

TIDINGS
OF
LIGHT AND PEACE

EDITED BY GEO. C.

"WE DECLARE UNTO YOU GLAD TIDINGS."—Acts xiii. 32.

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

1904

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| You Have Reached a Junction | 1 |
| “Go Thou Thy Way till the End” | 3 |
| Blind Striving | 6 |
| God’s Love and Sin’s Punishment. | 9 |
| Practical Maintenance | 14 |
| Can a Man go to Heaven on his own Terms? | 17 |
| Which of the Three? | 22 |
| Extract from a Letter of Oliver Cromwell | 23 |
| Man left to Himself | 24 |
| A Question for <i>You</i> | 25 |
| The Truth about Yourself | 27 |
| God’s School | 30 |
| A Black Cross | 33 |
| Jesus is God, or You are Cursed in Trusting Him | 35 |
| “Your Own Soul” | 39 |
| The Voice of the People and the Act of God | 43 |
| An Atheist’s Conversion | 49 |
| “Lest You Forget” | 53 |
| “Right Through” | 56 |
| Invitation to the Banquet by One who has Tasted | 57 |
| The Hour-Glass | 66 |
| The Cry of “Fire!” and the Pleading of Love | 67 |
| Five Times Thirty-nine | 69 |
| The Approaching End | 71 |
| “Nobody Wants your Care!” | 72 |
| A Bankrupt | 75 |
| The Folly of Defiance | 81 |
| Midnight to Dawn | 84 |
| Test Questions | 85 |
| An Infidel in the Presence of Death | 88 |
| Singing to his own Graveside | 91 |
| Not Deserving, but Desiring | 92 |

| | PAGE |
|---|------------------------------------|
| "The Sand Runs Out" | 97 |
| A Trophy of Grace | 99 |
| None Too Bad for Christ | 102 |
| Saved on the Western Prairies | 105 |
| He Slept till Too Late | 113 |
| Under Sin | 115 |
| A Priest's Fears, and What Came of Them | 119 |
| Fitness for Heaven | 128 |
| Thought, Talk, and Walk | 129 |
| The Gospel: What is it? | 137 |
| Lost in a Storm | 139 |
| Departing Peter and the Dying Pope | 145 |
| When I Leave this World, Where Then? | 148 |
| The Dying Rebel and the Dying Robber | 150 |
| A Countryman's Answer to a Freethinker | 154 |
| Division Expected—Peace Enjoyed | 156 |
| "Je Pense Forward" | 161 |
| Righteousness and Love | 166 |
| The Secret Out | 170 |
| Double Cleansing | 173 |
| What Binds the Heart to Christ? | 175 |
| Gilt or Gold? | 177 |
| His Last Chance | 181 |
| "Into a World Unknown" | 185 |
| Two Ways of Looking at it | 189 |
| "Not of the World" | 192 |
| THE CONVERT'S CORNER— | |
| "The Heavenly." Who are They? | 46, 61, 77 |
| Danger and Protection | 94 |
| Your Blessings | 109 |
| My Sins and Myself | 126 |
| Not your own | 142 |
| Fragments | 21, 83, 93, 96, 128, 160, 165, 176 |
| POETRY— | |
| The Passover Night | 124 |
| Jesus | 141 |
| It is Finished | 155 |
| A Triumphant Home-going | 165 |
| "He is Able" | 175 |
| The Fall of the Leaf | 180 |

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

YOU HAVE REACHED A JUNCTION.

“**Y**OU'RE a signalman?” said a preacher to a man whom he found deeply troubled about his soul. The man had been pointed out to him after the preaching amongst a number of other anxious persons. He had been told his occupation, and requested to speak with him. After lifting up his heart for a moment in silent prayer, the preacher sat down beside him and said—

“You're a signalman?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You know what a junction is?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you've reached a junction to-night in your life-line, and it is very possible, if you pass it,

THERE MAY NOT BE ANOTHER.”

The signalman seized his meaning, turned there and then to God, repented, and believed the gospel.

Now, my reader, if you are not converted I want to say to you, “*You have reached a junction.*”

Another year has just closed. You stand at the opening of a new one. Up to this point you have travelled on the broad road that leads to destruction (Matt. vii. 13). I raise the *caution signal* in front of you. *There may not be another junction* on the track down which you are being rushed as fast as time can take you.

You are in darkness. “He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth,” Jesus

VOL. XVI. No. 1.

said (John xii. 35). May the light of this message

OPEN YOUR EYES,

that you may see your danger.

You are blinded, too. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 4). May its glorious light open your eyes; it will show you your awful danger. At the same time it will show you that there is *a Saviour for you* in the glory of God, who once died for the ungodly. That very light once shone on the chief of sinners, in the height of his dire enmity to Jesus. At one stroke it laid him prostrate at the mercy of his Victor, and revealed Jesus to him in that glory as the One whom he was persecuting, in the person of His people. *He* had reached the junction of his life. Which road should he now take? What should he do? Do? He was helpless. He would no longer resist the pricks of an accusing conscience. Can *you*?

DARE YOU?

He could do nothing but make an unconditional surrender to his Conqueror, own Him his Lord, and place himself completely at His disposal, His willing slave from that moment; to find "the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant," as he himself afterwards wrote, and testified that "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation [of yours, dear reader!], that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 14, 15). *You are in danger*, I wave the danger signal before you.

"TURN YE, TURN YE!

for why will ye die?" You are fast hurrying to-

“GO THOU THY WAY TILL THE END.” 3

ward the brink of a precipice, at the foot of which is the lake of fire! That precipice may lie before you in this very year you have now entered. Decide, therefore, *now*.

“A point of time, a moment’s space,
May land you in your heavenly place
Or shut you up in hell.”

W. G. B.

“GO THOU THY WAY TILL THE END.”

SOME years ago a man named John — went with his wife to live in a remote village of the United States of America, where he opened a grocery store. John soon became a prosperous man, and was much liked by all his neighbours, being of a genial and kindly disposition, as well as having a character for honesty and straightforwardness in all his business transactions. But for all this, John was, sad to relate, a man who scoffed at all religion, openly avowed his disbelief in the existence of God, and never attended a place of worship.

After some years John’s old Christian father died, and in his will he bequeathed him, amongst other things, a large and much-valued old family Bible. “What a fool was my father,” said John to his wife, “to leave me a book which is absolutely worthless to me! It must have cost quite ten dollars too, and yet if I sell it it will only fetch a few cents. How can I make any profit out of it? Let me see—yes, I shall use the pages as wrapping-paper in my shop”—and, spite of his wife’s remonstrances, he placed the book on his counter and tore out the pages one by one to wrap up his customers’ purchases in.

For some time did this godless man continue thus recklessly to tear to pieces his father's Bible; and if some of his customers felt a little shocked, they did not trouble to give expression to their feelings.

One day, however, a farmer living at some distance came into the shop to buy some nutmegs. John proceeded as usual to tear a leaf from the Bible and place it on the scales; but, just as he was about to weigh the nutmegs, his customer called out, "Wait a bit, John! That page you have taken to wrap your merchandise in is sacred to me; you have torn it out of my God's blessed book; you shall never make use of it for any purchase of mine! Give me the nutmegs without any paper," and putting them loosely into the pocket of his coat, the farmer walked out of the shop, leaving John feeling very uncomfortable.

"Is this book really so different from other books?" he asked himself. "I must see if this page contains anything extraordinary," and folding it up, he put it into his pocket.

That evening, when business was over, he seated himself by the fire, and drawing the page from his pocket, he unfolded it and began to read. It happened to be the last chapter of the book of Daniel. Slowly and carefully he read the solemn words, and a feeling of awe crept over him as he thought of resurrection and judgment, of the portion of the wicked and of the just. But when he came to the last verse, the voice of God, whom he had hitherto despised and ignored, spoke loudly. "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." He was filled with alarm. "That is just what I am doing," said he, "I am

“GO THOU THY WAY TILL THE END.” 5

going my way until the end, and there is no doubt I shall then rest in my grave; but must I too stand in *my* lot at the end of the days? Then in which lot shall I stand? Mine will assuredly be the lot of the wicked—mine the shame and everlasting contempt!”

The arrow of conviction had entered the conscience of the careless scoffer, and now he saw himself a guilty sinner in the presence of a holy God. Filled with misery and unable to rest by day or night, he at length spoke of his trouble to his wife.

“Oh! John,” she exclaimed, “I always knew it was very wrong to tear up that Bible. Let us fetch what now remains of it, and see if it will help you.”

The dilapidated book was fetched from its position on the counter, and together they began to read. This time it was in the book of Revelation. But every word his wife read seemed only to increase his fear, and when she came to the words, “their works do follow them,” he groaned, “Oh! wife, I wonder if my works will also follow me? I don’t want them to, for they have been so wicked.”

But the blessed Spirit of God who had thus aroused this sleeping sinner, having first shown him his great need, guided him to other portions of the blessed book in which with delight he read of the great salvation which had been accomplished for him by Another. He saw that the Christ of God whom he had once despised and ignored was his only deliverer from the judgment which he so feared. With joy he learned that the precious blood of God’s holy Son could cleanse all his sins, and in simple faith he rested

his soul upon the value of that blood to God, so that his misery and fear had soon given place to peace and joy. He now longed to read the whole of God's precious book. The remains of his father's Bible he placed on a table, and by its side a new Bible of a similar edition which he had purchased, and in reading which he now found his greatest joy. And if any wondered why the two large Bibles were thus placed side by side, John delighted to tell them how the torn one recalled to him the time when in his lost and sinful condition he had scorned a God of love, and abused His message of grace; and the new one spoke of that wonderful day in his history when Christ became his joy and treasure. He now "goes his way" with a glad heart, no longer fearing to "stand in his lot at the end of the days."

But where will my reader stand at the end? Pray, let him ask himself—"Where, and how do I stand *now*?" He has started a new year, but where will its end find him? If in eternity, what will his lot be? Is the inquiry worth an answer? Then let him never rest again till a satisfactory one can be given. J. D.

BLIND STRIVING.

WHEN a patient has recovered from a serious malady through the skill of some eminent physician, it is only natural for him to long that others, suffering from the same disease, should seek the same medical aid and reap like benefit at his hands. Even the little captive maid in Naaman's house, when she saw the awful plight of her leprous master, exclaimed, "Would God

BLIND STRIVING.

7

my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy."

The following is a rough translation of two verses said to have been written by the present Czar of Russia. In the original they are expressed in exquisitely poetical language. The second and third verses of the poem run thus:—

"My happiness was born at night,
And succoured in the gloom ;
My pleasures have dissolved in flight,
Heart-stricken at my doom.

"My soul strives blindly for relief,
Chilled, as by drifting snow,
By doubts which scoff at the belief
Of finding peace below."

Now what true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ could read these lines without an inward earnest longing, "Oh that the royal poet knew *my* Saviour, and had the joy and peace in believing that fills my heart through Him" ?

But as some reader of these lines may find them, at least in measure, a true expression of his own feelings, let us say a word or two for such.

First, it is no small mercy to have the soul brought into the personal realisation of how it actually stands with God, since it is with *God* that we all must have to do, sooner or later. When the true character of sin in His holy sight is seen ; when the fact is really grasped that sin *must* receive its just judgment, and that the penalty is death ; when it is rightly understood, and the truth honestly faced, that God can no more reverse His sentence against sin than man can reverse the wheel of time and live his life over again—it is little wonder that the man so

laid bare in God's presence should stand "*heart-stricken at his doom.*"

But, thank God, when the light of the gospel of peace is seen; when God stands before the soul, as of old before a sinful nation, saying, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in ME is thine help" (Hos. xiii. 9), what a mighty change takes place! I find that God is *for me*, notwithstanding all I have said and done. If He hates my *sin* He cares for *me*, and His gracious provision for me proves it beyond all question.

Am I "sold under sin"? It is God who says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: *I have found a ransom*" (Job xxxiii. 24).

Does my sin necessitate a sacrifice? It is God who "*provides Himself a Lamb*" (Gen. xxii. 8), and says of the blood which maketh atonement for the soul, "*I have given it to you upon the altar*" (Lev. xvii. 11). Blessed answer to all man's hard thoughts of Him!

But while all these gracious statements come before us in the Old Testament, it is left for the lips of Jesus Himself to utter those wondrous words, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Thus God is known, not as One who would show me favour if I had always done right, but as coming forth to show me kindness though I have always done wrong. Yet this kindness was shown not in passing by or winking at the wrong, but in judging it unsparingly at the cross and by the death of His adorable Son.

When this is seen, instead of my pleasure taking flight and my sorely stricken heart being

GOD'S LOVE AND SIN'S PUNISHMENT. 9

filled with dark despair and dismal forebodings, God's perfect love casts out all my fear. Tormenting doubt gives place to joy and peace in believing. Oh, happy portion! Then why does not every troubled heart come into it at once?

Ah, alas! it is only too common for the heart-stricken one to turn blindly to his *own* efforts to obtain relief. And thus, like the writer of the above lines, he is bereft of the hope of "finding peace below."

God has only one "way of peace," and that way is *Christ*; only one way of salvation, and that salvation is in *Christ*. He is our hope, our peace, our joy, our all.

Oh, then, come to Him; come confessing your sinfulness in the past, your helplessness as to the future. It is all you have to bring; all He expects you to bring. All the rest you will find in Him — pardon through His precious blood, power through His blessed Spirit, everlasting life in Him, eternal glory with Him; yea, all He is and all He has will be yours. But beware of delay. This year may be your last, and what then? You will indeed be "HEART-STRICKEN AT YOUR DOOM," if you die without Him. GEO. C.

GOD'S LOVE AND SIN'S PUNISHMENT.

No. 2.

THE terms "*infinite*" and "*eternal*," which have their meaning in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the Godhead glory, are necessarily brought down into time and connected with this world by the incarnation of our Lord. Yea, farther still, for in "the Word made flesh," all that such a One said and did, whether in life

or in death, whether in resurrection out of the grave or in ascension to the glory at the right hand of God as Son of Man, only manifests fresh glories in the person of Him who could not be otherwise than *infinite* and *eternal*.

Every believer in Christ has found the preciousness of these words, *infinite* and *eternal* (not to speak now of others), as attaching to the work which He accomplished upon the cross for the glory of God and our salvation.

Who would dare to question the meaning of *eternal* and *infinite* as bound up together in securing these two grand objects of His life and mission? Or who would be allowed to doubt their value as applied to the blood which He shed as the Lamb of God? Was not that blood *infinite* in its efficacy, both for God in the height of His holiness and for us in the depth of our sin and guilt? Were not His suffering and death *eternal* in their value, as meeting the offended majesty and sovereignty of the throne of God; or must they be endured again and again? Which of us, whose consciences have been once and for ever purged "by the precious blood of Christ," would allow the intrusion of a thought, much less a blasphemous doubt, of the *full* meaning of those blessed words, ETERNAL and INFINITE? Must they and we be cleansed anew? If so, it must be by blood that is neither infinite in its efficacy nor eternal in its value, if His be not. For it is the blood of Jesus, the Son of the living and true God, "that inhabiteth eternity," which is in question, if at all.

So if we quit the cross, and the sepulchre, and the Lord's everlasting victory over death and sin and Satan's power, and think of Christ in heaven,

GOD'S LOVE AND SIN'S PUNISHMENT. 11

having "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, because He had by Himself purified us from our sins," must He rise up, and come forth to be offered *often*, because the work is found to be neither infinite nor eternal in its efficacy and value towards God or towards us? Is *this* the Christ, the Lamb which God provided? Which of us would not indignantly say, "No!"

And now we may transfer these words to a lower level still, and look at their meaning and application to ourselves, whether as believers or unbelievers, in time or for eternity, and to be realised in infinite bliss above or in everlasting misery below. There is nothing in our own being that can be the adequate reason why such words should find their further and future development in *our* histories, whether for weal or for woe; but the secret lies in *this*—that sin and transgression are infinite in their character of offence, because committed against God and all that He is in His own holy nature, and in whose presence evil cannot dwell. A finite and innocent creature, as Adam was, may commit an offence which is infinite in its character and extent, because of what God *is*—an offence, moreover, to expiate which nothing but the atoning sufferings and death of Him "who thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and whose sacrifice was therefore infinite and eternal in its value, could be of real and efficacious avail. The propitiation was offered to God, for it was against Him the original outbreak was made by "the liar and murderer from the beginning." Adam, through temptation, trampled under foot the majesty of the Creator, and the rights of God as the sovereign and supreme ruler, by handing

12 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

himself over as a rebel to Satan. All this was but the beginning of what was, in itself, infinite and eternal in its character against the rights and claims which the nature and being of God demanded, though the sin—this enormous sin—was committed in this world, and by a creature into whose nostrils God had breathed the breath of life.

What Adam was, and where he was, could not alter the offence, which, I repeat, was against God in all that He is. Would the devil make his mark lower than *this*, think you, and be the same devil? He could not deny the power and title of the Creator to create, but he would and did—devil that he is—snap the links between the wonderful creature that God had formed in His own likeness and the Creator. Yea, he would oblige God in righteousness to drive him out into the hand of him who had fallen already—fallen “as lightning from heaven.”

This was the nature of the original outbreak of sin in the first man. Who can measure the nature and extent of the calamity of an outbreak like this? Have men who deny the eternity of punishment hereafter forgotten all this? Do they *never* hear the groaning of creation *now*, at this present time? Do they never witness the curse upon the ground as they walk over it? And do they never think why “death passes” upon men all around them, and on themselves too? Do they never find or realise these terrible proofs of judgment, when clothing and craping themselves from head to foot and burying the dead out of their sight? Again, do they never get a gleam into this prison-house, from the bright “bow in the cloud”—the witness that God remembers His covenant with Noah, that He will not again destroy the world by the

GOD'S LOVE AND SIN'S PUNISHMENT. 13

waters of a flood, as He had done? Does His hand so effectually wipe away "the sweat of the brow" from the weary, that everything and everybody is consciously set free from "the creation curse" which still lies heavily upon the *ground*?

What of that "other Sinai curse" which rests heavier still upon man himself, who laboured hard, but failed to put himself right with God by "works of law"? Is not the manner and measure of rebuke and infliction heavy enough in this world, and in man's daily life, to lead him to think that these judgments in his natural existence, followed by death, are but the hidings of this power, against the day of far more terrible judgments in the second death?

But, again, and yet more important than the one man's offence, and our transgressions, whether under the law or without law, is the vast outbreak of the world's enmity, headed up at the cross and energised once more by Satan, the enemy of God and man, when the time was come for the sending forth of the Son of God's love into this world. Sin, born out of *this* hate, then took a character which creation and the fall of man could not give it, but which the rejection and crucifixion of Christ did. At the cross, and by the cross, it mounted up to its enormous height, and broke over all bounds, and became in its nature infinite and eternal, as committed against God and "God manifest in the flesh."

And God, who was in the midst of men in patient grace, and as they were, "reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"; and this, be it remembered, was a sin which cannot be measured by the responsibility of the creature in creation, nor of man

under the law, but by the rejection of the Father and the Son whom God sent forth to be the Saviour of the world! And now, we may ask, is this offence and murder of God's only and well-beloved Son *finite* or *infinite* in its character and outburst, though committed by finite beings? Was this hate against love—divine love—led on by the prince of this world, for a day or a year, think you? Was it local and temporal, or infinite and eternal? Can it be counted upon the records of time? What must be the everlasting wrath of God against such enmity, and all those who take part in it, by refusing to accept eternal life and eternal redemption, through faith in the precious blood of Christ? Salvation is eternal—the things which are not seen are eternal—our house in the heavens is eternal—the purpose of God in Christ is eternal—the weight of glory is eternal—and our inheritance is eternal. On the other hand, damnation is eternal (Mark iii. 29)—judgment is eternal (Heb. vi. 2)—the vengeance of fire is eternal (Jude 7).

(Extract from paper by J. E. B.)

PRACTICAL MAINTENANCE.

ALL believers, from the oldest to the youngest, need to be practically maintained in the Christian truths they may have learned, "lest at any time they should let them slip" (Heb. ii. 1).

Unless the truth is maintained in the soul in living power it will surely be lost sight of (see 2 Peter i. 9).

The truth of the present dispensation can be viewed from God's side and from man's.

From God's side all is perfect, and there can be no change. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. xi. 29).

From man's side there is either progress or departure. If there is to be progress there must be maintenance. Which shall it be?

There are three important conditions which are necessary for the health and progress of our souls after we have received the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We need spiritual food, healthy, moral atmosphere, and spiritual warmth.

The *food* for the soul is the word of God. Jesus said, quoting from the book of Deuteronomy, man shall live "by every word of God" (see Luke iv. 4). In this much watchfulness is needed, so that nothing should be allowed which would spoil the appetite for the reading of the Holy Scriptures.

The reading of religious or profane novels, or the gratification of self in ways that would damage the desire for reading the Word or prayer, should be set aside as worse than unprofitable. They cause spiritual weakness rather than strength, departure rather than decay.

Then with regard to *spiritual atmosphere*, where our souls can breathe freely, it is only found in the company of the Lord's people. We read of some of the early Christian disciples who, when their enemies had let them go, "went to their own company" (see Acts iv. 23). There they found fellowship in the Lord's things, because believers in those days were very separate from the world. The atmosphere of worldly company is very harmful to any believer who wishes to enjoy spiritual blessings while he

is in this world. How many believers have got irreparable loss through worldly company!

Then there must also be the *warmth of Christian affection*. Nothing grows without warmth. The apostle Paul nineteen hundred years ago wrote about "the comfort of love" (see Phil. ii. 1), and this is still to be known and sought after.

This love flows from a pure heart (see 1 Peter i. 22), that is, with no mixed motives, but only what is prompted by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35), and we also read, "Follow after love" (1 Cor. xiv. 1, N.T.).

If the necessity of these things is seen, they will be diligently sought after and carefully cultivated. Let us sum them up—

1. Good food, and an undamaged appetite to enjoy it.

2. The atmosphere of good company, with separateness of walk from worldly society, so that we are kept pure (see 1 Tim. v. 22).

3. Then the genial warmth of Christian affections, which promote growth and enlargement of heart towards the Lord Himself.

These things always attend enjoyed Christian liberty, and by following them we avoid those things which always bring the Lord's people into bondage. God has made every provision for His people being happy in their souls while passing through this world, and when they reach the end of their journey the Lord Jesus will faithfully do that part of His work which yet remains for Him to do. He will receive us to Himself individually, or catch us all up together at His coming. Oh to love Him more, and serve Him better!

G. W. Gy.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

CAN A MAN GO TO HEAVEN ON HIS OWN TERMS?

DEAR reader, let me ask you a question. On what grounds do you hope to get to heaven? That you *do* hope to get there I have not the slightest doubt, but my anxiety is whether you are going the right way to get there.

There is a scripture (Prov. xvi. 25) which runs thus: "There is a way that *seemeth* right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Now I ask, Are you *sure* you are going *God's* way to heaven, or only pursuing the way that "*seemeth right*"?

It is a distinct understanding among nations that each country has the sole right to say on what conditions an alien shall be allowed to reside in the same; and shall we allow *God* any less authority than that which is accorded to the governments of the earth? There is one law of nations which is almost identical with *God's* law, and that is, that no one shall be allowed to pass into another country while suffering from a malignant infectious disease—a law, moreover, to which everyone bows without the slightest question. *Has not God the right to claim the same?*

As a general rule people are allowed to pass from one country to another without much formality, but sometimes a particular country

is attacked by some dreadful disease which is very infectious. Immediately every other country issues notices, through its representatives, that no one will be allowed to enter *their* country from the infected one except on certain conditions; and to this notice everyone has to bow. Remember, it is *not the infected country* that lays down the conditions on which their people may pass into the non-infected country. It is the non-infected country that issues the terms on which any can enter into their country from the affected one. So it is with regard to heaven, and hence my question at the beginning of this paper.

There was a time, in the garden of Eden, when Adam was innocent and uncontaminated with sin, and God could hold free intercourse with him. But Adam listened to the voice of the tempter and fell. Immediately he became infected with that terrible disease—*sin*—a disease which has descended upon all his posterity. Because of this God drove out the man. God is too pure and holy even to look upon sin. When He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, He forsook that holy Sinbearer though it was His own Son. From time to time since that scene in the garden, God has issued through His messengers or representatives the conditions on which alone He would hold intercourse with man.

This is our position to-day. As descendants of Adam we are infected with this terrible disease, sin. It behoves us, therefore, if we desire to enter heaven, to find out and comply with the conditions *God* has made to govern our entrance there.

Where are we to look for these conditions? In

CAN A MAN GO TO HEAVEN ON HIS OWN TERMS? 19

the Bible, and the Bible only. God has caused the Holy Scripture to be written and preserved in order that there may be no mistake about the way He would have us go. In Old Testament times He gave conditions and terms to His people through the prophets; but in New Testament times, and up to now, God has spoken and still speaks through Christ, His beloved Son. Do you ask, Who is Christ? What is His authority? (and these are very proper questions, for the position and rank of a representative of a government give character and weight to the message he brings). I answer, Read carefully the following scriptures. First, Christ's own words (John v. 39): "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." He was the subject of God's testimony in the Old Testament scriptures. Now for His credentials.

At His birth it was said by the angel (Luke ii. 11), "Unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

At His baptism (Luke iii. 22), "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased."

On the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 5), "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; *hear ye Him.*"

These are His divine credentials. Now what is His message? John iii. 14-16 says, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now, dear reader, I ask, Do you personally

know anything of this way of blessing, this way to "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter i. 4), that is, for every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ?

If we ask people how they expect to enter heaven, many will answer, I go to church or chapel, I pray to God, I do my duty to my neighbour, and God is so good that if I do that He certainly will not cast me away at the last. But they totally ignore the principle that *God* has declared as governing His receiving of man into His presence.

Yet every person sailing to a foreign country is bound to apply to *that country's* representative for a document (for which he pays) certifying that there is no infectious disease prevalent in the place from which he comes, and unless he can produce that document he will not be allowed to enter the country.

So it is with heaven. Hence we hear Christ, as God's representative, saying, "No man cometh unto the Father *but by Me*"; and we have just seen His authority for so speaking. How is it that so few, comparatively speaking, do get a divine passport for glory? Look at the next verse to the one quoted above (John v. 39, 40), and you will find an answer: "*Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.*" Solemn words, "*Ye will not come.*" Oh! I ask you most affectionately, Why not? Is it that the price is too high? No! for it will cost you *nothing*. Hear His word: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will *give* you rest"; again (John x. 28, 29), "I *give* unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck

CAN A MAN GO TO HEAVEN ON HIS OWN TERMS? 21

them out of My hand. My Father, that gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."

My unsaved reader, do you realise that you are suffering from a disease that will keep you out of the presence of God for ever unless you get *cured*? You are like a patient suffering from small-pox in an isolation hospital. His only hope of getting back to his home is being cured of his dreadful malady. If he die while suffering from it he knows he will *never* get back. His only real hope is the hope of being cured, and getting a certificate to that effect from the medical officer. Only then is he free to enter and enjoy his home. In like manner the one who comes to Jesus, believing on Him, is free to enter and enjoy the presence of God, because his sin has been for ever put away by the sacrifice of Christ; his faith is counted to him for righteousness. Thus only can God receive man back into His presence. *Sin* must be put away, or the *sinner* put away.

Do you believe, my reader, that a man is discharged from the hospital because he has a clean suit of clothes on? You know better. Neither can anyone enter heaven because of good works. "Ye must be born again" were the words of Christ to Nicodemus, and nothing but the death of the beloved Son upon the cross can remove sin from the eye of God or the heart of man.

My greatest grief.—"When I die," said William Grimshaw, on one occasion, "I shall then have my greatest grief and my greatest joy—my greatest grief that I have done so little for Jesus, my greatest joy that Jesus has done so much for me."

WHICH OF THE THREE?

NO doubt you have noticed that the first Psalm describes two different men—a blessed or happy man in the first three verses, and an ungodly man in the latter three.

It is well to be quite sure as to which part of the Psalm describes any one of us.

Let me tell you an incident which brought this truth to a man's soul for his eternal blessing.

A city missionary, who spent his time in visiting public-houses, and there seeking to win souls for Christ, was one day reading aloud in the bar of an inn, when he was rudely assailed by one of the persons present with the remark that he thought too much of himself, and that others could read as well as he.

"No doubt," he said.

"I can read as well as you can. I'm quite ready to read you a match!"

"Very well," said the missionary as he opened his Bible. "The landlord shall be the judge, and those present the jury."

"Now," he said, "will you read first, or shall I?"

"Oh, you read first," said the man.

Whereupon the missionary read the first three verses of the first Psalm, and then, handing the book to his rival, asked him to complete the portion.

This he did, and the landlord was appealed to as to which was the winner.

He declared that they were both very good readers, but that the first man was the better, as he "was more accustomed to it."

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

23

“Well, now,” said the missionary to his opponent, “can you tell me which of the verses we have read describes you? Are you one of the blessed men of the first three, or one of the ungodly men of the last part? Which?”

In result, God blessed the conversation, and the second reader became a happy man.

And may I ask you, my reader, is it the first or the last part of the Psalm which classifies you?

Are you happy, separate from sinners and an evergreen, or ungodly, exposed to judgment, and about to perish? Which?

What makes the difference?

WHAT YOU THINK OF CHRIST.

If you have received Him as your “all in all” you have passed from the latter verses into the former.

If not, however moral or religious, your place is amongst the ungodly.

If such is the case, may God give you to look to it without delay.

GET RIGHT WITH GOD.

E. C.

An exact extract from a letter from Oliver Cromwell to his daughter. Oct. 25th, 1646.

“**Y**OUR friends at Ely are well: your sister Claypole, I trust in mercy, is exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind, bewailing it; she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best ‘sect’ next to

a finder; and such an one shall every faithful seeker be at the end.

“Happy seeker! happy finder!

“Whoever tasted that the Lord is gracious without some sense of self, vanity, and badness?

“Whoever tasted that graciousness of His and [became] less in desire, less than pressing after full enjoyment?

“Dear heart, press on; let not husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy husband is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that, and love it best, and all the rest for that. I pray for thee and him, do so for me.”

MAN LEFT TO HIMSELF.

“**J**UDAS was a representative of human nature, —fallen man. In him ‘the flesh’ enjoyed advantages greater than it ever enjoyed before or since—the advantages of early religious culture, of being called to discipleship, of being placed in the highest office of ministry, of being admitted to the personal acquaintance and friendship of the Lord, of being trusted by Him with condescension, familiarity, and kindness.

“The ‘flesh’ never had so favourable an opportunity for self-melioration and self-recovery. It was put to the test under the happiest influences—but only left to itself, and its real character is manifested. What was the result? Enmity against God, hatred of Love Incarnate—Judas betrayed his Lord.”

W. H. H.

A QUESTION FOR YOU.

MEETING a policeman at the corner of a street, the writer handed him a little book, entitled "What think ye of Christ?" He immediately drew up, as he scanned the words, and quickly replied, "*I think a great deal of Him.*" Entering into a short conversation, it was manifest that he was a true believer on His blessed name, gladly expressing the joy of his soul in Him. How happy to be able to respond readily, and in such language, when faced with this all-momentous question! Dear reader, "What think ye of Christ?"

Doubtless, in these lands of Bibles, gospel teaching, and tracts, you are familiar with many foundation truths connected with His name, but what think ye of *Him*? You know He came and died, and rose and ascended, and you have heard He is coming again. Well, what *think* ye of Him? Do you respond from the heart with the same readiness as the one above, "*I think a great deal of Him*"? Or are you careless and indifferent to the One who passed through these things for God and for us?

If you think a great deal of Him, it is the proof that you have tasted of His love. Naturally we have no heart for *Christ*; we think a great deal more of *self*. If we love Him, *self* gets displaced, and that is what we heartily dislike. And, moreover, to think rightly of Him exposes us, as He is the Son, and the Son is the Light. And we *love darkness* rather than light, and *hate* the light (John iii. 19, 20).

But if through grace we bow to His all-glorious name, and believe on Him, we begin to

taste and enjoy His love; and this love begets love in our hearts in return. We begin to think *a great deal* of Him, and the more we enjoy His love the more we think of Him. He becomes the living Object of our soul's joy. And as we continue to gaze upon Him, and to be occupied with Him, the soul is more and more enraptured, the heart captured, and self displaced without regret, our natural hatred being dispelled by perfect love.

“What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot think right of the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him.”

Then, what think ye? Some, thus tested, condemned Him to be guilty of death, and spat upon Him, buffeted and crucified Him (Mark xiv. 64, 65). These are they with whom you are taking sides if you are going on with the world without Him. And there can be but one end for all such—*the eternal judgment of God*. What think ye?

The world has been tested by the presence of Christ. In principle God said to *all*, What think ye of Christ, My Son? And man's awful answer was, He is only worthy to be spit upon and crucified, and that, as we have seen, in the consummate wickedness of his heart, he did. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound. God raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory, and still waits in grace upon man, giving time for repentance, and to think rightly of Him.

Hence, once more, we appeal to *you*, dear reader of these lines, in His precious name, “*What think ye of Christ?*” Have you bowed in self-judgment before Him and believed on Him?

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF.

27

“Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things” (Acts xiii. 38, 39). The eternal welfare of your soul depends upon what you think of Him. May God in His rich grace lead you at once to consider this vital matter, and enable you to say from the heart with the one of whom you have just read, “*I think a great deal of Him,*” that you may *know* the forgiveness of your sins *now* for His name’s sake, and walk in His steps till He return.

E. H. C.

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF.

HAVE YOU EVER FACED IT?

“**I** DO all the good I can, and can’t do more,” said an old road-mender to whom the writer had spoken in the interests of his soul.

“But what of the *bad* you have done?”

“Bad? *What bad* have I done?” was his ready response, forgetting that the volunteered statement about “all the good I *can*” had strongly suggested that it had not *all* been up to the mark, even according to his own code of good and evil.

“Now think for a moment, and let us look at one thing at a time. Can you say before God that you have never either told a lie or acted one?”

“Well, no, I can’t say that. I have told many a ‘crammer’ in joke, I confess.”

“Then God’s answer to that is this, ‘For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.’”

But once more, trying to evade the edge of the

truth, he said, "*My way is, 'To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.'*"

"That would be all very well if you *had* always done it, but you have not."

"Oh, well, we must just do all the good we can and leave it."

That man had no room in his heart for "*the gospel of Christ.*" He could neither look on with peace to the day of judgment, nor back to his own short history with comfort. The true believer can do both.

The gospel declares that God *has* done justly, and perfectly expressed His love of mercy too. Justice—absolute justice—has been done as to sin and its deserts, in the holy Person of the divine Sinbearer on the cross; while His delight in mercy was displayed at the selfsame spot in taking a repentant, self-condemned, dying robber to paradise. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10).

"Upon the cross this record's graved—
Let sin be judged, the sinner saved."

Oh, think of the folly of a sinner refusing God's provision in Christ, and, instead of taking refuge in what He has done, lightly saying, "We must do all the good we can and leave it." If men would only face the real truth about themselves, as left to stand on their own merits before God, they could not, they *dare* not leave it thus.

Has my reader ever faced that matter? Bear with a plain question or two.

1. Has the past been what *God* would have it? Nay, has it been what *your own conscience* would have it?

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF.

29

2. Do you find all right within? Is there no corruption there, no evil lusts, no deceit, no pride, no bad feeling against anyone? Is it *all* as God would have it?

3. Did you ever try to lead a holy, blameless life? Did you succeed, even to your *own* satisfaction, to say nothing of God's?

If you are honest, you will give a bold, unhesitating negative to all three questions.

Your life has *not* been spotless. Your heart is not sinless. Your best efforts to put matters right are utterly useless. You know this is the plain truth of the matter. You cannot live your life over again, and if you could it would not help matters. You would only repeat the evil of the past. If the snail that crawls across your window-pane could start afresh, and exactly crawl over the same course a second time, he could only leave a deeper trail of slime behind him, simply because he is a snail. And so with you, because you are a sinner.

But there is just another impossibility to face. You cannot change either God's holy nature or His righteous character. Yet, before you can be saved without Christ, this you *must* do. You must accomplish such change that He, to whom sin is now so hateful, shall, at your wish, begin to tolerate evil, wink at sin, and, indeed, so accommodate Himself to all the vile corruption within you as to say to sinners, There need be no change in you at all; I will be just whatever you would like Me to be!

Ah, but you say, This cannot be. With Him there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James i. 17). From everlasting to everlasting God is God.

Then, as sure as God is God, and sin is sin, *something* must be done! Something *must* be done, but *Christ has done it*. This is the news that brings joy and peace in believing.

May it early be yours.

GEO. C.

GOD'S SCHOOL.

GOD has only one school, and every believer on earth is a scholar in it. This school has only *one Teacher* and *one lesson-book*. The Holy Spirit is the Teacher, and the Holy Scriptures the lesson-book. God would have all His people taught the same truth, so that they should "all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them" (1 Cor. i. 10).

Whatever help believers may be to each other in the things of God, they possess no given authority. Being learners, they gladly impart to others what they themselves have learned. They are like pupil teachers in a school: they are both learners and subordinate teachers at the same time.

The Holy Spirit only can teach "*all things*," and lead into "*all truth*" (see John xiv. 26; xvi. 13). The Lord's people are responsible to prove all things spoken or written by those who are, according to our figure, only in the place of "pupil teachers," and to receive only that which is according to the Holy Scriptures (see 1 Thess. v. 21). "Pupil teachers" are warned not to domineer over the faith of God's people (see 1 Peter v. 3).

It does not follow because all believers have a place in God's school that they all profit by it, for we read of some who were "ever learning, and

never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. iii. 7).

God has always taken account of His people's conduct, and has written a good report of many of them who were under the first covenant (see Heb. xi.); and He does the same concerning those who walk in the light of the second covenant, of which the blood of Christ was the seal. This has superseded the one given by Moses, and is the basis of all the present teaching in the school of God.

When Jesus was on earth He gave as a proof of persons being taught of God that they came to Him. "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me" (John vi. 45). Later on, when Jesus was glorified, the mark of a spiritual man was that he was subject to apostolic teaching. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37); and again, "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John iv. 6).

Thus all the scholars who have been taught of God recognised the persons through whom God was giving His mind, whether through the prophets of old, or through Jesus when on earth, or the apostles after Jesus had gone to heaven.

In the days of the apostles there were those who, while belonging to the school of God, yet had not learned the truth of the *new* covenant (see Gal. iii. 1). This state of ignorance has continued, and many of God's people to-day are uninstructed in the teaching of the New Testament.

(or covenant), although it was made in the blood of Jesus. He said, "This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28).

The Holy Scriptures—the lesson-book—are of the greatest value to God's people, who are taught by the one Teacher—the Holy Spirit. By them they learn sound doctrine, and refuse what is false. Those who do not learn in God's school find but little of value in them, and therefore value them but little, and, as a consequence, when false teachers take them away or ignore them, they quietly submit.

Moses began the Scriptures, which were added to by other writers as God was pleased to give additional light. These writings were given during a period of about 4,000 years, but they refer at least to a period of 7,000 years, for they speak of 1,000 years yet to come (Rev. xx. 5, 6). From the time of Moses all the scholars taught in God's school acknowledged what was written by inspiration as binding upon them. *They never called in question the Holy Scriptures.*

After the new covenant was made, in the blood of Jesus, the subsequent writings were all based on accomplished redemption, and unfolded the various truths which were consequent upon it. The predictions of the old covenant writers, which remain yet to be fulfilled, are referred to by the new covenant writers as confirmatory of their own writings. Thus all the inspired writings are woven together, making one beautiful whole, and those who are taught of God are taught from them, and learn to love and treasure them up in their hearts, that they may not sin against God.

G. W. Gy.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

A BLACK CROSS.

IT is not an uncommon thing for travellers among the Alps to see a black cross painted on a dangerous rock, or near the brink of a roaring torrent. This sign marks the spot where some too-venturesome tourist lost his life, and it also serves as a caution to those who come after, that they may go more carefully on their ways.

There they stand, these silent yet eloquent black crosses, telling that destruction and death lurk even amid the exquisite beauties of the Alpine heights, and warning others, who, by the charms of the scenery, might be lured to similar dangers and similar ends.

And has not the hand of God set marks upon the rocks by the side of the pathway of life, that we, who now pass along that common highway, may be warned by the fates of those who trod there before us? Over the names of Pharaoh, Jeroboam, and Belshazzar the fatal mark appears. They were among the great ones of the earth, and lived in royal palaces, climbing the heights of pride and ambition until their terrible fall. And how great was their fall, even to destruction!

And, alas! unto those slippery eminences does Satan lure many a soul to-day, for it is not necessary to be a "crowned" head to have a contemptuous heart.

Over the names of Judas, Herod, and Pilate

VOL. XVI. No. 3.

stands that solemn mark; for, suddenly cut down by the stroke of God, they are warnings to others. Oh! let the remembrance of their awful ends scare any tempted one away from the brink of those sparkling torrents—the love of gold and the love of power—which, with their roar ever sounding in our ears, sweep precious souls into eternal ruin!

Down the long pages of the world's history, and also on the short leaflets of our own, we can recall names of celebrities, of school friends, of acquaintances, who have perished in the midst of their pleasures and pursuits. Should not the recollection be as an Alpine cross?

But now let us point the reader to a most sure Refuge and a never-failing Guide. The Lord Jesus Christ hears the faintest cry for help, and receives everyone who turns to Him. And His word—the word of God—shows the way of escape from every danger and temptation, and that way is to look simply to Him.

Even in human matters it is easy to trust those who prove their love to us. How much more readily, then, should we yield ourselves in obedience to God, when we see so great and wonderful a proof of His love to us, in the death of His Son on Calvary!

A cross is truly the mark of a curse, but the cross of Calvary, upon which the Lord died, remains as an everlasting memorial of divine faith, and obedience, and love. He stooped to lift the curse of sin from off the creation of God; leaving, for Him, a lustre of glory in its stead. And for us, He left the peace of a perfect salvation.

It is good to belong to Him. You will not

want the glittering gilded toys of time, for your eyes will be delighted with the pure gold of God's treasures. You will not care to be great here, where Christ was cast out, for you will long to see Him exalted in God's kingdom.

You will be glad to wait patiently until the time of His coming, and to say, in the words of Michael Angelo, the Italian sculptor and poet,

“My one sole refuge is that love divine
Which from the cross stretched out its arms to save.”

L. J. M.

JESUS IS GOD, OR YOU ARE CURSED IN TRUSTING HIM.

“**I** SAID therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins” (John viii. 24).

More solemn words than these it would be impossible to find among all the solemn words contained in God's book; and yet, though so searching and solemn, there is promise in them. For while it is clearly stated that those who do not believe shall die in their sins, it is also clearly implied that those who do believe in Him shall not. This scripture is like a two-edged sword—it slays the unbeliever and cuts him off from all hope, it protects the believer and assures him of eternal salvation. In these words He who cannot lie asserts both the object and the importance of faith.

The OBJECT of faith is JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. “Except ye believe that I am.” It is necessary to salvation to believe in His Deity. He claims to be Jehovah, the I Am, the Eternal, the Im-

mutable, the Self-existent, the Almighty, the Infinite One. The incommunicable name of God is claimed by Jesus Christ, and this claim is the very foundation of the Christian faith.

Unless He be God His other claims are a pretence, His sacrifice of no avail, and faith in Him utterly vain. TO TRUST IN HIM WOULD BRING US UNDER THE CURSE IF HE BE NOT GOD, for it is written, "*Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm*" (Jer. xvii. 5). He requires us to believe that while He is truly man yet He is also the true and living God, the great I Am. *He is the true Messiah.* He is the Anointed and Sent One; the true Prophet, revealing the name of God and the way to God. He is the great High Priest, whose sacrifice avails to put away sin and make propitiation. He is the appointed King to reign in righteousness and claim allegiance and obedience from all. Jesus Christ is He of whom Moses and the prophets did write. He must be accepted as such, as the only Saviour of sinful men, the only propitiation for sins. He is the sure Guide, the infallible Teacher, the rightful Owner and Lord of all. We must heartily believe that He died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

The IMPORTANCE and NECESSITY of faith. This is here stated clearly and solemnly. To believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ is of supreme and vital importance. "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." You may have much knowledge, you may think your intentions very good; your zeal in the externals of religion may be untiring; there may be in you many things that are commendable, useful and admir-

able, yet, except ye believe on this blessed Person, ye shall die in your sins.

Do you think this harsh? Remember it was the Pharisees, the leaders of popular religion, to whom these words were first spoken. Nothing can take the place of faith. It is by faith alone we are saved. All are guilty before God; all are under condemnation. All who are saved are saved by grace through faith. Salvation, therefore, must be accepted as God's free gift through Jesus Christ to the guilty and unworthy.

Faith is not SPECULATIVE, but PRACTICAL. He requires the faith of the heart, a living faith that adheres to Him, relies upon Him, and trusts in Him. Without faith in Him there can be no love to Him. You cannot love one you do not trust; doubt and suspicion are the death of love. Love rests upon confidence and is maintained by it. Only as we believe in Jesus and His love to us can we love Him in return. "Faith worketh by love." There can be no cheerful obedience without faith. The traveller who distrusts his guide will follow him reluctantly, even if he follow at all. The sailor who does not believe in his captain may obey him of necessity, but certainly not willingly. In every relation of life the true spirit of obedience is in proportion to the measure of faith. It is only by believing we obey, yea, faith itself is called obedience. Faith, therefore, is of the most practical importance, since it is the root from which all loving obedience and devoted service springs.

Faith in the Lord Jesus is of PERSONAL importance. These words are addressed to the individual. Each one must believe in Jesus Christ himself. Sin and death are personal matters;

salvation is also a personal matter. In John vi. you find faith compared to eating and drinking (read v. 35 with vv. 50 to 55), and eating and drinking are distinctly personal acts. Even a loving mother cannot eat and drink for her sick child; the child, to live, must itself eat and drink. Thus must it be in reference to you and Christ: you must believe in Him yourself and for yourself. There are those who are trusting in their parents' faith and prayers. Vain confidence! Your parents can no more believe for you than they can breathe for you. Not that the faith and prayers of godly parents are to be lightly esteemed, far from it; but they avail not for salvation unless you believe for yourself. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The soul that believeth, it shall live. Such is the clear teaching of God's Word.

Faith in Jesus as God manifest in the flesh is of ETERNAL importance. Your eternal destiny depends upon your acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ in all that He is. "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." Such will remain under the guilt and power of sin. There is only One who can save us from our sins. His sacrifice alone avails to atone. His Spirit alone renews. If you reject Him, there remains no other that can deliver you. Such will bear the punishment of their sin for ever; their sins will follow them to judgment and sink them into eternal woe. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son *shall not* see life; but the wrath of God *abideth* on him" (John iii. 36). O. T.

"YOUR OWN SOUL."

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—MARK viii. 36, 37.

WE present to you, dear reader, for your immediate attention and serious consideration the most momentous question that was ever put to mortal man. Yet there is a strange reticence amongst people of all classes on this subject. They will discuss political measures, social schemes, philanthropic enterprise, and even religious organisation and what is termed Christian effort; but touch the question of their own soul—its state, its relation to God, its future portion—and, with an air of injured dignity, they respectfully but firmly decline to converse, and if possible give the offender a wide berth in the future.

But, confronted as we are with this query, we must submit it to you regardless of all such consequences. So great is it, we confess we fear to touch it, but may God by His Holy Spirit carry home His word, and He shall have all the glory.

Observe, first, how intensely personal this question is. It speaks not of a realm, or a congregation, or a family, but "*a man.*" Reader, "*thou art the man!*" Thy soul is at stake, thine endless portion is involved, therefore we charge thee give heed! Do not shoulder upon another the responsibility that is your own, for it concerns "*your own soul.*" Whatever else you may share with others, your soul is *your own.*

Many a reckless young man has said, "I'll have my fling of the world, I'll enjoy life to the full, and it will be all right at last—my mother's prayers will be answered."

Young man, it is *your own soul!* Your mother cannot save it, all the prayers that ever were offered cannot deliver it; neglect it, and it will perish, perish for ever, and perish beyond all hope of recovery. Then, as you love *your own soul*, awake! face this question, and answer it, not to us, but to God.

Notice, next, the tremendous value attached to *your own soul*. Two things are put in the balances.

“THE WHOLE WORLD”—“YOUR OWN SOUL.”

Had Michael the archangel uttered these words, we might have been disposed to say he had exaggerated; had Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, laid down such a problem, we might have said he had been carried away with enthusiasm; but they are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Him who gave the soul to man, and therefore alone knows its value.

We repeat the words, and we pray you ponder them well: “*The whole world*”—“*Your own soul*.” If we could calculate the wealth of the British Isles, the figures would astonish us; if we could estimate the monetary value of our colonies, we should be equally surprised; if we had the faintest conception of the untold riches of “the whole world” discovered and unexplored, we should be dumbfounded. Yet put that on one side and “*your own soul*” on the other, and the comparison must strike you forcibly. The value of the world is inconceivably great, but that of “*your own soul*” is infinitely greater.

Oh, unconverted reader! can you, dare you, *will you* trifle with that which is of such priceless value to God? We tremble as we think how you are lightly treating this matter. Perhaps

you are bartering away *your own soul* for a glass of whisky, ruining it by the gratification of your own lust, selling it for a share in "the pleasures of sin" which are only "for a season."

"Ah!" says someone, "I knew you did not refer to me. I indulge in none of these things; I am a church member, a district visitor, a Sunday-school teacher, an open-air worker; I do my utmost to reclaim the masses of whom you write."

But, friend, what about "*your own soul*"? Are *you* saved? If not, you are a traitor to yourself, to your fellow-men, and to God. Religious but lost, respectable but perishing, zealous but, if out of Christ, going straight to hell. We apologise *not* for such language—God requires us to be faithful, and love for your soul demands it. If you want to learn God's value of "*your own soul*," look back to the cross at Calvary. See there that spotless Victim suffering, bleeding, dying; see His thorn-crowned brow, His nail-pierced hands and feet; penetrate you cannot that awful darkness, but bend your ear and hear that agonising cry—"My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And after that victorious shout "It is finished," behold Him in the stillness of death. Look still further, and see from His precious side now pierced that stream of blood and water flow forth, and there learn how precious is "*your own soul*." He suffered for you, He died for you, His blood was shed for you; and will you, in face of such love, and notwithstanding the awful price He paid, sink that soul of yours in the abyss of hell? Reader, awake! *awake!! AWAKE!!!*

Lastly, let us remind you that your soul shall exist as long as God Himself—*for ever*. When

God made man "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). The body is a casket in which God has placed a precious jewel. As one has said, He might, had He pleased, have taken the soul from the body of a fallen sinner and "sent it spinning like a stone into hell." But He has spared you; your soul's destiny is in your own hand, you have "heaven to gain and hell to shun." By simple faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, you—a lost soul—may have salvation on the spot; but neglect this stupendous question, and your doom is sealed. What hell will be to you we dare not contemplate. A mother's prayers called to remembrance will crush you; recollection of countless opportunities lost and loving entreaties spurned will torment you; but overtopping it all, the dreadful knowledge that in face of God's gift—the sufferings and death of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's striving—your soul is lost, and that by your own hand, will be hell indeed to you.

We have done. We own there is but little gospel in our message; but this little magazine is full of it, God's Word overflows with it, and you are well acquainted indeed with its charming sound. We appeal to you—yea, we charge you—by the love of God, by the dying agonies of His Son, by the present striving of His Holy Spirit, by the divine estimate of the value of "*your own soul*," and in the light of eternity, face this serious matter. Ere you lay down this paper answer to God the question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37). W. B. D.

THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE AND THE ACT OF GOD.

GOD has declared in His Word that there is as much difference between His thoughts and the thoughts of men as the heavens are higher than the earth (Isa. lv. 9), and this statement is fully borne out by other scriptures.

It is very wonderful to every thoughtful mind who contemplates the blessed truth that the Son of God has been down here in this world.

The One by whom "all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth," has in grace visited this scene for the express purpose of making known the heart of God.

Creation bears witness to His eternal power and Godhead (Rom. i. 20), but it became necessary for the *Son* to visit this earth because He, and He only, could adequately tell out the love that was in God's heart for the sinner.

Now I desire for a moment to invite your serious attention to the following inspired statements:—

Pilate said—

"What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? And they all said, Let Him be crucified."

The Spirit saith—

"God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both LORD and CHRIST."

There is a generally accepted proverb in this world that "The voice of the people is the voice of God," but one looks at the above and looks in vain for divine confirmation of this.

The prevailing voice of the people and the chief priests said—

"LET HIM BE CRUCIFIED,"

44 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

while God said—

“HE SHALL BE GLORIFIED.”

Man put Him to death. God raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory.

The condition of man before God has thus been fully proved. There is no mending or improving man after that. His condemnation is complete. There is no resource for him outside that One whom man refused and God exalted, for “to Him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43).

Reader, “What think ye of Christ?” The people in that day said, “Let Him be crucified!” What do you think of Him? Remember—

Eternal life's in the question,
And joys throughout eternity.

God hath made Him both “Lord and Christ.” Do you say amen to that?

Do you know Him as your Saviour? Refused on earth, He is now at the right hand of God, “exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and remission of sins.” Have you got the remission of your sins through faith in Him?

Do you know Him as the One delivered for your offences, and raised again for your justification? (Rom. iv. 25). He knows you, and longs for you to know Him. He waits for you to make His acquaintance while it is called “To-day,” and while “grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.”

Oh, you say, I am not fit for Him yet; I will improve myself a little, and then come. In other words, you want to do something that you think will commend you to Him, “but God commendeth

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE AND THE ACT OF GOD. 45

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

Your coming to Him to-day, just as you are, would cause all heaven to ring with joy. It would fill "yon courts of light" with joyful acclamation, for "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 10). He waits now to receive and to save even *you*. The accusation brought against Him when here on earth is still blessedly true. "This man receiveth sinners" (Luke xv. 2). A share in the joys of heaven for eternity is yours if you accept Him. His love is infinitely great. No human heart beats with such affection as His. A mother's love for her child is great. It would, no doubt, lead her to expose herself even to death for it, but here is a love that entirely eclipses anything and everything within the bounds of human possibility, for it is "stronger than death."

Reader, do you know anything of Him and His love? Is He yours? Have you confessed "that Jesus Christ is Lord"? You must do so either in "time or eternity." If confessed now, it brings to you salvation. If left until eternity, it will be for ever "too late."

What then is your choice, this blessed Saviour or the world that rejected Him? Make haste with your decision.

"Unresisting, uncomplaining,
 Holy, harmless, calm ;
 Driven, beaten, led to slaughter,
 God's unblemished Lamb—
 Bind me in eternal fetters,
 Lead me, Thine alone ;
 Silent when contempt and hatred
 Mark me for Thine own."

S. A. H.

The Conbert's Corner.

“THE HEAVENLY.” WHO ARE THEY?

CONVERSION to God is a very real thing, wherever found. Outwardly it may be more *marked* in one than in another, but inwardly the same reality is stamped on both alike.

There was undoubtedly a greater outward change in the raising of Lazarus, who had been dead four days, than in the maiden from whose youthful face the signs of vitality had only just departed. But the inward change was as real in one as in the other. And so with every true conversion. There may appear more outward change in the selfish drunkard when converted, than in his wife when she found the Saviour. He was besotted, even to the most disgusting rudeness and cruelty; she was patient, upright, and highly moral. But an inward work was necessary in both. Both had to be brought low enough to pass through the narrow door of self-condemnation, and only thus did their hearts make a personal acquaintance with Jesus as the all-sufficient Saviour of the lost.

Now, to come to our subject more directly, let me answer the above question by saying that every true believer on earth is regarded in Scripture as “*heavenly*” (1 Cor. xv. 48, 49). True, in his ways he may be very far from *expressing* it, but in God's account he is “*heavenly*” all the same.

Take an illustration. If you wanted to point out to someone the beauties of a purple or copper beech tree, you would not choose one close to the

open windows of some flour-mill or cement-works, where nearly every leaf was more or less disfigured by white dust; nor would you expect to see the beauties of a cream-coloured pony while it was yoked in the shafts of a chimney-sweep's soot cart. In each case what they *seemed* to be would be, at least, a partial denial of what, in point of fact, they really were.

In like manner, if you would see a true sample of a heavenly man, you must not look at the earthly-minded, worldly ways of the mass of professing Christians to-day. Many of them may be truly converted men, but their ways deny it. Where, then, you may ask, can I see a fair sample of a heavenly man?

Thank God, there are thousands of good specimens even to-day, but as any one of these, through evil associations, is in danger of losing his true heavenly colour, I would rather turn you to one of those brought before us on the page of Holy Scripture. Take the case of the apostle Paul, according to the Spirit's record of him in the Acts.

1. *He had the call of heaven at his conversion.* But so have you. Perhaps yours was not so marked as Paul's, for his was without any human instrumentality. (Read his conversion in Acts ix.) But it was the same Lord that made you hear His voice and stopped you in your determined downward course, and then spoke peace and comfort to your repentant, troubled heart.

2. *He had a perfect fitness for heaven.* But so have you.

Perhaps you say, I know Paul had, for he was caught up to the third heaven, but I am not so sure about myself. But if *God* has cleansed and justified you, you are as fit for

the third heaven as Paul was. Read the account in Acts x. of the vision of Peter. He saw heaven opened and all manner of "beasts" taken in there, but only because they had all been "cleansed" by God Himself. God claims the right to say what is fit and what is not fit for His holy presence. And every soul cleansed by the precious blood of Christ is pronounced "*clean every whit.*"

But perhaps you may say, How can *I* be in a fit state for heaven with an evil nature—"the flesh"—still in me?

Do you not remember that Paul had the same? When he came out of the third heaven, did he not need a "thorn in the flesh" to keep him from spiritual pride through the movements of an indwelling principle of evil—"the sin that dwelleth in me," as he spoke of it in Romans vii. 20?

If "sin in the flesh" is still found in the believer, and it *is*—for "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John i. 8)—there is something else to be said. *God has already judged it* in the cross of His Son, and by the help of the indwelling Spirit the believer judges it also. Instead of its *presence* robbing him of communion, he is not only free from it by the death of Christ, but by the Holy Ghost he can be in communion with God about its badness. The *presence* in the house, of fruit condemned by the wise mother as unfit for food does not hinder her child's happy communion with her, if *he* condemns it also. It is when, in disobedience, he *partakes* of it that he loses his communion and gets into trouble. And God has given us His Spirit that we may not do the things that naturally we would.

(*To be continued.*)

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

AN ATHEIST'S CONVERSION.

AS the subject of this narrative has passed out of this scene, I feel free to tell the story of his conversion as he told it to me himself some twenty years ago. I do not mention his name, as he may have relatives living who might object to my doing so. But I give the account in his own words, as nearly as I can remember them.

Count B—— was a Russian or Polish nobleman, I am not sure which. He told me he had been an atheist, and was so convinced that there was no necessity for belief in a creative Power that he had written a pamphlet to prove the truth of his views. He had spent an evening in correcting the printer's proofs of his paper, and had retired to bed, intending to send it to be published next day.

But as he lay in his bed the thought came to him, "Suppose there should be a God after all?" He could not shake it off, and spent a troubled and restless night; and at last, not able to bear the burden on his mind any longer, he rose from his bed, and fell on his knees, and said, "O God, if there be a God, reveal Thyself to me." Two or three times he repeated these words, and returned to his bed. But his atheistic thoughts were gone, and the first thing he did on rising was to destroy his paper. The next thing was to get a Bible, and there he found, in the testimony concerning

Christ, that revelation of God for which he had prayed. The more he read, the more he thirsted to know the God he had denied, whom he found to be a Saviour-God. He learned that if "God is light," it is also true that "God is love," and that that love had been told out to him, the atheist, at the cross of Calvary; and he could bow his knees before Him and thank Him that there had been mercy and love even for an atheist. From this time on Count B—— became an earnest Christian, glad to speak to others of the God he had found, and knew as *his* Father and *his* God.

If this should reach the eye of any poor atheist, I pray that it may lead him also to think, "Suppose there should be a God after all?"

It is quite a common thing to-day to find there are those who boast of their intelligence, and refuse with anger the very thought of a Creator-God, asserting that it would "rob" them of all that Darwin had given them. Poor fools! they limit their thoughts to the world they live in, though even that teems with proofs of a Creator; and ignore the wonders and glories of which David writes, as, moved by the Spirit of Him who created all, he breaks forth into his psalm of praise: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

Ah, leaving even inspiration out of the question, I would rather believe the common sense of a David than the poor, foolish vapourings of a Darwin, or of the school of infidels that believe in him and follow him to their own destruction, however intellectual they may seem. Not only do they "rob" themselves of the present joy of knowing Him whom to know is life eternal, but the time will come when they will "have to do"

with the God they deny, and will then find how terrible the "mistake" they have made.

"The fool hath said in his heart, No God" (Ps. xiv. 1), and he must be a fool indeed who denies a Creator-God. The question, "Which came first, the hen or the egg?" has silenced many an atheist, and cannot be answered except from Scripture. Some years ago I had a long conversation with a French Professor, of Bayonne, who tried in vain to justify his unbelief, and owned that he could not answer that question. Then turning triumphantly to me he said, "Of course, monsieur, you can answer it." I replied, "Yes, I can," and turning to Genesis i. 20, I read, "And God said, And let fowl fly [margin] above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." And as he listened I was able to tell him what it was to know that God as a *Saviour*-God, in the gift of His Son; and to have peace with God in the knowledge of sins righteously forgiven because they had been borne by His Son on the cross. He listened, and in bidding me farewell said, "I shall not forget what you have told me." More, of course, I cannot say, as I did not see him again.

One word in conclusion. As sure as there is a sun in the heavens, and countless myriads of worlds besides, there *must* be a God who made them, and they "declare His glory," as David wrote. But, after all, great as are the wonders of creation, far greater are the wonders of redemption; for the first are the proofs of His *power* who brought them into existence by the word of His mouth: "God said" was enough for that. But the latter is the proof of His *love*, and the darkness and death of Calvary are alone the measure of that, whether in the God who "spared

not His own Son," or in the devoted love of that Son Himself, who could say, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" though He alone knew what the drinking of that cup would be to Him. But He drank it to the bitter dregs, and has not left one drop behind for any who, taking their true place as sinners before a holy God, find perfect rest and peace in knowing that *all* their sins were in that cup of judgment, and can say in the triumphant language of faith in the finished work of Christ, "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" They can find in that risen and glorified Man at God's right hand, the answer to that finished work for the glory of God. Through sin, which has so deeply stained the world which came in all its beauty from the hands of a Creator-God, man had been estranged from Him, lost to Him. Through redemption He has recovered man for His own heart's satisfaction.

Oh, how blessed to read that even the sin of man could not close the love of the heart of God; but that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Poor atheist! "Suppose there should be a God after all?" as Count B—— asked himself. The question is at least worth *thinking* about, is it not? And it would be very awful to find *too late* you have *made a fatal mistake*. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).
A. P. G.

“LEST YOU FORGET.”

53

“LEST YOU FORGET.”

ANYONE passing through the busy streets of the old-fashioned city of B—— recently might have read these words, “LEST YOU FORGET,” placed in conspicuous places with the object of attracting the attention of pleasure-seekers to what was then taking place at a certain place of amusement.

But just for a moment let me use them in another way altogether. Let me remind you that you are living in a world that is very much at ease without God and without Christ. Let me further remind you that its history will be closed with the most awful judgments possible. It is true the rightful Heir has been rejected, but not the less certainly will His claims be asserted presently. As King of kings and Lord of lords will the now rejected One take His rightful place and reign supreme. “*Lest you forget,*” my reader, let me ask how *you* stand in relation to that quickly coming day.

Then there is another thing I should like to ask. Has it escaped your notice that your life on earth hangs on a very slender thread, or, to use another figure, that it is but as a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away? When you arrange that this day six months you will do so-and-so, are you not forgetting this? The rich farmer who thought he could safely reckon on having many years to “eat, drink, and be merry” made a woeful blunder. Death was that night on his very doorstep. And are you certain that the same unwelcome visitor may not be at your door even as you read this? Have you not had many reminders, nay, positive intimations of his approach? And yet you act as

though he were at some immeasurable distance away. *Lest you forget* until fatally surprised, let me remind you that God has said: "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment."

Close to the workshop in which I was once employed was a bridge that crossed the river. This bridge having done service for some years, it was decided to replace it by a new one. Accordingly a number of men were employed to this end.

On a certain morning these men could have been seen leaving their homes in the best of spirits to enter upon their work. Soon after they had started I saw on the other side of the bridge one of the party, a comparatively young man, carrying out his duties. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, he fell over the side of the bridge into the river below. A solemn hush came at once over his fellow-workmen, for what solemnises like death? Hastily they go to the rescue, but their efforts are all of no avail. In falling, as it proved afterwards, he had struck himself and sunk. Every endeavour was made to find the body while there was hope of life, but all was in vain. When the body was found the spirit had returned to God that gave it. Thrice happy if in life those favourite lines could have been truly claimed by him:—

"O 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."

But we cannot say. Surely the glad message of the grace of God had sounded at some time or other in his ears, but how he had treated it is another matter. All we know is that he

suddenly dropped the things of time and found himself amid the realities of eternity. We only bring the matter before you, dear reader, *lest you forget* the day of *your own* departure, for, perchance, the whirlpool of this world's business or pleasure so overpowers you that you imagine you have no time for these things.

But there is one thing more. Let me, in the yearnings of the Saviour's love, remind you, *lest you forget*, that when they have laid your dead body beneath the sod you will not have ceased to have to do with it. *It will be raised again!* If you turn to Revelation xx. 5 you will find these solemn words: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." It may never have occurred to you that there will be *two* resurrections. Those who die in the Lord will have part in the first, and those who die in their sins in the second. It is of the latter John speaks when he says, "*the rest of the dead.*"

In which shall you have your part, my reader? "*Blessed and holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Blessed and holy! Do those words describe you as you read this? If not, it is high time to consider. If you spend your little span of time in forgetfulness of these things, let me remind you that the second resurrection will bring no mercy to you. Nothing but judgment and no mercy then. Now it is nothing but mercy and no judgment. May grace at once arrest you and give you to seek His mercy! Hear the heavenly proclamation—"Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Do you say, "What man?" It is the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for many. "By Him

all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

May God awaken you and cause His voice to be heard in your soul even now, "LEST YOU FORGET" that "he that, being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). J. S.

"RIGHT THROUGH."

LAST week I was watching beside the dying bed of a faithful and beloved sister in Christ, friend, and servant. Between her gasps for breath she said: "I had a strange dream the other night. I thought I had to go a long journey. I was at W—— station. As I stepped upon the platform to see if my train was coming in, a man came up to me and said, 'Have you got your ticket?' I answered, 'Yes, I have.' He asked, 'Can you show it to me?' I said, 'The blood of Jesus Christ will carry me right through.' He replied, 'It ought to be more made known; there are so few who enter into it and understand it.'"

That precious blood *has* carried Emma — right through death, and she is now in paradise with the One who loved her and washed her from her sins in His own blood. In His presence we shall praise Him together for ever.

Would you also be there, my reader, to sing that new song? Then you must learn it here.

"The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from ALL sin."

"Though thy sins are red like crimson,
Deep in scarlet glow,
Jesus' precious blood can make them
White as snow."

F. M.

INVITATION TO THE BANQUET BY ONE WHO HAS TASTED.

“**O** TASTE and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him” (Ps. xxxiv. 8).

These words breathe the spirit of ardent love to God and man. Having tasted the goodness of God himself, the psalmist longs that others may partake of his happiness and have fellowship in his joy. The grace of God, known and enjoyed, expands the heart, frees it from selfishness, and fills it with Christlike compassion.

“The more I find Him precious,
The more I find Him true,
The more I long to witness
The selfsame bliss in you.”

Such is the spirit in which this invitation was given at first, and in this spirit the writer would address you now.

1. Consider the invitation. “Taste and see.”

You are invited to apprehend and believe in His goodness as a real fact. If you do not know of food and believe in its suitability, you are not likely to taste of it. Knowledge and belief must precede experience. Hence if you would taste and see the goodness of the Lord, study to know it as revealed in Christ and in His Word. You are invited to look into, consider, and examine the fact that the Lord is good; not that this is tasting, but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit it leads to it. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” “They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee.”

You are invited to test His goodness, to make trial of it, and prove it. When people go into the market to purchase food, they often taste to

see if it is sweet and wholesome. They do not buy upon mere report, nor even trust the sight of their eyes, but test it in the most practical way. The goodness of God can only be known by tasting; it cannot be known by report alone, much less by speculation; it must be experienced to be truly known. The power and virtue of the atonement of Jesus Christ can only be known to those who find deliverance from guilty fear, and peace with God thereby. The fact that God hears prayer is known only to those who sincerely pray. The truth of God's Word is proved in trial and need. True religion is life, not theory; *experience*, not *experiment*. For this reason it must be tested. You could not by argument prove the sweetness of honey to one who had never tasted it; it must be tasted if its sweetness is to be known.

A little girl was eating an apple, and she exclaimed, "Oh, how sweet!" "*How* sweet?" asked one near to her. She replied, "I cannot tell you. Taste and see." No preacher, however eloquent, no book, however clear, can tell you how good the Lord is. All we can say is, "O taste and see."

You are invited to appropriate His goodness and make it your own. Tasting is the truest way of appropriating. No one can take from you what you have eaten, it has become a part of yourself; so make the goodness of God your own.

Martin Luther says, "I call this tasting, when I do with my very heart believe that Christ hath given Himself for me, and that I have a full interest in Him, that He beareth and answereth for all my sins, transgressions, and harms, and that His life is my life."

INVITATION TO THE BANQUET.

59

Jonathan saw the honey in the wood; he put forth his staff, tasted it, and his eyes were enlightened. Thus with you. You must taste yourself: you must believe that "whosoever" means you personally, and then appropriate the promised blessing to yourself; and in this personal appropriation you will see that the Lord is good.

2. Consider the argument by which the invitation is enforced, or the assured result of accepting it. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." This is the testimony of one who had tasted and who was trusting, and he seeks to persuade others by arguments taken and drawn from his own experience. It is the testimony of all who trust in the Lord. All confess that faith in Him is the secret of all true blessedness.

They are blessed in their freedom. Trust in God, as He has been revealed in Christ Jesus, sets the heart free from guilty fears, oppressing cares, and crushing responsibilities. In everyday life we all know the relief that comes to us when we can trust the matter that distresses us in the hands of a faithful, influential friend. Such is the relief that comes to those who trust themselves and all their interests in God's hands. In the fact that He has engaged to perform and perfect all things for them they find full relief. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding" keeps their hearts. Experience proves that unbelief means worry; faith means rest.

They are blessed in their possessions. The word "blessed" is plural, and means that every blessing is bestowed upon him who trusts in the Lord. He is blessed in all and with all. All the fruits of Christ's redeeming love, all the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit, all the promises

and privileges of the gospel, belong to those who make the Lord their trust—they are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ. Blessings innumerable, priceless, eternal, divine, are here and now assured to each believer in the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. i. 3).

They are blessed in their position and standing before God. In Christ Jesus they are made nigh by the blood of His cross. Sin, which caused distance, has been expiated; divine justice has been honoured and satisfied; the Surety is accepted and seated at the Father's right hand. In Him the believer is accepted; is loved as He is loved, near as He is near, righteous as He is righteous. Such is the blessed position of all who believe.

They are blessed in their prospects. God has promised never to leave nor forsake them; to be with them in trouble, to deliver and honour them; to be with them in death and give them the victory over death, and then to give them a crown of life; to raise them up at the last day and glorify them together with His Son. Such is the blessed hope of those who trust in the Lord—a hope which God Himself has said shall never be put to shame. Such is the reason given why you should taste and see that the Lord is good.

In tasting you accept and trust; by tasting trust is confirmed and strengthened, and thus you become blessed now, blessed for evermore.

“O what shall we do the Saviour to praise,
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace,
So strong to deliver, to save from all harm,
The weakest believer that leans on His arm!
How happy the man whose heart is set free,
The people, O God, that are joyful in Thee!
Their joy is to walk in the light of Thy face,
For ever to talk of Thy mercy and grace.”

O. T.

The Conbert's Corner.

"THE HEAVENLY." WHO ARE THEY ?

(Continued.)

3. **P**AUL had the mind of heaven on His way to heaven. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth" (Acts xxii. 14).

Perhaps no two believers were arrested on their rebellious course exactly in the same way, but they are all arrested by the same Person. To this you are no exception, my reader.

True, you have not, with your natural eyes, "seen that Just One" as Saul of Tarsus did, but your heart has looked to Him. Outside Him there is nothing but judgment either for profligate sinners or religious sinners. Each must be brought to own, as another has expressed it—

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee";

and as he trustfully, joyfully, further adds—

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in Thee I find."

Yes, with the "eyes of your heart" you have "seen that Just One" as well as heard His voice.

But with Saul of Tarsus this was not all. "That thou shouldest know His will" was the prominent thing. This was his great business henceforth; and it is ours to know and do and suffer His holy will also. (See Rom. xii. 2 and Eph. v. 10, 17.)

Our Lord and Master is in heaven, but His eye is ever upon us, His heart ever caring for us. And the privilege of distinctly knowing and

heartily doing His will is as much ours in the twentieth century as it was Paul's in the first. But to-day the difficulties are more subtle. With a great outside *show* of profession, the *power* is missing. Do you inquire the reason? *Man's will and pleasure* have taken the place of *God's*, is the sad answer.

"*How to keep abreast with the times*" is the great study of religious leaders to-day. That is no secret. But pause and consider. *What "times"?* Paul describes the last days as perilous or difficult "times" (2 Tim. iii. 1). But what are the marks of these times? Read for yourself: we shall now only quote a sentence or two. "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: having a *form* of godliness, but denying the *power* thereof." Are these the "times," and is this the state of things we are to "keep abreast" with? Let the Spirit answer: "*From such turn away.*" When the worldly-minded and the pleasure-loving are being catered for, *heavenly* power is no help, but a decided hindrance. It would be next to blasphemy to think that the Holy Spirit could link Himself with such work. Hence with these "times" there is a *form* of godliness to keep the conscience quiet, and an ignoring of the power in order to make their scheme a "*success*"—"DENYING THE POWER THEREOF." How solemn!

It is this state of things, my dear reader, that we have to face to-day, and we shall either be overcomers or be overcome in the midst of it! Dead fishes can go "in the swim," as it is called. Only a living affection for Christ, with a heart fixed on pleasing Him, can make us overcomers. The great question to put to ourselves is this, "Is this *God's* will or *man's*? Is it from heaven or of

men?" Nor are we left to guess and speculate in the dark. Read 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17 and John vii. 17. "If any man *will* do His will, He shall know of the doctrine," said our blessed Lord. We must not look at others, and say, "What shall this man do?" "Follow thou Me" is what He says to each of us. Keep your eye upon Him.

Take an illustration. On the outskirts of a country town a nobleman's park is situated, with his mansion in the centre of it. The nobleman has a kind heart, and has granted to the inhabitants of this town the privilege of walking through his grounds whenever they please. Let us suppose a conversation between two of them.

"I am just going to join a few of my friends over there; come along with me and enjoy their entertaining company."

"No, thank you. I cannot leave this gravel path."

"Oh, but why be so isolated when, as I know, you enjoy good company? Our friends will be pleased enough to have us to swell their number."

"Possibly, but on no pretext whatever could I go where they are, while this stands here," pointing to a modest little notice placed near them—

"VISITORS ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED TO KEEP TO THE GRAVEL PATH."

"That is the Duke's will, and he has been so wonderfully kind to me that I would not for anything grieve him by disregarding it. From the tower of the castle yonder he can see the whole park and everybody's way of acting in it. And if he could not, I know what his will is, and that is enough for me."

"Then do you want to make out that everyone

must bow to *your* narrow way of thinking, and not do what he likes occasionally?"

"I only want to make out that this is plainly the way of his will, and that I, for one, intend to walk in it and in no other. I have no more authority, and no better title, for being in the park than you have, and as for the scores and hundreds of our townsmen whom I can see enjoying themselves away from the gravel path, I am only sorry that they have no more respect for his lordship's wishes. Many of them are amongst my oldest acquaintances, and it is a great trial to me that I cannot have the pleasure of being with them and give the Duke pleasure at the same time. But till I get his authority, no one, I trust, shall tempt me off this gravel path. Oh that I had more to walk with me in it!"

"But one thing more," he adds. "The end of this day will find me as an invited guest at his supper-table, and how could I, just for my own pleasure, go contrary to his expressed wishes on the way?"

Is it needful, my reader, to apply the simple figure? Hardly. Suffice it to add that there is a Friend—*you* know His name—at whose hand you have experienced *great kindness*. You know that His eye is ever upon you. You are going to be welcomed presently to His Father's house to share His pleasures there. Till then you and I are left to follow the way of *His* will.

The "gravel path" has been clearly marked out for us in the Holy Scriptures. Love will find it, faith follow it. Though, in a day of heart-breaking departure, it may cost us something to walk in it, yet He is worthy, His love unchanging, His coming near. Oh, where will His coming find *you*?

GEO. C.

(*To be continued.*)

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

THE HOUR-GLASS.

SOME years ago we were in Lyons, and it so happened that we were close to the spot where the famous clock* was about to strike an evening hour. We drew near to see and hear this extraordinary piece of mechanism.

The very appearance of the ancient construction was weird, and fixed at once our gaze. The quaint curves for marking the apparent position of the sun at the solstices and equinoxes, and the curious arrangement of the chiming bells, with figures emblematic of Time, Death, and Life, seen in the dim twilight, gave a ghostly appearance to the clock. On the very top stood a wooden angel holding a large hour-glass in its hand.

The hour arrived. The image of a cock rose and crowed, the chimes sounded sweetly through the deepening gloom, and the angel turned the hour-glass, so that the sand began to mark the first moments of another hour. We were deeply impressed as this strange old machine called our attention to the flight of time.

It matters little what kind of instrument may be used to awaken a soul—a simple dial or a more or less complicated clock. We wish to insist upon the value of time, and upon the

* Most readers have heard, no doubt, of this wonderful specimen of ingenuity, and probably know the sad story of "the clockmaker of Lyons." We fear the story to be too true, and a sad proof of man's selfish ingratitude. This is the identical clock.

importance of seizing the occasion offered to the sons of men as each hour is proclaimed.

This may possibly be read by someone who is not prepared to die. We know not what may happen in an hour, nor in a minute. It is probable that all those who read this little serial have often been warned not to let any interval of time pass before the great question of their eternal happiness be settled. It is not necessary, perhaps, to call up the remembrance of the symbolical angel and the glass; but, what is more important, a voice comes from heaven, saying, "Now is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation." It is the Lord Himself who calls, and who warns us all of the importance of the present time. 'Oh, if you have not yet believed in Jesus and trusted in His precious blood, *now* is the time as you read these lines, before any more grains of sand run down into the lower part of the hour-glass. No one can say when the thread of his life shall be cut; no one knows how much or how little sand there is to run out. *Now* is the time to lay hold of the certain word of the Lord, who offers a present salvation to every believer. A true Christian might say:—

"The glass has turned, and hark! the measured chime
Proclaims another hour of passing time:
Untold its value, as it swiftly flies;
The new-born hour appears, runs out—and dies!

"Now is salvation nearer than the day
When we to God from idols turned away.
Scant is the measure, quickly runs the sand,
Christ on the threshold—on the latch, His hand!

"Darker the shades around of evening lower;
'Watch!' He has said, 'for no man knows the hour.'
The minutes, rushing onward, swiftly pass—
Wake, sleeper, wake, as turns the warning glass!

THE CRY OF "FIRE!"

67

"Soon in the Father's presence we shall stand :
 'For ever!' measured nor by wheel nor sand.
 Teach us eternal worth, while moments flee,
 Whether we live or die, O Lord, for Thee!"

E. L. B.

 THE CRY OF "FIRE!" AND THE
 PLEADING OF LOVE.

ONE night we were suddenly awakened by the cry of "Fire!" When we reached the place a woman was standing with a blanket thrown around her—all she could grasp in leaving the burning building. As soon as she saw us she exclaimed, "Oh, sirs, the house is on fire, and my husband is in the flames!" She had just been saved from the fire, and her chief concern was about her husband; but he perished in the fire. She was in earnest when she saw what she was delivered from. Jesus said to the man out of whom He had cast the devils, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" (Mark v. 9-20).

"I told you," said one, "that I was a great Christian, a leader in all the religious meetings, yet all the time as far from God and heaven as any poor sinner on the face of the earth. Oh, the riches of God's grace in giving His Son Jesus to die for me, a poor hell-deserving sinner! Jesus, ere He went to the cross, was spat upon, buffeted, slandered, despised, and rejected by sinful man; yet out of love to my soul He permitted Himself to be nailed to the cross, and as He hung there He cried, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke xxiii. 34). '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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all'" (Isa. liii. 5, 6).

No love can be compared to the love of God. See how, at the cross in the gift of His Son, His heart of love overflowed to sinful man. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

A mother stood at the gate of a large railway station, pleading with the gatekeeper to let her in to see her boy. Her heart was full as she said, "Do let me in; I want to see him." Still he would not be persuaded to let her in. Then she cried, as only a fond mother can, "I *must* see my son." The gateman said, "Your boy will come to you." "No, no," she exclaimed, "my boy won't come to me; *his coffin* is coming on the train!" He wiped the tears from his eyes and let her in. A mother's love for her son is great, but the love of Christ is greater.

Dear reader, take out your Bible and read these words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). Christ died for His enemies. Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. v. 6-8). You cannot work yourself into the love of God, nor pray yourself into it. All you need is to see that you are lost, and then trust Jesus, and you will be saved from wrath to come (Matt. iii. 7).

J. G.

"Guilt's bitter cup He drains, nothing for us remains,
Nothing but love."

FIVE TIMES THIRTY-NINE.

SOME persons are never happy apart from doing good: therefore the more good they do, the happier they become.

We met with a very earnest Christian some time ago who had read his Bible through five times over on his knees, and had walked altogether something like two thousand miles on the Lord's service without receiving any payment whatever; and although turned threescore years and ten, he was still "in harness," and appeared to be very happy indeed.

But it may be asked, Was not Martha, the sister of Mary, "doing good" when she applied to the Lord for assistance in her busy moments? Yet instead of bidding her sister help her, He reproved her: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things" (Luke x. 41), proving that Martha was far from being happy, though fully occupied at the time.

Persons that are very active in the Lord's service are in danger of becoming self-important; and when such is the case we are apt to want others to follow our example and do as we are doing. This was Martha's snare, and with a mind somewhat engrossed and bewildered with care, she marred her own happiness and rendered her service distasteful to the Lord.

It would be difficult to say how many times the apostle Paul had read his Bible through, or tell the number of miles he had walked at the close of his Christian career. We may safely say, however, that no one ever laboured so incessantly or suffered so severely in the service of God as he; for a proof of which we have

only to refer the reader to 2 Corinthians xi., which contains a list both of the sufferings which the apostle endured and the dangers to which he was exposed, while journeying from city to city, and from one country to another as the ambassador of Christ.

The apostle commences by saying, "Five times received I forty stripes save one"; then follow imprisonments and stoning. In crossing the sea he had nearly been drowned, and when in the desert he was waylaid by robbers. So great were his privations at times that he was without food to eat or clothes to wear. But instead of being self-important or puffed up on account of his great doings, he actually charged himself with folly for having referred to himself at all, and partly apologised to the Corinthians for what he had said with respect to his service and sufferings.

While Martha was complaining for want of help in the work she was engaged in, Mary was sitting at her Master's feet, hearing what He had to say, including His condemnation of troubled Martha's activity and His commendation of herself, saying, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke x.).

The apostle Paul, like Mary, was marked by devotedness to Christ. Keeping self out of sight, what he did was for the glory of God and the praise of his Master's name.

Habitual communion with God renders the Christian capable of blending the service of Martha with the devotedness of Mary, thus affording joy to the heart of the Lord in both.

An aged servant of God once said to one younger than himself, "Be sure of this, that

THE APPROACHING END.

71

unless you are more with the Lord than you are with your hearers, you will soon run dry. Whereas if you come to Him continually and drink *for yourself*, there will, from the inward parts, be a proportionate outflow to others" (John vii. 37).

H. H.

THE APPROACHING END.

HAVE you, unconverted reader, seriously considered the end of the present day of grace? Things now within reach of every man will suddenly and for ever be placed beyond the reach of all, that is, of all who have not obeyed the gospel. Then the bitter cry, "Too late!"

For the privilege of repentance, and the joy of God's welcome, "Too late!"

For the blessing of forgiveness, and the comfort of God's Spirit, "Too late!"

For a place in God's house, for a taste of love's banquet, "Too late!"

The present day is peculiarly a day of *waiting*.

The Church, the Bride of Christ, waits for her heavenly Bridegroom.

Scattered Israel waits to be gathered back to the Promised Land.

The exalted Lord Jesus waits for the completion of the Holy Spirit's present mission.

God, in long-suffering mercy, waits till His house be filled. But the day of waiting will end, and **THAT END IS NEAR.**

"The day of God's grace is departing apace,
But still at the feast there is room.

Oh, why stand too late at 'the Master's' closed gate?
Oh, why in His wrath find your doom?"

GEO. C.

“NOBODY WANTS YOUR CARE!”

A FRIEND of mine set sail for a foreign land last August. Among the passengers was a theatrical company, also going abroad. One day one of their number went round the vessel, distributing handbills, on one side of which were to be seen three faces, one laughing more than the other; and underneath were announced the evenings and hours at which the plays would commence on board ship. On the other side were the following twelve lines of poetry, which were entitled—

“THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

“Laugh! and the world laughs with you;
 Weep! and you weep alone;
 For this solid old earth must borrow its mirth,
 It has trouble enough of its own.
 Sing! and the hills will echo it;
 Sigh! and it's lost on the air;
 For they want full measure of all your pleasure,
 But nobody wants your care.
 Feast! and your halls are crowded;
 Fast! and they'll pass you by;
 Succeed! and give! and they'll let you live;
 Fail! and they'll let you die.”

And is this all one may expect from the world? That is about all! As long as you have money, health, and youth on your side, you may be very popular; but when these go, then nobody troubles much about you.

But the one who knows the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, and has had his sins forgiven, is independent of either the world's smile or frown. He has proved the truth of the following words, which contrast with those above:—

THE WAY OF HEAVEN.

Joy! and your Lord joys with you ;
 Weep! and He sees your tears ;
 You may drink of His love all *measure* above,
 Not a cry of distress but He hears.
 Sing! and the heavens echo it ;
 Sigh! 'tis caught quick by His ear ;
 For you are His treasure wherein He finds pleasure,
 So cast on Him all your care.
 Feast! for you may live by Him ;
 Fast! He can fill up the void ;
 Ten thousand times lovely, His glory's above me ;
 His banner is Love—unalloyed.

There was an old woman, a Roman Catholic, in Co. Sligo, who was dying. The doctor who attended her was a child of God. He spoke to the poor woman of the love of Jesus, of a present salvation for the sinner who trusts alone in His sin-cleansing blood.

At first she could not believe that such good news could be true, especially for a poor old sinner like her; but after a few more conversations with the doctor, she believed the Word of God, which says: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5).

She saw with delight that she had nothing to do, that Jesus had done all, and that God was satisfied.

One day the doctor came to see her again; she was very far gone, but when he entered her room, lifting up her wasted arms and addressing the Lord Jesus, she said, "My ten thousand times beloved, sure it was Yourself that did it all!" and falling back, was gone to be with Him.

That same faithful doctor was visiting another very poor woman who was dying of cancer; he told her, too, what she had never heard before,

that if she believed in the Lord Jesus Christ she would be saved, and that His blood cleanseth from all sin; that she could do nothing that would entitle her to salvation, but that the Son of God had done all. She believed in Jesus as her Saviour, and believed, too, that He would have her just as she was—poor, old, sinful, and dying; and so He did, for it was for such that Jesus came to die, and her heart was full of gratitude and joy.

In that part of Ireland, some of the country people have a strange idea that if there are any feathers of a *wild* bird in their bed they cannot die, no matter how ill they may be. This poor old woman lived on so long, in spite of her suffering, that her people concluded there must be a wild bird's feathers in her bed, so they made her a bed of straw, as comfortable as they could, on the floor, and there they laid her down to die!

But she had *Jesus* with her, and she was delighting in His wonderful love in actually dying for her.

One day, not long before the Lord took her to Himself, her kind doctor came in to see her and to talk to her about the Lord Jesus, when she quoted a verse of a hymn which runs thus:—

“And when on that bright day I rise,
And join the anthems of the skies,
In ceaseless song this note shall swell,
My Jesus hath done all things well!”

See *how* happy Christ could make her as she lay suffering and dying on that bed of straw!

Oh, you who have tested the world and found it so shallow and unsatisfying, come to Jesus; He will not disappoint you.

“O taste and see that the Lord is good:
blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.”

A. G. T.

A BANKRUPT.

75

A BANKRUPT.

HELPLESS BUT NOT HOPELESS.

READER, have you ever considered how you stand with God? You may be able to say, I owe no man anything. But what of our account with *God*? A wise sea-captain will take his bearings. A wise business man will periodically take stock and reckon up his liabilities. But if it is wise to know how a man stands as to material things, is it less so to consider how he stands in regard to God and eternal things? You will not be always here: you have to leave this world. Why, then, like the farmer in Luke xii., play the fool? He thought only of his temporary assets, and forgot all about his eternal liabilities. Sooner or later you *must* take God into account. Every man has to appear before God and give account of himself there (see Rom. xiv. 12 and Rev. xx. 12).

Now God has taken your case into account already.

What! you say, God taken *me* into account? Yes. You are contemplated in Luke vii. 41: "A certain creditor had two debtors." The two before Jesus at the time were representative debtors, and you belong to one class or the other. God Himself is the creditor.

What has God had from man? Naturally nothing but sin. This is what He has had from you, dear reader. Put down your liabilities, for you have nothing else to put down. You have nothing to pay with. In plain words, you are a total bankrupt. If you believe it, listen! Jesus said, "And when they had nothing to

pay, He frankly forgave them both." Is yours not a parallel case? God's disposition toward these two debtors is His disposition toward you. He wants you as a repentant sinner to take this into account, that Jesus was delivered for our (that is the believer's) offences (Rom. iv. 25). His liabilities have been met by another—the man Christ Jesus—and this in order that all who believe on Him might have forgiveness. There are two kinds of debtors in this world, and only two. One recognises his debt like the publican in Luke xviii., the other, like the Pharisee, ignores it and learns nothing of the gracious disposition of God toward men.

How, then, do *you* stand, my reader? You cannot meet your own liabilities. Scripture is very clear about this. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). "The glory of God" mentioned in this verse does not refer to heaven, but to what is God's standard for man. You do not, my reader, come up to that standard. *He* says so in that little word "ALL." You are a moral bankrupt. But He (Jesus) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, and now "through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." God discharges no debts at the expense of righteousness. Christ in death met all our liabilities, in order "that God might be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). Be honest with yourself. Be honest toward God. Confess your liabilities, and in the name and through the merits and work of the man Christ Jesus accept God's forgiveness.

J. D. M.

The Conbert's Corner.

"THE HEAVENLY." WHO ARE THEY?

(Continued.)

4. *Paul had the joy of heaven in his heart.*

THERE is nothing doleful, nothing gloomy, about the believer's portion. Even an Old Testament saint could say, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased" (Ps. iv. 7). But when you come to New Testament believers, what do they say? Listen to Paul's testimony: "Rejoice in the Lord *always*: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. iv. 4). Hear next what the apostle John says: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be *full*" (1 John i. 4). Then think of Peter's words to the strangers scattered: "Whom having not seen ye love: in whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with *joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" Anything gloomy about this? It is *joy!* JOY! JOY!

But *how often* would God have us taste this joy? Paul answers, "*Always.*"

How much of it? John says, "The *fulness* of it."

What kind of joy is it? A "*joy unspeakable and full of glory,*" responds Peter.

Oh, yes, and we have great occasion to be a rejoicing people. At the very commencement of our new history there is joy in heaven about us. There might justly have been judgment from heaven upon us; but the moment we judged *ourselves*, that is, the moment we repented, there was joy in heaven about us; and this was quickly

followed by a taste of this joy in our own hearts, for the indwelling Spirit filled us with "all joy and peace in believing."

What must have been the joy in the presence of the angels when Saul of Tarsus was brought to repentance! What joy must have possessed the heart of that subdued champion persecutor when he discovered *who* it was that bore the name he hated, and that His tenderest compassions were towards him. No wonder, when he wrote to others, that he said, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." No wonder that "patient continuance" and "always abounding" should mark his service to that same Lord, from the first day to the very end.

Did you ever consider why men should point to a bird as their ideal of happiness? "*As happy as a bird,*" they say. Is it not because a bird is naturally one of the brightest, freest, happiest of God's creatures? Yet how Paul's joy in that desolate dungeon at Philippi far exceeded all that nature could produce in like circumstances!

Very few birds will sing in the night at all, but not even a caged nightingale would sing in the dark with both its legs tied. Yet Paul and Silas sang praises at midnight with their feet fast in the stocks.

Again, a hungry bird will rarely sing, and a wounded bird never! Paul and Silas, with bleeding backs, sang so heartily that the other prisoners heard them. When the Holy Spirit is ungrieved, inside rejoicings are not to be silenced even by the fiercest outside buffetings.

No. The joys of a Christian are not dependent upon things being exactly to his taste in this world. "The kingdom of God is not

meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17).

"Rejoice in Him! again, again,
The Spirit strikes the chord,
And faith takes up the happy strain,
Our joy is in the Lord."

5. *He has the aid of heaven in his service.*
Read Mark xvi. 19, 20.

It is a comfort to remember that the Lord's personal support may be as confidently counted on by one who really serves from love to his Master to-day, as it was counted on by His most honoured servants at the beginning.

He may not be pleased to send an earthquake to shake open a prison door to let you out, but He can open some *cottage* door, or, if He pleases, a *palace* door, to let you with your message in. And not only so, but He can as truly use you to a conversion as He used Paul to the jailer's. It is as easy for Him to shake the foundations of a prison as to open the heart of a Lydia or alarm the conscience of a jailer.

All we need is to begin and continue in Paul's attitude, and say, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have *me* to do?" It must be "Thou" and "me." No intruder must come between. "He gave to every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34). He claims the right to send forth labourers into His harvest (Matt. ix. 38). We must therefore not set ourselves to work as if we were our own masters. *He* must be consulted. "He that waiteth on his Master shall be honoured."

If you want to go north, a train going south will not be of any service to you, strong as the engine and careful as the driver may be. And if we want His support in our service we must

be found in the way of His will, and to this end we must be zealously watchful to accept nothing else. Another way may sometimes *seem* preferable, because apparently more successful—a quicker, a more ready route to the end desired—but the servant devoted to his Master's pleasure will seek to do *His* will, and count nothing successful that does not leave the heart conscious of His approval. "If any man serve *Me*, let him follow *Me*; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve *Me*, him will My Father honour" (John xii. 26).

Let us now recapitulate. He has—

- i. The call of heaven at his start.
- ii. Fitness for heaven in his state.
- iii. The mind of heaven in his path.
- iv. The joy of heaven in his heart.
- v. The aid of heaven in his service.
- vi. The welcome of heaven as his hope.

Yes. He may count on *the welcome of heaven when his work is done*. It is Jesus Himself who receives the spirits of His saints when they depart. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," said the dying Stephen. Think what that must be, and press on more ardently. When, at last, He fulfils His promise and comes again, He will "gird Himself, and make His watching ones sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke xii. 37). What a welcome! Oh, let us think what that reception must be, and let us gird up more vigorously to serve Him here.

That these heavenly hopes and privileges may be better known and more highly prized by every young convert who reads these pages, is the writer's earnest desire.

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

THE FOLLY OF DEFIANCE.

PERHAPS there is no chapter in all the Old Testament where we have a more simple picture of the gospel, as meeting man's need in the way of relieving him from judgment, than in Exodus xii.

There God is plainly set forth both as a Judge and as a Deliverer—a Judge to those who would not bow to Him nor avail themselves of the remedy He provided for their escape, a Saviour for those who did.

Two nations, representing two different classes of people, are there—those who were not sheltered from judgment and those who, though still in the place of judgment, were sheltered.

Pharaoh had refused—wilfully and stubbornly refused—every overture of God's abounding mercy toward himself and his people. By this means he became morally hardened. He hardened himself by his procrastinating, prevaricating course. God, no doubt, allowed it that He might make His power known to the proud monarch.

Pride of heart brought down the judgment of God upon Pharaoh and on the Egyptians. The pride of heart that in open defiance resists God will ultimately bring down the righteous judgment of God upon this habitable world. Though God is long-suffering and full of mercy, though judgment is His strange work, He will yet assert

VOL. XVI. No. 6.

His sovereign power in the judgment of man's pride.

The beast and the anti-Christ, who one day will be the world's leaders and rulers, receiving their direct energy from Satan, will act in the same defiant spirit, leading the world to openly blaspheme God's name—will yet, with all their confederates, be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Awful thought! Man of the world, consider!

How often, even now, there are those who resist God's Spirit and give themselves over to infidel teaching; who seem unreservedly to put themselves into the hands of the devil, by whom their eyes are blinded, their consciences hardened. Take the following instance—

"We will have some prayer," said a wife to her dying infidel husband as he lay in the sweat of a great agony.

"Not a breath of that, Mary," he said. "The slightest breath of prayer would roll back on me like breakers upon the rocks on a drowning man. I have come to the hour of test. I believed in a liar, and he has left me in the lurch. Bring me my infidel book that I swore by, and pitch it into the fire and let it burn." Then with a groan of despair and agony, tossing his hands wildly in the air, he exclaimed, "Blackness of darkness! Oh, my God! too late!"

Alas for the pride and hardness of man's heart and the utter weakness and vanity of his mind! Befooled and bewitched by infidelity, it leaves him in darkness and despair in the hour of supreme testing, the hour of death.

God would make Pharaoh and all Egypt feel that He is Sovereign, and that, though so highly

exalted amongst men, Pharaoh cannot do as he likes. Therefore He allows a wave of *death* to pass over the whole land, besides which nothing is so deeply affecting, and before which nothing makes man feel so powerless.

How often, even now, God speaks to people by death! A Christian woman told me that it was through the death of her only child that God broke down the pride of her heart and saved her soul.

A big, burly man told me the other day that he had been very wicked—betting on horses, etc.—but that God allowed death to come into his family and take away his four-year-old boy. That broke him down. He turned to God in confession and self-judgment, and is now truly converted. He can now thank God for the death of that child.

On the other hand, some are like Pharaoh: though they pass through all kinds of sorrow, they do not seem to hear the voice of God to them in it. Indeed, sometimes sorrow and death seem to have a hardening effect. “God speaketh once, yea, twice, *yet man perceiveth it not.*”

Reader, death may have come into *your* family. We would solemnly and affectionately advise you to cease your defiance and to give earnest heed to it! Hear God’s voice to you, lest you grow hardened, and Death suddenly lay his pitiless hand upon you and find you unprepared! P. W.

Comfort for a Seeker.—“COME unto *Me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will *give* you rest.” OUR REST COMES NOT FROM OUR BEING WHAT *HE* WANTS, BUT HIS BEING WHAT *WE* WANT. J. N. D.

MIDNIGHT TO DAWN.

“He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither
he goeth.”—JOHN xii. 35.

AMONGST the last lines written by the late
Robert G. Ingersoll, America’s great agnos-
tic, were the following:—

“Is there beyond the silent night
An endless day?
Is death a door that leads to light?
We cannot say.

The tongueless secret locked in fate we do not know,
We hope and wait.”

* * * * *

Amongst some papers found in the desk of a
man who once professed infidelity, but just before
he died got deeply interested in the eternal well-
being of his precious soul, were found these words:

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

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

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

“Though some will mock and some will blame,
In spite of fear, in spite of shame,
I’ll go to Him, because His name
Is Jesus.”

“I am the Light of the world: he that follow-
eth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have
the light of life” (John viii. 12).

Reader, how is it with you? In darkness or
in the light? Which? R. G.

TEST QUESTIONS.

“**WHAT** THINK YE OF CHRIST?” When the Lord Jesus was on earth He asked this question of the Pharisees. But let the question go straight home to *your own* heart, my reader.

Is He to you a mere man of whom you have read in a book called the Bible? Or is He the One whom you know as your Saviour? Perhaps you have only heard others speak of Him as such, and would like to know Him for yourself.

Then let me ask you another question: “**WHAT DO YOU THINK OF YOURSELF?**”

Perhaps you are quite willing to own that you sin sometimes, but that you are not quite as bad as some other persons whom you know, and that you hope God will, in His mercy, overlook *all* your sins because you have tried to do your best. My dear friend, if these are your thoughts, it is no wonder that you do not know Jesus as your Saviour; for He said, “I am not come to call the righteous, but *sinner*s to repentance.”

Still another question: “**WHAT DOES GOD THINK OF YOU?**”

Ah, we may try to hide our own shame, as Adam and Eve did behind the trees of the garden, but when the all-searching eye of God looks down upon us, how does *He* find the state of our hearts? The answer can be found in many places in God's book, but we will just take two passages from the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans—

“There is none righteous, no, not one:

There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

Their feet are swift to shed blood:

Destruction and misery are in their ways:

And the way of peace have they not known:

There is no fear of God before their eyes."

And again,

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Now, what can you say of yourself after reading what *God* says of you? Do you believe that God's word is true, and that He has given a correct picture of yourself? Listen, "Thou art holy" (Ps. xxii. 3). "THOU ART HOLY." Yes, *God is holy*. Sin and He could not dwell together. What room, then, can be found in heaven for one who has been a sinner? God *has* made room, and He has worked in such a way that He can bring men home to Himself without interfering with His own holy character. Jesus, God's own beloved Son, came into this world nineteen hundred years ago, and by His life and words and work told out all that was in the heart of God for men. He went about doing good, for God was with Him. Men nailed Him to a cross, and it was there that the question of sin was settled, once and for ever. It was there that God made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us.

Listen to the cry which rang out through the gloom and the darkness of Calvary—"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Let the

blessed Son of God Himself give the answer—
 “Thou art holy.” There alone, on that cross,
 forsaken of God, the Sin-bearer bore the judgment
 that was due to us, and now God can
 come near to you and tell you that repentance
 and forgiveness of sins may be yours. Can you
 link yourself with the apostle Peter, and say,
 “Who His own self bare our sins in His own
 body on the tree” (1 Peter ii. 24)?

What do *you* think of Christ? Shall I answer
 the question? He was the blessed Son of God
 who came here into this world and did a work on
 account of which God can now offer forgiveness
 to every man, because Christ died for the un-
 godly. He is *my* Saviour, for He died for *me*.

Beloved reader, happy are you if you can
 indeed speak thus. Be sure of this, that this work
 stands good for eternity. “Their sins and iniqui-
 ties will I remember no more” (Heb. x. 17).

And now, just one more question: “WHAT DOES
 GOD THINK OF CHRIST?”

Let God’s word give the answer. “God also
 hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name
 which is above every name: that at the name
 of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in
 heaven, and things in earth, and things under
 the earth; and that every tongue should confess
 that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God
 the Father” (Phil. ii. 9–11).

Is He not worthy to be praised? Does not your
 heart go out in deep thankfulness for what He
 has done, not only for yourself, but also for God?
 He has so maintained God’s holy character, that
 God Himself can now give unhindered effect to
 the desires of His heart by filling His house with
 the objects of His love.

T. H.

AN INFIDEL IN THE PRESENCE OF DEATH.

HE lived in London, an avowed infidel. With no fear of God before his eyes, he refused the Scriptures, which plainly present what is after death, and speak of man's responsibility before God.

But infidelity is built upon shifting sands, and often takes flight through a change of circumstances, as the following incident will prove.

This man's wife went to visit a friend who had been converted to God since last they met. The friend had received such blessing herself that she had a great desire for others to know it also. To this end an invitation to the gospel meeting was given to her friend, and she happily accepted it. She had been accustomed to listen to the opinions of her husband, but now found herself listening with great attention to the sweet and blessed story of how God had worked that He might gain the heart of man.

That night she took her place as a sinner, and having afterwards claimed the sinner's Saviour, she went home to entreat her husband to come and hear the gospel too. After much persuasion, the following Sunday evening he consented. But even the reading of the Scriptures proved too much for him, for he rose from his seat in anger and left the hall as quickly as possible.

On his wife's return home he forbade her ever going to hear the preaching again, and took good care to stay at home on the following Sunday evenings in order to prevent her. But "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations" (2 Peter ii. 9).

AN INFIDEL IN THE PRESENCE OF DEATH. 89

A few weeks had passed by when, at two o'clock one morning, a knock came at the house of the writer. It was the friend of the infidel's wife, requesting a dear old Christian woman to accompany her. No time was lost, and in a few minutes they were on their way to the house of the infidel. The door had been left ajar, so they went at once towards the bedroom. On opening the door they beheld the dying wife, with her eyes gazing into her husband's face. "George," she said, "George, you wouldn't let me go to the meetings; you forced me to sing that song at the party, and now I shall go to hell!" In the presence of his dying wife the husband's infidelity had forsaken him. There he was, standing by her bedside with Bible in hand, beseeching his wife to believe every word of it! She had only been to two gospel preachings, but believing in Jesus as a repentant sinner, she was safely sheltered by His precious blood. *It is true that for the moment her eye had been taken off Christ and her soul disturbed, but, thank God, her feelings could not affect her safety. She had trusted Christ, and her safety consisted in what God thought of His death for her.*

As the Christian visitor sat down by her bedside, bathing her heated forehead, she spoke to her more fully of that work. Her fears all vanished, vanished for ever, and peace once more filled her soul. With that word "PEACE" upon her lips she passed out of time into eternity, from the gloom of that death-chamber into the presence of her Saviour.

The husband, alas! who was at the time so much affected, afterwards only made the occasion an excuse for hardening his heart against God.

Reader, are you inclined to infidel reasonings? Beware of trifling with such hardening influences.

I remember what a great impression was made upon me when I saw the import of the following simple story. It was a custom among certain Indian tribes, when anticipating war with other tribes, to hold a great feast. When the feasting was at its height they held counsel as to whether or not they felt equal to the strength of the enemy. But before deciding to go to war it was their custom to have as many days of fasting as they had of feasting. If they did not feel as confident of victory on the last day of the fast as at the height of the feast, they wisely refused to go to war.

Friend, you may have no fear in the days of health and youth and vigour. You may not fear even in the presence of death. But you will tremble in the presence of God if found before Him in your sins.

You may now have passed the days of your youth and never yet had to say to God about your sins. Perhaps you are even close to reaching the allotted number of the days of men, and yet this momentous question has, up to the present, been avoided. But remember, though you may die and go to the grave with this question unsettled, it must at last be raised—raised when you are for ever beyond the reach of hope or mercy.

Friend, God is for man! He wants him for Himself. He goes after him because He desires to bless him. He is *ready to save you* (Isa. xxxviii. 20).
C. L.

“I do not ask you to accept anything, but to believe that God has given and accepted His Son for you.”

J. N. D.

SINGING TO HIS OWN GRAVESIDE.

SOME few weeks back a man was going along a road one morning to his work as usual in the town of H——, singing the lines of a well-known hymn. When he got to the words,

“When the roll is called up yonder
I’ll be there,”

the ground suddenly opened under his feet, and he disappeared into the depths below. He had fallen down what appeared to be the shaft of a disused pit, covered over.

An alarm being given, mining lamps were lowered, but the gas coming from below extinguished them, and the authorities soon found there was no alternative but to leave the poor man to his fate. A funeral service was held over the mouth of the pit in the presence of a large concourse of people.

Reader, had this been your case instead of this man’s, would your precious soul have passed to be with the Lord Jesus? Or would it have passed away to endless despair, where “there will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth”?

You say this man must have been a Christian. We trust he was, and that the words he was singing were true, and that the Lord Jesus took him to be with Himself. The great day that is coming will declare whether he was or not. How striking that he should have been called at the very moment he was singing such significant words! But how solemn to think how unconsciously near to death we often are! God is indeed speaking in these days of callous indifference.

A. G. O.

NOT DESERVING, BUT DESIRING.

GIBBETED! and only a few short hours left to live. Well-nigh had he run his course, and it had been a wicked one. He was no martyr, and he knew it. He richly deserved all he was getting. Well-nigh had he filled his cup of iniquity. One act more, and he fills it to the brim. To the wickedness that made his presence unbearably obnoxious in *man's* kingdom he adds the guilt of reviling God's King at the very moment that man was casting Him out of *His* kingdom. Iniquity could hardly go farther.

But listen! A change takes place; a veritable moral revolution is brought about, the hardened rebel is suddenly turned into a submissive subject. The criminal who has spent a lifetime in sin suddenly becomes a righteous judge, and the first person he judges is *himself!* Whatever could have wrought such a change? What could so quickly have moved the heart of such a hardened criminal to act and speak thus?

There is little doubt that it was the words that fell from the Saviour's own lips that awakened the dying robber to the dawn of a new day. "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Can you not imagine him exclaiming to himself, "What does He say? 'Forgive them!' 'Father, forgive them!' Whom can He mean but those who are doing their utmost to get rid of Him, and cruelly taunting Him while they do it? Why, then, I must myself be included! I have joined with the mockers! Is it possible that there can be grace enough in Him to desire God's forgiveness for a wretch like me, and to use His dying breath in pleading for it? Yet it

must be so, for He cries, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.' Marvellous! Marvellous! Oh, how such grace wins my confidence and draws my heart to Him! Never, never can I expect to *deserve* His favour, but here on the spot I cannot help *desiring* it," and with the desire a hope springs up that He may grant it. "Such a sinner as I am can claim no merit, but even such a sinner as I am may venture to seek the mercy of such a Saviour as He is, and I am resolved to do it."

We well know the kind of reception he got. If a dying malefactor, condemning himself, owned Jesus as Lord, that same blessed Lord over all will prove how rich He is to all that call upon Him. "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

One word, my reader. Is not this same blessed Person worthy of the confidence of *your* heart? Does not His position at Calvary plainly declare that He desires your forgiveness also? Beside this, He has authorised His servants to proclaim repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations. You do not, you cannot *deserve* His forgiveness, but do you not *desire* it?

GEO. C.

The heart of God.—"The sinner who would have been ashamed to show himself to man could hide his face in the bosom of Jesus, sure of not finding a reproach there. Not a sin allowed (if there had been, confidence would not have been established, because He would not have revealed the holy God), but a heart which, notwithstanding the sin, received the sinner in His arms. It was the heart of God."

J. N. D.

The Conbert's Corner.

DANGER AND PROTECTION.

THE necessity of protection for believers so long as they remain on earth is evident from the many allusions to danger in the Holy Scriptures. Very serious results follow the absence of it. Let us consider first,

Our dangers. The blessed Lord told of the wolf scattering the sheep (John x. 12).

The apostle Peter wrote: "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter v. 8).

The apostle Paul, of grievous wolves entering in amongst the saints and not sparing the flock (Acts xx. 29). We read of false teachers, and of many following their pernicious ways (2 Peter ii. 2). Also of some young women who had turned aside after Satan (1 Tim. v. 15); and in 1 John iii. 7 the exhortation "Let no man deceive you." These will serve to mark out some of the *dangers* from which we need to be *protected*.

In thinking of the dangers, let us be clear that on the Lord's side there are none whatever. He has overcome Satan, and Satan can never overcome Him. His present position at the right hand of God is the guarantee that nothing can fail which He has undertaken to effect. He only waits the Father's time, when "He will manifest Himself as the blessed and only Potentate" (1 Tim. vi. 15).

But on the believer's side there is danger, and therefore he needs protection, so that rather than be overcome with evil, he may overcome evil with good. Next let us consider

Our protection. For protection we are exhorted

to cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light (Rom. xiii. 12). That is, to refuse everything in ourselves which is unsuitable to Christianity, and then to put on the armour of light—the light which God gives His people through the holy writings and the indwelling Holy Spirit. There is no greater protection than light, because it enables those who have it to avoid the pits and traps of the enemy, which otherwise they would fall into.

The psalmist wrote (and Israel when restored will confess): "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. cxix. 105). Surely a word suitable for our meditation to-day!

Men of business need light regarding the things they are engaged in, and so read the newspapers, which supply light as to the state of the various markets, and by attention to such light they avoid losses which those in the dark often make.

As believers the Lord's business should be more important to us than our own daily calling, because the former is connected with eternity, the latter only with time.

The daily calling is indirectly the Lord's work because He has enjoined us "with quietness to work and eat our own bread" (see 2 Thess. iii. 12). God's light helps us to keep each in the proper place. When Paul made tents (see Acts xviii. 3 and xx. 34, 35) it did not interfere with the more direct work of caring for souls.

The "armour of light" has the first place in protecting us, but should be accompanied by "the breastplate of faith and love" (1 Thess. v. 8). If saints walk in the light, they will have to meet with much opposition to the truth, and will need the

protection which faith and love afford. There will be firmness in faith, and gentleness in love. While "the helmet, the hope of salvation," gives confidence that the Lord's second coming will remove us from the scene of opposition, when He will reward every bit of faithfulness He has approved of.

In the present day, when the truth of the heavenly calling of all believers has been well-nigh lost sight of, and worldly religion has become popular, there is great danger of young believers becoming entangled in some of the many forms of corrupted Christianity.

Thus the need of each individual looking more to the Lord and to the Holy Scriptures which are His voice at the present time; while those who are strong are exhorted to bear the infirmities of the weak and not please themselves (see Rom. xv. 1).
G. W. Gy.

Don't dispute with infidels.—William Grimshaw, of Haworth, in Yorkshire, was once in the company of an infidel nobleman, who had just before engaged in a long dispute with two eminent Christian men. William Grimshaw did not believe that any real good could be effected by such discussions, and when the nobleman tried to draw him into a similar dispute he declined, nearly in these words: "My lord, if you needed information, I would gladly do my utmost to assist you; but the fault is not in your *head*, but in your *heart*, which can only be reached by a *divine* power. I shall pray for you, but I cannot dispute with you."
ADAPTED.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

“THE SAND RUNS OUT.”

AT a sale where some valuable cattle were being disposed of, the auctioneer selling used a sand-glass, which he held in his hand. Having secured an offer for the animal, he started the glass running, doing all he could in the meantime to obtain a higher bid; and if he succeeded, the glass was turned again, and so on until it ran out, and the animal in the ring became the property of the last bidder.

Now I want to use this little incident in an appeal to any whose eye may read these lines. Have you ever considered for a moment that the sand in the hour-glass of your life is rapidly running out? And when the last grain is through, to whom will you belong? With whom will you spend the long eternity upon which you will then enter? It may be the world is spreading its illusive pleasures before you, bidding for your affections, and that your heart is inclined towards it; but listen to a warning from God's own Word. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. . . . For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof” (1 John ii. 15–17). What can the world give you when you are passing out of it? Neither “life” nor pleasure then!

VOL. XVI. No. 7.

Then there is another—"the god of this world" he is called. His competition for souls is very keen, though he is often found to be bidding on the sly, and often employs agents as diverse as an angel of light and a roaring lion. He blinds the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ should shine unto them (2 Cor. iv. 4). Professing to be a friend, he is really an adversary. Lying and murder characterise him (John viii. 44). Oh! beware of him, and turn away. He will be a hard master for time and a miserable companion for eternity.

But then there is yet Another who would have you for Himself—Jesus, the blessed Son of God. At the sale I mentioned there were purchasers who had come from the other side of the Atlantic to secure that which they were after, and which they really valued. And Jesus came from heaven that He might have you with Himself in eternal bliss. On Calvary He paid the redemption price in His own precious blood. There He offered one sacrifice for sins, and is set down at the right hand of God. He seeks you *here* that you might be with Him *there*. Oh! will you not turn to Him? Do not let the hour-glass of mercy's day run out and find you still away from Him.

The auctioneer cried, at such and such a price, and "the glass runs—quick! going! gone!"

And shall we be less in earnest in appealing to you? Nay, we would repeat, "Make haste, for the glass runs!" "*Going*" may now be said of you, and "*Gone*" will soon be said with equal certainty. Gone! but where? Will it be to be with Christ, or **WHERE?**

T. W. P.

A TROPHY OF GRACE.

A GRACEFUL ship is gliding out with fair wind on an ocean voyage, and sunlit wavelets spread like a sea carpet before it.

* * * * *

A storm, gradually gathering, increases in violence, till, stripped of masts and beauty, the fair vessel is at the mercy of the elements.

* * * * *

The storm is over, and, almost a derelict, she is towed into a secure harbour, under sunny skies and upon smooth waters, by a powerful tug.

* * * * *

Such are the scenes that arise in the writer's mind when thinking of Will D——. Handsome, genial, and amiable, his character ensured him many friends, amongst whom some envied his share of natural comeliness. Nor in his youth had there been any lack on the part of parents and teachers in displaying before him the durable riches of wisdom, faith in Christ, and the eternal joys of salvation.

But the world, with her siren voice, spoke also of stolen sweetness, of pleasure apart from God, and sought to allure him from the way of peace. Against her flattering voice the wise man warns the simple, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death; yea, the simple "know not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell" (Prov. ix. 18).

But the voice of wisdom ceases not: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; "Hear

instruction, and be wise." Well had it been for Will D—— had he listened to that kindly voice.

A sea-faring life was the one marked out for him, and amidst companions who bore him no true friendship, enjoying only his geniality and easy manners, he gradually declined from the effects of that godly instruction which had been instilled into him by parent and teacher.

At home his widowed mother nightly and daily prayed for her darling boy at sea, and who can say how much he was preserved by the all-powerful hand of a prayer-answering God?

The world may lay its charms, careless companions may seek to banish the voice of conscience, yea, conscience itself may become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, but the sinner on his road to hell is broken in upon by the God who hears and answers prayer.

Thus, like the ship in which he sailed, often swayed by a turbulent sea, Will D—— knew no rest.

From the laugh, the joke, and the occasional drink, he sank in self-respect till what was casual became habitual, and told on his none too strong constitution.

At last a doctor who attended him, after placing him in hospital for a time, recommended him to go home and be nursed as being beyond his skill.

Ah, the ways of God are marvellous, and reflect His love and glory! God speaks once, yea twice, even by strong pain upon his bed, to dissuade man from his purpose. He speaks with eternity in full view. Oh, the triumphs of grace! To the helpless sinner, brought low where no human power can avail, the boundless loving

A TROPHY OF GRACE.

101

mercy of a watching God is offered through Christ. Far better the sure eternal pleasures of God's presence than the longest lifetime of sinful pleasures that yield husks, and canker, and grief!

And God graciously heard the widow's cry, and brought her only son home to her, that she might hear from his own lips that for which she had prayed.

Loving Christian friends frequently visited him, and great was their joy to find him willing to listen to God's Word and to regard the overtures of the Saviour's love. Soon he was rejoicing in Christ as his Saviour, and longing to be with Him.

During the later days of his life joy and peace filled his soul; and the writer saw his emaciated face, even in death, lit by a radiance that seemed to triumph over all that had sought to destroy his faith in Christ.

God's only begotten Son, the only Saviour, the Conqueror of Satan, and the Vanquisher of death, was before him, and His power delivered him from all that would have deceived and dragged the soul into eternal perdition.

I saw his face when Satan's art
And sin's enchantments had their day,
And fell disease had done its part—
But had to stay.

I saw his face when Death's cold hand
Had drawn the gates of life aside,
And ushered him to heaven's bright land,
There to abide.

I saw his face with radiance bright,
As though a gleam from Jesus' face
Had set his features with its light.
Triumphant grace!

L. O. L.

NONE TOO BAD FOR CHRIST.

THIS DAY is the day of salvation. The day of judgment is at hand. It is an immense mercy when the Spirit of God wakes a man up in the day of salvation, before the day of judgment comes. But at the same time it is *a terrible awakening*.

Hitherto in complete darkness, when awakened his eyes are opened to the holiness of God, and to his awful state as a sinner before Him; and until God in mercy intervenes and speaks peace to him, *despair fills his soul*. And well it might, for to have to do with a holy God about my sin is a deeply solemn reality. The case seems *hopeless*, and, apart from His grace and love, *it is utterly so*.

Sins by the hundred come crowding in upon the conscience, sins in thought, sins in word, sins in deed, sins of omission, and sins of commission. Sin itself, the awful root-principle of evil in man, dominates the whole moral being, and the heart and mind become deeply afflicted. The holy law of God, with its awful curse for non-fulfilment, thunders at his guilty conscience. Satan heaps up accusation upon accusation of every kind of ill. Every outlet of escape seems barred. Behind him is the world lying in the wicked one, filled with lust and vanity, pride and wickedness, violence and corruption. Around him is a crowd of sin-stricken sinners like himself. Before him is death—dread death, with its awful sting—beyond it all the darkness of the grave, and with the resurrection, the fearful judgment of the great white throne, and the awful and eternal doom of the lake of fire! (Rev. xx. 15.) Well may the

awakened sinner, in view of all these dread realities, cry with one of old, "*Woe is me, for I am undone!*"

But GOD IS LOVE. Had we nothing better to tell you than of the claims of the holiness of God against you as a lost sinner, we would not even dip our pen in ink to address these lines to you. You would find it out soon enough. But, praised be His blessed Name, He has provided, in wondrous love, *a present way of escape* from all we have detailed, *and there is unbounded and eternal blessing* for everyone who through His great goodness is brought to true repentance before Him. There *was* no way of escape, but He has made one *by the gift and death and resurrection of His Son*. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." Every question that helps to fill the awakened soul with despair was met and completely answered in His finished work. In those three awful hours on the cross, when God hid His face from His beloved Son, the holy and unblemished Lamb of His own providing, He emptied once for all the bitter cup; He was made sin, suffered for sins, bore the judgment, exhausted the fire. He died, His precious blood was shed, He made complete atonement for the soul. He rose from the dead, robbing death of its sting, the grave of its victory, and utterly vanquished Satan for ever. Every question—sins, sin, death, Satan, judgment, the lake of fire—was met and answered then and there. The glory of God was vindicated, the holiness of God maintained, the judgment of God met, the claims of God satisfied. *The Man who did it all was Jesus, God's Son.* And God raised Him from the dead, and gave

Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God (1 Peter i. 21).

Now, poor, humbled, conscience-stricken sinner, why should not your unhappy case be settled to-day? "Oh, I am such a sinner, it seems impossible," you reply. "I'm far, far too bad."

Not a bit of it, dear soul. *No one is too bad for Christ.* You may well say so, so long as you look at yourself. A sinner you are, that is clear, and an utterly good-for-nothing, hell-deserving one, *as all are.* You believe it? "Indeed I do," you reply. Well, that is the first of the only two steps you need to take to be happy now and for ever. To own from the depth of your soul before God you deserve His holy judgment is *true repentance.* Step number two is *to believe God.* He has provided a Saviour. Jesus, in the glory of God, who met every question at Calvary, is that Saviour. All you want or need you will find in Him. God raised and exalted *that Man,* and gave up all expectation of merit from you long ago. *Believe on Him.* The moment you do, it is your privilege on the one hand to say, He bore *my sins,* He has been made sin *for me,* He endured *my judgment,* He exhausted the fire *for me,* He removed the sting of death *for me,* He spoiled the grave *for me,* He conquered Satan *for me.* And on the other hand, *He* is accepted of God *for me*—I am righteous, holy, accepted, and graced *in Him.* He is my Saviour, my Lord, my Advocate, my Priest, my Hope, my ALL.

All is as clear as a sunbeam in Scripture. Man is a sinner, an utter and irretrievable wreck. There neither is nor can be any betterment of any kind in any way whatever *before God.* He has given us all up once and for ever

SAVED ON THE WESTERN PRAIRIES. 105

as an utterly, irretrievably, hopelessly ruined race, only fit for death, judgment, and the lake of fire. But He has given His only begotten Son, *Jesus*. *He glorified Him*. And God raised and exalted Him to the highest glory as a present and everlasting Saviour for "every one that believeth." It is not a question of you and your doings, *but of Christ and His perfect finished work*. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby *we must be saved*" but by Him (Acts iv. 12). Then let self go, now and for ever, and believe on Him. To Him give all the prophets witness, that "*whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts x. 43). Pardon and peace are yours as the blessed result. And now, till He comes and fetches us away to that bright world where He Himself is gone, your one aim should be to follow, serve, and glorify Him. "What think ye of *Christ?*" *No one is too bad for Him.*

E. H. C.

SAVED ON THE WESTERN PRAIRIES.

DEAR reader, I would like to tell you how God saved my soul from coming wrath.

When very young I was taught to say my prayers, and brought up strictly in what is called the true Church for over thirty years. I kept my Prayer-book in my pocket, and if danger was near I would read a prayer. I thought I was all right, a true child of God, but I now see that I was a true child of the father spoken of in John viii. 44.

When I grew up to be a young man I left my native land for New York State. Not satis-

106 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

fied there, I moved to the western prairies, and settled down on a farm. We had neither priest nor preacher in those days, and lived as we thought best. Going out one day for a pail of water, I met a man giving away tracts, which he called "*gospel tracts.*" I did not know what they were, nor did I care much about them. "Gospel," said I, "whatever is that? I never heard of the like before" (see Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). The stranger placed a hand on each shoulder, and looking me full in the face, said, "Come over to the gospel meeting to-night in the schoolroom." I said to him, "Sir, would you advise me to leave my own church and go to your meeting?" The stranger said, "No, sir; leaving your own church would do you no good; it is Christ you need. But come over and hear about Jesus, who died on the cross out of love to sinners. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life'" (John iii. 16).

I thought the words were beautiful, never having heard them before. So I went to hear for myself what the gospel was. The Word of God was opened in the meeting, and a few scriptures read, showing that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15; Luke xix. 10). The stranger told how he got saved in the old country by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Saviour. For a man to stand up and say he was saved, and knew it (1 John v. 13), was, we thought, going too far. I could not say that I was saved, never having found out that I was lost; but this new doctrine, as we called it, bothered me, and I knew not what to do. My wife was quite religious, yet she could not say

SAVED ON THE WESTERN PRAIRIES. 107

that she was saved; nor did I know one in the whole district who could say he was saved from the wrath to come.

I began to think over what I had heard, and to read the New Testament which the stranger gave me. I saw in that blessed book that all who were saved had a right to know it. I got into trouble, deep trouble, about my soul, and wondered where I should spend eternity. I read the tracts eagerly now, thinking I might see in them some ray of light. But no light came; all was dark within and without. I saw nothing before me but hell, with all its blackness of darkness (Matt. xxii. 13). And though some say there is no hell, I saw from the Word of God that there is a hell, and that all who die without Christ will be turned into it (Mark ix. 44; Ps. ix. 17).

Night after night Christ was brought before me as the only way of escape. He died on the cross out of love to sinners. He saw the sinner exposed to the judgment of God, having nothing to shelter him. Jesus took the sinner's place, bearing the wrath which was due to the sinner on the cross. Oh, matchless love! "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24; iii. 18). I was afraid of dying without Christ and going to the place where hope never enters; where no water can be obtained to quench the eternal thirst (Luke xvi. 24, 25), and no rest secured amidst the weeping and the wailing of the damned (Rev. xiv. 10, 11). I could not work; I could not eat; I was sick; yes, sin-sick, and knew not what to do. The farm, the home, the friends, were all as nothing to me compared with the loss of my soul. I prayed, I wept, I read the Book, but no light came. I lay down

upon my bed, troubled about my soul's salvation. I knew by the Word of God I was a lost sinner under God's wrath (John iii. 18). I was not sheltered by Jesus' blood; I was in perfect misery; I had a taste of hell; afraid to go to sleep lest I should die and wake up in hell. As I lay there upon my bed the truths I had heard about Jesus, and His finished work on the cross of Calvary, came up before me (John xix. 30). I looked away from my own wicked heart (Jer. xvii. 9) to Jesus bleeding on the cross for me, and I had peace with God—a peace made by Jesus Himself (Col. i. 20; Rom. v. 1). I thanked God for the gift of His Son.

Next day, coming home from my work in the field, I met the stranger who had brought the good news to us about Jesus and His precious blood. I grasped his hand and told him, "I am not afraid of hell fire now, sir. Jesus has saved me, and I know it by His own blessed Word." "Through this Man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Dear reader, if you take your true place before God, lost, helpless, and undone, without strength, then you can claim the other part of the same scripture for yourself. "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). Jesus says, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x. 9). Jesus died that you might live. Jesus was buried, and God raised Him from the dead (Acts xiii. 26-32).

Will you receive Jesus now as the man did of whom you have been reading? If you do, all will be well for time and eternity; but if you reject Jesus, what then? Jesus said, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16).

Look to Him now (Isa. xlv. 22). J. G.

The Convert's Corner.

YOUR BLESSINGS.

IN connection with a believer's blessings three things should be clearly distinguished.

They are—

1. *Announced in the Scriptures.*
2. *Appreciated through the Spirit.*
3. *Fully possessed in glory.*

There are, moreover, three distinct joys in connection with these three things which Caleb's history may perhaps serve to illustrate.

1. There was God's announcement of His mind through Moses: "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exod. iii. 8); and this was followed by a work which was to bring that announcement into effect. And on the shores of the Red Sea no doubt Caleb sang, with the rest of the "saved" people, "Jehovah hath triumphed": the slave-master is judged: Canaan is ours! See Exodus xv. 13: "Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation." Then faith, taking one bold stride forward, sees the dukes of Edom, the mighty men of Moab, and the inhabitants of Canaan as "still as a stone," yea, as powerless to prevent their going into the promised land as the Egyptians, lying dead upon the sea-shore, were powerless to prevent their leaving "the house of bondage." In other words, though

Canaan was not yet reached, God had *spoken*, God had *acted*, and faith, joyfully, fearlessly, fell in with that which was in His mind to bring about. "What God has promised He is well able to perform" was the language of Abraham's faith, and Caleb's faith could as cheerfully and as confidently say the same thing.

We too, by faith, have seen a great work accomplished, and heard a marvellous announcement in connection with it. We have been told to "rejoice because our names are written in heaven." We have seen the enemy silenced: we have heard the love of God declared. We believe that God has "triumphed gloriously," and that the accuser may as well be "as still as a stone," for that, notwithstanding our numberless sins of a guilty past which he was glad to cast at us; and notwithstanding the fact that with terrible determination he urged the argument in our bewildered hearts that such a holy Being as the living God could never have anything to say to us, short of hurling us to perdition for our sins, yet he could not deny that God's beloved Son had been to Calvary on our account, and that, while "the wages of sin is death," God's love had been declared in the gift of His only begotten Son, and that He had been down to death, in order that the believer "*should not perish, but have everlasting life.*"

2. There is *the present appreciation* of that which is in the mind of God for us. This is by the Spirit.

Before Caleb went to dwell in Canaan he was privileged to pay a short visit to the "pleasant land," there to taste the sweetness of its fruit. For this he had necessarily to cross Jordan, for Canaan lay on the other side. So it is with us,

if we would have a present taste of the "pleasant land." Eternal life is declared, again and again, by the beloved Son to be the portion and blessing of the believer (John vi. 47). But it is by the Spirit that we appreciate its present blessedness.

Verse 54 of the same chapter shows that this involves the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood; in other words, the *personal appropriation* of His death. Eating and drinking would surely signify this: we personally appropriate what we eat. "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

The principle of death must be applied to man on this side, before he can enter into and enjoy that which, in the Risen Exalted One, lies on the other side of death. After His death and resurrection the Holy Spirit came down to carry our hearts, as He did Stephen's, into that deathless scene where Jesus now is. Eternal life is in His Son.

We are made to feel at home with Him, and to enjoy His present surroundings, the very atmosphere of love itself. There we find ourselves "with joy unspeakable" in that wonderful circle where, before the earth's foundation, the Father found perfect delight in the Son, and the Son was ever rejoicing before the Father (see Prov. viii. 30, 31, and compare with 1 Cor. i. 24).

3. There is the *eternal* possession with Christ of that which God has purposed for us in Christ.

The day came at last when Caleb went to reside in the "pleasant land." And so shall it be with us.

"We are going; yes, we're going,
To the place where Jesus is."

112 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

“In Thy presence is fulness of joy ; at Thy right hand pleasures for evermore.”

He is bringing many sons to glory, and they are all predestinated to be “conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. viii. 29). “Whom He justified, them He also glorified.”

It is for this glory we wait. Blessed be God!

“There in effulgence bright,
Saviour and Guide, with Thee
I'll walk, and in Thy heavenly light
Whiter my robe shall be.”

But bear this in mind, an eternity with Christ, in the unhindered enjoyment of heavenly bliss, could not add either to the truth of God's Word or to the efficacy of the redemption-work of His beloved Son. Sixty years of Queen Victoria's reign did not add one jot to her title to the crown and throne of Great Britain.

It is quite possible for an estate to be mine, and for me not to *know* it is mine ; or to know it is mine by right and title, before I have even tasted a single thing that grew upon it. But it would be poor work to try to make me question my title because of this.

On the other hand, let me remember that rejoicing in the fact that the estate is mine and enjoying the estate itself are very different things. “All things are yours,” and soon shall we be in the blissful possession and eternal enjoyment of them. Till then let us listen to the Spirit's exhortation: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col. iii. 1).

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

HE SLEPT TILL TOO LATE.

A WARNING.

PROVERBS xxiii. 32.

NEVER was this scripture more remarkably and exactly illustrated than in the following incident which I heard from a young assistant surgeon in Lahore.

The verse is, "At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

"Some years back we were stationed at Agra. I had to look after a detachment of British troops in the fort. You know what soldiers are. They have companions in drink as in everything else. Well, one night ten of them had received their pay, and were terribly tipsy in the great heat, so they chose to sleep in the verandah. One poor fellow lay just as he was on the verandah floor. At two o'clock he got up and shouted out, 'A snake! a snake has bitten me! Come and kill it!' So two or three rushed out, and the snake was hunted, but it was dark, and it could not be found. He was well laughed at, and told that he was in the 'shakes,' or *delirium tremens*, and that it was a mouse.

"He lay down then as all the rest did. At 5.45 a.m. the first bugle sounded, and all had to

VOL. XVI. No. 8.

get up for parade. To his horror he found that he could not rise. So after calling for another man to help him, he got up with difficulty. He then came to me about 7.30, ghostly white, and entreated me to do something for him, and said that in the middle of the night he felt a prick behind his ear and thought it to be a mouse, and brushed it away as he thought. But a little after he actually saw the snake, and raised the cry, but he did not think that the prick was a snake-bite. So I did what I could for the poor fellow.

“When the doctor came he told me that I could have done no more. The man died at eleven that morning.”

How often do such warnings, alas! pass unheeded; scoffed at, indeed, by those who are blinded by Satan! He knows too well that he has only to go on deceiving poor souls till the day of grace is past, and that then they will be his wretched companions in the lake of fire for ever and ever.

Never was there a greater necessity for solemnly warning every unsaved soul. How many of us feel that at any moment the day of grace may close! You will then as surely be too late for God's remedy for your sin-bitten state as the poor soldier was too late for the surgeon's aid. Consider this.

Remember that Jesus Christ, though rejected by men in this world, is still the Saviour of poor sinners. He not only assures us that He has died for our past sins, but gives to the one who believes on His name power, through the Holy Ghost, to keep him from sinning any more. Arise, then, from thy stupor, and Christ shall give thee healing; Christ shall give thee light. A. G. N.

UNDER SIN.

I AM well aware, reader, that you may be such a one as would feel almost insulted by having a gospel book put into your hand. You may consider the preaching of Christ a little antiquated for to-day, and you may believe yourself beyond the possibility of being affected by the report of a glorified Saviour. I need hardly say that I would fain hope you have overestimated the impregnable nature of the fortress of your unbelief, and that through the mercy of God you may be found capable of receiving divine impressions. It would be both cowardly and cruel of me did I, when well acquainted with your terrible condition and with the only and sure remedy, turn away from you and leave you to perish, simply because I feared to offend you. As I do not wish to be either cruel or cowardly, I venture to put before you the state in which you are, and to call up a few witnesses, whose veracity you cannot question, to prove the charge.

Your case is this: *you are a slave of sin.* Do not be angry. Do not throw away this paper. It cannot injure you to hear all that I have to say on the subject. Hear me to the close. I will call the witnesses who will testify to the truth of the charge, and you will not be able to gainsay their testimony. Sin has the mastery over you; you serve it. That is to say, *you are a sinner.*

The first witness I shall call is *your own conscience.* It accuses you and makes you a poor coward who can never come out of your hiding-place. You are not peculiar to other

people in this; but I am not dealing with other people at present, but with you. Neither God nor man are you ready to meet. You would not care to go over, in the holy presence of God, the details of your life; and the bare idea of that life being manifested and exposed in all its naked reality before your fellow-men would fill you with horror. You are glad your neighbour does not know as much about your inner life as you do yourself, and you do not wish him to know any more than he does. Why is this? Because you are conscious it would not be to your credit. If you were sure that everything you have done, and every thought and every counsel of your heart was just what it ought to be, you would be glad to be manifested before the world, that all might see what an excellent man you are. But you know it is not so, and hence you would desire to hide yourself from the scrutiny both of God and man. This you will not always be able to do.

The second witness I shall call is *your neighbour*. He puts you down in his mind as a man *not to be absolutely trusted*. Is it because he does not know you? No, it is because he does. He may think you the most honest and upright man in the whole world, but he refuses to put himself unreservedly into your hands in serious matters. In all his relations and dealings with you, by the way in which he safeguards his own interests, he is always letting you know that you are not all you ought to be. I will not examine this witness as to details. He may speak loudly in your praise and, as men go, consider you a very good man; but this is only as contrasted with others, for he quite believes you might be better than you are. *He classes you as a sinner.*

The third witness I shall call is *death*. Men do not pay wages to those who do not serve them, neither does sin. "The wages of *sin* is *death*." This is a terrible witness. You may tell me you do not serve sin, but I see how helpless your plea is, for you are on the way to death. Do not tell me that death is the debt of nature. Do not deceive yourself. You may be able to bear the accusations of conscience, and cover up the utter misery of your condition in your own breast; you may scorn the testimony of your neighbour, knowing he is no better than yourself; but death—grim-visaged, cruel, merciless, horrible, repulsive death—you cannot ignore or despise. It lurks in your path, lying in wait for you, ready to strike at you out of the darkness, to beat through brain and heart, and drive the immortal spirit from its earthly tenement into the blackness of a lost eternity. If it does not force the confession from your living lips, it will proclaim the fact that you have been the servant of sin through your lifeless corpse.

I will not call in *the Word of God*—you do not accept that—but the witnesses I have invoked and the testimony they give you cannot controvert. Any impartial jury would bring against you a verdict of *guilty*.

Now cast your eyes about you, and tell me what will meet your deep need. Who will justify you? Who will deliver you from the dominion of sin, so that you may practise righteousness and please God? Do you expect to be let off in the day of manifestation, when God shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts? If you are to be let off then, why not in this present life?

118 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

Why is death not removed? You need righteousness, and you have it not. You need to be placed beyond the reach of death, and how is this to be brought about? God has undertaken to answer these questions, and the answer He gives is CHRIST. God has taken upon Him the character of Saviour, and has approached man in His Son Jesus Christ. He has given Himself a ransom for all. He has been under death for us. He died for our sins, and was buried. In His death God has justified Himself in the sight of the universe with regard to sin. He has let it be seen that He could not pass it over as though it were nothing. He has condemned it in the cross of Christ. He has judged all that man was, but He has done it in the death of another. He has done it in the One who gave Himself for us. And He rose again the third day. God raised Him from the dead on behalf of man; that men might find in Him what they could not find in themselves—righteousness and life. God has done all this in the grace of His heart. I can look up to heaven and see a Saviour for all at the right hand of God. The best man on earth cannot do without Him, and He is available for the worst. Believe in Him, my reader. He will be your justification, and He will deliver you from the dominion of sin. He will lay hold of you by His great power, and guide your feet into the way of peace and righteousness. He calls to you. He would direct you to Himself. He says: "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures" (Prov. viii. 20, 21). Fear not to

A PRIEST'S FEARS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM. 119

come to Him. Forgiveness is through Him, and through Him for all. Through Him it is proclaimed to all. Banish from your mind all your hard thoughts of Him. Repent and believe the glad tidings. "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). J. B.—D.

A PRIEST'S FEARS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM.

THERE are at least two classes in the world to-day who would be glad to take the Bible out of our hands.

Those who belong to the first of these boldly ignore the authority of Scripture by denying its divine authorship. In other words, they refuse to believe that it is "THE WORD OF GOD." In order to make good their contention they try to point out what they blindly call "defects" and "contradictions," and get a ready hearing from those who would, if they could, stifle conscience and get rid of their responsibility as sinners. They make a short cut to the end they would fain reach by excluding the uncomfortable thought of coming judgment. If they could persuade themselves that "there is NO GOD to judge," that question would soon be disposed of—at least so they think—but only for the time present. Death they *cannot* escape. But it is not convenient to admit that it is the "*wages of sin*," lest even ordinary common sense should whisper the inquiry, *Who* inflicted this penalty, and *why* was it inflicted? so they style it "the debt of Nature," and, with as much show of bravado as they can

muster, they pass it over. They remind one of an old "gaol-bird" who has the impudence to tell his friends, as he steps into the prison van, that he is only going for a ride into the country!

But there is yet another class. These do not deny that the Scripture is the Word of God, and must therefore admit that there is divine authority behind it. But knowing, by long experience, the result of its truths being simply received by faith, they find it convenient to maintain, that *ordinary* people cannot understand it, that only the clergy can properly interpret it to the laity. Like the "lawyers" when the Lord was on earth, these use all the influence they possess to "take away the Key of Knowledge." And not only would they keep this key in their own hands, but men's consciences also, if they could only induce their hearers to trust them.

But thank God, spite of every attack, the Holy Scriptures are still here, and He who makes the truth effectual in men's souls—the Holy Ghost—is here also. Men can get rid of neither. Infidelity may do its best to tear the book to pieces, and Romanism and Anglican Ritualism do their utmost to snatch it out of your hand, or bury it out of your sight, but these two witnesses of Christ are in the world still, and God's gracious work goes on (see John v. 39 and xv. 26).

Let the writer relate to you an instance of how God can and does, notwithstanding all the opposition of man, bring about His own gracious ends and bless precious souls.

A young lady of our acquaintance was leaving her home in Germany to fill the post of French governess in a school in England. She was at this time a devout Roman Catholic. Before her

A PRIEST'S FEARS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM. 121

departure the priest, her "father confessor," expressed grave fears as to the influence of certain things upon her when she landed in Protestant England (so called). Two things he tried to make her solemnly promise him. First, that she would *never read a Bible*; second, that as it was a common custom in England for persons to put little religious leaflets into your hands, she would absolutely refuse them. While declining to bind herself by any definite promise, she assured him that she would certainly do her utmost to follow his advice. We shall see, presently, that the fears of the effect of *tract* and *Bible*, on the part of this German priest, were not altogether without foundation. Man proposes and God disposes, no matter how much Satan opposes.

When the young governess reached her destination, one of her first duties was to take a junior reading-class in French. In this school, it appears, they made use of the French Bible as their ordinary reading-book for those studying that language. The strange governess had never handled a Bible before, and when they told her that the portion for that day's reading was the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel, she did not even know in which part of the book to look for it; a girl in the class had to find the place for her!

When she discovered what the book was, she determined not to pay any regard to what was in it. However, for the proper carrying out of this devout resolution it was unfortunate that the young ladies in her class stammered and blundered so considerably over their reading of the chapter in question, that they had to spell it out over and over again. Spite of her fixed purpose, therefore, she could not help noticing what was in it.

Her next class was the elder scholars, and this time the chapter was the fifty-third of Isaiah. The girls of this class could, of course, read much better, but instead of being the better able to pay no attention to what was read, she became intensely interested; indeed, so much was she interested in the chapter that she found herself secretly determining to get a Bible, take it upstairs and read it for herself.

While reading Acts i. one day she found that at a prayer-meeting in that upper room at Jerusalem the *mother of Jesus* was included in the praying company, and that *they were not praying to her!* "These *all* continued in prayer and supplication, with the women, and *Mary the mother of Jesus*, and with *His brethren*" (v. 14).

Then, for her, came a very serious question, but not less serious, had he known it, for the priest we have already spoken of. If Mary herself needs to make supplication and prayer in company with the other women and the rest of the disciples, why should she be prayed to?

Again. The priests had always said that Jesus was the *only* son of Mary, and now she found that this was false also (Matt. xiii. 55).

These discoveries staggered her greatly, for she had often heard the very opposite from the priests. She was now forced to this conclusion, They must have told me a lie about it! And if one lie, why not more? Her confidence in them became more and more shaken, as the light of Scripture with its divine authority entered her mind. So much for the priest's *first* warning!

When the holidays came a few of the pupils had to remain under the care of their teachers; and our young friend, unable to go home herself, was

A PRIEST'S FEARS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM. 123

selected, with another, to take these girls to the Isle of Wight for a change. One day they all went together for a walk in the public park. Near the entrance they found a lady sitting on one of the seats, who gave them each a little book. The one given to the governess we have been speaking of was different from any of the others. Its title was "*Almost a Christian.*"

On receiving it she made up her mind to read it when she got a good opportunity, though it was in English, and, as yet, she had but a very elementary knowledge of this language.

By the help of a dictionary and grammar she managed to get through it; but what it contained so touched her that, in a temper, she crumpled it up in her hands and angrily threw it into the corner of the room!

This, needless to say, however, neither removed nor lessened her soul exercises. Early next morning she was compelled to get out of bed, come downstairs, and search for that crumpled and once despised bit of paper. Carefully smoothing it out she read it once more, but this time in a very different state of mind. So much for the priest's *second* warning!

Thank God, she now began to read her Bible more diligently, and in reading, one day, the fifth chapter of Romans, she found what she longed for—PEACE WITH GOD.

Many years have rolled by since then, but the grace that once followed her for blessing still keeps her in the enjoyment of the love of the exalted Blessor.

She has long known that the one sacrifice of Christ not only answered for her sins before God once for all, but that God now sees her associated

124 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

unchangeably with all the excellence of Him whose sacrifice it was, and who is now risen out of death. In Him, under God's holy eye, she stands complete, and knows it. By that one offering (offered *once for all*) He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Heb. x. 10-17).

No merit of ours appears in all this. He has died *for what we are*; we are accepted *in what He is*, and all "to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. i. 6). *In me*, that is in my flesh, dwelleth *no good thing*. "*In Him* dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete IN HIM, who is the head of all principality and power" (Col. ii. 9, 10).

May the light that shone from the face of a glorified Saviour into our young friend's heart shine into yours, my reader. Beware of men. God's written Word is your only *safeguard* amid the conflicting jargon of human opinions. "Jesus alone can save."

TRUST HIM, AND NO OTHER.

GEO. C.

THE PASSOVER NIGHT.

'TIS night, and Egypt sleeps!
 Unconscious; for the Lord's decree
 Is scorned, and they no danger see,
 Lulled by false peace contentedly,
 While midnight onward creeps.

But hark! What means that cry,
 That wail of bitter woe?
 Throughout that land, by one fell blow,
 Each firstborn son has been laid low;
 For judgment has swept by.

THE PASSOVER NIGHT.

125

No house in all that land
 Where there was not one dead ;
'Tis true in some a lamb had bled,
 Had suffered in the firstborn's stead,
 And he a saved one stands.

What peace all Israel feels !
 They rest upon the faithful word
 Of Him whose ear their cry has heard,
 Whose patient love each heart has stirred,
 And to their faith appeals.

Sheltered by that shed blood,
 Ready to march they stand ;
 They keep the feast with staff in hand,
 And girded loins—a pilgrim band,
 All ready to set forth.

Stay, friend ; one moment more.
 My verse a tale has told
 Of what took place in days of old,
 When Israel groaned beneath the load
 Of Egypt's bondage sore.

To-day there's judgment nigh.
 To-day, by Satan cruelly bound,
 Asleep full many a soul is found,
 In silken cords of false peace wound,
 Seeing no need to fly.

For such God's Lamb did die,
 His precious blood was shed ;
 He suffered in the sinner's stead.
 Oh, yes ; for you the Saviour bled !
 Then to Him quickly fly.

Then peace, with every good
 Fruit of His changeless love,
 Each day you more and more shall prove,
 Until you reach God's rest above,
 Through Jesus' precious blood.

E. M. H.

The Conbert's Corner.

MY SINS AND MYSELF.

A MAN who was deeply exercised about his soul was conversing with a friend on the subject, when the friend bade him come at once to Jesus; "for," said he, "He will take away all the load of sins from your back." "Yes, I am aware of that," said the other, "but *what about my back?* I find I have not only sins to take away, but *there is myself!* What's to be done with that? And there's not only my back, but there's my hands and feet, and head and heart; yea, I am such a lump of sin, such a mass of iniquity, that it's *myself* I want to get rid of before I can get peace."

I thought that was a plain and searching way of putting matters; and that is, going not only to the stream, but to the spring whence the stream arises. You may take away the *fruit* of a bad tree, but until the root is reached the fruit will appear again, and the same sort of fruit too.

I believe that is the reason of so much misery among honest hearts who have never inquired of this matter at the Word of God. They do not know what God has done with that "I" which gives so much trouble—that "old man" which brings them into bondage, concerning which the Word says, "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we*

shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 6-11).

In Galatians ii. 20 the "I" is a crucified thing, put away from before God. "*I am crucified with Christ*: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

When the truth of *myself* is not known, there will always be trouble; but God would have me see how He has dealt with it on the cross—that it is a crucified thing, that as He reckons it so, I am to reckon it so also, and that henceforth I am not to live unto myself, but unto Him who died for me and rose again. The Spirit of God tells me that in the flesh (the evil principle in one that is at enmity with God) dwells no good thing; and knowing it is a thing to be reckoned dead, I am told to mortify (not to crucify) the members. There is no part but what is sin, and therefore good cannot be expected from it; so that it is not only the sins which were as a burden upon my back put away, but my back too. I, myself, am not recognised: that is, not as a child of Adam; but being born again of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, and being indwelt by the Holy Ghost, I am a new creature in Christ Jesus, so that the "I" that is living is the "I" "in Christ Jesus."

When John Bunyan looked up at the cross, the

bundle fell from his back; but then he didn't seem to learn that God had dealt with the back itself. So with many, and hence the bitter bondage.

Oh, to know more of the truth that makes us free from Satan, free from the "beggarly elements" which bring us into bondage; free from the world which undermines the current of divine joy in our hearts; free from ourselves, the enemy which gives us so much trouble—altogether free for Christ, who has bought us with His own blood.—*Extract.*

WORTH REMEMBERING.—"It is not what *you* think of Christ's work, but what God thinks of it, that saves. Your knowledge, by faith, of what *God* thinks of it gives peace." J. N. D.

Oh, the mighty love of God for a poor, vile sinner like me! He found me on the brink of hell, and that I might be saved from it, His Son stooped to the shameful death of the cross.

FITNESS FOR HEAVEN.

WITH the true Christian, all that merits God's condemnation *has received its condemnation*, and that which is worthy of God's confidence the believer's heart rests on with happy assurance. But this is found in Christ, not in self. The best robe is of the Father's providing, and that robe is Christ. Therefore he can now unite with Paul in saying, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which *hath made us meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12). He is fit for the very light of God's presence in glory, for if that fitness consists in what *Christ* is, it is a perfect fitness. Who dare dispute that?

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

THOUGHT, TALK, AND WALK.

SUBSTANCE OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS BY C. P. W. N.

I DESIRE, beloved friends, to draw your attention for a few minutes this evening to three words found in Scripture—"THOUGHT, TALK, WALK." If a man's thoughts are not right his talk will not be right; and if his thoughts and talk are wrong you can hardly expect his walk to be right.

In Psalm xiv. 1 we read of a man who said, "There is no God." It was only in his heart he said it, but his outward walk was evidently according to his inward talk. "They are corrupt and have done abominable works."

Have not you, my hearer, not only thought but talked and walked as though there were "no God," utterly careless about that soul of yours?

What does God say about this man? He says he is a "fool," and we may say so too. It is a well-deserved name for such a man. The man who acts as though there were no God is a fool indeed. FOOL! It is not some exaggeration of the poor speaker, it is God Himself, the Holy and the True, who has used this word.

Have you not been going carelessly on as though there were no God? Then let me tell you this. The God you have been so *careless* about has been very *careful* about you! So desirous of your blessing has He been that He gave up for you His well-beloved Son. Yes, Jesus left His home in

VOL. XVI. No. 9.

glory and came to Calvary, there to do a work whereby you might be eternally saved. Do not, therefore, persistently continue in your present thought and talk and walk till you are eternally damned for your sin and unbelief.

But what I want specially to speak about is a man of whom we read in 2 Kings v. In the first verse of this chapter we are told that this man, Naaman, was a man of importance in the estimation of his own country. He was captain of the host of the king of Syria. He had, as a mighty man of valour, proved to be a deliverer for his nation, and was personally, moreover, a man of honour—a great man with his royal master. But what spoilt it all was this, "*He was a leper*"! Oh, what a terrible discount to his greatness was this! A favourite of king and country, a terror to his enemies, but a misery to himself. "He was a leper." Poor Naaman! He is entirely done for now. And that is just where you are, dear unsaved one, for in soul you answer to what Naaman was in body. The leper is a type of the sinner. Inside and outside Naaman was a leper, and inside and outside you are a sinner. You may be a person of great mind; you may be amiable, loving, and kind; you may be well spoken of, and a great favourite with those who know you; but in God's account you are a sinner—a crimson-dyed sinner. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness." Nothing but "wounds and bruises and putrifying sores." That spoils it all. You are in Naaman's plight, and as far as you can help in the matter, you are done for.

But good news, welcome news, reaches the ears of poor leprous Naaman. He hears that

THOUGHT, TALK, AND WALK.

131

there is a prophet, a man of God, over there in Samaria who can recover him of his leprosy. But Naaman lives in Syria, and Samaria is a long way off! What is that to a man who is suffering from a loathsome disease and wants to be cured? Perhaps you will be ready to say, If Naaman does not get cured of his leprosy it will take his body down to the grave. But wait and let me tell you that if you do not get delivered from your moral leprosy—your sinful condition—it will carry you down to everlasting damnation.

But this man *wanted* to be cured. Let the difficulties and the distance be ever so great, he was determined to go. Now, if *you* want to be cured you have not to go to Samaria: there is no distance to travel. Praise God, His beloved Son has bridged the distance. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. To reach the Healer you need not move a step from the spot where you are now seated. Feeling your sinful state, just where you are, just as you are, and at this moment, if you receive Christ as your Saviour there will be a perfect cure effected by Him. But whatever you may think of your own case, *this* man was not going to lose an opportunity. Not he! He wanted to be cured, and did not know how long the way would be open, how long the prophet would be in Samaria. And are you certain how long salvation may be within your reach? From this night you may be too late. Oh, turn ye, then, turn ye; why will ye die? At all events nothing was allowed to put Naaman off, so he started on his long journey.

On arriving in Samaria with his splendid equipage, he drove first to the palace of the king with his letter of introduction, and then to the

door of the house of Elisha, with his carriage and pair. No mean one-horse vehicle would do for him! It may have been a "four-in-hand" for aught we know, but since it says "horses," he must at least have had a pair. But then, you see, his dignity demanded it. And no doubt he thought it was advisable to make as good a show as possible. Alighting from his chariot, he stood at the door of the prophet, fully expecting that the man of God would rush out to meet so distinguished a visitor. But to his utter amazement, if not disgust, all he received was a MESSAGE! What unceremonious treatment! he no doubt thought, only such as he would himself have shown to one of his retinue. Then the *substance* of the message was anything but what he expected. "Wash in Jordan" indeed! This he could *not* stand: it was most hurtful to his dignity. He was something like a great lady I heard of some time ago. A servant of the Lord was seeking to press upon her God's way of salvation, when she exclaimed, "And do you mean to say that I must be converted in the same way as my coachman?" "Yes, indeed you must, or you can never be saved at all," was the reply. "Well, then," she said, "I never will be."

But why should our friend Naaman be so vexed? The prophet's message was clear enough—"Go, wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." No instructions could have been plainer, none more simple or emphatic—"Wash and be clean." But not less plain is God's message to moral lepers to-day—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

When Naaman heard the message he was wroth. But why this rage? Ah, it is plain enough. He wanted to be cured *in his own way*.

Should you be in like case, please note this. If that man had not been cured according to the prophet's word, he never would have been cured at all. And if you are not saved in God's way you will perish everlastingly. "I *thought*," said Naaman. But pray, what business had he to think, when the man of God had thought for him, saying, "Wash and be clean"?

Possibly, my hearer, *you* also have let your own thought govern you. Perhaps you have many a time responded to the gospel message by saying, "But surely *I* must do something myself before I can be saved?" Beloved friend, let me say again, God has thought for you, and does not ask for your opinion. He has definitely settled the matter, and tells you so.

"*I thought*," said Naaman, "He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper."

Now notice. Notwithstanding all the distance he had journeyed to be cured, he had evidently not come as *only* a leper. True, he was captain of the host of the Syrian king. But what had that to do with his being a leper? He was a great man with his master, but what had the prophet to do with that? He was a mighty man of valour, and honourable, but what had all these things to do with his disease? They were all very well in their place, but their place was at home in Syria, and he should have left them there. Certainly God's servant did not regard them as of much importance. He spoke to

134 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

Naaman as a *leper*, and nothing else, and if the leper had been humbly content with taking that place, the message would have been all that he required. "Go, wash in Jordan, and thou shalt be clean."

And have you not acted like this proud officer? Have you not even sung—

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling,"

and yet all the time the real language of your heart has been, "Lord, I own I am a poor sinner, but I do all the good I can; I give to the poor all I can possibly spare; in fact, I am prepared to do the very best I can"? Let me ask, What have these things to do with your guilty, lost condition? Oh, fling them all behind you and own that you have been doing the worst thing that any sinner on earth can do—*refusing to be saved by God, in God's own way.*

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?"

No, Captain Naaman, I can answer for that. If you had dipped yourself seventy times seven in those rivers, when you came out after the four hundred and ninetieth dip you would just be as loathsome as before the first dip. You must be cleansed according to the word of the man of God, or be a leper to the day of your death.

"*So he turned and went away in a rage*"! His thought, followed by his anger, very nearly robbed Naaman of the longed-for healing; and since then, many a man has not only nearly, but *quite*, lost eternal blessing in a similar way.

Fortunately for Naaman, he had wise servants.

Hear what they say: "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean"? If he had been called with ten thousand men to meet an enemy with twenty thousand he would not have hesitated a moment. Or if he had been told to attack a strongly fortified position, or to lead a forlorn hope, he would have done it cheerfully. But to be simply told to "wash in Jordan and be clean" was far too easy! It would yield *him* no credit whatever. It would make just *nothing* of him.

If you are in like case, dear friend, remember this. God will not alter His way to suit your pride. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" is what He says, and if you are wise you will not hesitate another moment.

Naaman at last acted on good advice. He "dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and *he was clean.*"

Now, beloved friends, suppose we had met him coming back from Jordan. Suppose I addressed him thus: "Captain Naaman, I have been thinking very much about you to-day, for I am very sorry for you: you have my truest sympathy. It appears to me so very dreadful that you should be suffering from this terrible leprosy!"

"My dear sir," he would have replied, "I am as free from it as you are."

"But that is very different from what I heard from you yesterday."

"Ah! *yesterday!* I had not then been to the man of God. He told me to-day to wash in

136 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

Jordan seven times. I have done so and am *clean*. Not a spot is left, not even a freckle!"

And should you, who this night believe in the merits of the cleansing blood, be accosted in a similar way on your way home, you can answer in a similar way, no matter how filthy you may have been when you came to this place an hour ago. You may say fearlessly, "Coming in God's appointed way, I have been made clean to His entire satisfaction."

Just a few words more. "Talk," if it ends there, is not of much avail. Plenty of people, like the Pharisee in Luke xviii. 11, can talk religiously. But with this man it was all stupid, "tall talk," as though God could be deceived by that which had no reality in it. His *talk*, however, was only the result of his thought, and with it a walk that was taking him down to hell, for he was not justified.

Now let us turn to what we get in Romans x. 9, 10, where we get the confession of Jesus as Lord. This is the kind of talk that makes all heaven glad. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Oh, think of it, dear friend. It is, through grace, within your reach to be that repentant sinner to-night. "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."

If your heart has been bowed to trust Him, let your lips be opened to confess Him, and let your walk prove that, in your inmost heart, you henceforth regard Him as your Lord. C. P. W. N.

THE GOSPEL: WHAT IS IT?

IT is the outcome of the heart of God, whose nature is "love," and is the divinely appointed means by which God makes Himself known to man. It addresses itself to all without exception. It makes no distinction of race, colour, or nationality. It appeals to you, dear reader, whoever you may be. If you are in distress and anxiety about your soul, and desire to know the true way of peace and forgiveness, it is proclaimed to you freely and without reserve in the "glad tidings" of which God is the source and spring (John iii. 16; Acts xiii. 38).

The gospel makes no hard demands upon the sinner. It enforces no stern decrees; it requires no good works or penance to entitle you to its benefits. It comes laden with heavenly blessing to rebel, guilty, undeserving man.

The great subject-matter of the gospel is Christ the Son of God, who is the only Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. ii. 5). It has ever been in the mind of God to have His creature, man, in nearness to and in relationship with Himself. In order that this might be brought about, consistently with His holiness, the Son of God entered into manhood, becoming, in His own person, in the scene of man's revolt and departure, the perfect expression of God revealed in grace, as well as setting forth in the midst of a ruined creation what a man should be for God (2 Cor. v. 19; Heb. vii. 26; 2 Peter i. 17).

But even the perfect life of Jesus, with all its beauty and fragrance, as under the eye and heart of Him who alone could rightly estimate its worth,

138 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

could not emancipate a single individual from the thralldom of sin and Satan, under which all were held. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24). The blessed Son of God laid down His life, to close up for ever in death, as before God, man's sinful history, and to bring to light, in resurrection, a new generation after His own order, with hearts responsive to God the Father's love (John iv. 23; xx. 17).

Dear reader, this is the tidings which the gospel brings. Christ is presented as the object of faith, and in receiving Him to your heart as God's free gift you are brought to the One in whom every blessing centres. As of old, in the dark days of famine, Joseph was appointed to deal out from the granaries of Pharaoh the precious store which could only be found in Egypt, so now the Lord Jesus Christ, risen and exalted to the right hand of God, is the dispenser of all that His death has secured for man.

God has set Him in the place of power and supremacy, having put all things into His hand. And the Spirit of God, who is down here to bear witness to Christ on high, is ready to make Him known to you for the joy and satisfaction of your heart.

The gospel opens out the storehouses of God's grace and love to every poor famine-stricken sinner who has come to the end of his own resources. Is this *your* case, reader? Are *you* in the far country hungry and desolate? Is your heart longing for the Father's house with its festal hall and well-spread table? (Luke xv.) Jesus the Saviour, who dwells in the Father's

LOST IN A STORM.

139

bosom and knows its deep secrets, is waiting to make known the love and compassion there is in that heart for you. Appropriate now the living Saviour, who comes close to you in the gospel. Receive at His hands the forgiveness of all your sins and the gift of "living water" He so freely bestows (John iv. 14, vii. 37; Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 17).

"Saviour, to Thee, a sinner lost and vile,
I gladly come :
Give me to know the sunshine of Thy smile,
And lead me home :
That so my heart and lips may loud extol
Thy name and love, while endless ages roll.

"Thy cross, blest Lord, has closed my sinful past
And set me free ;
And now on high, 'mid scenes of light and rest,
Thyself I see.
Jesus, triumphant, vanquished death for me ;
The Father's house my portion now shall be."
G. F. E.

LOST IN A STORM.

LOST! A very short word, yet it is true of every member of Adam's race. You may not believe it, but your unbelief does not alter the fact. God has it on record in His Word. "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). When a vessel goes down at sea, the report in the papers says so many were saved and so many were lost, and no one doubts it; but there is no third class spoken of who were neither saved nor lost. So it is now in connection with salvation: there are only two classes, those who are saved through faith in Christ, and have a right to know it (1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15),

140 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

and those who are lost. "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts xxviii. 24).

Lost! Eighteen years ago the crew that carried the mail from Cape Tormentine to P.E. Island were lost on the ice, and for two nights and a day and a half they were driven hither and thither during a terrible storm, and they knew not what to do; everything looked dark and gloomy. The captain said to his men, "What must we do?" One of them answered, "Stand still." One of the mail-boats was broken up and used as firewood, two of them were turned over as a place of shelter, only the ice between them and a lost eternity.

Some of the men were almost frantic; others began to pray as they thought of going out into eternity unsaved: all longed for a shelter from the storm. The captain sighted land, so the boats were drawn ashore, which took four hours' steady hauling on the ice. Through exposure and the extreme cold, some had to have their feet taken off; others were disabled for life as the result of having to remain so long on the ice. One of the mail-boat crew went to a gospel meeting. He was not asked to stand up or go forward, or make a start. Man's lost state by nature was plainly brought before them, Christ was lifted up as the resting-place for sin-sick souls. The man who was lost on the ice said, "I listened to the story of the cross, I saw that I was a poor lost sinner on the broad road which leads to hell. My former religious life was no use to me. Trust in prayers, and so-called good feelings, passed away, as the truth of the gospel came with power to my dark, benighted soul. There I stood with nothing but hell before me. I could do nothing to save

JESUS.

141

myself. Then the truth of God came with all its freshness to me. I saw that the Son of God had poured out His life's blood for me. I rested in Jesus, and I was saved, first from a watery grave, then from a burning hell."

Sinner, you have nothing to do for salvation; all has been done. Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished" (John xix. 30).

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

 JESUS.

"He shall save His people from their sins."—MATT. i. 21.

"If any man of you . . . shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."—LEV. i. 2-4.

MY faith doth lay her hand upon His holy head,
Believing that for me, for me, His precious blood was
shed.

That all *my* sins He bore when hanging on the tree;
He took them; they are gone, are gone! and I'm for ever
free.

Oh, blessed be His name! Oh, bless Him for such love!
How can I but rejoice, rejoice! seeing the guilt remove!

How can I but give thanks to Him who loved me so!
Who bore for me the wrath, the curse, the judgment, and
the woe!

Most gracious Saviour, Lord, take this poor heart of mine,
And closely round Thyself, Thyself, its fond affections
twine!

Bought with Thy precious blood, Thine only can I be;
Yes, blessed Lord, Thine own, Thine own! for all eternity.

S. M. W.

The Conbert's Corner.

NOT YOUR OWN.

“**K**NOW ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). “You are Mine,” He says. “I want you for Myself, for My own joy. I want to display My own nature and character in you; not only that, I want to gratify My own heart in having you near Me.” Is it not marvellous that it should be so? When we came as poor sinners to Him our thought was, Will He take us in? We came as beggars to a rich man's door. We wondered if He would have any interest in us at all. But “Know this,” He says, “the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself” (Ps. iv. 3). Should it not then be counted our highest privilege, our sweetest joy to put ourselves day by day entirely at His disposal?

Yet, alas! the majority of Christians to-day seem to think that while they cannot do as they like in a worldly, immoral way, they may do just as they please—pick and choose as they will—in a *religious* way. If you were your *own* you might, perhaps, do as you like; but if you are His, it is due to Him that you should be found in the way of His will. That is of the utmost importance. If the Holy Ghost has come to dwell in your body it is because you do not belong to yourself, but to Him whose Spirit has sealed you. What right, then, have I to make my own plans,

or go my own way and leave His pleasure out of my calculations ?

Take an illustration. Suppose I am passing a gentleman's house. I say to myself, "It is a very fine evening, and I think I should like a ride in the country." I walk up the grounds to his stable. A policeman finds me yoking the gentleman's horse into his brougham.

"What are you doing there ?"

"Oh, no harm ! I am just borrowing this gentleman's horse and carriage. I thought I should like a little airing with a friend of mine this evening."

"What do you mean ? The horse is not yours !"

"Oh, I only want it for a little while, you know. I am not stealing."

"Man ! do you not know that without the owner's permission your act is a felony ? Have you no respect for yourself ? It is a *felony*, I tell you."

And you, believer, who have the Holy Ghost, are no more your own than the gentleman's horse was mine. From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot you are His : you are bought, and paid for, and possessed by His Spirit. Not to recognise this is practical unrighteousness. You may know a great deal ; you may be very earnest and active in service ; but if you are not making a full surrender to Him, who by His blood has bought you, and by His indwelling Spirit has claimed you, it is, we repeat, nothing less than an injustice to Him.

It is not sufficient that we should think that such and such things, and such and such a service, are right. We must know what *His* mind is. We must have His judgment about *everything*.

Suppose I am absent from home for a few

144 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

weeks. When I return my boy comes running to meet me. "Oh, father," he says, "I have been working so hard for you while you have been away." I can see that he has just left off, for the perspiration is still standing on his little face. "Come into the garden, father, and see what I have been doing for you." I go with him, but only to find, to my disappointment and amazement, the garden in the saddest plight possible. First he has pruned the trees, but, oh, the mischief! The blossom-bearing boughs, which gave such promise a few weeks before, lie withered on the ground. He has done for them!

"But, father, come and look further: I have been digging also!" And what do I find? Rows of peas destroyed, the onion bed dug up, and other devastations. "Working so hard, father!"

"The harder you worked the worse for me, my boy," is my lament.

"But I was in such earnest!"

"I have no doubt of it; but if you had attended to what I said, how pleased I should have been. Did you not get the letter I sent, giving directions as to my wishes?"

"Oh yes."

"But did you not read my letter?"

"I did, but I did not think much about it: I was really so busy. I saw a boy in the next garden working for his father, and I thought I should like to do some work for you."

And is not this where thousands of young converts are to-day? But it will not do. We have His mind in His written Word, and are responsible. We have in our bodies the Holy Ghost as the living witness that we are not our own, we are CHRIST'S OWN. GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

DEPARTING PETER AND THE DYING POPE.

“OUR prayers will save you, Holy Father.”
So said the cardinals, as one by one they
kissed the hand of the dying pontiff.

“I’m going to eternity!” was the awful un-
certain response that fell from the lips of Pope
Leo XIII., as he lay breathing his last.

This man, assuming to be the Vicar of Christ
on earth and the successor of the apostle Peter, a
man honoured and looked up to by millions, could
leave no better testimony than this! For what
was there in it but awe-inspiring uncertainty?

What a contrast between the apostle Peter
and his so-called successor!

The former, when face to face with death, and
that by cruel martyrdom, could say, “Knowing
that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle,
even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed
me” (2 Peter i. 14).

To him it was no leap into the dark, but
simply a taking down of the tent, a dissolving of
the “earthly house”; and what then? What
hope had he beyond? Read his first epistle,
first chapter, verses 3 to 5: “Blessed be the
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
which according to His abundant mercy hath
begotten us again unto a lively hope by the
resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to
an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and
that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for

VOL. XVI. No. 10.

you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

No dread uncertainty here; no overwhelming sense of responsibility; but a sure and certain expectation of eternal blessedness, through sovereign grace.

He *knew* that he was born again (1 Peter i. 23). He *knew* that he was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ and that every other believer shared these blessings with him (1 Peter i. 18). He knew that the God of all grace had called both him and them "to His own eternal glory by Christ Jesus" (1 Peter v. 10).

In the face of this contrast, what should be the thoughts of those who are connected with that system of religion of which the Pope of Rome is the head? Is it not high time that they asked themselves the question, "Do I really belong to the true Apostolic Church?" If so, how is it that such miserable uncertainty should overcloud the mind of the professed successor of St. Peter, whilst such glorious assurance and certainty was the portion of that apostle? And not only so. Is not the general teaching of that Church uncertainty as to salvation? And does not that same Church denounce the blessed apostolic doctrine of assurance as "the vain confidence of the heretics"?

These are weighty questions which require an answer, and that a satisfactory one.

Beloved reader, whether you belong to this Church or not, permit me to ask you one question. If the summons came for you to pass into eternity to-day, what would be the language of your heart? Dread uncertainty or blessed as-

DEPARTING PETER AND THE DYING POPE. 147

urance? I beseech you answer this question in the presence of God. Can you speak with a divinely given confidence of "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you"? Or are you so full of misgivings and fears, that you can only look forward to passing into an unknown eternity?

Unhappy soul, if this is your condition, I beseech you give yourself no rest until you can speak with the same assurance as the apostle Peter. Thank God! there are thousands who can. Why not you? Get into the presence of God at once, own your lost and guilty condition, and cast yourself upon His sovereign mercy and grace, extended to you on a perfectly righteous ground, even the death and bloodshedding of His only Son, who "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He stood in our stead as a holy, spotless substitute. He endured all the judgment of a just and holy God against sin, and so perfectly satisfied divine righteousness and justice that God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to the highest place in heaven, even to "the right hand of the Majesty on high." For the true believer, to depart this life is only to reach the immediate presence of Him who is just the same as when, with one look of love, He exposed Peter's self-sufficiency and melted his heart to tears. Who that really knew Him would not delight to be with Him? Of Him the same apostle writes, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter i. 8).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and

148 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Dear reader, be not deceived: if you are building on a sandy foundation, it will give way when you want it to be firm.

What a contrast between the dying Pope of Rome and a dear Christian lady who recently passed away.

"Oh, John," she said to her brother, who stood beside her bed, "what will the first five minutes in His presence be!"

May the Lord give you, beloved reader, to see His way of salvation, and enjoy a divinely given assurance, for His name's sake. Amen. J. H. E.

WHEN I LEAVE THIS WORLD, WHERE THEN ?

THE above question is worth pondering over in the light of eternity. There are many who think that all will be together, and though shut out of heaven, yet they expect to have a good time. In one sense of the word it is true, all will be together. All the unsaved will be in one place "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7; 2 Peter ii. 4-6). But each one will be occupied with his or her own suffering.

Look into one of the City hospitals, where six or seven hundred men and women are under one roof suffering intense pain of body. One has had a hand taken off, another a foot: each one's trouble is diverse from the other. It brings no comfort to them to know that they are all suffering under one roof. It does not ease the pain of the one who has the hand off to know that others are suffering extremely because of their own particular

WHEN I LEAVE THIS WORLD, WHERE THEN? 149

troubles. Each one is occupied with his own pains. So it will be in eternity. All who die without Christ will be taken up with their own sufferings for ever.

WHEN I LEAVE THIS WORLD, WHERE THEN?

All who are sheltered by the precious blood of Jesus can say, Absent from the body, present with the Lord. "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (2 Cor. v. 6-10; Phil. i. 23; 1 John iii. 2). You may have had a godly father or mother who loved the old Book. It was not a Sunday book with them; every day they were at it, and the words they read made them happy.

The real Christians can sit down and talk about Jesus who died in their room and stead on the cross (Luke xxiv. 14-48).

Dear reader, there is no escape for you, only in Christ. He died that you might have life through Him. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). When you are alone, take up the old Bible your father or mother enjoyed so much and read some of the marked verses in it. Look at Romans v: 8: "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Trust in Jesus as your own personal Saviour, then you will be ready to meet your loved ones, where sin and sorrow can never enter. Through eternal ages all the praise shall then be given to the Lamb slain on the cross of Calvary. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v. 12). "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). J. G.

THE DYING REBEL AND THE DYING ROBBER.

(FROM A GOSPEL ADDRESS.)

I HAVE two pictures for you, one from the Old Testament, and the other from the New.

“And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak. . . . Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom and slew him. . . . And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him” (2 Sam. xviii. 9-17).

Now turn to another picture. “Then were there two thieves crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. . . . He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him. . . . The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth” (Matt. xxvii. 38-44).

It is very evident that a great change soon came over one of these thieves, for in the Gospel of Luke we read, “And one of the malefactors

THE DYING REBEL AND THE DYING ROBBER. 151

which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 39-43).

Now there is more than one point of similarity in these two pictures. Let us briefly consider them.

Both the *rebel* and the *robber* are found in dire extremity. Fixed to a tree, they are totally beyond the ability of their own hands to deliver. Again, each man had nothing to blame but his own sin for placing him at the point of hopeless extremity in which he found himself. Each could say, It is entirely my own fault that I am here. I can blame no one but myself.

Once more. Each of these men had a friend, though the friend of one was only such in name. Joab had once, a few years before, set himself to serve Absalom, but it is evident that the master-motive, the controlling ambition in the mind of Joab was to serve his *own* ends, and, in doing so, to consider the feelings of nobody.

Absalom had a real friend, a friend true and tender, his own father. But, alas! he was not then present, for against that friend he had put himself in deadly conflict. He had driven him already from his kingly home, and was now proceeding still further to drive that devoted father from his God-given throne—yea, drive him to death itself for aught he cared.

It was no court-secret that David loved Absalom. This was well known throughout the army, and from Dan to Beersheba. Nor was Absalom's shameful return for all the loving-kindness heaped upon him by his royal parent any secret either.

So that if there are points of similarity in these pictures, there is, at least, one great contrast. All the contrast between a false friend and a true. Between one who would turn round upon you in your desperate extremity, disclose to you at the last that he is really your enemy, and administer to you what you too well deserve, and One who, though *you* deserved the worst that could be dealt out to you and He the best, would take *for* you all your worst and share *with* you all His best.

With one or other, my hearers, you have to do. I say, you *have* to do. Let me, then, come a little closer, and speak plainly of your own position in the light of these solemn pictures.

YOUR EXTREMITY WILL COME. Do you hear that? I repeat it to you anxiously: *Your extremity will come!* And when it does, if the grace of the blessed Saviour has not then effectively reached you, Satan's power will. If you have not then known the healing virtue of the Saviour's precious blood, if you have not then fled to Him as the refuge of your dying soul, you will get what this man got. You will, you *surely* will. What he had been doing, *you* have been doing—doing ever since you heard the first clear note of God's gospel message. I do not charge you with being guilty of any special sins, but I would tell you, and tell you fearlessly and faithfully, that if you are unconverted to-night you are fighting against your Best Friend—

THE DYING REBEL AND THE DYING ROBBER. 153

against God, as revealed to us in the Lord Jesus. Could you find a better friend than Jesus? Yet you are still resisting Him! The miracle is that God has not cut you off and sent you to everlasting damnation years ago. Oh, how gracious, how long-suffering He is! But as surely as Absalom came to his extremity, you will one day come to yours.

Have you ever noticed that it was the very thing in which Absalom so much prided himself—his beautiful locks—that proved his ruin in the end? Take care, my hearer, lest what you love best, what you are preferring, every day you live, to Christ, should eventually prove your ruin. Your worldly companion, however well chosen, your money, however well gotten, your pleasure, however innocent and harmless in your estimation, if they help you to shut Christ out, are your real enemies, even though they appear to you in the garb of true friends. Your companions may come in between you and the salvation that is freely offered you. But when your soul is lost, and your companions have left you, as Absalom's mule left him in his extremity, what will you think of such friends? Believe me, you will regard them as your worst enemies.

Look at poor helpless Absalom, hanging between heaven and earth! What fearful suspense! What crushing reflections must have been his! What a close to a day of rebellion against the one who most tenderly cared for him! And what next? The merciless darts of the enemy, and the pit after that! What a fearful doom! Think of it, and remember that I am not doing violence to the picture when I apply it to some unbeliever here to-night. God knows, and

154 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

that unbeliever knows that the time is coming when on his dying bed, labouring for the next breath, faint, helpless, and alone, he also will be in desperate extremity. What awful suspense will be his! And will the enemy, think you, have no deadly darts for his bosom? Yea, verily, and cruel, piercing tauntings into the bargain. And what after that? Yea, WHAT?

Oh, take a different course *now*. Repent and turn from the way which *can* only land you at last in eternal damnation. Listen to the voice that offers not only forgiveness, but power by the Holy Spirit for a new life! yea, everlasting salvation with an eternal weight of glory. *God* lingers over you. He would have you obtain mercy to-night. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." GEO. C.

A COUNTRYMAN'S ANSWER TO A
FREETHINKER.

A FREETHINKER named C—— once met a plain countryman going to church. He asked him where he was going, and got a true and simple answer to his question.

"What to do there?"

"To worship God."

"Pray, is your God a great or a little God?"

"He is both, sir."

"How can He be both?"

"He is so great, sir, that the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, and so little that He can dwell in my heart."

C—— declared afterwards that this simple answer from the countryman had more effect upon his mind than all the volumes which the learned doctors of divinity had written against him.

IT IS FINISHED.

155

IT IS FINISHED.

SINNER, why that look of sadness?
 Why thus weep, and sigh, and groan?
 All thy unbelief is madness,
 All thy griefs could not atone.
It is finished! Halleluiah!
 Jesus saves, and He alone.

Why such *longing* for salvation?
 Why not take Him at His word?
 There is now no condemnation
 To the soul that trusts the Lord.
It is finished! Halleluiah!
 Oh! what joy it doth afford.

'Tis thyself thou art discerning,
 Not the dying Lamb of God;
 Weeping, striving, never learning
 How He bore sin's heavy load.
It is finished! Halleluiah!
 God is satisfied through blood.

See! for sin, what bitter anguish
 Jesus bore upon the tree!
 See Him left by God to languish
 In atoning agony!
It is finished! Halleluiah!
 Jesus died from wrath to free.

Now begin thy halleluiahs
 God Himself delights to hear.
 Jesus, Saviour! Halleluiah!
 Sweetest song that greets His ear.
Christ is Risen! Halleluiah!
 Perfect love hath cast out fear.

J. D. S.

DIVISION EXPECTED—PEACE ENJOYED.

“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.”—LUKE xii. 51.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.”—JOHN xix. 27.

THESSE two sayings of Jesus Christ appear contradictory, yet the history of the Church and the experience of believers in all ages prove that they are not; both are true, both are actual facts in Christian life.

OUTSIDE DIVISION.

The first scripture is to be understood in the light of the believer's relation to the ungodly world. The disciples, in common with the Jews, were expecting temporal, social, and political peace under the Messiah. He forewarns them against this delusion, and plainly tells them that the result of His coming would be the reverse of peace. All succeeding ages prove His words true. In the bitter controversies that have been carried on, and the cruel persecutions that have raged, we see how literally these words have been fulfilled. In many an instance, brother has betrayed brother to death, parent has betrayed child, and child parent. And though we live in far happier times, yet this division is still seen. The followers of Christ are despised to-day, watched with jealous eyes, and separated from the society of the world. How is this? Did Christ come to create discord? No. He came to bring peace and good-will. The strife arises from the pride and passions of ungodly men. His purpose of peace is effected through a storm.

DIVISION A NECESSITY.

1. *The principles of Christ's gospel of necessity create division.* The leading principle of His gospel is salvation by grace, through faith, salvation—a free, full, and present gift to the guilty and undeserving. Such is clearly the distinguishing doctrine of the gospel of Christ. It proclaims free pardon and acceptance with God through simple faith. This is utterly opposed to all false religions. All false and perverted religions make salvation to be of works, penances, gifts, and offerings. They all seek to make God a debtor to man, and teach that you must purchase His favour by what you are and do. Hence of necessity comes division. Salvation by grace and salvation by works are contraries. They cannot stand together. The first is utterly opposed to the pride and self-importance of man; the last is utterly opposed to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see this division in every Jewish synagogue in which Paul preached. You see it in the entire history of the Church from Acts xv. downwards. You see it in the conflict between Ritualists and Evangelicals to-day. It must be so. In this warfare there can be no compromise. Souls enlightened from above are still “determined” to know nothing amongst men “save Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Cor. ii. 2).

THE CAUSE OF THE DIVISION.

2. *The spirit of Christ's followers also leads to division.* The distinguishing mark of a Christian is love—love to the Lord Jesus and to men for His sake. Does love create division? Yes; of necessity love to Christ includes hatred to sin and separation from it; it leads the soul to be

loyal and true to Him at all costs. Love cannot be neutral or indifferent; it must take sides with the Beloved. It follows, therefore, that our very love to Christ creates division. The spirit of the world is selfish. *Self-love* in one form or another rules the world. Between the two there can be no sympathy. Love and enmity cannot unite. The more we love Christ the more shall we be separated from the world and hated by it too.

3. *The character of Christ's followers necessitates division.* Look at the character of His people as revealed in the beatitudes (Matt. v.), and you see at once what a great division there is, and how He honours and blesses those whom the world persecutes and casts out. He blesses the poor in spirit, the mourner, the meek, the merciful, and the pure in heart. The world blesses the self-sufficient, the gay, the ostentatious, the prosperous, and the shrewd. That which Christ highly esteems is despised by men. All who follow Him must walk in a separated path, and count it their honour to be despised by the world. To follow Him is to go against wind, tide, and the whole course of this world.

PEACE WITHIN.

The second scripture — sometimes called our Lord's legacy to His disciples — is to be understood in a spiritual inward sense. It refers to the believer's relation to God and his disposition towards Him. This inward peace has been and is enjoyed even amidst the conflict with the evil of the world and the trials arising therefrom. Indeed, this peace is the cause of division and opposition, for until one is fully at peace with God he will not be fully in conflict with sin. The peace with God and peace with the devil

can never be linked together. How is this peace described?

It is the peace which Christ leaves, the peace of reconciliation, the peace which He secured by the blood of His cross. Peace I leave with you, your sins are forgiven, your debt is cancelled, your soul is at rest, your eternal life is secured, the Father's smile is enjoyed. On the ground of completed work and perfect atonement of the Lord Jesus, He bequeaths this peace to all who believe. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then more than this, He gives the peace which as man here below He Himself possessed. "My peace I give unto you." The peace which dwelt in His own bosom amid all the trials of earthly path, the peace of full confidence in His Father's love, of full union with His Father's will. Our blessed Lord never distrusted the one nor strove against the other. Even in the darkest hour He accepted "the cup" from the Father's hand, and said, "Not My will, but Thine be done." To His disciples He said, "My peace I give unto you." Do we know what this is? It is possible to know the first, the peace of deliverance from condemnation, and yet not to know the second, at least only partially and fitfully. How many who have accepted Christ as their Saviour are yet full of anxious cares, repining because of what is denied or taken away! They are never truly happy because they are not in harmony with the will of God. But Jesus, the beloved Son of God, is willing to give us His own peace, His own confidence in the Father's love and power, His own union with the Father's will. There are those who know what it is. In trying circumstances

and in the darkest hour they have been kept in perfect peace, and have cheerfully said, "All is well." This peace is to those who possess it a precious reality.

It is not dependent upon outward circumstance like that of the world. It is peace within, and independent of external things. It is neither given nor taken away by men. In the most unfavourable circumstances it has often been most truly enjoyed. It has sustained the heart in poverty, in affliction, in reproach, in imprisonment, and even in death. *It is not false and delusive.* The world's peace is but a delusive dream, from which there will be a rude awakening ere long. But the peace which Jesus gives is based on righteousness and truth. It is peace with honour, peace consistent with unsullied holiness. It is firmer than the everlasting hills (Isa. liv. 10). It brings everlasting consolation, and the possession of it now is the sure pledge and earnest of an eternal sabbath.

Such is the portion of all believers. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Me ye shall have peace." The smile of God and the frown of men, the friendship of Christ and the opposition of the world, these are the allotted portion of all who truly follow Him. O. T.

Must be with Him to be for Him.—It is not necessary to be highly educated and learned to tell forth the "glories of Christ," nor does the "knowledge of Christ" create a desire to be so. One thing it does. It gives a boldness which, when manifested, will cause even your superiors to marvel greatly, and force them to acknowledge that you have been with Jesus (Acts iv. 13).

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

—♦—
“JE PENSE FORWARD.”

OUR readers may wonder at this curious title to the following lines, for it is not very customary to unite French and English words in one sentence. They form the motto of a well-known Scotch earl, and are inscribed in large letters over the handsome stone gateway standing at the entrance to the grounds which surround his splendid country mansion. “Je pense,” I think. “Je pense forward,” “I think forward.” What suggestive words for any whose thoughts are not limited to time and the comparatively small circle of human life on earth! “Je pense forward.” Would that all did! What a much happier world would this be!

We have no idea what the origin of this motto was, nor what it signifies for its possessor. But we are assured that whoever thinks forward is wiser than he who only thinks for the present. Man in his natural state, being a sinner, and with a conscience ill at ease, shrinks from thinking forward. To think of that which will surely succeed his short span of life, the eternal future, would fill him with an undefined dread. If he does so at all, he seeks to lessen in his own mind the gravity of sin in God's sight, defers death, which may come upon him at any moment, to the far-off future, and closes his eyes to the judgment after (Heb. ix. 27). All this is the essence of folly.

It is true wisdom to think forward, and to

VOL. XVI. No. 11.

think seriously, for the eternal future *must be faced*. Satan seeks to dazzle men's eyes with the pleasures, wealth, and fame of this world, a world which is about to pass away. Long ago, the wisest of Adam's fallen race, who possessed far more than any one of us, passed his well-weighed verdict upon it, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit (Eccles. ii. 17). Why, then, pursue the empty bubble of the devil, when God offers you His rich and glorious salvation for ever? Think forward. Sin is here, and its wage is death, and after that the judgment (Rom. vi. 23; Heb. ix. 27). But God in His great love sent His Son to put sin away, to overcome death, and to deliver from judgment. The whole necessary work was performed by Him once for all at Calvary, and now He lives, a glorified Saviour, seated at the right hand of God. Think forward. God declares over and over in His blessed Word, that whosoever believes in Him shall now be pardoned all his sins, delivered from death and judgment, and be claimed by Christ to share His glory for ever.

Apart from the revelation of God, no one could think forward aright. All men's histories tell of the past; the newspaper gives the history of the present (a sad one, indeed); but of the future, apart from the Word of God, who can tell? But He has not kept the future hidden from us; He has lifted the veil. And we learn that, though there is only one sphere where men now dwell on earth, there are *two* where they will dwell *in the future*. The former is but a *temporal* place of sojourn, both the latter in the unseen world are *eternal*. In this world there is a great mixture of good and evil; but in that world there

is one eternal abode of unmixed good, and another eternal abode where evil will meet its eternal due reward.

Many are the questions agitating the world; questions of all kinds and of varying importance; many that in every age have puzzled the greatest natural wits; but the one question of all questions which infinitely outweighs every other in importance, is for *you*. In *which* of the two abodes named *will you spend eternity?* Now, *think forward. In which?* Do you *know?* Maybe you reply in your heart, "No, I don't; nor do I believe that anyone else does." Ah, friend, there you are utterly at fault, and if you are a professing Christian, you thereby manifest the utter hollowness of your profession. Satan has well succeeded in deluding *you*. Tens of thousands *know* where they are going. Every *true* Christian may have certainty as to the future. We *know*, because God has spoken. We believe and are sure. God has wrought in us in His grace and exercised us. He has led us to think forward, and to accept His thoughts, and to forsake our own. *Hence we know* that on the ground of the finished work of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are cast into the ocean's depth, no more to be remembered. And death, being conquered by Him, has become but the portal to His blessed presence, who bore the whole judgment for us at Calvary.

Moreover, we know that if He come before we are called to face the death of the body, we shall, according to His promise, be claimed by Him among His living ones, conformed to Him by His mighty power, to share with Him in His Father's house for eternity the blessed fruits of His victory, in that glorious home of light, and love,

and holiness, and joy. Be wise, then, whilst 'tis the day of salvation, lest death find you in your sins, and, missing all the blessed present and eternal fruits of divine love, you find, when it is too late, you are reaping in eternity what you sowed in time, eternal darkness and misery; and all for the sake of a few worthless bubbles!

Oh, sinner, once again we appeal to thee, wake up from thy folly, and think—*think forward*. Sin has such a terrible hold that the multitude does not seriously think. “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and *many* there be who go in thereat” (Matt. vii. 13). “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. vii. 14). Reader, think, think forward, *that you may be one of that few*. The company of the lost multitude will surely be no solace in that awful darkness, outside the presence of God. But the company of Christ, and of all His heavenly saints, now and evermore, is the blessed portion freely offered you this day. Stop, then, on your career of carelessness and folly; think forward; look eternal realities in the face. Satan's empty bubbles will very soon all have burst. In *Christ* you will find everlasting substance. Believe on Him, and in the blessed and holy presence of God to all eternity you will praise Him for the grace that led you to think forward, and to receive Jesus, the present Saviour of the perishing. Then, as in His blessed footsteps through this poor world you pursue the pathway of faith, you will find it an ever-present preservative from all its corruptions and temptations to think forward. “*Je pense forward.*”

E. H. C.

A TRIUMPHANT HOME-GOING.

ALL who knew S. G. Grantham-Hill will be glad to hear of the joyful end of his earthly journey. John Bunyan's quaint lines well describe his Christian course—

“And though 'twas late when I began
To seek the Lord and live for ever ;
Yet now I'll run fast as I can,
'Tis better late than never.”

How he finished that course his own testimony shall tell.—[Ed. *T. L. P.*]

Shortly before passing away, he said, “These words were forced out of my heart”—

“Draw down the blinds ! One more departed—
Taken away to his heavenly rest ;
No more dependent on earthly blessings—
Sweetly at peace on his Saviour's breast.

“Nothing but Christ he has taken with him—
No one but Christ has cleared the way ;
Trusting alone on His grand atonement,
Ready for glory—Eternity's Day.

“Praise to the Father for His gift so precious—
Glory to God for His boundless love ;
Millions and millions of tongues will proclaim it,
Through countless ages in rapture above.”

S. G. G.-H.

NEVER think what you have to give up to obtain Christ; but consider what you lose by clinging to those things which are contrary to God's mind, though delightful to the taste of the natural man.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVE.

JOHN iii. 14-16.

THERE cannot be anything more blessed than to know the great reality of the love of God; but to know it in all its greatness we must first learn His righteousness. That is to say, we must learn it in God's way, and in God's words.

John iii. 16 is a blessed revelation of divine love, and has been used for blessing to a vast number of anxious souls; but before that, comes the serpent of brass, a type of God's beloved Son "*made sin for us*," and made sin by the very God who found in Him His perfect delight. If *every* claim of a holy God was to be met so that His love might come out in all its blessed fulness to poor lost sinners, He who "knew no sin" must be made a sin-offering. And thus the cross of Christ is the measure of divine righteousness and divine love. The love of the Son of God to His Father and to the sinner was seen there, in that He took the place of death and judgment, that every claim of God's righteousness might be met, and the power of death, that abiding proof of God being dishonoured by the man He had created, might be for ever broken. He, the Son, could take both from His God and His Father. "*Thou hast brought Me*," He says, "*into the dust of death*" (Ps. xxii. 15). "*The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?*" (John xviii. 11). I have often said to anxious souls, "Build all your hopes on the *righteousness* of God, and then you can enjoy His *love*."

Let me give a simple illustration of my meaning. Suppose I owed a large sum of money to

some one, and had not one penny to meet the debt. A friend meets me one day and says, "Why don't you come to Mr. So-and-so's house? He is the kindest man in the world and delights to use his ample means to show hospitality and love to all who come there." "Ah," I answer, "there is nothing I should like better than to go there, for I hear on all sides how good he is; but I owe him a thousand pounds, and have not a penny to pay it; and if I see him coming I get out of the way as fast as I can." But one day my friend meets me and says, "I have some good news for you; your debt is paid, every farthing of it, and here is the receipt, and a warm invitation to you to come to the house and enjoy the hospitality of your late creditor. You will find what a kind man he is." "Well," I say, "I can go now, for I know that he is such a righteous man he will never ask me for one farthing of that debt again. But how can I go in these old clothes?—and I have not a penny in my pocket to get myself another suit, or to live on in the future." "Oh," says my friend, "he has thought of all that, and has sent you an order on his banker that all his resources are to be at your disposal; and you know they are well-nigh inexhaustible, and the more you draw on them the better pleased he will be."

Dear reader, this is but a very feeble illustration of the infinite greatness of the grace of the God who "spared not His own Son" that He might have you and me in His own house—the "Father's house"—for the delight and satisfaction of His own heart for ever. Grace that seeks; grace that finds; grace that keeps; grace that teaches (Titus ii. 12); grace that saves (Eph. ii. 8); and grace that

reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 20) is what He offers now. Yes, it is all by Him, "Jesus Christ our Lord." He Himself has *met* and *satisfied* every claim of a holy God against sin, and has glorified God in doing so. If you are a believer, if you have owned your bankrupt condition before God and pleaded the precious blood of Christ as your only hope, not only is it true that He, God's Son, has "borne your sins in His own body on the tree," but also that (to apply the type of the brazen serpent) "He who knew no sin has been *made sin*" for you. That is to say, that in the death of Christ not only has the *fruit* (your sins) been for ever removed, but the *root* also (*yourself as a sinner*) from under the eye of God; for not only did His Son give *Himself* for your sins (Gal. i. 4), but in the language of faith you can surely say, "Who loved *me* and gave *Himself* for *me*" (Gal. ii. 20). What a blessed exchange! Christ instead of your *sins*, and instead of *sinful self* before God. All gone, sins and self, and Christ instead! You stand before God, dear Christian reader, in all *His* acceptance. And just as in the type of the poor bitten Israelite who looked and lived, so now the look of faith goes right up to the glory of God. The One who was once in death and judgment, that your sins and yourself might be for ever removed from under the eye of God, is *there*, and not now on the cross. His holy claims having been for ever met, He has glorified the blessed Man who glorified Him on the earth and finished the work given Him to do. And what was that work? Not only that He might save poor sinners from the eternal judgment of their sins, but that He might recover

for God in His own blessed Person the man He lost in the Garden of Eden: that He might in His great love, and in all the value of His work on the cross, bring "many sons to glory" (Heb. ii. 10). This was what the heart of God had been looking for from the moment that sin and death dishonoured Him, and the very man He had created for His own glory was lost to Him. "My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I *work*" (John v. 17) tells the story of unbounded, unwearied grace and love; and the answer to that blessed work of Father and Son is that God can *righteously* have in glory one who, as a poor lost sinner, finds rest in that finished work.

Dear reader, on what are you building your hope of salvation? On the *righteousness* of God? What kept out the messenger of death on that terrible night in Egypt when the blood of the slain lamb was God's way of deliverance? Was it mercy? *No*. Was it love? *No*. It was righteousness, and righteousness only; for where the blood of the lamb, that blessed type of the precious blood of Christ, met the eye of God, He could not in righteousness enter to slay the firstborn—He *must* "pass over." He had said He would—"When *I* see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exod. xii. 13).

Oh, how blessed it is, and what perfect peace it gives, to *build on the righteousness* of God, and then to learn more of the greatness of *His love*; to live in the warmth and sunshine of that love, and to *know* what it is to be "accepted in the Beloved"! (Eph. i. 6). May you and I, dear reader, learn more of this day by day, and live more in the power of it as witnesses of it to others, till we find ourselves in all the fulness of it in His presence in glory.

A. P. G.

THE SECRET OUT.

PAUL, the prisoner, and Felix, the governor, were no strangers to each other when the latter came to the end of his term of office at Cæsarea. Often had the so-called "noble Felix" listened to the fearless, faithful gospel preacher who stood in chains before him. Once, at least, as the prisoner reasoned of "righteousness," temperance, and judgment to come, had the judge been made to tremble. But, alas! he never repented, never turned to God, never got converted.

As his two full years of more than ordinary opportunity wore away, the earnestness of Felix seemed to increase. What a likely case! we should probably have considered him. Indeed, any thoughtful onlooker might reasonably have said, "Surely this Roman governor cannot be far from the kingdom of God"; and with every new hearing would come the wondering exclamation, How *can* he hear such things and come away so indifferent!

Alas! there was a secret hindrance. There was a hidden, soul-deadening motive behind all this seeming interest. It was worldly gain he was after. Out of Paul's misery (as he no doubt deemed his imprisonment) he thought he could make money. Constant calls for a new hearing, he vainly calculated, would, in the end, make manifest the prisoner's willingness to purchase his freedom by a secret bribe. Therefore we read, "*He sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.*" This continued till at last the day came when he had himself to quit office—a disappointed man. Has this no voice for many a seemingly interested gospel hearer in the present

day? We are convinced it has. The secret of their dangerous, soul-damning delay may not yet have come to light, but it will. The Roman governor's secret was exposed by the Holy Spirit as a warning to others.

To go no further, why have *you* not responded, my reader, to God's oft-repeated call to repentance? Do you not know that God's gracious forgiveness in the name of Him who died and rose again is proclaimed with it? Yet you coldly hold back, and deliberately procrastinate. Why is this? Is it not that you know well enough that repentance toward God can no more be possible, with the wilful continuance of your sinful pursuits, than clinging tenaciously to a hundredweight of gold at the bottom of the ocean could help you to rise to the surface?

Paul told King Agrippa and all who sat with him that the result of the heavenly vision to which he was not disobedient was that he showed first unto them of Damascus (where he really began his Christian service), and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, "*that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance*" (Acts xxvi. 19, 20).

It is not that present-day gospel hearers have any open quarrel with this announcement. Nay their consciences, unless seared, compel them to go with it; but some hidden lust is fondly cherished, and the way of their own will is persistently followed. No doubt in many a bosom there is the secret purpose to decide upon a different course at some future day, some more "convenient season," as Felix expressed it. But for the present it is all briefly summed up thus:

My will to-day ; God's will to-morrow. And, alas! this goes on with thousands until death overtakes them, and their convenient to-morrow turns out to be a night of despair. As an old writer (A.D. 1632) has well expressed it:—

“ I will to-morrow, that I will ;
I will be sure to do it.’
To-morrow comes, to-morrow goes,
And still thou art to do it.
Thus still repentance is deferred
From one day to another,
Until the day of death is come,
And judgment is the other.”

Beware, my reader, that you do not wear out your day of grace by such a course of guilty indifference to the holiness and love of God expressed at the cross of Jesus; lest for this world's tempting glitter you forfeit an eternity of heavenly bliss.

As surely as Felix has gone, you are going. We ask you, *Where?*

The “hope” of Felix, like the hope of the hypocrite, perished (Job viii. 13). What is *your* hope worth?

If you have not yet responded to God's call, if you have not repented and believed the gospel, there is secret reason to be found somewhere.

It is for you to inquire what that secret is, and to consider what it will be worth when you are as far beyond gospel opportunities as Felix is now beyond his.

“ Let others boast of heaps of gold, *Christ for me ;*
His riches never can be told, *Christ for me ;*
Your gold will waste and wear away,
Your honours perish in a day,
My portion never can decay, **CHRIST FOR ME.”**

GEO. C.

DOUBLE CLEANSING.

WHEN the Roman soldier pierced the side of Jesus, blood and water flowed forth (see John xix. 34).

Many believers have learned something of the value of the blood, but have not yet seen the value of the water. The blood is spoken of in Scripture in connection with what we have done; the water in connection with our moral associations with Adam, the fallen head of the human race.

Thus the death of Jesus has toward us two distinct aspects. Though they cannot be separated, they need to be distinguished so as to get the *present good of both*.

Though every gold coin of the realm has two faces with two totally different inscriptions, these faces, nevertheless, only constitute one coin.

The death of Jesus was so important that God gave two distinct testimonies to it, and the Holy Spirit adds another, making three. We read "there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" (1 John v. 8).

If a believer reviews his *history* of self-will in the light of Scripture, his mind reverts to the blood-aspect of the death of Jesus, where he sees how he has been cleansed from every sin before a *righteous God*, which is proved by God having raised Jesus from the dead. But when he thinks about the corruption, wilfulness, and helplessness of his *state* as a child of Adam, his mind reverts to the water-aspect of the death of Jesus, which has cleared him from his moral associations with Adam, in order that he may be *in Christ* before a *holy God*.

This can be learned from Scripture, and apprehended in the soul by the Spirit's teaching.

Christ having died *for sins* and *to sin*, now lives to God, and the one who is in Christ reckons himself dead to sin, that is, to the evil he knows he has within himself.

The corruption, wilfulness, and helplessness within remain unchanged in the believer, but God sees him in Christ, and no more in Adam. The apprehension of this truth changes the standpoint, and we learn to view things as God views them.

Thus the blood points to cleansing from *sins* according to the claims of God, acting *in righteousness*; while the water points to cleansing from *sin* (our association with Adam) according to the will God, acting *in holiness*.

For the testimony to the blood see Romans iii. 25; Ephesians i. 7; Colossians i. 14; 1 Peter i. 19; 1 John i. 7-v. 8.

For the testimony to the water see John iii. 5; xiii. 10; 1 Corinthians vi. 11; Hebrews x. 22; 1 John v. 8.

It is the privilege of every believer to see this double cleansing effected in the death of Jesus, who having risen and gone to the right hand of God, maintains everything in resurrection power.

He lives to make intercession for His own, and uses the exercises of heart to produce a more living sense of the reality of unseen things.

The hope of His second coming acts as an anchor to the soul, and keeps the believer "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

If all believers would meditate on these things, they would be greatly profited, and become of much more use to others.

G. W. Gy.

WHAT BINDS THE HEART TO CHRIST? 175

“HE IS ABLE.”

HEB. ii. 18, vii. 25; JUDE 24.

“HE is able!” What deep meaning
 In these three words dwell!
 Those who on His strength are leaning
 Can their import tell.

Is it succour you are needing
 In temptation’s hour?
 He is able—yea, and willing;
 Only trust Him more.

Do we doubt His power to save us
 From the power of sin?
 “He is able,” comes the answer,
 Bringing peace within.

Are we filled by fear of falling?
 Able He to keep.

O’er His own in love He’s watching—
 Love that cannot sleep. E. M. H.

WHAT BINDS THE HEART TO CHRIST?

“I AM going to be like Christ in glory; then I must be as like Him now as ever I can be. Of course, we shall all fail, but we are to have our hearts full of it.

“Remember this, that the place you are in is that of an epistle of Christ. We are set for this, that the life of Christ should be manifested in us. Christ has settled the question with God: *He appears in the presence of God for us, and we are in the presence of the world for Him.* ‘In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.’ If I know He is in me, I am to manifest the life of Christ in everything. *If He has loved me with unutterable love which*

passes knowledge, I feel bound in heart to Him; my business is to glorify Him in everything I do. 'Bought with a price'—that is settled; if bought, I am His.

“But, beloved friends, I press upon you that earnestness of heart which cleaves to *Him*, especially in these last evil days, when we wait for the Son from heaven.

“Oh, if Christians were more thoroughly *Christians*, the world would understand what it was all about. There is a great deal of profession and talk, and the activity of the Spirit of God—thank God there is; but do you think if a heathen came here to learn what Christianity meant he would find it out?

“The Lord give you to have *such a sense of the love of Christ that, as bought with a price, the only object of your souls may be to live by Christ and to live for Christ*; and for those who do not know Him, that they may learn how He came down in love to seek us, and, because righteousness could not pass over sin, died to put it away.”

J. N. D.

Extract.—“*What is Christ worth to you? If I have got a life by which to express my value of Christ, I can pour it out for Him—and mark, this is not martyrdom, but loyalty to Christ in a world that has rejected Him.*

“If you see a man seeking to follow Christ and please Him, what does the world say of him? ‘He is throwing his life entirely away.’ Ah! I like to hear that, because he stakes it for Christ, and another day will show whether it is a lost life or not.”

B.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

GILT OR GOLD?

IN the middle of a spacious square in the city of H—— is a beautiful equestrian statue. It is a striking monument, for besides being of colossal size, excellent proportion, and high artistic value, it has the appearance of being solid gold. When the sun shines on it the rays are reflected from its burnished sides in resplendent beauty. Great pains are taken to maintain this lovely show, and how? By regularly *regilding it*. It is base metal gilded! It is a beautiful make-believe. People see it, admire it, and are pleased with it. But it would not stand a searching test as to whether its substance is the same as it appears.

How like many a one who passes muster here as being all that he should be, making a fair pretension of good works, of being perhaps somewhat superior to those around! Are you, reader, one of those who, gaining the approbation of your fellow-workpeople, co-religionists, and neighbours, think that you are right with God—that you will be able to stand the test that He will apply to you and your works? Will that which you *are* stand the fiery test of God's judgment as gold is tried? Gilded shams are exposed, solid gold is declared by the fire test.

Pretensions will not do for God. Nothing but what stands the test of His judgment will be accepted of Him.

VOL. XVI. No. 12.

Now His own beloved Son has been here and has been put to the test in every way. Has He stood the test or has He succumbed? Let Heaven itself answer! Let us look up with the eye of Stephen, and we shall see Jesus at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour. Has He failed? Ah no! He has stood the test, and the fact that He is seated in the place of power proclaims Him to be worthy of my trust. Reader, abandon your gilded unrealities and trust with confidence the One in whom God has found His delight. "The pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. liii. 10). This is the Saviour—the Lord Jesus Christ. Make Him, oh, make Him your trust.

One of the closing scenes of the Chinese war of 1859 was the destruction of the charming summer palace of the Emperor of China by the British troops. The whole of this lovely place was given over to the will of an unrestrained army to burn, and pillage, and waste. Costly treasures, works of art, unique ornaments, were carried away as lawful spoil.

Months after the treaty of peace was signed, a Chinese mandarin and an English officer chanced to meet. Both had witnessed the wanton waste of the palace, and their conversation naturally turned to this sad event.

"One thing," remarked the mandarin, "always seemed to me to be very strange in the conduct of you and your troops."

"What was that?" said the officer.

"Oh, that none of you thought it worth your while to take the metal dogs that served to keep open the front door of the palace."

“But who would burden himself with such great lumps of brass as they were? They were neither ornamental nor valuable.”

“Ah, my friend,” said the Chinaman, “they were *solid gold*.”

“Solid gold!”

“Yes, absolutely worth their weight in gold! And yet you did not think it worth while to stoop and take them!”

Can you, reader, picture the bitter chagrin of that officer when he learned what he had missed? Just imagine—as much solid gold as he could have carried away. And all for nothing. But he knew not what lay before him. What would he not have given if some poor passer-by had hinted to him the worth of what was within his grasp! It was the chance of a lifetime. But he missed it. Would he ever cease to recount his own madness or curse his own ignorance? But it was too late.

To-day, my reader, there is before thee, within thy reach, that which is of far more worth than countless gold and silver—more valuable than aught beside—there is before thee now the offer of forgiveness of sins: peace and reconciliation and an eternity with Christ; yea, a full, free, and perfect salvation. Wilt thou stoop to take it? Wilt thou stand for a moment and consider what God puts in thy way? None less than God's own Son is offered as thy Saviour, and with Him nothing less than the best that heaven can afford.

Do not be like the silly soldiers, who preferred the painted, showy gewgaws to the solid, lasting gold. If you choose the gilded unrealities of this world rather than the blessed realities of the next, you too will lament your decision when too late.

180 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

The day will come when you will acknowledge the worth of God's beloved Son. Some day your eyes will be opened. If in time, you will bless and praise His name for all the worth that dwells in Him, and which you will share and delight in; but if it be in eternity, when too late, when the day of opportunity is gone, you will for ever remember the day in which you had your chance (and that day is *this* day) of being enriched for ever; but as the officer cursed his neglect and indifference, so, too, you will curse the day when you neglected God's offer of Christ.

Be persuaded now. Consider the magnificence and the solidity of God's offer—the greatness of Christ, the wonders of the salvation which are to be had in Him.

Despise not the pure gold of God's salvation. Nay, rather have done with the gilded shams of your own religiousness, or piety, or fancied goodness, and embrace the glorious Christ that is set before you in the gospel. S. S.

 THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

SPIRIT, proud spirit, O ponder thy state,
 If thine the leaf's lightness, not thine the leaf's fate;
 It may flutter and glisten, and wither and die;
 And heed not our pity and ask not our sigh;

But for *thee*, the immortal, no winter may throw
 Eternal repose on thy joy and thy woe;
 Thou must live—live for ever—in glory, or gloom,
 Beyond the world's precincts—beyond the dark tomb.

Look to thyself, then—ere past is hope's reign,
 And looking and longing alike are in vain;
 Lest thou deem it a bliss to have been, or to be,
 But a fluttering leaf on yon blasted, dead tree. J.

HIS LAST CHANCE.

THE reader will no doubt agree with me when I say that every soul has his last chance of receiving the gospel of God's grace.

When he gets that last chance we know not, but how often do souls wake up to the bitter discovery that they *have had* their last and lost it!

They can vividly call back to mind the moment when Christ was presented to them, when, so to speak, Jesus of Nazareth *passed by*. Yet they sat still in indifference with their mouths closed; just one feeble cry would have brought Jesus to their deliverance.

If you turn to Mark's gospel (x. 46-52) you will find an illustration of the offered gospel of to-day and how a wise man will treat it. Bartimæus was blind naturally, and he knew it; and not only so, he knew that there was One and only One, living amongst men, who could meet his need.

No doubt he had heard that Jesus had made the dumb to speak and the lame to walk. Devils had been cast out by Him and the dead raised! Then why not the blind see?

At all events Bartimæus did not mean to miss his first opportunity of gaining the blessing he had long waited for. His need was too great to trifle with such an opportunity. Therefore when once Jesus was near enough, he would cry loud enough.

What a wise resolution for blind Bartimæus to arrive at; for had he not come to that conclusion when he did he would never have received the blessing at all.

Do you say, Why? Well if you carefully

182 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

study your Bible you will notice that Jesus never passed that way again. It was Bartimæus's *first* and *last* chance. What an opportunity! But what tremendous consequences would have resulted through missing it.

Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, from whence He never returned, for there He was crucified; so it was now or never for Bartimæus.

Did he know it? No, certainly not, but he pleads as though he did. The crowd tried to hush his cries, but he knew that they did not feel his need as he felt it, and therefore he only cried the louder. Then what happens? "*Jesus stood still.*" What a spectacle! The Creator of heaven and earth stands still and listens to the voice of a blind beggar! *What love!* "Bring him to me," says Jesus; and at that command Bartimæus was hurried into the presence of the Son of God.

"What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" says Jesus to him. Do you think that Bartimæus was long in giving Jesus the answer? Nay, friend. Although he was poor, and his sole occupation begging for a living, he seems to forget his need in that respect. His whole mind is fixed upon his greatest necessity—his blindness. Therefore he says, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Then came those sight-producing words: "*Go thy way; thy faith hath saved thee.*"

Now, dear reader, just consider *your* position before God. If unconverted, you too are blind. You were born blind, and have in one way or other been begging from the world all your life for something to satisfy you. Up to the present moment you have gained nothing permanent, and your needs are just as great to-day as ever they were.

Perhaps you think you are not blind, but God's word says you are if you have not seen yourself a lost sinner and Jesus your Saviour.

We are not naturally in a great hurry to view ourselves in a proper way by studying *God's* opinion about us. We think we are not so bad as Scripture brands us. It is only when we get a glimpse of our degradation before God that we are convinced that there is no more hope of blessing in us than Bartimæus had in his own powers to get eyesight. Then we find we must turn to another if our case is to be met, and that the only One we can turn to is Christ.

But how often we are hindered from obtaining God's blessing at once by some trivial thing which we cling to! We allow small objections to rise in our hearts. The devil comes along with some paltry tale, as with the crowd to Bartimæus, who cry, "*Hold your peace.*" As much as to say, "Jesus does not want to bother with you!" But this is only a piece of the devil's craft. The needy sinner is just the man Jesus came to save. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." So that immediately you feel your need of Jesus, He is your nearest, your truest Friend.

The more the crowd endeavoured to stop the cry of Bartimæus, the louder he cried; he did not mean to be balked in his purpose. Here was the chance of a lifetime, and the chance was too valuable to miss.

Well, the faith of that blind man was rewarded. The crowd came to a halt, and, although Bartimæus could not see it, the attention of one and all was centred on him. The hearts of many in that crowd beat high; there was, no doubt, *purpose*

184 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

written in the face of Jesus. Was it not a moment of importance in *His* life also—Son of God, yet a servant of all?

In a moment the voice of Jesus responded to that beggar's cry, for the Lord could not delay an answer to a cry like that. His ear was ever open to hear a needy one's cry, and in quick response He said, in effect, *Bring him to Me.*

Do you think Bartimæus was long in going to Jesus? Not he. All that hindered him in his progress he would fling aside. "Casting away his garment, he rose and came to Jesus."

Now, reader, when this picture is studied, you must admit that the wisdom and discretion of Bartimæus were of the greatest importance to him. He did the right thing at the right moment.

But have you ever thought of the condition of every sinner, or, to come a little closer, of your own condition pictured here?

If you are unconverted you can only be compared to this blind man sitting by the wayside begging, only with Jesus passing by without your heeding Him.

You know He is passing by, for this country is filled with preachers who proclaim it. Yet you allow some little thing to balk your blessing. Even one of the devil's whispers is enough to seal your lips. But unless you wake up to the fact that, one by one, your chances are slipping by, you will one day look back with bitter remorse to the moment when Jesus passed within your reach and you kept your mouth shut.

Oh, may that mouth of yours be opened at once! The ear of Jesus is waiting for the cry, "*Have mercy on me.*" Will you not partake of His mercy? Nothing is too hard for Him.

"INTO A WORLD UNKNOWN."

185

Do you say, "I am too bad for Jesus to take any notice of me"? Do you think Bartimæus had a thought like that? He knew he was a beggar, and the Person of whom he asked a favour was none other than the Son of David, King of Israel, yet that did not hinder his request being made.

Weigh these things in the balances of justice—justice to your own soul. Is salvation not worth your immediate attention? Mercy's door stands open wide to-day, but a day is coming—and that not far hence—when that door will be *shut for ever*. "*When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know ye not whence ye are*" (Luke xiii. 25).

"Jesus gently whispers
To thy longing soul,
'Down I came to save thee,
Came to make thee whole;
Wilt thou now be pardoned,
Wilt thou be set free?'
Yield thine heart to Jesus
While He waits for thee."

F. A. P.

"INTO A WORLD UNKNOWN."

"THE above was submitted to the burial board as an epitaph for the tombstone of a J.P. lately deceased. As the board had decided not to accept anything but quotations from well-known authors or texts from the Bible, the application was refused." [Probably it was intended to mean "A world *unknowable*."]

As I read those lines the awful solemnity of the occasion came before me. Here was an

epitaph, to all appearance the dictation of this gentleman before his decease. He was by no means an ignorant man: on the contrary, he was well educated, and for some time had figured before the public in a popular way. Giving his time and interests as J.P. to the keeping of the peace, he had apparently never known the peace of God as filling his soul, or the God of peace as with him.

Does my reader suppose he was right in declaring that he had entered into a world *unknowable* because he was pleased to call it "unknown"?

Let us take the greatest authority. Let us listen to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and hear what He has to say of the future world. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven." That being so, He must have a perfect knowledge of the world not yet made manifest to the human eye. If my reader will turn to Luke xvi. he will see the curtain drawn aside and the future unfolded in parable. Then let him turn to Matthew xxv. 23, where the Lord is seen taking His throne in the world of the future. He says to each who has learnt His grace and love and sought to serve Him loyally during His absence from this world, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." But to the empty professor who in name only takes up His service (v. 30), "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Awful sentence!

Reader, these are stern facts. For before your never-dying soul there is either the joy of the Lord, or the gnashing of teeth and the tears of undying remorse. Leaving the Lord's personal

testimony, we have also the witness of the Spirit through inspired men.

The once-bitter opponent of the cause of Christ, Saul of Tarsus, speaks of "having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. i. 23). And further, 2 Timothy i. 12: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day." What day does he refer to, and what world? Not "to a world unknown" and a day of uncertainty, but to the day when J esus, the Christ of God, the once-derided Man on earth, shall reign in righteousness and fill the world to come with peace and blessing.

Reader, let me ask you not to entertain infidel thoughts in regard to your future. There is no longer any mystery as to man's future. How can there be when the Son of God has become man in order, not only to show to us the two destinies of man, but to plead with us in love and grace to come to Him, in order that eternal joy may be secured to us?

This, first of all, depends on the mercy and love of God, who through the death of Jesus opens the way into eternal life. Then upon your acceptance in His name of repentance and forgiveness of sins you simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. If you take your true place as a lost and guilty sinner, you will gladly own at His feet that He is your Lord and you His willing subject. You will praise the Father whose Sent One He is. That being so, God can say to you as in 1 John v. 13, "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." Then you may unite with the inspired writer and say, "We *know* the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we may *know* Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ" (v. 20). These are divine certainties, thank God. The believer enjoys them.

On the other hand, there are certainties for the unbeliever also. Solomon says, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but *know thou*, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccles. xi. 9).

True preachers of the gospel are those who are earnestly striving, according to God's working in them, to enlighten men in regard to the revelation of God's love in Christ. They tenderly plead with men to incline their ear to the gracious message of a giving God, that He asks nothing from them, but brings all to them, even forgiveness of sins, the Holy Ghost, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus. Instead of imputing man's trespasses to him, He is now beseeching men to be reconciled, in order that they may share with Him the blessedness of a *well-known* world—a world of love and light, and to be in the present assurance of certain salvation in this world. Reader, may this blessing be known to you. W. T.

"**My Father's house!**" Think of what the home of such a heart as Christ's must be! Think of the delight He will have there! *That* is the place He is going to bring us to, oh, wonderful thought!" J. N. D.

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT IT.

AT the tea-table of a Christian in Manchester sat two guests; one a gospel preacher who was expected to preach that night, the other a gentleman who had, for many years, held the office of inspector of schools in Jamaica.

In the course of conversation respecting the way in which examination papers are dealt with in Jamaica, this gentleman said that it was a rule to put on all papers, which failed to satisfy the examiners, three letters, in bold, legible characters—B.G.R.

When the preacher stood up that night to preach he related to his audience what he had himself heard just before. He said that the whole of Adam's race had been put to the test, and with this result, that the same letters B.G.R. had been written against every one of them as natural men. The best and the worst alike, without a single exception, were pronounced B.G.R.

A quaint open-air preacher in Scotland who was one day trying to show his hearers that salvation is not of merit but of grace, remarked that many fell into the serious mistake of thinking that it was the G.P.O. class that God saves.

We have thought it would be useful to the reader to have these two testimonies placed side by side for his thoughtful consideration; for all hope of his belonging to the second class is for ever wiped out, if it is really true that he belongs to the first.

But a little explanation is here necessary.

What was meant by B.G.R. on an examination paper was that it was "BELOW GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS." In applying this to the subject before him—the truth presented to us in the third

chapter of Romans—he said that if God's law required righteousness from man; if God had the right to require what was suitable to His own glory; if all had sinned and come short of His glory; if every mouth had been stopped and all brought in guilty before Him, then it was certainly true that every man, weighed in this just balance, came **BELOW GOD'S REQUIREMENTS**. The preacher showed, moreover, that the Spirit of God had recorded this solemn verdict plainly enough; and that any but the wilfully blind might read it.

But what did the other preacher mean by the G.P.O. class?

Possibly some of his hearers thought that these initials referred to the *Government Post Office* staff. But not so. He only wanted to draw their attention to, and then correct the mistake that appears so common in the minds of many religious people to-day, that it is "GOOD PEOPLE ONLY" that God blesses. Tell them that God says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one," "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10, 12), and they will answer, "Oh, I know I have not been good in the past, but I hope to be good in the future." But the reader of a man's examination papers does not confine himself to a few of the best pages. He passes his judgment on the *whole*, and gives his award accordingly. In like manner, if a man stands before God in judgment on the ground of his own merit, the *whole* of his history will be taken into account. It is, no doubt, with such a fact before him that David cried out, "*Enter not into judgment with Thy servant [O Lord]; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified*" (Ps. cxliii. 2). Then his son Solomon was inspired to write something that bears its searching

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT IT. 191

light directly upon the words of his inspired father and shows the necessity for them: "*God requireth that which is past*" (Eccles. iii. 15).

My dear reader, you can stand before God's holy eye, in judgment for the past, or you can *not*. If you cannot, why allow yourself to be blinded by the thought that you can?

Jesus, the sent One of the Father, has been here: not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

It was sinners he called.

It was sinners whom He received.

It was for sinners He died.

Before He went on high He gave a commission to His servants to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations. Blessed proclamation! If He had sent a message to "*good people only*," nothing could have been said about either repentance or remission of sins. *Good people* have nothing to repent of; nothing that *needs* forgiveness. They come up to God's requirements. God's holy ear never heard an idle word from *their* lips; His holy, all-searching eye never traced the smallest bit of deceit or uncleanness in their heart. Their history is spotless, blameless!

Who but a fool would take this ground and allow the hand of time to push him into the presence of God in judgment, refusing to take, in the name of Him who died for sinners, immediate advantage of the open door of repentance and the proclamation of forgiveness?

You are and for ever will be *below God's requirements*. *Without Christ* you must be rejected.

In Christ you will be fully and unchangeably accepted; yea, as fit for the light of God's glory as the rich merits of His beloved Son can make you.

All that God could wish for in a man He finds in Christ, and nothing would rejoice His heart more than to know that you have found all you want in Christ also. Flee from guilty self to the gracious Saviour; condemn yourself and confide in Him; deny yourself and follow Him.

GEO. C.

“NOT OF THE WORLD.”

“THE world could not understand Christ, but He knew the world thoroughly. He was ever mixing with everybody, but always Himself, and never of the world; and we are by rights as much strangers in it as He was. Flesh and Satan and the world always go together; but He was ever drawing round Him everything that was of God, and judging all that was not. If you were a great man you would get a good place in an inn; if you were a little man you would get a little place; but *He got no place at all*. Has your soul got the thorough conviction that you have none either, and that all you have to do in it is to *overcome*?

“Even if we do not cling to the world, how it clings to us! But if Christ had His place, it could not. If it were last night that the Lord Jesus had been put to death by the world, would any of us be ‘hail fellow well met’ with it? What matters it whether it was last night or 1800 years ago? Some are insisting on belonging to this world and to Christ too. I say you are wonderful people if you can! *Christ* could not. All I do is to get through it as earnestly and as fast as ever I can.”

J. B. S.