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The Gospel Messenger.

"GO OUT."

"Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city. . . . Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."—LUKE xiv. 21-23.

MANY years ago, in one of the most depraved parts of Bristol, there was a dear Christian young person, very afflicted, and at that time bedridden. She lived with her parents, who kept a brewery and public-house called "The Coach and Horses."

The Lord had done great things for her, in converting her soul, and giving her to know and love Him as her Saviour, and He was very precious to her. She greatly desired to be with Him above, like the delivered one in the fifth chapter of Mark, but the Lord bid her still abide with her friends, to tell them and others in the lane and the neighbourhood around what great things He had done for her, and had had compassion on her.

She loved to do this. She had great love towards poor fellow-sinners. She let her light shine, and witnessed for the Lord, amidst great darkness and sin all around.

Every Thursday afternoon she used to get a few

women of the neighbourhood together in her room, to read to them and tell them of Christ and His wondrous love to sinners. A dear Christian lady used to unite with her in this happy service.

At the end of one of these little meetings, the invalid told her fellow-labourer in the gospel that there was a party of gipsies in the lane, and how much she wished some of the young Christian men would go and hold a little gospel meeting with them before they left. The lady made this her wish known, and the following Lord's Day evening two young Christian men went, and held a meeting at the lodging-house where the gipsies were.

There were eight of them present. They sang the well-known hymn—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.”

They read the twenty-third chapter of Luke, from which they brought before them man's ruin and God's remedy, and told them in simple words how the precious blood of Jesus could make their sins, though deep as scarlet, and red like crimson, whiter than snow; and sought to get them that very night to plunge beneath that flood and so lose all their guilty stains.

The meeting broke up. The young men gave them a large print Testament, asking them to get it read to them, and also inquired if they might

come again next Lord's Day evening. They replied, "If we are still here you may, but we think of leaving the end of the week for the country." They travelled the country, living in carts, nine months of the year, attending the fairs, race-courses, &c.; the other three winter months they came into the town, because it was warmer, and sustained themselves by making skewers for butchers, clothes-pegs, baskets, and such like articles.

The young men went the next Lord's Day evening and found the gipsies had left; but the landlord said they were welcome to continue the meeting, if they could succeed in getting any of the neighbours to come to it. It was, as was said before, a dark and sinful place, full of the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind; just where the blessed Saviour would send and bring in to the great supper of God's everlasting love.

The gipsies were gone, as we have said, but the little gospel work and meeting continued. God had opened a little door—a door of utterance—and, blessed be His name! it was effectual, too. If any place needed the Great Physician, it was this lane, and He used His divine and blessed skill and power to many at that time. All kinds came to hear the Word of God—sweeps, costermongers, drovers, fishwomen—and as many as eighty of these came on one occasion. God sent a little wave of converting grace and saving blessing, which rolled in to many hearts.

Amongst those His Word came with power to at

the first was a very desperate woman, Nance S——, a veritable Magdalene. The power Satan possessed over her was awful, and for a long time she had been a terror in the lane, even to men, as well as to women. But the Lord had compassion on her and delivered her, and turned her to God. He left her a little time to manifest the great change He had wrought, and then took her to be with Him above for ever, in those bright and blessed scenes where sin can never come.

A direful fever broke out at the time, and some that had attended the gospel meetings took it and died — praising the Lord Jesus for having turned them to Himself, and giving every evidence that they departed to be for ever with Him above.

One Lord's Day evening, about nine months after the gipsies had left, on going into the meeting, it was observed that more than usual were there; and on further looking round, there were the gipsies. They had returned for the winter months, and hearing the little meeting had continued since they left, they came to it. The eldest, Jubal S——, the head of the party, was soon observed to listen with deep attention; then he remained behind to be further spoken with. God was working; faith came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. With tears rolling down his face he said, "Oh, what wondrous love of Jesus the Saviour to suffer such a death upon the cross for the likes of we!" He believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved, and his eldest son also, a young man of the party,

soon after. These, after some time, giving every evidence of the work of God in their souls, were received amongst God's people gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace first saved them, then taught them—taught their wandering feet to tread the heavenly road. They gave up their gipsy life of going about the country, afraid of its temptations to ungodliness and sin, and sought and obtained honest employment in the town.

After Jubal S——'s conversion, he had deeply laid on his heart an old companion, Tom T——, who had travelled the country with him, but had not attended any of these meetings. Oh, thought he, if only Tom could know the Lord, what a joy it would be. For eighteen months he tried to get him to come and hear the gospel. One Sunday evening he succeeded, and Tom went with him. He was old now, and had not been inside a place of worship, so called, for between thirty and forty years, and then only to get married. Oh, what grace! that very night God blessed His Word to Tom T——'s soul. He also was manifestly converted to God, and some time after was added to the Lord's people.

These three have now likewise passed away, after giving every evidence of the work of grace in them for some years, and their simple life and testimony having been used to others. The Lord took them, one by one, to be with Him above for ever.

This little record is written in connection with those blessed words in 1 Timothy, chapter ii., verses 3-6, “God, our Saviour, who will have all men to

be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

May God use this tale of His work of grace to encourage His servants, and to stimulate and encourage labour in the gospel. And in any who may read this little paper, that do not as yet know him as a Saviour-God, may He by it create the desire in their heart now to learn Him and His great love. And to Him be glory, for ever and ever. W. F.

MEROY: WHAT IS IT?

I HAD long wished to be the bearer of life to some condemned cell. My wish was granted me. It was on a Tuesday that a poor sentenced criminal was to be hanged. How wonderful, to be in a position to carry tidings of *life*!

So, with his life in my hand, I stand before the victim in his cell. His eyes have no tears, but are red, and look as if, with dry, hot grief, they had burned down into their sockets.

"Can you read?"

"Yes," was the reply.

But fearing to break the news too suddenly, I added, "Would you *like* your life?"

He responds, "Do not trifle with me."

"But life is sweet?"

"I would rather you did not speak to me."

"But would you not like your life?"

"I'm justly condemned."

"But the Queen *could* give you your life. Can you read this?"

And now those hot eyes are on the paper. As he reads, putting my arms around his shoulders, I say, "There, my poor man; there is your life!" No sooner had I uttered the words than down he dropped, as it were, *dead*!

When a man, to whom a reprieve is announced, falls down as dead, may not a sinner *rejoice* who finds he is not to be *lost*, but that, on believing, he is *saved*—I say, may not *he* weep? Yea, cry for joy?

But now, revived, he asks, "Sir, who sent me this?"

"The Queen sent it."

"Why did the Queen send it *me*?"

"It was *mercy*. It pleased her to do it."

"What have I ever done to the Queen?"

"Nothing, but break her laws."

"Could I see the Queen?"

"Why?"

At this the tears are in his eyes. How refreshing! What a tale they tell! A new life is coming!

Dear reader, you understand.

He repeats, "Could I see the Queen?"

"What for?"

"I don't know; but if I *may*, I would place my life at her service."

"Then you are not an *Antinomian*?"

"What is that?"

"One who *says he is saved*, but may live as he likes. Would you murder again?"

"Murder! Ah, no."

Dear reader, to set us free from *death*, Christ died, on the ground of which God *gives* us life! To know this is to know God in *grace*.

It would have been beginning at the wrong end if I had said, "My poor man, you must love the Queen." Was he not to be hung by her laws? There was room enough for misery, fear, but none for *love*.

Or suppose I had said, "You must reform." Could *reform* stay the law's demand? He had wept, had groaned under the sentence. But no account is taken of these. *He must be hung by LAW, or saved by MERCY.*

Now, according to *justice*, God must *condemn*, or in *grace* *save* the sinner. He chose the latter—not at the expense of law, but by a glorious vindication of law. In "Christ dying for the ungodly," infinite worth has met and discharged eternal penalties. Reader, have you believed this? Have you eternal life?

"'Rich in mercy,' on my head
Oil of boundless joy He shed;
All my sins are put away,
All is turned to brightest day;
To Thy 'mercy,' Lord, belongs,
Never-ceasing sweetest songs."

ANON.

"PERSUADING THEM CONCERNING JESUS."

(Notes of an Address on Acts xxviii. 23-31, &c.)

THERE are ten thousand roads to hell, but there is only one way to heaven. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John xiv. 6). If you have not found the way yet, and will take the advice of a plain man, you will find that road at once.

Turn to the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verses 23, 24: "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." There is something very charming in this closing page of the history of a man like the apostle Paul. This is clearly the closing page of the history of his life. You have some of his letters afterwards. But where the man is before you described by God's Spirit, this is the last scene, and a very lovely one it is.

And what is it? Well, we have a hired room, and the apostle sending out and inviting people to come, and there he was

"PERSUADING THEM CONCERNING JESUS,"

both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. It was a long sermon. Ah, look at the fervour of the man, look at the burning zeal that filled that dear aged servant of Christ. What made him so earnest? I will give you the secret of his earnestness in a minute or two. What strikes me here is the deathless energy of the man, and the lovely work he has in hand. He had before him a company of immortal souls, and he was "persuading them concerning Jesus."

I am not Paul, but I am in my own hired hall, and here you are, and what I want to do, my unsaved friend, is to "persuade you concerning Jesus." You see you have never been persuaded yet. You have often heard of Jesus. Some of those people had perhaps never heard of Him before, but that is not the case with you. From your very childhood you have heard of the Lord Jesus. But somehow or other the devil has managed to come in between your soul and the truth, and you have never yet been persuaded to thoroughly receive Christ. You would not deny that He is a Saviour. How do you know He is a Saviour? Has He saved you? No? You cannot talk from the experimental knowledge of another person. Has He saved you? I repeat. No! Then you do not believe in Him. The very fact that you are not saved shows you do not believe.

If you had felt your need of a Saviour, if you had got a sight of your danger, if you had known what

the love of God was to you in giving His Son, you would have closed in with God's offers of mercy. But you and the devil are very close intimates. You have managed between you to escape the effect of the gospel—your soul's salvation. God save you now, my friend. It may be the last chance you will get. Indeed it may.

"Persuading sinners concerning Jesus" is glorious work. Oh! such a Saviour as He is, such a blessed Saviour! Jesus, Jehovah the Saviour. God's Son, man's Friend, Satan's Victor, the One who has annulled death, and broken all the bars of the tomb, Jesus, a living Saviour at God's right hand, but soon to be the Judge. Happy must Paul have been, as he from morning to evening expounded to them out of the Scriptures. I should have enjoyed that twelve hours. Would not you have also, fellow-Christian? How your heart has been refreshed many a time, as you have read what Paul has given us in his epistles. But it must have been something perfectly delicious to have been there and heard Paul glowingly speak of Jesus.

Now, what was the effect. "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." He sought to persuade his hearers that Jesus was the Son of God, that He was the Messiah of whom the Old Testament Scriptures spoke, that He was the Daysman whom Job sighed for, and the Man of sorrows of whom Isaiah wrote. Above all He was God's Son, man's Friend, and the Saviour of sinners. And when he had finished what was the result?

"Some believed," and "some believed not." Just the same will it be here, some will believe, and some will not believe. Have you believed in Him? If so, own it, acknowledge it, I pray you.

To persuade men concerning Jesus is the evangelist's business. That is all. Without Christ there is no hope; with Christ, every blessing. If you know Jesus, oh what a priceless, precious Saviour you have. God help me now to persuade you concerning Jesus. Tell me, what has He done to you that you should not come to Him? Why should your heart be opposed to Him? Why should you not receive Him? Has He not been your friend? Oh, He is the Friend of sinners. "This Man receiveth sinners." Listen to the truth, that in glory there is a Saviour for you. But mark, if you do not have Him as a Saviour, you must meet Him in an entirely different character. You must either have to do with Him now as a Saviour, or you will have to meet Him as a judge. You will have to be in His presence. The heart that knows Him loves to get near Him. The heart that does not know Him flies from Him. But you will have to meet Him. You must face Him. How soon, I do not know, I cannot tell.

God is now giving you an opportunity of meeting Him as a Saviour—the sinner's Friend, the One who has glorified God about sin. Oh, be persuaded to trust in Him, to confide in Him. Some believed then, and some believed not. That is generally the effect in a meeting like this, but one does not always get the tidings about the conversions on the spot.

What we want to-day is broken material, broken-hearted men and women, convicted of their sin and guilt. Have you been so convicted? You have heard God's Word over and over again. Has it affected you? The very mark of death may be on you this night, and I want you to know where you are going to spend eternity. Why have you never been persuaded concerning Jesus yet? Oh! a lost eternity is an awful thing. There are ten thousand roads to hell, I repeat, but I believe the most thronged to-day is "Procrastination Road." Oh, may you believe to-night. "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not."

Just before his hearers went away Paul quoted a very solemn scripture: "And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts xxviii. 25-27). What a happy thing it is when you see with the eye. See what? God coming to you in grace. You see God drawing near to bless you. If your ear were opened what would you hear? Tidings of love, tidings of mercy and grace. And if your heart were opened

you would understand. And the next thing you would be converted. It is a fine thing to be converted. Paul applies Isaiah's solemn prediction to those that were hearing him that day. And then he adds, "Be it known therefore unto you, that **THE SALVATION OF GOD** is sent unto the Gentiles, and **THEY WILL HEAR IT.**" Now that is a very sweet word, beloved friends. Paul says, Listen to this ere you go, the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and they will hear it. The Jews as a nation would not have it. See to it that you get it. What is sent? **SALVATION.** Who sends it? **GOD.** To whom is it sent? **THE GENTILES.** You are a Gentile, are you not? What happy news for you that the salvation of God, that is Christ, is pressed on you.

Christ, the blessed Son of God, has come here, lived in this scene, and passed out of it by death on the cross, where He glorified God about sin. Paul knew Him as the risen, triumphant, ascended Saviour, and boldly says, "The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles. and they will hear it." I repeat again, What is sent? Salvation. Salvation is for a lost man. It is for you, and God sends it. It is God's own gift, wrapped up in the Person of His own blessed Son.

Now no person could read this scripture without at least feeling a deep admiration of Paul. His heart, so full of the enjoyment of the love of Christ, and the thoughts of God, was deeply desirous that others might know the grace he knew, and get to

know the salvation which he enjoyed. Though a prisoner he does not rest until he has got others brought under the sound of the Word. And for two long years he went on with the same thing. He is just a picture of what every Christian should be. Now what was it made this man so very earnest? He tells us this elsewhere, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. v. 10, 11).

"WE PERSUADE MEN."

What a mission, and well Paul carried it out! The judgment seat of Christ and the terror of the Lord gave him tremendous impulse. I would not miss the judgment seat of Christ in the glory, for it will reveal to every saved soul the Lord's infinite grace, but how different will it be for a man who has his sins on him, and who dies in his sins. For him the judgment seat of Christ is the Great White Throne. Do you think anybody is saved at the Great White Throne? Not a saved soul is there, not one. How is this? Because those who stand there are all *dead* (see Rev. xx. 11, 12). And that is why the apostle says, "Knowing therefore the *terror* of the Lord, we *persuade* men." My dear friend, the judgment seat of Christ, although it be a very solemn thing, has no terror for the Christian, because

it will show the unspeakable grace of the One who there judges. The question of sin He settled for the believer by bearing his sins on the cross, and blotting them out. At the judgment seat He will appraise and reward the works of each child of God. You may say, I have done very little. He will not forget the little. A cup of cold water given in His name, will not be forgotten. That is the point. And therefore, the judgment seat of Christ for the Christian, although it be solemn, is a place of unspeakable blessing. But for a sinner, oh man! "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" That is what moved Paul. He knew what the terror of the Lord was.

There is no forgiveness at the Great White Throne. There is no one there to plead for you, and you cannot plead for yourself. It is nothing but judgment for an unsaved man. Now, my unsaved friend, listen to me, how will you do there? I tell you what the devil will do when you come to die. He will draw near and give you a draught to soothe you, and drug you, as you are dropping into eternal damnation. Your friends will then say, "He died peacefully." Oh yes; Satan has a patent soothing recipe for every sinner that dies without Christ. But stop a bit, what is it that comes after death? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." How will you do there? "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" Oh man, for God's sake, for your own soul's sake, wake up. Oh, ²flee you from the wrath to come!

Oh, let me implore you, never stand as a sinner before Christ's judgment seat. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, *we persuade men.*"

I do not doubt there was something else that moved Paul's heart, for he adds immediately, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. v. 14). There were two things that moved the heart of Paul: "The *terror* of the Lord" impelled, and "the *love* of Christ" constrained him. Ah, man, by grace I too long for your soul. Will you come to Jesus now? Won't you take God's salvation now? Let me implore you. Oh do not let this appeal rise against you in the judgment day. Do not compel lost golden opportunities of salvation to rise in that day as witnesses against you. Oh friend, let me beseech you, get down before God, own your guilt, own your sinfulness, get down before God in the acknowledgment of what a sinner you have been, and let Christ save you. Oh, He is such a Saviour! The love of Christ constrains us. That mighty love which brought Him down to death. Do you know why He went down into death? That He might bring you and me into life. He took all the punishment of our sin, He took the distance that we might get the nearness. He took the strokes that He might heal us. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii. 5). Why don't you let Him heal you,

heal the deep wound in your soul that sin has made, and that none but He can heal? "By whose stripes ye were healed," says Peter; "for ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet. ii. 24, 25).

Well, you say, will everybody be persuaded? Oh dear no. I will show you three classes that hear the Word of God. Some are *never* persuaded, others are *almost* persuaded, and some are *altogether* persuaded. Which class are you in? Let us turn to Luke xvi. We have there a solemn unfolding of the future, from the lips of Christ. I see there a class which one looks at with sorrow: they are—

THE NEVER PERSUADED.

Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments (ver. 23). Observe now that this is from the lips of our Lord Christ. The One who agonised on Calvary's tree, and who went down into death that He might bless us and heal us, it is He who tells us this story; and you may depend upon it, that these terrible words from the lips of Christ portray the truth as to the eternity of a lost soul.

Oh, but it is only a picture, say you. I admit it, but what will the awful reality of a lost eternity be? One word describes it. Torment. Man, look ahead. Torment. Listen, careless, godless man. Torment. Three times over you get it (vers. 24, 25, 26). If it

be nothing else but this, that you have the sense in your soul for ever that you might have been saved, but are not, it will be torment. You have had your opportunities. You can never say that forgiveness was not preached to you. "But fancy, what will conscience say then? I know now you indulge in your lusts. Yes, you go in for the thing you love, and your lust is damning you. Oh friend, I believe the Lord's Word. Torment is a terrible word. Thank God, I shall never know it. Why? Because the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah tells me that "he was tormented for our sins." That is, Jesus, blessed be His name, passed through atoning agony that He might deliver His people from the judgment of God.

This wretched rich man dropped from the lap of luxury into the lake of fire, and torment is his own description of his state. True, a prayer comes from him, but it is not answered. "Have mercy on me," he cries all too late. Mercy has been pressed on you, and have you despised it? Look at his prayer. Did you ever think of his prayer? One drop of water to cool his tongue. Well, understand this, that drop the parched soul can never taste. There is thirst in hell, but no water. Oh! friend, if you are wise, you will stoop down now and drink and live. You will drink of the water of life, you will drink deep draughts of the grace of Christ.

But see what follows. Abraham tells Dives that deliverance is impossible (ver. 26). I know that we have heard a great deal lately about "the larger hope." The larger hope, viz., that all men will

eventually be saved, is a nineteenth-century delusion, hatched by the devil in hell, and proclaimed by his servants on earth. What hope had Dives in hell? None. It is perfect folly. There is neither a larger hope, nor a smaller hope for the man that dies in his sins. Thank God there is salvation for you *now*, where you are. You may *now* drink of the living water, and live for ever.

Now observe the earnest desire of the man in torment that others should *not* be his companions, as he begs Abraham to send to testify to them. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them," is the reply. But he continues, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent." Carefully note the rejoinder: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets *neither will they be persuaded* though one rose from the dead." There are some people that are *never persuaded*. They decline God's Word. My friend, if you are in that class your future is awful. You say, "I have my doubts about Scripture." Well, I have no doubt you have, but I tell you frankly that I have no doubts. Its plain statements should lead you and me to feel that hell is an awful place. If I were commissioned of God to go to the dungeon of the damned this hour with a gospel message of pardon and liberation, ere I had spoken fifteen words I believe the place would be empty. Sinner, don't you go there. Unconverted man, don't risk it. "Oh, I'll risk it," says some one. Very well, I tell you something else you will do—you will taste it. Thank

God I shall not. Why? Because I believe the awfulness of it, and that my Saviour has loved me and died for me to deliver me from it. “The love of Christ constraineth us: because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.” Are you not going to be persuaded? Has not Christ risen from the dead? Yes. Is it not a striking thing that although you know Christ has risen from the dead you have never been persuaded yet? Let not the words, “Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead,” be true of you, my friend.

It is possible that you are saying, “I am almost persuaded, I will think about these things.” Well, I will show you a likeness of yourself. Turn to Acts xxvi., where we get the story of one who was

ALMOST PERSUADED.

Paul is telling the story of his conversion, and presently Festus said, “Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.” “Oh no,” he says, “I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness” (ver. 25). What was he preaching? A risen Christ, an exalted Saviour at God’s right hand. “This thing was not done in a corner”—the whole world knew about it. And then he says, “King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou be-

lievest." He says, I know you believe, you cannot refuse the testimony of your Old Testament Scriptures. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, "*Almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Some people are *never* persuaded, but there are crowds of people who are *almost* persuaded, yet never reach Christ. They are still outside the door of salvation. Do you not think you had better get amongst those who are

ALTOGETHER PERSUADED?

I can understand Paul as he says, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and *altogether* such as I am, except these bonds." To be only *almost* persuaded is to be still *altogether* unsaved. "Almost persuaded" ground has a great many standing on it, but there is not a saved person among them, not one. Are you almost persuaded? Yes. Are you saved? No. You prove what I have said. There is not one single saved person upon "almost persuaded" ground.

Let me come to an altogether persuaded man, for there are such people, and hear him speak. "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and *altogether* such as I am, except these bonds." I too can say similarly. I am a sinner saved by grace, loved of the Lord, and on my way to eternal glory without a shadow of a doubt as to my getting there. I know the joy of being a child of God. My friend, I can commend my Saviour to you and my Master also.

Would to God that you were almost and altogether such as I am by grace.

Let this witness, Paul the aged, say one other word to you. Will you read 2 Timothy i. 7-12? Now what does the gospel do for a man? It saves him. The apostle speaks of "God who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works (we can do nothing) but according to his own purpose and grace . . . now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Observe that in verse 8 he says to Timothy, "*Be not thou therefore ashamed* of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner." Then in verse 12 he says, "*I am not ashamed* . . ." And in verse 16 he says, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and *was not ashamed* of my chain." Here are three men, Timothy, Paul, and Onesiphorus, who are not ashamed of Christ and His testimony. I know many a man who has been ashamed of the testimony of Christ. Be not like such, but let this witness lead you to simple confession of Christ. "I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and *am persuaded* that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (ver. 12). He is a persuaded man, out-and-out persuaded. Christ had won his heart. Christ had got hold of him absolutely, and now he is passing along through this scene in the joy of the gospel, a persuaded man.

Now I ask you, which of the three classes are you in? *Never* persuaded, shall it be? Take care. *Almost* persuaded? No, better. Because the moment may come soon when God will take you away, and then it is all over with you. There is only one secure path. What is that? *Altogether* persuaded. Shall not Christ from this hour have the confidence of your heart? Oh, surely. Have I been successful in "persuading you concerning Jesus"?

W. T. P. W.

THE EXECUTION BOOK.

AS I sat in the office of a county jail, the governor handed me the execution book; and, turning over the pages, I read a long list of fifty or sixty executions. Against the name of each one who had suffered the extreme penalty of the law was recorded his age and a description of his personal appearance, as well as the crime for which he had been hanged.

In that sad list were the names of men and women, young and old. The offences were various; amongst them were cases of theft and burglary, sheep-stealing and the receiving of stolen goods, besides many instances of murder, and others being implicated in murderous affrays. On some occasions the execution was of one man, for his own solitary crime; whereas

in other cases, two, three, and as many as five, were all hanged together for their joint participation in some lawless act.

I turned from the prison execution book to read in a small book, which was on the table beside me, the account of another execution. But how widely different was this story from the one that I had previously been engaged with! Here was an account of Him of whom the Roman judge declared, "I find no fault in this Man, and nothing worthy of death is done by him;" and yet the insults of the Jewish rabble were poured upon Him, and the cruelty of the Roman soldiery made Him its victim. He is led from prison and from judgment, and going up towards Calvary, He carries His cross. And this was the Son of God! Man's heart being estranged from God, consequently every thought of man's, and every action, and all that could come from his heart, were opposed to God; so that it was only for God's beloved Son to be in the company of men, and at once the hatred of the natural mind against God found a suitable occasion for manifesting itself. And thus the Lord Jesus Christ became the very target for the malice and venom of man to level itself at. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." He was despised and rejected of men; He was buffeted and spit on, and scourged and crucified, and yet God, His Father, knew it all, saw it all, and looked on. But *why* did He hear not the cry of His well-beloved, and why was He so far

from helping Him? Because, in this scene of man's fearful enmity to God, there was also the grandest and most marvellous display of God's love to man.

Here was an execution—the Just taking the place of the unjust—Jesus, the Son of God, bearing the sinner's sin, and suffering the full penalty due to the guilty, 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.” What a sight for angels, devils, and men!

In the execution book of the county jail I read the record of the executions of those who suffered for *one* particular offence. But here was the divine record of Him who suffered for *many* offences, even for the many sins of many sinners. The murderers and thieves of whom I read were hanged for *their own* crimes, and they suffered, I suppose, justly; but here was the death of One, who bare the sins of others, who His own self bare sins in His own body on the tree that sinners might be eternally saved. Glorious news! Have you believed them?

“And did the holy and the Just,
The sov'reign of the skies,
Stoop down to man's estate and dust
That guilty worms might rise?

Yes, the Redeemer left the throne,
The radiant throne on high;
Surprising mercy! love unknown!
To suffer, bleed, and die.

He took the guilty culprit's place,
And suffered in his stead;
For man (O miracle of grace!)—
For man the Saviour bled.”

ANON.

THE SADDLER'S DISCOVERY.

A YOUNG Christian one day called at the house of the village saddler and left a gospel booklet. The old man read it over, and silently it preached the gospel to him, pointing him to the Saviour of sinners, through whom alone forgiveness and salvation can be possessed. Light broke into his soul, and he is now rejoicing in the knowledge of the forgiveness of all his sins.

But can such a thing be possible? perhaps our reader inquires. Certainly. And on what does such assurance rest? In the soul's experiences? No. In our frames or feelings? No. What then?

ON DIVINE AUTHORITY—

the Word of God.

Many are looking *within* for this blessed assurance; but faith looks *without*.

The evidence that the believer's sins are for ever put away, lies not *within* him, but altogether *outside* of him. Turn to the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews for proof of this. In verse 15 the Holy Spirit's witness is spoken of, and to what does He witness? To two facts:—

First, That Christ having offered one sacrifice for sins, sits now in perpetuity at the right hand of God (ver. 12).

Second, That on the ground of His one offering for sins, God has in righteousness put them away *to be remembered "no more"* (ver. 17). So that the believer can say without presumption that they are gone—

"FORGIVEN, FORGOTTEN FOR EVER,"

as dear Suso wrote some hundreds of years ago.

Reader, is this your assurance? Remember, they are the words of God who cannot lie.

But to return to our narrative. Some days after, a friend of ours was passing the old saddler's house, when he called him in, and after showing him some books he had been reading, produced a copy of the *Gospel Messenger*, which he said was "*the sweetest of all*," and that it had opened up such a lot to him, and had been such a blessing to his soul.

Thank God, the light through the pages of the magazine had shone into the old man's soul. May it shine likewise into yours, dear reader, and then may you go forth to make known to others the salvation of God.

"Rise, my soul! behold, 'tis *Jesus*,
Jesus fills thy wondering eyes :
 See Him now, in glory seated,
 Where thy sins no more can rise.
 There, in righteousness transcendent,
 Lo, He doth in heaven appear,
 Shows the *blood of His atonement*
As thy title to be there."

FORTY YEARS IN GRACE.

I FIND it exceedingly happy, as I write on this 4th of January, to cast my mind back on a day exactly forty years ago, when, by God's rich grace, the greatest joy and blessing which mortal man can know, was made my own. On that day—to His eternal praise be it said—He saved and made known to me His Son, as my own blessed Saviour. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3).

The 4th of January 1862 was the dawn of that life in my soul.

And believe me, dear reader, there can be no moment of more profound importance in our personal history than that in which God thus makes Himself known as a Saviour-God. Not to know Him thus is to be in spiritual death and darkness as well as in constant danger of banishment from His presence under the judgment of "the Great White Throne"!

Again I say this moment is of supreme importance to every one.

The last breathings of that great revival of '59 and '60 were just passing away, leaving, nevertheless, hundreds if not thousands of souls who had been truly "born again," many of whom remain to this present, many have fallen asleep and are now "absent from the body but present with the Lord," and not a few, alas! alas! who have turned back,

like the dog or the sow, only to bring discredit on the Name in which they had professed to believe.

When I first heard of that revival I regarded it, as did many, with suspicion and contempt. It seemed only a bit of religious fanaticism—an ephemeral craze which would soon die out. But, with all its defects, God was in it! Very much of the work was that of His Spirit.

Personally I saw but little of it. I was urged to attend evangelistic meetings. I only attended one, and received no divine impression. It appeared to me only excitement. Still, God was moving outside of meetings. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." He acts in a grace that is sovereign. So in my case.

"Are you converted?" was the question put to me by one who had a very deep interest in my whole life and conduct.

"No," I replied, with a feeling of anger—nor did I want to be. Conversion meant, I fancied, the possibility of heaven at last, by the sacrifice of every worldly pleasure meanwhile. And *that* no young man could dream of. I, of course, wanted the world, and not God. Sorry preference! And yet that plain question, so kindly meant and tenderly uttered, was God's arrow of conviction. "Except ye be converted . . . ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3), reverberated in my now awakened conscience, demonstrating the awful and only alternative, viz., "the damnation of hell," until I felt that I stood on a point where decision for Christ or the world was imperative. To halt between such

opinions is fatal. To choose the world is to be damned for ever—to turn by grace to the Lord is, not the mere possibility of heaven by-and-by, but present pardon and the assured knowledge of God, and therefore incomparable joy.

That evening, as I came all alone from a walk in the country to the camp at Colchester, where I happened to be quartered, God brought home to my conscience the word — “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” A serious question indeed!

Reader, what shall you give for yours? Were you to gain the whole world, or any fraction of it that you might desire, at the cost of your soul, you would be left at the end in poverty, in hell, and in misery! The risk is far too fearful.

And thus I felt that evening under God’s solemn appeal. What should I give in exchange?

Did I attain to the height of my military ambition, and die without Christ, my “castle in the air” would prove to be, I clearly foresaw, but bitter disappointment, and my expectations a delusion at the close. Then which should it be? Christ and His cross, or the world and its pleasures—one or other it must be. The issues were for eternity!

But would He take one who now felt himself a guilty sinner. The question of choice was not all on my side. I was the beggar, the suppliant! Would He show mercy? I recalled the words — “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” Light overspread my troubled heart. “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was

lost" (Luke xix. 10). So He made even me welcome! And never did a sinner, young or old, rich or poor, thus fly to Him but surely to find Him a perfect and blessed Saviour.

God's grace and man's guilt are divinely correlative. The love of God, the blood of Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, win the heart, purge the conscience, and sustain the spirit of him who believes.

Hence we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. i. 5). And for this keeping power—the power of God which keeps the believer, whether for one year or forty, in our journey across the desert to the bright heavenly Homeland, the Father's House, and the presence of the Lord at His coming—we are as much indebted to Him as for the saving grace which met us at first, and brought us "out of darkness into His marvellous light," weaning us from "the pleasures of sin which are but for a season" for those which are at God's right hand for evermore.

May I appeal to you, dear unsaved reader, to consider your eternal future. If you follow the "course of this world," then you must accept its awful doom. If, by the power of divine love and grace, you would follow the Lord Jesus, then seek to do so wholeheartedly, humbly, and faithfully. You have but one brief life! It flies apace. Your day must speedily close.

Remember that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that

shall be revealed to us" (Rom. viii. 18), and that the life which carries the greatest moral dignity—the brightest, most useful, most calm and joyful—is that which has Christ for its grand commanding object.

J. W. S.

JUSTIFICATION AND PEACE.

"Having made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). "He came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them which were nigh" (Eph. ii. 17). "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

IF Christ made peace, and preached it, the man that does not get it makes a huge mistake for time and eternity. That is certain. If you were told to make this blessed peace, it would be impossible. Christ has made it, as it is written, "HAVING MADE PEACE through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). And now He has sat down at the right hand of God, and Scripture says, "He is our peace" (Eph. ii. 14).

The person that simply receives Him has it. Do not forget that when He rose from the dead He preached it. Do you know the very first words He said among the company of His own when He rose from the dead? They were these, "Peace unto you." Now, what is peace? Well, it is profound calm. Profound calm exists between the soul of the believer and God. To my mind peace is this—there is not one single disturbing element between my soul and God.

"But," you say, "what about your sins?" Well, thank God, they are not between God and me. Do you know why? Because they were once between God and His Son. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). I know that I am among the many; and when my sins got in between God and His Son, He, in righteousness, forsook Him. It cost Christ His life, and He went down into death. With my sins on Him? Oh, no! He did not take my sins into His grave. If He had, He would be there yet. No, no, He put them away when He bore them upon the tree. And what is the result? They are all gone, and I have peace with God.

Have you not got this peace yet, dear friend? Perhaps it is because you are expecting to *feel* it. You would like to have the experience of it. Do not forget this, Christ has wrought a work by which all the sins are put away; they are all blotted out; and the evidence that they are gone is this, He sits without sins in glory at God's right hand. You must get hold of the wonderful fact that He is there without them, though once He bore them. The moment you see Jesus there in glory without your sins, you will get peace. He is in glory. Will you be there?

Ah, friend, if you never made up your mind for this blessed Saviour before, let me urge you, make up your mind now. And if you never had peace before, God's blessed wonderful peace, the peace Jesus made by the agonies of the cross, and the peace which He preaches now, oh, take it to-day. All you have

to do is to take in simple faith that which perfect love furnishes.

"Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1), is a glorious fact. Do not make any mistake as to the order here given. Faith in God and what He has done comes first. Justification is the blessed consequence, and peace follows suit.

Perhaps you are saying: "I do not feel very clear about it. Do not we read about being justified by faith, by His grace, and also by His blood?" Yes. "Then are there three ways of being justified?" No, but there are three parties to my justification. "Who are the three parties?" God, Christ, and myself. What is God's part in it? "*Being justified freely by his grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24). What brought justification to a poor guilty sinner like me? God sent it in the deep blessed grace of His heart. What could secure it? What is its basis? "Much more then, being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. v. 9). That is Christ's death. It is the instrumental means of my justification. It is not your works or my works, but the perfectly finished work of the Lord Jesus. There is the basis of justification.

Now then, how do I get it? What is my part in it? The justification, the peace, the salvation that God presents, and which the death of the Lord Jesus Christ secures, how do I get those blessings? In simple faith I put out my hand and say, "Thank you,

Lord, I will take what Thy love provides." "Therefore being *justified by faith*, we *have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

What is the spring of justification? God's grace. What is the basis and groundwork of it? Christ's work. And what is the principle on which you and I get it? Not works, but simple faith. God furnishes it; Christ secures it; and in simple faith I, though a poor hell-deserving sinner, put out my hand and appropriate what the love of God presents to me. The result is "peace with God."

Will not you take it? Receive Christ and it together, and then I think you will joyously sing that hymn—

"Oh, joy of the justified, joy of the free,
I'm washed in that crimson tide opened for me.
In Christ my Redeemer rejoicing I stand,
Being saved by His grace and held by His hand.
O sing of His mighty love,
Sing of His mighty love,
Sing of His mighty love,
Mighty to save."

W. T. P. W.

PLAIN FACTS FOR EARNEST PEOPLE.

NOTHING is more important in a structure than a good foundation. None would care to live in a house or cross a bridge if the foundation were not reliable.

If it is, then, so important to have a good foundation where human life is concerned, which is only

for a brief span at the longest, how much more important to have a good foundation in view of eternity.

All will admit that we are living in a day of change and rapid progress. Old institutions and old ideas are fast giving way before the quick march of science. Men glory in the latest discovery in the same way that a child gets excited over the latest novelty or some pretty toy.

Now this is true, alas! with regard to ideas in religion. Some men, both in the past and the present, have been so bent on the process of reconstruction, that they have been vain enough to think that they can reconstruct the Bible itself, if not obliterate its holy, blessed, soul-saving contents altogether. Well might the Psalmist say, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Let us, however, try and get to the bottom of things, if thereby we may secure a good foundation—a foundation that shall stand for ever—that shall stand when all else is shaken. Let us lay aside all preconceived ideas and prejudiced notions and come to facts. "Facts are stubborn things." Let us view them with all the candour and gravity they deserve. Let us look at them as we could wish to look at them when we are about to cross the borderland of time and pass into eternity.

1. CONSCIENCE.

Most, if not all, will admit that man has got a

conscience—an internal monitor that does duty as a detective. When we do what we know to be wrong either against God or our neighbour, it condemns us. The basest of men have confessed to feeling its condemning power. Truly it makes a strong man the veriest coward. It made Felix tremble on his throne as Paul reasoned with him “of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.”

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

Even professed infidels have confessed to have felt its awful lash to be worse than the sting of scorpions. Through life, when all was smooth sailing, they fought against it, and even denied that it was any evidence of man's responsibility, yet when the cold hand of death assailed them the stoutest hearted has quailed and been seized with blank despair.

Men may philosophise and spin theories by the yard to try and get rid of *the fall*, but let them first settle where conscience came from?

2. SIN.

Take another fact, namely, SIN. “Fools make a mock at sin,” but sin is an awful reality. It is one of the most terrible facts in the universe; its wither-

ing blight is felt everywhere. The amount of evil and sorrow it has brought in its train can scarcely be exaggerated.

Why do we require policemen to protect us?—Sin! Why do we bolt and bar our doors at night to keep out the thief?—Sin! Why are we so careful that our children should not read the vile and pernicious literature abroad to-day?—Sin! Why have we gaols to lock up the profligate and the assassin?—Sin! Why have we workhouses to hide poverty from our eyes, and asylums to confine the lunatic, and graveyards to hide the corruption of our own flesh?—Sin. Sin is in every man's breast, and because of this the seeds of death are there. Death is the result of sin; lust is sin in the bud; sin is lust in the full-blown flower, and death follows. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas. i. 15).

Man or woman, I challenge you as an honest person to say that you have not been guilty at times of thoughts that have horrified you. You would not like your nearest friend to know them. Where did those abominable thoughts come from if sin does not exist? Admit the truth, that but for the influence of Christianity in these countries, and the restraints of the laws of society, we should be quite as bad as the heathen.

Notwithstanding the effects of Christianity and the barriers that delicacy and refinement have thrown around us, what terrible things appear in the daily

papers! Oh! the horror of what goes on underneath the surface that never comes to light! "But he that formed the eye, *shall he not see?*" "Neither is there any creature that is not made manifest in his sight."

3. IMMORTALITY.

Take another fact, namely, *man is immortal*. That is, he possesses an intelligent spirit which is *deathless*. He must exist for ever. Some men may deny it, as they can deny anything, if they have boldness enough for it. But denial is no proof. Man is an intelligent creature, and in that sense he is above the beasts. At times immortality asserts itself in every man's breast. Why do men dread death if man's spirit be not immortal? If he dies like a beast and has no further responsibility, why should he at any time be concerned about his future state?

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

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

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

"And now remorseful thoughts the past upbraid,
And fear of twofold death my soul alarms."

It cannot be denied that Sir Walter Scott had a great mind. He was a most prolific writer, yet when he was dying he asked for a Bible to be brought to him, that he might get comfort from its pages. Why did he ask for a Bible and not for some of his own or other literary productions? Was it not because that he felt the Bible was the only book that could meet what his immortal nature craved for? No, death is not the end of existence. "After this the judgment."

4. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Take another fact, namely, *the righteousness of God*. If God's existence be admitted, we cannot but conceive Him to be a God of unbending righteousness and unsullied holiness. The Scriptures give the fullest testimony to this. If God is holy, He must hate sin. If He is righteous, He must punish it.

Will He allow to go unpunished all the evil that has been done in this world against His righteous government? Will He allow the murder of His own Son to go unrequited? Though He is long suffering the day of reckoning will come. It is not far off. He will manifest His righteousness in judgment by bringing every transgression to light and giving it its due reward. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

5. THE LOVE OF GOD.

Take yet another fact, namely, *the love of God*. "God is love." It is the nature of God to love.

If so, *He must express it by devising means whereby His banished be not expelled from Him.* He must open a way whereby the sinner might be brought back to Him. How could this be brought about consistently with what God is in righteousness and holiness and with man's condition as a sinner against God? If He had acted in justice only, He would have swept the whole race into destruction. But where would His love have been seen?

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

The cross of Christ is the perfect reconciliation of God's righteousness and His love. There we see the perfect righteousness of God against sin and the deepest compassion for the sinner. There "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10). *None need perish since Christ has died.* He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. He died for the UNGODLY. God has been so honoured and glorified by the death of Christ that in perfect accord with strict justice He has come out to bless REBELS. Christ's death avails for the blackest, vilest, most polluted, guilty sinner, and therefore it avails for YOU. The way is now so clear and open that all

who come in the confession of their guilt will be received and welcomed into God's favour, and will thus realise the pardon of all their sins. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world *to save sinners*" (1 Tim. i. 15).

Reader, discard the thought for ever that God is now asking the fulfilment of the law from you to make you righteous. This is the rock on which many split and make eternal shipwreck. None can be justified by works of any kind. "NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST." However hard you try, you will not be satisfied. All your trying will not give peace to your troubled conscience, nor give you the sense of God's favour.

God is now offering to clothe you with righteousness, and such a righteousness as suits the very light of His unsullied holiness. His righteousness is "unto (toward) all and *upon all them that believe.*" God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "By him (Christ Jesus) *all that believe* are justified from all things, *from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*" (Acts xiii. 39).

As well might you expect to extinguish the light of the sun at mid-day with a rush-light, as that God's justice could fail to those who believe on His Son.

Why not submit to God? Why not bow in the judgment of what you are as guilty and utterly helpless to meet your own condition? Why not accept a righteousness that is divine when God is offering it for nothing? Yes, for nothing.

Hear what Chalmers, the great Scotch preacher, said, who himself before his conversion to God had been a strict law-keeper: "I am now most thoroughly of opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of '*Do this and live,*' no peace, and even no true worthy obedience, can ever be attained. It is, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' When this belief enters the heart, *joy and confidence enter along with it.* We look to God in a new light. That love to Him which terror scares away, re-enters the heart, and, with a new principle and a new power, we become new creatures in Christ Jesus."

P. W.

LESSONS FROM BANK NOTES, BY A BANK CLERK.

I NEVER see the words on a five-pound Bank of England note, "*I promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of five pounds,*" without thinking of the words, "*Whosoever among you that feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent*" (Acts xiii. 26).

Some years ago a Bank of Scotland one-pound note was passing up and down Scotland through the hands of rich and poor, old and young. On the front were the words, "*I promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of one pound;*" on the back were the following lines:—

"This piece of paper in your hand
 Declares to you that on demand
 You twenty shillings shall receive :
 This simple promise you believe,
 It sets your mind as much at rest
 As if the silver you possessed.

* * * * *

So Christ who died, but now doth live
 Doth unto you this promise give,
 That if you on His name believe
 You shall eternal life receive.
 Upon the note you calmly rest,
 Which is the safest, or the best ?
 The bank may break, Heaven never can,
 'Tis safer trusting God than man."

The lines may be more doggerel than poetry, but they contain simple but blessed truth. Have you yet received the simple gospel? "To you is the word of this salvation sent," yes, addressed to you, whosoever you are, God's salvation is freely offered to you. Whoever the person may be who presents the note over the Bank counter, he receives the money, so whoever simply presents his claim as a sinner, the demand of faith is instantly met by the gift of salvation. How simple for us, yet Christ had to win salvation for us by His death on Calvary's cross.

Some years ago a poor woman in Glasgow bought a penny stamp, and presented a one-pound note in payment. She was the bearer, and she expected to get the penny stamp and 19s. 11d. change.

To her surprise and distress she could not even get a penny stamp with it, much less twenty

shillings. She had worked hard for it, but the Bank had failed, and the promise to pay on its face was worthless. It professed to be worth a pound and was not worth a penny.

Thank God, His promise can never fail. The Bank of Heaven can never break. There is mercy for you. No applicant is refused. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," are the words of the Son of God.

About the year 1820 a cashier of a Liverpool firm was counting a bundle of Bank of England notes just received from abroad. He noticed one of them had a number of red marks, which puzzled him. A close examination showed these marks were words as follows:—"Should this note fall into the hands of John Dean, of Longhill, near Carlisle, let him hereby know that his brother is languishing a prisoner in the hands of the Dey of Algiers."

This message was sent to John Dean, the matter was brought before the Government, and after a heavy ransom had been paid, the prisoner was released after an imprisonment of eleven years. He only lived one year subsequently, so harshly had he been treated.

After long years of weary waiting he had seized a slender chance. A Bank note had strangely enough come his way, and he traced this appeal with the point of a nail in blood drawn from his arm. Once the appeal came to the right quarters, no time was lost in effecting his release.

Oh! sinner, will you not sue for release? You

are a prisoner in the hands of Satan. Christ came to preach "deliverance to the captives." John Dean seized a strange and slender hope. You have but to cry to the Lord, and He will hear instantly. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13). Surely you deserve to perish in your sins, if you are so careless as not to avail yourself of the way of escape, of salvation, of forgiveness of sins. Present your claim on God in faith—even the claim of a needy sinner—and you will receive salvation.

W. R.

HOW GOD FORGAVE A ROMAN OFFICER.

NOW the first Gentile received the forgiveness of his sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost should surely be of great interest to the readers of these lines, nearly all being Gentiles also. The name of this privileged man was Cornelius. He was a Roman officer, a centurion of the band called Italian, posted at the moment, when he received blessing, at the town of Cæsarea.

Now Cornelius was a very different man from his fellow-officers in general. They were heathen, either outward worshippers of false gods, or destitute of any profession of faith whatever. But of this centurion it is written, that he was a devout man, one

that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

Doubtless, such a captain as that was a marked man in the Italian band, and probably the subject of much remark, if not of ridicule and jesting, on account of his strange and unusual religious views. That which distinguished him would have been far less remarkable among Jews than among Gentiles. But though he was a pious man, with the fear of God (which is the beginning of wisdom) reigning in his soul, and characterised by liberality to the people, and continued prayer to God, yet was he not in the enjoyment of the forgiveness of sins, or the gift of the Holy Ghost.

No doubt God in His sovereign grace had wrought in Cornelius by His Spirit, and he was born anew. He was a vessel marked out for the salvation of God, and the work was already begun in his conscience and heart. But he was not yet rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins, or free from the bondage of Satan and sin. He, a Gentile, was still where many Jews were before Christ completed the work of redemption, and the salvation of God in all its blessed and wondrous fulness was revealed. But God was about to show that His grace was not limited to Jews, by bringing Cornelius into the rich blessing of His gospel."

Suddenly an angel of God appeared to him, and told him that his prayer to God and his alms to his neighbour had come up for a memorial before Him, and he was to send to Joppa for one Simon, sur-

named Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do.

It is wonderful to trace the ways of God in Scripture in the blessing of souls. At the very moment when Cornelius' messengers drew nigh to the city where Peter was, the Lord's servant fell into a remarkable trance upon the housetop, whither he had gone up to pray. He saw in the vision a certain vessel like a great sheet knit at the four corners, let down to the earth. And in it were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. Peter, with his Jewish prejudice, replied, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake with him the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice. And the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Now while Peter doubted in himself what the vision which he had seen should mean, behold the messengers of Cornelius arrived, and they narrated to him how Cornelius had been warned from God by a holy angel. And Peter went with them to Cæsarea.

Cornelius awaited him with his assembled kinsmen and near friends, and as Peter entered, he fell down at his feet and did him homage. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. Now God had shown Peter in the vision of the great sheet, that he must let his Jewish pre-

judice fall, and call no man common or unclean. Hence he had come seemingly to visit Cornelius and other Gentiles.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and proclaimed to him and his friends the rejected and crucified Jesus, Lord of all, whom God raised from the dead, and ordained to judge both quick and dead, closing with the blessed testimony, "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" And while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

Blessed news! Joyful news! Christ, the future Judge, a present Saviour. Free and full forgiveness for the Gentiles, for Cornelius and his house, and to-day for *you and me*, dear reader, in His blessed name. All the prophets give witness to it. It was no longer a question of law keeping, no longer *do* and live long on the earth. The day of the privileged Jew and the law was past. But *through the name of that Man* who kept the law, magnified it, and made it honourable, *Jesus, the blessed Son of God*, who gave Himself for His glory on the cross, and *for sinners*, was preached *forgiveness without doing*. *Whosoever*, that is, Jew or Gentile, then or now, yea all men are included. There is no exception. *Whosoever* embraces the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the moral and the immoral, the religious and the irreligious, *all*.

Now, when the centurion and his kinsmen heard that precious gospel word, they knew it meant them.

And it matters not what the past life of any reader of these lines may have been, good, bad, or indifferent, according to man's estimate, *whosoever* means *you*. Maybe, your conscience is troubled, past sins and failures come crowding on your memory. Satan thunders accusation after accusation against you, the curses of the broken law make you tremble, your heart is ready to sink, despair fills your soul. Yet, above all, sounds out far and wide and loud, the blessed news for the guilty and the lost, that *whosoever believeth* in the name of that blessed Man, Jesus, who died, and sits now as Saviour at God's right hand, *his sins are remitted*. Remitted now, *freely, fully, and for ever*. *Dost thou believe on Him?*

Every effort on your part to obtain forgiveness through your works is *utterly vain*. 'Tis true, if awakened in your soul by the Spirit through the grace of God, and your heart has gone out in prayer to Him, and kindness to men, He is not unmindful of it. But if you wish to be happy now and to spend eternity in glory, *you must have the remission of your sins, and the gift of the Spirit*. God bestows these gifts on every one who believeth. Why should not *you* have and enjoy them? *Whosoever believeth* in His name shall receive remission of sins. And the Holy Ghost fell on them that *heard the word*. Remission of sins settles the whole past. The whole debt is paid. All your crimson sins are blotted out for ever. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John

i. 7). And the Holy Ghost comes and takes up His abode in the one who is forgiven and cleansed, and he is sealed for the day of redemption.

Perhaps you exclaim, But how about my future sins? What have you to do with the sins of a future here that you may never live to see? If the whole past is settled, and you have the Spirit, your future is in glory with Christ. He may come, according to promise, at any moment. God forgives us fully and for ever, for Christ bore all our sins or none, and gives us the Spirit, in whom is power to live to and for Him, and sin no more. *But* "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." That is another matter. Christ is an Advocate above, and the Spirit below, that the believer *may not sin*. But *if* he does, there is this blessed provision for us, that, "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).

Dear reader, what say you to these things? If the forgiveness of your sins is still an undecided matter, pause now, and earnestly consider. Read the above again, and attentively. A sinner you are, whatever your moral character, and you need forgiveness. *You must have it ere you leave this world*, or you cannot dwell in glory with Christ, and your life hangs on a thread. *Now* is God's time. Hear once again, and pay earnest heed, we pray you, through the name of Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, *whosoever believeth*,—mark it well, *who-*

soever believeth shall—shall receive—what? The remission of sins. Oh, what joy for the soul that takes God at His word!

Cornelius and his friends received the Spirit, and magnified God, &c. Why should not you? To *every one* who believes and receives remission of sins, God gives the Spirit. May He give *you* to be decided this moment, and henceforth enable you by the Spirit to magnify Him who is the Author and Source of so great salvation in Christ.

E. H. C.

"PRAISE HIM FOR ME."

"**K**NEEL *down and praise Him for me.*"

The words were spoken by a man in great bodily suffering, who lay on a bed in a large ward in the Benevolent Asylum, Melbourne, Australia. He was near his end. His former life had been spent in sin. He had been a professed infidel, and his conversion was a marvellous manifestation of the sovereign grace of God to him.

He had now for some years been rejoicing in the Lord Jesus who had sought and found him, but on this particular day he said to the writer, who visited him frequently—"I have long wanted to tell you of the Lord's wondrous dealings with me. I am drawing near the end of my journey, and I cannot, must not, die and leave the tale untold. It is due to the

praise of the glory of the grace of Him who has saved me. I have left it, I fear, almost too long, for I speak with difficulty now, but you will bear with me and listen, and tell others again what God has done for me.

“I was left an orphan when four years old, and consigned to the care of an aged aunt, *a true Christian*, whose godliness I could never *disprove to my own satisfaction* in all my after-life of wickedness. I remember her Bible. It had pictures in it, and she used to take me on her knee and show them to me with the tears trickling down her cheeks. She would tell me of the Lord Jesus dying to save sinners.

“I grew up, left my aunt, got into bad company, became utterly careless, read bad books, and came at last to say in my heart, ‘There is no God’—*fool that I was*; and so I lived until I was more than forty years old. Then God took me in hand and afflicted me. He stripped me of everything, took away my dear ones, took away my property, took away my health, and I came to this place to be indebted to charity for my support. Still I continued morose and hardened, until one day I was arrested in the following way.

“A Christian lady came to see a man in the next bed to mine, and I could not help overhearing her conversation with him. Before she left, she kneeled down and prayed. Oh! that prayer. I felt it was a reality, *I was sure it was*. Then there was a God, and she had been speaking to Him! I had heard

nothing like it since the days when I lived with my old aunt. She used to pray like that. Yes, I could not deny it, my aunt was a true Christian, and now here was another. Then the Bible must be true after all, and I ! oh ! what was to become of *me* ?

"The lady came to speak to me presently, and I was glad to hear her talk. She came often to see me after that day. I told her of my miserable condition, and she pitied me and prayed for me. She said she would ask God to teach me of the Lord Jesus by His Holy Spirit, and He did help me wonderfully. Then Mr —— came, and you came, and by degrees divine light broke in upon me and the terrible darkness was past. The Lord Jesus revealed Himself to me, the vilest and the worst, revealed Himself as the Saviour of sinners, both *able and willing to save even me !* Well may I love Him and rejoice in Him. What has He not been to me since that day ? In what bodily anguish has He sustained me ? How has He answered my requests, and at times has filled me with such unspeakable joy in Himself that I have felt I could ask Him nothing, it was so good to leave all to HIM ? And now I shall soon see Him face to face, and I shall stay with Him for ever !"

Here he failed, exhausted by the efforts of speaking so much, and overpowered by emotion. Then he whispered, "*Kneel down and praise Him for me,*" and indeed only praise was possible, for he seemed to have come in spirit already to the heavenly glory where prayer is past. He lingered a few days longer

in the same joyful condition of soul, and then peacefully slept in Jesus. Some months before his death a visitor, who was a stranger to him, observing the look of suffering on his face, said, "My friend, you seem very ill—I trust you have a hope in Christ?" With a bright smile he answered, "*He has brought me beyond a hope: 'I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED'*" (2 Tim. i. 12).

Was not this a brand plucked from the burning? Was not the Son of God manifested to destroy the works of the devil? Are not the fields around us white unto the harvest? Have we not encouragement to be always abounding in the work of the Lord?

"Sound the high praises of Jesus the King !
He came and He conquered, His victory sing !
Sing, for the power of the tyrant is broken,
The triumph's complete over death and the grave !
Vain is their boasting, Jehovah hath spoken,
And Jesus proclaimed as the mighty to save.
Sound the high praises of Jesus the King !
He came and He conquered, His victory sing !
His victory sing ! His victory sing !

"Praise to the Conqueror ! praise to the Lord !
The enemy quailed at the might of His word.
In heaven He ascends, and unfolds the glad story :
The hosts of the blessed exult in His fame !
In love He looks down from the throne of His glory,
And rescues the ruined who trust in His name."

THAT ONE ARROW.

MANY years since the Lord unexpectedly found me and turned me to Himself. Deep and short work He made of it. It happened thus: His servant, Mr R——, who has now entered heaven, had just arrived in A—— on a visit to a friend.

Permission having been obtained for Mr R—— to conduct a Wednesday evening service in —— Church, my father, in response to an invitation to be present, took me, with my mother and sisters, to the service then held.

The interesting address and straight way of talking to people on their personal need of “being born again” were strangely new to the audience; and still more so was the hitherto unheard of “after-meeting,” at which those who remained to inquire about salvation were shown how they could be “saved” on the spot, and go out by the church doors as truly justified as the glorified ones already in heaven.

My father’s pressing engagements called him away at the close of the first address, but I remained, and from the front gallery I most narrowly watched the people below, thinking I could detect, in the spirit of an inquisitive spectator, whether these people underwent any spiritual change or not.

Such statements as “saved on the spot” and to “know it,” to my ultra-Calvinistic and dead views,

seemed most extraordinary and quite incomprehensible, so I intently watched the whole proceedings. Seeing one after another rise and go out without any apparent transformation of their persons, I turned to my sisters and pronounced my verdict, "*There's nothing in it, these people are just the same as before;*" and having satisfied myself on the point, I dismissed the whole subject from my mind. Such is the spiritual ignorance and hateful pride of the natural heart!

Fortunately my mother sought an interview with Mr R——, and after a considerable absence returned to us much absorbed with what had been said. I secured her attention by the remark, "Mother, you might have introduced us," which was quickly followed by our being left in the vestry with this remarkable preacher.

Instead of the usual recognition and friendly interchange of words that follows an ordinary introduction to a stranger, Mr R—— grasped my hand, and earnestly gazing at me with a look that seemed to penetrate my soul, he said, "Are you saved?"

That one arrow from the Almighty shot through my heart, and like a cloak dropping from me, my former life of worldly ease, blameless religiousness, and happy carelessness was gone. I stood in the presence of God, most fully realising my lost and undone condition, with nothing but the slender thread of life between me and hell.

The fountain of my tears was unlocked, and, heeding nothing else that was said, as we drove home,

the awfulness of my position weighed heavily upon me. All through the hours of that night—spent not in bed, but in musing over the marvellous mercy that had not cut me off in an unconverted state—I thought of how I might have quietly gone down to a lost eternity, amid the praises of my friends and acquaintances, at a largely attended and decorous funeral, but all the while, and for ever and ever, have been hopelessly and irrecoverably weeping and wailing in outer darkness.

At the breakfast-table next morning, my parents did not fail to notice the depth of my distress. Particularly disliking anything of an exciting or fanatical spirit in religion, they advised me to go to Mr R——, whose query had brought me into that awakened condition, probe this question to the bottom, and get the matter settled once for all.

By ten o'clock in the morning I was again in Mr R——'s company. Failing to enlighten me with any of the texts quoted, he warned me to beware of being like some who are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

With increased earnestness, if possible, I listened *as for my life*. Then Romans x. 9 was blessed to me: "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." This was unhesitatingly complied with—indeed, in my case neither compromise nor concealment was possible. My whole being I gave up to Him on whose "death and resurrection" the Lord enabled

me to hang my soul; and, after trusting the bare word of the living God, the Holy Ghost entered and filled my heart with joy and peace in believing.

My separation from worldly society came *then* and *there*. An acquaintance, with whom I had enjoyed waltzing several times at a fashionable ball a few nights before my conversion, happened to meet me as I went with Mr R—— to the forenoon meeting at which I found my Saviour. His look of disdain and angry disapproval of such a course revealed to me the separation which the supreme choice of Christ ever necessitates. Three balls which I had accepted previously were declined, with full explanation of my change of heart, and I was never led that way again.

Friends and everything became new. "The river of pleasure" in Jesus, and the life of genuine happiness which Christ opens up for His own, made the small relinquishings dwindle into their true insignificance. It is quite impossible to tell the joys present and in prospect. It will require eternity to unfold how much loving-kindness God can compress into the short lives of His children here below. Truly He blesses them with "all spiritual blessings" as they pursue the heavenly life of abiding in Jesus and seeking to bring others to Him.

My girlhood has now emerged into elderly widowhood, with tokens of an early autumn; but *spiritually*, thank God, eternal youth is our inheritance; and the "locks black as a raven" may abide with us, although oftentimes wet with the dews of the night.

We know that the tears of sorrow, all lusted with His love, in His bright coming day will be transmuted into an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So we continue, to look, not at the things which are seen, but at those things which are unseen and eternal.

With an earnest purpose this personal testimony is written, and the fact of your having read it shows that God has a purpose in sending it to you. Surely He desires you also to know your true condition before Him, and if not already one of His ransomed ones, He would have you know that, though a straying lost sheep, helpless to save yourself, the Lord Jesus Christ, on whom "was laid the iniquity of us all," is ready and willing to save *you on the spot*.

Some reader may inwardly reflect: The sunny plains of existence, stretching before me, invite my advance in the course I have already entered. Life has great charms for me, and the ladder of my ambition now seems by no means unattainable. Why should I descend to the level of the sinful and vile, and be found seeking the Saviour of the lost?

If life apart from Christ could continue bright, if reaching the top of your ambition could satisfy, you might *hesitate*; but, separated from Christ, life must be a failure, and ultimately result in the blackness of darkness for ever and ever.

Some other reader more advanced in years and experience may have a very different view of life. Having drunk deeply of the world's so-called "pleasures," you feel weary and tired of them all,

and are keenly conscious of "the aching void" you have within.

Friend, you are the very one to come to Jesus. He, and He alone, can satisfy that big heart of yours, too large to be filled with anything this world can afford.

Jesus can make you "sing for very joy of heart," and satisfy you to overflowing. "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. "God is love," and He "commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and from *the moment* you trust Him, you have eternal life, and shall never perish. One of His blood-bought precious people, He will keep, lead, and feed you, if needs be even to hoar hairs, and then He will carry you safely home to His own Glory-Land, where He has gone on before to prepare a place for us.

Other readers may have always trod the shady side of life, and some such are nearly broken-hearted to-day, weighed down with care, want, sorrow, and unforgiven sin.

Listen! To you the Great Deliverer comes, and in His glad news for "every creature" is willing to befriend you. If you are willing to "receive Him," He is willing to become your Redeemer "from all iniquity," your Preserver "from all evil," your gracious Keeper and Deliverer "every moment." When you thus know the Lord you will praise Him in heart and in life, and prove Jesus to be the "Bliss of the purified," the "Bliss of the free." H. L. G.

GOSPEL MESSAGES BY ANGELIC MESSENGERS.

GOD has often sent messages to men by angelic messengers. There are four, important to all, that we would bring before our readers.

The first two tell us of the incarnation and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the last two of the results for those who do, or do not believe on Him.

In Luke ii. 8 the angel of the Lord came upon a company of shepherds who were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. The glory of the Lord shone round about them. And the angels said unto them—"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all people*. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

This blessed angelic announcement tells us of the advent in the world of *a Saviour for all*. God employs angelic gospel messengers as well as human. And this was one of the most wonderful messages that ever reached the ears of men. What He has promised, He is able also to perform. The Old Testament teems with His promises *concerning One to come*. And here in Luke ii. the moment of fulfilment has arrived, and the angel of the Lord Himself announces the blessed joyful news. *The Saviour has come*. Christ the Lord was among men. The holy Babe in Bethlehem's manger was

the Son of God. Emmanuel was there; God was with us. And as the angel told the shepherds of the wondrous sign, a *multitude* of the heavenly host was with him suddenly, and the whole of that vast company of blessed spirits from another world burst forth with one accord in praise, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and *on earth peace, good will toward men*" (ii. 12-14).

We know that this is not the first time, dear reader, you have heard this wonderful news. But have you considered Him whose birth was announced? What think ye of this good tidings for all people? *What think ye of Christ?* Have you received the Saviour? Have you believed from the heart on His glorious Name?

Now the Saviour, Christ the Lord, must needs die to save. Sin had shut us all out from God, and nothing but His death could put it away, and make us at home in His holy presence. Hence, sent by God in love, when His hour was come, He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to Him, was accepted, bore the whole judgment of sin upon the cross, and died. God raised Him from the dead, and the angel of the Lord came and announced the blessed fact.

There was a great earthquake; and rolling the stone from the sepulchre door, the angel sat upon it, and the Roman guard shook and became as dead men for fear of him, for his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. Mary Magdalene and another Mary were by, and the

angel said unto them—"Fear not *ye*: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. *He is not here: for he is risen*, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead" (Matt. xxviii. 5-7).

Hence the first testimony borne to the fact of Christ's resurrection was angelic. And the angel removed the stone that our Lord's disciples *might see* that the sepulchre was empty and Christ risen. And why was He raised? Not only for the glory of God, but that poor sinners might be pardoned, justified, and saved. All who believe in God, who raised Him, may know that He was *delivered for our offences and raised for our justification*. And the blessed result thereof is *peace with God* through Him. *All our works* are mixed with sin, and can never be accepted of God, but Christ finished the great work of redemption. God raised and exalted Him to highest glory at His own right hand, *a Saviour for all people*.

Have *you* hitherto been satisfied or dissatisfied with a formal profession? Now is the moment to look realities in the face. Death, judgment, and the lake of fire lie before the mere nominal professor, as much as before the godless sinner. But bow in self-judgment before God, and believe His testimony concerning His Son, and He will pardon all your sins for His name's sake, account you a just person in His sight, and save you with His own everlasting salvation.

In Revelation xxi. 9, an angel came to the prophet John and talked with him, saying, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife;" and in xvii. 1, an angel came and talked with him, saying, "Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters."

In these two angelic messages we get, on the one hand, the coming glory of the true Church of God, and on the other the judgment of the false church. The fruit of the death and resurrection of the Saviour for all people, is a mighty work of the Spirit of God world-wide, in a multitude of precious souls, Gentile and Jew. All who through this work of grace believe the testimony of God concerning His Son and His finished work, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, form part of the Church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, whose future glory was shown by the angel to John. On the other hand, a vast multitude of souls in many nations has taken up the name of Christ as a mere profession, whereby, under Satanic influence, and through human self-will, a huge system has been formed, with the *sobriquet* "the church." But this system is characterised more or less by every form of ecclesiastical and moral evil, the mass within its sphere having no true saving knowledge of God and His Son.

Now, at any moment, those who compose the true Church may be claimed by Christ, who will descend from God's throne, to be displayed with Himself as His bride in heavenly glory, and the rest left behind for the awful judgment portrayed in Matthew xxv.

46, and Revelation xvii. 16. To which class, dear reader, do *you* belong? Doubtless you would confess that Christ came as a Saviour for all people, and that He died and rose, but have *you* confessed Him as *your* Saviour and Lord, have *you* believed *in the heart* that He was raised for your justification? Do *you* know what it is to be *saved by Him* from the power of Satan, sin, and the world? You can only escape the wreck and confusion and judgment of the professing church through the gift and power of the Spirit of God. And God gives the Spirit *to every one that believeth*. Are *you* one? Think of the consequences of answering Yes, or No. On the one hand, glory and bliss inconceivable with Christ; on the other, abject misery and eternal judgment without Him.

Have you hitherto been content, or tried to be, with a nominal profession? It is high time to awake out of sleep, high time to look eternal realities in the face. We are daily reminded in numberless ways of the uncertainty of human life, of the busy hand of death, of the nearness of eternity, and of the overwhelming importance of *the present moment*. We would press upon you *immediate decision for Christ*. There is not a second to be lost.

God created you, you are about to meet Him, you cannot escape Him. Are you ready? Dare you run the risk any longer of meeting Him in His infinite holiness *without a Saviour*? Lost already, to meet Him as a lost one, is to be eternally lost.

But believe as a poor lost sinner on Him who came to save, and He will save you. He is a present Saviour for *all* people, hence for *you*. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved*," (Acts xvi. 31). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

Then surely as you have believed the first two angelic messages of which we have spoken, you shall have part in the third, and never come into the awful judgment portrayed by the fourth. May God in His infinite grace lead you to be decided now, just as you are, to believe on Christ as your Saviour, your Lord, your all.

E. H. C.

THE RAILWAY PORTER; OR, "IS THIS THE LAST?"

"**I**S this the last, Doctor?"

"Yes, my dear brother, I think the Lord is about to take you home; and Scripture does not exaggerate when it says, 'To depart and be with Christ is far better.'"

"Yes, yes, that's true."

"And you are resting in Him?"

"Oh yes, that I am."

"How long have you known Him?"

"It is over sixteen years since I was converted."

"And have you rest, peace, and joy in Him?"

"Yes, yes, I have all in Him."

"And what have you to say to your wife?" who was weeping by his bedside. "Can you say like Jacob when he was departing, 'Behold, I die, and God shall be with you'?"

"Ah, yes, I can say that." Turning to his wife he said—"God shall be with you, my dear. Train up the children in the fear of the Lord."

Then to me, he added, "Any little goods I have, Doctor, I have left all to her. Good-bye, good-bye."

The speaker was lying in a bed in one of the surgical wards of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. A man in the prime of life, just thirty-six years of age, well nourished, pleasant looking, and without a grey hair in his head, or a wrinkle on his brow, his words came with weird and sorrowful power alike to myself and his tender-hearted wife, who, with deep emotion, heard his dying testimony. For such indeed it was; within an hour he passed into eternity.

Perfectly well on the previous Lord's Day, he was seized with a sudden illness at his work, as a railway porter, on Monday morning, and transferred from his house to the Royal Infirmary on Wednesday, and that day underwent a serious surgical operation. From that he seemed to rally; but on the Friday his strength failed, and the dew of death was on his brow when I stood by his bedside a little after noon that day.

He said little after I left him, save to repeat to his wife—"God shall be with you, and will provide for you and the children. Train them up, wife, in the nurture and fear of the Lord;" and then peacefully departed to be with Christ. His end was peace and joy; his eternity will be the same; and his sixteen years of Christian life had been marked by the same characteristics.

M—— was a native of Orkney. Brought up well, he had as a young man been always outwardly moral, decent, and respectable; but was not converted to Christ till he came to Edinburgh when about twenty years of age. At that time he was thoroughly aroused as to his condition and guilty state before God; and going to hear an evangelist preach the gospel, his convictions of sin were deepened, and his anxiety to find Christ intensified. The preacher extolled the cleansing value of the blood of Christ; its all-sufficiency to meet the claims of God, and purge the sinner's conscience. Its sin-cleansing power was pressed. At last the preacher said, "Lippen yourself to the blood!" and in an instant, acting on the exhortation, M—— lippened (the broad Scotch for simply and implicitly *trusting*) to the blood, and entered into peace.

From that moment he took his stand for Christ, confessed Him boldly, and rejoiced to take his place in the ranks of those who were testifying for Christ everywhere. At many a street corner his cheery voice was heard extolling the Saviour, and proclaiming the power of the blood that had given him

peace, and washed all his sins away. His occupation as a railway porter brought him into contact with all sorts and conditions of men. His fearless testimony for the Lord, and endeavour to deal personally with all whom he could address, of course, in the beginning, brought an immense deal of opposition and ridicule from those he daily worked with. But his godly walk and consistent behaviour—ever ready to do any one a kindly turn, and thus to get an opportunity of commending his Master—eventually made him to be one of the most respected and trusted of the employees in the station where he earned his daily bread.

He had been married some fourteen years, and had displayed the greatest care for his six living children, often gathering them round himself in his spare hours, when home from his daily toil, to instruct them in the Scriptures.

His funeral was a sight rarely beheld. Many hundreds of railway-men who had known him, on the Lord's Day after his death, followed his remains to the cemetery in the Easter Road, where they now await the first resurrection. At the grave I read a portion of 1 Corinthians xv., and spoke briefly on the wonderful facts that Christ had died for our sins and lain in the grave, that God had raised Him from the dead, taken Him into glory, and that He was coming again to take out of the grave *all His own*. I narrated his death-bed testimony, reminded my hearers that they all knew how he had lived, and then raised the question, Would it not be well for

them to be what he was, an out-and-out Christian, a man constrained by the love of Christ to live for Christ, and seek to win others to Him?

Rarely have I seen more strong stalwart men affected and weeping over a grave. God spoke; many were reached; some were converted. Afterwards many were heard to say, "It would be a good thing if we were like him." Of a relative of his own I have heard, the day I pen these lines, that she was converted, as the result of his death. She said, she thought that being but a young woman, she might put the matter of her soul's salvation off for a little, but his sudden removal made her feel the terrible uncertainty of life. She thought she had better come to Jesus. She did so there and then, and is now rejoicing in the Lord. Reader, follow her example.

Returning from that grave, one of the chief officials of the Company whom he served said to me—"Never was there a better servant than the one we have buried to-day. I do not expect to meet his like again. He could always be relied on, and was willing, cheerful, and obliging in every circumstance."

That is a fine testimony to the practical Christianity of a simple working man. And I trust that many a railway servant into whose hands this little tale may fall, will have grace to be as decided for Christ, and seek, as devotedly as did' dear M—, to serve, and please, and follow the Lord.

Reader, you cannot tell how soon you may have to say to some one at your bedside, "Is this the last?" If to-day were the last of your earthly career,

are you ready for eternity? Are you converted? Are your sins forgiven? Is your soul saved? Are you prepared to meet God? If you cannot answer these questions honestly in the affirmative, let me implore you not to procrastinate. Time is short. Eternity is long. The Lord's coming is at hand. Procrastination is fatal folly. Let me urge you to turn to the Lord Jesus to-day. Receive His love. Believe His name. Trust His precious blood. Cast yourself on His unlimited mercy. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

W. T. P. W.

"UNTO HIM:" A SEQUEL TO "FORTY YEARS IN GRACE."

TO have Christ for your Saviour is blessed indeed—to have Him for your object in life is the natural and happy consequence; and it is the work of grace in each case. Very clearly none can live for Him until they are calmly and divinely settled in the knowledge of redemption.

To know the value of His precious blood, and Himself as risen from the dead, so that all the claims of God's holiness are met and satisfied, is the joy and comfort of the soul that believes.

Further, at the cross we see our sins borne, and sin itself dealt with. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the

righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). That is, not only did He bear my sins, but "sin in the flesh" was then condemned. Hence He was crucified for me, and I am crucified with Him! "Our old man is crucified with him" (Rom. vi. 6). And thus we see the end of the fallen and sinful man in the sight of God. Oh! how wondrous is the work of the cross! It was there the Son of man glorified God in obedience; and there it was that He wrought a full and perfect salvation for all who believe, besides laying a divine basis for the new creation.

What a work, and what a Workman! He is Son of man, but He is also Son of God! I repeat, then, that the first step on the ladder of the new life is a divinely-given knowledge of redemption.

I do not suppose that any one receives much of this at the moment of his conversion. Some, alas! learn but little throughout the entire course of their life, and that to their unspeakable loss and shame. Conversion is like the drowning man being placed in the lifeboat. He may apprehend little more than that he is out of danger. He has now to discover the virtues of the lifeboat, as he is being safely carried to the land ahead.

Conversion in like manner places the believer in grace. That is a safe and happy place, even though it is not glory. But what is it to be in grace? It is to be in the favour of God! Wonderful position! A poor guilty sinner, filled once with rebellion against God, to be now set down in His favour!

Yet so we read in Romans v. 1, 2, "Therefore

being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace (favour) wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Notice—

1. We have been justified.
2. We stand in grace.
3. We rejoice in hope of glory.

Our justification is past ; our place in glory is future ; but our present standing and position are in God's favour—and all comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have the consummation of this in verse 11, “We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.” All this flows to us, when we simply believe in the death and resurrection of our blessed Lord.

Thus we know redemption. And this delivers from the law. The principle of the law is that I must make myself fit for God ! How absolutely impossible when I know myself to be as unholy in nature as God is holy ! I am a sinner and full of sin. I have no power to do the good that I should. The law bids me “do this and live” ! But, in truth, I lack both the life and the power to do this ! My case is utterly hopeless on the ground of law.

But, thank God, the redemption that is in Christ Jesus meets the whole case and sets me free ! It gives me liberty ! “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Cor. iii. 17)—*there* and nowhere else.

There is no liberty in sin. License is not liberty. Sin enthral, and enslaves, and demoralises, and ends in death and judgment. There is no liberty in the law. It placed all under it in bondage. There is no liberty in human religion of any kind. Its ten thousand restrictions have nothing more in view than the amelioration of the flesh; but, however ameliorated, it is flesh still. There is liberty nowhere but in Christ!

What kind of liberty? One of looseness? Nay, we read in Titus ii. that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation (note these words) to all men hath appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

These are the holy lessons of that grace which first brings salvation in perfect freeness to all men, and finally presents the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord and the appearing of His glory—lessons of self-denial and separation from the world, of sobriety, righteousness, and piety, which mark a higher standard of devotedness to God than the law demanded. But then it also supplies the needed power, in the Holy Spirit, in order to the enjoyment of Christian life and liberty, as well as for the practice of these holy precepts. Now, if redemption

be so blessed, what of the Redeemer? “He gave himself for us.” There is love!

It was a love that not only abandoned all He had, but led to the giving of Himself. The cross is the only full measure of the love of Christ. “He gave himself.” And hence the infinite value of His work, and the attractive and sanctifying power of His death.

Oh! the omnipotence of loving-kindness! Therefore we read—“That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again” (2 Cor. v. 15). Let this be the object of all who thus live; let the two words “UNTO HIM” be deeply graven on the hearts of all who owe everything, for time and eternity, to Him, who, for their sakes, “endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” He is worthy!

I would thankfully own that what, for these forty years, has shed a radiance of peace and joy over my heart, has been a divinely given knowledge of “the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” together with a daily and sweet enjoyment of His love.

The enjoyment of these two blessed facts—love and redemption—is the secret of true deliverance.

May God grant this to every reader of these pages, so that he may know the joy, amid needed trial, of living for, and serving our Lord Jesus Christ, until He come.

J. W. S.

“NOT DARK AT ALL.”

AWAY in the back blocks in one of the most remote parts of the bush a man was thrown from his horse. He fell on the stump of a tree and broke his back.

We carried him on a stretcher four miles through a rough track. It took eight men four hours to reach the road, where a coach was waiting to convey him twenty-five miles to the nearest hospital. The dear fellow lingered in much pain for a few days, and then passed away; but just before he breathed his last he shouted, “I’m on the threshold, I’m entering in, and it is not dark at all.”

Reader, when *you* are on the threshold—when *you* are entering into eternity—how will it be with you? Will it be “a leap in the dark”? or, “not dark at all”? If unwashed and unforgiven, it will be “blackness of darkness for ever”; but if resting on the finished work of Christ, it will be the light of His presence and glory for ever.

W. B.

NO STORM-CLOUD OVERHEAD.

NOTHING strikes such terror into the mind of a guilty man as the thought of meeting a judge. It is bad enough to have the guilt of some criminal offence resting on one’s conscience, but the thought of that guilt being brought

out in a court of justice and openly exposed before one's fellows is far, far worse.

To be taken from the court in disgrace, with good name, friends, and situation, lost, and to be confined in a prison, is enough to make an honest man shiver with terror.

The law shows no mercy. Mercy is not the province of the law. The law can only condemn the evil-doer and punish the guilty. The tears and pitiable condition of many a criminal has before now moved a judge to weep; but though such might be the case, he must, as the representative of justice, perform his solemn duty. He must pronounce sentence on the sinner.

Pardon might be afterwards granted by the king, or the governor of a state, if the case was extremely pitiable; but that is not the business of the judge.

Now if it be solemn and dreadful to be exposed before one's fellows, what must it be to stand before God, the supreme Judge and righteous Ruler of the Universe, and to have all one's lifetime of unpardoned sins openly exposed in His holy presence? "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. He can by no means clear the guilty."

If it would be so much worse to be taken from before an earthly judge and court with loss of character, and friends, and situation, and to spend years in prison for perhaps only one criminal offence against the law of the land, what will it be for those who stand before the righteous bar of God to be led by the executors of judgment to hell's awful prison?

“where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Reader, yet unsaved, awake to the awful fact that you are a sinner, and that God is holy and hates sin. Though He loves and pities you, He hates your sins, and must in strict righteousness deal with you if you continue unrepentant and die in them. Do not let the devil befool you on this most momentous point. It is perilous in the extreme to be blind as to it.

The Lord is long-suffering. He proves that every day with you. “Judgment is God’s strange work.” If so, He will never find pleasure in it. He delights in mercy. His nature is love. Has He not proved that He delights not in judgment, by bearing with this world in all its heinous forms of wickedness, cruelty, and oppression, and worst of all the murder and rejection of His own dear Son?

Yet He has appointed the day of judgment. He will judge righteously—all will be fairly and squarely examined and tried. No soul in hell will be able to say that he did not get a fair trial. Though God’s nature is love, and the gift of His beloved Son to save a rebel-world proves it, yet He must be true to His righteous character. Man having gone on persistently in open defiance of His will, and lived in sin’s pleasures without Him, God must vindicate Himself as a righteous Being.

It is a great comfort to see that there will be those who shall never come into judgment. Even now there are those who are completely and eternally exempted from it. Having been justified by God

through faith in Christ, they are now cleared from all charge of guilt—that is, *sin is not and cannot be imputed to them*. Happy people!

Is not this most wonderful? In John v. 24 Jesus plainly says, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment), but is passed from death unto life.” Paul says by the Spirit, “Much more then *being now justified by his blood* (His death), we shall be saved from wrath through him.” The same blessed Person whose blood was shed to clear us from judgment, will make sure that none ever falls upon those who have distrusted themselves and their own doings and trusted His atoning blood. Thus will God honour the precious blood of Christ. Woe be to all who now despise it!

The past being all cleared away and the future secured, we who believe may well be happy in the present enjoyment of the wondrous love of God that gave His Son to accomplish this.

Many believers not seeing their perfect justification by God through the work of Christ from every charge, have not at all times this simple and blessed assurance. Perhaps they have been brought up to believe that such assurance is a great attainment.

They are like a gentleman of whom the story is told, when crossing the Atlantic, thought he observed a storm-cloud, which rather terrified him. A sailor passing observed him in this apparently fearful condition, and inquired the reason. The gentleman

replied—"Do you see that cloud overhead? If that cloud bursts upon this vessel we shall all find ourselves in a watery grave."

The sailor, who knew more about storm-clouds than the passenger, quietly remarked—"Sir, *that cloud is not overhead as you suppose. That cloud has spent itself regions behind this vessel. We are now sailing under a cloudless sky.*"

What a glad surprise to the timid, frightened passenger! The word of the sailor at once dissolved his doubts and brought peace to his troubled mind. All his fears were now gone, and he sailed to his destination in peace.

Peace to him was the result of learning what he had not previously known. The truth dispelled his ignorance. This is a simple illustration which has helped to clear many a doubting soul.

What is it that drives all terror from our hearts and minds when the thunder-cloud of God's judgment seems hanging over our heads? Is it not the truth of God's Word brought home in power to us when believed in all simplicity? When death stares us in the face, and our conscience is under the pressure of sin, and we feel utterly helpless to relieve ourselves, what a relief and joy it is to see for the first time that the thunder-cloud of divine judgment broke over the devoted head of Jesus, and that in His holy spotless soul all the terrors of God's wrath were for ever consumed.

There is no storm-cloud in the sky for the weakest, most timid believing one now to fear. *It is regions*

behind us. We now stand beyond it in the risen Christ, who in His own blessed Person on the cross exhausted it. All who believe are now justified, and are as clear of judgment as the risen glorified Christ of God who sits in the highest place in all the universe.

When He came into the midst of His own His first words were, "Peace be unto you." He made the peace by bearing the judgment. In heaven He is our peace. *Instead of looking above to see clouds, we see Him who went up right through the clouds to clear the way for all who believe on Him.*

Once the eye of the soul sees Him in heaven who on the cross exhausted all the judgment, there is peace. Faith sees Him. Faith does not look at self to find happy feelings so as to trust them. Faith looks at an object outside self. That object is Christ in heaven glorified, and, be it said, glorified because He did His blessed work on the cross to the full satisfaction and glory of God.

Anxious, doubting soul, get clear of your doubts now and for ever, by looking at Christ and not at self. Put yourself inside this one verse, "Who was delivered for our (my) offences, and was raised again for our (my) justification." You cannot help having peace if you do. Peace will flow into your soul almost unconsciously to yourself. Then you will be able to say in truth, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

How could there be? He passed through the judgment and exhausted it by bearing it. He is

risen and gone up to heaven to live for ever in the cloudless sunshine of divine love. Fellow-believer, that is our portion. Not only are we justified, but *accepted in the Beloved*. If we live daily in the conscious sense of our own acceptance before God in Christ, our souls not only should, but *they will* be filled with joy and peace all the day long. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

No one ever enjoys what he does not believe is his. If we believe all this is ours, we cannot help enjoying it. Let us not be half-hearted, but whole-hearted believers, making manifest to all around that we have got something that the world cannot give nor yet take away.

"Not your own ! to Him ye owe
All your life and all your love ;
Live, that ye His praise may show,
Who receives all praise above.
Every day and every hour,
Every gift and every power,
Consecrate to Him alone
Who hath claimed you for His own.

"Teach us, Master, how to give
All we have and are to Thee ;
Grant us, Saviour, while we live,
Wholly only Thine to be.
Henceforth be our calling high,
Thee to serve and glorify :
Ours no longer, but Thine own,—
Thine for ever, Thine alone !"

"I TOLD JESUS THAT I WOULD ACCEPT HIM."

ON the first Sunday in August 1901 a young man by the name of John O—— was stricken down with hæmorrhage of the lungs. God was after him, was speaking to him, and in this way was going to show that He had purposes of love toward him.

The writer was telephoned for to come and see him, and gladly he responded to the call, knowing that he was unsaved, and therefore unready to meet God. The thought of one being smitten down as he was, and the possibility of his dying unsaved, was enough to move the heart and to turn one to God, who only could give a word that would be light and peace and salvation to his soul.

I had some slight acquaintance with him, and had spoken to him about the necessity of being ready to meet God, for meet Him he must; but I fear the word was unheeded, save that it left this impression on him, that some one cared for his soul; and when stricken down, by what proved to be his last sickness, he remembered the writer, and got his friends to telephone for him.

It had been a very bad hæmorrhage. He was very much exhausted, and the amount of blood in the vessel at his bedside told how severe it had been.

I was cautioned not to spend too long with him, as the doctor had ordered quiet, but the sick one said,

“Let me see Mr A——, he can stay,” which at once revealed to me that he was anxious about his future should he be taken away.

After a few general remarks I opened upon the subject that I knew he had sent for me for.

He was all at sea, as we say, as to these things, and one soon found that no real conscience work had been wrought in him. He had loved the world with all his heart, but found when stricken down by sickness, which ended in his death, that it had been like chasing a phantom, and had yielded no satisfaction. When brought to face death, and meeting God, he found that he had nothing to rest on. His worldly friends now proved to be his greatest hindrances; they could only speak of natural things, eternal things were all a mystery to them. They were utter strangers to them, nor could they give one ray of light to this young man.

At first I spoke of the love of God, of the Saviour's grace, and of the value of His precious blood, but, as in the case of the Samaritan woman, the sick man understood not.

It became evident to the writer that what was needed was a real work in the conscience, an awakening to a sense of what he was as a guilty sinner before God, and his danger of eternal judgment, and the time seemed short as it became more evident to all that soon he must die; and how could one bear the thought of his being lost for ever!

With much prayer the writer continued his visits, sometimes encouraged and sometimes discouraged,

but still looking to God to save him, for who could save but God? He well knew Him to be a Saviour-God, and what could He not do for a poor sinner, just outside of hell, if he did but turn to Him in real repentance? The blood of Jesus had met the claims of God, and the need of sinners, which left Him free in righteousness to save all such.

On one occasion, after a long and serious talk with him, John said, "*Mr A——, I am trying to do the best I can.*"

This was a revelation to me, for though exercise of soul Godward was now manifestly seen, yet with all that had been said he had not seen himself yet *without strength*, as well as *guilty*, and that salvation rested on a foundation outside of himself altogether. He was still like the man that built his house upon the sand, for what is "doing the best I can" as a foundation to stand upon before a holy God?

That false foundation had to be dug away.

"The best we can do," I said, "is to own that we are ungodly and guilty before God, and have no strength of our own to accomplish anything. When we do that, we discover how great God's love has been in the gift of His Son, and that He upon the cross accomplished all that God demanded and our case required, and in dying said, 'It is finished.' We learn also in the fact that God has raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, that the work of atonement has been accepted of Him on our behalf, and then, that in believing Him we are saved. We

read in Job xxxiii. 23, 'If there be with him an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness: then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.' An interpreter is one who shows man the truth about himself, however unpalatable it may be; and when in uprightness of soul he owns the truth about himself, he learns that God has been before him and provided a ransom in the death of His own Son, and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.' Faith accepts it: it sets to its seal that God is true. It has done with self: it looks out from self to Christ. Faith is always an outward look, not an inward; it looks out to another, it trusts Jesus and His blood, and all is settled for eternity."

I felt that God had been with me in the conversation. In fact, the sequel showed that He had owned it in blessing to him. It was the turning point—from self to Christ, from darkness to light, from "doing my best" to resting in the "It is finished" of the Son of God, and from the power of Satan unto God. The foundation of sand was displaced by the Rock of Ages, and eternal salvation was his. I left inwardly conscious that all would be well. On my next visit I found it even so. He had arrived at the blissful knowledge of salvation, and his feet had been guided into the way of peace. He said to me, "*After you left the last time I told Jesus that I would accept Him.*"

From this time on it was only a question of in-

structing him in the way of salvation more perfectly, and it was a great pleasure so to do. Soon growth in the knowledge of divine things became evident. He had tasted that the Lord was gracious, now he wanted to know more about the Son who had saved him, "the living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious" (1 Pet. ii. 3, 4.) He became a student of the Word of God, no doubt feeling that his stay here was to be short.

From the hospital he was taken to his father's house some miles away, and nursed by his devoted mother and sister the rest of his days. Saddened they were on the one hand, but on the other gladdened to know that all was well with him for eternity. The writer visited him there several times, only to be assured that he had built upon the Rock, and that his faith was in Christ alone.

He was much interested in the intermediate state, or the condition of the soul in its disembodied state after death. This was shown to be "with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. i. 23), and "absent from the body, and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8). This was most interesting and delightful to one who was so soon to realise the truth of it.

A friend of the writer's, Mr G——, also visited him twice and had conversations with him, only to be convinced that he was the Lord's.

One thing he said to Mr G—— showed how he viewed things at that time. He said, "*My employers promise to send me to Arizona if I get better, but this beats Arizona all hollow.*" He referred to his de-

parture to be with the Lord. His eye was on the eternal world, and as he relinquished his hold of the things of time he was taking hold of the things of eternity; and as the fairest of earth faded from his sight, "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," came into view. No wonder he said, "*This beats Arizona all hollow.*"

On 14th November, three weeks from the time I last saw him, I saw him again. It was evident that he was failing and not long for earth. His confidence in God was stronger than ever. Satan had not been able to move him. God's power had kept him. Christ was enough. The world, that empty bubble that fascinates so many, was behind him; he wanted it not. His eye was upon the heavenly country so bright and fair, and he longed to reach it.

He said, "*Do you think it wrong to ask the Lord to take me home? I pray night and morning for Him to do so.*"

Without answering his question directly, I said I thought we should pray for patience to wait His time to take us, for often we have lessons to learn, and while learning them we can be assured of the loving sympathy of our great High Priest, who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

During this visit, he said, "*I would not give up my hope for the whole world.*" The world had had great attractions for him before the Lord laid him low in order to save him.

When the question of his recovery was raised, and

his remaining here for awhile yet, he said, "*I am too anxious to taste of the joys of heaven to desire to live.*"

We had spoken a good deal about what death was for the Christian, that it was falling asleep here and waking up in paradise, that the sting of death, which is sin, is gone, and that we "never should see death" in the awful sense the unbeliever would, but that "death was ours," the door of exit from the tabernacle of clay, and of introduction to the blissful presence of the Lord above.

He said, "*It would be a pleasure to feel myself going, I feel that sure in Christ.*"

A few days later was his last. He died on 26th November. The day before he departed he was very bright and happy. He said to his mother, who was in constant attendance on him, "*Say good-bye to every one for me; and tell them every one that I died happy in the Lord.*"

The morning of the day he died he suffered greatly. He prayed earnestly to the Lord to answer his prayer, and take him home that day.

He suffered so intensely that his sister went down town to obtain some medicine to ease his pain, but it was not needed, for on her return she found him gone, and that his pain was over for ever. He fell into a doze, and thus passed away without a struggle at 11 A.M.

He left a request that at his funeral certain spiritual songs that Mr G—— had sung during his visits might be sung. So when the people assembled

at 2 P.M. on 28th November, complying with his request we sang at the beginning—

“Life at best is very brief,
Like the falling of a leaf,
Like the binding of a sheaf,

Be in time.

Fleeting days are telling fast
That the die will soon be cast,
And the fatal line be passed,

Be in time.

Fairest flowers soon decay,
Youth and beauty pass away,
Oh ! you have not long to stay,

Be in time.

While God's Spirit bids you come,
Sinner, do not longer roam,
Lest you seal your hopeless doom,

Be in time.

Sinner, heed the warning voice,
Make the Lord your happy choice,
Then all heaven will rejoice,

Be in time.

Come from darkness into light,
From the way that seemeth right,
Come and start for heaven to-night,

Be in time.”

And at the close we sang—

“Will your lamps be filled and ready
When the Bridegroom comes ?
And their lights be clear and steady
When the Bridegroom comes ?

Chorus.—In that night . . . that solemn night . . .
Will your lamps be burning bright
When the Bridegroom comes?
Oh! be ready! Oh! be ready!
Oh! be ready when the Bridegroom comes.

Don't delay your preparation
Till the Bridegroom comes,
For there'll be a separation
When the Bridegroom comes.

Oh! there'll be a glorious greeting
When the Bridegroom comes,
And a happy joyous meeting
When the Bridegroom comes.

Chorus.—In the night . . . that joyful night . . .
With our lamps all burning bright
When the Bridegroom comes.
Yes, we're ready! Yes, we're ready!
Yes, we're ready when the Bridegroom comes."

Hebrews ii. 14, 15; 1 Corinthians xv. 51-56; 1 Thessalonians iv. 16-18, were read and commented on, and then we took the body of our young brother to the cemetery, where we buried it "in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection."

It was only the body that we committed to the grave, the immortal spirit had gone to be with Christ, which is far better, where he awaits the morning of the first resurrection to receive his new body, all glorious like his blessed Redeemer's, and with the ransomed host be for ever with the Lord.

Dear reader, may the Lord bless to you the read-

ing of this simple and true story of the conversion to God of this young man that made him so to long to go, and which led him to say, "*I am too anxious to taste of the joys of heaven to desire to live.*"

What God did for him, He can and will do for you, if you but turn to Him and trust His blessed Son, "*who once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

Neglect not the blessed opportunity of being saved, I beseech of you. Come in all your need, and He will receive and save you.

E. A.

"AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT."

"**I** COULD not stand those words, sir, as I sat here in my chair day by day. That sentence, 'After this the judgment,' facing me on the almanac you gave me, was more than I could bear. They troubled me so much that I got my wife to cut them off, but I cannot get rid of them. They trouble me continually."

Evidently such was the case, as I saw "the Good News Almanac" nailed to the opposite wall, but minus the bottom portion, on which the words which were troubling him had been printed.

Unconverted reader, such words might well trouble him. They might well trouble you, for it

would be an inexpressibly solemn thing for you to die unprepared.

How will you meet the judgment of a righteous sin-hating God? For though He loves the sinner (and He has proved it in the gift of His Son), yet He hates sin. Though "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," yet He "will by no means clear the guilty" (see Exod. xxxiv. 7). How will you meet One who cannot pass by a solitary sin—One whose divine claims must be met—One whose glory must be upheld and vindicated. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31). "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29).

No wonder then that people shrink from the judgment of God.

It is, however, my joy and privilege to tell you, as I told the troubled one of our narrative, of Him who has borne the judgment of God against sin—of Him who has "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust"—of the "one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

Yes, the Lord Jesus has met all the claims of God. He cried on the cross, "IT IS FINISHED." In heaven He sits exalted a Prince and Saviour.

What then remains for you to do? When the Lord was here upon earth He was asked by some—"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Mark well the reply—"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath

sent" (John vi. 29). Beware of seeking to merit salvation by your own good works, which are as "filthy rags" in God's sight.

"Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet.
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete."

I wonder whether you will pay heed to this warning, or will life's journey end as sadly for you, if not as tragically, as it did for the subject of our narrative.

Exactly a week after the above conversation took place I again visited the man's house, and was greatly shocked and surprised to hear of his strangely sad end. In a fit of intoxication he had walked into the canal, and thus met his death. Perhaps he had sought to drown the voice of God in drink and mirth with boon companions.

Sadly we leave him, but we turn to you, unsaved reader. "God is not mocked." The reaping follows the sowing. Do not trifle, we beseech you, with your precious soul.

"Time is earnest, passing by ;
Death is earnest, drawing nigh."

God is earnest, Christ is earnest. Alas ! the devil is earnest. Be you in earnest. Be warned in time. "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). J. G—D.

"NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE PLACE."

SOME years ago I was returning to Edinburgh one Saturday evening from Musselburgh, where I had been addressing a number of Sunday School children. The long, old-fashioned third-class carriage of five compartments in which I was riding was thoroughly filled with travellers, and in the central compartment was a party of ten, whose general deportment showed plainly that they had been spending the Saturday afternoon in a somewhat festive manner.

They soon commenced to sing some Scotch songs, and I must admit they sang very well. The other occupants of the carriage, mostly Scotch, listened with attention to the well-known melodies which fell upon their ears.

At Portobello the train stopped, and the choral party got out, their places being immediately taken by others.

I happened to be in the last compartment of the five; and as the train moved off, I rose and said, "Fellow-travellers, I have noticed with what interest and pleasure you have been listening to the songs of your native land, and I would like to tell you a little about a song of my native land. I am not a Scotchman. I cannot tell you the tune to which the song goes, I will only give you the words of

the song, assuring you it is a song of my native land."

They all looked hard at me, wondering to what land I belonged, so I continued: "These are the words of the song. 'Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth' (Rev. v. 9, 10).

"That is a very lovely song. It is the song of the redeemed in heavenly glory. That is the land to which I belong. It is the land to which every Christian belongs. The Christian belongs to heaven. His Father is there. His Saviour is there. His home is there. His inheritance is there. And how beautiful are the words of this song, concerning which is said of those who sung it, that they sung a *new* song. It will be ever new; the song of redemption never gets old or out of date. The song of praise to Jesus the Lamb of God, who has been slain for sinners, and has redeemed them to God by His blood, 'out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation' will be eternally new. How many of us in this carriage really belong to that land, belong to Jesus, have been washed in His blood, and will be found by-and-by in everlasting glory with Him? If any of you have never yet been brought to know Him as your own personal Saviour, and been washed in His precious blood, let

me urge you to lose no time in coming to Him. You will find He will receive you, bless and save you. He will cleanse you from your sins in His precious blood, for the Scripture says truly, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John i. 7). You will know the joy of forgiveness now, and will be able by-and-by to sing that song, ever new, the words of which I have quoted to you. The songs of earth all die away, but the ‘new song’ of heaven shall ever abide. Will you all help to swell its blessed strains?”

My little address was quietly listened to, with as much apparent interest as the previous singing; and, as I sat down, a danger signal in the line caused the train to stop quite suddenly. Silence reigned for half a minute; and then a voice from the compartment farthest from me, which was filled with working men returning to their homes, said, “Is he drunk?”

Another replied, “I do not think he is drunk. I think that he is a good man.”

Said a third, “He is not a wise man.”

“Why not wise?” said a fourth. To which the other rejoined, “Because he knows neither the time nor the place. Thae kind o’ things should be kept for Sunday.”

Another rejoined, “I am no sae sure aboot that. I dinna think it will dae us ony harm to hear aboot thae things on a Saturday night.”

At that moment the train moved off, and I heard no further comments; but I could not help reflecting

on how the world shows itself to be the world in a railway carriage as well as everywhere else.

As to being under the influence of strong drink, the allegation might with truth have been laid at the doors of those who had been singing. The world likes singing, but it does not like to hear about Christ. When the gospel rang out in the second of Acts, the world said, "These men are full of new wine." But Peter put them right, as he rejoins, "These are not drunken as ye suppose."

I should like to know the "time" and the "place" where Christ and His blessed gospel will be welcome. Alas, the truth is only too patent; the world as such does not want Christ. It preferred a robber and a murderer to Himself when He was here upon earth. It wants not Him or His witnesses any more to-day than it did when they wildly cried, "Away with this man. . . . Crucify him, crucify him" (Luke xxiii. 18-21).

Reader, are you still part and parcel of the world? Let me say this to you—The pleasures of sin are but for a season, their pangs are eternal. Life is short, eternity long. There is thirst in hell, but no water. Weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, mark that bourne of the godless, not singing. No, there is no singing there. If you want to sing in eternity, you will have to come to Christ now; and I urge you to do it without delay. You cannot belong to the world and Christ too. There must be decision. Procrastination is fatal folly. Come to the Lord now, and get your sins forgiven and your soul saved;

and then come boldly out for Him. Better far be a witness of Christ in the scene of His rejection, and His companion in glory, than be the servant of sin and Satan for time, and the denizen of an endless hell for eternity.

W. T. P. W.

THE SQUIRE'S MOURNINGS.

“**T**HIS will be a good chance to get T—— and B—— to these meetings, where, if we keep praying for them, they may get saved.”

“A very good plan, Jack. I will wire for them to come on at once.”

The above is the substance of a conversation between master and servant in regard to the best possible way by which the two younger brothers of the latter might be brought under the sound of the gospel, in a village where God was working and saving many sinners.

Jack was a tailor with a Christian master in a rural district of the North of England. These special meetings had just started when God gave distinct proofs that a real work of grace was taking place. Jack's master, after a good deal of pleading, got him to go, and, in a few days, after passing through deep exercise of soul, Jack found the Lord Jesus and was saved.

No sooner had he found Christ than—like Andrew (see John i. 40-42), who brought his brother Simon

to Jesus—he began to think of the salvation of his two unsaved brothers, who wrought with their father at the same trade some twenty miles away. He thought if he could only get them to these meetings, they would be almost sure to be saved.

Just at this time orders for “mournings” came in, which were wanted for the funeral of the “Squire.” To get them ready, it would require Jack and his master to work day and night. This, of course, had often been done in the past, and could easily be done again. But Jack, whose chief thought was how he might get his brothers saved, saw in this event a good excuse for bringing them over and getting them to the meetings, and this led him to make the above suggestion to his master, who, he knew, shared deeply in his desire for their blessing.

The proposed telegram, therefore, was sent to the father, which ran as follows:—“*Squire dead ; big order for mournings. Send T—— and B—— at once if you can spare them.*” As trade at home was quiet, he gladly responded by sending on his two sons by an early train.

They had not been long at work, however, till they wished they had never come, for they feared they had been caught in a trap, as Jack and his master kept constantly at them about their souls’ salvation, and pleaded with them to go to the meetings. When the “mournings” were finished, they wanted to go home ; but the master, who then knew the father could spare them, pressed them to stay a week or two longer, as he had plenty of

work; and after a good bit of resistance, they yielded. It required, however, a great deal more earnest pleading to get them to the meetings. They were a "Church of England" family, and as such had a strong prejudice against all evangelical work in connection with "dissent," but at bottom their great fear was that if they went they might get *converted*, a blessing they had no desire for—yea, *dreaded*—at the time.

It was a happy hopeful Friday night for Jack when he took with him, for the first time, his two brothers, and saw them safely seated beside him in that building where God had saved his own soul only a week or two before. The first meeting had a deep effect on them both. Not much sleep for them that night. Saturday night's meeting convicted them still deeper. Sunday night's meeting so broke them down that they stayed to the "second" or "anxious" meeting. B——'s own words to the writer will best describe what his soul passed through that night:—

"I had not been long in the meeting till I shook like an aspen leaf. My knees knocked against each other, and for the life of me I could not stop them. Several Christians in the second meeting came and exhorted me to trust Christ FULLY, as He *only* could save me. And while all this attention was being paid to me, my brother T——, who had at that moment been enabled to trust Christ and was saved, was so overjoyed that he started and sung an old Sunday School hymn right away. This only

added to my misery, as it looked as if everybody was going to be saved but myself. Yet nobody in the world could have been more anxious than I then was. Still I could have wished that the walls had fallen in to let me out of the place."

How like Jacob after his vision this was. Though God had spoken of nothing but *blessing* for poor Jacob, yet he said—"How DREADFUL is this place; this is none other but the house of God; and this is the *gate of heaven*" (Gen. xxviii. 10-17). How man fears nearness to God.

B—— continued—"Some wanted me to go up to the front and be specially prayed for, but I said, 'Can God not save me sitting here as well as going up to the front?' 'Yes,' they said, 'but it is making a public confession you want to be saved, and that you are *not ashamed* of being on the Lord's side.' This made me yield, but when I tried to rise I felt powerless to walk, my legs shook so dreadfully; I had therefore to be helped by others to the front. I was on my knees there, while others were praying for me, for about three-quarters of an hour, before I was able to rest my soul on Christ *alone* for salvation; but thank God! I would not rise till I *knew* I had trusted Him. I have often thought since, how much better it would have been if some of these dear, earnest, soul-loving, and soul-winning Christians that spoke to me and prayed for me, had also taken their Bibles and shown me from *God's own Word* how a poor sinner could be saved; for I think there is nothing like the blessed Word of God for faith to

lay hold of and rest on, as it puts the soul in *living* link with God Himself. To believe His Word is to believe *Himself*, like Abraham in Genesis xv. 6, 'Abraham *believed God*,' &c. (Rom. iv. 3). But thank God! He was graciously pleased to use the means of these dear Christian workers who prayed so earnestly for me, while one and another would come and exhort me to trust Christ FULLY, which ultimately I did. Since then, and that is a good few years ago, I can through grace say I hardly ever have had a doubt of my soul's salvation.

"Well, that was a never-to-be-forgotten night in my history. We went home to our lodgings—*three happy brothers*—and there, before going to bed, we all went down on our knees, and each of us in turn poured out our hearts and thanked God for *having* saved us."

Blessed sight, yes, for God—for all heaven—to look down upon. Has heaven, dear reader, ever beheld the same sight in you? Have you ever gone down on your knees and *thanked* God for HAVING saved you? Now don't misunderstand me; I don't ask if ever you have gone on your knees and *said* a prayer? You may have *said* prayers from the moment you were able to lisp a word at your mother's knee—as many times as you like in the day—till your hairs are grey with old age, and after all find yourself in a sinner's hell for all eternity.

It's only those who *are* saved and KNOW it that can do what these three brothers did that night—"thank God for *having* saved them." But if you

have never done it in the past, you may do so before you lay this paper aside. If, like the three subjects of this story, you, as a LOST SINNER, trust Christ—who has died for “sinners” and perfectly *satisfied* God for our sins—He will save you *at once*. Then, but not till then, will you be able to go down on your knees and say to God—“*Oh ! blessed God and Father, I thank Thee from the bottom of my heart for HAVING saved my soul.*”

God keep you from giving sleep to your eyes till you are able to *truthfully* use the above words.

J. M.

THE STORY OF MY CONVERSION.

“**D**O you believe that God loves you?” was the earnest inquiry of an evangelist, addressed to the writer when he was yet unsaved.

“No,” I emphatically replied. “How could God love such a sinner as I am? If God gave me what my sins deserve, He would put me into hell for ever.”

Such was the judgment I had of my own state. I thought it was only those who were good and deserving that God loved, not knowing that “God commendeth his love toward us in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us.”

I had been brought up under a godly father's influence, whose words often penetrated my heart and

conscience. I was religiously inclined. When I was very young I liked to attend gospel meetings, if perchance a passing word spoken might bring me what my soul was craving for. Oh! how I longed for "peace with God." Yet I was kept in this miserable anxious state for years. I often longed that some kind friend would lay his hand on my shoulder, and take me quietly aside, and direct me to the Saviour. I had, like many others, the greatest timidity about making my feelings known. I thought if only some one could anticipate my difficulty, and bring before me what was needed without asking me any questions, that possibly my case might be met.

Death I dreaded; judgment I was rightly in terror of. Damnation, dark and dreadful, I knew would be my everlasting portion, if I died in my sins without Christ.

Every human means I could think of I tried, if thereby I could get from under the burden I was bearing, and thus work deliverance for myself. I became more zealous in my religious duties, said my prayers more earnestly, and read my Bible more diligently. Many a resolution I formed, and many a new leaf I turned over, but only to break the resolution and blot the newly-turned page. I tried hard to work myself into the peace I heard others say they were enjoying, and which I believed was the true portion of every forgiven person; but alas!

PEACE DID NOT COME BY THESE MEANS.

I found every effort unavailing, and I often

wondered if I were destined not to be saved, and if I must perish in hell for ever. I had often heard good people speak of the wonderful work of God's grace in 1859, when so many were deeply affected, and I longed that such a wave of blessing might again pass over the country, if perchance I might be irresistibly caught by the flowing tide. I heard some speak of how they came to Christ, telling how they wrestled with the Lord, like Jacob of old, and would not let Him go except He blessed them; and after hard struggling and weary waiting they obtained the blessing.

But all this did not comfort me. There was a burden upon me—even the heavy burden of my sins, which prayer-saying and Bible-reading and increased zeal in religious duties could not atone for. At this period in my history, I shall never forget attending a Sacred Service of Song, given by the renowned Philip Phillips. As might be expected, there was a great rush for seats, and I was determined not to be shut out, and so gained admission half an hour before the service commenced. When we got comfortably seated, an aged minister of the gospel passed a gospel tract into the hand of each person in the pew. Having plenty of time before the singing commenced, I read the tract, the title of which was "Corporal A——." It related how he had been visited by a servant of the Lord, who spoke to him plainly about how he was to meet God. Amongst the questions addressed to the corporal, I shall never forget one, viz.,

“WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU MUST DO TO BE
SAVED?”

The reply given was very common. “Well, I think I ought to pray.” The illustration used by the Lord’s servant on the occasion arrested me very much, because it exactly suited my state.

It was this. “Suppose you ask your wife to prepare you a cup of tea. When the table was spread, and the tea poured out, what would your wife think of you, if you continued asking her for the tea?”

“She would think me very foolish,” he replied.

“What would be your simple duty then?”

“To *take* the tea, and thank her for it.”

“And you would be right,” replied this servant of Christ.

“Well, now to apply the illustration, what must God think of you when you continue asking for what He is so freely offering? He has provided a full and free salvation through the death of His beloved Son, who in richest grace died for guilty sinners, even for ‘the unjust’ and the ‘ungodly.’ When He was expiring on Calvary, He cried, ‘*It is finished,*’ leaving nothing to be done, and now God can in righteousness save you for nothing.”

I had never seen it like this before. I had been asking, asking, asking, and had determined to give up praying any more, as I thought I had never felt any good from prayers. But now, for the first time in my life, I learned that God was asking me to take what He had provided, even

SALVATION AS A FREE GIFT,

because the work was all finished by which I could be righteously saved.

The effect produced I shall never forget. I could have leaped and shouted for joy. What so astonished me was my own ignorance. To think how simply God had put it in His Word, and that I should have gone the wrong way about obtaining it.

Dear reader, should I have in any way described your state by giving an account of my own conversion, allow me to direct your attention to one verse in Rev. xxii. 17, "*And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"

There are three words in this scripture which I would desire to fix your eyes upon—(1) *Whosoever*; (2) *take*; (3) *freely*. *Whosoever* means yourself. *Take* means to accept or receive what God in His rich grace is offering to you. *Freely* means for nothing—all for nothing on your part.

"How easy the terms," says one. Indeed, a Roman Catholic said to me the other day, in the West of Ireland, that the way was too easy. But let me ask you, What other terms would suit a *complete bankrupt*? "When they had *nothing* to pay, he frankly forgave them both."

Thank God, the price has all been paid already by the blood and dying agony of God's blessed Son.

JUSTICE ASKS NO MORE.

So believing in Jesus we rest in the justice of God.

He is "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Is your faith in His Person and work? Do you rest alone on what He has accomplished? Then be assured from God's blessed Word that you are justified from all things. For it is written, "And by him *all that believe are justified* from all things" (Acts xiii. 39). Rejoice, and give God thanks that He is your Justifier; and if so, "Who is he that condemneth?"

P. W.

PRAISE WITH JOYFUL LIPS.

PSALM lxiii. 5.

6.

WITH joyful lips we praise Thee,
 Thou giver of all good ;
 With loving hearts we bless Thee,
 Our Father and our God.

Thou gav'st Thy Son in mercy
 Our ruined souls to save,
 That we in Him believing
 Eternal life might have.

Accepted in Christ Jesus

We have sweet liberty—
 The liberty of children,
 From condemnation free.

Sealed by the Holy Spirit,
Each happy, blood-bought child
Is meet for heavenly glory,
Redeemed and reconciled.

The Comforter Thou givest
Within our hearts to dwell,
That He of Jesus' glory
To us may ever tell.
Oh ! may we never grieve Him,
This holy, heavenly guest ;
Our bodies are His temple,
To us He brings sweet rest.

We love Thee, God our Father,
Thy Name we magnify,
Now brought in Christ ascended
To Thee so very nigh.
To know Thee thus, and Jesus,
Thy well-belovèd Son,
Is life, yea, life eternal,
'Tis heaven on earth begun. M. S. S.

CHRISTIANITY consists in what it brings to others, not in what it receives. This is a principle of vast importance. Many believers ruin their history by self-occupation and self-seeking, instead of just drawing all their springs from Christ, and dispensing His grace freely and cheerfully to the weary, restless, and unsatisfied throng around. The Christian is called to inherit blessing, and to be a blessing unto others.

W. T. P. W.

A DRUNKARD'S CONVERSION.

DO I believe in miracles? Of course I do, for I am one. I have been looking in the dictionary to see what a miracle is, and it says:

"It is a wonder: something that only God can do;" and if you knew my history you would say that was true of me. Would you like to hear it? I will tell it gladly, and before I am finished, you will say that no human power could have made me what I am.

I was born in Westmoreland, in a little village that used to boast that it sent out the strongest men that could be found in England. My father was one of the finest men I have ever seen, and he gloried in his strength. I was his youngest child, and he delighted to have me by his side. His great desire was that I should be the champion wrestler of my country, and he trained me accordingly. By the time I was twenty-one I could throw any young man in the village. Among the companions of my childhood was Nellie W——, the brightest, bonniest girl in Westmoreland.

Of course we married, and the first year of our married life was unmingled sunshine. Nellie had a beautiful and well-trained voice, and I was rather musical, so the clergyman persuaded us to join the church choir. I suppose there is better singing than ours was, but I never heard it, and it was the talk of the country round.

Bright as our sky was, the shadows began to fall. The fact is, I had been taught to regard beer as a necessity of life, and no one ever warned me of its danger. The result was that I drank it freely. It met me everywhere, and I welcomed it, as a God-sent friend. For a time I drank it without any injurious effects, but gradually it conquered me. Every night found me at the drink-shop. When my wife spoke to me about this I lost my temper, and said words that I should have knocked anybody down for saying to her, and then I hated myself for having done it. Many a time I made up my mind that I would do differently, but an hour at the "Unicorn" swept away all my good resolutions.

At last my master spoke to me about my irregularity, and, being somewhat under the influence of drink, I told him he was welcome to get a better man. He took me at my word,—we parted. I hadn't courage to go home and tell Nellie, but went again to the "Unicorn," where I knew a lot of my mates were. Wild with excitement, I drank and laughed like a madman. At the closing time the landlord told us we must leave. I told him I should stay as long as I pleased, and he took me by the shoulder to put me out. My temper was up, and with one blow I sent him headlong. Getting help from some of his servants, he mastered me, and flung me into the road.

Stupefied with the fall and drink, I lay there till the morning. I awoke to consciousness of the madness of my conduct. I was out of work, and no

chance of getting any. I dared not look my injured wife in the face, and I determined to leave the place.

After walking a little distance I came to a cottage, where they were getting an early breakfast. They gave me a cup of tea, and urged me to go home. It was, however, all in vain. I sent my love to my wife, and told her she would never hear from me again till I had some good news to tell.

For several days I pursued my weary way, kind cottagers giving me food, and I got sleeping wherever I could find a little shelter. At last I met with a carter who wanted a man, and I gladly accepted his offer. My wages were not half of what I had received at home, but a hungry and weary man will grasp at anything. For a week I went on quietly, but when I received my wages I went, with the master, to a public-house, and, before the evening was out, I was conquered again, most of my wages were spent, and I had to pinch all the following week. Week after week was spent in much the same way, and hope of improvement seemed to have left me.

My work often led me to the railway station, and there I formed the acquaintanceship of one of the porters, and one day he told me there was an opening for a man who knew a little of mechanics. This seemed just the place for me, and I applied for it, and obtained it. Here my wages were better, and the rigid enforcement of the rules, together with the influence of the porters, most of whom were abstainers, kept me more sober. After a while I wrote to my

wife, for my heart was always yearning after her, and I told her where I was, and what I was doing. She at once replied, offering to come to me. I told her that this was impossible, for I had no home, and no means to support her. Cruel selfishness on my part, for if I had been sober and careful, I should have had both ; but I was a heartless slave, tied and bound by the chain of drink. Thank God ! He loved me, and in His own way He was coming to my help.

One Sunday afternoon, the public-houses being closed, I sauntered into the park, homeless and hopeless, and saw a crowd gathered around a man speaking. Hardly knowing what I was doing, I entered the crowd, and listened to the speaker. I found he was talking about liberty for the captives, and the opening of prison doors to them that were bound. Just as I came within hearing, he was talking about those who were bound by the chain of drink, and how they were dragged out of church, shop, and home by it, till at last they became captives for ever. Every word he spoke pierced my heart, and the voice of God thundered in my ears : "Thou art the man." It was a true picture of my past ; was it also to be a picture of my future ? I forgot the crowd around me. I saw the old church ; I heard Nellie's sweet voice ; I saw the little home once so full of happiness ; then I looked in terror at the dread future till I felt as if I should faint. To prevent a scene, I hastened to a seat close by, and listened eagerly to the rest of the speaker's words. He went on to speak of the Deliverer, who came into the world to save sinners,

who could save to the uttermost, and who was there that day, Mighty to save.

My heart seemed broken, and I turned my head away to hide the tears. . . The speaker, however, had noticed my agitation, and as soon as he had finished, came and sat down by my side.

His kindness won my confidence ; I told him that I was the man that he had been describing, and eagerly asked him if the Deliverer he had been talking about could deliver *me* ? He said there was no room for a doubt of that, and went on to tell me "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." How He had left heaven, and lived and died for me—yes, for me ; that He had risen from the dead, and had ascended into heaven to plead for us. He told me of the multitudes that He had saved.

I asked him what I must do to get Him to deliver me ? He told me that the first thing I must do was to cry from my heart—"Lord, help me." That God would hear and answer. That I must cease to do evil. That God saved men *from* their sins, but never *in* them. I told him that this was my great difficulty. That my bondage was absolute and long continued. That I had often vowed to give up my besetting sin ; had kept on for a time, but always went back again, and sank deeper, and that I was afraid to try again.

He told me that it was because he knew this, that he gave me that prayer to use. That I had been trying in my own strength, and therefore was sure to fail, but that if I tried in God's strength I should

be sure to succeed. That I alone could do nothing, but that God and I could do anything. He said I must remember the past, that my life's sins stood against me; and that if these were not pardoned, whatever my life might be in the future, I should perish for ever,—but that the Deliverer was a complete Deliverer; that He had made a full atonement for our sins, and had provided all-sufficient help for the future. That this Deliverer was almighty, and that He was “able to save to the uttermost.”

The words stirred my soul to the depths, and with all the energy of my nature I cried—“If He can, He shall”; and as I spoke there arose within me a hope that proved to be the foretaste of salvation.

My friend advised me to go to my lodgings, and quietly seek that light which God's Word can alone impart, and most carefully to avoid intoxicating drink. I took his advice, but God only knows the struggle that went on within me. Fortunately for me, the public-houses were closed, so that the thirst within was not met with the temptation without. On reaching my lodgings I went to my bedroom. Gradually the light dawned. I saw that Jesus had borne my guilt—my sin—my curse—and I realised that His blood could cleanse. I then and there saw it, believed that Jesus had died *for me*, and that thus trusting Him as my Saviour—my Substitute—I *was saved*. My burden was gone, and in one moment I could look up to God, and call Him, “Father”; for He says: “To as many as receive him (Jesus), to them gave he power to become the sons of God.”

It was said of me for the first time, "Behold, he prayeth!" The light seemed to fill my mind, I saw that what Christ had done at Calvary, He had done for me, and that all He was, He was for me. I stayed in my room all the evening, and lived in memory my life over again.

I was filled with shame as I thought of the sins committed, the gifts abused, and the opportunities neglected, but I knelt again and again at the mercy seat, and realised that His blood which had been shed could, and did cleanse, and thus I found rest to my soul.

In the evening I determined to write to my wife, and tell her what had happened. I had sent word when I left the village that I would write to her when I had some good news to tell her, and surely this was good news indeed. In the morning I went to my work, but it was like a new world. My joy, however, was of short duration, for I had not been long at my work before one of my mates came to me, and offered me a drink from his flask. In a moment the craving for drink came upon me with such force that my feet well-nigh slipped. It seemed as if every nerve in my body was burning with thirst. The longing I experienced is indescribable. I hurried from the temptation, feeling that everything I valued in this world and the next was at stake. I tried to pray, but the very power to pray was gone. It was the hour and power of darkness. Suddenly my eye fell on a pump, standing by my place of work, and I resolved to try what water would do. I drank heartily,

and the gnawing thirst abated. I felt that God had sent me deliverance. The battle went on all day, indeed, all the week, but the moment the internal fire broke out I hastened to the pump, and it was quenched. That week stands out from all the other weeks of my life. It was the week of fiercest assault, and the week of most complete victory—the conqueror was conquered; and now with a grateful heart I say, “Christ and the pump did it.”

My wife soon after joined me. We took a little house, and by diligence and economy we have got it nicely furnished. It hasn't a name, but I call it “Content Cottage.” I saw in the paper the other day the question asked, “Is life worth living?” Thank God, mine is! I thank Him. I wouldn't change with the Prince of Wales. When I left the village, Nellie left the choir, and gave over singing, but since we have been re-married her music has all come back, and I think it is sweeter than ever.

The other Saturday I was on duty for nearly twenty hours, and, as it had been a drizzling day, when I left work I was wet, cold, and tired; but presently I came in sight of our little home. The light was shining so brightly that it seemed to come down the street, and enter and brighten my heart. When I reached the house the table was spread, and the kettle was boiling on the hob, while Nellie was just giving the last touch to everything, and singing—

“Salvation! oh, the joyful sound!
What pleasure to our ears.”

It was so sweet that it quite carried me away.

"I HOPE" OR "I KNOW": WHICH IS BEST?

JAMES A—— was an old gardener in a country town—a respectable quiet man, always busy, always cheery and brisk, and a regular church-goer.

He sometimes worked for me, and if conversation turned on religious matters, he was fond of closing it by saying, "Ah yes, I've got a good hope."

One day on hearing James was ill I went to see him, and found him laid aside, beyond any hope of permanent improvement, or of again rising from bed. His naturally lively disposition was still prominent, and his hopes of recovery wonderful. To my great regret I found James averse to any converse on spiritual things, though ready to talk over his poor body and any worldly matters.

Ere leaving, I asked him point blank if he was resting his soul on our Saviour's finished work, and could calmly face the future trusting in Him.

Evading my question, the poor fellow said, "Oh, sir, I'm quite happy, I've a good hope, and if my wife would only come in and give me my tea, I need nothing else."

Seeing there was no use saying more, I left him some little comforts I had brought, and bade him good-bye with the words—"Well, James, I never expect to see you again down here; take my advice, ask the Lord to show you your need and His readi-

ness to save, and don't be content with a 'hope.' I had a 'hope' once, but never was happy till I could say 'I know' whom I have believed."

I never saw him again. In a few weeks he went to the grave. We can only trust that before that he looked in faith to One mighty to save. God only knows.

Wondering at the apathy of a soul nearing death, I called on another old man of a very different type, but a similar trade. Laid aside by age, his attitude was a humble waiting for the coming of his Lord, long known and trusted.

After a little chat I said, "John, it is a good thing to 'hope,' but better to 'know.'"

"Oh yes," he replied; "where would I be, if I did not know the Lord now in my old age? He has saved me, kept me, and led me for thirty years, and now is soon coming for me, and when I see Him I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is."

Reader, which are you? Are you a man with only a "hope," or a man who "knows" it is well with his soul? Do not delay to a dying bed. To-day take the sinner's place, claim the sinner's Saviour, and sing:—

"Oh, mercy surprising! He saves even me!
 'Thy portion for ever,' He says, 'I will be;'
 On His word I am resting—assurance divine—
 I'm 'hoping' no longer—I *know* He is mine.
 I *know* He is mine, yes, I *know* He is mine,
 I'm hoping no longer—I **KNOW** He is mine."

COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANS.

COUNTERFEIT coin is not an altogether unknown thing. Frequently has one seen at the ticket office of a railway station a bad half-crown nailed down on the counter. The object of the ticket clerk, who has been deceived by having the counterfeit coin palmed on him, is clear. He wishes to warn all tenders of bad coin to beware that detection is sure and certain.

It is very unlikely that the reader of this little article will seek to pass on false metal, but doubtless prefers what is genuine, and is wise in his preference. I do not think there is a great amount of counterfeit coin in circulation; but whether the same can be said about professing Christians is another question. Profession of Christ is so general, that it behoves every professor of Christ to honestly ask himself whether he be genuine or counterfeit.

These reflections spring out of a conversation I had with a young lady some years ago. I will tell you how it occurred.

A doctor in the West of England very suddenly had his wife taken from his side after an illness of a few hours. Overwhelmed with grief, he telegraphed for me to come to his side, and, for a while, to look after his practice. This I did, and while going round among his patients one morning, I had to make a final call on a lady who, herself but a visitor to

Clifton, was leaving that day for her own home. The professional part of the visit over, a simple remark soon revealed that she was a bright, simple, joyful believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we had a happy little conversation. Bidding her farewell, I went downstairs to the door, but found that my carriage had moved off. It was a cold, bleak, windy day, and the coachman had wisely given the horses, while waiting for me, a little turn on Durdham Down.

The person who kept the apartments in which the patient was staying, a bright intelligent young woman, taking in the state of affairs, begged me to close the door, and to come into another apartment while waiting for the return of the carriage. This offer I thankfully accepted, and then remarked—

“You are losing your lodger to-day?”

“Yes,” she replied, “and I am very sorry, for she is a very nice lady.”

“And a very nice Christian,” I added.

“Oh yes,” she rejoined, “a very nice Christian,” and her answer was so frank that I took for granted that she herself was a believer also, and therefore said, “And you are a Christian too?”

“Oh yes,” she replied, “of course. We are all Christians here.”

“All Christians here, my dear girl,” I said, “that is very wonderful. You are quite sure that you are a Christian?”

“Of course I am,” she replied.

“Why then do you wear this?” I inquired, point-

ing to a large jet ornamental cross which she was wearing, hung by a ribbon on her neck.

"Oh, I just wear it as an ornament," she replied. "What's the harm?"

"I do not think it is the question of good or harm exactly," I rejoined, "but it never occurred to me that a Christian, one who really knew and loved the Lord Jesus, could wear, as an ornament, the cross, the symbol and sign of His deep and untold agony; the cross on which He died bearing the sins of sinners and the judgment of God, that sinners He might save."

"I never thought of that," she ejaculated. "I just wore it as an ornament."

"Exactly so. And now may I ask you another question? When you receive payment from your lodgers, what is the first thing you do with your money?"

She seemed rather startled at the turn of the conversation from things spiritual to things mundane; but immediately replied—"Oh, I put it past. I put it in a safe place."

"I think you do something before that usually," I replied. "Do not you see that it is all correct first?"

"Oh yes, of course I do that."

"And you see that it is all genuine coin too don't you?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Do you know a good sovereign from a bad one?"

"I think I do."

"How could you tell a good sovereign from a counterfeit?"

"I should ring it. I should know by its sound whether it were good or counterfeit."

"Quite so," I replied, "that is what I should do also. And there are other things besides sovereigns that are known by their ring."

"Indeed, what other things?" she asked.

"Well," I rejoined, "I think the Lord is ringing you this morning, that you may find out whether you are a genuine or a counterfeit Christian. Which is it?" She bowed her head; her eyelids dropped; a deep crimson suffused her face and mantled her brow; her lip was bitten with trembling agitation; a tell-tale tear rolled down her cheek; and after a slight pause, she softly said—"Counterfeit. I see, I am a counterfeit Christian."

I need not detail the conversation that followed. Her conscience was reached; her eyes were opened; and she saw herself to be what she really was, a sinner in her sins, although professing a Christ she did not know. I pressed upon her the awfulness of her state, and presented the gospel simply to her. Whether she became a genuine Christian, through new birth of the Holy Ghost, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Saviour believed and trusted, God only knows. I know not.

This young person is but a sample of tens of thousands one meets with daily. The profession of religion is the order of the day, And such profession is lightly made by far too many. Confirmation,

joining the church, so-called, and partaking of the communion, are lightly entered into; while the necessity of new birth, the reception of the Holy Ghost, the forgiveness of sins, and the possession of eternal life as absolute necessities, and present known realities, have no place in the history of such souls.

My reader, all such must be classed among counterfeit Christians. A Christian in the true sense of the word is indeed a wonderful being. He has a title to glory without a flaw, and a prospect without a cloud. He is born of the Spirit of God, washed in the blood of the Son of God, and indwelt by the Spirit of God. By such indwelling he is made a member of the Body of Christ, and having received the spirit of sonship, knows that he is, and can take his place as a child of God, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ. All this is deep, real, and genuine in his soul. He has peace with God. Christ is his life, his righteousness, his sanctification, his redemption, his all.

Let me ask you, Are you a professing Christian? Probably you will say, "Yes, certainly." Again, let me ask you, Are you genuine or counterfeit? Depend upon it, as a counterfeit coin is sooner or later detected, and certainly exposed, so will you be detected and exposed, if not in your lifetime, certainly when you meet the Lord by-and-by.

If only hitherto a counterfeit Christian, let me fervently and lovingly beseech you not to sleep this night till you have found the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour. Turn to Him. Own your sin. Confess your guilt. Take your true place

as utterly lost and undone in His presence, and you will find He is merciful and gracious, and that His words are true to-day, as true as when He spake them, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

W. T. P. W.

MADMAN OR MURDERER: WHICH?

THE passengers for the west have taken their seats, and the train is passing out of the depot. Moving slowly at first, its speed soon increases, and now it is rushing at the rate of sixty miles an hour.

But see! The red flag is waving from the signal-box, there is danger ahead. Does not the driver of the engine perceive it? It would seem so, for he waves his hat in response, yet he does not shut off the steam, nor slacken speed one jot. On flies the train faster and faster till presently, a crash, a smash, and scores of deathless souls are launched into eternity.

But what of the engine driver? "Oh," you reply, "he must be either a raving madman or a wilful murderer."

Is that what you think? Then let me ask, my unsaved sinner, which of the two are you? For that reckless driver is but a picture of yourself.

Are you not

DRIVING YOUR SOUL

onward to awful fate, in spite of many a danger signal flashed before your eyes?

That sickness that you had a short time ago, what was that? A warning from God to your soul!

That serious expression that held you for a short spell—'twas another flash from the red flag.

This paper being put into your hands—'tis but another echo of the warning note.

Friend, will you hasten on to certain ruin in the teeth of all these, and a thousand other danger signals? Then it seems very much as if you were a raving madman—mad, ravingly mad, to treat your soul in such a fashion.

Do you object to the title? Then it must be that you are a *wilful murderer*, a murderer of that hapless soul of yours. O sin of sins,

THE SIN OF SOUL-SUICIDE!

Will you not come to a halt? Will you not pause, and look up, and say, "Lord Jesus, I was just about to step over the brink of the fathomless abyss, but instead of that I take one step to Thee for refuge, I flee to the shelter of Thy blood."

What would be the result? Every throb of your pulse would then carry you nearer, not to an awful doom, but to eternal joys. Then come to the Saviour *just now*.

H. P. B.

THE REJECTED SUBSTITUTE.

ONCE knew a young militiaman who professed an earnest desire to obtain his discharge. A kind friend undertook his case, and interested himself in his behalf. The adjutant was applied to; but money, however large the sum, would not in itself buy him off; he was unwilling to diminish the strength of his regiment, and required that a substitute—a living man—should be found, who might serve instead of this militiaman. After some days, one was prevailed upon to take his place; the smart-money having been paid, the discharge, signed by the adjutant, was handed to J. S. He took it, and seemed to prize his release, saying to me, “Now I must take care not to lose this paper, or they might make me serve again.”

A few weeks passed away, and a recruiting sergeant was enlisting young men for the militia. The “lurking places of the villages,” the idlers’ corner, and most public-houses gave him a field in which to reap a goodly harvest. Our friend J. S. re-enlisted; he despised the kindness of his benefactor, and rejected the use of his substitute.

When the gospel is preached, some who are tired of the bondage of sin cry out, “What shall I do to be saved?” The message of salvation tells them of a Substitute.

But in the instance of the young militiaman, he had

to procure his own substitute; in the sinner's case, God, who befriended us, found all that was needed in His own Son. The redemption-money was paid down to the full when Jesus went surety for us. Solomon says, "He that goeth surety for another shall smart for it." The Lord Jesus knew what our place was, and the consequence of sin; He knew the awfulness of its punishment, and, knowing all, He came voluntarily to take our place, and suffer in our stead—"He was wounded for our transgressions." Then it was, in pure love for us, the Surety smarted; stroke after stroke fell on Him, dealt heavily by the hand of a just God, when He was smitten, stricken, and afflicted; and all for us—our Substitute.

When J. S. brought the young man who was willing to serve in his stead in the militia, the first point to be decided was that of acceptance—Would he be accepted by the adjutant? He was accepted, and then all was settled, and J. S.'s discharge signed. Just so with the sinner. Has his Substitute been accepted at headquarters? Yes, surely!

What good have you got by His substitution? What is the result of Christ's death for you? Has it brought pardon, peace, and blessing to your soul? Oh! discard not the love, reject not the Substitute, but now, take the discharge from the bleeding hand of Jesus, signed by God Himself. It is your freedom from the bondage of Satan. Won't you thank Him? Won't you praise Him? Won't you render spirit, soul, and body all to Him?

ANON.

DELIVERANCE FROM DOUBTS.

PEACE with God! What a priceless possession! Many who have sinned away their day of grace, and bartered their souls to the devil for a bit of worldly gain or pleasure, would in their dying moments have given worlds to obtain it.

To have a conscience cleared from all charge, and at perfect rest in God's presence, is well worth being in earnest about. Those who are in the enjoyment of such a blessing have no dread of the unseen future, and are in peace as to the past.

No one can enter into the reality of what it is to be at peace with God until his conscience has been awakened to a sense of his guilt. To a soul in distress on this account no subject can possibly be of such importance.

With a view of helping souls into the enjoyment of abiding peace we shall seek to make plain—

1. Whom does God justify?
2. On what ground does God justify?
3. What is it to be justified?
4. What is the result of being justified?
5. What is it to be accepted in Christ?

WHOM DOES GOD JUSTIFY?

It is certainly not the innocent nor yet the self-righteous. If we were innocent or righteous we would not need to be justified. Scripture makes it

clear that "there is *none righteous*, NO, NOT ONE" (Rom. iii. 10). This is a very sweeping statement. It cuts very deep at the root of man's natural pride. Moreover, Isaiah says, "we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Our righteousnesses are the very best we can do in our natural state.

One verse sets forth unmistakably the character of those whom God justifies. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the **UNGODLY**" (Rom. iv. 5). An ungodly man is a *godless* man. He is without God and hence without hope. If he is godless he is unrighteous toward God. That is the state of all by nature—the most self-righteous moralist, the wisest philosopher, or the veriest pagan.

Both the publican and the Pharisee of Luke xviii. were alike before God, who seeth not as man sees, but who judges the heart. But the one saw his true state in God's holy presence, the other did not. One man was so humble that he confessed his true condition; the other man was so filled with pride that he was blinded to it. The publican was so low down that nothing but grace would do for him; the Pharisee was so high up that he did not see his need of grace.

We spoke to an aged gentleman the other day, and asked him on what ground he hoped to go to heaven. His reply was—"I have never done anything of which I am ashamed. God has nothing to accuse me of, and I have nothing to reproach

Him for. Besides, I taught for twenty years in the second Sunday-school that was ever opened in this country." We quoted the above verse to him and told him he was on the wrong track. His indignant reply as he left us was, "Do you mean to tell me that all my twenty years' teaching in the Sunday-school will go for nothing?" That man had never learned the truth of his sinful and lost condition.

ON WHAT GROUND DOES GOD JUSTIFY?

Not on the ground of our own works. "By the deeds (works) of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. iii. 20). The meritorious ground of the believer's justification is the blood of Christ. One passage is most decisive on the point: "Much more then being now justified by his blood" (Rom. v. 9). When Scripture speaks of the blood of Christ it means His atoning death on the cross. The blood that flowed from His side was the evidence that His life was given up—that He died. God had said in the Old Testament, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Abel's lamb and every lamb sacrificed on a Jewish altar pointed forward to the One of whom the Baptist spoke when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

It is most important to understand what is involved in the death of Christ. In the first place, it was the fullest expression of God's love to us. In the death of Christ we see the love of God active

in providing all that His righteous claims against sin and the sinner demanded; not only so, but there He Himself, in all His nature and moral attributes, was perfectly displayed and magnified.

When we speak of the nature and moral attributes of God we mean His love and mercy, His holiness and righteousness. Because of the cross He acts consistently in justifying us. That is, love and mercy are not magnified at the expense of holiness and righteousness. All are perfectly blended and harmonised in the cross. This is what makes the death of Christ of such unspeakable value in God's sight.

WHAT IS IT TO BE JUSTIFIED?

It is to be cleared from all charge of guilt and to be accounted or reckoned righteous by God Himself—the very One against whom we had sinned. If such be the case, there can be no possibility of bringing any charge against a justified person. Every charge that conscience or the great accuser might bring God would refuse to entertain, simply because “it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God.”

Christ's atoning sacrifice has so met God's righteous demands and vindicated His righteous character that He has now become the Justifier of those that believe in Jesus. “ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED *from all things*” (Acts xiii. 39). He is no longer our Judge, but the One who clears us from judgment.

A guilty man naturally fears to be brought before a judge. But if the judge could be turned into his justifier he would not in the least dread to meet him. Why? Because the judge would be for him, and not against him. Thus the judge would be his friend.

So perfectly has God justified the believer that He Himself challenges the whole universe to bring a charge against those who are the subjects of His electing love. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" (Rom. viii. 33, 34).

In the very nature of things it is utterly impossible that a justified person could ever come into judgment. Scripture is most definite and conclusive on the point: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

All believers will be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, but we shall not stand there to be tried as criminals at the bar to see whether we are fit for heaven or not. We shall stand there as saints of God. Before that takes place the Lord will come and change our bodies into the likeness of His glorified body. When we stand before Christ's judgment seat we shall be like the One who sits upon it. "When he shall appear *we shall be like him*; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John iii. 2). Our appearance there will be to receive our reward for service rendered here (see 1 Thess. iv. 13-17; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF BEING JUSTIFIED?

When justified by faith the result must be to clear the conscience and calm the troubled mind. *Peace with God* is the inevitable issue. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Why? Because there is nothing now to fear or create a disturbing element. No wonder the conscience-stricken but penitent Psalmist exclaimed in such rapturous tones, "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." When self-judgment had been passed through he knew the meaning of such a happy exclamation.

I said the other day to a woman who had been some years in distress, troubled with doubts and fears—"Suppose you owed £20 and I paid the debt for you, and brought you the receipt for it, and a month after the gentleman to whom you owed the money sent you a letter asking for an interview. Should you dread to go and meet him?" "Not at all," she replied. "Why?" "Because I had got the receipt with his own signature attached to it." "Would he be justified in demanding from you what another had paid for you?" "Certainly not." "Then why should you dread the thought of meeting God when He tells you so plainly in His Word that 'Jesus our Lord . . . was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' 'And by him all that believe are justified from all things'?" Her face brightened up in a moment, and she said that now all her doubts and fears were gone.

Nothing can be simpler than the way that the Scriptures put the whole matter. The death of Christ has met all the righteous claims of God and glorified Him eternally about the great sin-question. If so, then all the believer's liabilities are met and fully settled. His resurrection is the proof of this. "If Christ be not raised . . . ye are yet in your sins." If Christ is risen, what then? Are not we out of our sins? God having raised Him is the demonstrative evidence that His death has cleared us. All that believe God's testimony are now justified and brought into peace as the result.

I take God at His word, as Abraham did, *without feeling, or seeing any evidence whatever*, and now know that I am justified or reckoned righteous. I look up into God's face without dread. I know that He is my Justifier and not my Judge. I have perfect peace in my conscience with regard to all my guilt.

This is not something we may hope to attain to by living a holy life, but a real substantial blessing to be enjoyed now by all who rest in simplicity upon the sure Word of God, and thus set to their seal that God is true. "Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but YE ARE JUSTIFIED in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11).

WHAT IS IT TO BE ACCEPTED IN CHRIST?

To be accepted in Christ is to be in the same favour in which He now appears before God, and is

in virtue of the redemption-work He has wrought. It is entirely an act of God's grace in making us accepted. There is nothing in us to make us accepted. "*He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*" (Eph. i. 6). Endearing term. Place of endearment surely—"IN THE BELOVED." "AS HE IS, SO ARE WE in this world" (1 John iv. 17).

Our acceptance in Christ does not depend on how we walk or how we behave ourselves in this world, *though it is of the very greatest importance that we should behave well and seek to please the Lord in all things.* The enjoyment of our acceptance depends upon our walk, but not the acceptance itself. Nothing can add to or take from the believer's acceptance in Christ. I may lose the joy that flows from the knowledge of it, but that is quite another thing.

We must be careful to distinguish things that differ. Therefore we must make a clear and definite distinction between acceptability in our walk as saints and servants of Christ and our acceptance before God in virtue of what Christ is and what He has done. Paul says, "Wherefore we labour (make it our aim) that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of (well-pleasing to) him" (2 Cor. v. 9, R.V.).

To make the believer's acceptance in Christ depend upon his walk would put it on very slippery ground indeed. The most consistent believer has to say, "In many things we offend all." "In the Beloved" is where divine grace has set us, and from

whence all the unseen powers of darkness cannot dislodge us. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God *which is in Christ Jesus* (see Rom. viii. 38, 39).

My practical walk really results from the knowledge of this great yet simple truth when received in power into my soul. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so walk ye in him.*" If I am in Christ, Christ is in me, and will be seen in my ways if I walk in the power of His grace. All that is in Him God has given to be enjoyed now as a present reality in my soul. This is what the Spirit of God would lead our souls into, and thus we gain power to walk acceptably to the Lord here.

Otherwise legality would characterise us, besides which nothing perhaps is so weakening to the sincere and earnest soul. It never helps, but always hinders, and leads to morbidness and sometimes even to despair. Legality casts us upon self and not on Christ. It is the complete misrepresentation of God's grace. *Grace enjoyed* is the only power for walk, testimony, service, and worship acceptable to God. The enjoyment of grace excludes self and keeps Christ and all that God has given us in Him prominently before the soul. No wonder the apostle said to the Hebrews, who were brought up in a legal system and thus disposed to it—"It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace."

"I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU."

AND he meant what he said, for he took his hat and left the hall.

It was during an after-meeting held for anxious inquirers, and the speaker, an old man of seventy-five, did not want to be spoken to personally, although it was the most important subject beneath the sun which he was being spoken to about, viz., the salvation of his never-dying soul.

The evangelist was having a cup of coffee before retiring to rest for the night. He looked weary, and I knew he felt weary, as he had been working hard in God's service for a lengthened period. And as I looked at that calm face, I thought of the words of the prophet, "Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" (Isa. vii. 13.)

"Don't you think we had a good meeting to-night, Mr —?"

"Yes, it was a solemn time, but did you hear what that old man said to me? 'I've had enough of you.'"

"Yes, it was sad, but then we must remember that this old man may get caught by a simple rod and line after you have passed on with the great gospel net."

"Very well, let it be so. Let us pray about it.

"O God, we desire to commend these bodies of ours to Thy care through another night. Bless all

those who have been in that hall, and have heard, it may be for the last time, the story of Thy love, and how Thou art delighting to have fallen sinners back in Thy presence, justified from all things. Lead on all those who have believed with their hearts, and confessed with their mouths the Lord Jesus; and, oh, we beseech Thee, our God, hear us on behalf of that old man of seventy-five summers; he is still in the dark, still in his sins. Trouble him, we pray Thee: may he have no peace until he finds it in coming to Jesus. Amen."

"Well, good-night, now."

"Good-night, Mr —, and remember that Paul got a thorn in the flesh to keep him from thinking that he was doing all the work."

It was Saturday afternoon, and I had to go into the township of E—— four miles off. The weather was fine, and my wife came for the drive. As we returned we arranged to call on two aged Christians who lived not far distant from each other, and to save time, my wife suggested that she would call on one while I called on the other. My wife found both these old people at the house she called at, and my privilege was to find the old gentleman, who had spoken so defiantly to the evangelist, alone at the house where I called. I had met him on several occasions, but he always avoided what he termed "religious matters." This time, however, he seemed different, and quietly listened while, as clearly and simply as possible, I tried to show him, from God's Word, man's ruin through sin, and God's remedy

through Jesus, and the importance of receiving God's gift (Rom. vi. 23).

He talked of *doing* for salvation.

I told him all was done when Jesus died on Calvary's hill, and nothing could be added to what He had finished.

He talked of *praying*.

I told him it was no good praying for what God was offering, as it was only making God a liar (1 John v. 10). This seemed a terrible blow, to dash to the ground the two things on which he was placing such dependence as means of salvation, and was something he was not prepared for; so for a few moments we sat in perfect silence, while secretly I used the prophet's prayer for his servant, "Lord, open his eyes that he may see."

"Mr P——, would you not like to be sure about salvation, and have peace with God?"

"I would."

"Well, how are you going to know it?"

"Can I know?"

"Yes, God says so. Let us turn to His Word, '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).

"Now look, this is the order:—God has written to those that *believe*, that they may *know* that they have eternal life.

"Do you believe?"

"I hope I do."

"Ah, you are wrong there again, you are looking

in to see if you can find some goodness in yourself, instead of looking up and seeing Jesus. Faith is believing God. Faith is trusting Jesus.

"Mr P——, will you get down on your knees with me and thank God that He gave the Lord Jesus Christ to die for you, and will you trust Him now?"

A moment's pause and then came a wretched "No. But I will get down on my knees with you if you will ask God to make me a better man."

This seemed nice, and no doubt showed anxiety on Mr P——'s part, but it is not God's way. So I honestly told him I could not do what he asked, as God does not make a sinner better. He saves him outright and makes him a son, in new creation. He does not mend him. The Lord Jesus said, 'No man putteth a piece of new cloth in an old garment.'

"I don't like that man who preached in the hall at R——," my listener now said.

"Oh, Mr P——, I am terribly anxious about you. I can clearly see the devil is doing his utmost to hold you in darkness, and you are running an awful risk. Suppose you were to die to-night, where would you be for eternity?"

"I don't know."

"Would you like to be sure?"

"Can I be sure?"

"You can. Look at the poor dying thief on the cross beside Jesus. He owned Jesus as his Lord, and Jesus told him He would take him to paradise that day (Luke xxiii. 43). Again, Paul speaks of

being *present with the Lord* when absent from the body (2 Cor. v. 8); and again, in Philippians i. 23, says, 'To depart and be with Christ is far better.'

"This is the blessed portion of the believer, but to depart out of time into eternity unsaved is to reach that place spoken of in Luke xvi. 23, 'In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment.'"

"I am a great sinner," Mr P—— now said.

"Christ is a great Saviour," I replied.

"How can I be sure about salvation?"

"By hearing God's Word and believing on His Son. Let us turn to the Word. Look at John v. 24."

"Let me get my spectacles."

"Very well. Now read it carefully, and remember it is Jesus who is speaking." So he read:—

"'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life.'"

"Now, let us go over it again. 'He that heareth my word'—Christ's word. You have heard it. Now because you were a sinner and needed salvation, God so loved you as to give His own Son to die in your stead. You have heard His word, now what comes next?"

"'And believeth.'"

"This is our side of the matter, the hearing and the believing, and there is not a word said about praying or hoping, or trying to be better; and notice also that those words are positive, and all in the pre-

sent tense—*Heareth—Believeth—Hath—Is*. Hence the awful danger of putting off the hearing and the believing, and then missing salvation."

"I don't want to put it off."

"Do you believe that God gave the Lord Jesus Christ to die for you, and that when He died He was bearing your sins?"

"I do."

"Well now, let us finish that verse."

"*'Hath everlasting life.'*"

"Read that again."

"*'Hath everlasting life.'* What does it mean?" said Mr P——.

"It means what it says, '*He that believeth hath everlasting life.*'"

"Hath it now?"

"Yes, hath it now."

"Thank God, I see it all. '*Hath everlasting life,*' and hath it now."

There was no need to refer to any more scriptures. The anxious look had passed away from the face of the man of seventy-five summers without Christ, and as he took off his spectacles and laid them down on the table, he said, "Thank God. '*Hath everlasting life.*'"

"Shall we get on our knees and thank Him *now*?"

"Yes, we will," and we did so.

This was a happy time for us all, for while we were on our knees pouring out our thanksgiving to God, my wife and the mistress of the house were standing outside, afraid to intrude on such a solemn

scene, and when they came in we all rejoiced together, while our old friend told how he found peace through believing God's Word.

And now, dear reader, I desire to commend to your careful consideration that word **HATH**. It was the means of my finding peace over twenty years ago. I had been for weeks very anxious about my soul's salvation, and one night as I read John iii. 36, I saw like a firm foothold cut in a mighty rock, above all the doubts and fears of my heart, that precious word "hath." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

If unsaved, come to Jesus just as you are, and come now. You are running an awful risk by delaying ; time is short, and life uncertain.

May the Lord bless you is my earnest prayer. I feel constrained to add that our old friend confessed the Lord publicly in the hall where he had told the evangelist, "I've had enough of you," and no wonder the evangelist was delighted. But when we speak of joy on earth, what is it compared to joy in heaven ?

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

May there be joy over you !

"Prodigal son, thy Father is waiting,
Anxious and longing for thy return ;
He will forgive thee, welcome and bless thee,
Gladly embrace thee : then why not come ?"

J. J. W.

THE SOURCE OF SALVATION.

“SALVATION is of the Lord”—damnation is of our sins and unbelief. It pleases God to save; judgment is forced on Him by our folly. He finds no pleasure in the death of the sinner. Had man never sinned, then trial, judgment, and condemnation had been unknown to him. God being holy and man sinful, then all this is necessary. Where there is repentance, then whatever the trial, there is no condemnation. Self-judgment anticipates and sets aside the necessity for God's judgment. What is of the Lord, as its spring and source, is salvation. Happy, thrice happy to know this!

The “barbarous people of Melita,” in Acts xxviii., had a wrong idea of God. They spoke of Him as “*Vengeance*”! Their religious calculations, as they put together sin and God, amounted to Retribution, and that only. Natural religion—let it assume whatever form it may, whether cradled in barbarous Melita or learned Athens, whether conjured up in the heart of the heathen or in the heart of the merely professing Christian—views God at best as no more than a righteous Judge, perhaps, even as unrighteous—that is, as severe and merciless, as “*Vengeance*.”

Hence we have nothing, in this matter, for which to thank nature. It cannot help us. The mind of man, with its myriads of religious imaginations, is

absolutely unable to shed one ray of light on the most important of all questions—the disposition of God towards fallen beings like ourselves.

Nay, its prescribed remedies have plunged souls into hopeless despair. “The world by wisdom knew not God,” nor does man know how to help or save his brother.

Human wisdom is necessarily limited by the range of the human mind. This may indeed be remarkable, for, without doubt, man is wonderfully clever within the above limit; but, if God be beyond his ken, it follows that, if He is to be known, He must, in grace, reveal Himself. He must draw back the curtain, He must speak in such a way that He can be understood by, and made known to us.

All this He has deigned to do. What an unspeakable mercy! Hence we read in Hebrews i. 2 that “God . . . hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by His Son.” This is the revelation He has made of Himself in Christianity, It is the whole Christian system stated in a few magnificent words. The revelation is complete, and only wants a heart that, in faith, is humbly receptive of the marvellous grace it carries. It is salvation, not vengeance, nor judgment, nor condemnation, though it may well be asked—“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3). That is true! How indeed? Let it never be supposed that because to-day God is a Saviour, He has finally abandoned His character as Judge. Impossible! His holiness is eternal—His moral separation from sin infinite! The judgment

of "the Great White Throne," with its dread issues, will assuredly demonstrate this. It will prove His intolerance of sin. That is certain! Yet not more so than the cross has already done!

But the cross, while fully vindicating God's holiness, has also shown His righteousness, and, in the death of His Son, has opened the door of salvation. Now God is "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The cross is the judgment of sin in the person of the Substitute; the Great White throne is the judgment of the sinner for his sins, and, above all, for his refusal of the Substitute. He is judged according to his works, but his chief sin is the rejection of grace.

Wonderful cross! and wonderful salvation, flowing thence to poor sinners to-day. What the eye, and ear, and mind of man could never conceive, is all made known for faith to-day. "God is love," not "vengeance," though it may belong to Him, but, ere judgment—your judgment, my reader—come, His disposition toward you is that of love. He is not willing that you should perish, but rather that you should come to repentance.

May the goodness of God lead you to it. Get in among the "whosoever" of John iii. 14-16.

"God His Son has given, sent Him from above
That we might not perish, such His wondrous love;
He the work to finish, died upon the tree.
"Whosoever" may believe Him—that means me."

DOUBTS REMOVED.

SEQUEL TO THE STORY OF MY CONVERSION.

THOUGH I was truly converted, and saw clearly that I had nothing to do to save myself, yet I had not *settled* peace. My experience for some time after I professed conversion was very changeable. This I have no doubt arose from two causes. I expected to find in myself perfect love to the Lord, and perfect personal purity. Great was my disappointment when I found neither. The question arose, filling my heart with deepest anxiety, Was I after all deceiving myself? Was all that I had experienced at my supposed conversion a delusion? Was I after all only a hypocrite?

I sought, as best I could, to bring about a better state of things, but was greatly perplexed to find that the more I tried to produce love to the Lord in my own heart, the more I failed to find it there; and the more I tried to keep down evil desires, the more they seemed to trouble me.

Thus I found out my own helplessness, and learned in some measure the utter badness of the flesh in me. The evil I discovered in myself, and which I was so powerless to remove, was far worse than I knew it to be. I found that "when I would do good, evil was present with me."

At this juncture, when I had almost given up in

despair, a well-known book was put into my hands, entitled "Grace and Truth." I read it with great delight, for it seemed to be the very book to meet my need.

I had never known or even heard before this of the difference between "sin in the flesh, and sin on the conscience." One night when downcast and heartbroken, I went to my bedroom and read a chapter from this book. The writer plainly illustrated the difference between these two things by the three crosses on Calvary's hill.

He showed that the two dying malefactors represented two different classes of people. What made the difference between them? Simply this: the unbelieving, impenitent thief had not only sin *in him*, but *sins upon him* also, for his whole life of guilt was resting upon him at that moment. The penitent, believing thief had no sins *upon him*, though he had still sin *in him*.

But why had the believing thief no sins upon him?

Because at that moment Jesus, the Man on the centre cross, the One in whom was no sin, was bearing them, and all the judgment due to them from the hand of a sin-hating God. "The Lord hath laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6); "who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24).

Though Jesus had all our sins upon Him, yet personally He was without sin. "In him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5).

The result was, I saw that all my sins, past, present, and future, as people speak (though all were present to Christ when He suffered for them, and future as far as my actual history was concerned), were laid on Jesus, and that therefore they could not be resting on me. I saw also that, though I had sin in me, and always would have until death ended my history, or the Lord from heaven came to change my body into a body of glory like His own glorious body, my sins could never again be righteously reckoned against me.

The death of Jesus had put them all away from before God, and the knowledge of this through the Scriptures brought home in power to me, cleared me completely and for ever of them.

Accepting this, peace came into my soul like a river. I was filled with joy and peace in believing. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." This ought to be the happy portion of all God's children, and will be if the truth of the gospel is seen and believed in simplicity.

I can truly say that from that moment I never doubted, but have always been confident of my eternal security. How could I doubt when I saw that Christ's one offering had settled the whole question of my sins to God's eternal satisfaction? "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever (as regards the conscience) them that are sanctified." "And their sins and iniquities *will I remember no more.*" Precious statements, these! How assuring to the troubled, tempest-tossed soul!

The Holy Spirit had come to dwell within me to shed abroad the love of God in my heart—that is, to make me conscious of God's love to me, not my love to Him. The knowledge of that love casts out all tormenting fear, and sets the soul at perfect rest before Him.

Instead of now looking into myself for perfect love, I saw that God's love was perfect and unchanging toward me, and that this love was not because of anything He found in me, but because of what He is in His own nature. "God is love."

He loved me in spite of all my badness, and apart from any *fancied* goodness in myself. Though I have since then—nearly thirty years ago—learned myself to be worse than I could ever have conceived myself to be, still His love is the same. I have changed and failed, but His love has never changed, nor once failed me; I saw that the spring and power of my love to him was the knowledge of His love to me. "We love him because *he first loved us*."

I saw also that though sin was still in me, it was not reckoned to me; that it had been judged and condemned in Christ's cross and put away from God's sight; that He never makes sin chargeable to those who believe. I saw also that I was no longer regarded as being in Adam but "in Christ," where there is "no condemnation." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).

It is now the believer's privilege to count himself to have died to sin and to be alive unto God in

Jesus Christ our Lord. We are not to suppose by all this that God makes little of sin that may come out in the life of His children. Far from it. If we go on in the practice of sin and do not judge ourselves, He may come in with chastening for us. If we do judge ourselves and make confession to Him, "he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Besides, if we fall into sin, which we may do if not watchful and prayerful, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He takes up our cause in heaven in face of our accuser the devil. He also makes us conscious of the sin committed, and thus works repentance in us. How good and truly gracious He is! Not gracious to our sin, but gracious to us in working so as to deliver us from it, and restore our souls to the happiness we may have lost through it.

How truly blessed it is to look away from self, and all that pertains to it, and to have the eye of faith fixed on Christ, who made our peace on the cross by settling every question that could be raised against us, and who is now our peace at God's right hand. "He is our peace." He is everything to God. God has found all His delight in Him, and works in us to make us do the same. He has made Him unto us "wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." "Ye are complete in Him." And if so, nothing more is needed but to rest in Him.

"THAT IS WHAT I NEED."

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 JOHN i. 7.

IT is deeply interesting and touching to the heart to witness from time to time the wondrous ways of a Saviour-God in doing His own blessed work in saving poor lost sinners. Ah! it is His work, the work of God, the work of divine power and love, and it ever bears all the blessed marks of His wonder-working hand.

God does not use angels to set the gospel before poor sinners; it is saved and pardoned sinners that God uses to do this, for they can speak that which they know, and testify that which they have seen of the Saviour's love and power to save with an everlasting salvation all that come unto God by Him. He may use an angel to direct the anxious sinner to send for a servant, as in Acts x. 5, or to direct a servant to go to an anxious soul, as in Acts viii. 26; but it is not theirs to prove, as these, the cleansing virtue of that blood.

The writer was privileged some time ago to witness God's blessed work in the conversion of his landlady. Being often brought through this connection into contact with her, there sprang up in his heart a deep desire for her soul's eternal welfare. Naturally she was kind, amiable, and very right in her ways and dealings, but always kept a perfect silence and marked refusal when anything as to the soul and

God, and a hereafter, and our need of Jesus the Saviour and Friend of sinners, was alluded to. She would always close and draw tightly in her lips, and assume an impenetrable silence.

She had been brought up amongst Unitarians, and had evidently fallen under the influence of their awful and darkening errors. "O God! work in her soul. O God! come in and deliver from the blinding darkness of soul-destroying error," we prayed and cried to God. He did, blessed be His name, all at once. A grave internal malady came suddenly upon her, and the doctors said a major operation must be performed without the least possible delay. It could not be done at her home, it must be done at an institution. It was of so serious a nature that but three cases only out of every hundred survived, and not to undergo it was certain death.

She went at once into the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and on that bed God used the few preparatory days before the operation, with death so near in view, to give her to see her ruined state. She trembled to die. She could not die with Unitarianism. She needed a Saviour, and, blessed be God, He at once revealed to her His remedy for her need.

Exactly opposite her bed, hung on the wall, was a large wall text—"THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST HIS SON CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN." "Bless God," she said, "that is what I need. I have often heard of it before. I now put all my trust in it and in the blessed One who shed it." She found peace.

God also brought her safely through the operation, and she came out of that abode of suffering a new creature in Christ Jesus, magnifying and praising God—and had a little meeting at her house in the country for the gospel to be preached, in the hope that her husband, who was a hay farmer, but a godless and drinking man, might hear the glad tidings, and himself and others might be saved.

Oh that the writer could raise a warning voice by this little paper, to Unitarians and all who are being influenced by their soul-destroying doctrines. It is much laid upon him to do so. Oh! listen, he beseeches you, for unbelievers in the Son of God are in soul-peril! If salvation is on the ground of faith in Him, as stated in the Word of God—the Bible—both Old and New Testaments, AND IT IS, you are lost to all certainty!!! If salvation is only and entirely by GOD THE SON—the Son of God—the Son Jesus Christ, and His atoning death and blood-shedding upon the cross for sinners, AND IT IS, again I ask—"What think ye of Christ?" If you deny and reject all this, you are infidel and antichrist as to HIM, WHO IS GOD THE SON, and if you remain so, I repeat you will be lost for ever and for ever. May God in mercy deliver you.

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also" (1 John ii. 18, 23).

"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (John v. 23).

"I said, therefore, unto you, that you shall die in your sins : for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John viii. 24).

"I and my Father are one" (John x. 30).

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John xiv. 1). Heed these words of God. W. F.

THE EVANGELIST AND HIS WORK.*

WE have in the Acts the history of a man—and the only man that I know of—who is called in Scripture an evangelist. It was Philip. He was one of those at Jerusalem selected to look after the money and the poor. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full

* Extracted from "The Gospel, the Church, and the Servant": a tract for the times. To be had at *The Gospel Messenger* Office, Bristo Place, Edinburgh. Price one penny.

of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Acts vi. 1-6).

In the seventh chapter of the Acts we get the testimony of Stephen, and for his testimony he loses his life. But how did he die? He died exactly like his Master, praying for his murderers. What did the blessed Lord say, when on the cross? "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). And what does Stephen say? "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts vii. 60). Beautiful testimony to Christ.

Persecution then broke out, "And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. . . . Therefore they that were scattered abroad *went everywhere preaching the word*" (Acts viii. 1-4). Why did the Lord allow that persecution? I have no doubt He had a divine purpose in allowing it, because you know very well in the end of Luke the Lord had told the assembled company of apostles and disciples, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his

name *among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*" (Luke xxiv. 47). That is how it is put in the end of Luke.

But when you come to the opening chapter of the Acts of the Apostles you find that they were to wait in Jerusalem till the Holy Ghost came down, and then they were told, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and *unto the uttermost part of the earth*" (Acts i. 8). Now what were they doing? The apostles and all the brethren had stuck fast to Jerusalem. They made it a sort of spiritual metropolis. It is amazing how we like to stick to the old place, the old room, instead of going out. There they were, they would not go out of Jerusalem. The Lord broomed them out by sending persecution. Probably you say, The apostles stuck there still. They did stick still, but I do not think they were obeying the Lord in their action, and He raises up other servants, lesser, as Philip (viii. 6), or larger, as Paul (chap. ix.). If you go far afield with the gospel you will not be disobeying the Lord.

A right evangelist, however, always works from the divine centre. He works from Christ, and from the thing that is nearest and dearest to Christ, and that is the Assembly. Philip was in full touch with the nearest Assembly when he went down to Samaria, and "preached Christ unto them," as recorded in the eighth chapter. In the end of that chapter the quality of an evangelist is sweetly seen in him.

Commanded of the Lord, he leaves the flourishing work at Samaria, and travels one hundred miles to meet a poor anxious soul that had journeyed over a thousand to get light from God. He met that poor solitary eunuch, and "preached unto him Jesus." I do like to hear a brother preaching Jesus. I do not think there are very many that can do it. You need to be very near the Lord to go and "preach Jesus." It is easy to talk about Christ. When I was a young Christian I heard more about Jesus than I do nowadays. We have not enough of Jesus about us, nor the grace of Jesus, nor the ways of Jesus. We all of us need a great deal more of Jesus.

Philip caught a great many fish in Samaria, one in the desert, and after he had helped the eunuch he began at "Azotus, and passing through he preached *in all the cities*, till he came to Cesarea" (Acts viii. 40). This evangelist, therefore, preceded Peter in his remarkable mission to Cornelius, and I venture to think that he may have had to do with the beautiful work in Cesarea, recorded in Acts x. In the twenty-first chapter you will find he lived there, and when Paul came thither he stayed with the full-fledged gospel graduate—"Philip the evangelist." "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea: and we entered into the house of *Philip the evangelist*, which was one of the seven; and abode with him" (Acts xxi. 8). The apostles had a greater idea of the evangelist than many people have nowadays.

Evangelists may not always be very intelligent.

If this be the case, help them. Possibly Philip needed and desired help; anyway, I am very much struck with the fact that the greatest man that ever lived, save the blessed Lord, when he comes to Cesarea does not go to an hotel, nor to the mansion of the noble centurion Cornelius, but puts up with an evangelist. It would do you good to go and stay with a warm-hearted evangelist.

I have been very much interested lately in considering four things in relation to the gospel: *What* to preach; *where* to preach; *when* to preach; and *how* to preach. What to preach? Well, you will be interested to see the varied kinds of preaching in those days. It was many-sided. It was beautifully varied. You will find it to be so, if you just take the trouble to see what the preaching was like. But we all have to be like Jonah. The Lord said unto him, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it *the preaching that I bid thee*" (Jonah iii. 2). Young preacher, preach what God bids you; not what your brethren suggest, or expect, or your hearers like. Get your orders from the top, and stick to them. You must get the right kind of bait if you are going to catch fish. What we want is our hearts enlarged. Oh, for enlargement of heart! That is what we all want, my dear friends. It is a mortal disease physically, but it is the very thing we all want spiritually. A large-hearted saint takes in the purpose of God, the thought of God, and the grace of God, and, in His service, proclaims the whole truth of God.

The evangelist's sphere is the world. He brings Christ to it, and seeks to bring souls out of it to Christ. But, if instructed, he always works from the Assembly, and leads souls into it. You know what a pair of compasses is? An evangelist is like that—or should be. One leg is fixed, and the other you stretch out as far as it will go. Where is the fixed leg of the evangelist? In the Assembly; and his other leg, to use my figure, circles the world. He goes out in burning zeal, and whole-hearted energy to seek souls, wherever God leads him. The world is his parish.

Everything is in view of the Assembly, and leads to it. But the question arises, Is the evangelist for the Assembly? It is to be noticed that in the list of gifts, which edify it, in 1 Corinthians xii., that of the evangelist is not named. Is this the reason that some saints do not need and enjoy the gospel? I trow not. I pity the saint that does not enjoy the gospel. There is nothing I like better than to sit down and listen to the gospel, and we must bear in mind that we live in a day when unestablished souls hover about, and perhaps even get into the Assembly. To all such the simple gospel is divinely suited.

The Lord said to Simon and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. iv. 19); and what I understand by a fisherman is one who *catches* fish—not merely a man with a rod, or a net, that goes a-fishing. The work of the evangelist is to bring souls to Christ first of all, and then to the door of the Assembly. My advice to you is, Do not intro-

duce your own converts. Let the porters take them in. We read of the porters in Solomon's days. Their *names* are given in 1 Chronicles ix. 17, 18; their *number*, four thousand, in xxiii. 5; their *courses* in 2 Chronicles viii. 14; and their *service* in xxxv. 15. A few good porters in the Assembly are of great service, because the porters keep out what ought not to be in, and let in those who have a title to go in. It is a great cheer to a young soul when the porters can say, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." I like a good, warm-hearted porter.

We have all our work assigned to us, but let us remember we are all subject to Christ. The evangelist catches the fish, others should determine if they be good or bad. Then what is the relation of the evangelist to the Assembly? Is he under the control of the Assembly? Under the control of the Assembly! What, my servants under your control? My house and my servants belong to me, and not to you. The evangelist is of the Assembly, and, of course, if his walk and ways are not right, he comes under the discipline of the Assembly, but he is the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do I owe allegiance to anybody? Yes! to my Lord and Master, surely to none other. Then as to control? "One is your Master, even Christ" (Matt. xxiii. 8-10). Of course as to doctrine, that is quite another thing. Being of the Assembly, if the evangelist's doctrine is not sound, he is therein amenable to it. But for the Assembly to think that the evangelist's business is theirs is a profound mistake. On

the other hand, for an evangelist to seek to work in a spirit of independence apart from the Assembly, I should condemn with my whole heart.

If souls are reached by the gospel, what is the natural thing you wish? That they will gravitate to the spot where the Lord is. We might help these dear servants—the evangelists—and we should help them if we prayed more for them. They, however, must be left free to carry out the exercise of the gift which the Lord has given them, where, when, and how He would lead them. For the Assembly to pray much for them is a very blessed and happy thing.

If any whom I address feel that God has called them to this blessed service, let me affectionately urge you to be devoted. Yield yourself to the Lord. You have only one life, and if the Lord has put it into your heart to preach the gospel, go and do it. Do not preach sermons; be like Philip, preach Christ.

Young men, go out into the country, and tell the people, who perhaps never hear the simple gospel, the story of the love of Christ. Oh, you say, I do preach, but I do not catch any fish—I do not get any conversions. Do not let your mind be occupied with success. The Lord says, “Well done, good and *faithful* servant” (Matt. xxv. 21). He does not say, “Well done, good and *successful* servant.” The great thing is to be simple.

If you are going to be a successful fisherman, you will have to keep yourself out of sight. Wait much on God, and remember that men have immortal souls, and are hurrying on to a lost eternity. Then go, and

tenderly, lovingly, and beseechingly preach Christ. Tell them of Christ, and, my dear friend, you will be sure of catching men for Him.

The Acts of the Apostles give us great variety in the way of presenting the gospel, and it is very interesting to see the way in which the gospel is connected with the Assembly, and the way in which the work went on. The gospel and the Church were never dissevered in the days of the apostles. The reason of that was their interest in each other's work, and their manifest simplicity. Look at Philip with that beautiful work going on in Samaria, when so many were blessed. Peter and John came down. Do you think that was to examine the work of the evangelist? I do not believe it. The Holy Ghost did not fall upon the converts until they came down. God did not permit that until these men came down, and laid their hands on them. The reason is plain. The work of God is one, although the instruments vary. There was One Head in heaven, and One Spirit on earth, and the work at Samaria was one with that at Jerusalem, for there was but "one body." The apostles' action, therefore, was to show the identification of the work. The Assembly at Jerusalem took deep interest in the work of the evangelist in Samaria.

Doubtless Philip needed, and gladly received the help of the apostles. He thought Simon was converted, but he was not. An evangelist must be a hearty, sanguine man, or he would not succeed. It is part of his gift to be just that. Nothing daunts

him. He is like a cork on the water, the more drenching he gets, the higher he floats. He always comes up smiling. He is set in the name of the Lord, and by the grace of the Lord, to win souls for the Lord, and as long as he is here you will find that is what he will do. Preaching is not evangelising. Many a man likes to preach to a large company, but do you find him dealing with souls? If not, such an one is not of much use. He is perhaps a splendid preacher, but he is not an evangelist. The going down of the apostles, in the case alluded to, was doubtless an expression of sweet and beautiful interest in the evangelist's work.

W. T. P. W.

(*To be continued.*)

"WELL OFF."

TO be really "well off" you must have more than health, for *you are in a world of death*; more than wealth, for *all that you possess must be both parted with and accounted for*; more than gratified ambition, for *death's iron grip will burst that bubble also*.

YOU MUST HAVE CHRIST.

Without Him you will neither have comfort in the hour of death, nor boldness in the day of judgment. John N—— was very well off, and he knew it. He could say on a dying pillow, "If I get better it will be ALL GRACE; if I don't, it will be ALL GLORY. Who could be better off than I am?"

GEO. C.

CHRIST, OR THE BALL.

“**W**HY not now?” It was no difficult task for Helen G—— to find an answer to that question, as she leaned back in her chair and gazed at the pretty ball dress, laid out in readiness for that evening’s wear—a masterpiece of dressmaker’s skill, a charming design, and calculated in every way to set off the wearer to the best possible advantage. But the expression on Helen’s face was far from being one of happiness; the thought that the long-anticipated enjoyment was at hand at last could, just at that moment, afford her no satisfaction, and even the consciousness that few, if any, of her fair rivals would receive nearly so much homage and admiration as herself, could not drive away the shadow from her brow.

Why not now? Why not now? Oh how those three tiresome words would keep ringing in her ears! Why could she not put them from her—forget them until to-morrow at all events; and then, the ball over, the triumph won, she might feel more inclined to turn her attention seriously to the matter which had been so strangely and unexpectedly thrust upon it?

“I wish I had never gone to hear that stupid man!” she muttered. “If I could only have had an idea how miserable he would make me, I am sure I never would; but how silly it is of me to mind or care!—but yet I know he is right.”

"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation," was the text from which an unknown itinerant evangelist had addressed a few dozen people in the village the evening before, and Helen G—— had been one of his audience. There was nothing remarkable in the preacher—a plain-spoken man; no eloquence or gift of oratory beyond the intense earnestness with which he entreated all present to listen to the solemn message which God had sent him to deliver. But the truth and power of each word pierced like an arrow into the heart of the gay, thoughtless young girl. The memory of his simple appeals haunted her through the hours of a sleepless night; when morning came, the impression grew stronger instead of weaker, and heart and conscience alike urged her to close without delay with the offer, —to yield herself unreservedly to the Saviour, whose blood had been shed for her.

"If you want peace, if you want happiness, if you want pardon, come to Christ now—NOW, while He is calling you, drawing you with the cords of His love. Oh, how can you remain cold and indifferent, and turn away from such a loving offer? Why will you not let Him save you now?"

Such was the burden of his pleadings; and the eyes of more than one in that room filled with tears, and more than one heart responded, "Yes, Lord; I will come—and come now;" while others hardened themselves and stifled the voice of conscience.

"If it only had not been just before the ball!" thought Helen, as with hasty, impatient steps she

began to walk to and fro in her room. "If he had only not come here until after to-morrow. If he had only not talked quite so much about now, as if any other time would not do just as well. There is to be a meeting again to-night—I wish I could go to it—no, I don't. I shall never go to a place of the kind again. I will go to the ball, and to as many more balls as I am asked to. I go to church on Sundays; I say my prayers night and morning, always—nearly always. That is religion enough for other people, why should I want to be better than every one else? There is nothing wrong in enjoying life, and enjoy it I will. There! I am not going to think about it any longer; I have given myself quite a headache as it is."

She took a book from the table, and sitting down, resolutely found the place where she had last left off. But somehow the words would not form themselves into connected sentences; try as she would, she could not create any interest in the tale with which only the day before she had been so delighted. After many unsuccessful efforts she closed it with a weary sigh, and bowing her head on her clasped hands, she suffered her thoughts to flow back into their former channel. For a long time she did not move, but her quick, hard breathing showed that no ordinary conflict was being fought out; and when at last she raised her head, her cheeks were more flushed, and the light in her eyes more troubled than ever.

"I would far rather go to the meeting than to Lady M——'s," she said half aloud. "But Alex

G—— is to be there, and I have promised to keep several dances for him. What would he think of me, if I were to give up a ball for a meeting? He does not believe that there is even a God at all. Other people might laugh at me as much as they pleased, but I know what a look of contempt would come into his face if he found out where I had gone instead. I could not, oh, I could not bear it."

* * * * *

She was by far the prettiest girl in the ball-room—no one could deny that. She was besieged with would-be partners for each dance, and many were the words of flattery and low-spoken admiration breathed into her ears. Nothing seemed necessary to complete her enjoyment, and could any one suppose that her laughter was hollow, her smiles forced, and that her heart was full—almost bursting?

It was to meet Alex G—— that she had come to the ball, and there was no sign of Alex there. For the first hour or two she had furtively watched each new arrival, hoping to see the man whom she loved, and who, she was almost convinced, loved her. But all in vain; he did not come. The night was wearing away, far too slowly for her now, and she was longing wearily for the time when she could escape from the noise and glare and heat, which was becoming unbearable; so much so, that she began to fear she could not possibly keep up the empty show of gaiety until all was over.

* * * * *

"No, indeed, I was not. Do you suppose for one

moment I would be seen at such a place?" It was the hostess who spoke, and Helen, catching the words, and guessing at once to what she alluded, drew near to listen. "My maid went," continued Lady M——; "and she talked in such an absurd way to me this morning, that I was obliged to remind her I had hired her to wait on me, and not to preach. Then she stupidly began to cry; it was most disagreeable!"

"What an interesting scene!" exclaimed one of the bystanders. "Do please tell us what she said, Lady M——."

"I did not give her time to say much; but I believe she intended to favour me with an entire rehearsal of his sermon."

"Bad grammar and all?" inquired a young man who had just joined the group. "I really think his admirers ought to get up a subscription, and present him with 'The Art of Correct Speaking.'"

"You have heard him then, Mr P——?" asked Lady M——.

"I have had that infliction. Would you like me to follow your maid's example? Listen, friends!" And with an exaggerated, but ludicrously good imitation of the preacher's voice, accent, and gestures, he commenced to recite part of his address, almost word for word.

Most of his hearers were convulsed with laughter.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself! he cannot surely be so bad as that!" exclaimed Lady M——; but none the less did she appear amused.

"Now, Miss G——, I saw you on the very front row of seats, listening with rapt attention, I appeal to you to say whether I do him more than justice," said Mr P——, turning to Helen. She flushed crimson, scarcely knowing how to answer.

"Miss G—— there!" exclaimed more than one voice in tones of well-bred surprise; many eyes were turned towards her, and looking quickly up, she saw for the first time that Alex G—— was standing near, and imagined he was watching her with that hard cynical smile, which she knew so well, and dreaded so intensely.

"I await your judgment, fair lady," said Mr P——, with affected solemnity. "Or perhaps I have touched a tender chord. If so, I humbly beg pardon, and hope I may have the honour of congratulating this new star on the religious horizon on the conquest he has made."

"He has made no conquest that I know of," cried the girl hotly, "unless, indeed, it be of you. You seem to take far more interest in him than I do, at all events."

"Oh, but young ladies are so impressible! Confess now, that he made you feel it would be a very naughty thing indeed to come to a ball, and that dancing was a dreadful sin."

"I am not impressible; and if he, or any one else, had made me feel that dancing was wrong, do you suppose I would be here?"

"Certainly not, but——"

"Oh! do not let us hear about him, if you please,

Mr P——. You seem to forget we all have not your appreciation of vulgarity."

"Hush! my dear; that will do," said Lady M—— gently. "Of course, every one knows you have far too much sense to be carried away by such absurd, fanatical ideas, and you should not let Mr P——'s teasing annoy you so; he only means it in fun. But tell me, how did it happen that you went to hear that dreadful, uneducated man?"

"I was spending the day with Mrs L——. She brought me—I could not help it. She would take no refusal."

"Very wrong indeed of Mrs L——. You must never let yourself be persuaded into going into a place of the kind again."

"There is no danger, I assure you. I have had quite enough of meetings for the rest of my life!" cried Helen with an hysterical laugh.

"Certainly, quite enough, if you only go to mock."

In blank amazement they all turned to gaze at Alex G——, hardly able to believe it was he who spoke. Calmly and unflinchingly he looked from one to the other; his face pale, his voice strong, as he continued, addressing the hostess: "It was to apologise to you for my absence, that I came here for a few minutes, Lady M——. I was at the meeting you have been discussing, and I liked it so much that I went again to-night. I never made any secret of being little better than an infidel. Thank God! I am so no longer; and I am not ashamed to acknowledge that of all the preachers I have heard, the only one who

ever made the slightest impression on me is this one, who does not always speak correctly; and to 'that dreadful, uneducated man,' as you term him, I shall have reason to be grateful to my dying hour."

He turned and walked quietly away; but in passing Helen G——, he paused for a moment.

"Would that you had been where I was, instead of here!" he said in a voice meant for her ears alone. "When I saw you last evening, I hoped—I hoped that we might have helped each other on the right way. Good-bye, Helen." He went out into the dark cold night. The band struck up for the last dance, and with set cold face, and a heart like lead, Helen G—— moved in and out among the dancers.

* * * * *

Years have come and gone. The snows of age have gathered on the heads of many who were young on that memorable night, but by far the greater number have passed away. The incident was nearly forgotten; but there is one who remembers it still, and ever will—an aged Christian, who, having devoted more than half a century of her life to the Master's work, is quietly awaiting the summons into His presence.

Let us listen to her for a few minutes, as she speaks in kind, but grave tones to one who has come to her for help and counsel.

"My child," she says, "I was once in much the same strait that you are in now, many, many years before you were born. God called me, as He is calling you, and earthly love held me back. 'Come

to Me now,' His voice said, and I answered, 'No; I must secure the earthly love first, then I will give myself up to the heavenly.' And by doing so, I lost the one, and well-nigh lost the other too. The call came to him in the same way that it came to me. He heard and obeyed; but I not suspecting this, and fearing his ridicule, spoke so lightly and scoffingly of the gospel message, that he thought it his duty to give me up. It might have been otherwise by accepting and confessing the truth, but my pride would not let me. I thought to drown conscience in a ceaseless round of pleasure and gaiety. It was of no use; at last I was forced to yield. I gave up the rest of a life, to me scarcely worth living, and came to Him. He who had bought me with His own blood, and whom I had so basely denied, received me as I was, and oh, the happiness with which He has filled my heart ever since!"

"And the one of whom you were speaking—what became of him?" asked her companion.

"He found another bride, different from the worldly, frivolous girl he once loved,—a fitting help-meet for him, and they have laboured together for the Lord. My child, when God says '*Come,*' come at once."

"But if you still His call refuse,
And dare such 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.'"

JESUS' MISSION HERE.

TUNE—*Irene*.—The Church Hymnary, 311.

ONCE to earth the Saviour came—
Suffered sorrow, loss, and shame,
Ever blessed be His name—
Came to save the lost.

By the Spirit He was sealed,
God in Him was all-revealed,
Wounded souls by Him were healed,
God's beloved Son.

Satan's power o'er man prevailed,
Man's deep guilt God's wrath entailed,
Jesus' work alone availed
Sin to put away.

When on Calvary's 'cursèd tree
Jesus hung for thee and me,
Bleeding, dying, then cried He,
"It is finishèd!"

Victim, when His blood was shed,
Victor, rising from the dead,
To His own He sweetly said,
"Peace be unto you!"

Heavy laden is thy heart?
Rest can He alone impart;
Trust Him, He'll not say "Depart!"
But "I'll give you rest!"

Sinner, make the Lord thy choice,
 He will make thy heart rejoice ;
 Weary soul, now hear His voice,
 "Come ! come unto me !"

W. T. P. W.

HAVE YOU PEACE?

A YOUNG lady in Canada once said to me.
"Before I came to your meetings my salvation was a rickety kind of a thing that I might have to-day and lose to-morrow."

How many there are like this ! They do not know what settled peace is, but are tossed up and down by every wind and storm that the devil sends to mar their joy.

Surely this is not as our precious Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, would have it. He spoke to His own of "Peace" and

"FULNESS OF JOY."

He said, *"Let not your heart be troubled."*

Then why is it that you, trembling believer, have not this peace ?

This young lady's case may answer the question. She said, *"I was looking within and trusting my feelings, which were always changing, instead of believing God's Word that can never pass away,*

which speaks about the work of Christ *which was finished on the cross.*"

Here lies the secret. On the cross the sinners' substitute—the spotless Lamb of God—cried with a loud voice, "It is finished"—words fraught with everlasting consolation to all who believe. For if the work was finished it was finished for them.

But is God satisfied? Upon this hangs our eternal blessing. Here is the triumphant answer. "But *God* raised Him from the dead" (Acts xiii. 30). Here is God's seal upon the work accomplished at Calvary, and now God Himself declares that through this Man (Christ Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him *all that believe are justified from all things* (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Is not this sufficient? Could anything be more plain and simple? Then why not rest your soul upon this testimony of God concerning His Son, and enjoy the perfect peace which follows.

And now the challenge comes from the very throne of God. "Who is he that condemneth?"

GOD IS THE JUSTIFIER.

It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God (Rom. viii. 34).

Thank God for a salvation so complete. Doubt His word no longer. Let go all those God-dishonouring fears. Trust Him and His word: "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith **WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD** through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1).

J. T. M.

INFIDELITY OR FAITH—WHICH?

ON the north-east coast of England there lived an infidel, who was solemnly warned as to how his course would end if he continued on it. He tauntingly replied to the person who warned him that religion was only for weaklings and children; it was not for great minds like his, albeit, some of the greatest minds of the last century were deeply affected by it.

In the course of a year or so he became suddenly unwell, and the worst was feared. He began to feel that the chill power of death was on him. As he neared its cold waters he found, like many others, that infidelity could yield him no comfort; it all fled from him.

He sent for the person who had spoken so faithfully to him. When she came she found his tune was changed. He was solemnly and deeply in earnest. No scoffing escaped his lips now. He was the "weakling" in the presence of one stronger than himself—the king of terrors and the terror of kings.

He began to let out how he felt as he saw nothing but death and the judgment of God ahead of him. An old companion in infidelity who had come to see him die, began to upbraid him for showing the white feather at the last, to which he replied: "Ah! Jim, it's hard for a fellow to hold on to nought. *It's hard for a fellow to hang on to nought!*"

Infidelity may do for a man who loves his sins

and wants to satisfy his lusts ; but, alas ! it can give no antidote for the sting of conscience, nor take away the fear of death, nor rid you of the terror of God's righteous judgment.

An innocent man never felt, nor could feel, the sharp prickings of conscience nor suffer from the lashings of remorse, nor could death possibly be a terror to him. Why are most men so terrified of hell if there be none ? If there is nothing after death why need any man be alarmed on his death-bed ? Beasts are not alarmed at death.

"If there is no hell, why bother yourself to *prove* there is none ?" was the quick rejoinder given by a young man lately converted to one who was scoffing and raising infidel objections against what the Bible says about future judgment. It was a sound argument, a great home-thrust, and a complete silencer.

Yes, and let us repeat it in the face of the brazen-faced infidelity of the present century. Why seek to prove there is no hell if such a place does not exist ?

After all that has been said to the contrary, both by religious and profane sceptics, it is really hard for men in their sober moments to believe there is no future punishment.

Could conscience, that impartial tribunal that exists in every man's breast, be got rid of, the difficulty would not be so great. But "conscience makes cowards of us all." As another has said—

"With whip of scorpions, over bed of spikes,
In pinch of midnight darkness it chases guilt."

Why so ? Because we have all sinned against the

God that conscience makes us feel we are responsible to meet. Conscience if allowed to speak will prove all guilty. An honest man will own and bow to the truth that this is so. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Reader, if you have imbibed or are in danger of imbibing infidel notions, and will not be warned otherwise, take warning from the unhappy end of like rejecters of the truth.

Let it be solemnly and plainly, *yet most lovingly*, told. *There is a hell*, and many a bold blasphemer has had it kindled in his breast (like the one mentioned) ere he has left this world, just as many a believer has tasted the joys of heaven before going there. Every sinner who dies in his sins, and thus unrepentant, will surely find himself there for ever, "where the worm *dieth not* and the fire is not quenched." "He that believeth not shall not see life, *but the wrath of God abideth on him.*"

What a contrast was this to the end of a young man in the prime of life who died in the city of L—. The doctor told him to prepare for death and make his peace with God when he saw the end approaching. This was just twenty-four hours before he died.

With all the strength at his command that young man, so far from being afraid, exclaimed, "Make my peace with God, doctor! Make my peace with God, doctor! If I had that to do now I never could do it. But, thank God, Jesus made my peace with God."

The doctor, who was standing in the bedroom at the time, left the room saying, as the tears flowed down his face, "Oh! Bobbie, Bobbie, I wish I could say that."

Not terror nor the dread of coming wrath filled his soul. Peace, perfect peace, was his portion. *Not the false peace that comes from trusting something he had done, or something he had been that others were not, but peace flowing from the knowledge of what Jesus had done for him.* This alone gives true peace.

The ENJOYMENT OF PEACE is the result of the victory of Christ on the cross. His victory was complete over sin, the power of death, and Satan. The peace of those that believe in Him is for ever settled according to God, and is as firmly secured as His righteous throne. "It is finished." What a word!

If it be a question of the believer's sins, Jesus bore them and exhausted the judgment due to them. If he exhausted the judgment of God due to us, there cannot possibly be any judgment for us. We never can come into judgment.

God has no claim on the one whose sins Jesus bore. He can never impute sin to such. Nay, more, *He does not* impute sins to such. He justifies us from our sins. If He justifies us from our sins, then we are acquitted of them. If we are acquitted of them, then we have never to answer for the least of them. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." "And by him all that believe are justified from all things."

The resurrection of Christ from the dead proves and establishes one fact beyond any possibility of a doubt, namely, that God is the justifier of those that believe. "He was raised again, for *our justification*." It was God who raised Him.

This is a wonderful fact, especially when we remember that on the cross God forsook Him, and thus seemed to be against Him. He was left in the darkness of death to grapple with Satan's power alone, while the judgment of a holy God rested on Him. "He who knew no sin *was made sin for us*." Wonder of wonders! Think of the blessed holy Son of God being made sin *for us*.

Thank God this is past for ever for Him and for us. Now we have a change of place, and so has He. "We are made the righteousness of God *in him*." What a contrast and what a blessed change! It is a change from the deepest misery to the deepest joy. From the blackest darkness into the brightest light, even the light and joy of God's love. "As he is, so are we in this world." Marvellous statement!

Well may the believer rejoice and be full of confidence. Death has no claim, and ought to have no terror for us. "To die *is gain*." Death can only conduct us into the Lord's blessed presence. *That* should be no terror but the deepest joy. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, *but is passed from death unto life*." "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Moreover, the Lord may soon come for us. If He bore our sins He bore them in view of the fact that He will come again and receive us unto Himself. Hence the apostle says, "So, Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without *sin* unto salvation."

We wait for the redemption of our bodies. We wait to be conformed to the image of God's blessed Son. We wait to be taken in the joy of the Father's house, where His love will be more fully known and enjoyed. We wait to be displayed in the same manifested glory as Christ. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with him in glory."

No wonder the apostle encourages the saints who had lost all or given up all for Christ in this world, by saying that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us." "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

What a bright future and glorious prospect is held out to the believer. What has an unbeliever but death before him? (and however he may dislike the thought of it) "after this the judgment." Besides no unbeliever is happy in the present. We are, thank God. His love and the sense of His smile resting on us makes us so happy that we could say to a king surrounded by all the pomp and glory of this world, "I would to God you were as happy as I."

The present is only a little foretaste of the future, when we shall be at home with Christ, out of all the trials and temptations of this poor world, where no cloud will ever rise to darken the horizon of that sky, and where no tempest will ever break to cause the least discomfort or sorrow.

Reader, we invite you to come to Christ now. He will meet the need of your guilty conscience and satisfy your restless heart, and pleasures for evermore shall be yours. Come as you are and where you are. Do not try to improve yourself. *He wants you.* He will save you now, and give you the deep joy of present salvation. COME! P. W.

THE EVANGELIST AND HIS WORK.

WHEN Paul was converted, "straightway he preached Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20), before he got really into the Assembly. He was brought into the Assembly at Jerusalem by the commendation of Barnabas, and the saints soon recognised his worth, as he "spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus" (ix. 20-29).

Why did Peter report at Jerusalem the wondrous tidings that "the Gentiles also had received the Word of God"? (Acts xi. 1). To share with the Assembly the victories of the gospel. Would that there were more of that kind of thing to-day, but alas, we are

often too self-occupied to be interested in another's work. They were then of one heart, one mind, and one soul. It was not with them the question of this gift or that gift. God was working, and no matter who it was by, all the rest were interested.

See how this is illustrated in the eleventh chapter : "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them : and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem ; and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith : and much people was added unto the Lord" (vers. 19-24).

When the happy tidings of these things came unto the ears of the Church of Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas, all the way to Antioch, a distance of about four hundred miles. They were interested in others. When you hear there is a beautiful work of God going on fifty, or five hundred miles away, do you send some one to see how it is getting on? If you

do, mind he must be a good man. The man they sent "was a good man, and *full* of the Holy Ghost and of faith." That is the kind of man to send. If he is not a man of that sort, he will do a lot of mischief. They sent down that man to help the preachers and the converts, and when he was come he was made glad, we read. It is a great thing to be always set to help everybody else. Barnabas comes and sees a company of happy saints, and of course he was made glad. A wonderful thing is the grace of God when it works. Why does He not work more in our midst? That is a serious question.

Now come to the thirteenth chapter, and see how the gospel spread from this same Antioch. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (vers. 1-4). Now observe, this was no work of the Assembly, but the Assembly was allowed to have fellowship with what the Holy Ghost was doing. The Holy Ghost led these servants, but He lets the Assembly have fellowship. Could not you do the same? "And when they had fasted and

prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." I would be very glad if you did that to me. Mark this, no hypocrisy. If I pray, and put my hands upon a man, I am identified with him. If I put my hand on my brother in prayer, I ought next to put my hand into my pocket, to help him, because "the labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke x. 7). The Assembly at Antioch was identified with these two men, and doubtless sustained them.

In the fourteenth chapter, you find Paul and Barnabas back again at Antioch. When they get there, what do they immediately do? Let us read: "And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia: and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (vers. 25-27). They gathered the Church together, and rehearsed all that God had done with them. When you come back from a happy and successful gospel campaign, do you, dear evangelists, gather the Church together to share the good news? Oh, you say, we should not like to put ourselves forward like that. The saints would not come together for that purpose. I am very sorry for the saints. That is all I can say. If you were to go home and do it, probably some would say, He thinks a great deal of himself. If that be so, at least something else is manifest, the Assembly nowadays has

lost its first love for the gospel, and its triumphs. In plain language, we are not so simple as they were in that day. God enlarge our hearts, for we need it.

Pass on now to the fifteenth chapter: "And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren" (ver. 3). There again you have the servants sharing their common joy with the saints, and causing great joy. That is what took place in those early days of freshness and simplicity. I am only telling you what the Lord has recorded, just to stir us all up. And if you are not happy, I am. I know the secret of all this communion in the effects of the gospel. They had all one heart for Christ. They thought only of the glory of Christ. Oh, brethren, the Lord give us to be more in the enjoyment of His love.

I have been greatly struck, lately, with the way in which the Lord sought to educate, and then sent out His servants when He was here. "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth" (John iv. 34-37). Oh, what an evangelist He was. Come from the

Father's heart, and laden with all its love, He travelled all through that burning desert to reach, and fill one empty, sinful heart. Son of God, we adore Thee! He went to death for you and me. Beloved brethren, what are we going to do for Him? Are not souls perishing on every hand? What are we doing? Are we carrying the light, the blessed gospel of God's grace, to them? Mark, it is a responsibility laid on us. Here the Lord says, LOOK, the fields are white already to harvest. May He press these words upon your hearts and mine.

If we go elsewhere, we find it written:—"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; *pray ye therefore* the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. ix. 36-38). "PRAY YE." Oh, how beautiful! In the fourth of John it was, Look ye; here it is, Pray ye. He, so to speak, says, I will take you into fellowship with Me in the work. I do not know that they did pray, but anyway He sent out twelve: "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. . . . These twelve Jesus sent forth" (Matt. x. 1, 5). Oh, beloved, the labourers are indeed few. Do we pray after this sort?

In the sixteenth chapter of Mark, we find Him risen from the dead, and there He says in the fifteenth

verse, "Go YE into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." That is it. People sometimes say to me, Where shall we preach? He tells you, "Go ye into *all the world*." I quite admit, if you contend for it, that it was a special injunction to the twelve. But would you limit it to them? We have been noticing that "he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, *for the work of the ministry*; for the edifying of the Body of Christ" (Eph. iv: 11, 12). That is to say, He gives in His blessed grace, all that is necessary for the pathway of the saints, and for the carrying out of His work down here, whether in the Assembly, or outside it in the world. "Go ye into all the world," is an imperative command. Have we hearts to obey? Are our hearts so sweetly in tune with Him as to be ready to go?

This answers the question—*Where* to preach? If I look at the apostle Paul, I find him preaching in all sorts of places. Hill-tops, river-sides, market-places, prisons, palaces, and synagogues, and his own hired house, all heard his voice. The point is that the servant is to be at the command of the Lord to carry out the testimony. His only exercise was as to how the Lord's word was to be addressed to those to whom his Master had sent him. Nor was it a question of fellowship with the Assembly, though his oft-repeated request for their prayers showed how he valued their fellowship. If their hearts are right, they will be praying to the Lord for blessing.

The servant gets his commission from his Master. He wants no other authorisation or commendation. "For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to *every man his work*, and commanded the porter to watch" (Mark xiii. 34). He has authority from his Lord: that is enough. What will be the result? A reward for all service rendered to Him by-and-by.

The thirty-second chapter of Isaiah gives us a good illustration of the query, *Where shall we preach?* "Blessed are ye that *sow beside all waters*, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass" (ver. 20). Sow beside all waters. What is the meaning of that? Diligent toil.

But there is not only the question of where to preach, but *when* to preach? Solomon furnishes a good answer: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight: for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. *In the morning* sow thy seed, and *in the evening* withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or

that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Eccles. xi. 1-6). In the East they sow the seed upon the waters, the water subsides, and the seed drops into a soft fertile bed. This is not preaching. It is you and I just being keen to drop the blessed seed of the Word of God in the soul, wherever God carries us. You are to be a person going about with the heavenly seed-basket on your arm, dropping the seed wherever you go. It may be to a saint. It may be to a sinner. The fact is, far too much is left to the preachers. Verse 4 teaches us not to be governed by circumstances. I think God often gives us a fair wind. It took Paul only a day and a half to come to Philippi from Troas with the gospel (Acts xvi. 11, 12). But it took him five days to get back to Troas again (Acts xx. 6). Do you think God has told us that for nothing? God did not put that in His book without purpose.

Go on with your work. Let nothing hinder you. That is the great thing for a saint to-day. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand." That is *when* to preach. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. iv. 2). *Where* to preach? All the world your parish. *When* to do it? Morning and evening, *always* at it.

How to preach is also of importance, and Scripture tells us how to do it. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him"

(Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6). They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. I think that is the How. There is a moral state. There is exercise of soul. And therefore you sow in tears, and reap in joy. That is a beautiful answer to the How, both in the way you go out, and in the way you present the truth.

Again we get an illustration of this in Paul's history. "And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed" (Acts xiv. 1). Connect that with "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And Paul and Barnabas so spake that a multitude believed. It is said of George Whitefield that he so felt the love of God, on the one hand, and the need of souls on the other, that he often wept over them when preaching. Little wonder that they wept under him. The Lord help you and me to preach like that.

What God looks for is a willing heart. You may be as devoted as you like to be, and will be no more. You may yield all to Christ. There is no *must* when it is a question of devotion to Christ. I never say to a person, You must be devoted. But I sometimes say, You may be devoted. We all have the opportunity to be such, and it is a fatal mistake if we miss that opportunity.

W. T. P. W.

SOVEREIGN MERCY; OR, MY BROTHER'S CONVERSION.

MY brother was in his nineteenth year. Strong and healthy in body, spirited and vigorous in mind, we never expected that he would be the first to make a breach in the family circle. Much less did he think that he was so near his end. But so it was.

Death stays not its claims for the young. The babe is taken from its mother's breast; the youth is cut down in the prime of life; the father or mother succumbs beneath its stroke leaving a family to mourn their loss. It enters into the dwelling of the rich and of the poor, of the king and of the peasant. Oh! the cruel hand of death.

In a few weeks my brother was brought to its very door. By letter I was informed that he was in a critical condition, but what was worse, the same letter intimated that as yet he had made no confession of Christ. A few days later a telegram summoned me home immediately. There was no hope. I thanked God that if there was no hope for the body there was hope for the soul. I felt assured that he would be saved before he died.

After a weary journey of the greater part of a day I reached my destination. A few hurried words to my parents, who said that he was still unsaved, and in a few moments I was standing by the bedside of my dear brother. I quietly asked all to leave the room

so that we might be left alone. What a solemn moment it seemed to me ! The sufferer lay in intense agony of body. I felt as if I were in the presence of death. I spoke a little about his condition, and that he might soon be called hence. "Now," I said, "what about *Jesus* ?"

His answer filled my heart with joy unspeakable. It ran as follows, "*Jesus* has been with me while I was lying here. No one knew it, but as I lay in quietness He came to me, and spoke to me, and showed me all about it, and now I am ready to die."

"And what did *Jesus* show you ?" I asked. "All about my sins," was the reply, "because He Himself bore them *all* on the cross."

The more I questioned him, the more I became convinced that God had saved his soul. No servant had been sent with the word of salvation, but in sovereign mercy God had come in to point him to *Jesus*, and to give him faith to accept that same *Jesus* as *his* Saviour.

We spoke together afterwards about God's righteousness being unto all and upon all them that believe (Rom. iii. 22). The result was that God would not impute sin to the believer but righteousness. *Jesus* had accomplished atonement and redemption on the cross, and now righteousness was reckoned to the believer in *Jesus* on the basis of faith and not works (Rom. iv. 5). Thus the apostle could say, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

My dear brother grasped these wondrous truths. They placed his feet on a sure foundation. From

that moment until the Lord took him home to glory, his soul was filled with peace, and his heart was so full of heavenly joy that his great desire was "to depart to be with Christ, which is far better." Jesus so commanded his love that every other attraction dwindled into insignificance. The things of time affected him not, because in spirit he was already in another scene.

The Lord graciously allowed him to remain with us a few weeks longer. To the surprise of all he seemed to recover a little, and the doctor informed us that, in a few months he would be well again. On hearing this he affirmed that the doctor was wrong, and he added, "*I know* the Lord is going to take me."

"Besides," he continued, "I don't want to remain down here, I want to go to be *with Jesus*." The One who had died for him, and washed away his sins, had won his heart.

He continued, however, to improve in body, but as he himself foretold, the Lord did take him. Peacefully he passed away to be absent from the body but present with the Lord. The desire of his heart was granted. Sorrowful friends might weep over his corpse, but he had gone to the land where all tears are for ever past.

After his conversion, the subject that interested him most was the coming of the Lord. For hours he would lie listening with the deepest interest while his sisters would picture to him that blessed hope. He was aware of the fact that death was at hand, and he rejoiced at the prospect of going to be with

the One who loved him and gave Himself for him. But then Jesus might come before he died. If not, he would be among the sleeping saints who would be raised incorruptible when Jesus should come. His great concern was to get into the presence of "*Yon lovely man in the glory*"—Jesus. Death had no terror for him, for Jesus had been there. He had extracted the sting of death. But more, it was by going into death that Jesus had given expression to His love. Oh, the blessedness of being able to look at death and say, "It not only speaks of the existence of sin, but also of the boundless love of the Father and the Son.

"By sin came death," 'tis true, but further, "God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). How beautifully it is expressed in the lines—

"Love that on death's dark vale
Its sweetest odours spread,
Where sin o'er all seemed to prevail
Redemption's glory shed."

My reader, let me ask you, in all affection for your soul, Where would death land *you*? In heaven or hell? I know you are hoping to reach heaven at last, but I wonder when that "last" will come for you. It may be as you read this paper, that death's clammy fingers will stop the beatings of your heart. Should this be so, what about your soul? Would you be with Jesus in glory or in the regions of the damned, which? Oh, don't be careless about that which is infinitely more important than anything else.

“To lose your wealth is much,
To lose your health is more,
To lose your soul is such a loss
As no man can restore.”

Jesus died for *you*. We read, “Who gave himself a ransom for *all*,” and hence God’s desire is that *all* might be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4-6).

How good God is! We deserve eternal banishment from His presence, but instead of that He has opened up a way of blessing for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus. He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. God could not have given a greater gift, and He could not have given a less. He could not have given a greater, because there was none greater than the One who could say, “I and my Father are one.”

Neither could He have given a less, because no other was capable of taking up the question of sin and settling it. Man could not touch the question. He could not purge it out of his own heart. “The heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things” (see also Matt. xv. 19). That describes your heart and mine.

Nor could angels have undertaken the mighty task. Many of them have been unable to maintain their first estate (Jude 6). No less a one than God’s beloved Son could take up the question. Blessed be God, He has met every claim of a holy God against the sinner who trusts Him. How then are *you* going to treat the Christ of God? Are you going to accept Him as your Saviour or reject him? The greater the

gift, the greater is the responsibility in refusing it. God's desire is to bless you. His heart is full of love towards you. But turn your back on such a God now, and one day you will take your place in judgment before Him (Acts xvii. 31).

The lowly Nazarene, the rejected Saviour, will soon rise and shut the door, and then every ray of hope for the unsaved soul will be gone for ever. *Now*, He lingers over a guilty world, not willing that any should perish. Never is a cry from a penitent heart unheeded. As in the case of my brother, Jesus will meet you just where you are, whatever be the circumstances in which you are placed. Won't *you* trust Jesus *now*? "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." J. T. C.

IF UNREPENTANT, YOUR SINS WILL MEET YOU ONE DAY.

SIN IS AN AWFUL REALITY. It is one of the most stupendous facts in the universe. It has been stalking about this world for the past six thousand years, cursing, blighting, withering, blasting, damning all that it comes in contact with.

Wherever it travels it brings poison in its breath. Whatever it touches it inflicts a sting more deadly than the most venomous reptile. It has put the whole world out of joint, and turned it into a moral chaos.

Its devastating effects are seen in the various forms of misery around us to-day. Its awful curse is witnessed in the drunkenness and immorality, lying and deceit, practised both in town and country.

The workhouses, asylums, and graveyards tell the ghastly tale of sorrow and suffering it has brought in its train. No one has escaped its poisonous venom. The king and the peasant, the learned and the illiterate, are alike affected by it. No circle of society can claim exemption from the evil. The sad havoc it has wrought no plummet can fathom, no understanding can grasp. It baffles all description and beggars all language to explain. It is only known to God, and will not be fully manifested until the judgment throne is set.

THE RESULT OF ONE SIN.

One sin drove the brightest cherub out of heaven. For one sin the angels that kept not their first estate are reserved in chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day. One sin drove our first parents out of Paradise. For one sin the earth opened and swallowed Korah and all his company. One sin hindered Moses from entering the promised land. For one sin Achan was stoned to death. One sin brought down the judgment of God on King Uzziah, and he was smitten with leprosy. For one sin Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. One sin caused the death of Ananias and Sapphira. The results of one sin (Adam's) brought the blessed Holy Son of God from heaven's brightest glory to Calvary's

cross of shame, where He was made sin, and went right into all the darkness that sin involved, that He might put it away for ever, and liberate those who were under its power.

YOUR SINS WILL MEET YOU ONE DAY.

Honest reader, have you ever *felt sin* on your conscience? Have you repented of your sins? Do you now know the forgiveness of them? "Plain questions," you may answer. But you will admit, my reader, that they are of the utmost moment. Your everlasting weal or woe hangs on how you stand in reference to them. Sinned against God you have, "for *all* have sinned." If you die and meet God in your sins, you will be banished from His holy presence for ever. You may not care to be told the truth, but "*be sure your sin will find you out.*"

You may ask, What is sin? Let the sacred page answer: "The thought of foolishness is sin." Have you ever had a foolish thought? "All unrighteousness is sin." Have you always done right, and never done wrong? "Sin is lawlessness" (R.V.), which is simply doing your own will. Have you always done God's will or your own?

Do not think, my reader, sin is a light thing in the eyes of unsullied purity and divine holiness. You may roll it as a sweet morsel under your tongue, but the day will come when it will be more bitter than gall or wormwood to you. Think not that you can evade looking at your sins, however unpleasant the task may be, or that a holy God will forget one of

them. A faithful register of them is kept in heaven, and if not forgiven, YOUR SINS WILL MEET YOU ONE DAY.

Remember, "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap." History furnishes ample evidence of the truth of this statement of Holy Writ. The wreck of nations and of individuals ought to act as a warning beacon to you. You must either honestly face your sins now in the light of God's pardoning grace or in the light of His judgment throne. If you face them now honestly in this day of abounding grace, and own, "I have sinned," you will hear Him say to you, "*Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace.*" If not, you will have them bound on you for all eternity, in the anguish of dark despair, where hope shall never come.

SIN AND HOLINESS CANNOT DWELL together. Holiness abhors sin, and righteousness must judge it. My past history of guilt God cannot overlook. If He took no notice of it, He would not be a righteous God. To admit me into heaven in my sins would be to deny His holy character and utterly defile that blessed place. The unholy, the profane, the unclean, the immoral, the drunkard, the swearer, the liar, the cheat, the hypocrite, would only defile. To admit such into heaven is altogether repugnant to the thought of what heaven is.

How then can God righteously clear me from my sins and make me fit to dwell in that holy place? These are questions that should be of the utmost importance to all, especially to every awakened sin-

burdened conscience, and to the soul that feels its own pollution through sin's defilement.

Only one way was open, and that was that One should be found who could bear the penalty of sin in such a way as would meet the righteous requirements of God's righteous throne. This, in mercy, God gave His own Son to accomplish. He proved His love to us (who deserved it not) in so doing. Christ came to express the love of God to us and to bear the judgment that lay upon us. God's grace is now going out to all through a righteous channel.

When visiting one day in the workhouse at L—— I repeated in the ears of a Roman Catholic inmate who was confined to bed, these beautiful and most eloquent lines:—

“Could I with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill,
Were the whole sky of parchment made,
And every man a scribe by trade—
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky.”

On the next bed lay a woman with her eyes closed, suffering, I was told, from paralysis. Though her eyes were closed, yet her ears were open to the sweet but simple story of God's love, as expressed in the foregoing beautiful lines. As she opened her dark and most brilliant eyes upon me, she exclaimed what I can never forget, and have often told, “Ah, sir, no parent would give her child for her friend, but God gave His Son for His enemies.”

What a powerful sermon in few words. If God has allowed sin to come into this world to His own dishonour, and the ruin of His creature, and the triumph of Satan, yet He has found the way in His own heart of love, to meet it to His own everlasting praise and glory.

Sin, then, has only been the occasion for God to display His love to man, the sinning rebel. Men may talk about what they cannot understand, or cavil at certain things that appear contrary to God's government, *but who can cavil at such love?*

It is a great and fatal mistake to think that Christ had to intervene to make God love us. He came from God to reach us in all our sins. In the love of His heart He went to the depth of our misery. Let any one honestly gaze upon Him, and there read God's love, and see if, after such a wondrous sight, they cannot but admire and praise and adore. All cavilling flies in view of that wondrous cross, with the mighty Maker of heaven and earth upon it, bearing it meekly and patiently, that He might show out the heart of God to sinful man.

“How shall we celebrate the day
When God appeared in mortal clay,
The mark of worldly scorn ;
When the archangel's heavenly lays
Attempted the Redeemer's praise
And hailed salvation's morn ?”

All this was needed to take away our sins, and make us fit to dwell for ever in God's holy presence. Now the person who believes in Christ and rests on

His atoning work, is as fit for heaven as that work can make him. The thief on the cross had no natural fitness in himself. His heart was touched by divine power, his conscience was convicted of his deep need as a sinner. He confessed his guilt saying, "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." He appeals to the Lord Jesus Christ who was there beside Him. In virtue of the finished work of Christ that man goes from off the gibbet on Calvary's hill a fit companion for God's blessed Son. At once he was snatched from the deepest hell and lifted into the highest heaven. What grace!

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." "And by him all that believe are justified from all things." These scriptures drive all uncertainty from my mind. I rest upon them, and would rather have them than an angel's voice. I know I am justified because God says "all that believe" are so.

Salvation is all of grace. Those who know themselves will be most ready to confess it. Grace at the bottom, grace at the top, and grace all the way between. God takes sinners up to exhibit His rich grace in them even now. In the ages to come He will show what is the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us by Christ Jesus.

P. W.

PROCRASTINATION is the thief of souls as well as of time, and the plunder can never be recovered.

AFTERWARD.

“**A***FTERWARD* came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not” (Matt. xxv. 11, 12).

Professing Christian, this is the Lord's warning voice to you. What is your profession worth? “*Afterward* came also the other virgins,” &c. Who are they? Those who professed but possessed not. The bridegroom had come, and the wise virgins had entered in. The wondrous event prefigured in this likeness of the kingdom might happen this moment. The Bridegroom, Christ, is coming. And all the true Christians, those who are ready, possessors of eternal life and the Holy Ghost, will enter and share His glory in a moment. But the same door which will shut the wise in, will shut the foolish out. The possessors will be with Christ on high, the professors shut outside the door of grace below. How would it be with you? Are you ready? Would you be inside or out were the Lord to come to-day?

“*Afterward* came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.” Afterward! Beloved reader, think of it; how deeply solemn! *Afterward*. After Christ shall have come; after the redeemed shall have entered in; after the day of grace shall have passed; after the long-suffering of God with professing Christendom is exhausted; after the door is shut; “*afterward* came also the other virgins,” &c.

Alas! alas! for all who are found amongst them. A *closed door*, shut fast, and shut for ever. The saved caught up to meet the heavenly Bridegroom, and to sing His praises round the throne of God, the unsaved left behind to pray for admittance when it is too late. The saints in glory sing, "Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev. v. 9); the sinners on earth cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" but cry and cry in vain. Ah! "many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 22, 23). The *profession* of His name will go on even after the Lord has come. Many will still cry, Lord, Lord, forgetting His query, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke vi. 46).

Dear reader, will you let these golden moments pass by, and run the risk of being found outside that closed door of grace? Will you be foolish enough to expose yourself to the awful danger of learning when it is too late the deeply solemn meaning of that word "*afterward*." Will you, *dare you*, continue to neglect Christ's warning word? Think of the awful remorse of all who meant to be inside that door, but who went on satisfied with a mere form of godliness, a name to live and yet dead, and find when it is too late to remedy it, that all their pro-

fession was nothing worth. Christendom is full of foolish virgins, professors with their lamps. Tens of thousands profess the name of Christ and have lamps; but alas, how few comparatively have oil in their vessels with their lamps. How few are saved, and sealed with the Holy Ghost! Are you one?

Professor *or* possessor you are, unless you are an avowed infidel. We suppose you were baptized as a Christian; most likely you go to a church or chapel and have been trained in the Christian faith. If you are married, it was as a Christian. And if you were to die and be buried, it would be on the same footing. Well, there is your profession; but what is it worth? Are you a believer, forgiven, saved, sealed with the Holy Spirit of God? Are you a Christian in truth and in deed? Are you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus? Or are you foolishly living day by day, without Christ, and in your sins? Are you one of the wise or foolish virgins? Answer now in the secret of your own soul before God, and if still foolish, be *wise* now ere it be too late. "O that they were *wise*, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. xxxii. 29).

"Lord, Lord, open to us," "Lord, Lord, open to us," is the vain and bitter cry that will go up from myriads of lips at that awful moment. Yes, and that agonising prayer will be heard. It will reach the ear of the Lord and elicit a deeply solemn reply. "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, *I know you not.*" Had He known you, you had

known Him also, and been found amongst the ranks of the wise. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine," He said elsewhere (John x. 14). But to the foolish, He replied, "I know you not." Alas, alas! it is too late then. Oh foolish professors, be warned in the day of His abounding grace, whilst the Bridegroom still tarries on high. Respond now to the wondrous love of God, manifested in the gift of His Son. He died for the guilty and the lost; died for sinners, died for professors, died for all. Christ's work is done, and God is satisfied therewith. He finished it, and God is glorified therein (John xvii. 4). And God raised Him from the dead for the justification of every one that believeth (Rom. iv. 25).

Tear aside then with your own hand the mask of your worldly profession, and come out in your true colours. Confess your folly and sin, and believe on Him, even Jesus, the risen and exalted Saviour at God's right hand. His precious blood will cleanse you from all your guilty stains. Believe in Him and your sins are all forgiven; eternal life is yours, and you shall be sealed with the Holy Spirit of God for the day of redemption (Eph. iv. 30), the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom. Yes, you shall become wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and be ready to enter in. Delay not, lest it be too late; run no longer hither and thither to buy oil where it cannot be had; but come now, while it is yet the day of salvation, to Jesus, the only Saviour, who sells you all you need without money and without price. Eternal life and the Holy Ghost are the

free gifts of God to every one that believeth. Come then, oh! come to Him now, and you shall never hear that awful reply, "I know you not;" "I know you not."

"Watch therefore," said the Lord in warning, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Every moment brings us nearer to that eventful hour, fraught with infinite bliss for the feeblest believer in Jesus; but with infinite misery for all who, whatever their profession, have failed to trust in Him. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the Bridegroom *will come* (1 Cor. xv. 52). His promise is sure. Any day, any hour, any moment, His people may hear His welcome, well-known voice, the heavenly summons to the everlasting glory of God. Dear reader, does your heart beat with joy at the thought of it? Or would His return be the seal of your eternal doom? Come He will; *come He may as you read these words*. Are you ready?

In a moment the door will be shut, shut fast, shut close, and shut for ever, the saved within, the unsaved without. Now, ere we close, which shall it be with you? Look to it. Be decided. Once again, salvation is offered to you. Accept it now, just as you are, and you are ready to go in. May God in His grace lead you to exchange a worthless profession for the blessed possession of His priceless gifts, "eternal life" and "the Holy Ghost." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). And you will find it true, as thousands have done, that "After that ye (or

having) believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13). Thus will you be ready to go in, and assuredly be claimed by the Lord as His own at that blessed moment. The Lord grant that so it may be.

E. H. C.

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

IF you stopped the average "man in the street," and questioned him as to his hopes for eternity, he would probably tell you that they were as good as those of most people; and that he was doing his best, in the hope that when the account of his life was closed, the balance would be found upon the right side. And if I could address you in person instead of by this paper, perhaps *you* would tell me exactly the same.

To say the least of it, *this is most unsatisfactory*. Too often sentiments such as these are the offspring of simple indifference. You neither know, nor care to know, and this because you have a lurking suspicion that to *know* would spoil your appetite for the pleasures of sin, and instantaneously dispel the fool's paradise in which hitherto you have lived.

Surely you will not continue thus for ever? Your stake in the matter is vital and immense, and its issues will be to all eternity.

But after all it is not merely unsatisfactory, *it is*

totally wrong. It is, I daresay, quite true that your hopes for eternity are as good as those of most; but that you are "doing your best"—pardon me!—I really do not believe. „Your BEST, mark you! *That* does not mean giving the matter now and again a passing thought, and occasionally attending a place of worship. You must, of course, pay due attention to your family and your business, but having done so, are your thoughts and *all* your choicest energies concentrated upon this one point, and do you labour for success with *all* your powers?

No! if the truth is told, the larger part of your spare time is frittered away in the pursuit of pleasure, which empties your pocket and does not fill your soul. *That* is not doing your *best*; and, further, were you doing your best, it would be of no avail. For the matter does not stand as you suppose. For instead of pointing you *on* to a moment when the balance of your life-history will be struck, God points you *back* to a moment when after thousands of years of testing, the true nature of the heart of man, and of *every* man, was plainly declared, and an exact and accurate balance arrived at. *That moment was the cross.*

Do not deceive yourself. *God* knows *you*, the state of your heart, and the value of your professions; and instead of your life being a time of probation, wherein God is testing to see whether or no you will merit His approval, the truth is that you have begun your history, and you continue it a *lost* and *guilty* sinner, and to *you* there appears as to Belshazzar,

long ago, a mysterious hand that writes the word of judgment—"Tekel."

"THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND
ART FOUND WANTING."

Nearly twenty-nine years have rolled away since in the town of Grimsby, one Sunday morning a young lady entered a "high" or ritualistic church for a "communion service." She had been for some time a seeker for salvation; had previously nearly embraced Roman Catholicism as a means of obtaining it, and had now settled down with a round of good works and observances, such as the ritualists of the day advocate as a means of salvation.

She entered just before eleven, the hour of service, feeling *good*, in fact *very good*, for she had made diligent preparation for this "communion" with the aid of a certain book—"Steps to the Altar." She had been "*doing her best*" with much more energy than most people.

The service proceeded, and a young curate mounted the pulpit to preach and announced his text. "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting" (Dan. v. 27). Of all that sermon she remembers nothing, the text itself directed by the hand of Almighty God, went crashing through her conscience like a shell. She saw herself weighed, wanting, and hopelessly undone, and at twenty minutes past twelve, without stopping for the "communion," she walked out of that church, feeling, as she herself expressed it to me, "*too vile to look up.*"

Ah! did you but face the truth, my reader, as honestly as she, the result would be the same, for this has been just the experience of each and every one who has been in the presence of God.

Job was no ordinary mortal. Distinguished by God Himself for uprightness and patience, he stands in the front rank of men; yet when before God he said, "I am vile, what shall I answer thee?" (Job xl. 4).

Isaiah was a prophet of the first rank; when there he said, "I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. vi. 5).

Peter was certainly in the front rank of the apostles, yet when he fell at the feet of Jesus, he said, "I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8).

Weighed and found wanting was true of them, and it is *true of you*, but mark! it is upon this very ground that the gospel is sent to you by God Himself. It is not sent as many suppose, to help men to save themselves, but because it has been plainly proved that men are *lost* and cannot help themselves.

However, to finish my story. From the time she hurriedly left the church, she had no rest; about a month of soul anxiety and anguish followed, at the end of which time, casting herself upon her knees, she prayed that if there was mercy with God, and value in the blood of Christ, she might know it. There and then, peace entered her soul, and I have had her testimony to-day that peace has been her portion ever since, though years of trial and suffering, far beyond the lot of most, have rolled over her.

The gospel is for you to-day. It points not to

yourself, but to another, Jesus, who now sits in heaven crowned with glory and honour. There was a time when *He* was weighed—weighed in a life of suffering, and a death of shame; weighed by God Himself, and the verdict—

ABSOLUTE PERFECTION,

a true and even balance in every particular. Now He is presented to you as Saviour and Lord, and if you will but look to Him in faith you may know that His death avails for you.

One word of warning is necessary, lest, careless and indifferent, you pass on to that moment when you must meet God and stand before the great white throne, there to learn in bitterness of spirit the very fact which in unvarnished language this paper brings before you to-day. Then you will be *found wanting*, but not more so than you are now.

There will be this sad difference, however, that *now* we point you to the mercy of God, and the all-availing blood of Christ, whereas *then* the bombshell of divine truth will surely reach you, and leave you a shattered wreck to all eternity, *without a Saviour*, and *without a hope*. Had you not better come to Him now? Then would you sing—

“The more through grace ourselves we know,
The more rejoiced we are to bow
And glory in Thy cross;
To trust in Thine atoning blood,
And look to Thee for every good,
And count all else but dross.”

"THE PILLOWS OF CERTAINTY"

SOME months have passed since I was asked by a Christian friend to call and see a dying man who, she told me, she felt was ready to take the place of a lost sinner. I found it was so. I took with me a little book, and thereby I learned a solemn lesson, for I found it had no message for him, and the Lord showed me by it that I should only have brought His own Divine Word. "The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Next day I called, feeling the Lord had given me that blessed message for him contained in John v. 24. At first he began to reason on the impossibility of knowing now that you were saved, but finally he bowed to the Word as the Word of God.

I then said, "Mr S——, the Lord Jesus thus speaks:—'He that heareth my word.' You have often heard it?"

"Yes," he said, "I have."

"'And believeth on him that sent me.' Do you believe on God who sent Him?"

"Yes, indeed I do," he replied.

"Well, then, it is not what I say, but what God's Word says; and it says that the one who hears and believes hath everlasting life, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

After a few more words on the Divine authority of the Word, I left him. When I called the next

day he told me he had received the Lord, adding, "Now I lie down on the pillows of certainty, I have Christ's work, and God's word for it." Once when seeing him and speaking of this blessed assurance, he remarked, "It is wonderful, and yet when you look on the cross of Christ it is *not* wonderful."

Two hours before he was taken he said to his nurse, "He has forgiven me all my sins, Jesus has tight hold of my hand, and He will not let me go."

This nurse said she too had accepted God's gift at the same time. Reader, have you? A. H.

THE COMING CORONATION.

"Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?"—2 SAM. xix. 10.

WORLD-WIDE and deep has been the disappointment caused by the deferred coronation of King Edward the Seventh. The cause thereof—the grave illness of the King—has evoked true and right sympathy; and, as I write, deep is the thankfulness of countless hearts at the tidings of His Majesty's recovery of health.

"God save the King," in every sense, has been and is the desire of the heart, and the language of the lip. Never has an impending coronation produced such world-wide interest, such bright expectations, such aggregation of multitudes from every part of the earth, and such profound chagrin, when the long-

looked-for event was found to be impossible, and all the festivities connected therewith declared to be off.

One lesson we must all learn from this tragic circumstance is that God disposes all things, whatever man may propose. It is fervently to be hoped that His Majesty's coronation is only deferred; but the future is with God.

There is, however, a coronation close at hand, which is certain to arrive, and to that I would turn my reader's attention for a brief moment. The question which heads this paper was uttered nearly three thousand years ago. It relates to the bringing back of King David to his throne. He had been crowned, yet he had lost his crown through the rebellion of Absalom. When this unfilial usurper of his father's throne had fallen at the hand of Joab, the question arose as to why the true king had not been brought back. The tribes of Israel were saying, "The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom. And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" A touching message from the king reached the elders of Judah saying, "Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house? Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh; wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?" The effect was this, "And he bowed the heart of all the men of

Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king—*Return thou* and all thy servants. So the king returned and came to Jordan; and Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan" (2 Sam. xix. 9, 10, 12-15).

Now this is but a figure of Christ's present position and future return. He has been rejected, cast out, refused by the world, slain, buried, and sealed in His tomb. This was the world's treatment of the One of whom it had been said, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." The world did not want God's Saviour, nor His King; but it will yet see Him, and have to own Him. For God has raised Him from the dead and seated Him in glory, saying, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1). Before the day when He makes His enemies His footstool, He is seeking to make them His friends. He does this by the revelation of His love, and by the proclamation of pardon and peace as the fruit of His own atoning death.

Have you, my reader, been yet turned to be His friend? If not, it is time you carefully regarded your relationship to Him, for He is coming, and coming quickly. And one day, when the world least thinks of it, the prophet's vision will be fulfilled. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of

fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. xix. 11-16).

This solemn picture of the Lord's return to the world declares that on His head were many crowns, placed there by God's hand. But depend upon it the world will yet own His title, and another Old Testament picture have its answer. We read, "Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, "God save the king" (2 Chron. xxiii. 11). A wonderful day will it be when Jesus will have His rights recognised, and established in this world, the spot of His rejection. Our relation to Him to-day will fix our position in regard to Him in that day, when He shall reign. Truly says the Scripture, "It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. ii. 11, 12).

My friend, if your heart has not been bowed to Him, may God bow it now. If you have never believed in Jesus, may you be brought to believe in Him now, and find peace and pardon through faith in His blessed Name. And then may you be found among the number who are longing to bring back the King. The world does not want His return. But those who love Him truly long for His return. Affection says to Him, "Return Thou." It is the worldly and unbelieving heart that says, "My Lord delayeth his coming" (Matt. xxiv. 48). What are you saying to Him? It is good for each of us to ask ourselves,—Am I ready for His coming? Am I waiting for His coming? Am I longing for His coming? And am I saying to Him, "Return Thou"?

In the day of His return will the scripture be fulfilled, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart" (Song iii. 11).

When He passed through this world a stranger, unloved, unwanted, uncared for, it was the day of the sadness of His heart. When He comes back again, with all then owning His sway, and confessing His name, it will be the day of the gladness of His heart. For then "his name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed" (Ps. lxxii. 17). God hasten the coming Coronation!

W. T. P. W.

AN IRREPARABLE MISTAKE.

NO more profound mistake can any soul make than to defer receiving Christ as Saviour and Lord when He presents Himself in that character for the acceptance of the soul. Should Christ even be found on a death-bed, to have lost months and years of the sweet privilege of following and serving Him is loss indeed. These golden moments are never regained: these lost opportunities cannot arrive again. Every day spent without Christ is a day lost, and deferred decision for Him is often the seal of eternal damnation of the hesitating soul. God's grace does sometimes meet a procrastinator; but it is fatal folly for any soul to defer decision for Christ.

The truth of these remarks has been pressed upon me during the last week, when I received a message to call and see, in the Edinburgh Infirmary, Jessie —, a bonnie Scotch lassie of twenty-three, whom I had known from childhood.

I had often been in the house where she lived, but no opportunity of a quiet talk with her, as to her soul, had arisen till eighteen months ago, when the death of an aged relation after a short illness, gave me the occasion I had long desired. The old lady referred to, a simple and happy believer in the Lord, had buried a Christian husband, brought up her family in the fear of the Lord, lived to see most of

them decided for the Lord, and was also very anxious for Jessie's conversion to the Lord.

At the time of the old lady's death, Jessie was letting me out after paying a visit, when I asked if she had yet found the Lord. She frankly said, "No," but that she thought of her soul's salvation occasionally, and the fact of death being in the house had solemnised her.

I put the gospel very simply and plainly before her. She listened, trembled, wept, and finally said she would turn the matter seriously over in her mind.

Two days after, I again saw her, and asked her whether she had decided for Christ. She shook her head, and said she had many difficulties. The world was attractive, she was young, life was before her, she would enjoy it and the pleasures of the world for a while, and certainly decide for Christ some time; but she had definitely made up her mind not to receive Him then.

Deeply moved by the firm position she took up, I pled with her again, warned her solemnly of the uncertainty of life, and urged her to reconsider her position, for God might take her at her word, and, as she refused Christ, she might shortly find herself in eternity without Him for ever.

More than a year rolled by, when one day she came to see me, complaining of some distressing head symptoms, the result, as she supposed, of a very trivial fall. Improvement not taking place, I recommended her to avail herself of the advantages which the Infirmary offered, for quiet rest and treat-

ment, which she could not well have at home. I saw her occasionally, but without getting an opportunity for quiet conversation; and a week ago, received a message from her, asking me to come and see her.

A great change had come over her physical condition. I saw that she was rapidly nearing the grave. I did not tell her this; but on asking her how she felt, she said, "I believe I am dying, I feel I shall never go home alive."

I at once referred her to our conversation eighteen months before, saying "Do you remember the talk I had with you at the door?"

"Yes, indeed, I remember it well. I can never forget it; but thank God, I am all right now, Doctor. That is all settled. I have come to Jesus."

"Oh, thank God for that, Jessie," I said. "And when did that take place?"

"Just a week after I came into this ward," she said, "I felt somehow when I came in, that I should never go out alive. An old friend of the family, who was a Christian, came and spoke to me, and I was led to decide for Jesus then and there."

"And you have the knowledge that your sins are forgiven?"

"Yes, thank God, I am quite sure I belong to Jesus."

"And His love gladdens your heart?"

"Yes, but I am sorry I did not decide for Him at the time you spoke to me."

"Yes, it was a pity, was it not, because all this

year and more has been lost, in which you might have been enjoying the Lord's grace, and following Him. But how great indeed is His mercy, that He has met you in the evening of your life."

"Yes, He has been very good," was her gentle answer. And then she said, "Won't you pray with me, Doctor?"

"Certainly, my dear girl. And what do you want me specially to ask the Lord for you?"

"Oh," she replied, "ask Him to keep me near Him till the very end."

I did so, and the end came within three days. She passed away quite peacefully, and I have no doubt she is with the Lord. But how much better would it have been, had she believed the Lord Jesus simply, confessing His name boldly, and followed Him faithfully for the twelve months that intervened between His appeal to her soul through my lips, and the incidence of the malady that carried her off.

My young reader, let me implore you to be warned by Jessie's history. She being dead yet speaketh, and surely she says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day shall bring forth." You may think you have years of life before you. Already God may have uttered the word, "This year thou shalt die," regarding you, as He once did to another (Jer. xxviii. 15-17). Tell me, are you ready? Are you forgiven? Are your sins washed away? Is your soul saved? If not, procrastinate no more, but come to Jesus now.

The tender mercy that waited on the fair young

lass of whom I have written, may never be tasted by you. Remember that "God is not mocked." He was a wise and weighty counsellor who once said, "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18). Why cannot a great ransom deliver thee then? It will be all too late. It is in life, not in death, that Christ is to be found.

W. T. P. W.

THREE MEN, AND THE THINGS THEY DESPISED.

(NOTES OF AN ADDRESS TO MEN ON GEN. xxv. 27-34 ; HEB. xii. 16, 17 ; MARK x. 17-22 ; PHIL. iii. 4-8).

I SHOULD not wonder, dear friends, if you desired at the very start to know why you have been invited to such a meeting as this, and I will not keep you very long in doubt: we desire to win your souls for Christ.

When our Master was here, He said to some who followed Him, "I will make you fishers of men," and that is what we are after, we want to get hold of men for Christ. We are deeply in earnest about this matter, because we know the devil is seeking men for hell. He desires to destroy their souls, that he might rob the Son of God of the glory of saving them. The world is seeking men; pleasure bids for men; lust seeks to drown men's souls in perdition.

There are many voices calling to men to-day ; there are many traps. It is because of this that we desire to win you for Christ. We have learnt that there is no true joy apart from Jesus ; that there is no salvation apart from Him ; that your heart cannot be satisfied except in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have turned to these scriptures, and in them I find three men brought before us, and these three men are representative of three classes in the world to-day. I would speak of them to you for a few moments, and of the things they despised. Each of them had things that he valued, and there were things which he despised.

Esau is a picture of a man of the world. Scripture tells us that he was "a cunning hunter, a man of the field." Another scripture says, "The field is the world," and I should like to read it like that: a cunning hunter, a man of the world. Have you not such all around you to-day? Indeed you have. I should not be at all surprised if some Esau had found his way into this hall to-night. You are a cunning hunter: a man of the world. You are a sharp fellow in business; there is no catching you napping when your interests are at stake; you know how to strike a bargain and turn over the money; you know how to make the thing go. In the race for wealth you will be abreast of any man living. Is not that you?

But there may be an Esau of another character here. *You* believe in pleasure. You don't want to hoard up the gold; you believe in having a good

time: a short life and a merry one, drinking long and deep draughts of this world's sparkling cup of pleasure. I warn you to-night, there are dregs in this world's cup of pleasure, and the dregs are smittings of conscience, bitter sorrow, and the end eternal thirst. You may go on for a certain time, hunt well, and have pleasure in the chase; but, friend, I will tell you a truth: the pleasure is only in the chase; you will find that the game is not worth the shot. The world's best will not pay you for the trouble you had in pursuing it; and oh! if you have nothing beyond this world, how fearful it will be for you in the day that is to come!

But some men care nothing about wealth or pleasure: they are going in for fame. They want to make a name for themselves. But, dear friend, the name is but for time, and you have forgotten that you have a deathless soul that will live throughout the rolling agès of God's eternity. Your soul will never die: the grave will not kill it; it will exist through the thunderings of the great judgment day. It will exist throughout eternity, even if that eternity is a lost one for you. You might gain the fame of a Kitchener; it would not buy you a home amongst those mansions fair above the sky; nothing that you can gain in this world will buy that for you. And yet you seek things here; you are going after the passing trifles of this poor fleeting world, and you forget weightier matters. It is strange that men should be possessed by such folly as this.

I have met men who were wise in their day, who

had all the world's learning at their finger ends, who could tell the weight of the planets, and knew the secrets of nature; and yet, strange to say, they did not know, should they die, whether they would land in heaven or go down to hell. If you are one of these, I want to warn you to-night by the history of the man of whom I have read. Esau was a cunning hunter. See him: he starts out at early morn to go hunting in the field. He hunts the long day through and returns at night, dying with hunger. He would not have gone forth if he had not been hungry; he comes back dying with hunger. That is what men are doing to-day. They go forth in search of something to fill their hearts, and after the chase, they come back dying with hunger. They have not found that which they sought. Esau came back like that.

Jacob had sodden pottage; Esau sees the pottage and his soul longs for it. "Give me the pottage," he says. Cunning as Esau was, he discovers that there was some one still more cunning than himself. Jacob says, as it were, "Not so fast, Esau: I should like to do a little business with you. I will give you the pottage if you will give me the birthright. Is that settled?" Esau says, "What good will the birthright do me? I am about to die, Jacob: you shall have the birthright." And they strike hands. The thing is done. The birthright goes to Jacob, the pottage to Esau. "*Thus Esau despised his birthright.*" For one short moment's pleasure, Esau sold his birthright; and, dear friends, Hebrews xii. 16, 17 tells me that he sought a place of repentance. He

would like to have gone back on it, but there was no going back on that bargain. Though he sought a place of repentance most earnestly, and with bitter tears, he failed to find it.

Friend, I beseech of you not to sell your birth-right to the devil for a mess of pottage. The devil has got the pottage ready for you; he knows your tastes exactly, and he will give you what will suit you if only you give him your soul. But if you do, it is because you do not know the value of that soul of yours. But what is its value? let us weigh it. Put your soul in the scale, put all the gold of all the world in, all gems, all fame, glory, pleasure, bring everything that this world can afford, and put it into the scale: what is the result? Your soul outweighs it all. These things are but as the small dust of the balance when compared with your soul; it is a greater treasure than all these things put together. And yet you treat it as if it were a thing not worth a thought! You clothe and feed your body; if you are sick, you send for a doctor; but your soul does not receive a bit of attention from you. Why? Because your eyes are blinded; you are short-sighted, living for time and forgetting eternity. This is the way with thousands; they are living for this short span here and forgetting the boundless ages that stretch before them.

Man, turn to-night from that road of folly; get into God's presence and see things as He sees them. Esau discovered his folly when it was too late. When will you find out your folly? If you refuse

to come to Christ, if you reject the gospel, you will discover your folly in that dark day when death claims you as its victim, when death lays its hand upon you, twists the life out of you, and casts you into eternity ; then you will discover your folly. In that day what would men give in exchange for their soul ? But then the die will be cast ; it will be too late. As the tree falls, so it will lie. Oh we beseech of you, value your soul as heaven values it ; turn to God to-night, and see that that soul of yours is made safe.

Now the second man's case is very different from Esau's, but it is equally sad. The man in Mark x. cared not much for this world ; he was rather of a religious turn of mind. It seems to me he had given thought to his soul's welfare. He had evidently been possessed by soul concern. He comes to Jesus and says, " Good Master, what must I do that I may inherit eternal life ? " It is a wonderful thing to come into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. You come into the presence of One who looks right through you, who knows all about your every thought. That this man discovered. He fancied himself very good ; he imagined, I have no doubt, that he was just about as good a specimen of humanity as could be found ; and he thought that if eternal life could be gained in any way by doings, he was the man that would obtain it. Jesus, knowing his thoughts as to his own goodness, says, " Why callest thou me good ? There is only one good, and that is God." That shut out altogether that man from goodness.

The Lord was putting His finger upon the spot where that man was likely to fall, the thing that was likely to cost him his soul. He says, as it were, If God only is good, then you are not good.

But the man goes on to talk to the Lord, and we find that he boasts in having kept the commandments. The Lord says, "If you want to do something for the blessing, I will tell you what you must do." This man says, "All these things have I kept from my youth." It seems to me that these things were very precious to him; he valued these things that he had kept. People don't keep that which is of no value. He had been storing up these good works, these things which he has been able to do and accomplish; he had been keeping these works of charity against the day of storm that was yet to come, and he imagined that they would be his shelter when the hurricane of God's judgment blew. But oh! dear friends, what a delusion. At the first blast of the hurricane of God's judgment, that shelter would come down. Great would be the fall of it, and it would leave him shelterless and guilty before the pitiless blast of God's judgment and wrath against sin.

This man thought that what he had done would stand him in good stead in that day, and he can say to Jesus, "What lack I yet?" "One thing thou lackest;" and if you have not yet come to Christ, whatever your past has been, you lack one thing—Jesus Himself.

But we read that "Jesus looked upon him and

loved him." Why? Because he was such an excellent specimen of humanity? I do not believe it. I believe Jesus looked upon him and loved him for the same reason that he looks upon you and loves you: you are a poor, needy soul, and your very need draws out the compassion of His heart; He wants to save you. To him He said, "Go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor; and come, *follow me*, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." He had to leave behind him all that in which he trusted, and come away to Christ. He could not find salvation in these things in which he boasted; it must be found alone in Jesus. Now is his opportunity. Surely he will embrace his chance: he will follow the Lord in the way the Lord marks out. No, he goes away very sad, because he had great possessions. He loved his possessions, and *despised the Saviour*. He went away very sad. I should think so, because he went away from the only One who could make him truly glad. If you turn away from Christ, you too will go away with sadness filling your breast, and that sadness will remain with you for ever and ever. You cannot become acquainted with true joy unless you become acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord turns to His disciples and says, "How hard it is for a rich man to be saved!" He said it with sadness of heart. But remember, there are many kinds of riches in this world. They do not always consist of £. s. d. They often consist of things that people fancy are good works. Many men to-day count these things—their prayer—saying,

alms-giving, church and chapel going, as of value to them. They are sticking to these and despising the grace of God which comes to them through Christ. Are you doing it? Do you know what God says? "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." God's book tells me that your righteousnesses are as filthy rags; you cannot gain salvation by your works. It is "not of works." But you say, Was not the law given to enable us to reach heaven? It was not. If you read Romans iii., you will find that the law was given in order that "every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." That you might have no doubt that you are a sinner in His sight, deserving nothing but His judgment, and then you will be ready to receive the blessing. For God has a blessing for you. God does not want you to perish. God loves you, man, and He would have you in yonder glory with Himself. He wants you to stand on the golden pavement, with palm in hand, and crown on brow, with the ransomed throng to sing for ever the praises of the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants you to be happy throughout a golden eternity, and He wants to make you happy now. The jovial companions cannot make you truly happy: the song, the joke, and the cards cannot do it. God, and God alone, can fill your heart with joy, and that God desires to do.

How can He do it? you say. I will tell you. I read of Saul of Tarsus. He was a man who had trusted in his own goodness, and there were few

men like him. He accomplished what other men had failed to accomplish, and in his day he was head and shoulders above his compeers. He had made rapid strides, and everybody in that ancient and religious city, Jerusalem, looked up to Saul of Tarsus. He was entrusted by the Pharisees with their most important missions. We find him one day starting for Damascus. What is he going to do? Filled with religious zeal, he desires to stamp out the name of Christ. Don't imagine that every religious man has bowed to Christ. There are thousands of religious people on the earth to-day who hate Christ from the bottom of their hearts. There are thousands treading the broad road to eternal destruction shod in the shoes of a Christless profession. Saul the Pharisee was the most religious man of his day, and yet he hated the name of Christ, and wanted to stamp it out of the earth. It is mid-day. The sun is shining brightly in the heavens. Suddenly, Saul of Tarsus is struck down on the roadside, and there shines a light above the brightness of the noonday sun. The Lord has shone upon Saul, and a wonderful Voice reaches his ear from yonder glory. The light struck him down, and the Voice reached his heart.

He saw something better than the brightest and best thing of the earth, and heard a Voice that was so wonderful that it won his heart for ever, and made him a slave of the One who spoke. Oh, that such a thing might take place in your heart! That the light might shine upon you, that you might find something brighter and better above the sun than can

possibly be found beneath it! Who is it that can thus fill your heart? JESUS, the One who shone upon Saul of Tarsus, and won his heart on the roadside just outside Damascus. Jesus, the One whom Saul persecuted, whom he despised. Jesus was the Exalted One, and Saul of Tarsus discovered that. What did he do? He says, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It meant that he had bowed his knee to Jesus. It meant, dear friends, that henceforward the Lord's will was to dominate him.

Have you yet bowed the knee to Christ? You are going to. God has decreed that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess Him Lord, to the glory of God the Father. He shall receive the homage of all mankind: your knee shall bow before Him. If you refuse to do it until the day of judgment, you will be damned for not doing it before, but still you will bow. Those who are saved and those who are lost—all shall bow.

A man in the West Indies said to me once, "I will never bow the knee to that Man!" Vain boast! for God has said that every knee shall bow. If you bow in time, how great will be the blessing you will receive! Saul of Tarsus could say of himself, I am the chief of sinners; but the chief of sinners got salvation. Thenceforward he proclaimed the name of the One who had saved him. He got Christ, salvation, heaven; God was his, and all the joys of God's home belonged to him when he bowed to Christ. God is so delighted when a man bows before His blessed Son, that He will give that man the choicest

gifts of heaven. There is nothing that God will withhold from the one who bows to Christ. If you bow to Christ, you will get your sins forgiven. Those sins that trouble you, that bar your way to heaven, that haunt you in the midnight hour; those sins will all be washed away by the precious blood when you trust in Jesus. From your guilty soul He will wash every trace of sin, and make you whiter than the snow on the mountain-tops; He will fit you for the courts of eternal glory, and then He will give you to see that you have something better than this world can give; so that you will be able, like Paul, to turn your back on its choicest treasures. He was wealthy, noble, religious and famous: he turns his back upon it all, counts it dung and dross that he might win Christ. The light of the glory had shone upon his pathway, and filled his heart with radiance and joy; he wanted not the gay trifles of this passing world, because he had got those blessed and eternal realities.

O friends, will you waste your time on the trifles of this world when heaven's choicest gifts may be yours, when the Son of God can make you superior to all temptation, to the power of sin and of the devil, when you may stand with the redeemed on the glassy sea throughout God's eternal day? Be not so mad in your folly, but turn to Christ to-night; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Esau despised his birthright, and loved the passing things of this world; the rich ruler loved his own good works, the things he accounted as

treasure, and despised Christ; Paul despised the world. He could say—

“Farewell, farewell, poor faithless world,
With all thy boasted store;
I’d not have joy where He had none,
Be rich where He was poor.”

His heart was set upon Christ; and in time and throughout all eternity, he will be a wondrous gainer. He lost nothing, no, the Lord will not be any man’s debtor. If you go in for Christ, you will lose nothing; you will gain a hundredfold more in the present time, and in the world to come life eternal. Blessings that no heart can conceive, joys that no tongue can tell—these will be yours if you turn to Christ.

“Reject Him not, O man!
He speaketh from above;
He offers thee Himself, and all
The fulness of His love.
Was ever love like His,
So boundless and so free?
Love for the sinfullest,
Love for thee.

Resist Him not, O man!
He lays His hand divine
Upon thy head in love, and says,
‘Let all my peace be thine!’
Was ever peace like His,
So boundless and so free?
Peace to the fearfullest,
Peace to thee!”

"OUR REPORT."

(ISAIAH liii.)

"**H**E was wounded for our transgressions." "*It was that that did it,*" said a young lady to me at the close of an evangelistic meeting the other day wherein the preacher (the Editor of the *Gospel Messenger*) had spoken very largely on the lovely chapter in Isaiah in which the above-quoted marvellous words are found.

The Spirit of God had used these precious words to carry light and peace to her heart and conscience, and had given her, in divine power and sweetness, an apprehension of the saving grace of the gospel.

And no wonder! The marvel is that such words, whenever heard or read, should prove ineffectual, in a single instance, to produce a like happy result.

The fault lies, alas, in the wretched unbelief of the human soul! Oh! what a damning sin is unbelief! May God deliver the reader from its blinding power!

Now, mark, the first of these words is "*He.*" And, "of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself?" No—never! Then "of some other man"? Yes, indeed! "Philip opened his mouth and preached unto him JESUS" (see Acts viii. 34, 35). Ah! this is the Man!

Our question is answered. Jesus it was who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for

our iniquities—Jesus the Son of Man, and Son of God, whose death wrought atonement, and who is now raised and glorified in heaven as the Saviour of sinners !

Again, "He was *wounded*," He suffered, He bore the storm of wrath ; He drank the cup ; He died ! Who can tell the awfulness of His sufferings ?

But yet again, "He was wounded for *our transgressions*," our sins, our guilt, our vile offences against God and man ; our iniquities, our dark, heinous crimes—for them was He wounded ! Blessed Substitute !

*"In Thee only good,
In us only ill,
And sin has but shown us,
Thy love deeper still !"*

What a wondrous and unexpected discovery ! Our sin met by His grace ! Yes, the first word is "*He*" the last is "*transgressions*," but between them is the fact that He "*was wounded for*" them. Thank God for that !

As the sweet truth came to the heart of this lady she could but exclaim, "*It was that that did it !*"

"Now, can you throw these words into the singular ?" was my query to her.

"He was wounded for *my* transgressions," was her immediate and unhesitating reply. She claimed the blessing. Never throughout eternity will she forget these six words of Holy Scripture ! The conscious removal of the leaden load of guilt is a

fact that remains when other things are forgotten, and the love that removed it still more so !

The believer takes bold possession of the truth, and enjoys it too.

Faith is intensely individual. It acts as though God and the believer were alone in the wide universe. It lays hold of God and God's word. Thus all doubt is driven from the soul. There is sweet rest and confidence instead of fear and distrust. So we read that "Abraham believed God," and he was reckoned righteous.

We, too, are justified by faith and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1).

See how Paul, in Galatians ii. 20, throws the truth into the singular when he says, "the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me !"

Charming appropriation, to himself, of all the love and self-surrender of the Son of God ! but how divinely permissible and becoming ! Faith accepts what love presents, and returns the gratitude of a devoted life. And these words of Paul are just a beautiful New Testament amplification of our verse in Isaiah liii. 7, "He was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and by his stripes we are healed."

Throw that verse into the singular, dear reader, and make its living truth your own. J. W. S.

A SAD FAREWELL.

NEVER shall I forget the painful impression made on my mind one morning I was traveling through the county of D——. The train stopped at a little colliery village, where it picked up an emigrant party consisting of three or four families. There was but a minute or two to take in the sad scene of relatives being parted, perhaps for ever. The men had that hard stolid look about their faces and eyes which told the tale of grief; the women and children were crying bitterly as they said their sad farewells. Just as the train moved off, I saw what I shall never forget. An aged mother was standing at the far end of the platform gazing eagerly after the retreating train. Her grey hair was flying in the wind; her hands were clenched together, and firmly pressed against her breast, as if to still the tempest within. Tears were streaming down her furrowed cheeks, as she shrieked out, "Are you gannin, Jack? Oh, it will kill me! Oh, it will kill me!"

The thought flashed across my mind, "If the parting for *time* be so bitter, what about the separation for *eternity*."

My dear reader, if you have relatives saved by the blood of Christ, and you pass into eternity unsaved, remember you will have to part with them, not for time but for eternity. Theirs will be the unending

joys of heaven, thine will be the agony and remorse of hell. Stay! more than that—you will part company with your boon companions, for although they may spend eternity with thee, yet in hell there is *no society*. Each one will be like Judas who went unto *his own place* (Acts i. 25). Stay! more than that.

Truly and well has the poet sung that solemn dirge over the lost soul :—

“Thy songs are at an end ; thy harp
Shall solace thee no more ;
All mirth has perished on the grave,
The melody that could not save
Has died upon death's sullen wave,
That flung thee on this shore.”

Earth with its waves, and woods, and winds,
Its stars, and suns, and streams,
Its joyous air, and gentle skies
Filled with all happy melodies
Has passed, or with dark memories
Comes back in torturing dreams.”

Stay! thou wilt have to turn thy back upon the blessed Bible, upon all that is of God, upon all that is holy, good, and true. Awful fate! But stay, dear reader, how is it that thou art still alive? that God has not yet come in judgment upon this poor world, hoary-headed in its sin? It is that “the Lord . . . is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Man's hatred in killing Jesus only threw open the floodgates of God's love. In virtue

of that sacrifice God can now woo sinners with His love. He is even now seeking to win thy poor heart as you read these lines in *The Gospel Messenger*. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). If you go on unsaved, the truth is you are on your road to hell, *trampling* on the Saviour's love. Revelation xxi. 8 gives us a list of the company there: "But *the fearful and unbelieving*, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." The sin of rejecting the Saviour is put before the worst sins that we can think of, thus showing how God will judge us if we refuse His wondrous offers of mercy.

Now, dear reader, while time and opportunity are yours let me persuade you to accept Christ, and trust His blood-shedding to put away all your sins, for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22), and "the blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth from all sin." Jesus says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John vi. 47). Why not trust Christ now? and then instead of thy portion being "outer darkness," and "wailing and gnashing of teeth" for all eternity, it will be the joys of heaven for ever. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed

away" (Rev. xxi. 4). "And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xxii. 5).

A. J. P.

"WHAT SHALL I DO?"

IT has been often very truly said, The work of the Spirit IN US produces distress; the work of Christ FOR US gives peace.

The tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles is a marvellous chapter in unfolding the gospel as the power of God unto salvation to the believing sinner—God's full deliverance. It begins with a soul convicted of sin, in soul trouble crying to God, and saying, "What shall I do?" it ends with that very soul praising and magnifying God. How wonderful to read of God, the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit, an angel of God, the servant Peter, a heavenly vision, all engaged in the conversion of a far-off Gentile sinner.

Two men are earnestly praying to God in the chapter. Cornelius for himself, Peter for others. We are not told what they so earnestly prayed for, but the immediate answers to their prayers tell us. The answer to Cornelius was, "Send for Peter, he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do:" clearly then, his prayer was, "What shall I do?" Ah, this

is the prayer, this is the cry of every divinely sin-convicted soul. This is what it is to be born again, born of the Spirit. This is the first great movement produced by the Holy Ghost in the soul. This was the cry of the Philippian jailor in Acts xvi. And that greatly-used evangelist John Bunyan, in his "Pilgrim's Progress" describing an anxious soul, describing himself, says: "I saw a man clothed with rags in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book and read therein, and as he read he wept and trembled, and not being able longer to contain, he broke out with a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

Ah! bless God, this cry is always heard. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee, and thou shalt glorify me." "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

Cornelius immediately sent therefore to Joppa for Peter, and called together likewise his kinsmen and near friends, that they all might hear those words whereby they should be saved.

We have said before, the answer to Peter's prayer tells us also what he was praying for. Not like Cornelius, for himself, but for others he prayed. He was saved, he had peace with God, he had been turned to God from this evil world, to serve the living and the true God; he was praying for God's work—that others might be saved, and that God

would work and graciously use and direct him in His blessed work and service; where to go and to whom to preach. "And the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them."

"PEACE BY JESUS CHRIST."

These were the words that Peter spoke and dwelt upon. Marvellous words to troubled souls, just what they needed. Four words expressed the deep soul-trouble of Cornelius—"What shall I do?" four blessed words expressed what could fully meet it—"Peace by Jesus Christ," and these blessed words are all sufficient to give peace to every troubled, sin-burdened, anxious soul. A sin-hating God, and a sin-bearing, holy, spotless, divine Substitute at the cross, once and for ever settled the question of sin. Blessed truth! The blessed Lord and Saviour made peace by the blood of His cross—by His atoning death—by His finished work. "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." "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification: therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It was God's work from first to last. He gave

His servant the word and blessed it to Cornelius and all present with him. They received forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and spake with tongues, magnifying God.

Peter at once bids them to be baptized in the name of the Lord, bringing before them that, not only had the Lord Jesus Christ died FOR them, to save them from their sins and the judgment due to them, but as the truth of baptism sets forth, they had died WITH HIM; they were buried WITH HIM; they were risen WITH HIM, which delivers them from the dominion of sin. What is sin and the world to one dead and buried? even so baptism teaches the believer to reckon himself dead, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus—henceforth to live to God, and to walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 1-12; Col. ii. 12.)

“Unto Thy death baptized,
We own with Thee we died :
With Thee, our Life, we’re risen,—
And shall be glorified.
From sin, the world, and Satan,
We’re ransomed by Thy blood,
And here would walk as strangers,
Alive with Thee to God.”

Well may they triumphantly sing as saved through God’s salvation :—

“Lord, while our souls in faith repose
Upon Thy precious blood,
Peace like an even river flows,
And mercy like a flood.”

"THEY TIME WAS THE TIME OF LOVE"

(EZEK. xvi. 8).

I WAS a child forsaken,
An outcast poor and mean,
By every woe o'ertaken,
Uncomely and unclean ;
With only rags to clothe me,
Too weak for help to cry,
None loved, but all did loathe me,
And I was left to die.

But Jesus, passing, pitied,
To me in love He came,
He cleansed, He robed, He fed me,
He called me by His name,
He told me of His pleasure
To place me on His throne,
Himself, His home, His treasure,
He said were all mine own.

Since He in grace did choose me
And save me through His cross,
If ever He could lose me
He most would feel the loss.
The arms He clasps about me
Can never be undone,
He cannot be without me,
For He and I are one.

THE STRANGE CASE OF FONG JUNG.

A MAN without 'a country! A strange and exceptional case indeed, yet such is the predicament in which Fong Jung finds himself.

At this moment, while I write, he is in all probability still sailing to and fro between the Southern States and the Spanish Main, waiting for a chance to reach some country where he will be welcomed.

It appears from the *Limon Weekly News*, that he has lived for some years in Nicaragua, and took a passage from that country in the steamship "John Wilson," bound for New Orleans.

According to the immigration laws of the United States, he was not allowed to land. According to the laws of Nicaragua no Chinaman is allowed to return after having once left. Poor Fong Jung thus finds himself in a most perplexing dilemma. The country to which he bade farewell has closed its doors against him; the haven he desired to reach refuses to receive him.

Does it strike you, reader, that this is a case of "history repeating itself"? The case of Fong Jung portrays in miniature the case of the whole human race.

In the Garden of Eden man pushed out from the blissful shores of Innocence in the boat of sin. Never again can he land upon those shores; Innocence,

with its entire ignorance of sin, can never again be the portion of the race that has forfeited it. The flaming swords of the angelic guardians whom God placed at the gates of Eden, for ever bar man's return. Whatever his future may be, man can never regain the estate of his first parents.

This being the case, one's thoughts naturally turn to another country where, perhaps, one may find a home. *Heaven* suggests itself to one's mind, and one takes it for granted that admittance there will be accorded.

But is this so? Is any and every wanderer free to land upon the golden shores of the New Jerusalem? What says the Book of Truth? "*There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither worketh abomination, or maketh a lie*" (Rev. xxi. 27). Does not this effectually bar the gate of heaven against the unclean and sin-laden child of Adam? Can any of us, sinners as we all are, hope to annul the fiat of Almighty God, and force an entrance to His city in spite of His plain declaration, that nothing that defileth shall ever enter. Impossible!

Not one of us can urge the plea that he is free from defilement, for the Bible says, "They are *all* together become filthy," and "*all* have sinned." None can say that he is better than others, for God's Word is clear that in this matter of sinnership "there is no difference."

This makes the sinner's position an exceedingly serious one. Have you ever thought of it? A

return to man's first condition in blissful innocence is impossible because of SIN, and the country in which you fain would dwell in the ages to come is closed against evil of every kind. In view of this what do you propose to do?

The laws of the United States forbid the Chinese *labourer* to land upon its shores. Fong Jung was aware of this, and in order to secure his purpose he booked his passage in the steamer as a *merchant*. During the voyage his conduct was consistent with his assumed character, and deceived the captain and the crew of the vessel as well as his fellow-passengers.

In like manner the sinner may assume a religious character, and make a profession of Christianity that shall deceive all who know him. He may pass through life in the guise of a pilgrim to the better land, and like Fong Jung he may sincerely expect that this will suffice for his admittance into the country he wishes to reach.

But sooner or later the discovery of his mistake must come. With Fong Jung, all seemed going well until the "John Wilson" reached the port and the customs officials came on board to investigate. Cross-examination followed, and the assumed "Chinese" merchant was ascertained to be nothing but a common labourer, to whom admittance could not be granted. He was therefore turned away at the very portals of the desired haven.

A serious thing for him! But how infinitely more serious for *you*, reader, if you are travelling through

life as a *professed Christian*, though in reality you have never been born again, you know nothing of conversion, you have never bowed at the Saviour's feet, a heart-broken, sin-convicted, repentant seeker for pardon.

Be sure of this : the investigation day will come ! In that day every mask will be torn off, every empty profession exposed, every secret of the heart and life laid bare, every sin dragged into the light. All will appear in their true colours, and the devices that serve men on earth will be useless then. It will be proved then, that *God must have reality*. Fong Jung gained nothing in the end by his pretension to be a merchant, nor will any man gain aught by a profession that has no vitality in it.

But to be *real and honest* is to own that I am full of sin ; and if heaven is closed against all sin, how am I to escape from the dilemma I am in ?

The means by which it is expected that the homeless Chinaman, Fong Jung, will ultimately find a way out of his difficulty, will help us in seeking an answer to the foregoing question.

The paper which gives the account of his case asks : " What will become of the Chinaman ? Some one has said that he is practically doomed to spend the remainder of his life on the high seas. In any event he is at least doomed to sail backwards and forwards between New Orleans and Nicaragua, until the ' John Wilson's ' captain has the good fortune to meet a ship at sea whose master will consent to take

the Chinaman off his hands, and take a chance of landing him in some other country. Until that time Fong Jong must sail the high seas. . . . Unless the 'John Wilson' hails a vessel bound for England, whose master will take the Chinaman, he must remain as he is now, a man without a country."

From this it appears that Fong Jung's only hope lies *in the intervention of another*.

The sinner's only chance of reaching heaven lies in the same direction. Unless intervention comes from One who is *willing* to take him just as he is, and *able* to provide safety and a kind reception for him, he must for ever remain an exile from heaven, home, and happiness.

Now glad tidings have come into the world from God Himself, telling us that there is such a One, and that He made the long, painful journey from the glory-throne to the cross in order to save us. For it must be evident to all, that if it is our *sin* that bars the gate of heaven against us, then the sin-question must be dealt with in a satisfactory manner if any of us are ever to be admitted there.

This is just what the blessed Saviour has done. On the cross He became the sin-bearer, and made full atonement to God on the sinner's behalf. The result of that mighty work is that sin is put away (Heb. ix. 26). So that it is no longer an insuperable barrier against us. The blood which Jesus shed was of such value, that it can cleanse us from every spot of sin, and make us white as snow, and fit to dwell in the city of God.

Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift! The road to heaven is opened, not by our own efforts, but by the precious blood of Christ. Reader, since this is so, why be an exile any longer? Why not commit yourself to the Saviour, and trust Him to bring you safe to glory? And, on your way, to others

“Tell how the Lord hath opened,
Opened the blood-stained way
Right from the realms of darkness
Up to eternal day.”

H. P. B.

“I HAVE NEVER GIVEN IT A
SERIOUS THOUGHT.”

WHILE driving on the box seat of a coach near Wellington, N.Z., we passed a ferry wharf where, only the day before, a sad accident had happened. Three little children had gone to the wharf to see “the ferry steamer” come in, as they frequently did.

While they were playing on the wharf, Mary, a little girl aged six, tripped and fell into the water; her brother, aged nine, unable to help his sister, ran home, a distance of half a mile, and told his father, who at once came to the rescue, but alas! too late, for when the father got the body out of the water life was extinct.

“Yes,” said the driver of the coach, “I was just

passing at the time, and saw the poor man carry away the dead body of his child in his arms."

My friend and I took advantage of this remark to try and drive home to his heart the fact of how soon death overtakes us, both young and old.

"Are you ready for it?" asked my friend.

"Well, to tell you the truth," replied the driver, "I HAVE NEVER GIVEN IT A SERIOUS THOUGHT," at the same time whipping up his horses as if to take off the keen edge of the question.

But what a confession, "Have never given it a serious thought." He had thought very seriously of his coach, his horses, his passengers, and the things of time, but death and his precious never-dying soul had never received one serious thought.

Dear reader, what about you? Death is before you, "and after this the judgment," and beyond the judgment, the lake of fire. Have you given it a serious thought? If not, do so at once. Just as you are, Jesus will receive you, and put away your sins by His own precious blood, making you fit for His own presence for eternity. Oh, do give it a serious thought.

"Life at best is very brief,
Like the falling of a leaf,
Like the binding of a sheaf,
Be in time !

Fleeting days are telling fast
That the die will soon be cast,
And the fatal line be past,
Be in time !"

J. H. F.

“WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?”

(MARK X. 17-52.)

THERE is a very striking contrast in this scripture, between the question of the *rich* young man to the Lord, “What shall I do?” (ver. 17), and the question of the Lord to the *poor* blind man at the close of the chapter, “What wilt thou that I should do?” (ver. 51).

The young man was a ruler, and he was rich; but, ruler though he were, and rich also, the question of the possession of eternal life had not been settled satisfactorily in the history of his soul. Clearly, he was an earnest young man, for he was *running*: “There came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” (ver. 17). Evidently he thought seriously of eternal things, and the question crossed his mind as to how eternal life was to be obtained. He had it not; he wished it. He wanted it, and desired, seriously and earnestly, to know how he was to get eternal life. Do you also?

Till our eyes are thoroughly opened to see where we are, the same kind of question as this rich young man put to the Lord, would be put by us. He says, “Good Master, what shall I *do* that I may inherit eternal life?” Do you suppose that eternal life is to be inherited by doing? We have all thought so, at some time. But, some one says, does not the Lord answer him, and bid him do certain things? No doubt He does; but the Lord, when this young

man comes to Him, says, as it were, I will find out what you are prepared to do. And what comes out is this—he was not prepared to do that which would have given him eternal life, had it been obtained by doing. That is clear. In reality, he was tested.

This ruler came to Jesus, apparently in immense earnestness, for he ran, and knelt to Him. Have you ever knelt to Jesus yet? to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God? I do not mean as a form, but with a sense in your heart that there was an immense need, which only He could meet. “He kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” No more important question could fall from his lips, and I am sure the Lord took a deep interest in him, for we read, “Jesus beholding him, loved him” (ver. 21). Beautiful words, “He loved him!”

But he came with this thought, you see, that he must “do” something. We have all thought similarly. When we think of possessing eternal life, the first thought always is, “What shall I do?” The Lord does not answer this question straight; He puts another question to him, “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” That ought to have smitten his conscience at once with the sense, if there be none good but one, I am not that one, and therefore I cannot do any “good thing.” Another gospel tells us that he said: “Good Master, what *good thing* shall I do?” (Matt. xix. 16). Do you think you can do any good thing? I sometimes hear men talking about doing better, nay, I have

even heard them sometimes talk about "doing their best." What folly!

The Lord Jesus Christ says here, "There is none good but one, that is, God." And Scripture says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Here Christ asks, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." I think the Lord gave him the opportunity of saying, "But thou art God." Had he really known, and clearly discerned the Person of Jesus, he would immediately have said, "Thou art God." But, I take it, he saw no more in Christ than that He was a teacher of religion, hence when the claims of the Lord on him are presented to him, he does not rise to them. He could not, so he turned away sorrowfully.

First of all, the Lord says to him, since he came on the ground of doing, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and thy mother." The Lord presents to him that table of the law which bears specially on his neighbour, and what he was to his neighbour. He replies, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." That is, his outward conduct toward man had been perfect. But, my friend, let your conduct be never so perfect outwardly before man, that does not put you right before God. That does not fit your soul for God; and this young man felt he was not right before God.

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell

whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (ver. 21). The heart of Jesus was deeply interested in this apparently anxious young man. Your conduct has been beautiful, He seems to say, but “one thing thou lackest.”

Matthew’s gospel tells us, that when the Lord had put the details of the law before him, he replied, “All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?” (xix. 20). He himself, conscious of deficiency, propounds the question, “What lack I yet?” I will tell you what he lacked. He lacked the real knowledge of Christ, and, my friend, if you have not Christ, no matter how beautiful and moral your life may be, you lack everything. Let a man have and be what he may in this world, if he do not possess Christ, he lacks everything really worth having. The man who is not right about Christ, is wrong about everything eternal; be certain of that. The man who is right about Christ will be the man right about most things.

The Lord knew his condition, and expressed it in the words, “One thing thou lackest.” And what was lacking? Attachment to Himself. You have not attached yourself to Me, and there are certain things in the road which hinder you so doing. “One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.” No man likes to take up the cross.

I pray you to carefully note that I do not think

the Lord desires to teach you or me here, that eternal life is to be got by our giving up earthly things ; that is not the way the gospel speaks. The gospel does not say we must give up in order to get. No, men are "*turned to God from idols*," as Scripture says (1 Thess. i. 9); and turned to know Christ through grace, and possess Him ; then, as they possess Him as their Saviour, what they are engaged in drops from them as autumn leaves. The reason why the Lord presented the truth as He did in this narrative, was because the young man came upon the ground of *doing*. He, so to speak, says, I must test you, whether you are prepared to *do* that which will at least put you on the way of getting eternal life. "Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor ;" because, observe, he took the ground of loving his neighbour.

There are two tables of the law. The first is that summed up in, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind" (Luke x. 27). And the other table is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Had he loved his neighbour as himself? He had not committed adultery ; he had not murdered ; he had not stolen ; he had not borne false witness ; he had not defrauded ; and he had honoured his father and his mother. He was most estimable ; but did he love his neighbour as himself? Certainly not. Why? Because he was wealthy. If he had loved his neighbour as himself, he could not have been wealthy.

Let us take an illustration ! If I have got £1,000, and I love my neighbour as myself, I shall give him half of it. I cannot keep it to myself. If I love him as myself I must give him a share equal with myself. Why, you say, you will be stripped. That is the point. The Lord does not take a long time in reaching it. He says to the rich youth, If you mean to get eternal life on that ground, you go right away, and sell all you have, and give it to the poor ; and thus illustrate the principle of the man who loves his neighbour as himself. Further, you will then have got rid of that which is a hindrance to your coming after Me.

Alas ! he loved his money more than his soul. He loved his riches more than eternal life. He loved more, what he had got, than what he might have got—that is, Christ. The test was too great. What was he told ? “Come, take up the cross, and follow me.” What does the Lord mean by this ? I am the rejected Saviour. Do not you shut your eyes ; let no man delude, or deceive himself. It is a rejected Saviour that is preached to-day. Jesus is not popular. He could not be. The cross is not popular. It could not be. Oh no ! “Take up the cross, and follow me,” was a hard saying, although coupled with “and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.” He had treasures on earth, and they entangled his heart. What do we then find ? “He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved : for he had great possessions” (ver. 22). He said to himself, I cannot part with my money, my being

something on earth, even though promised blessing in heaven, so he "went away grieved." He was simply tested; and I believe we all get tested. I have been tested, and you will have to be.

But if I address one who wants eternal life, do I tell you, that you have to give up everything to get eternal life? I do nothing of the sort. That is not the gospel. The incident of this young man is a good illustration of the sad fact, that man is wrapped up in what makes much of himself, and further that he will not drop the thing that is seen and temporal, for what is unseen though eternal. He will not give up the present things, seen and temporal, for what is unseen and eternal. The young man loved his money better than Christ; he loved what he had got better than what he might have got. He loved the bounties Providence had given him, and he clung to earth, to its wealth, to the things of time. He was as near salvation as you are to-day, but alas! he missed it. Do not you miss it. He was very near getting it, when coming to the feet of the Saviour, and hearing Him say, "Come, and follow me." What is his answer? No, I cannot do that. He goes away with a sad heart. He kept his money, and his lands, but he parted with Christ, and, as far as Scripture tells us, never met Him again. I gravely question whether you and I, if we be found in everlasting glory, with treasure there, by-and-by, will find that young man there.

Mark what the Lord says now: "Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly

shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished.” Then again He says: “Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?” (vers. 23-26). That is a grave question, “Who then can be saved?” If these earthly things come in as such insuperable difficulties, who can be saved? Let me reply. You may be saved if you will have salvation in God’s own way. If you are going on the tack of doing good, so as to give God a meritorious reason why He should bless you, then you will never get it. If you take the place which the man in the end of the chapter takes when he comes to Jesus in his need, you will have it.

You will be struck with the contrast between the rich man who comes and asks, “What shall I do?” and the man in the end of the chapter, the poor blind beggar, to whom Jesus says, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” What a difference between the “What shall I do?” of the sinner to the Saviour, and the “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” of the Saviour to the sinner. Who can be saved? Any one who lets Jesus save him; any man who will let Jesus play the Saviour’s part—that is the man who will be saved. If you have not been saved, why not? Do not you want to be saved? Are you not desirous of being saved? The

disciples may anxiously inquire, "Who then can be saved?" What is the answer,—Every one who takes his place as one incapable of doing that which will save himself; and who feels that he cannot earn eternal life for himself; and who will draw from the Saviour's grace, and fulness, and goodness. You come to Jesus; you heed the lovely voice that calls you, and come to Him, and you will have treasure in heaven. Who can be saved? The man who hears the voice of Jesus, comes to Him, trusts Him, and gets all that His blood can purchase for him, and all that the Saviour's heart can minister to Him. The man who will let Jesus bless him, that is the man who will be saved.

"Who then can be saved?" the disciples exclaimed in wonder. "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." You ask, What does that mean? It is not possible for you and me to be saved by our own efforts. Why is it impossible? Because we are sinners, and cannot save ourselves. How can you meet the claims of God in righteousness? You must be more than a man to do that. You may think your case is not a bad one. It is not the verdict of the sinner as to his own condition that settles it. You are no judge of your case. God has judged you and me, to be sinners in our sins, lost, and undone. He has judged us to be what we are, incapable of extricating ourselves from the condition in which sin has landed us; and, the thing which is not possible with us, is possible with Him. "Who

then can be saved?” said the disciples. Well, says Christ, “with men it is impossible, but not with God ; for with God all things are possible.” Whom, then, am I cast back upon ? I am cast back upon God. How can you be saved ? You must let God save you. You must bow down before God, and let Him save you. You say, How ? It is very simple. It is by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by the atoning work of the Saviour. There is no other way.

What follows is very interesting. The Lord was going up to Jerusalem, to die ; and He tells the disciples, as they were going up, what things were to happen. He went before them, and I doubt not the disciples were very much astonished at the Lord going out of their company, and going ahead. They followed and were afraid. Then He took them apart and showed them the things that should happen to Him. “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem ; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes : and they shall condemn him to death.” If you and I are to live, Christ, the holy man, upon whom death had no claims, must go into death ; and here He unfolds, in the most distinct way, that there is no way into the glory of God, except through His own death. There is no way to get eternal life but through His death. If we are to possess eternal life, it is not by any doing on our part. It is by His dying. The Jews, He says, “shall deliver him to the Gentiles : and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon

him, and shall kill him : and the third day he shall rise again." He was rejected of the Jews then, and He is a rejected Saviour still, for Christ is as much rejected in the twentieth century as when He spoke these words. You stand for Christ, believe on Him, and be a man for Christ, and you will find this out. But what will He give you? His support. It is such joy to be on the Lord's side. It is a blessed and a wonderful thing to be on the side of the rejected Saviour.

But in the moment when men rejected Him, He in love gave Himself for them. He died, and His work accomplished, He has gone to the right hand of God, where He is now glorified. There He sits ; but He is the same Jesus to-day, as when He passed Bartimæus that day, in the chapter before us,—the same tender Saviour, though now in glory. Get you to the feet of that risen, ascended, victorious Saviour, and let Him bless you. If you want Him, you will find Him just as did the blind man. There he was, poor fellow, sitting by the wayside. He heard of Jesus, and so have you, my friend. He was sitting there, hoping to get a little money, and as he heard the crowd approach, I have no doubt he said to himself, "I shall have a prosperous day, and get a good deal of money from this passing multitude." But He was curious to know the meaning of that crowd. He was told, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." No doubt he had heard of His miracles, and of how He had opened other men's eyes, and he concluded He could open his.

In a minute the filling of his purse, and the getting of money are forgotten, and his voice rings over the crowd: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” That is what he says. The people said: “Hold your peace, be quiet; do not make a noise. Do you think He will stop for you?” But we read, “He cried the more, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” And that voice of need falls on the Saviour’s ear, and touches His heart, and Scripture says, “Jesus stood still.” He was on His way to Jerusalem to perform the wonderful work of the cross, of which I have spoken, but the cry of need arrested *Him*. He is now in heaven, in glory, but the voice of need touches Him now, just as the voice of misery and need touched Him then. “Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.”

And what do we then find? “And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.” The thing that hindered him, he cast away. Picture to yourself that blind man, sitting by the roadside, with the people all around him. When his cry is heard he felt, If I am going to get to Him through that crowd, I must cast off my garment—it will but hinder me; and so he cast away his garment. He got rid of the thing that hindered him. Every man has hindrances. Do you likewise get rid of your hindrances, and come to Jesus. Read it again: “And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to

Jesus." He was in earnest ; he came to Jesus. He got through the crowd, until he stood in the presence of Jesus. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, *What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?*" That is the point: "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" "The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight." He wanted to see ; he wanted his sight, and he got it.

What do you want? Your sins forgiven ; your soul saved ; pardon, love, and acceptance with Him? You may have all. What Christ does, is to put down a blank cheque, with His name at the bottom, and you can fill it in for any amount you like. He says to you to-day, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" What is it you desire? That you may see the Saviour, the Son of God, who died but rose again? "Lord, that I might receive my sight," said the blind man. "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight." His eyes were opened, and what was the first object he saw? Jesus! And that is what happens when the eyes of the sinner are opened. He sees Jesus.

The Lord says to him : "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and *followed Jesus in the way.*" He did what the rich young man did not do. Jesus said to the rich young man, "Come, take up the cross, and follow me." And he went away sorrowful. To this man with his eyes now open, what did Jesus say? "Go thy way." Observe the Lord never makes a man

follow Him. He would not make him a compulsory follower, if I may so speak. He who follows Him must love to follow, and that is just Bartimæus' case. What do I read? „He received his sight, *and followed Jesus* in the way.” He quickly made up his mind that henceforth the way of Jesus was to be his way. He followed Jesus. That was right. There is no compulsion. Did I tell you that you must follow Jesus, you would not do it. But you may follow Jesus. If you learn His love, you will follow Him. You will say from this hour, Christ for me, and I am going to follow Christ, through evil report and good. I am going to be for Jesus, and to follow Him in the way.

You have true discipleship here. The Lord help you to follow Him too. That is the right and wise thing to “do.”

W. T. P. W.

THREE DIVINE ALLS.

THE children of God are to pray “for all men” (1 Tim. ii. 1), “for kings, and for all that are in authority.” This is the will of God concerning them.

It is a wonderful place to occupy, standing between God and men in the spirit of prayer and supplication. Not merely that we may “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,” but with a view to their eternal blessing also; for we read,

"This is good and acceptable in the sight of our Saviour God, who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Blessed fact! The heart of God goes out to "all men," the gospel is to be preached to "every creature," the grace of God that bringeth "salvation to all men" hath appeared, we are to pray for "all men."

So when we are praying for "all men," we are in sympathy with the blessed heart of God, who contemplates all men and desires their salvation. It is the loving gracious desire of His heart of love. How blessed then to be in touch with Him and His heart, and to be bounded by no narrower circle than He is. "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).

Rest assured, beloved reader, that there is nothing on God's part to hinder your present and eternal salvation. Quite the contrary: He desires it. God contemplates "all men" and desires their salvation.

Some imagine that there is something in God, in His counsels or purposes, in His plans or arrangements, in His dealings in some way to hinder their salvation. But how can that be when it is written, and God's word is better than our own thoughts, that He desires the salvation of "all men."

No, the difficulty is found in another quarter. It is found in *the will of man*. "I would, but ye would not," said the Saviour, as He beheld the

city of Jerusalem, and "wept over it" (Matt. xxiii. 37).

"Ye search the Scriptures," said our Lord to the Jews, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John v. 39, 40).

"YE WILL NOT COME TO ME."

God wills man's salvation, and poor blinded man wills his damnation. He refuses all that God would bring him into, and save him from, and shuts himself up to a life of self-will here, and to the judgment of God hereafter. What a swift witness against himself and his own folly will he be when he stands at the bar of God, and discovers, when it is too late, his tremendous mistake!

Then see the world-wide provision that God has made to save man. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 3-6).

Could anything be fuller, more world-wide, or blessed than this,

"WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL"?

He stepped into the breach, He placed Himself between a holy God and a world of guilty sinners, and gave Himself a ransom for all, *the one available sacrifice for whosoever will.*

For four thousand years this was foreshadowed in type and sacrifice, and since His death and resur-

rection are accomplished facts, for two thousand years it has been testified of. The Holy Spirit of God has borne witness to the mighty power of the sacrifice of Jesus to save the very vilest amongst the sons of men. Whoever avails himself of that precious sacrifice as the means of his salvation is accepted with God, for it is in the "Beloved that we are accepted, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. i. 7).

In Egypt it was said, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Exod. xii. 13). Now it is, "Ye know that ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

Our song can be, even here: "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

Our entrance into the holiest is by the blood of Jesus, as we read, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. . . . Let us draw near with a true heart" (Heb. x. 19-22).

Our theme in glory will be, "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by the blood out of every kingdom, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. v. 9).

Reader, what will keep you out of heaven and shut you up in hell for ever, is *your own obstinate*

and perverse will. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," is a word that should ring in your ears, and show you how the matter stands.

Friend, the saints of God are bidden to pray "for ALL men"; God "will have ALL men to be saved"; Christ "gave himself a ransom for ALL"; and can you, in spite of those three divine alls, rush on refusing all, and be lost for ever?

If so, then in hell these "alls" shall be a witness against you for ever.

But why go to hell when you can be saved and go to heaven and be happy for ever?

May your eyes be opened.

E. A.

A HOSPITAL VISIT.

WHEN the floodgates of fury, with which the late war assailed us, were fully opened, it was my happy privilege along with other loved friends, to visit the world-renowned Netley Hospital.

Every ward in this colossal edifice was filled with wounded and fevered men—in fact, the demand was so great that outside huts had to be erected to supply the need of sick and dying.

I would like to call the attention of my reader to one ward we were allowed to enter. A wonderful silence seemed to be almost felt. Beds in beautiful order, but in them lay the sunken frames of fevered men; the deadly enteric was doing its work.

Reader, pause. These men had been under the deadly fire of shot and shell. Brought, we may say, from the cannon's mouth, from the clash, flash, and fire of the battlefield to the solemn deathlike silence of a hospital ward. God had done it. Why had not the bullets hit these men? Only because God wished them once more to hear of His beloved Son.

Opposite the door lay a bed which was surrounded by a red screen. Ah! you say, why was this? Why? Because, dear friend, another visitor was expected that afternoon, so hot and beautiful, a visitor with icy finger—Death. Unwelcome but expected. As I approached the next patient, I saw a priest come from behind the screen. He had been to administer the last rites of the Roman creed: to slip a little bread and wine into the mouth of an unconscious dying man.

Friend, again I ask you to consider. Are you resting your immortal and God-given soul on any form or creed such as this? Do you consider that the partaking of the sacrament is going to remove your sins from the eyes of a holy God, as this priest thought. From heaven the answer comes in words bright as lightning, weighty as worlds: "Without shedding of blood is no remission." Make no mistake; if you are on the pathway of *doing* for salvation, and continue on it, the rails will carry you down into the dark caverns of hell for ever.

Come to another bed. Here we see a man once tall and strong, now weak and prostrate. Gently kneeling so that we might speak without disturbing the

solemn silence which prevailed, he whispers in my ear that he was out in the trenches for nights, and caught a chill which brought on a fever. I asked whether God had spoken to him when in the trenches. "Yes," said he, "I was troubled about my sins then, but when we were out of danger it wore off, and now the anxiety was gone."

Are you, reader, in the same bed spiritually as this man? Were you once troubled about your sins?

Did you feel as if you would like to be saved when you sat on the rear form when that earnest preacher spoke so of the coming judgment?

Were you once anxious to know the way of escape which some you knew had found?

You heard the gospel on Whit-Sunday, and you were in the theatre on Whit-Monday night, trying to stifle your conscience.

Be not like this soldier. He drowned his anxiety, stifled the voice within, and now they were gone, perhaps for ever.

One more bed I will ask you to come to on the right-hand side of the door. A young fellow? Yes. Pale? Yes, but in yon hazel eyes is a look of happiness. The lustre of heaven is there.

"Well, you seem very happy."

"Yes, sir."

"I suppose you have found the One who alone can make happy?"

"Yes, sir."

"How was it you were saved?"

"Oh, it's about eight weeks ago now. I was coming

home sick from India, and we stopped at Malta. Feeling a little better, I went on shore. Going into a little mission there, I heard of the Saviour Jesus, how He had died for me, and trusting in Him, I found peace to my soul."

"You are in no doubt, it seems," said I.

"I've had no doubt since I believed *Him*."

A few more words followed, and I gave him a "Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment" to read.

What a vast difference to the other two! Here was a man, though young, rejoicing in Christ. I never saw either of these men again, but the happy face of that youth comes before me as a hall-mark as to the reality of what he said. Will you meet him in heaven, reader? Are *you* going to come to Jesus? John Calvin, Martin Luther, Wesley, Whitefield, all came to Jesus early, and found in Him a Saviour.

My reader, are you anxious to be saved. Then look to Calvary where Jesus bled and died for thee.

Look from Calvary to Glory, and there see a living Man on God's throne. Calvary is where the work was done, Glory is where the Person sits who did it.

"Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him *all* who believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Now, which bed are you on—the bed of works, the bed of indifference, or the bed of peace, rest, and joy?

"WHAT HE HATH DONE FOR MY SOUL."

"By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. xv. 10).

THE apostle Paul seems to have often recounted the story of his conversion. As "a chosen vessel" bearing the name of Jesus "before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel," he delighted, not only in declaring the glories of that Name, but also in telling *how* it became the controlling passion and hope of his life-work and destiny.

My conversion is not to be compared with his. Mine was little out of the common, his was almost tragic in its suddenness and its effects. Mine can only be known to a few, his has been for centuries on the lips of thousands. Mine will soon fade from the annals of time, his has been handed down to posterity on the Bible page, and is still being circulated in millions. Nevertheless my conversion is as real to me as his was to him!

Knowing how often the Lord uses a simple personal testimony, and that, faulty creature though I be, yet I am a living demonstration of the saving power of the gospel which I preach, I would like to tell you who read these lines "what he hath done for my soul" (Ps. lxvi. 16).

From my childhood I breathed the atmosphere of the gospel, and often was my heart touched by the soul-stirring appeals of my dear father, the late

William Carter, who, together with Richard Weaver, the converted collier, was one of the pioneer theatre-gospel-preachers of the south of London.

When I was sixteen years old my father died, and I entered a commercial house and spent some two years on the London Stock Exchange. I was in the Foreign Market, and what with tossing, smoking, billiard playing, &c., and succumbing to other outside temptations, I soon banished home influences, and began the down grade to an early grave and an endless hell.

My mother persuaded me one night to go with her and hear Moody preach. I went and was greatly subdued when 20,000 people sang "Hold the Fort." Then Sankey's voice reached to every corner of the vast Agricultural Hall, Islington, as he sang "Yet there is room"—sang it with such depths of feeling that I felt like crying aloud for mercy. Then Moody preached, and every word hit, cut, and told.

Moved by motives of curiosity and soul trouble, I got the better of my pride and went into one of the inquiry rooms. But, alas, I did not decide for Christ that night; *pride*, PRIDE, PRIDE got the upper hand again, and I actually scoffed. A man close by fell prone on the floor and wriggled like a worm under the convicting hand of God, but I sullenly refused even to own my anxiety.

The scene in that inquiry room is indelibly engraved on my memory. I still see my widowed mother weeping on my right hand, and brethren praying on my left, and Moody right before me—with

his big broad margin Bible all covered with notes—pleading, as few could plead, with my soul. Yet, spite of the importunity around, and the wretchedness within, there was 'I standing with a smile on my face, and unbelief in my words and eyes.

So I went away still unsaved, and returned to my old ways. Shortly afterwards I left for Australia, where I sought all I could to forget God. But when money and friends were all gone, and I had come down pretty near to the swine trough of the prodigal, God again worked in my soul.

It was one Saturday afternoon in the rooms of the local Y.M.C.A. that a young fellow spoke to me about eternal things once more. He had his Bible in his hand, read the Scriptures, warned and exhorted me, and in the end I promised to pray for myself, and he did the same. He was only about nineteen years of age, and died a few months after in Wesley College, Melbourne, but he was used to my conversion and will get his reward.

It came about in this way. Next day, Sunday, I became increasingly miserable, and at last, late in the afternoon, I went down on my knees in my lodgings crying for peace, and resolved not to rise till I got it. Satan tried his old devices, and cajoled, insinuated, threatened, raged, fought, and bound me tighter with the cords of my sins, so much so that my poor soul, cleaving to the dust, refused to be comforted. But still I continued to wait upon God. Then deliverance came, and light broke in, and I saw and owned not only my sinful self and my sins,

but also my Saviour. In faith I committed my past with its sins, my present with its darkness and distress, and my future with its uncertainties and fears, all to Him, and the load rolled off my soul.

I remember as though it were yesterday, when I whispered, "Lord, I *do* believe Thee!" I had a very vague idea of *what* I believed, but I knew *whom* I believed, and I trusted Him to save me. All I knew was that I was saved, because I knew He would save me, for *He said He would!* He was *trustworthy*—that was the measure of my knowledge, and of my confidence; and lo, the judgment-cloud dissolved, and heavenly light and love illuminated me.

My great desire now was to get a Bible, but there was not one in the house. Out I went, it being evening and church time, in search of this treasure, and presently I found myself in a chapel. I did not know what the preacher was saying, but I got hold of a Bible, and eagerly turned to that blessed life-giving, heart-resting, conscience-healing passage, John iii. 16, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"There it is," said I to the tempter, who still harassed me, "God has it written in black and white;" and I showed it to him, and found that it was as conclusive to *him* as it was to me, for he ceased to assail me, and has never since *even tried* to make me doubt my salvation. I staked my whole eternity on the divine testimony of John iii. 16, and

I do so still, though I have explored wonders in it since which I did not dream of then. Satan may well hate and fear this magnificent scripture, for he knows it to be one of the most poignant weapons in the gospel armoury of God. John iii. 16 has milk for the babe in Christ, and strong meat for the matured. The ocean of God's love contains shallows in which a child can revel, and depths so profound that the most advanced saint cannot fathom them.

Since my conversion more than a quarter of a century of Christian service, and pilgrimage, and wonderful mercy has gone by, but the joy of the Father's house and heart which I tasted of then is still my portion, yea, and it shall be till I know it in all its fulness above. Then in the endless bliss of my Saviour's love, and together with all His own, I shall bless Him and praise Him as I would, for "what he hath done for my soul."

"How shall I meet those eyes,
 Mine on Himself I'll cast,
 And own myself the Saviour's prize,
 Mercy from first to last."

S. J. B. C.

THREE SOLEMN FACTS.

YOU may consider yourself, dear reader, an entire stranger to the one who addresses you through this paper, but it so happens that he knows three things about you—**THREE UNDENIABLE FACTS!** To throw this paper down

would only prove that you were afraid of facing them ; but the facts themselves would still remain.

Indeed you can no more get rid of them than a bird could fly away from its own wings. You have

A GOD TO MEET.

A HISTORY TO ACCOUNT FOR.

AN ETERNITY TO SPEND.

But stay ; this is not all we have to say. It is our privilege to tell you that the God you so much dread to meet in coming judgment is prepared to meet you in present blessing.

If you come to Him through Christ, He will wipe out every stain from your guilty history, and make you as fit for the highest glory as you are now fit for the lowest hell.

His precious Son has died ; the cleansing blood has been shed ; and in spite of your sinful past, your soul may yet be saved. Oh, what a Saviour Jesus is ! If you only knew Him, the thought of meeting Him would no longer be your darkest dread but your brightest hope.

This may be yours, not because you have any merit, but all on the ground of pure grace. And I ask, Does it not just suit your case ? For surely you have naught to plead but God's own love and your exceeding need. ..

Accept then now this all-gracious Saviour, and when you have accepted Him—

“Let everybody see it
That Christ hath set you free ;
And if it sets them longing,
Say ‘Jesus died for thee.’”

GEO. C.

"GO HOME TO THY FRIENDS."

(Read Mark v.)

THREE great evils oppress man as the fruit and result of sin. They are—the devil, disease, and death; and they all three are before you in this chapter. The man was completely under the control of the devil, the woman was hopeless with disease, and the child was dead.

Christ met all the three, and to-day He is the same; He is unchanged. The Jesus of Luke v. is the Jesus of whom we have to tell you, though He is now at God's right hand. He is the mighty, living Saviour, ascended to God's right hand, but He is unchanged, His heart is the same, His love is the same, His power is the same. I do not say that now the Lord is dealing in quite the same way with men. It is not the moment of the display of that miraculous intervention which this chapter shows, which delivers from Satan's power a man possessed with demons. Nor is it a moment when the Lord is showing His power over disease, or the raising of the dead, as to the body. But you get the principle, He still delights to bless and deliver souls.

Now see what is the outcome of this chapter. The man who had been the slave of Satan, the woman who had been the victim of a dreadful malady, and the child that had got under the power of death, all three become witnesses of Christ's power, and testimonies to Christ. That is exactly

what the gospel does now. It lays hold of a man, who might have been what you call a raging sinner, lifts him out from underneath the burden that lay upon him, and sets him on his way a witness for Christ. To the man the Lord says, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" (ver. 19). What does He say to the woman? "Go in peace" (ver. 34). He does not bid her testify, for she was not ashamed to confess Jesus, she had already done so. And what about the child? Did He tell her to witness? No, He says, "Give her meat," take care of her. The very fact that she was walking about alive was a wonderful testimony in itself.

Let us now look at the man. In the fourth of Mark the Lord said, "Let us pass over unto the other side." And then a storm arose, and the devil hoped the boat would go down and the blessed Lord would be drowned. The disciples were desperately afraid of it. They absolutely say to Him, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" They thought the case was hopeless. Ah, my dear friend, do not you be frightened, the boat that Christ is in is safe in the biggest storm the devil ever raised. And therefore Satan does not drown Christ in the fourth chapter, but many of his servants are drowned in the fifth.

Here are two thousand of them tormenting this poor man, and there he was, the absolute slave of the devil. I do not say that you, my reader, have been a man of this stamp? But the point is this, if the

Son of God has not cast the devil out of your bosom, he is there yet. Now I want to know whether that moment has yet come in your history. This poor wretched fellow had an unclean spirit. Unsaved reader, an unclean spirit also dwells in you. It is a spirit of rebellion and disobedience, a spirit of repugnance toward God, a spirit of love of the world. It is an unclean spirit. Every unconverted man and woman is possessed with an unclean spirit. Ah, you need deliverance. Thank God there is a deliverer waiting to-day to emancipate you.

Well, this man meets Jesus. I grant it was a bad case. He was dwelling in the tombs. He was familiar with death. You are at home with death in that sense. And more, no man could bind him. It was a desperate case. “Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him” (ver. 4). It was indeed a desperate case. Is yours less so? The more desperate the sinner, the more delight Christ has in saving him. You are just the case the Lord likes to meet with.

I dare say you will say, “I have tried to regulate myself.” It is no good. That does not change your heart or life. You may have put on fetters and bonds to meet the claims of society. The devil has a great many chain and fetter factories, and a great many servants busy putting them on now. But the fact is, they all get broken. Nothing tames you but Christ. You never get right till you get to Christ.

The Lord's Supper will not help you. Temperance will not save you. It is not that I say a word against temperance, but temperance is not Christ. Suppose you are a drunkard and are under the awful curse of drink still, Jesus alone can save you. He alone can deliver you. But you are not too bad for Him. Sinner, let me encourage you. God tells us about the worst cases that they may encourage us. We sometimes hear of bad cases in our day. But there is no case too bad for Jesus.

The day of miracles of God's grace is not passed by, so there is no case too bad for Jesus. This man was not too bad for Jesus. The state of the dead child was not too bad. Depend upon it, yours is just the case for Jesus. And mark, we want you saved now, not to-morrow. Oh, young man, wake up. Old man, you with grey hairs, wake up. "Oh," you say, "you do not know my life." Christ knows it. He knows all your sins, and can blot them out. Friend, come to Jesus, come now!

Now what do we find this poor man did? He was in a most miserable forlorn condition. "But when he saw Jesus *afar off*, he ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?" Ah, you may feel, "What would Christ do with a wicked hell-deserving sinner like me?" He would bless you, save you, pardon you. Completely under the very power of Satan, the poor demoniac had had nothing to do with Jesus till this moment, and so little knew His heart that he says,

“I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not” (ver. 7). Is the tale of the gospel torment to you? Is Christian talk torment to you? Oh, what a state you are in. Are you saying, “What have I to do with Thee, Jesus?” Why, He is the very One you need. He wants you at any rate.

Mark the demoniac’s action. He came to Jesus. He ran to Jesus. And now see what follows. The Lord says, “Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit!” (ver. 8). What is in the heart of God to you just now? Nothing but blessing. This man says, “Do not torment me.” “Torment you?” says Christ, “I shall deliver you.” Another gospel says, “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matt. viii. 29). It is the unclean spirit speaking in men, just like the devil speaks in you and suggests things to you. “Put off deciding for Christ for a fortnight,” he said to me the night I was converted. Thank God I did not put it off. An out-and-out servant of the devil I had been, but Jesus in His grace met and saved me. He longs to save you and bless you too, my friend.

“Come out of the man” was the word, and Satan obeyed. I love to hear the Lord say this. What a wonderful thing it is when He reaches a poor desperate sinner like you or me, and His word comes and delivers us. So was it with this poor man. “And forthwith . . . the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the

sea" (ver. 13). The power of the enemy was absolutely broken, and the devil's vassal delivered. Hallelujah !

As the result of sin, man is under Satan's power and needs deliverance. In the day of Paul's conversion the Lord said to him, Go to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and *from the power of Satan unto God*" (Acts xxvi. 18). Afterwards he wrote, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who *hath delivered us from the power of darkness*, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. i. 12, 13). What does the gospel do? It brings you out of darkness into light. It takes you out of your sins, and puts you on resurrection ground in association with Christ, absolutely delivering you. Oh, it is a wonderful thing the gospel. There is nothing like it.

What is the next thing? The news spreads abroad that something has happened. "And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done" (ver. 14). "And they come to Jesus," not for salvation, but from mere curiosity, "and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." That man could never sit down before. What is he doing now? Sitting. He is at rest. Have you known what rest is? You never will till you sit at the feet of Jesus.

Look at this man now, as he sits "clothed, and in his right mind." You say, "Was he a lunatic?" Well, you know, till a man is converted he is not in his right mind, because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God. But when the sweet gospel of God enters your soul, and you learn that the blood of His dear Son cleanses you, and you are pardoned, and forgiven, then you will be like this dear man, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in your right mind.

Now notice the sequel. "And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him" (ver. 18). A most natural thing. He desired to be in the company of his Deliverer. That is what one always finds. A person really converted loves the company of Christ, and the company of Christ's people. If you go on with the world, just as and where you were before, it shows that there is no change in the mind or the heart. Where there is really knowledge of Christ, there is deliverance from old habits and ways. And what does he want to do? Stay in the old associations? Not a bit, he wants to be with Jesus. That is lovely. He sought to be with Him.

But what does the Lord say? "Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends." That is it. "Go home to thy friends." Have you been converted? "Oh yes." Told your friends? "Well, you know, I don't like to speak about myself." Oh, I see. I think you had better

ask yourself whether you are converted. If you had been you would surely tell your friends, tell the people in the house, tell the folk you work with. "Go home to thy friends," and tell them you are a converted man? No, "tell them how great things *the Lord hath done for thee*, and hath had compassion on thee" (ver. 19). Do not go home and talk about yourself. Go home and talk about Jesus. You go home a witness for Christ. There is nothing happier.

"Well," you say, "we cannot all begin at once." The sooner you begin the better. Satan will say, "Stop, you might not get on, you may yet give it all up," and so he will try to keep you quiet. Go home and tell your friends. That is what the Lord said to this man. And you say, "Did he do it?" He did, and a revival followed. We desperately want a revival nowadays in Edinburgh, and elsewhere too. We want wakening up. The secret of a revival is usually the outcome of personal testimony. Look at this man. He was a witness for Christ. What did he do? "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how *great things Jesus had done for him*: AND ALL MEN DID MARVEL" (ver. 20).

Do you know where Decapolis was? The word means ten cities. It was not, however, merely ten cities, it was a district, chiefly east of the Jordan, about twenty miles broad, and some eighty or one hundred long. This man's witness, "See what Jesus has done," evidently aroused the district, so that you

will find in Mark vi. and vii. that when the Lord went back the whole countryside was waiting to see Him. Nothing tells like personal testimony. If conversion really gets into a house 'it will spread.

Reader, if still unconverted, let me urge you to come to Jesus now. If you have come to Him, boldly testify of His grace to you, and you too may be the means of a revival among the Lord's people, and of the conversion of sinners to God where you live. The Lord grant it.

W. T. P. W.

ECHOES FROM JAMAICA.

SHORT narratives of conversions and testimonies to the gracious dealings of God with souls are often the means of awakening spiritual desires in the hearts of others. They are welcomed, I believe, by the editor of the *Gospel Messenger* for this reason. Through hearing of what God has wrought for others, sinners are often made to feel how much joy and peace they are missing, and how good it would be for them also to come to Christ and receive a share of the blessing possessed by Christians.

With this end in view, a request was made during a series of gospel meetings held in Kingston, Jamaica, that the believers should write on a half sheet of notepaper an account of their conversion. These

accounts were handed in and read at a special service arranged for the purpose.

After singing that well-known hymn—

“Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God,
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad”—

several special requests for prayer were dealt with. Christian parents asked prayer for their unconverted children; a converted wife sought God's blessing for her godless husband; many a dear one was mentioned before the throne of grace, at the desire of some Christian relative.

The preacher then read two passages of Scripture, which he said would suffice to explain the object of the meeting. The scriptures were these:—

“Thou shalt REMEMBER all the way which the Lord thy God led thee” (Deut. viii. 2).

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will DECLARE what he hath done for my soul” (Ps. lxvi. 16).

The two words “Remember” and “Declare” were to be the key-notes to what was to follow.

The various testimonies were then read and commented on. It may be that by placing them before a larger audience by means of this gospel magazine, they will become the means of blessing to a still wider circle. The comments of the preacher are added after each testimony.

L. B. B. wrote: “I was converted in March 1899, during a series of evangelistic services held by Mr A. T. Pollock at

Port Antonio. Many passages of Scripture were shown to me, through which I saw the truth that Christ was the only way of God's salvation. The passages that brought peace to me are to be found in Ephesians ii. : 'By grace ye are saved' (ver. 5), and 'by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God' (ver. 8)."

It is not surprising that these verses were the means of blessing to the writer, for they speak so clearly of a present salvation, the result of God's grace, assured to every believer. "Grace" means "favour to those who don't deserve it," and God's grace is the source of every blessing that we have. Those who have tasted it can say, not that they *hope* to be saved one day, but that they *are* saved. How many here can say this of themselves?

S. K. wrote : "I was one of the chief of sinners, living in open sin. I praise God that He sought and found me. It is now sixteen years since I have known a personal Saviour. I have proved Him to be a Saviour who is mighty to save and to keep. I still need to be prayed for, for I have many temptations, and am very weak. I am just holding on to Jesus by faith, and trusting in Him alone."

It is indeed good to be able to speak of Christ as this sister does. One may not know a great deal about Him, but the great thing is to know Him as one's

PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

He saves once and for ever. As this note says, He *saves* and He *keeps*. Amid the many temptations of life one needs a living, loving Saviour, upon whose sympathy one can always count, and upon whose

arm one can always lean. Christians are just as weak in themselves after they are converted as before. They are like Jacob in Genesis xxxii. He had been wonderfully blessed of God, his name had been changed, and night had given place to sunshine within him as well as around him, but at the end of the story we still read, "He halted upon his thigh." So with believers. When we come to Christ we lose our sins, we lose our misery, we lose our doubts and fears, but there is one thing we never lose as long as we are on earth. What is it? *Our weakness.* We need to *lean hard and cling tight.*

The writer speaks of "holding on to Jesus." That is good, but I know something better still—*the assurance that Jesus is holding on to me.*

There was once a terrible gale at sea, and one of the sailors fell overboard. A rope was thrown to him, but amid the surging, boiling waves he was lost to sight, and no one could tell whether he had seized the rope or not. So the question was shouted from the deck, "*Have you got hold of the rope?*" Clear and plain the answer came across the waves, "*No, but the rope has got hold of me.*" The drowning sailor had seized it, bound it around him, and knotted it fast.

Dear believer in Jesus, remember this, however discouraged you may be, *He has got hold of you.*

C. M. wrote: "I was a Christian by profession, but a stranger to grace and to God. I knew not the perfect love that casteth out fear. At length my soul got restless, and longed to know about Him. A real hungering and thirsting

possessed me. I was told that baptism was necessary to salvation, but it did me neither harm nor good ; it was Christ that my soul needed. Soon after this the Lord sent His dear messengers from across the waters with the glad news of a full and free salvation. They led me to a personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus, and the knowledge of sins forgiven, that my iniquities were laid on Jesus, and with His stripes I am healed. Bless His dear, dear name ! ”

How easy it is to be a Christian in name only, going through a regular routine of religious observances, and yet all the while “a stranger to grace and to God.” Oh, that I could persuade every Christless professor here to go in for the *personal acceptance* of Christ that this note speaks of. Salvation, as the writer so truly says, is both full and free. It is *full* because it is not only salvation *from* danger and from sin, but salvation *for* glory. We are saved *from* all that *we* deserve, *for* a share in all that *Christ* deserves.

E. R. F. wrote : “Twelve years ago I was regardless of my soul’s salvation, and on the downward road that leads to destruction. But a young man who was as much in earnest about my salvation as the devil was about my destruction, tried all means to bring me to the Saviour. One day he handed me a bit of paper with the word ‘Ungodly’ written on it, and requested me to sign my name under it. I refused, and he said, ‘If you are not “ungodly,” Christ didn’t die for you !’ He told me to read Romans v. 6, and for the first time in my life I found out that Christ came to save an ungodly sinner like me. I accepted Christ and was saved, and knew it. It did not take me twenty minutes to be saved.”

I have met many people who seem to think that

Christ died for good people, and that if only they can be good they may claim an interest in His work. Now the exact opposite is the truth. It will be a blessed moment in your history, as it was with the brother whose note I hold in my hand, when you discover that you are ungodly, and that it was for the ungodly that Christ died.

It was a good thing that this brother had a friend so much in earnest about his soul. Would that we Christians were all of us more in earnest. We were singing the other evening—

“Time is earnest, passing by,
Death is earnest, drawing nigh.”

God is in earnest, Satan is in earnest, and if sinners will not be in earnest about themselves, let them see that by God's grace there are some people in this city who are in earnest about them.

L. M'I. wrote: “While listening to the gospel in the tent, the truth dawned upon my soul. That night I found out that it was not my feelings that could save me, but the blood of Jesus. Just at that moment I lifted up my soul to God and asked Him to save me, and in less than a minute He answered my prayer, and I found Him to be the Sinner's Friend.”

This is a charming testimony from our dear young friend. You know you can send a cablegram to England and get an answer back within an hour or two. A telegram to the other end of the island will bring an answer in less than half an hour, but think of sending a telegram from the sinner's heart to the throne of God and getting a blessed answer

in "less than a minute"! This is better than our brother F.'s twenty minutes. Why should not you, as you sit there, send up a message of repentance and faith to the Lord? Depend upon it, the answer would come, and you would be saved.

M. A. J. B. wrote: "I was in darkness for many years, though blessed with a Christian mother. I was trying to please God by becoming a Sunday-school teacher and a choir-singer. I was always praying for pardon, but in vain. I was a member of the 'church,' but not of Christ. At length some evangelists came to my district, and preached a free and full salvation through the finished work of Christ on the cross. I accepted Him as my Saviour, yet I was filled with doubts and fears for about a year. On Christmas Eve 1898 I was reading John x., and when I got to the 27th and three following verses, the Spirit of God brought them home to my soul, and I was filled with joy and peace in believing. I cried tears of joy for the love of God to a sinner like me. I am now rejoicing in the Lord day by day, waiting till He comes."

I notice that the writer speaks of five things that were true of her in her earlier days. She was—

Trying to please God.

Praying for pardon.

A member of the church.

A Sunday-school teacher.

A choir-singer.

All this, and yet not saved. She had never accepted Christ as her own Saviour. Even when she did, peace did not come to her soul until she saw from God's Word what was said about the sheep of Christ—that eternal life is theirs, that they shall never perish, and that none can pluck them from the

mighty hands of God the Father and God the Son. Is there any one here that lacks assurance? If you have really accepted Christ, take your Bible and see what it says of you. That is the way to get rid of doubts and fears. *Christ's work* secures our salvation, *God's Word* dismisses our doubts. But beware of trusting to a religious life without Christ.

W. J. F. wrote : " I lived a life that was very displeasing to God, although I was a Roman Catholic that attended Mass regularly, and thought that by doing so I could escape judgment ; but blessed be God for the day of my conversion, which came about through hearing two Christians discussing the words of John x. 27, &c."

This brother also owes his blessing, under God, to the golden words of John x. 27 and on. That passage may well make any one desire to be one of Christ's sheep.

A card with that text upon it was once tied to a bunch of flowers that was given to a sick girl in a hospital. As the words caught her eye she sighed. " Ah ! " she said, " I wish I knew whether I were one of His sheep or not." She turned the card over, and on the other side saw another text, " Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." " Thank God ! " she exclaimed, " I can take hold of *that*. If I can't claim blessing on the ground of being a *sheep*, I can claim it on the ground that I am a *sinner*." And you can do the same, friends.

E. D. wrote : " I am glad to say I am saved through the precious blood of Christ, and am kept by the power of God.

For twenty-three years I have trusted Him, and He is precious, and dearer every day. My conversion was brought about through the death of a child in my home, which drew me out of self to Christ, and since then I am trusting all the time. Oh, the riches of His grace. Many battles on the way, but I am more than conqueror through Him who loved me."

One who has the blood of Christ *over* her and the power of God *behind* her is well off indeed. The apostle Peter speaks of the two things which our sister mentions as being "precious."

"*The precious blood of Christ*" (1 Pet. i. 19) is that which cleanses the soul and purges the conscience. It puts away our sins and redeems us to God. Then we read, "Unto you therefore which believe, *he is precious*" (1 Pet. ii. 7). When we are saved through His blood, it is our privilege to cultivate the acquaintance of Christ Himself, and the more we know His peerless worth and boundless love, the more precious *He* will be to our hearts.

B. P. wrote: "I can well remember the very first evening I got troubled about my soul. I went to a gospel meeting where the preacher spoke about the sufferings of our Lord. I saw at once what He had endured for me, and was much affected. I went home and got on my knees for hours that night, and before two o'clock I believed that I was saved, but having to leave the place, and entering on new scenes, I began to doubt, until one night I went to another gospel meeting at West Street. The preacher told how long he had dishonoured God by doubting, and also told the scriptures which had set him free. So I took them to myself, and can now thank God that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ."

We are reminded in this note of the fact that *soul trouble* precedes salvation and peace. I am very doubtful as to the so-called conversion of those who have never been troubled as to their sins. But when one trusts in Christ one's trouble is at an end as far as one's *sins* are concerned. There is no need to doubt one's salvation for another moment. It would be well if all Christians realised that doubts are sinful, God-dishonouring things.

M. A. P. wrote: "About a month ago, by the blessing of God, I received salvation. Ever since then I have enjoyed peace with regard to the future, and have had a pleasant desire to attend divine worship, an absence of thirst for strong drinks and sports, and a desire to be grateful to Jesus Christ."

Thank you, dear brother, for this testimony. You seem to be like Noah, for three things at least that you mention were true of him. In the ark he had *salvation*. *Peace* was represented by the olive leaf which the dove carried to him in its mouth. It was the token that the storm was over, and judgment passed. Then Noah became a *worshipper*. He returned thanks to God for His goodness.

Thank God, too, that Christ has won your heart, excluding the evil desires that may have heretofore reigned there. I have not a word to say against temperance or the pledge, but the *gospel* is God's power unto salvation, and it is through *Christ* that we get victory over the temptation to drink. Cleave to Him, dear brother!

S. W. R. wrote :

" 'Tis not the loudest voice that loudest speaks,
But 'tis the voice of God, the still small voice ;
'Tis not the righteous man whom Jesus seeks,
But such as me the Saviour makes His choice.

'Twas first in youth that Jesus spoke to me,
And once in sickness at the age of twelve ;
But I did not my danger fully see,
And once again I lived for sin and self.

A few years passed, and as before I heard
In far more deep affliction that same voice,
E'en in the sins to which I'd been allured ;
Then came the time for angels to rejoice.

Ah, yes ! God's goodness to repentance leads ;
For even then, when at my very worst,
Compelled by need, and puzzled much by creeds,
I came to Jesus, and I learned to trust."

That is good. No wonder our brother breaks out into song. It is such a charming story he has to tell. He realised that even the angels found cause for rejoicing over his conversion. Think of the value of the soul, when the repentance of even *one* sets heaven ringing with shouts of joy.

C. D. wrote : " When a girl of twenty I was aroused to my sinful condition, and became very anxious about my soul and the way of salvation. I tried to be good, but could not succeed. Then I began to read my Bible, and found that I had nothing to do but to believe on the Lord Jesus. He has made me free from the law of sin and death."

I am not surprised to hear of the failure that

attended the efforts of the writer to be good. It would have been surprising if she had succeeded, for the Word of God says that the sinner is "without strength." I have met many kinds of people in the world, but I have never yet met a person who has succeeded in being good.

If every one would consult the Bible, as this sister did, they would find that God does not ask sinners to try to be good, but tells them that Jesus has done all the work, leaving them "nothing to do" but to trust in Him.

Several more testimonies were then read, all deeply interesting. But space forbids their reproduction, and I pass on to the last.

P. B. wrote: "In August 1901 I went to a gospel meeting at Hanover Street. The preacher took for his text, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' As I sat under the sound of the gospel, I saw the danger I was standing in—Hell! I needed a Saviour, and I knew the Saviour's love. Wanting to be saved, I turned my back against that dreadful place, and trusted Jesus' precious blood. Through faith I saw heaven's gate opened wide, and the Saviour standing with His arms outstretched to welcome me. Immediately the words came to my heart—

'Safe in the arms of Jesus.'

I could not leave the hall without having a talk with the preacher. We prayed, and I left rejoicing, and walked quickly through the streets to give the people whom I lived with the glad news of the Saviour's love, and put forth the way of salvation to them."

This is a most interesting story of conviction, con-

version, and confession. Our brother realised his danger and felt his sinfulness. That is conviction. He turned away to Christ, and threw himself into the outstretched arms of infinite love. That is conversion. Then he went home to bear witness to his friends of the grace that had met him and saved him. That is confession. May many here do likewise. I am sure the writer of this letter has never regretted his conversion. That day in August last year was a red-letter day in his history !

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The meeting was then closed, after prayer by three brothers. Several, deeply impressed by the testimonies of God's saving grace that had been read, remained for prayer and conversation.

It is our earnest desire that others, too, who read these pages, may be stimulated thereby to desire a personal acquaintance with the grace of God and with the Saviour of sinners, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“In tenderness He sought me,
Weary and sick with sin,
And on His shoulders brought me
Back to Himself again ;
While angels in His presence sang
Until the courts of heaven rang.
Oh, the love that sought me !
Oh, the blood that bought me !
Oh, the grace that brought me to Himself,
Wondrous grace that brought me to Himself.”

"IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW."

A POOR widow was induced to come to the gospel preaching, and was much moved by the Word. In speaking to her she said, "I was all right once." "How long since?" we inquired. "Eight years ago," was the reply. "Well," we said, "*what's the matter? Why are you not right now?*" Poor woman, she had left the Lord, and was, like the prodigal, far away. The Father's love and readiness to meet her was put plainly before her, and we left that night with these words—"Tell your Father, and if you do, you will come to the gospel on Lord's Day evening happy."

This poor widow came to the meeting, and we shook her by the hand and said, "How now?" when she replied with a face full of joy, "It's all right now."

Reader, she told her Father. Should this meet the eye of any dear child of God who has got away—left the Father's house, your poor heart well-nigh breaking—here's a word of encouragement for you, "Tell your Father." How intensely He desires to hear you again say, "I will arise and go to my Father." The Father has not changed towards you, His love is as great as ever. You have changed, you have gone astray. Oh, the far-off country is a wilderness of misery, and may your heart cry out, "I will arise and go to my Father."

W. S.

A SAILOR'S CONVERSION.

WE were homeward bound from a port in India towards London when I became anxious about my soul. It so happened that there was a Christian young man on board, on his first voyage, as an apprentice, and much younger than myself, who was before the mast as able seaman. In filling our various duties, it very often came about that we were sent to work together, and being in the same watch (starboard), on and off duty, we were thrown a good deal into each other's company.

While pacing the deck in the night watches we would often speak of home, the place so dear to a seaman's heart. I learned that my companion's father and mother were Christians living in Glasgow, and that it was not their wish that he should go to sea; but since he so earnestly desired it, they did not restrain him from his purpose. They did not know then, in their anxiety and fear for their son, that he was to be used by God in pointing a vile sinner to Christ.

Well, I felt drawn towards him by a power I could not account for. He being in possession of some excellent books, which were given him by some Christian friend on our departure from Port Chalmers for India, we used to spend many hours reading in our watch below, generally finishing with a chapter from God's Word.

This went on for some time. I could plainly see

that he possessed an inward peace and happiness such as I never knew, and I yearned to obtain it. I knew a good deal of the Bible, and in the sight of my fellow-shipmates might have passed for a good, moral, and upright man, but I knew I was not saved. I soon learned that my supposed morality was black and loathsome in the sight of God, and did not give peace to my mind. I was beginning to realise that I was on the way to destruction, which desperately troubled my mind.

One night as we were reading about the Philippian jailer crying out at midnight, "What must I do to be saved?" and was told to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," I said to Edwin (my shipmate) that "*I* believed in Christ right enough." He said, "If you do, you are saved." "No," I said; "I know I am not saved." I had known the story of Christ dying on the cross since I was a little boy at school, but up to then I knew I was not saved. The Philippian jailer had peace in believing, and Edwin had the same peace, but I had not. My heart was now awakened to seek this peace, and all other pleasures, vain talking, and spending the time as seamen are wont to do when off duty, became distasteful to me.

I began now to *search* and read my Bible very diligently. This, of course, directed the attention of my shipmates to me, and they began to pass remarks about me becoming religious; but what did I care for that? I saw that I was for ever lost unless I got salvation. I knew if I were to die in that lost

state I would be cast into hell. One afternoon I was turning over the leaves of an old torn hymn-book, in which were a number of large texts of Scripture; looking over these my eye lighted on one, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. xxxvii. 5). It just seemed to send a gleam of light into my soul. I brought the book to Edwin, and asked him to find the text that he thought suited me the best, and strange to say, he pointed out this very one. It was always in my mind after that, telling me to commit my way unto the Lord, and He would bring it to pass—about the finding of peace by believing.

One night, during the first watch (it was my "look-out" from ten to twelve), Edwin came on to the forecandlehead to accompany me for a short time, and talk about what was dear to his heart. We were running under topgallant sails; the night was dark, and it was blowing hard. The watch began to take in sail, so Edwin had to leave. I just said I would give myself up to God; I thought—If I put my case in His hands, and leave it with Him, He will bring it to pass, and give me this "peace in believing." I knelt down on the forecandle, by the rail, and cried to the Lord Jesus to save me. I just said, "Lord Jesus, I give myself up to Thee, just as I am, my soul, my body, my sins and all, and bring Thou it to pass, that I may believe."

Oh, that was the first real prayer I uttered during all my life, and it went above the roar of the wind and tempest, and right to the throne of God. Such

a happy hour was that! Such a glorious light shone into my soul, which I cannot describe. I saw it all in a moment. I had not to wait, as I had thought, until some future time, but as soon as I cast myself upon Christ, laden with sins as I was, I was enabled to believe on Him for salvation, for He says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Being relieved at eight bells (midnight), I came down from off the look-out a saved man. I went straight and told Edwin. His joy was great. What a happy time we had afterwards. One day, while showing me some letters he had received from home, one from his mother struck me very much, in which, writing to her son, she said, "Many times a day do I lift up my heart to the Lord to take care of you, and that He might make you the means of bringing one to Christ, to be with you." I did not know then the mighty power of prayer, but many times since then have I thought it was God's answer to this Christian mother's prayer for her son, far away at sea, that brought about my conversion.

I now began to yearn for home. How I wished we would put into some port, that I might write to my father and mother, and tell them that I was saved. My wish was very near being realised, for, in a gale near the Cape of Good Hope, our ship began to leak very badly. After pumping all night, our soundings showed $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet of water in the hold. The captain thought of running for a port, but as the gale abated we gained on the water, and so kept our way. I shall not forget that dreary night and morning, but

I knew if we foundered in that gale *I was saved*. This hope cheered me through it all, and, amid the cursing and oaths of my shipmates, I could lift up my heart to Christ, who gavè me a quiet peace.

We eventually arrived in London, and, after a short delay, I reached my home in the North of Scotland. It was winter time. After supper we were all seated round the fire, and I told them then of this, the most eventful voyage I ever made, and how I had found Christ, and of the joy and peace I now possessed through believing. I also read to them a tract, which, when done, I turned to my father and said, "Father, will you believe that?" (meaning the story I read out of the tract). With a quivering voice he said, "Yes, my boy, I will." I then turned to my mother and said, "Mother, will you believe it?" She could not speak much, but said through her tears, "Yes." They were not tears of sorrow, but, I believe, tears of repentance.

I did not speak to my brother just then, but when we went to rest I spoke to him about his soul, and how Christ was waiting for him, and of the joy in heaven even over one sinner coming to Jesus. Although he was older than I and had a family of his own, I urged him to come to Christ at once, telling him what joy it would bring to his wife and peace to himself. He could not speak, but he just put his arm round my neck and cried. I believe Christ was with us that night, and that salvation came to all in the house, as it did to the Philippian jailer's household.

I never knew what real joy was until I came to

Christ. The people of the world think that the knowledge of Christ is a dull thing, That is just what my shipmates said, and they laughed at me because I did not join them in their amusements, but I had something better. Christians cannot join in with the world in its ways and be true to Christ. If the world only knew of the real lasting joy a Christian has, they would just come to Christ at once. Well, I know for myself, for I have tried both sides; I have served the devil faithfully, and the greatest joy I ever got in this world left a gnawing at my heart. I'll praise God for all eternity that I did not receive the devil's wages, for "the wages of sin is death, but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And what can I say more? If any one who has not this peace in believing reads this—perhaps a seaman—troubled and tempest-tossed and steeped in sin as I was, I would say to him—Just cast yourself upon Christ, sins and all; commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.

Looking back over a period of some twenty-five years, I feel no hesitation in affirming that the experiences I have related were indeed the work of the Lord. The changes wrought that eventful night, when I reached home, were permanent in the hearts of my loved ones—many of whom have long ere this gone to be with the Lord.

J. V.

"WHOSOEVER WILL."

A SHORT time ago, in the cathedral square of the city in which I live, a drinking fountain was erected to the memory of a great temperance advocate. Thousands flocked to see the ceremony of unveiling performed, and to hear the eloquent speeches delivered.

The next day, when all the hubbub and excitement was over, I was told the fountain was so high that some tiny children struggled in vain for a drink. Ah! thought I, how unlike the gospel.

The Gospel invitation is to "*whosoever will*." The drinking fountain was erected with the best of intentions, but it was, after all, beyond the reach of a certain class. Not so the gospel of God. The vilest sinner out of hell is within the reach of its blessings.

MAN IS THIRSTY.

Alas! alas! he seeks satisfaction at the broken, empty cisterns of pleasure, sin, and lust, and shuts his eyes to the darkening evening of life and the darker eternity beyond.

A gay, godless man lay dying. His friends, anxious to make his last moments as easy as they could, offered him water. In anguish he cried, "Water cannot quench my thirst; I'm going to hell, I'm going to hell." So he passed to his reckoning.

Solemnly true it is that an unquenchable thirst rages in hell, never to be satisfied—NEVER.

There is none to pass that

“GREAT GULF FIXED,”

with a drop of water upon the tip of his finger, to assuage the awful thirst of hell.

Oh! friend, as I warn you to escape from the wrath to come, and entreat you to pause in your downward journey, let me carry you in thought to a scene that should break your heart and bow your soul in submission at the Saviour's feet.

The apostle Paul could triumphantly exclaim, “*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*” (1 Tim. i. 15).

Yes! blessed be His name. He

“Came from Godhead's brightest glory
Down to Calvary's depth of woe.”

What an exchange! and on that cross, when enduring the hatred of man, the punishment of sin, and the hiding of God's face, He cried out, in deepest anguish—

“I THIRST.”

Reader, are not these two words eloquent in their very simplicity? They speak loudly to you of His devotion and love, and of God's holiness. He thirsted on the cross that you might never thirst in hell. He endured the cross and glorified God, and now He adorns the throne of God in brightest glory—the Saviour of sinners.

Now the living waters of endless satisfaction are flowing for ALL.

"WHOSOEVER *will*, let him take the water of life FREELY" (Rev. xxii. 17). Ah! reader, that word "*whosoever*" takes you in, and "*freely*" shuts out the possibility of your making the blessing yours by aught that you can give or do.

A young medical student lay dying. His Christian uncle was sitting by his side, putting the fulness and simplicity of God's gospel before him.

The young fellow had sown his wild oats, and now he was reaping the sad harvest. His wasted life lay behind him; death and

JUDGMENT TO COME

stared him in the face.

"Uncle," said he wistfully, "do you mean to tell me that God will receive me, as worthless as this sucked-out orange?" dropping the skin on the floor as he spoke.

"Yes," eagerly responded the uncle.

"Then I will come to Him," was the subdued answer, reminding me of the prodigal of old who said, "*I will arise and go to my Father.*" We all know the glad reception that awaited him.

Oh! if you only knew how God had freely sent His Son—how Christ upon the cross glorified Him as to sin—how that same Jesus is now in brightest glory—how God is finding His highest delight in picking up worthless sinners and making them fit companions for His Son in glory, you would trust in

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

"His is love, 'tis love unbounded,
Without measure, without end,
Human thought is here confounded,
'Tis too vast to comprehend."

A. J. P.

THE TOUCH OF FAITH.

(Read Mark v. 25-34.)

THIS scene is very interesting, because it shows you how a truly anxious soul at length finds blessing. Here was a woman who had been for twelve long years in a condition of misery. She is to me the illustration of an anxious soul who longs for relief, but for many a year does not know where to get it.

So keen was she to get cured, "she had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse" (ver. 26). Well, that is like a great many people. I daresay there are souls who say, "I have been to church, and chapel, and this place, and that place, and to hear So-and-so, but I have not got a bit better." No. She too had come to this point, there was not one single bit of help to be had anywhere. And then one day she somehow heard of Jesus. Have not you heard of Jesus?

"Oh yes." Why have you not come to Him? You are not forgiven? "No, I wish I were. I hope to be." Why is it you are not forgiven? You have not done what she did. When she heard of Jesus she came to Him.

You will find six important points in her case. She heard, she came, she touched, she was healed, she felt, and she confessed.

SHE HEARD

of Jesus, so have you. You have heard that He is the Son of God and the sinner's Friend. She had heard doubtless of His power, His might, His grace, His goodness. How, when, or where, we know not, but she had heard of Him, and now seized her opportunity and came to Him. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "She came." Where? "In the press behind." Why? She hoped nobody would see her. We always hope that nobody will see. But she came, "and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole" (ver. 28). She had faith in Him. She had faith in His power, in His goodness. She had the distinct sense, there is in Him the very thing I want. But what was lacking was personal contact with Him. She makes up her mind she will come to Jesus. Have you ever done that? "No, but I have been twelve years seeking." Very possibly, and have had twelve years' misery and distress of soul.

Look at this poor woman. I do not doubt the

devil said to her, "You will never get to Him." But ah, she does. She makes up her mind, I must have Him, and "if I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." There is such grace in Him, there is such power in Him, oh, there is such love in His heart and such virtue in Him, even the very hem of His garment would suffice. She sees Him in the distance, and she gets a little nearer, but there is a sway in the crowd, and she is carried back. Doubtless Satan whispered, "It is no good, you cannot reach Him now." But no, she is in earnest—would to God you were—so she starts afresh, and spite of many a back-draw she gets nearer and nearer, and at length she pushes her poor blanched fingers between others, nearer than herself to Jesus, adds one little thrust, and thus Him

SHE TOUCHED.

Yes, she just touched the hem of His garment, and

SHE WAS HEALED.

Yes, all was done. Thank God, if you trust Jesus you are saved. Oh praise the Lord, she is healed. Yes, it is all right. That touch of faith did it. Cannot you trust Him, my reader? God bless you as you read this, poor, troubled, anxious soul, trembling about death and judgment. But one touch of faith, one look at Jesus is necessary, and what then? Saved on the spot.

And what is the next thing we read?

SHE FELT.

Yes, "she felt in her body that she was healed of

that plague" (ver. 29). "I thought people did not have feelings?" Oh, indeed they do. When you get the sense of the Lord's love to you, joy will fill your heart. Do you know the very first thing the Holy Ghost does when you trust the Lord Jesus? He comes and sheds the love of God abroad in your heart. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us" (Rom. v. 5). When that is known you will say, "Oh, how sweet, God loves me."

I do not want to press you to feelings, but I am not content with merely knowing that I am in relationship with God, because it says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" (1 John v. 1); and again, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). Christianity is eminently experimental, and if you are a converted person you will enjoy the love of Christ, and you will want to please Him. The woman was healed by faith, and very consciously she knew it. I believe, my friend, that the face does brighten up when you get the sense of the love of Christ to you. The point is this, you touch Him, and it is all right.

"Well," you say to me, "I do not feel very sure, I think I trust Him, and sometimes I think I am saved; and then again I am sometimes doubtful as to whether, after all, I belong to the Lord." Ah, dear friend, I do not think she ever had doubts and fears after this sort. Do you know why? Because she came out and owned the Lord. Jesus said, "Who touched my clothes?" The disciples, in

surprise, say, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" (ver. 31). Note this well, to throng Him is not to touch Him in faith. It is the touch of faith causes Him to say: "Somebody hath touched me. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth" (vers. 32 and 33), that is,

SHE CONFESSED.

She is not told to come and confess, but she came right into His presence, fell at His feet, and said, "Lord, I came to Thee because I could not get help elsewhere, and I came with the sense, if I could only get to Thee, Lord, all would be right; so I came and touched Thy garment, and I am healed." You say, How do you know she did this? Because it says so (ver. 33). Nobody said, "Go forward." She had not to be urged. Perhaps, my reader, you are afraid to confess Christ. Look at this dear soul. She was a woman. They have often bigger hearts than men. And don't forget that the lake of fire is nearly full of cowards. The list of the damned (see Rev. xxi. 8) is headed by the "fearful"—the timid, world-fearing souls afraid to confess Christ.

She "*knowing* what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth." She confessed her need and her cure. Now this is where many a soul goes astray, it does not confess.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9, 10). You see, beloved friend, you get right with God in your *heart*, and then you get right with man by your *mouth*. You will never get right with God by your mouth. The Lord says, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matt. xv. 8). You get right with God in your heart, and then see that you are not ashamed to confess with your lips. Possibly the secret, my dear fellow-believer, of your weakness, is that you have been a coward, and have not boldly and fully confessed Christ.

And now see what takes place in this simple woman's history. She goes through what I call a confirmation service. She gets into contact with Jesus, and He confirms her. "Daughter, thy faith (not thy feelings) hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (ver. 34). He owns relationship with her, tells her that her faith has made her whole, and bids her depart in peace fully assured that she shall never relapse into her old state. So is it with us. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Christ made peace by the blood of the cross. He Himself is our peace, and He gives it to us. Supposing she had not con-

fessed the Lord, do you know what would have happened? She would have gone on her way home, and the devil would certainly have said: "Do not be too sure. It will all come back again." And she would have gone away with this cankering thought, "Well, I am now whole, but who knows, it may come back to-morrow." But look at the grace of Christ. He says to her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and *be whole* of thy plague." It will never come back. There will be no relapse of the malady that has been the sorrow of your life. No relapse, thank God. Now she would have missed that if she had not confessed Christ. Oh, let me urge you to trust Him, and confess Him.

W. T. P. W.

ETERNITY: WHERE WILL YOU SPEND IT?

WHAT mind can think or tongue declare how much is wrapped up in one word, "Forever"? The human mind seems to be almost incapable of grasping the momentous issues that are involved in it. It means, for man, being without end—endless duration.

With man, in his present state, everything has an end. We rise in the morning and day ends in night. We begin our life in youth, and the short span of threescore years and ten with rare exceptions (and

in the vast majority of cases far, far less) ends our history in this world.

Ask the oldest man you meet and he will tell you as he looks back that his life is like a dream, and seems to him but as yesterday. A man takes a nine hundred and ninety-nine years' lease of some ground, which seems a long time in comparison to our short threescore years and ten, yet the term runs out and the lease expires. It comes to an end. But what of eternity? What of eternity? It is limitless. It never, never ends.

Reader, ponder it well and seriously. You have entered on an existence that shall never end in one sense. Death may kill your body, but the soul which is the true and inner life of man, it can never touch. You have a deathless spirit. If death wrecks your body, your spirit will survive it. Oh, that men would think seriously of so important a matter.

Brownlow North, a celebrated English preacher, tried to picture eternity to his audience. He supposed a little bird coming every thousand years to a huge mountain of sand, and carrying in its little beak one tiny grain to some distant spot. We could suppose, said he, a time when the bird would have removed the mountain. But were the mountain removed, eternity would still roll on, and on, and on.

The story is told of a shoemaker sitting working under his clock. As the pendulum swung to and fro, giving its well-known tick, tick, it seemed to say to him one day, For ever ! where ? For ever ! where ? For ever ! where ?

The effect produced upon him was to make him most unhappy. He thought of his sins and where those sins would land him if he were ushered into eternity unprepared. He felt for the first time the awful solemnity of meeting God. Meet God he must. From this solemn fact there was no possibility of escape. He stopped the clock, but that only intensified his misery. In the silence his conscience spoke louder than ever. "For ever! where? For ever! where? For ever! where?"

Upon hearing this incident some one composed these telling lines:—

"Eternity! where? it floats on the air,
'Mid clamour or silence it ever is there,
The question so solemn—
Eternity! where?"

Eternity! where? O Eternity! where?
With redeemed ones in glory, or fiends in despair,
With one or the other—
Eternity! where?

Eternity! where? is aught worth a care?
Oh, can we, oh, shall we e'en venture to dare
Do aught till we settle
Eternity! where?

Eternity! where? O Eternity! where?
Friend, sleep not, nor take of your rest any share,
Till you answer this question—
Eternity! where?"

Reader, is it too much to ask, **WHERE SHALL YOU EXIST FOR EVER?** I do not ask, *Where would you like to exist for ever?* I never met the man, nor

do I believe he is to be found, but would like to escape damnation and enjoy heaven at last. There are few but would say, however they might live, "Let me die the death of 'the righteous, and let my *last end* be like his."

Now the point of gravest moment is, How is this possible if you go on in your sins ? How could it be possible for God to take a man into heaven who dies in a state of uncleanness and utterly unrepentant ? Impossible !

No, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." These words were uttered by the Lord Jesus to those who were most zealous religionists outwardly.

REPENT OR PERISH ! Which ?

He also said to a teacher of the same religious people, "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." "Except a man be born again, *he cannot see* the kingdom of God." To the same people He also said, "Ye shall die in your sins" (that is, if you die unforgiven). "Where I go you cannot come." These are the words of the Son of God, and plain unmistakable words they are. They undoubtedly shut the door of heaven on *all who have not repented, on all who are living in sin, and on all who have not experienced the NEW birth.*

There is only *one* door into heaven, ONE way, NOT TWO. The blessed Son of God said, "I am the door," "I am the way." There is no possibility of a sinner approaching God or entering heaven except through the crucified, risen, and now glorified Saviour. The necessity of the case on our side demanded

nothing less than death on His side—a death, too, that involved the drinking of the bitterest cup that ever was put to any lips.

Oh! who could ever conceive the depth of the agony the blessed holy Son of God passed through when, amid the darkness of Calvary, betrayed, denied, and bereft of every friend, He was left alone and abandoned of God? Not for His own sins did this happen, but for the sins of His very murderers. For the sins of the dying robber, for the sins of Saul of Tarsus, once His most bitter opponent, and for your sins, my reader (however deep-dyed and foul they may be) if you believe on Him.

His death avails for the most guilty. His death avails for all. It is told that as a murderer was on his way to the scaffold to be executed, he was heard to exclaim: "Oh, isn't He a great Saviour! Oh, isn't He a great Saviour! Oh, isn't He a great Saviour!" He had good reason to use such language, for He had saved him.

The celebrated English preacher, John Newton, once said that he never despaired of anybody being saved since Jesus saved him. It is well known that before his conversion to God he was most notorious for his sinfulness and utter profligacy. Those who have known the power of His saving grace may well sing, "Hallelujah! what a Saviour."

Listen to the sweet, simple message, "Christ also hath once *suffered for sins*, THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). This was certainly an exchange of places. He took

my guilty place in grace to me, and bore all the judgment my sins should have brought upon me. By His dying for me I am for ever free from that judgment, and am now justified from every charge of sin before a holy God.

He not only died to relieve me from the judgment of my sins, but that He might have the joy of bringing me right home to God. Wonderful grace ! Those who believe are brought near to God, even into all the nearness of Jesus Himself, the Beloved of the Father.

“The offended dies to set the offender *free*.”

Think of that word **FREE**. Free from what ? Free from all imputation of sin. Free from the fear of death. Free from the intense dread of coming wrath. Free from the whole dominion and power of Satan. Free to love God and find our greatest pleasure in His blessed service. Free to anticipate the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with joyful expectation. Free to proclaim the same blessing to all who will accept it without conditions.

Free ! “Ah !” you say, “I never was a slave.” Fatal error. More, you are blinded to your spiritual condition, and do not understand what freedom means. Wake up at this moment lest you die in darkness and despair, and, bound hand and foot, be cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Look at that negro servant waiting upon and watching incessantly every glance of her English master. See how she serves and waits upon him.

She is ready at every call to do his bidding. Ask her why all this loving yet apparently slavish attention. She has only one reply, namely: "He redeemed me. He redeemed me. He redeemed me."

Does she not know what freedom means? Yes, ah, yes. All her happy service to her new master is the result of her purchased freedom. Her service is not legal drudgery, but the sweetest liberty.

So Christ hath redeemed us (believers) from the curse of the law, "*being made a curse for us.*" He paid the ransom price in blood. His own precious life's blood was shed for us to set us free. We are everlastingly free, and now it is our joyful liberty to serve. If we are captives, we are His captives by the chains of love. These are chains we never want broken. Each redeemed heart would say, May they bind us more strongly to Him until we see His face and sing for ever in His presence, "Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Then and not till then shall we fully know the value of the ransom paid for us. P. W.

DO YOU KNOW GOD?

THE ending of the year brings with it family gatherings and happy holidays. The twelve-month of toil is over, and its curtain falls on a brief period of relaxation and pleasure.

All very well, but a year is, after all, a good large slice out of life. The "three score and ten" fly away

with extraordinary rapidity. Long in prospect they appear; when reached, very transitory in retrospect—so at least we are told, and so we may believe; and therefore it is wise, amid all that may be happy, to pause at the milestone, and cast the eye both back and forward. Here is the close of another year; here you stand—a traveller on a quickly passing journey—so much nearer the end. The past you know, the future you know not. You can recall many a mercy, and also many a sin and sorrow; you look forward—yes! but to what? Some would fain know their earthly future. Far better that we should not! It is infinitely better to know God, in the minuteness of His love and care, than to know to-morrow.

One thing is certain, that His only desire for you is your blessing. He finds no pleasure in the death of the sinner, and He does not afflict willingly. Hence, to know Him aright is the best knowledge of all. In such a case to-morrow may be calmly left in His hand—the hand of perfect love.

May I kindly ask you, dear reader, to turn aside for a moment from seasonable attractions, and put to your soul this question—Do I know God?

What God? The God of creation? No! The God of Providence? No! Of Law and Judgment? No! But the God and Father of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Do you know Him in the full and perfect revelation He has been pleased to make of Himself, thus, as a Saviour-God? Your Saviour-God?

Pause, I pray you, and consider. Look back on your life. It has been one of sin. You are wretched and hopeless. The closing of the year seems but another nail in your coffin. You tremble as you anticipate the Judgment Day and the Lake of Fire!

Friend, God has taken up the awful question of sin, and has found, in the death of His Son, complete satisfaction. He has manifested His righteousness at the cross, and the gospel proclaims a risen Christ as the Saviour for sinners. Your sins may be pardoned and your wretchedness removed. There is hope for you in the blood of Christ, but only there.

Where God has found satisfaction you may find it; and, in one moment, your dread give place to peace and joy in believing.

Oh! an immense point is gained when the sinner is brought to know that God has a very deep interest in him. If the devil can persuade him otherwise, he will. But one look at Calvary dispels the dreadful cloud of darkness and despair. So learned the dying thief! So may you, and this year may close, bright and blessed, as you find that the God against whom you have sinned is He who loved you and gave His only begotten Son in order that whosoever (and does that not mean yourself?) should not perish but have everlasting life.

Yes, my friend, may grace grant that 1902 may ~~not~~ close upon you unsaved, unpardoned, and not ready for the soon return of the Lord, but rather bearing witness that you have turned to Him in faith for the salvation of your soul.

J. W. S.