

ECHOES OF MERCY.

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EDITED BY

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

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ECHOES OF MERCY.



Editor's Letter.



WE feel we cannot allow one year to pass and another to begin without special reference to the occasion.

The Editor of a monthly magazine, perhaps more than any other, is made aware of the rapid march of time. *He* knows that there are but twelve months in the year, and how quickly they *do* come round.

It is estimated that the average of human life is about forty years, rather under than over. In a town of say 30,000, the population changes in about forty years, that is, 30,000 graves are dug in the cemetery of a town of 30,000 inhabitants during the short space of forty years! It seems incredible, but it is true nevertheless.

How short is human life in the world, and yet each man, woman, and child possesses a soul that will live for ever and ever.

Christian reader, what are we doing to "rescue the perishing"?

I. A WORD TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

We thank you all most warmly for your help and fellowship in this important work. "Be not weary in well doing" is an exhortation we constantly feel the need of, and we pass it on to all our fellow-labourers in this field.

As we are addressing no one in particular we feel we may write the more freely. *Be brief.* Long articles, like long sermons, are of interest only to the producer. People will not read the one, nor listen to the other. It is labour lost, though the matter may be excellent.

Especially in a gospel magazine do we need to remember that the class whom we seek to reach have not yet developed a taste for these things. They *will not read* a long, doctrinal article, no matter how good and sound it may be.

They are like a young man we heard of lately, who as far as the body was concerned, was lying seriously ill, though altogether careless as to his spiritual danger. He had one deaf ear, and when a Christian visitor used to call and speak of his eternal interests, it was his custom to place his good ear upon the pillow and his *deaf ear up!*

To use the figure, let us remember that the unsaved around us have for the most part the "deaf ear up." No sooner was our young friend converted than he used to reverse the matter, and turn his deaf ear down and his sound ear up.

2. A WORD TO DISTRIBUTORS.

Take courage, and go on!

While holding some special gospel services in a Scotch town last summer, a large number of gospel books were distributed. In some instances they were most reluctantly taken, and no sooner taken than rudely and with evident temper flung away. Had even those tracts been given in vain? Who can tell?

While there we were much encouraged by the story of an old man, converted only two years ago. He was one day at work digging in a trench, when quick as thought the words flashed into his conscience, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" (Amos vi. 1.)

"O God," he cried, "I am at ease, when I ought to be troubled." His soul-trouble became so great that he had to throw down his spade and fling himself upon his knees. He could do no work, and so with a conscience deeply pierced by the arrow of conviction he wended his way

home through the woods. His eye caught a bit of paper lying on the ground. It was a gospel tract, entitled,

"When I see the blood !"

The message this tract contained spoke peace to his soul. Had it been thrown away in disgust by the first recipient? Possibly, but it did its work, *God's* work, nevertheless.

3. TO THE GENERAL READER.

The death-roll of 1895 has been unusually heavy. The awful "'Elbe' disaster" in the North Sea, when nearly four hundred lives were lost almost within hail of our shores, has been followed by numbers of wrecks on the Spanish coast, in the West Indies, and on the Pacific shores of South America, whereby many hundreds of hale and hearty men and women have been swept into eternity. They, like you, began the year full of hope for their earthly future, and with little idea that they would now be where their eternal destinies are fixed.

And have you, dear reader, any certainty as to what this year may bring forth for you? No, you cannot count upon a day. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

Be assured that when we urge upon you the

imperative necessity of an immediate settlement of this important matter, we are actuated with no other motive than the constraining love of Christ for your soul.

"When the harvest is past, and the summer is gone,
And preaching and prayer shall be o'er,
When the beams cease to break of the blest gospel morn,
And Jesus invites thee no more.

When the rich gales of mercy no longer shall blow,
The gospel no message declare,
How canst *thou*, sinner, bear the deep wailing of woe—
How suffer the night of despair?

When believers have gone to the region of peace,
To dwell in the mansions above,
When their harmony wakes in the fulness of bliss,
Their song to the Saviour they love.

Say, O sinner, that livest at rest and secure,
Who fearest no trouble to come,
Can thy spirit the wailings of sorrow endure?
Or bear the impenitent's doom?"

"Mighty to Save."

(ISA. lxiii. 1.)

O WORDS of grace and power and life,
That sweetly end our woe and strife,
O words with Name of Jesus rife—
"Mighty to save!"

So strong to save ! salvation free,
Poor sinner, now is offered thee,
Since Jesus died upon the tree—

“Mighty to save.”

For thee He bore sin's heavy load,
For thee beneath the judgment rod
He was forsaken of His God—

“Mighty to save.”

The work of righteousness is done :
At God's right hand behold His Son,
The risen and ascended One—

“Mighty to save !”

Should unbelief thy heart enshroud,
And with its mists thy faith becloud,
To Him the strong One cry aloud—

“Mighty to *save*.”

Look not around, look not within,
Thy doubts and fears are nought but sin,
For *these* He died, thy heart to win,—

“Mighty to save.”

Then turn from sin and self and fear,
Behold the Lamb exalted there,
He lives thine every weight to bear,

“Mighty to save.”

He lives to bear each feeble sheep
O'er rock and vale and mountain steep,
And safe upon His shoulders keep,—

“Mighty to save.”

The arms of Jesus ! oh, how strong
 To guard us all the way along !
 Until we sing, 'mid heaven's throng,
 "Mighty to save !"

A. E. P.

Water Free!—No Gratuities Allowed.

(An incident during the severe frost in London,
 January 1895.)

WHAT an announcement for the people of London ! For my part, I never remember seeing such a thing in London before.

WATER FREE !

Yes, there it is printed in bold black type, that all may easily see it. And so the water-cart passes from street to street with its gladsome news—*Water free !* I say gladsome news, and true it was, for see how quickly the neighbours carry the tidings. They are all in need of water. "We have been frozen out for weeks."

Oh, the inconvenience of being short of water ! Dear reader, I need not describe it. No doubt

you have felt it. Look how quickly the people are running with their baths, pails, water-cans, and anything that will hold water, for they are all in need of water, and there is *nothing to pay*.

The water is free, brought to your door, and so is the gift of eternal life. *It is free*. God in His love has sent the message through London, through Paris and New York, yes, through all the world has His message gone, the gladsome news, "Salvation is free! Salvation is free!"—brought to your doors, into your houses.

Perhaps you have a Christian son, a Christian wife, or a Christian mother, who is often telling you, "Salvation is free." The living, loving Lord is calling to all the inhabitants of earth, saying, The water is free; the living water, the water of life, it is free. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37). And again from heaven that same precious Saviour sent the message, saying, "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

"Water free!" Yes, as free as the air we breathe, this living water which, if a man will but receive, shall be in him a well of water

springing up into everlasting life. Come to the fountain, then, drink and live.

Dear friend, oh! that I could see you as anxious to obtain Christ, the Living Spring, as I saw the people of London were to get that earthly water. But, do you know, I heard of some who refused to accept this water which was so free. Perhaps you ask me, Why?

Some had this excuse, some that. One thought the water might perchance bring some infectious disease into their houses, I don't know how. Another said, "I won't have water like that; from a water-cart, fancy! not I, it cannot be clean. Let those drink it who like, I will not."

So with the gospel. What multitudes to-day there are who find some excuse or another for refusing our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Are you, dear reader, one of them?

Perhaps you are thinking they were only silly excuses. That may be, but still I found the people who made them could not be convinced that their excuses were silly. What do you think God thinks of your excuse, for going on in your sins and refusing to accept the Lord Jesus? Have you a reasonable one to offer before God? "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat

of Christ. . . . So then every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God" (Rom. xiv. 12).

What should we do without water? We should all miserably perish. What will you do without Christ? You will miserably perish, for "he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). "If ye believe not . . . ye shall die in your sins," and "whither I [Jesus] go, ye cannot come" (John viii. 24, 21).

"Water free, and no gratuities allowed!"
Not *allowed!* Not only not wanted, but if offered not accepted.

In God's gracious plan of salvation gratuities are not allowed. Naaman the leper had to learn this. See, there he stands, cured of his leprosy; his flesh as clean as a child's. Look at the gratuity he offers (he knows not that our God is a giving God), for Naaman had brought with him as a present for the blessing he received, "ten changes of raiment, ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold." There he stands before Elisha, saying, "Now, therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant."

But Elisha said, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none; and Naaman urged him to take it, but Elisha refused" (2 Kings v.). Naaman was cured, he was made

clean. So may you be, only believe. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Naaman received the blessing without paying for it. So may you, by simple faith. But it must be *free*, and "no gratuities allowed."

Dear reader, the blessed Lord Jesus, our adorable Saviour, passed through untold agonies when He offered up Himself on Calvary's cross as a sacrifice for our sins, and God is satisfied with that sacrifice. It is sufficient. You must not, you cannot add to it any of your good works. They are not allowed. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." "By grace are ye saved." Your salvation, your admittance into the light of His countenance, into everlasting glory, must rest only and entirely on that all-atoning work which Christ has accomplished on Calvary's cross.

When the Jews sinned, they needed a sacrifice; the bullock and the goat must be killed; then their sins were forgiven. So with you. You have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. You need a sacrifice. Christ the Lord is that sacrifice. Christ "died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3). Acknowledge your sins then, in the presence of the thrice-Holy God,

who knows every one of them ; believe in His dear Son, and you shall receive remission of all your sins.

FREE, FREE, FREE, and gratuities not allowed ! I would like to impress this fact on your mind, "Gratuities not allowed," because many think they can appease God by good works or by penance ; but this falsifies the character of our blessed God. He is a giving God, and needs none of it. In the fulness of time, He sent forth His Son, and so we read 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).

There was a gentleman who had often heard John Wesley preach. Let us hear him as he stops Mr Wesley in the street.

"I know you," says he to John Wesley, "but I do not like you ; you lay a wrong foundation for salvation. Do you think that the blood of another man will save me?"

"On what terms do you expect to be saved, then?" asked Mr Wesley.

"By good works," said the gentleman.

Mr Wesley answered : "You will be the first that got to heaven that way. But what will you do when you get there?"

This, it would seem, the gentleman had not considered, for he only said, "Why, what do others there?"

"They sing, Glory to God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood. But your song will be, Glory be to myself, for I have qualified myself for heaven. Oh, sir! your song would make discord in heaven."

And now, dear reader, I pray God that you may think of the announcement on the water-cart, and of the men knocking at our doors, saying,

WATER FREE,

And thus be reminded—forcibly reminded—of that gracious loving Saviour, who stands at the door of our hearts, knocking, waiting, and saying, "Salvation free! Salvation free!"

F. H.

Emile, the Baker's Apprentice.

IN January of last year a young baker, named Emile K——, was under treatment in hospital at a small town in the Palatinate.

Raised up after a short illness, he was on the point of being discharged, and resuming his employment. He was all the more pleased, as he was near the end of his apprenticeship, and then, as he thought, he would be able to see something of the world. Poor Emile! he was, according to the Scriptural expression, "dead in trespasses and sins."

Brought up in the darkness of Roman Catholicism, he had hitherto walked according to the course of this world, and thought of nothing but of pursuing his path of estrangement from God. But God, who was watching over him in mercy, was about to magnify the power of His grace towards this poor lost sinner.

While Emile was thus impatiently awaiting the moment of his discharge from the hospital, a young lad of some fifteen or sixteen years, with a blood-stained hand, one day entered the ward where Emile was. This was Alfred O——, a saddler's apprentice; he had just given himself a rather severe cut, and had been sent by his master to the hospital for treatment.

Alfred, whose parents lived at some distance, was privileged in having a Christian mother, whose instructions and pious example, through the grace of God, had early influenced his heart.

Converted in his thirteenth year, he delighted to attend with her the gospel services in the neighbourhood, and to listen to the precious Word of God. He also much enjoyed the society of some earnest young Christians, who loved him and interested themselves about him.

But then when he came to B——, to fulfil his apprenticeship, his new-born faith was put to a severe test. He there found himself isolated, in a circle unacquainted with the Gospel and hostile to the truth, deprived of meetings and of all Christian intercourse. This was very hard for him. "Take courage, dear Alfred," wrote his pious mother, "the Lord is near you, and you have His precious Word ; only be faithful, and, young and weak though you are, do not fear to confess the Lord, and to speak of Him as you have opportunity to those around you. He can make use even of the little ones."

These encouraging words strengthened the faith of our young friend, and moreover the Lord was preparing a great solace for him. The wise and powerful hand of God, who directs all things, and makes them all unite in the accomplishment of His designs of grace, made use of the accident of the saddler's young apprentice to bring him in contact with Emile for the salva-

tion of the latter. The two young people soon became acquainted, but their relations at the hospital were of short duration, the baker being discharged soon afterwards. There had been time enough, however, for him to shamefully deceive his young companion. Using artifice and falsehood, he had known how to move to pity the sensitive and generous heart of Alfred, and had extorted money from him.

Alfred in his turn had gone back to his master's house. One Sunday afternoon, according to his custom, he went alone, armed with his New Testament, to the neighbouring forest, when, meeting Emile, he invited and persuaded him to take this walk with him. As they went along their conversation very soon took a serious turn. The young baker had just given full swing to his infidel thoughts. Then Alfred, seizing the opportunity that God had given him of speaking to the conscience of his companion, said to him: "Undoubtedly when one is dead, one is dead indeed, but that is not the end. The Word of God says that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment. Now think, Emile, what a terrible thing it would be to die, and then to appear before God to be judged and thrown into the eternal torments of hell! One

cannot escape from God, do you see?—nothing escapes Him. The Word of God says further, that there is no creature hidden from Him, and that all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Thus, you see, God knows all your life; He knows everything that you have done; He has seen it all. How then will you stand before Him? What is to become of you? If you die as you are, in your sins, you are lost for ever. Oh, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

Thus spake Alfred alone with his companion in the silence of the forest.

Emile was overwhelmed. The Word of God, "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," had pierced him through. It ploughed up his conscience, which was brought into the light of the presence of God through the power of the divine Word. He began to melt into tears.

"Oh, Alfred," he cried, "what a sinner I am! I am lost! My sins are too great to admit of grace and pardon for me; I have committed too many! I am lost!"

"You must confess them to God," said Alfred. "If you have stolen, if you have lied, whatever

sins weigh on your conscience—all your sins, confess them to Him ; He is ready to pardon and to show you grace. His Word says, that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness ; for Jesus died on the cross to expiate them, and His blood cleanseth from all sin."

The young baker, taking from his pocket what remained of the money he had extorted, and handing it to his friend, said to him: "Look here, Alfred, this is your money ! I have deceived you, and told you lies ! Oh ! can you forgive me ? can God forgive me ? No, no ! He cannot pardon a sinner like me ! I am lost !" and he continued weeping.

Alfred, himself deeply moved, urged his friend to look at Jesus dying on the cross for the greatest of sinners, and to believe in His love ; then, opening his New Testament, he read him a number of passages which he thought were fitted to convince him of the love of the Saviour, and to bring peace to his anguished soul. But all seemed in vain. Emile could not believe it. So deep was the sense of his sins and of his unworthiness, that to speak to him of grace and of pardon appeared to him at this moment like

derision. His conscience was divinely convinced, but his heart still remained incredulous of that divine love which superabounds where sin has abounded. But God was carrying on the work of His grace.

The two friends on their return had each re-entered their dwellings. Alfred felt himself constrained to bring the case of his young companion before the Lord in prayer. As for the latter, under the powerful action of the Spirit of God, his agonized heart opened by degrees to the comforting words of the Gospel which he had heard, and, after long wrestling, he found peace that same night by faith in Jesus. Marvellous grace of God! The Good Shepherd had found His lost sheep; and in the arms of love, feeling the heart of the Father beating upon his own heart as a child, overflowing with joy and praise, happy Emile tasted the reality of the blessedness experienced by the Psalmist, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Ps. xxxii. 1-7).

The next morning his first impulse was to make known to his master and his working companions the great things that God had done for him. This was enough to rouse their enmity against him. They loaded him with ridicule,

especially his master, who abused, threatened, and knocked him about, and then sent to the neighbouring village to inform his parents. The mother, hastening to her son, was violent in her behaviour to him. But in the midst of the storm let loose upon His young witness, the Lord was near and strengthened him, so that nothing could shake his faith.

Great was the joy of the young saddler when Emile came to announce to him the happy news of his deliverance. What blessed days they would now spend together! Indeed, every evening after work, their happiness was to meet in the office of the saddlery, or in Alfred's room, to encourage and strengthen each other in the Lord; they delighted to sing His praises together. Emile soon learned several hymns; he himself could now, through mercy, sing with a glad heart these words—

“On Thee, Lord, rests my soul.”

These days of joy and sweet communion were soon to come to an end, alas! in a very affecting way.

Dear Emile always found the same hostility around him, especially from his master, whose animosity towards him showed itself on every occasion. This man worked a mill adjoining

the bakery. Now one night, before beginning work, he sent Emile to fetch a sack of flour, refusing to give him a light, which was, however, indispensable. Emile went without a murmur, and mounted, groping his way to the place indicated. Loading his shoulders with the sack, and trying to find his way in the dark, he put his foot beyond the floor, and fell with his burden a distance of some yards. The master hastened thither with his men, and all saw, with consternation, poor Emile stretched unconscious on the ground.

They took him to the hospital, where the doctor, discovering a double fracture of the spine, announced that it would very soon be all over with him.

The sufferer, having regained consciousness, asked that his friend might be sent for. The young saddler arrived, but what was his grief to see his friend stretched upon a bed of suffering, and in a hopeless state. He broke out into sobs.

"Do not weep for me, Alfred," cried Emile, "I am happy to die; I know that I am going to the Lord. What joy!"

Then, resuming a little afterwards, "How much better it will be for me!" he added, "for if

I recovered I might again get away from the Lord."

A moment afterwards a priest, who had been summoned, entered the room, and approached the bedside of the sufferer with the intention of "administering the rites of the Church." The latter, making a sign in the negative, said to him, "I have already confessed, and I have received everything."

"What priest has been here?" asked the visitor.

"Oh! a greater than you, Monsieur l'Abbé. The Lord Jesus Christ has been with me; I have confessed to Him, and He has forgiven me all," replied Emile.

The priest withdrew in anger.

Seeing that our friend had refused the priest, the nurse in charge then sent for the Lutheran pastor, who also made no delay in coming "to administer the sacrament" to the happy dying one.

"Oh! it is useless," said the latter, "I have already confessed. Jesus has died for me. He has cleansed me. Oh! the blood, the precious blood of Jesus, is of much more value than all the sacraments."

The pastor did not insist. "You are suffering very much," he said.

"Yes," replied Emile; "but what are my sufferings compared with those that my Saviour underwent for me!"

Emile was "inexpressibly happy." But it was a great sorrow to Alfred when the hour came for him to return to the workshop, and to leave the bedside of his friend. He was not permitted to see him again. The next day Emile was received peacefully into the bosom of Jesus.

All that Alfred could learn of what passed after their parting was this testimony from the nurse: "Full of joy, he was always singing."

(From the French.)



Eternity! Where?



IN a remote little country village a young girl lay dying. She was still quite young, although the mother of two children; but consumption had laid hold of her, and no one who saw her wasted form, or heard her distressing cough, could doubt that her days on earth were numbered.

Her father had died of the same malady, and she was fully aware of her own critical condition.

There she lay, placid and calm, undisturbed by the least anxiety about the future, while she quietly waited till death should end her sufferings.

It is an awful thing to have eyes that are only blind eyes; to possess ears that are too deaf to hear; to be in a position of extreme peril, and yet quite unconscious of danger. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31). Here was an immortal soul, on the very verge of eternity, yet utterly indifferent about settling that solemn question, Eternity! Where?

One of her neighbours, who was a Christian woman, called to see her one day, and asked her whether she was prepared to meet a holy God who says He cannot look upon sin. The poor girl replied, saying—

"The clergyman has been, and he tells me I am quite ready, so it must be all right."

How fearful the responsibility of those who, crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," dare thus to lull to sleep souls who are entering eternity! Listen to what the Word of the Lord says: "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall

die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand " (Ezek. iii. 18).

But in that remote country village God had some of His own children, who, feeling an interest in the poor girl, offered much prayer to God on her behalf. They asked Him to convict her of her deep need as a sinner, and then reveal His own remedy in the death of His beloved Son. As they prayed, they watched for the answer, but their patience was to be tested. A long time passed without any outward change ; then at last she showed more interest in hearing the Word of God, and seemed more inclined to listen to the "old, old story of Jesus and His love." But though she listened most attentively, and her dark eyes seemed to follow every word, she would say nothing, and no response of any kind could be gained from her.

So the Lord's people prayed afresh, that there might be some satisfactory evidence of a work of grace in her soul,—some confession with the mouth that she had believed in her heart on the Lord Jesus. Still no answer was given. Day after day passed, each succeeding one finding her weaker than the previous one.

One morning the news came that Mrs —— was sinking, and could not possibly live out the

day. One of the first to reach the cottage was her Christian neighbour, longing for just one word of assurance that the poor sufferer was really trusting to the finished work of Christ.

Bending over her, she repeated slowly, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Word by word the girl repeated the verse in a whisper, then her eyes closed, and with one short "Good-bye" she turned her head to the wall. All was silence, and, after imparting one farewell kiss on the dying girl's brow, the woman returned to her home.

Tears filled her eyes, and disappointment her heart, as she wended her way up the hill. What did it all mean? she thought. Had God forgotten to be gracious? Had He passed unheeded the many prayers that had gone up to Him for this poor soul?

God's ways are not as our ways, and He chose His own way of acting. At the very moment that the woman left the front door, one of the Lord's servants was crossing the back garden, and, unperceived by her, entered the cottage just as she went out. Not knowing what had transpired,—though surely guided by the Holy Spirit,—he also bent over the dying girl, and slowly repeated the very same verse, "The blood

of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Her eyes opened once more, and with a smile she said, "*Dear Jesus!*" and then became unconscious.

Thank God for those two words. The answer had come. Scripture says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." But there was more given than this, for the affections of her heart went out to the One who had saved her, making her exclaim, "*Dear Jesus!*"

There was thanksgiving and praise ascending to God that day from hearts that had been praying before, as they heard the voice of the Shepherd saying, "Rejoice *with Me*, for I have found My sheep which was lost." E. R. M.



PRECIOUS FAITH.—How sweet it is to peruse and consider the testimony of the Holy Ghost to the faith of the dear saints of God as recorded in that wonderful eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, which, were there no other record, would be sufficient to show us the value God places upon the faith of His people, and why the Holy Ghost designates it "*precious faith.*"

And surely it is "precious faith," inasmuch as

"it is the gift of God," and the connecting link between the sinner and the Saviour,—the beautiful connecting link in the chain of divine grace in John v. 24:—

Heareth—Believeth—Hath ;

at the end of which, as has often been observed, hangs for every repentant sinner the stupendous gift of **Everlasting Life**.

"He that *heareth* My word, and
believeth on Him that sent Me,
hath everlasting life."

Life! life! eternal life, for "*whosoever believeth*"!—present possession of "*joy and peace in believing*"!—and "faith counted for righteousness" "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly" (Rom. iv. 5).

Precious faith! it grasps the "exceeding great and precious promises"; it reposes in "the precious blood of Christ"; it clings to "the Living Stone, . . . chosen of God and precious"; it beholds Him, even Jesus, through the opened heavens, "crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii.); and proves the truth of the scripture which says, "Unto you which believe He is the preciousness," for "by Him *all* that believe *are* justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

Reader, dost *thou* believe? Hast *thou* eternal life? Art *thou* justified? N. L. N.

The Prayer-Meeting and the Theatre.

A SHORT while ago, I was hurrying to catch a train which was to take me home from a prayer-meeting.

The prayer-meeting, though, alas! thinly attended, had been redolent with the presence of the Lord. All who were present had indeed felt it was good to be there, where earnest and believing prayer ascended to the throne of God in the all-prevailing name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many and varied had been the petitions presented for the work of the gospel in all lands, and for the blessing of God to descend upon every child of His all the world over, and that all His people might be kept from the bodily and spiritual dangers that beset their paths on every hand.

I left the hallowed spot grateful beyond expression to know that it was the Christian's privilege to have God *for* him, God *with* him, and God *in* him; and as I hurried along I still prayed for the multitudes that jostled one another in the crowded streets, many of whom

were, alas! "without Christ . . . having no hope, and without God in the world."

Alas! alas! How few of the people of God seem to know the value of prayer, or they never would lightly absent themselves from a prayer-meeting.

Jesus said: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 19, 20).

My path led me down the Haymarket, past the doors of a large theatre. As I passed the first door my attention was arrested by an immense board with words painted in black and white letters, large enough to be read from the other side of the street—

The Stalls are Full!

The next door had an equally imposing board with the words—

The Balcony is Full!

Yet another door remained, and here a board was placed with the following startling announcement—

Only Standing-room in the Pit!

I have heard of one, a theatre-goer, who was

arrested, and ere long converted, by the words, "*This way to the pit,*" placed over the door by which he was entering. Certainly, I felt, the announcement I have read to-night is enough to awaken serious reflection.

"Deliver him from going down to the pit," says a Saviour God ; "I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24). Oh ! friend, trifle not with your soul, nor mock at the solemn warnings of the Word of God as to the future of those who die without faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a contrast between the prayer-meeting and the theatre ! Possibly some Christians may have been at the latter who would more profitably have been employed at the former.

The Lord is coming ! In the twinkling of an eye He will translate His own to heavenly glory from this world of sin and sorrow.

Christian reader, would you not rather be "caught up" from a prayer-meeting than from a theatre ?

Sure I am that I would rather my precious and all-worthy Redeemer and Lord when He comes should find me praying for, or otherwise labouring for, the salvation of the poor dupes of sin and folly, than sitting elbow to elbow with

them clapping hands, and greeting with applause the sights and sounds which the enemy of their souls so artfully devises to obliterate from the memory the *past*, to while away the *present*, and to drown all thoughts of the *future*!

“Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
 Save in the cross of Christ, my God :
 All the vain things that charm me most,
 I’d sacrifice them to His blood.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were an offering far too small ;
 Love so amazing, so divine,
 Demands my heart, my life, my all !”

A. H. B.



“’Tis so dark, and I cannot go
 alone.”

THESE words were uttered by a dying girl in a town in Sussex.

“’Tis so dark, and I cannot go alone”—this plaintive sentence was the last the poor girl ever spoke, and we fear that those around her were unable to minister that spiritual comfort which could have assured her that, if death arrives, there is One who will

never leave nor forsake those who have *known and trusted Him*. “He is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” It is the *believer* who can say, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art *with me*” (Ps. xxiii. 4). Whether we would or not, death comes at all times and seasons. Spring, summer, autumn, winter are all alike to him. Often, too, he passes over the decrepit and aged, and seizes on youth and health. But what a difference there is between the end of those who pass out of this world with Christ in them, and with them, and that of those of whom the reverse is true! It is here that reality is manifested.

The Rabshakeh, acting for the King of Assyria, challenged Hezekiah, King of Judah, in his day with this question, “*Now, on whom dost thou trust?*” (2 Kings xviii. 20.) Hezekiah trusted God. His trust was not in vain, and such trust never can be. The day will come, depend upon it, dear reader, when it will be shown whether your trust is really in Jesus. When Latimer and Ridley were about to be burned at the stake for their faith in Jesus and His blood, the former triumphantly shouted to his companion in martyrdom, “Cheer up, brother Ridley; we shall

light such a light in England to-day as shall never be put out."

No! the way was not dark to Latimer. The path of life, and of light too, is opened to the believer in Jesus. He, having passed through death and overcome it, rose from the dead the third day, after dying for our sins, according to the Scriptures. The soldiers might say, after having been bribed by so-called religious people, that His disciples had taken away His body by night, and removed the stone from the sepulchre while they were sleeping, which was false on the face of it; but none the less true was it that our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and led captivity captive, having been "made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). The darkness was borne away by Him, that we might be "light in the Lord."

"Every ray was purchased for you
By the precious blood of One
Who suffered in the darkness
That you might see the sun."

There are many who look upon the Lord Jesus Christ merely as a martyr; but in the hour of His sufferings He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Had He been a martyr, God would have come near and

sustained Him, who had so faithfully served and glorified Him. It is only as we perceive that He was bearing "our sins in His own body on the tree," that He was in the place of our substitute, that we can understand that, "*why* hast Thou forsaken Me?" It is beautiful to see that Jesus Christ owns and vindicates God in forsaking Him—"My God," He says (Ps. xxii.), and adds, "but Thou art holy." This explains the forsaking.

"O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head !

Our load was laid on Thee ;

Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,

To bear all ill for me.

A victim led, Thy blood was shed :

Now there's no load for me.

Jehovah lifted up His rod—

O Christ, it fell on Thee !

Thou wast forsaken of Thy God,

No distance now for me.

Thy blood beneath that rod hast flowed :

Thy bruising healeth me."

People who prefer to live without Christ will find the way very dark and lonely at the end without Him. And no one can be on two roads at the same time. Happy for those who are on the narrow road, and not on the broad one which leadeth to destruction. Only to-day the writer was reading a letter, in which the following occurs :—

“A fortnight since, R. G—— brought a letter from their son, A——, telling them of his conversion, and asking them to thank God that he was now waiting for the Lord. It appears that P—— had been pointing out the difference between Job iv. 18 and Psalm xvi. 3, and this had reached his soul. Some days later a letter was received here which spoke of A—— being ill, and the doctor having said that his lungs were diseased. Nine days after that another letter came from E——, giving an account of his short illness and triumphant death. He was *singing praises almost up to the moment of his departure.*”

There was no darkness there! “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee” (see Dan. iii. 25). “For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour” (Isa. xliii.).

Reader, delay not. Procrastination is the thief of *souls*. To live without Christ is bad enough, but oh, the misery of dying without Him! That way is “so dark,” and those who will go that way *must* go alone.

W. R. C.

A Solemn Night—a Joyful Morning.

HOW varied and strange are the ways of God, both with His own people and with the world!

The natural mind cannot grasp them, for "God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts"; and many a dealing of God's hand, directed in unerring wisdom, calls forth, even from those who know Him as their God and Father, the exclamation, "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out"; and many a proof of His never-failing love and mercy can be traced in these dealings, like a vein of precious metal amidst the rough and shapeless rocks.

Again, how varied are the states of soul, and the characters of those around us! The many seeking their own way—the pleasure-loving ones fully taken up with the empty baubles and vanities of this world, but (as 1 Tim. i. 6 tells us) these are dead while they live. It may be that they have "a form of godliness," and are trying to make the best of both worlds, forgetting God's solemn warning, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Respectable and orthodox in their outward ways; correct in all domestic duties; benevolent, kind, and active in services of love—much that is so *like* the true Christian life may be seen, and yet the soul is *dead*, “dead in trespasses and sins,” dead as to God, “far off,” “having no hope, and without God in this world.” They are thus incapable of doing one work pleasing to God, whose penetrating eye discerns the root from which their works spring.

Shall I tell you of one of this class, and how solemnly her life, which was such as I have described, was tested as to what really she was resting upon?—whether on her own works, which are as shifting sand, or on the only ground that can stand the righteous judgment of a holy God, the finished work of Jesus on the cross?

She lived in a seaport town in one of our lovely islands, and was the daughter of a family well known and looked up to, and of her it could be said, “What a good life Miss —— is leading”—kind, industrious, unselfish, amiable, and (so-called) religious. But what was God’s estimate? He saw that something deeper was needed than this outwardly fair life.

Late one evening, in the height of summer,

this young lady was walking home alone, after a long ramble through the fields and moors at the top of the precipitous cliffs above the sea. She was gathering flowers, and seeing one she greatly desired to have, alas! she either went a short way down the cliff to get it, and stumbled, or was tempted to step on one of those spots of green mossy turf that look so secure, but are treacherous, and often give way. Whichever it was, she slipped and fell over the cliff, sliding down and down the side of the rock.

Think what a moment of horror it must have been to feel herself gradually slipping either into the deep sea or to be dashed to pieces on the sharp rocks that lay beneath! But God had, in His tender mercy and pity, so ordered it that, in a wonderful way, her feet rested on a ledge in the side of the precipice, where a small tree was growing, which she grasped and clung to desperately. But what could she do in such a perilous position? One step even was dangerous in the extreme. She dared not move; to cry for help was in vain. No sound of her voice could reach the land above, and nothing but the yawning sea below—night fast coming on, with all its silence and dreariness—alone—nothing to be heard but the cries of the birds and the

surging of the waves. Think what must have been her anguish and despair as hour after hour passed on. There she remained, clinging to that tree for very life! Face to face with *death* and *eternity*—*alone with God*. No voice to be heard but His.

What of her profession of Christianity now? Would not the thought of the eternity before her be too real for anything false and fleeting? But God was speaking to her. Will she not listen, and cry to Him in her distress? I can tell you that she did cry to Him, and His Word says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13). He looked down upon her in His tender grace. He heard her cry, and showed her the Crucified One standing beside her, in that night of terror. Her eyes were opened to see Him as the One who had died for her, shedding His blood that she might live, and He, in the loneliness of that moment, spoke peace to her soul. So the treacherous ground, from which she slipped, simply landed her on the Rock of Ages, there to rest for ever! The night of sorrow was turned to joy, and there was joy in heaven over this repentant one.

The night passed on, and gradually gave place to the early dawn of the summer's day, and she

was still clinging to the tree, with strength that God must have expressly given, and God (her Father now) had His loving eye on a way of escape for His newly-born child.

It had been arranged at the harbour that, in consequence of some special excursion, a steamer was to start from the pier several hours earlier than the ordinary time. Amongst those on board was a naturalist, whose desire was to take observations of the cliffs, and the birds that frequent them. As the steamer slowly rounded the headland forming the harbour, the naturalist was busy with his glass observing the birds among the rocks, when he noticed a white object on the side of the cliff. It puzzled him greatly what it could be. The captain's attention was called to it, who said, "There's a bird for you, sir."

Many on board are roused to curiosity, and join in the cry, "What can it be?" "It is too large for any ordinary bird." As they approach nearer, they cry, "That is no bird." It moves! Can it be the figure of a woman whose dress is fluttering in the breeze? Another and another look. They all cry out, "This is no bird; it is a woman clinging to something several hundred feet up the cliff." What heartfelt sympathy and

consternation there was on board. What was to be done?

It was evident that no help could reach her from below, and seeing this, the captain at once put back into port. The alarm was given on shore, and instantly responded to, especially by those (you may be sure) who had had a long night's search for the missing one. Ready help was given, and by means of scaling ladders, &c., from above, willing hands and beating hearts united in the rescue of this young lady. I cannot tell you the exact mode employed, but I can tell you that she was saved in this truly remarkable manner, and that, it was during those long hours that she was brought to know God as her Father, and Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and from that time she sought to live for Him "who had loved her, and given Himself for her."

With what feelings of joy and thankfulness would she ever look back to that morning, when she was thus rescued from her perilous position. And through eternity how will she praise the grace that had met her, showing her what it was to be living without Christ, and bringing her to rejoice in His forgiving love. Truly "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Weeping, to see our sins against a

holy God,—joy, to know all those very sins washed away in the precious blood of Jesus, and the soul accepted in the Beloved.

Reader, let me ask *you*, On what foundation are *you* resting? Is it on anything, even the best you can do yourself, or is it only and simply on Christ? Let me beg you to ask yourself, How should *I* stand such a test? Many and solemn are the warnings around us; the almost daily records of accidents, illness, and sudden death cry out loudly to you to delay no longer to trust in Christ, the one and only true ground of *rest*. He is calling you; will *you* not hear His voice? He says, “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

To-morrow may be too late. One false step, one fleeting breath, and you may be in an eternity of woe—and that FOR EVER. E.

“I’VE got ETERNAL LIFE to-night.” So said a woman as she passed out of the door of the Meeting-room, where she had heard a simple and telling address on the text, John v. 24. Reader, have you?

“The Word of God is quick and powerful.”

IT was probably about the twelfth century that Christianity was introduced into Westphalia, a province of Prussia. But the Christianity that found an entrance there had already at that epoch degenerated into Roman Catholicism or Popery, with its idolatrous ceremonies ; and great was the need in Westphalia of the further light received from the Word of God at the time of the Reformation.

Many souls received great blessing then, and learnt the truths of the Gospel ; but the dissensions that arose amongst the Reformers on the subject of the Sacrament led to spiritual decay, so that their Protestantism became by degrees a religion of forms, and, with a few exceptions, the Westphalians fell into the sad state of lukewarmness described in the epistle to Sardis (Rev. iii. 1-6). During the last twenty or thirty years the Spirit of God has again wrought in the province, and thousands of souls have been aroused from their torpor, to turn to the Lord and His Word, which is able to make wise unto salvation by faith in Christ Jesus.

Those who have lived in a large mining and manufacturing district like Westphalia know how frequent are the accidents, which entail a sad loss of life among the workmen. There are therefore many widows, and it is of one of these that I wish to tell you. She had been left with eight children, most of whom had married, and all had been brought to know the Lord. The mother alone remained a stranger to His grace, opposing her children by every means in her power, even showing annoyance when their good behaviour proclaimed that they wished to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. At this time she was living with her youngest son, close to a large manufactory where he was employed. One day he came in suddenly to the cottage, saying that he had to drive his master to the station of B——, to meet a Swiss evangelist who would preach the Gospel on the following Sunday.

The widow thought she would like to go to the preaching, being curious to hear a different dialect to that spoken in North Germany. The young man did not fail to encourage her, glad enough that she should come under the sound of the Gospel from any motive whatever, for God's Word is a hammer that breaks the *rock* in pieces.

On the Lord's Day afternoon, the passage chosen was Hebrews x. 1-18, and the evangelist drew the attention of his audience to three things concerning salvation. First, its *source*, the will of God, who desired the salvation of sinners ; secondly, Christ, the *way* by which this will of God was accomplished, He having offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin (ver. 9) ; and thirdly, the *power* by which we can appropriate the blessings resulting from the death of Christ, namely, the Holy Ghost (ver. 15). He then warned those who had hitherto been indifferent to their soul's salvation, that although Christ was now seated at the right hand of God (ver. 12), waiting till His enemies be made His footstool, yet the moment was near when He would rise up and call those who had believed on Him to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), and then what would become of those who had despised His grace ? Nothing would be left for them but the anticipation of standing before the great white throne.

The widow had not lost a word that was said. She returned home struck with terror at the future before her, and her eyes opened to her state in the sight of God. She prepared her son's tea, but could touch none herself. She

went to a daughter living near, but her comforting words could not calm the anxious soul ; for the Word of God, which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, had reached her, and in the presence of a holy and just God she felt herself to be lost for ever.

At ten o'clock at night, so great was her distress, that she went to the house where the evangelist was staying, to see if he could bring her any relief ; but her errand was fruitless, all the household having retired for the night. Until midnight her son prayed with her, and read several passages in the Bible, but to no effect. "It's all very well for *you*," she said, "but I am too great a sinner, and my unbelief is the worst of all. Oh ! what will happen to me when I stand before God ?"

In the morning they heard that the preacher was on his way to pay them a visit. Her words when he entered the room were : "How thankful I am that you have come ! What you said yesterday has made me wretched, for I see that I am lost, and that there is no hope for me."

"Very well," said the evangelist, "the Lord Himself said, 'The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*' (Luke xix. 10); and also, 'I am not come to call the righteous,

but *sinner*s to repentance” (Matt. ix. 13). Then turning to 1 Tim. i. 15, he read, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinner*s.”

“But you do not know what an unbelieving heart I have,” replied the widow. “I have eight children, all converted and steady, and if you could see the touching letters they have written, begging me to come to Christ, you would wonder I have not listened to them, but had hardened my heart against them ; and now I cannot seem to lay hold of these good things you tell of.”

The evangelist knew that the woman was poor, and so he asked her, “Do you know that a clever doctor in Paris has a cure for hydrophobia ?”

“Yes,” she said, “I have heard that.”

“And do you know how people can get received into his hospital, and the cost of the treatment ?”

“No, sir.”

“Supposing to-morrow that you were to be bitten by a mad dog, would you know how to go all the way alone to Paris ? and would you have enough money for the expenses of the journey and of the hospital ?”

"Why, sir," said she, "I have no money ; I should have to be *taken* there, and paid for, too."

"Now," said the servant of the Lord, "that is just how it is with salvation. It comes from God, and depends on nothing in us. 'For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast' (Eph. ii. 8, 9). God has shown you your state of sin and unbelief, and He will draw you to Christ, and give you to believe on His name. 'No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him. . . . Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me' (John vi. 44, 45). Read God's Word, and remember that 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God'" (Rom. x. 17).

Upon this he had to leave to catch his train, but on his journey he often prayed that God would meet the need of this troubled soul.

Six weeks later he received a letter from a friend, telling him that the poor widow had found peace with God, and was very happy in the assurance of His great love to her. A few months after he heard again of her joy in the Lord, and that she was not afraid to speak of her Saviour's love to all her friends and neigh-

bours, begging them not to delay any longer in coming to Him.

May the Lord give you, my reader, to consider your state before God, and may the sharp two-edged sword of His Word reach your heart and conscience; for it is better to find out *now* that we are not fit to stand in the presence of God, than to wait until by-and-bye, when even the earth and heaven will flee away from the face of Him who will sit on the great white throne.

G.

The Two "Ifs."

IN the garden of Eden man was surrounded by everything that testified to "the goodness of God." Through heeding, however, the voice of the deceiver, he sinned, and, by *that one sin*, opened the flood-gates to what has proved to be the deluging torrent of evil and sorrow, sin and death.

In the fourth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, we find the arch-enemy of God and man again upon the scene; not this time in the garden of God's planting, but "in the wilderness," where Jesus

was "with the wild beasts" (Mark i. 13), and where everything spake of hunger and solitude.

Ah! subtle foe! His object was the same, though his tactics differed. He knew too well that such a question as "*Hath* God said?" was not the weapon wherewith to meet Him, who, from all eternity, was Himself "THE WORD" (John i. 1).

God had just borne witness to Him (Matt. iii.) with the words, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In seeking, therefore, to weaken the authority of that word, and to allure *Him* from *His* position before God, of *dependence* and *obedience*, the devil approached Him with an, "IF *Thou be the Son of God*, command . . .," "IF *Thou be the Son of God*, cast Thyself down"

In Genesis, the woman *added* to God's word; in Matthew's Gospel, the devil *took* therefrom (compare Ps. xci. 11 with Matt. iv. 6; also Rev. xxii. 18, 19).

Audacious "IF"! How many a time, and in how many varied ways, has it since then been echoed and re-echoed by the infidel mind.

But Jesus *was* and *is* the Son of God. As a shaft, therefore, from the quiver, He drew from the very Pentateuch itself that, concerning which

He asserted, "*It is written.*" Can we wonder, therefore, that the Books of Moses, since that day, have become special objects of the virulent attacks of Satan?

"If Thou be . . . !"—Again, at a later period, when the malignant foe marshalled all the hosts of evil around the cross of Jesus, the "Despised and Rejected of men," we hear repeated from the cruel lips of the poor dupes of the adversary the same awful taunt, "*IF Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.*"

Did He "come down from the cross"? No! Blessed be His name! He remained. "That bitter cup, He drank it up"—He "*gave* His life," and "died for the ungodly." He did not "*come down,*" but He was "*taken down,*" and "*laid . . . in a sepulchre.*" And the grave attested the fact that Jesus *really died.*

He had come from the glory with good news for ruined man, and He went to the cross where He glorified God by meeting the whole question of sin and sins. God, therefore, hath "highly exalted Him," and "hath made that same Jesus both LORD and Christ." And now that the Saviour adorns the Father's throne, a bright and glorious "IF" (*God's "IF"*), accompanied by words of wonderfully tender grace, which the

Holy Ghost has caused to be inscribed upon the pages of inspiration, illumines the horizon of this dark world for perishing sinners—that, "IF thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

"The heavens are opened now!
Sound it through earth abroad!
And we, by faith, IN HEAVEN behold
Jesus, the Christ, OUR LORD."

N. L. N.

"7,025 Chances, and I have not
seen it yet!"

TWO ladies were travelling on the railway a short time ago, and on observing a placard which stated that a certain theatrical play had been performed 7,025 times in different parts of the world, one of them remarked that she had had 7,025 chances of seeing that play, and had not seen it yet. Their conversation was overheard by a Christian, who thought of how many opportunities God gives souls of being converted in this present day, and of how great a

number of people are apparently still unsaved. From the subject of their conversation, it appeared that these ladies knew nothing of the love of Christ; they were still in their sins, away from God, under judgment, and their hearts fully occupied with the fleeting pleasures of this world. It could hardly be possible that one opportunity had not been given them of coming to Christ, that they had never heard the story of the Gospel, that God had never spoken to them by His Word, or some other means; yet, up to this time, they were still amongst the unsaved, and all warnings had been unheeded. What a terrible condition was theirs, yet similar to that of many in the world to-day. Is it yours, reader?

Scripture records three instances of men to each of whom was given *one* opportunity. Felix heard the Gospel from the lips of the most devoted servant of the Lord that ever lived. He trembled in the presence of Paul, and his conscience seemed to be touched as his prisoner reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Did the powerful message have the effect of making him believe the truth, and surrender to God? Was his heart broken as he felt his terrible sinfulness, and the reality

of judgment to come? Nay; he neglected God's mercy, and said, "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." God's time was not his time, and it is not recorded that his "convenient season" ever arrived. Felix will have to answer for this opportunity, afforded him by God; and what excuse will he make for having neglected it? He will be self-condemned. He trembled in the presence of Paul (then a prisoner in his hands); what will he do when he stands before God? It is solemn when a soul turns a deaf ear to all God's gracious entreaties, and postpones the consideration of its eternal welfare.

Agrippa heard of Christ from the same apostle. He said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," but Scripture is silent as to whether his persuasion was ever complete, and whether he believed in the Lord. What is necessary to persuade thee, reader? May thy heart be won by the immeasurable love of Christ, who descended from glory to the depths of death to redeem thee from hell, and fit thee for His presence above.

Blind Bartimæus had but one opportunity, but he made good use of it. Immediately he heard of Jesus, he was in earnest to be in His presence, and allowed nobody to hinder him in

his purpose. He pleaded for "mercy," and the blessed Saviour said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," his sight being restored him. He then followed Jesus in the way. How much in nature would there be for a man who had been blind to admire, and set his eyes on! Yet he followed Christ, having eyes to admire no one but Him, and counting Him worthy of all his heart. What an occupation for a beggar, following Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God! Yet what a picture of a true-hearted Christian, following the Lord in this world until he shall be with Him in glory!

How different is the case of Felix or Agrippa from that of Bartimæus! The first two were rich in this world; Bartimæus was poor, yet rich in faith. Felix and Agrippa neglected the opportunity afforded them; Bartimæus rejoiced in it, and received the blessing. Felix and Agrippa will have to appear before Christ in the judgment-day; Bartimæus had dealings with the Saviour in a time of grace.

May those who read this paper not say, "When I have a convenient season"; but, being altogether persuaded, may they follow Jesus in the way.

"Behold the Lamb of God."

SOME years ago, when the Crystal Palace, as it now stands, was just completed, an honoured servant of God, the late Mr Spurgeon, was asked to preach in it, which he consented to do.

But the thought came to him, How should he modulate his voice so as to be heard all over the immense building?

So early one morning he went to try it for himself, when it was empty. When he got there he hesitated for a moment as to *what* he should say, when suddenly the words came to him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

This he shouted at first with all his might, causing it to echo round and round the building, making him say to himself, "This will never do." Again and again he repeated, until satisfied as to the pitch of his voice, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Some years after, one of the workmen employed in repairing the roof of the Crystal Palace, was on his dying bed; a friend went to see him, and, upon asking him if he were ready

to meet God, he replied, "Yes, quite;" adding, "When I was employed some years ago in helping to repair the Crystal Palace, I was very unhappy about my soul, and one morning upon the roof, when I felt the burden of my sins very heavy, a voice came all of a sudden, from whence I do not know, or who it was I do not know, but it said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,' and in one moment my burden of sins was gone for ever."

Dear reader, have you ever heard a voice telling this blessed news to you? To how many of our hearts has it brought a message of peace and pardon! and as we feel the comfort of it to our own souls, we long that others should share it with us. And if you remember when John the Baptist first uttered those words, two poor sinners, just like ourselves, heard him say them, and they left him to go after that blessed "Lamb of God." And what was the result? Jesus saw them following, and invited them to come and see where He dwelt, and they stayed with Him (John i.).

And that is just what He does now, for He "died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."

Think of this holy, blessed Saviour *wanting*

us poor sinners to live with Him always in His home. He tell us, "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . and I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John xiv. 3). S.



"No, Sir, I wish it was;" or, The Work that Saves.



IT is amazing how few there are, comparatively speaking, who seem able to grasp the glorious fact that the work which saves is a finished work.

In visiting from house to house in country villages and elsewhere, I am struck with the fact that by far the larger number, of even seriously disposed persons, have never realized the blessings that belong to those who rest in faith on an accomplished redemption.

While walking in the county of Suffolk, inviting the villagers to some open-air gospel services, I met two old women returning home from their work. They each were carrying a bundle on their backs. They were both old, their bent

forms and tottering limbs telling of previous hard work and of increasing years.

"I see you are both carrying a burden on your backs ; I hope the weight of your sins is gone."

"No, sir, I wish it was," was the honest reply.

"You are both old," said I, "and any day might be called into eternity. What a terrible thing to die unforgiven, and unsaved !"

To this, with downcast eyes, they both assented.

"Where are you coming from ?" I asked.

"From our work in the potato-field."

"Then you have finished your work for to-day ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, tell me, is the work that saves finished ?"

"No, sir, I wish it was," was the sorrowful reply.

"Ah, my dear old friends, there you are entirely wrong ! Thank God, the work that saves *is finished*, not only for to-day, but for all eternity ! The Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross for sinners eighteen hundred years ago. It was there He cried those glorious words,—

'It is finished !'

He has *completed* the work. He has left

nothing for you to do but believe, and thankfully receive from His hands the peace that flows from simple, childlike faith in that finished work."

The two poor old women listened to the simple gospel tale, and went on their way.

Reader, have you learnt that the work which saves is finished?

"But this man [Jesus], after He had offered *one sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 12). It is by that one sacrifice alone that the believer is perfected, for "by *one offering* He *hath perfected for ever* them that are sanctified" (v. 14).

"Perfected for ever!" Glorious words! The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once" (Heb. x. 10), and is "*perfected for ever*." The Jew under Moses' law, was sanctified, or separated, to God in an external way on the ground of the blood of bulls and goats; but the believer now is sanctified or separated to God on the ground of a sacrifice of infinite value, that of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Oh, how perfect is that one sacrifice of Calvary! And how perfect is the acceptance before God of all who trust it! The believer is perfected *now*, and perfected *for ever*. A. H. B.

The Blacksmith's Conversion.

NEAR one of our country villages there lived some time ago an aged Christian, whose delight was to make known to those around the blessed news of the salvation of God, and often, after much prayer and faithful speaking, had he seen souls pass from the weariness of serving sin and Satan to the gladness and freedom of the service of God.

But there was one in the village (B——, the blacksmith) who had never been known to enter church, chapel, or meeting-room, and was to all appearance utterly unconcerned as to his condition before God. He was without Christ, and without God (Eph. ii. 12), and had no desire to be otherwise. But God had a purpose of blessing in connection with the subject of this narrative, as we shall see.

When at prayer one night the aged believer had brought very powerfully before him the case of the blacksmith, and his awful state as a careless sinner on the way to hell. Remember, my reader, "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of

death" (Prov. xiv. 12), and "*the way of the wicked*" and "*the thoughts of the wicked*" are both "an abomination unto the Lord" (Prov. xv. 9, 26).

With these solemn thoughts before him the child of God went to prayer, and as the night far advanced the aged man was still upon his knees in agonising prayer for the blacksmith. At last he could pray no longer, and as he rose from his knees a voice seemed to say, "You have been praying for the man; now go and see him."

Early the next morning the messenger of God left his house, and made his way to the blacksmith's shop. The latter was standing at the door, little thinking of what was in store for him, when the servant of God approached, and in a voice trembling with emotion, said, as he caught hold of the hands of the smith, "Oh, B——, I have come to tell you that I am deeply concerned as to your soul's salvation." Then releasing his hands, he remounted his pony, and returned home.

The blacksmith, astonished, could scarcely believe his ears. "Deeply concerned about my soul's salvation! Whatever can it mean?" It was an arrow from God to the soul of this man. He was awakened to the fact that he had a soul,

an immortal soul, and that he was not prepared to meet God.

Turning into his cottage close by, he said to his wife: "What do you think; there's dear old Mr A—— come two miles this snowy morning to tell me he's deeply concerned about my soul's salvation? Whatever shall I do?"

"Well," she replied, "the best thing you can do is to go and see him."

Taking her advice, B—— went off, there and then, to the house of the one who had brought him such a remarkable message, and on the way the Spirit of God had so wrought upon him that he had to exclaim directly he came to the Lord's servant, "Mr A——, *I am indeed deeply concerned about my soul's salvation.*"

"Thank God for that!" was the reply; "it's the very thing I have been praying for."

Together they searched the Word of God, and the blacksmith saw that he was indeed a sinner, lost, undone, *without strength* (Rom. v. 6), and *without excuse* (Rom. i. 20), and that God had provided a Saviour that could meet, on the one hand, the claims of God, and, on the other, his own deep need as a sinner; that Christ Jesus at Calvary had borne in His own body the punishment that he deserved, and now he could sing—

“ My happy soul is free,
For the Lord has pardoned me,
Hallelujah to Jesus' name ! ”

B—— was saved ; a brand plucked from the burning. But, my reader, what about you ? Have you never been stirred up to the fact that you have to meet God, that you have to face One who is acquainted with every detail of your life, every sin in thought, word, and deed ? If you meet Him now as a Saviour-God, it will be for your everlasting blessing ; but if you meet Him as a judge, it will be for your everlasting condemnation.

“ As though God did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God ” (2 Cor. v. 20).

“ Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke : then a *great ransom* cannot deliver thee ” (Job xxxvi. 18).

“ Hark, sinner, while God from on high doth entreat thee,
And warnings with accents of mercy doth blend,
Give ear to His voice, lest in judgment He meet thee,
Thy harvest is passing, thy summer will end. ”

S. E. B.

“ And WHOSOEVER was not found written in the BOOK OF LIFE was cast into the LAKE OF FIRE. ”—Rev. xxi. 15.

One that I know.

FIFTEEN years ago a young lad, who had a good opportunity for enjoying the pleasures of sin, felt lonely and sad, and very unhappy indeed, for he had discovered that none of these things could satisfy, or give him *lasting* joy.

It all seemed a mockery. Go where he would, have what he would, it left him still longing for something more. He had no *true* and *lasting* happiness, no peace, no real joy. In his heart he yearned for something beyond the fleeting things here, but scarcely knew what.

At this time he began to discover that he was a lost sinner needing a Saviour ; not that he had then learnt the awful depravity and deceitfulness of his heart, for of this he knew but little at this time, and it was long indeed before he really learnt *God's* verdict of the heart (Jer. xvii. 9, 10). Nevertheless he was so unhappy, for his heart *did* yearn for an object which would satisfy the desire which was there ; and God, who is rich in mercy, turned his gaze upward, to behold in the glory a *living* Man, a Saviour whom He had exalted there to His right hand, and oh ! it

was such a view of Him, that he felt, "Here is the One to suit me, both as to the desire of my heart and my need as a sinner."

These precious words were then brought before him: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. 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. 35, 36).

For some time he had read and admired the perfection and glory and grace of the Saviour's ways, as recorded by the evangelists, but *now* he beheld the One upon whom the heavens had opened, and who had called forth the expression of the Father's joy and delight when walking through this sin-stained world, and who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every thing. (Heb. ii.). He had now learnt something of the mercy and grace of God in giving His Son for a guilty world, and leading him to the One who, by His death, had met all the claims of eternal justice, and his need as a sinner, the decision He enabled him to make was this, "*Christ for me.*"

He now began to learn something of the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," that, though

He was rich, He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

Think, dear reader, saved or unsaved, of the magnitude of grace and depth of love that led Jesus from such heights of glory to such depths of woe, for such guilty rebels as you and I! He came to seek and to save the lost, and, like the good Samaritan, "as He journeyed," He came where *we* were—where death and judgment were. He bore sin's due, suffering the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. So unlike man! Man *will stoop down*, and help to pull another out of a pit, but this is not the way of the One whom believers know and trust as their Saviour. He went down Himself *into the pit*, where there was no standing (Ps. lxi.). He goes *beneath and lifts the poor helpless one up*, and this Shepherd, having found the lost sheep, layeth it on His shoulders rejoicing. Such is His grace!

Oh, that I could persuade you, weary, heavy-laden one, to come to Him, and He would give you rest! High in glory, He still is that same blessed Jesus who receiveth sinners. Burdened, anxious one, *is He not worthy of your trust?* Believe on Him and trust His finished work, who though rich, became poor, that *you* through His poverty might be rich.

“Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). Do not delay, but honour the Son (whom the Father loveth and delighteth to honour) by believing on Him, and everlasting life is yours (John iii. 35, 36, v. 23, 24).

Fifteen years ago I was that lonely lad, whose eyes God in mercy opened to see Jesus exalted a Prince and a Saviour. I then thought Him worthy of my trust, and trusted Him alone for my eternal security. Often since then I have had to mourn over *my unfaithfulness*, but never have I regretted the decision arrived at then. I bear unfeigned testimony to *His faithful*, constant love. Learned myself surely I have through folly and failure, and proved His precious forbearing love and patience through it all. But, believe me, the truest estimate I have ever had of self is that which I have formed when consciously in His holy presence. My heart has been captivated and filled with holy wonder and joy as I beheld the beauties and perfections of the Lord. I once saw no beauty in Him, but now through the mercy of God, as one called to share in the Father's thoughts, I, according to my measure, can say He is the altogether lovely and chief among ten thousands!

I have here, dear reader, told you a little of the One that *I know*, but oh! the joy of knowing that soon I, with all His loved ones, will joy and delight throughout eternity in telling Him that *He is worthy!* Where will the reader be in that day?

R. G.



A Party of Card Players.

“Enter not into the path of the wicked.”—PROV. iv. 14.

ONE Monday night, in the month of February, more than twenty years ago, in a house of business in a well-known English country town, four young men might have been seen very intently engaged in playing whist.

For some time previously they had been thrown much together, and at the early part of their friendship nothing was more opposed to the thoughts and practice of each than playing cards; but through visiting friends who, though highly moral and respectable, indulged in card-playing at home, they had all four caught the spirit of the game, which grew upon them to such an extent that at last they did not care to

play at all unless it was for money. The remarkable thing about this select little party was that all its members were very religious, and most careful as to the company they kept. One attended Wesleyan class-meetings ; another sang in the choir of a fashionable chapel, and taught in the Sunday school ; the third played a harmonium in a Church of England Sunday school ; the fourth was the principal supporter of the superintendent of another Sunday school in the town.

They each wished to be considered religious by all who knew them, and certainly nothing could exceed their zeal on Sundays in attending all the services at their respective so-called places of worship. As to their life and conduct both in private and public, they were all deservedly highly esteemed and respected.

The question of whether or not it was consistent for Christians to play cards at all, and especially for money, had frequently been discussed between themselves. This exercise had so far ended in all four agreeing that if there were no cheating, it could not be condemned on any grounds ; and having rightly unlimited confidence in each other, they became at last thoroughly infatuated, and lost no opportunity

in meeting together to pursue the game. The moving spirit of the party was a delicate young man, nearly homeless and friendless, the most religious of all four, who boasted more than the others that he could play cards without feeling condemned.

But in the secret of his heart for a long while past he had been deeply exercised about it. For several years he had been much concerned about his soul. Sometimes he thought he had "peace with God," and the forgiveness of sins, and said he was not afraid to die; at other times he was filled with the greatest terror at the thought of death and judgment to come (Heb. ix. 27).

He had been confirmed, and had taken the sacrament; but this gave him no rest of heart; and in order to keep a good conscience (not that there was anything morally wrong, but because he felt his relations with God were not right), he was compelled to tell the clergyman he must discontinue "holy communion." He was conversant with religion of almost every phase, from revival meetings and penitent forms to Roman Catholicism; listened most attentively to sermons; read everything religious that came in his way; with the result that at the date when

our tale begins, his heart was as restless and unsatisfied as ever.

On the Monday night referred to, about eleven o'clock, he started off alone to go to his lodgings, when his exercises as to his course returned more deeply than ever. The darkness and gloom of the well-nigh deserted streets, and the fear of sudden death and judgment to come, combined to impress him with fear and terror almost intolerable. He hurried upstairs, flung himself on his knees at the bedside, and found relief only in a flood of tears. Many were the resolutions he made that night that, if God would only spare his life, under no circumstances would he ever touch a card again.

All through the morning of the next day these good resolutions were before his mind in the most determined manner, but he had yet to find they stood only in his own strength. Towards the evening the old infatuation returned, then the reasoning that nothing dishonest was allowed overcame his pious scruples, and in due course he formed one of the select little party, shuffling the cards as eagerly as ever. Before midnight the religious young leader was smitten with the same experience that he had passed through on the previous night—cards,

repentance, dread of meeting God, prayers, tears, resolutions, followed each other in bitter succession. On Wednesday all was repeated over again; so on Thursday, Friday, and on Saturday, the week was finished precisely as begun. The following Sunday he was very religious as usual, and many were the resolutions made, on the strength of Romans vii. 19, never to play cards again.

So very earnest and scrupulous had he become, and zealous, too, in siding with Evangelicals against Ritualists, that he did not care for any but "Low Church" services, and often would walk some distance out of the town to hear a clergyman who always preached in a "black gown," the only "robes" our young friend thought it was consistent to preach a sermon in.

The following Monday, towards evening, the old temptations again got the upper hand, and all the experience of cards, repentance, and prayers of the previous week was gone through before his eyes closed in sleep. It seemed as though there was no hope of his recovery from the snare, and he was himself beginning to feel it was distinctly leading to other temptations and into associations which otherwise he would

not have dreamt of. But the time of his deliverance, in the mercy of God, was near at hand.

An evangelist had been holding special gospel services in the Town Hall all the previous week, and a crippled old man, who appeared to see the danger to which his young friend was exposed, had at last, after much earnest persuasion, got him to promise to give up his cards for one night, and go and hear what this strange preacher had to say.

Accordingly, on Tuesday he went. That night the message was blessed to his soul, and he returned to his lodgings with a joy and peace with God (Rom. iv. 23-25, v. 1, 2, viii. 1) such as he had never known before. Instead of tears of repentance over cards, his long-troubled and weary heart was at perfect rest. Every night during the week he was found at these meetings, and all that he heard seemed to confirm the distinct blessing he found on the Tuesday. Two well-known questions—one in Genesis, the other in Exodus—were the special portions used of God in thus reaching him, and presenting not only the atoning work, but the person of the Lord Jesus to his soul. His taste for cards at once completely vanished, and never returned.

His deliverance was also used to break up the card party altogether.

Not many days after he was present at a special afternoon service, held at the meeting-room of the "Society of Friends," to give thanks to God for those who had been blessed at the Town Hall. It was a cold, bleak day, and on the way there he had an attack of hæmorrhage for the first time in his life. This brought back vividly the fear of early death ; but his conscience and heart being now at rest through faith in the "blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 18-22), he had not a trace of fear as to meeting God. Only a little while before his chest had been carefully examined by a physician, and he was given to understand his life was practically not worth a straw. But none of these things could now disturb his newly found joy and peace of soul ; he could say, "All things are yours . . . whether life or death" (1 Cor. iii. 21-23). In spite of the adverse judgment of doctors, his strong tendency to consumption did not terminate fatally at an early age ; in fact, he is alive at the present time.

Neither the preacher, nor any of those who promoted the meetings in question, have ever had the slightest idea of the existence of the young convert, nor of the blessing he received

by their means. The coming day of glory will declare it (1 Thess. ii. 20). He stayed behind at the after-meetings at the Town Hall, placed himself broken-hearted, but saved, with those interested and awakened, but all others seemed to receive attention except him.

But the "peace with God through our Lord Jesus" was deep and solid, and though since then he has learned by further experience more of what it is to possess a wicked and deceitful heart (Jer. xvii. 9; 1 Kings viii. 39), that peace, which he then received through faith in the "blood of Christ," has never once been disturbed, and a doubt as to his standing, acceptance, and the relationship with God of a child crying "Abba, Father," has never crossed his mind.

Should this true narrative meet the eye of any professedly Christian young man who is in danger, through card-playing, of being drawn into the well-nigh national vice of betting and gambling, and thus making shipwreck of faith, it is hoped that God may use it to induce him to forsake this evil practice, and thus prevent Satan from accomplishing his evil design. Many such have never intended to go far; they have been induced to look at it as *innocent* in itself.

In the end it has paved the way for their utter downfall, both as to body and soul.

"He that *covereth* his sins shall not prosper, but whoso *confesseth* and *forsaketh* them shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13).

"What concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. vi. 15.)

"Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go" (Gen. xxiv. 58).

"Who is on the Lord's side?" (Exod. xxxii. 26).

X. L.

Flee!

WHEREVER the glad tidings of the love of God to a ruined world has been proclaimed, mankind may be regarded as divided into two classes, viz. :—

The *first class*, consists of those who, having chosen "a way that seemeth right" unto men, "but the end thereof are the ways of death," have "fled from the presence of the Lord."

When Adam had sinned, he "*hid himself from the presence of the Lord*," choosing for his hiding-place "the trees of the garden."

When Cain had murdered his brother, he "*went out from the presence of the Lord,*" and, away from that presence, chose for his dwelling "*the land of Nod.*"

When Jonah rose up to *flee from the presence of the Lord*, he chose to go by ship to Tarshish, instead of going to Nineveh as required by God.

When, in a later day, all classes of men will "say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and *hide us from the face of Him* that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," the way of their choosing will be to "hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains."

Sin always separates from the presence of God, who, being eternally holy and eternally just, "can by no means clear the guilty"; and Scripture says, "*All have sinned.*"

"*All the world*" is "guilty before God."

"*All . . . have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.*"

"They are *all* gone out of the way."

"There is none righteous, no, *not one.*"

Sweeping statements these. And, moreover, we read that "God . . . will render *to every man* according to his deeds," "in the day when He shall judge the secrets of men."

The *other class*, consists of those "who have fled for refuge" to Christ "from the wrath to come."

Of old it was ordained that "there shall be six cities of refuge for the man-slayer, *that he may flee thither*," and thus escape the consequences of his fault. So now, as to the sinner, "Christ died for the ungodly"; and He, the risen Jesus, whose "blood cleanseth from all sin," has become the believing sinner's glorious and blessed refuge from the coming judgment.

"O precious blood ! poured freely forth for me,
My sins are sunk beneath Thy crimson tide ;
No more before the avenger's sword I flee,
Christ is the Refuge-city where I hide."

N. L. N.



Two Death-beds.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? *So run, that ye may obtain.*"
—I Cor. ix. 24.



TWO men lay dying, their race was almost over. They were what men call "jolly good fellows." Both of them were well known in the racing world. Enthusiastic crowds had watched the victorious

racehorse owned by one of them win the Derby, and warm were the congratulations which were showered on the proud owner. Here the curtain falls,—falls to lift on a very different scene.

G—— lies in a darkened room. But darker far are the shadows in which heart and mind are wrapped; he is in an agony. As to who will win the Derby? The Derby! No! As to where his soul is going. All else fades away in the presence of near-approaching death. He sent for a young clergyman, a nephew of his. When he came, the now fast-dying man told him of his terror. His nephew replied, "What have you to fear? Why should you be in such distress? When you won the Derby, you restored the parish church!" And—the well-known racer passed for ever away. *Where?*

Not far off another man lay dying. His doctor, who had seen a good deal of life, and also a good deal of death, felt great interest in his patient. The doctor had had the *two ways* put before him, "the way of life, and the way of death." For you know, dear reader, *there is* "a way of life," and there is a "way of death." This doctor was well aware of the unhappiness of G—— as he lay dying, and here lay another racing man, on the verge of eternity.

One day as he prescribed for him, he said, "G—— is dying, and is in great agony of mind."

"Why?" exclaimed his patient.

"Because he is afraid of meeting God in judgment."

Nothing more was said, and the doctor left. The next day he called again.

"I am wretched," said the dying man.

"What is the matter?" asked his doctor. Then he told him, how his words that G—— was in an agony of mind, *because he was afraid of meeting God in judgment*, had pierced his own soul.

Then the doctor most gladly told him the "old, old story, of Jesus and His love."

"There is pardon sweet at the Saviour's feet, Come and see ;

There's a song of peace that shall never cease, Come and see ;

There's a life beyond, 'tis a life divine, Come and see ;
And the light of faith on your path will shine, Come and see."

One night the end drew near : the dying man asked the night-nurse to read to him the third chapter of the Gospel of John, in which are to be found these 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. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Most attentively did he listen to the God-sent message of divine mercy, then turning to God he cried for mercy, and shortly afterwards he passed also away. *Where?* To the presence of Christ, for "Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

The above short story was told me a few months since by the doctor to whom these two well-known racing men were known, and who in the latter case was in God's mercy the instrument of blessing. May it be a message from God to you, dear reader. "Behold, NOW is the accepted time: behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"Why art thou waiting till another day,
Grieving the Saviour from thy heart away?
There is no refuge for thy soul but He;
Wilt thou reject Him, and a lost one be?"

"One more message wilt thou hear in vain?
When ill-spent time is o'er and life is past,
What shall it profit, though the world thou gain,
But lost for ever thy soul at last?"

Life now is Mine.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye *have* eternal life" (1 John v. 13).

ONCE my soul had been distrest,
By the weight of sin opprest,—
Now on God's own word I rest,
That life is mine (John v. 24).

Sin's just wages were my dread,
Till I saw the Lamb's blood shed—
Jesus, dying in my stead,
Life now is mine (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

God, though just, can justify
All who on His Son rely ;
Ne'er can I be doomed to die,
For life is mine (Rom. iii. 26).

Ended now is all my strife,
My blest Shepherd died to give
To His sheep eternal life,
That life is mine (John x. 11, 18).

Christ, the eternal Son of God,
Christ, the ever-living Word (1 John i. 1).
He Himself became my food,
And life is mine (John vi. 51).

A. R. V. A.

"I am going to Jesus."

WHEN residing some years ago in Plymouth, I was asked by a Christian lady to visit a sick man in whom she was interested, and who she feared was far gone in consumption. I called at the address given, and the door of the cottage was opened to me by a poor dispirited looking woman, with a bruised face and black eye. Inquiring if William — lived there, she replied, "Yes, sir, he is my husband," and on my telling her that I was a doctor, and that Miss — had asked me to visit her husband, she with some hesitancy admitted me, and taking me up to the side of the bed, which was on the far side of the room as we entered, she said, "William, here is a doctor that Miss — has asked to come and see you," then, without saying another word, left the room.

Lying before me I saw a fine, well-built young man, of about thirty years of age, whose bold, defiant aspect at once arrested me. His features, though good, and more than usually intelligent, had a sullen, hard, angry look, that told of one at enmity with God and his fellows. Telling

him who had asked me to visit him, and with what purpose, I asked him if he would allow me to examine his lungs. Nodding his head, but without a word, he flung himself higher up on his pillows, and laid bare his broad chest.

After I had carefully examined his lungs, during which I noted that he was intently scanning my face, I looked steadily at him, and said, "I suppose you know that you are very ill." As he made no remark, I went on to tell him a little about the serious nature of his case, and concluded by telling him that he had not long to live, that I did not think that he would be in this world at the end of a month. "How will it be with you in the next world?" I asked him. Pulling himself together, and opening his mouth for the first time, he replied, "Take my chance, like the rest, I suppose."

Feeling the kind of spirit I had to deal with, and looking straight into the defiant eyes that were fixed upon me, I replied: "Chance, my man, will land you in hell in the next world as surely as you are lying on your bed in this. Don't trust to chance."

His face slightly quivered, and I felt sure the arrow had gone home. After a slight pause, and

taking a prolonged breath, he angrily rejoined, "Then what must I do?"

"Do nothing," I said; "but, as you lie there, a poor lost sinner, simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Taking from my pocket my New Testament, I read him part of the twenty-third of Luke, beginning with: "And when they were come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left," concluding with, "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

In a few simple words I showed him how bad a life this man had lived, and to that it had brought him in this world even to the gallows, but how, repenting at the last, and owning himself justly condemned to death, he had turned to the Saviour, who in love to save him hung by his side, and cried to Him for mercy. I said, "You see this man had done nothing but sin all his life, had lived without God, and now when his life was forfeited, and he was actually dying, he *did* nothing to save his soul but *believe* on the Lord Jesus."

Though making no sign, I felt persuaded he had followed me in all I had said, saw how

like his case was to that of the thief, and was mentally applying it to himself; but he made no remark. Silently lifting my heart to God to bless His own word, I left him.

I should say here, that William — was a desperate character. He was what is called a master or “boss” stonemason, an occupation which is very fatal to those who follow it, as the small particles of stone-dust, especially of some kinds of stone, being inhaled into the lungs, remain there, setting up an irritation in them that frequently leads to a rapidly fatal form of consumption.

Being a man of great physical strength, and of more than ordinary intelligence, he was regarded amongst his mates as a ringleader, and, alas! in all that was bad and violent. He was notorious for his utterly irreligious and godless life, hardly ever speaking without an oath, and following his words often with a blow when he was crossed; and, though I had not been told it at the time, I felt convinced that the bruised face and blackened eye of his poor wife was some of his recent work. It was the knowledge of all this that led me to speak so plainly to him, and to read this portion out of the twenty-third of Luke to him.

Though William —’s case was much on my

heart, and I had enlisted the prayers of several of God's dear children on his behalf, I did not feel led to visit him for some days, but rather to leave him *alone with God*. At the end of a week I called again to see him, and on his wife opening the door I saw at once by her face that something had happened. On my asking her how her husband was, she burst into tears, and exclaimed: "Oh! sir, he is changed from a lion to a lamb. Before you came to see him he was like a chained wild beast, cursing and swearing at everything and everybody, because he was ill, and could not get up and go to his work. I got nothing from him but oaths and hard words. Nothing pleased him, and only the day before you came, because I did not place his pillow quite as he wanted it, he swore at me, and fetched me a blow that, as you saw, had bruised my face and blackened my eye. God only knows what a life he has led me; but oh! it is all changed now, and he can't be kind enough to me, and thanks me for the least thing I do for him. Oh! it is wonderful, it is wonderful."

She went on to tell me, that after I had left him, he was quite silent for some time, evidently thinking over what had been said to him, and for the next three days was very quiet, but

restless and unhappy, also very changed in his manner towards herself, though saying nothing of what was passing in his mind. Then, as she put it, "something strange seemed to come over him, and he became very happy." He said he believed that God had saved his soul, and that he should not be afraid to die.

On my entering the room, he greeted me with a nod and smile of welcome that said much to me. Going to his side, I said: "Well, William, how are you to-day? I fear not much better."

Slowly and sadly shaking his head, he said, "No."

"But how is it," I added, "as to your soul?"

Pausing to take breath, he replied, with evident emotion: "Thank God, better. I believe my soul is saved."

On my asking him how all this had come about, he told me that after I had left him he could not get out of his mind about, "chance landing him in hell," and became very unhappy and anxious about his soul for some days. Then what I read to him from the twenty-third of Luke, about the thief on the cross, and the Lord Jesus telling him He would take him to paradise, came back to him, and he said to himself, "That thief was not a bit better than I am, and the

Lord Jesus saved him just because he owned he was bad and trusted in Him, and why should He not save me if I do the same," and then, as he put it, "I just did it, and I at once felt at peace with God."

His subsequent conversation plainly showed that the work in his soul was a very real one, and that, realising that he was a lost and helpless sinner, he had turned to Jesus in his extremity, and had clearly perceived that the Lord in His love had died for Him on the cross, had taken his place before God under judgment, and borne the penalty due to him for all his terrible sins. It was plain that with the Apostle Peter he could say, "Who His own self bare our sin in His own body on the tree."

I saw him several times after this, but only to witness on each occasion the progress of God's grace in His soul. This showed itself, not only in the increasing clearness of his confession of Christ and His work as his only trust before God, but in the wonderful change in his life and conduct towards his wife and those about him. Many visited him, and magnified the grace of God in him.

On one occasion, referring to what he had passed through after my first visit to him, he

said, "You see, sir, I had nothing but my sins and wicked life to look back upon when you told me 'chance would land me in hell,' and the more I thought about it the worse I felt, so there was nothing for it but either to go to hell or look to Jesus, and that I did, just saying, 'Lord, have mercy on me, as You did upon that thief.' Of course I see it all more clearly now, and how God's love to us poor sinners was at the bottom of it all, giving His Son for us, and that Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

He lingered on uncomplainingly, in increasing weakness and suffering, for just a month, but his peace and joy were never interrupted. On the afternoon of the day he died I called to see him. He was sitting, propped up in an easy-chair, and breathing with great difficulty. The dew of death was on his forehead, and I plainly saw that a few hours would close the scene.

Taking his hand in mine, I said, "William, it is just a month since I first called to see you, and do you remember the question I put to you, and how you answered it?" With a faint smile he nodded his head in response. "Well, William, I will put the same question to you again—'And how will it be with you in the next world?'"

Drawing a deep and laboured breath, while a tear trickled down his cheek, and a heavenly smile stole over his pale, wan face, he gasped out, "I am going to Jesus—going to Jesus." They were the last words I heard from his lips, and I believe the last words he ever spoke in this world, for within an hour the Lord called Him to Himself, and he was "Absent from the body, and present with the Lord." C. W.



"Not Fit to Die."

A CHRISTIAN was about to stand up to preach, on board a large vessel, when the first officer came up to him and said—

"There is no use in your preaching here, we are all infidels, there is not a man on board who believes in God."

"How can you prove that there is a God?" he added defiantly.

The Christian paused, and quietly said—

"Can you prove that there is not a God?"

"Yes," said the man. "Last year there was a ship full of Methodist ranters, on her homeward

journey, and there was only one man on board who did not believe in God. A storm came on, and he was saved, while all the rest were drowned. That man was myself."

The Christian looked up to the Lord to give him just one word in answer—

"It was God's mercy in sparing your life, my poor fellow. You were not fit to die. The Methodist ranters, as you call them, were taken home to the bosom of Jesus. Beware lest you trifle with this opportunity, which God in His long-suffering mercy has given you, of acquainting yourself with Him."

The man slunk away without answering, and the Christian preached the gospel.

* * *

A Sudden Call.

IT was a familiar sight to those of us who live in the country, and one of almost daily occurrence in this part of England.

Two men were loading faggots in a waggon, to be carted home and stored for future use. One man was on the ground, and pitched the bundles of faggots to the other, who, mounted

on the waggon, arranged them there in order, as each in succession arrived.

They had been busily engaged for some time, and the waggon was getting well piled. The man below then moved off several yards to reach an outlying bundle, with which he returned, and before heaving it to the man above, called out the usual signal—

“Ready?”

But there was no reply, so he again called out—

“Ready?”

Still no answer. So getting anxious at the silence, he mounted the load, only to find to his horror that *his mate was dead!*

Just think of that poor fellow for an instant. He had tossed down his last bundle of faggots, apparently in perfect health, but before the next one could reach him he lay a lifeless corpse. One moment he was in the full vigour and energy of manhood; in the next—without the slightest warning—he had passed into eternity.

Did you ever think it is quite possible that *your* end may be as sudden as his? Would you be prepared for it if it were? People often hope to have “a death-bed conversion,” but Scripture never warrants such a thought for an instant.

God says of our life, "It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas. iv. 14).

"Vanisheth away"! That does not promise you much time for repentance at the last, does it? We read again in Psalm ciii. 15: "As for man, his days are as grass . . . For the wind passeth over it, and it is *gone*."

"Gone"! How long does that vouchsafe you for turning to God?

God is warning us on every hand by sudden deaths, and it is too solemn a matter to trifle with. How can you rest with your life hanging on so slender a thread, and the question of your sins not settled?

Who can tell the unspeakable blessing of a mind at perfect peace with God? For it is possible to know in this world, by all who are resting their soul's salvation on the finished work of the Lord Jesus, that we are ready to meet a holy God at any moment, and that without fear or dread.

May you also be able to add, "Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. xiv. 8).

"Or in living, or in dying,
All, all is well."

E. R. M.

The Treasures of Eternity.

IT was rather alarming, just as the express for Brighton had begun to move from the platform, to find the door of the carriage hurriedly flung open, and a gentleman to burst in, who had evidently, from his haste and almost breathless condition, made a great rush for his train.

He apologized for his hurried entrance, saying he had to be in Brighton by a certain hour, and feared he would have missed his train.

After a little time, in conversation with others in the carriage, he said he was returning so annoyed, having gone to town in the morning to get some diamonds for his niece, who was going to the ball at Brighton that night, and he had to return without them, and she would be so disappointed not to have them. They were deposited at his bankers, and the key of the jewel-box could nowhere be found. He had ransacked his house, and been back and forward to his bankers, but the key had been mislaid or lost, and no other that they tried would unlock the case. At last he had to give up the search for it, and it was then too late for anything else

to be done, and to his great disappointment he had to go back without them. His niece would be looking out for him, waiting for the diamonds, and would not have them for the ball ; and what had become of the key he could not imagine.

I felt sorry for the man, his vexation seemed so great, and I could not but marvel that these things should have such a hold on people, and that they should set so high a value upon them, though it may be natural enough for those who have nothing better, and whose portion is in this world. I felt a profound pity for him in my heart, and wished I could talk to him of other and better things, "for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal." I was sitting just opposite to him, and when a pause occurred in the conversation, I ventured to say to him—

"I know a key that can unlock all the treasures of eternity. It is the key of faith—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for us."

His countenance instantly changed, the remark was evidently distasteful to him, and he looked haughty and almost angry, and I could say no more. There was silence afterwards for the little time till the train reached its destination. As he left the carriage, I asked him to accept a

few gospel books, and to read them. He took them and thrust them into his pocket, bowing rather stiffly though politely.

The treasures of eternity are *God's* treasures, and what He has revealed and laid open to us, through faith in His Word; human thought cannot grasp them, nor human language express them; but they all find their centre in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent to be the Saviour of the world, and who now fills heaven with His glory.

“And by the one chief treasure
Thy bosom freely gave,
Thine own pure love we measure
Thy willing mind to save.”

It belongs to the treasures of eternity that the sinner saved by grace, and made whiter than snow, is fit to be in the glory of God, where all is spotless, pure, and holy, and where no thought of sin can ever enter. Put the treasures of earth by the side of this, and what are they worth? The question may well be pondered.

Take all the treasures of this whole world, and what are they in comparison with being “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”? with Him who is “King of kings and Lord of lords”?

Think of the sin, and sorrow, and death with which this world abounds, and the undying joys of heaven where these things are unknown, and where the heart is filled to the full with all that can make it happy and blessed. These are treasures indeed !

To be with the Saviour and see His glory, to tell out His praise, to see His face, and His joy in having those bought with His precious blood surrounding Him—what treasures of God are these !

To bask in the sunshine of the Father's love, to be filled with pure and heavenly affections, flowing out towards all without a hindrance, and enduring throughout the eternal ages.

Contrast them with the fleeting, crushed, and broken affections here, the wounded spirits and broken hearts, and well may we exclaim, What treasures of love and joy !

The key of faith unlocks these treasures even now, and gives the believer to rejoice in them, while he awaits the time that he shall be in the full unhindered joy of them in the brightness of heaven, where all is resplendent with the glory of God.

Fellow-sinner, ponder the treasures of eternity, and let not your heart go after the perishing

treasures of earth, on which man lays such stress. What advantage will they be to the lost in hell, when for ever cast out from the presence of God? Oh! think seriously of what you are now pursuing. "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?"

When I saw afterwards the name of the one I met in the railway carriage among the high potentates of the world, it was less to be wondered at that his countenance changed and fell when the treasures of eternity were named. What room had he in his heart for them? It was occupied with the things of this world—its greatness and display were manifestly his pursuit; and the solemn thought is, that man must pass from these things, which are but for a day, into God's eternity, when "He shall judge *the secrets of men* by Jesus Christ."

I would ask, Have you closed with God's offers of mercy? Have you come to the Saviour who came to die for you? Are you washed in His precious blood, which alone can make you fit for the glory of God? And do you desire to enjoy for ever the treasures of eternity?

"Lay not up for yourselves *treasures upon earth*, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and

where thieves break through and steal ; but lay up for yourselves *treasures in heaven*, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal ; for where your treasure is, *there* will your heart be also."

M. V.



"Have you ever thought of Death?"

A YOUNG woman, who had been away some time in London, had come home for a short holiday. I was very much struck by her changed appearance.

Instead of her neat plain attire, she was dressed in all the latest fashions. I asked her how she liked being at home, but in rather a disdainful tone, she answered, "I want to see life, and enjoy it."

Ah! reader, do you want to see life and enjoy it.

Stop for a moment, and let me ask, Have you ever thought of death? This young woman was asked if she had ever thought of it, but her face plainly told me she did not want to hear

about that, nor to hear that God was offering through the death of His Son, life, salvation, and peace to her, but she walked away without showing any concern about the things of eternity.

How like many lovers of pleasure, who think of nothing beyond this life! When death is talked of, they shrink and shudder from the thought.

May God, by His Spirit, cause the reader to pause and reflect!

"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas. iv. 14). Away, where? In eternity. Where? With Christ or Satan, heaven or hell, blessed or cursed, in happiness or misery, darkness or light, anguish or joy?

May God give the reader to decide now, and that for Christ. Then he will be able to sing—

"Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God;
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.
Happy day! happy day!
When Jesus washed my sins away."

A. E. B.

"It is appointed unto men once to DIE, but after this the JUDGMENT."—HEB. ix. 17.

“Who shall Ascend into Heaven?”

“**W**HAT and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?” (John vi. 62.) Hitherto none but the Lord Jesus has “gone into heaven,” by His own power.

For centuries men have been trying to get there, both morally and physically, but without success. Many inventions have been tried, and all have proved man's inability to rise higher than himself by any sort of wings. Enoch did go up to heaven, but “God *took* him”; Elijah was equally powerless, for he “went up *by a whirlwind* into heaven.”

With the Lord Jesus, how different! “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John iii. 13). He came from God, and He went to God. When death could no longer hold Him, He who had power over death, not only left this earth, but vanquished every foe, and in His own glorious rights ascended into heaven, declared Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. No

one had gone there before in the same sense —no one had come out from among the dead never to return thither again. The widow's son, the Shunammite's son, the man in Elisha's grave—all these ultimately returned to their tombs. The ruler's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus, did likewise. Of the Lord it is said, "*Now no more to return to corruption*" (Acts xiii. 34).

The other night I was dreaming. I dreamt that I was walking about a well-known village, the observer of a spectacle enacted in honour of some favourite preacher. The entertainments and illuminations were to conclude with the supposed fall *from* heaven of some form of darkness; and secondly, the projection *into* heaven of some earthly body which was *meant to remain up there!* I saw in my dream the first mentioned descend and vaguely disappear; then I saw the second sent up, but come down again so rapidly that its resounding *thud* on the ground suddenly awoke me!

"Only a dream," I thought, "but how true! Nothing of the earth, earthy, can reach heaven of itself, much less stay there!" And yet how many are enacting this farce, how many are trying to reach God and heaven by their own efforts?

And it has been much the same thing ever since Eden. God shut Adam out of paradise "*lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life.*" Cain brought of the toil of *his own hands* an offering unto the Lord. At Babel, men said, "Let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven." Aaron made a molten calf, and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel." Can we not see the like around us to-day? Oh, my reader, search your own heart, and see whether it be not so in its hidden recesses. Herod was smitten because "he gave not God the glory" (Acts x.), and many of us are still putting man before God. But there is coming a day wherein "*the Lord alone shall be exalted.*" Let any of us who study God's thoughts ante-date that time, and say *now*, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!"

Dear reader, do you value Jesus, or are *you* trying to get to heaven by some means of your own? You may soar like a projectile into the sky, but you will surely come down again. Only He who *came down* from heaven can take you thither. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens." He *knows* the way, He *is* the way. Every poor, lowly, sin-burdened one who goes there or seeks

to go there *by Him* will surely reach, not only heaven but, God—for we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and *by Him* we “believe in God, who raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory ; that our faith and hope might be in God” (1 Pet. i.). Amen.

H. L. II.

How a Jew found Christ.

I BECAME acquainted with a very intelligent Jew in the city of Montreal. His father, I am informed, was a wealthy banker in Germany. I heard this Jew relate his Christian experience in a large assembly, the substance of which, in his broken English, was this :—

“The Spirit of de Lord take hold of my heart in my fader’s house in Germany. He make me feel so bad, I could not eat my food or take my rest.

“My fader said to me : ‘Why you no be happy? You mope round, just as miserable as can be. Plenty of money, why you no be happy?’

“I say : ‘Fader, I find no place for my soul.

De money won't buy a place for my soul. I lie down and die one day, and den what good de money to me, and where go my poor soul?'

"By-and-by I reads in a paper about one Dr F., a Jewish Rabbi, in Canada, dat find Messiah. I says to myself, I go to Canada to find dat Rabbi dat find Messiah. When I come to Canada, I ask de first thing, 'Where is Dr F.?' and dey tell me dat he live in de city of Hamilton. When I go to the city of Hamilton, he not at home. I no find him for two weeks. Then one man show him me at a public meeting, and I look at him till de meeting was out; and as he came, I say to him, 'You Dr F.?'

"'Yes.'

"'You Jewish Rabbi?'

"'Yes.'

"'You find Messiah?'

"'Yes.'

"'Will you give me two lessons, and I pay you?'

"Dr F. say, 'Come to my house, and I give you many lessons, and not charge anything.'

"But I say, 'Oh, no, Dr F.;' and he talk to me, and talk to me, and talk to me, but I no find Messiah.

"Den I go to de Catholic Church, and talk to de priest to find Messiah.

"De priest he tell me about de baptism and de holy water; and I say, 'Go away with your water; I want to find a place for my soul!'

"Den I go back to Dr F., and he say: 'You Hebrew scholar? Now take your Hebrew Bible, and read what the ancient prophets say about the Messiah. Take your pen and write down de exact description dey give of Him, especially the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; and when you get de prophetic directions how to find Messiah, you take your Greek Testament, and search, and you will find, as face answereth face in a glass, so de New Testament answers to de Old, and dat everything de old prophets say about Messiah was fulfilled exactly in de person of Jesus of Nazareth. When your judgment be convinced, den bow down on your knees, and pray to God, in the name of Jesus, and you find Messiah in your heart. He save you from all your sins.'

"So I follow de instructions that Dr F. he did give me; and my judgment he got convinced, and I bow on my knees, and I cry: 'O Got of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Got of my faders; I pray to dee in de name of dy dear suffering Son, Jesus Christ; I be convinced

from dy holy books of de Old and New Testaments dat He be Messiah which dow hast sent into de world to save sinners. Dow knows what a great sinner I am ; but Jesus comes to save de chief of sinners. I trust my soul to Him ; I believe He can save me. O Got, have mercy on my poor soul, and save me from my sins for Jesus's sake. I believe all dow has say about Jesus, and I take Him as my Saviour.'

"While I pray, I feel more and more bad, and I tot my poor soul he must go to hell. Den, I say, if Jesus Christ bore my sins in His own body, and redeemed my soul with His own blood, my soul he no need to go to hell. Den I give my soul to Jesus ; I believe in Jesus, and just as quick as lightning, I finds Messiah. He save me from my sins. He fill my soul wid unspeakable joy. My soul he find a home in Jesus. He abide in Jesus now for tree years, and I know Him more and more, and love Him with all my heart."

He proceeded to tell of some remarkable answers to prayer he had experienced, and such was the artless simplicity of his story, and the light and unction of the Holy Spirit shining through his broken utterances, that when he sat down, there were but few dry eyes in that large assembly.

(*Extracted.*)

The Two Cries.

'T WAS night in Egypt, when a cry
That rent the air was heard ;
The king arose, his servants too,
And all the land was stirred (Exod. xii.).

For weeping parents bowed their heads,
And cried, "Alas ! my child !"
The first-born all around lay dead,
And hearts with grief were wild.

House after house had felt the blow,
But stay ! not every home,
For Israel's children dwelt in peace,
That night of awful doom.

Obedience to Jehovah's word
Could stop destruction's hand.
The lamb they slew, its blood they shed
By the divine command.

The hours rolled on, each life was safe,
For Death had passed the door ;
He could not lift the latch of those
Where blood was sprinkled o'er.

Another cry will soon go forth
(It may be heard to-day),
When Christ descends into the air
To call His own away (1 Thess. iv, 16),

The dead in Christ shall all arise,
Joined by a living throng ;
While joy shall fill the hearts of saints
Who watched and waited long.

He comes at last, their absent Lord,
They'll see Him face to face ;
With bodies changed, from sin set free,
They now shall sing His praise (1 Cor. xv. 52).

They're gone ! but see that busy crowd
Left in the scene below ;
Alas ! for them, their souls are doomed
To everlasting woe.

They heard of Jesus, God's own Lamb,
Who shed His precious blood
To screen the sinner, who unscreened
Must bear the wrath of God (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

Some mocked, some scorned, some turned away,
For all 'twas now too late ;
The Lord no sprinkled blood could see,
And they must meet their fate (2 Thess. ii. 12).

Oh ! reader, ere another morn
Has dawned, the Lord may come ;
Will you be ready for the shout
That calls His people home ? (Mark xiii. 35-37).

A. R. V. A.

“Surely I come QUICKLY. Amen. Even so,
come, Lord Jesus.”—REV. xxii, 20.

"Mother ! Jesus Christ has Saved Me."

IT was with these words that a young sunburnt sailor flung himself into his widowed mother's outstretched arms.

The joy of heaven, as we read of it in Luke xv., found its bright reflection in this humble earthly home, and the mother's heart rejoiced, as it echoed the heavenly strain, "This my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost and is found," for long had she mourned her only son as one lost and dead.

His history, a bright witness to the sovereign grace of God, as shortly related to me, was as follows :—

He was the only child of very godly parents, and they, feeling the all-importance of eternal things and longing to have their son one with them in the enjoyment of salvation, had pressed persistently, perhaps not too wisely, the things of God upon him. The result was that, when about twelve years of age, to escape from their prayerful importunity, and the constant hearing of the Word of God, which in his heart he hated,

he ran away from his village home to a neighbouring seaport town. There, without loss of time, he shipped him as a cabin boy on board a vessel that was just leaving the port.

He grew up, as might be expected, with such a beginning, and amid such evil influences as attend a sailor's life, to be an utterly godless man, and, as an able-bodied seaman before the mast, became notorious for his blasphemous, drunken, and violent ways. But the constant and agonising prayers of his parents to God for their lost son had not been unheeded. God's eye had followed the wanderer, and, when about twenty-two years of age, He brought him to Himself and saved him in the following remarkable manner.

The sailing vessel in which he was, when about mid-ocean on one of her homeward voyages, suddenly encountered a severe storm. "All hands aloft to take in sail!" at once was shouted out by the captain, and with several others he was quickly at his post to carry out the order. He was the farthest out on the main-yard, and the ship was already pitching heavily. In a "devil-may-care" manner, as he afterwards described it, he was leaning over the yard-arm gathering up the sail, when the vessel gave a

tremendous lurch, and he was pitched headlong into the raging ocean.

Instantly the cry was raised, "Man overboard!" and as soon as possible a boat, with four men at the oars and one at stern and bow, was lowered to go to his rescue. With all their efforts, it was some little time before they could get even near where he was struggling in the waves, and as they were approaching him they saw him sink. Knowing he would rise again to the surface in about a minute, they rowed with all their energy so as to be near him. He rose to the surface a short distance ahead of the boat, but quickly sank again. The boatmen knew that their only chance of saving him now lay in their being within reach of him when he should rise for the third and last time. "Give way, my lads, with all your might!" cried the man in the bow, "we will have him yet!" and with determined energy he leaned as far out over the bow of the boat as he could. By God's providential mercy, the drowning man rose immediately under his outstretched hand. He seized him by the hair of his head, and, with the help of the others, soon had him in the boat.

During this time the vessel, having put about, was nearing the boat, and as quickly as possible

the apparently lifeless form was hoisted up on to the deck of the vessel. The doctor, with the aid of others under his direction, at once set to work with the usual measures adopted in such cases to restore animation. For more than an hour they continued their efforts to do this but without any result, and some of the eager watchers began to say, "It is no use trying any longer, doctor; poor Bill has done with this world." For a moment they desisted, but the doctor cried out, "Let us try again; it is wonderful how long the life remains in them sometimes."

They again set to work, lifting up his arms over his head and then bringing them down again to his sides, with pressure on the chest walls so as to induce artificial breathing, and another quarter of an hour had hardly passed when the lips of the seemingly dead man began to move, and, to the utter amazement of those about him, he gasped out, "Jesus Christ has saved." He immediately became again unconscious, but the spark of life had been rekindled, and after continuing their efforts a little longer breathing was fully restored, and they were able to carry him to his bunk.

Saved thus miraculously from a watery grave,

when he was fully recovered, he told this tale to his wondering listeners:—"When I fell head-long from the yard-arm into the sea, in a moment of time all my sins and my awfully wicked life came before me, and it seemed to me that the angry *waves of hell* were tossing, tossing themselves to receive me, when, quicker than thought, a verse I had often heard from my mother's lips shot into my mind, like a voice, saying, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' In my agony I cried out, 'Lord Jesus, save me!' and, as it seemed to me, before I reached the water He threw His mighty saving arms around me. Any way, while I was battling with the waves for dear life, I felt sure in my mind that my soul was saved, and that I should not go to hell even if I was there and then drowned."

His subsequent life and behaviour during the rest of the voyage showed plainly to his mates that "Bill" had not only had his body saved from drowning, but his soul saved from sin and the power of the devil. He showed "out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom," and gave evidence to all who subsequently knew him of the reality of the work of God in his soul; not simply in the fact

that he *knew* with certainty that he was *saved from hell*, but that he "was dead to sin and *alive* unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

His one great desire now was to get back to his parents, so as to tell them what God had done for him, and how sorry he was for all his bad conduct to them, and the sorrow he had given them in running away from home.

As soon as the vessel reached port, and he was paid off, he took his way home, and, as he neared the well-remembered cottage, for the first time it came across his mind whether his parents were still living, and his heart beat fast at the thought of whether he might ever see his loving mother again. Slowing his eager footsteps, he crept softly to the cottage door, and looking in saw, sitting by the fireside, his mother in a widow's cap. A father's arms were no longer, then, to receive him; but the mother looking up, at once recognised in the stalwart, sunburnt sailor-man her long-lost boy, and in another moment he was in her outstretched arms, with the exclamation, "Mother! Jesus Christ has saved me!"

And now, dear reader, can you say, "Jesus Christ has saved me"? And if not, why not? You may not have gone so far in a life of sin as the one you have just read of; you may not

have so striking a providential circumstance as he had to awaken you to your condition before God ; but you are a sinner, and nothing but a sinner in His sight. " All have sinned, and come short of His glory," and " There is none righteous, no *not one*," the Word of God tells us. On the other hand, that same Word tells us, that " Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and " God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Do you believe this? Have you come to Jesus, and believed in Him as *your* Saviour? If not, let me remind you of His own words, " If you believe not that I am He, ye shall *die in your sins*." And if *you* were to *die* in your sins, what then?

C. W.

"Prepare to meet thy God."

IN a comfortable room, in a large house in the West End of London, were seated several young girls with their governess, all busily engaged over their morning studies.

The Bible lesson was just over, when Emily,

the eldest, a girl of sixteen, was called upon to repeat some poetry, and when she had finished, she said, "There, Miss P . . ., have I not said it well to-day?" It was a thing she particularly disliked doing, and one which she usually did very badly.

Immediately after making the above remark, she complained of a severe pain in her head; her mother was called, a doctor sent for, and a warm bath (all in the course of a few minutes), and every remedy likely to prove helpful was tried, but it was all of no avail—Emily never regained consciousness. In less than half an hour after making that remark her soul had returned to God who gave it.

Who can describe the distress and consternation in that house? And above all, the anguish of that mother's heart? She made no profession of being a child of God herself, but she knew her governess to be a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus, and to her she turned for comfort, saying, again and again, "Oh, tell me, where is my child *now*?" but Miss P . . . could give no decided answer to that sorrowful question; she could but say that Emily had "always been attentive during the Bible lessons, and obedient at all times."

In such cases the heart must fall back upon God Himself and His immutable justice: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" We dare not affirm that a soul has gone to be with the Lord when there has been a lack of the two things needful, viz., *believing* on the Lord Jesus in the *heart*, and *confessing* with the *mouth* (Rom. x. 9); but we know that God looketh on the heart, and judgeth not as man judgeth. Moreover, He makes no mistakes.

We will not dwell on this sorrowful scene, but would affectionately ask you, dear reader, whether you are ready to be called away suddenly? We would especially appeal to the *young* readers of this little paper. You may have been accustomed to think of *sudden* death as a thing likely to come to people far advanced in years, or even to the middle aged, but *not* to the young. Here we have a true instance of a young girl being called to meet God without a moment's warning being allowed in which she could even "call upon the name of the Lord," if she had not already done so. It may be the same with you, and it may be the case *before* you have finished reading this paper. Death, in Emily's case, was due to the sudden bursting of a blood-vessel in the brain which

was followed by almost instantaneous death. It may be the same with you. Should it be so, are *you* prepared to meet God? If in your heart you are afraid to meet Him because of your many sins, may we beseech you to be reconciled to Him through the death of His beloved Son, who was "made sin for us [He] who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"? "God is just, and the justifier of Him that believeth in Jesus."

God says, "Is there not an *appointed* time unto man upon earth?" Yes, an *appointed time*,—it may be eighty years, it may be fifty, it may be thirty, or even so few as sixteen years; and, dear young reader, perhaps *you* have seen the last sun set, and *your appointed* time be TO-DAY.

Oh, turn not from these pointed questions, for after death comes *judgment*. If you die in your sins, you will go to the lake of fire where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Perhaps you think all this warning is very unnecessary for the young, for they cannot be such great sinners. You are not hardened in sin, I trust, but you have sinned in one way or another every day since you have had sufficient understanding to comprehend the meaning of

obedience and disobedience, and God says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in ONE point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. ii. 10). ONE act of disobedience constitutes you a lost sinner. Now you see you are not too young to sin, not too young to be lost, and not too young to die. But I have something better than all to tell you—you *are not too young to be saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ*, for He says, "Come unto me, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you rest," and, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Oh, come to Him to-day, and let Him give you rest. He desires to bless you and make you happy here, and have you with Himself throughout eternity.

Another suggestion Satan is likely to make to your mind is, that it is a miserable thing to be a Christian. Remember, the devil "is a liar, and the father of it" (John viii. 44). God's Word says, "At Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," and God cannot lie.

A young boy of sixteen was converted lately, and he wrote to a Christian, saying, "I used to think Christians must be unhappy, but *now* I think none save believers know what real happiness is." All God's children can say, "He is

good and doeth good"; and we say to you, dear reader, "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. xxxiv. 8).

R. M. W. B.

**"All I know is, my Sins are gone;"
or, Peace with God: Its foundation.**

THE writer often finds persons more or less ignorant as to the righteous ground upon which the sins of the believer in Jesus are blotted out.

Calling one day upon a man, who was kept at home by ill-health, I found him cultivating his little vegetable garden. We entered into conversation, which soon turned upon matters spiritual. I learned that my friend was a member of what is termed "The Salvation Army." Certainly, this man appeared bright and happy, and told me that his sins were gone; but as to how or where they were gone, he was not clear; but with a plainly marked pleasure, said, "All I know is, that my sins *are* gone."

It is possible that at some time or other the question as to the *ground* of their removal will seriously occupy this believer, and surely it is

for the blessing of every one that such a question should be clearly understood. Man has a *heart* and also a *conscience*—the heart needs to be reconciled, and the conscience needs peace *with* God. The relentless foe of man will at some time or another, perhaps at the hour of death, challenge the believer in Jesus. He may seek to attack the conscience about its misdeeds, and much distress may be occasioned in the soul of one who is practically unacquainted with the true ground upon which the Christian can say—

"What though the accuser roar
Of ills that I have done ;
I know them all, and thousands more,
Jehovah findeth none."

In the tenth chapter of Hebrews, the sacrifice or work of Christ is contrasted with the sacrifices offered under the law in the time of Moses. These sacrifices could never make the conscience perfect before God because of their imperfection: "In those sacrifices, there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Indeed, by being repeatedly offered, the sins of the offerer were rather brought to remembrance.

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away its stain."

But in contrast to this, the one sacrifice of our Lord gives a perfect conscience to the believer: "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," *i.e.*, all that believe in Him. The Holy Spirit, too, points out the significance of the High Priest in Moses' day not having any rest in the performance of his repeated offerings. It is said of him that he "*standeth daily*, offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." This signifies that the work was not in any way a completed thing. On the other hand, stress is laid on the fact that Jesus Christ *sits* at the right hand of God, to show that His work is finished.

The sacrifices of old, being imperfect, could never give a perfect conscience, *i.e.*, a conscience without a flaw before God, however *conscious* we may be of the many sins of which we have been guilty. On the other hand, Christ's sacrifice being a perfect one, the result is a perfect conscience before God. The believer knowing that God has accepted the sacrifice for him, and consequently God's holy claims having been met, it is on righteous grounds He can say, and does say, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"; nay, further, the Christian has "boldness to enter into the holiest by the

blood of Jesus, by a new and living way;" by the blood of Jesus, and by nothing else.

There is a striking metaphor used in the Book of Micah (chap. vii. 19). The prophet says to Jehovah, regarding His people, "And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the *depths* of the sea." We are told by those "that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters," that we are not to suppose that the whole mass of waters is disturbed in times of hurricane or tempest; below a certain depth is what is called the "cushion" of the sea; beneath this are the calm depths, into which let anything sink, and never in time will it rise again. Look once more at the sentence, "And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the *depths* of the sea," and observe, too, the comprehensive word "all."

It is of great importance to be assured that the sins of the believer are put away consistently with the holiness and justice of God. "God is Love," but also "God is Light." This the third chapter of Romans unfolds, showing that since the accomplishment of redemption, God is declared to be "the justifier of the ungodly," He is "just," and not only merciful. Through the work of Christ, God sees righteousness upon all that believe, and it is available for every one.

So we see that while those who believe in Jesus can rightly say their sins are gone, they are not left in darkness as to how and where they are gone. In consequence of God's holy claims having been fully met in the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth from every sin, they are gone "into the depths of the sea," by which is meant, as we have seen, that they will never rise again to be a ground of condemnation.

"Payment God will not twice demand,
First at my wounded Surety's hand,
And then again at mine."

Thus the heart of the believer is not only reconciled, but his conscience is at rest. It is true that his joy may fluctuate, even Paul was not always in the third heaven, nor always in an ecstasy, but his peace with God remains unruffled. The blood of Christ secures this.

To doubt is to dishonour God. To say, "I hope," when God would have me say, "I have," is simple unbelief. "Being justified by faith, we HAVE peace with God, *through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. v. 1).

W. R. C.

THOSE who know heaven to be their home can look upon all things here as a stepping-stone helping them on up there.

J. W.

"I am Vile."

MANY people would think that these words were very suitable in the mouth of an openly wicked, bad, immoral man or woman. But they were not spoken by such. On the contrary, they were the words of a man who lived an outwardly blameless life—a man who "was perfect and upright, and one who feared God, and eschewed evil."

Mark, Job does not say, "I have done wrong things"; every one will admit that; it is not a question of what he *has done*, but of what he *is*: "I am vile." Job lived early in the world's history; but, as it was *then*, so it is *now*, the great difficulty is to get people to give up all pretension to any righteousness or goodness in themselves, and simply take the lost sinner's place.

Job struggled hard against the hand of God upon him: he thought, Well, "*if*" I had done such and such bad things, then I could understand all this evil which has come upon me; in chapter xxxi. he closes his pleading with sixteen "*ifs*." But at last the light broke in, and

Job saw himself as he really was. From that moment there was no excuse, no "if." He goes down on his face before God, and says, "I am vile," "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And so it ever must be. Every soul who gets blessing must take this place. Christ died for the *ungodly*. He came to seek and save that which was *lost*.

This great fact I was trying to make plain to a person living beside a wide river by the following illustration. Suppose you saw a man struggling in the middle of that river who could not swim: all his efforts are useless—he cannot keep himself afloat. One thing can meet his desperate case, and one thing only. Some one, seeing his utterly helpless condition, at once launches a boat, rows over and takes him on board, and he is brought safe to land without any effort on his part. So Christ is a full and complete Saviour for the lost and helpless sinner.

Oh, the blessing to be had by simply taking the lost sinner's place, casting aside every shred of self-righteousness, and then proving what a Saviour Jesus is!

When speaking on this subject a few days ago, some one said to me, "Oh, yes, we can do nothing without His help." True, but Christ

will never *help* you to save yourself; no, He has completed the work of salvation, "it is finished," you have but to accept Him by faith. Christ offers Himself as a full, complete, and all-sufficient Saviour, and He is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by Him.

B.

Up or Down.

THERE is a great difference between *up* and *down*, is there not? Yet how many pursue their journey through this world, as if there were none in respect of the future, however eager they may be about up and down trains, and up and down in the social scale. Ah! if it is very important to go *up* in this world, and very disappointing to go *down*, how *much* more serious for the future.

There is a great junction in the vicinity of London where it is difficult not to be struck with the difference between these two words, and that which they convey of deep meaning. Two trains there constantly run out from two platforms side by side, and for a few moments they continue running on parallel lines, then

almost imperceptibly the levels change, and with astonishing rapidity one train runs down-hill and soon disappears, while the other seems slowly ascending. Any way, they lose sight of each other—one goes *up*, the other *down*.

Many young people wish to ascend in every sense, and some take for their motto *Excelsior*; but perhaps they are only thinking of life in this world, often so full of aspirations, and have forgotten eternity. But what can authorise any to say of the life which is on the other side of death, "I am going *up*"? *Nothing* but the fact that Jesus has been down beneath death's dark waters—

"Down to Calvary's depth of woe."

As Jonah "went down" in the belly of the fish, so did He under the weight of our sins, and God's wrath against sin. He went down alone. He could say, "Thou hast cast Me into the deep . . . Thy waves passed over Me" (Jonah ii.). It is figurative language, you may object—yes, but *truth*, couched in language that we can well understand. God has been pleased to use such simple words as *up* and *down* to convey to us the solemn reality of two conditions or destinations in the future. We know very well, and we

take care to know, whether we are going up to London or down to Bristol, just as the poor man who was going "down from Jerusalem to Jericho" was, of course, aware of it. Why should eternity be of less importance? Why do not men prepare for it as they do for a journey here?

But to return—the Lord went down, but not to remain there. "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell." "Thou hast brought up My life from corruption." He went down to bring us up. He went down that He might not be alone in going up. Can you not thank Him?

How solemn it is to carry on the thought of up and down! There are some—thank God there are *many*—who will be "caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," or as an old hymnologist says, who will

*"Run up with joy the shining way,
To see and meet their Lord."*

Just as Jesus was "taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (Acts i.), so will it be with them; they will be taken up, they will leave earth for heaven. Will *you* be there?

And this earth? Ah! it will be emptied of believers, but Satan will be here in great wrath. "The devil is come down unto you" (Rev. xii.),

it says, for he is cast out of heaven to which he *has* access now. Many terrible things will happen, and then God will consign the devil to the bottomless pit, and shut him up for a thousand years, after which he will be cast into the lake of fire—he will go *down*.

But why speak of Satan? Oh, reader, would that he might be alone there! Where will you go? Will you have your portion where he has? “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget God*” (Ps. ix.). Are you one who is forgetting God? If so, think seriously before it is too late; do not shut your eyes to that to which every moment brings you nearer. You are on the eve of a journey, and it is well to consider *now* whether you are prepared for it, whether you will go up or down. “Seek ye the Lord *while He may be found*.” When once “the up-train has started,” when once “the saved ones are caught up,” “when once the Master of the house has risen up and shut to the door,” it will be too late to apply for a ticket, or to seek an entrance. “Because thou hast *forgotten* the God of thy salvation . . . therefore the harvest shall be reaped in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow” (Isa. xvii.).

Thank God this need not be true of you; you

may look up and see Jesus, and learn that He went down to death to save you and bring you to God, so that where He is, you may be.

"As an eagle soaring
Up the radiant skies,
Even now to find Thee,
In Thy Paradise."

H. L. H.

"Is not this a brand plucked out
of the fire?"

I WAS the third son of a publican living in the north of London, and when I was only about seven years old my mother was suddenly snatched away by death.

She was in her thirty-ninth year, and was a strong, healthy woman, but just previous to her death she had, poor thing, fallen a victim to strong drink, through my father's bad treatment, they say.

I can remember quite well the accident which caused her death. It was the Sunday after Christ-

mas Day, 1874. We had just finished dinner. My poor mother was in her bedroom, and my father had locked the door, when suddenly we heard a scream, followed by a violent ringing of the bell. In trying to escape through the window she had fallen to the ground, and was picked up dead. Without a moment's warning she had passed from time into eternity, and "In the place where the tree falleth there it shall be."

Oh! dear reader, take heed to this solemn truth. Who can tell what a moment may bring forth? What would be your end, should you be thus cut off? Where would you go? Remember, if you die in your sins, you will be raised in your sins, and judged in your sins, and cast into the lake of fire in your sins. Oh! take heed, I pray you—take heed!—

"All things are ready—come!

All hindrance is removed,
And God in Christ His precious love
To fallen man has proved.

"All things are ready—come!

To-morrow may not be;
O sinner! come, the Saviour waits
This hour to welcome thee."

Well, ten years had passed by since this sad

event ; my father had lain for about three weeks on a sick-bed. He had had similar attacks before, and the doctor had told him that one of them would take him off ; and so it turned out. On returning home from business one evening I was told he had suddenly fallen back on his pillow, exclaiming, "God have mercy upon me," and died. Again, "In the place where the tree falleth there it shall be."

Five years passed by, and, unheeding these solemn warnings, I went on my way. Often I listened to the glad tidings of God's grace to lost sinners ; but still without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world, I vainly tried to satisfy my heart with the pleasures of sin. But God, who is rich in mercy, heard the many prayers offered by friends on my behalf. One Sunday afternoon I was sitting in my lodgings feeling very dissatisfied with myself and my surroundings, when I noticed a new book lying on the table, the title of which I found to be "Grace and Truth."

After glancing through the preface I commenced to read the piece "No Difference." I had not got very far before I threw down the book, and began to pace to and fro the room, exclaiming, "Absurd nonsense ! no difference

between me and a thief—pshaw! no difference between me and a murderer—bosh! Why, I'm not even so bad as J—— G——, and he is not half a bad sort; and, besides, I believe in the Bible."

However, I could not rest; the words "*no difference*" kept ringing in my ears. I felt thoroughly annoyed and upset. Eventually I resolved to go and hear Mr E—— preach at the Baptist Chapel (where I had attended the watch-night service about ten months before), and off I went, still feeling rather put out.

But God had His eye on me, and gave His servant a word specially for me I believe, for the scripture from which he preached was Romans iii. 22 and 23, "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." I hardly knew how to keep my seat, and felt myself turn very red. Oh! how I thank God for that word, and for that sermon, for Mr E—— had not been speaking very long before I was compelled to cry out from my heart, "Lord Jesus, I receive Thee as my Saviour."

How intently I listened to every word! I shall never forget it, nor shall I ever cease praising God for it, for there and then I passed

from death unto life, from the power of Satan to God—

"Saved for glory—
Wondrous story,
Saved by Jesu's precious blood."

I could but say of myself, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

And now, dear reader, permit me in love to your soul to ask, Where are you? You may be a child of godly parents, but there is no difference. You may be a strict religionist, but there is no difference. You may be a great moralist, but there is no difference. You may be a poor profligate, still, there is no difference: for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Yes, blessed be God! there is also "no difference" before Him, for "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him," "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"!

"Take salvation,
Take it NOW, and happy be!"

T. G. P.

"And others save with fear, snatching them out of the fire."—JUDE 23.

The Worldling's Lament.

"The spectres of long-buried hours
Throng round me, thick and fast ;
'The might have been' of life is lost
In the unreturning past."

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE.

"Hush ! these are tones unfit for thee,
Heaven's chosen one ! It cannot be
That *thou*, in mere humanity,
Canst chide 'what is.'

What 'might have been' is none of thine ;
It sounds no chord, no note divine ;
It tells of earth, of man, of time,
That 'might have been.'

Or know'st thou not what hand has traced
Thy path, thy portion, through the waste ?
There's nought of chance, of loss, of haste,
In His '*What is.*'

'Tis He who once came very man,
And knows man's need and will, and can
Make part of His eternal plan
Thy 'might have been.'

Amen ! amen ! (the soul replies),
Blest hand that curbs, controls, denies :
Each 'loss' with Thee becomes a prize,—
Each 'might have been' a loss."

"Eternity!"

NOT all our readers, perhaps, know that this solemn and soul-subduing word occurs only once in our English Bible. Embedded as it were in its very centre, we find it in the fifteenth verse of the fifty-seventh of Isaiah. It is God Himself who uses it, and speaks by it to every one of us: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth ETERNITY, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

ETERNITY is the home of God. He ever has, ever does, ever will inhabit it; and there, as He tells us, He would have others dwell with Him.

No *one* word can tell us more fully and characteristically who and what God is—He is "the ETERNAL GOD."

No *one* word speaks so solemnly and so comprehensively to us as to ourselves. Creatures of time, we *must* all go into ETERNITY. Either to dwell with God in "ETERNAL life," in His home; or with the devil in "ETERNAL punish-

ment," in the "lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Let each of our readers ask him or herself seriously this question: "Shall I, in ETERNITY, dwell with 'Him who inhabiteth ETERNITY,' or where?"

But more, no *one* word appeals so powerfully and effectively to the conscience as this word "ETERNITY"; and we believe no *one* word has been so used of God to arrest the careless, and be the means of their conversion to God, with all its blessed consequences.

The apostle Paul tells us, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The apostle James, speaking of God's sovereign action towards us in grace, says, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." The apostle Peter reminds us we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

It is God Himself who makes His own voice heard in the soul by His *written* Word, and with Him *one* solitary word of *that* written Word is enough. The two instances we are about to relate are striking proofs of this, as well as of the sovereign mercy of God to poor rebellious, unbelieving sinners.

I.

A lady of fashion, wholly given up to worldly pleasure, utterly godless, and unconcerned about her soul, returning home from a ball about three in the morning, as she passed to her bedroom through the adjoining sitting-room, where her patient Christian maid was awaiting her return, glanced over her shoulder to see what book she was reading to beguile the tedious hours. It was the Bible, and with contemptuous astonishment she exclaimed, "Poor dull soul!", and passed on to her room.

Her maid followed her mistress to help her to unrobe, and having completed her services retired to her own room, which opened into that of her mistress. She had not been long in bed when she was aroused by sounds of distress issuing from her mistress's room, and, going to the door, she inquired what was the matter, and if she could do anything for her. Her mistress replied that nothing was the matter, and that she needed nothing, requesting her maid to go back to her bed.

Doing as she was told, she had hardly composed herself to go to sleep when again groans and sighs aroused her, and she heard her mistress restlessly tossing herself about in her bed.

Going again to the door of her room, she asked if she was not feeling ill, and begged to be allowed to do something to relieve her, but her mistress, in an annoyed voice, replied that she was quite well, and requested her to go at once back to bed and not be concerned about her.

For a time there was silence, but before long she again heard her mistress restlessly tossing about in her bed and groaning deeply. Getting up she this time passed to the bed-side of her mistress, and said, "Madam, I am sure you must be ill, or something is greatly distressing you." With a burst of tears her mistress, no longer able to retain her self-possession, replied, "I am not ill, but I am in great distress of mind, and you are the cause of it."

"I, madam!" exclaimed her astonished maid; "I am very sorry; I am sure I do not know in what way I have offended or distressed you."

"It is all that book of yours," rejoined her mistress; "I just glanced over your shoulder, as I came in, to see what you were reading to amuse yourself with, and my eye caught sight of the word 'ETERNITY,' and I have not been able to get it out of my mind ever since. It seems burned into my brain, and the more I try not to think about it, the more it seems to force itself upon

my attention. I can't tell what to do with myself for anxiety. I don't love God; I am afraid to die; I can't bear to think of ETERNITY; I feel I am going to hell. Oh! what shall I do? You have been the cause of my distress; can't you try and do something to relieve me?"

Lifting her heart silently to God in deep thankfulness, her maid quietly replied, "Dear madam, you need not be afraid of God and ETERNITY. If only you put your trust in the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that He died on the cross for you, is risen from the dead, and is now at God's right hand to be your Saviour. Turn to Him in your distress, for He says, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

With many such words she tried to comfort and compose her mistress, but for the moment without effect. God was doing His own work of contrition effectually in her soul, and for some days she remained in great distress of mind, but eventually God led her by her maid's means into peace and salvation, through the knowledge of the forgiveness of her sins. Shortly after she came out fully on the side of Christ, and left the world and its delusive pleasures behind her for ever. The word ETERNITY had done its work.

II.

On one of the steamers of the St Lawrence River, in Canada, a servant of the Lord was giving away gospel tracts to his fellow-passengers. He offered one to a gentleman who was standing near him. He took it, glanced down its first page, and then deliberately tore into small pieces and tossed it over the side of the boat into the river under the eyes of its giver. He was a professed infidel.

At the next landing-stage, as he passed over the gangway to land, the tract distributor, who was standing close by, whispered in his ear, "The Lord will have to say to you about the way you have treated that tract."

The gentleman, with a contemptuous sneer, passed on, and going to his hotel, soon in the company of riotous companions forgot all about the incident. In the small hours of the morning he went to his bedroom, and as he was unbuttoning his waistcoat a small triangular piece of white paper, thus set free, floated on to the floor. Stooping down, he picked it up to see what it was. On it was printed one word, and that one word was "ETERNITY." He tossed the bit of paper into the fire, and, completing his undressing, was soon in bed. But not to

sleep. Scarcely had he laid his head on his pillow when a voice seemed to sound in his ear the word " ETERNITY." Turning his head on to the other side, again the voice sounded in the other ear, " ETERNITY." Vainly he endeavoured to evade this constant sounding in his ears of this word " ETERNITY." He tried to think of something else, by distraction to free his mind from the thoughts this word suggested. It was all no use : God was speaking to his soul. As Elihu said to Job : " God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." So was it in this case, but at last he did perceive that GOD was speaking to him. His infidelity passed away, and he realised he was in God's presence, with all his sins upon him calling for vengeance from the God he had despised, and so long sinned against. His agony of soul was complete. For two days sleep forsook his eyelids, and, like Saul of Tarsus, he could " neither eat nor drink."

On the third day he went to hear the gospel at a mission-hall, and believing " on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead ; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," he found peace with God, confessed " with his mouth the Lord Jesus," and

from that time devoted the remainder of his life to the service of Him who had loved him and given Himself for him. Knowing that he had ETERNAL LIFE himself, and that he would surely dwell for ever with Him "that inhabiteth ETERNITY," he loved to insist on those precious words of our Lord Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, HATH ETERNAL LIFE, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

C. W.

"Fire! Fire!"

SUCH were the terrible words that echoed through a small watering town where I was staying. I put on my hat, and following the eager steps of others, I found myself in a narrow crowded street where a large concourse of people had assembled. On inquiring, "Are all the inmates safe?" I was told all but one, and that was an old lady who had once been led to the door, but would go back again to fetch something, and they had lost her in the

smoke and fire. "But can they not save her?" I replied; for I knew the old lady, and felt interested in her welfare. "Well," said the person addressed, "they are doing their best; she should not have gone back."

The flames were still pouring out of the windows amid volumes of smoke; the firemen worked hard and did what they could to get the fire under, but did not succeed till the poor old lady's spirit had fled, and her body charred, with both legs burnt off, was found.

I stood in solemn wonderment as I thought of these words, "The earth also and the works therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter iii. 10). Dear reader, have you ever thought what a dreadful thing it will be when "the heavens being on fire, the elements will melt with fervent heat"? If not, think where will you be in that day. "Behold! now is the day of salvation." Oh! come to the Saviour while you may. If the lady of whom I have written had accepted the offer of the friend who helped her sister to escape, she would have been saved, but she went back after something and was burnt. Dear reader, do not delay—the Lord Jesus is coming, and then the door will be shut. On which side of that door will you be?

“My Word shall not return to
Me void.”

ABOUT fifteen years ago a young Jewish Rabbi called on an intimate infidel friend, and while sitting in his library he took up a little book from the writing-table, and said to his friend, “What is this?”

“It is only the Gentiles’ book, you will not care for it,” answered his friend; but in those few moments the young Rabbi’s eyes had caught the opening words of Matthew’s Gospel: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” What, he thought, the despised Nazarene, the Messiah, the son of Abraham! Why, he was already interested in the Gentiles’ book. His friend seeing him still looking at the little Testament, rallied him, saying, “Don’t read that, it is the Gentiles’ book, and worth nothing,” and the young Rabbi replied, “But I should like to read it.”

“Oh, very well,” answered the infidel, in a mocking, joking tone; “take it—I give it you for a birthday present.”

The young Rabbi took it, and for fear of

being disturbed, he used to go into the synagogue and read it in the Sanctuary, where he knew he should be quite unmolested, others not having a right to go there. When he had finished it, he resolved to read through the Old Testament very carefully, and *without* the comments and additions of the Rabbinical writings, and when he reached Daniel ix. 26, and read, "Messiah shall be cut off, and shall have nothing" (see margin), he felt convinced that the once-crucified "Jesus" was the "Messiah"; and then he read again the New Testament, and after that he saw that he must not only believe on Christ in his heart, but make confession of Him with the mouth, so he told his friends that he had learnt that the despised Nazarene was the Saviour whom Jehovah had promised in the Scriptures.

It is almost needless to add that he had to leave his kindred, for the hatred of the Jews is as great to-day to the name of Jesus as it was when the blessed Lord was Himself on earth, and the young Rabbi's friends were always seeking opportunities to put him to death, so that he left his kindred and home to preach Christ crucified to his Jewish brethren in Berlin, Paris, and other large cities.

Oh! what untold and unknown blessing has come from that little Testament, as through it hundreds of Jews have heard of Jesus, and many through the young Rabbi's preaching have passed away with the precious name of Jesus on their lips.

May this account encourage us to go on distributing the Word of God on the right hand and on the left, for "we know not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether *both* shall be alike good." Doubtless the one who gave the Testament to the infidel felt discouraged at seeing him remain unchanged, but God says, "It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." *God sent it* for the young Rabbi. He had purposes of love towards that lost sheep of the house of Israel; and He led him to the infidel's house just when that Testament was lying on the table. So, dear fellow-Christian, "be not weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Before closing I would give one other little instance of blessing received through printed gospel matter. Two or three years ago a lady had a great wish to speak to a cab-driver about his soul; he was very respectable, and she could not find the courage to do it, so she

prayed much to the Lord to bless and save the man, and gave him a bound volume of gospel addresses. Six months afterwards she heard that that man was dying in rapid consumption, and on visiting him she found that God had worked in his soul by means of that book, for he was saved, and was rejoicing in Christ as His Saviour. The lady often read to him during those last few weeks of his illness, and he constantly said, "I know that, miss; it is all here," referring to the little book which he kept under his pillow, and from which he would never part.

The cab-driver assured Miss W—— over and over again that he had learnt he was a sinner, that Jesus was the only Saviour, and that he had received everlasting life through the gospel in that book, and without any other aid.

Dear fellow-Christian, may we be "always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." When His own Word is distributed in dependence on the guidance of the Spirit, and accompanied with prayer, blessing must follow, for the "word of God is the sword of the Spirit," and "The entrance of Thy word giveth light." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Ps cxxvi. 5).

R. M. W. B.

"The Last Night."

THE Last Night!" Such were the striking words posted all over Cape Town in huge, heavy capital letters. What did they signify? At any rate they set me thinking that Sunday evening as I wended my way to where the gospel message was once more to be told out.

Was it the "last night" that sweet story of redeeming love was to be heard by some one in that preaching hall? Was it the "last night" some preacher was about to deliver his message? Was it the "last night" before the coming of the Lord?

These were the thoughts that went flashing through my mind, though the announcement itself had to do with a very trivial matter.

For a whole week the walls of the town had been placarded,

"THE LAST SIX NIGHTS."

Some theatrical company had been performing, and their visit was about to terminate. The public were thus informed that their chances of witnessing the spectacle were now getting fewer,

but at length the last night had come, and all were warned that it must be *now or never!*

THE LAST NIGHT!

Yes, the last night had come, and the following morning a large crowd was assembled at the station to witness the departure of the troupe.

Reader, has this no voice for you? Of course it is true, no one could for a moment deny it, that we must all arrive sooner or later at our last night of life. And yet how often time speeds us on to ETERNITY, and little do we contemplate that any day may be our last on earth.

Belshazzar's "last night" came when, amidst scenes of blasphemous revelry, he was drinking himself drunk in Babylon's palaces, forgetful of that God who held his life in His hand, and took account of all his ways. "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting," was the solemn record; and, reader, is it otherwise with you? If weighed in God's righteous balances of judgment at this moment, what sentence must needs be passed upon you?

"The last night" had come for Sodom and the cities of the plain when two messengers from God presented themselves at the gate where Lot sat (Gen. xix. 1). True type of a worldly minded

believer, he had accommodated himself to the wickedness of the place instead of, in faithfulness to God and his fellow, raising the voice of warning as to impending judgment.

Oh, ye Christians, who dabble in the politics of this world fast ripening for God's judgment, and omit the weightier matters of "the world to come" in your intercourse with those around you, take warning by Lot!

"The last night" in Sodom had come. And Lot, at length awakened to the seriousness of the moment, sallies forth from his house into the streets and goes from door to door where his sons-in-law were slumbering. In vain, now, he pleads, and warns, and beseeches them to fly. "He seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law" (ver. 14).

But "the last night" had come, and the sun was just risen upon the earth when the Lord rained brimstone and fire out of heaven upon the cities of the plain. Every traveller to those parts can to this day behold the awful and unmistakable evidences of this dire calamity. Scripture it is that informs us that it was a direct interposition of God in judgment because of the wickedness of the inhabitants. And "as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank,

they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke xvii. 28, &c.).

And "the last night" has already, since the opening of this year, come to many of the inhabitants of South Africa. The Natal railway disaster, the worst ever known in the southern hemisphere, launching its sixty and more victims into eternity in a moment of time as they hurried from Johannesburg; and now, as I write, news has come of the awful dynamite explosion whereby, in that self-same city, hundreds of lives have unexpectedly been cut short. Do not these and many other instances of the kind speak loudly to us all, and remind us that soon and suddenly, too, our "last night" on earth may come; and if our eyes were suddenly closed in death, where next, reader, would they be opened? When death terminates your sojourn here, where will your soul go?

Where will you spend eternity?

But your "last night," reader, may come in another sense than this of which we are speaking. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh;"

in the twinkling of an eye He will come and take His people home to the mansions prepared for them on high. Beware, lest coming suddenly He find you unprepared! Then, though your life on earth might continue for a short space, your "last night" of gospel privilege will have come, your last chance of salvation will have been missed, and your eternal doom have been fixed.

Reader, these are faithful and true sayings. Despise not the warnings, or you, too, may suddenly be cut off, and that without remedy!

But, thank God! the remedy is now available: the remedy for sin. The precious blood of Christ in all its sin-cleansing efficacy may be your immediate confidence. There are no stains so dark but what it can make whiter than snow. Come, then, and prove its value at once!

God, the God you have sinned against, invites you; He has Himself provided the remedy; He is satisfied with the atoning work of His dear Son, and now offers a full, free, and eternal forgiveness to all who believe (Acts xiii. 39). *This day may be your last of life on earth.* Decide at once! Choose this day whom you will serve!

Christ or Satan?

A. H. B.

A False Peace.

IN Ward No. 3 of a large county hospital a young woman lay very ill. We were strangers to each other, but the moment I sat beside her, she began chatting freely, telling me of the precious baby boy she had been obliged to leave behind at home, and of the tidings she had received that morning telling her he was getting on so well.

Her condition was very serious indeed. She told me that on the previous Saturday the doctors had despaired of her life, and thought she could not possibly live through the night.

"Supposing you had died that night, where would you have gone?" I asked her.

"Oh! that is all right," she replied; "I was not a bit afraid to die."

"It is a great mercy to be prepared to meet death, but what about your sins? Were you ready to meet God?"

"Yes, I had not a fear," she said.

"Tell me then what kept you so peaceful," I inquired, and never shall I forget the horror that seemed to chill me through and through as she replied:—

"I've always lived such a good life, I knew it would be all right."

"But could you dare to meet a holy God with nothing to bring Him but your good life?"

"Yes," she said; "I knew no fear, for I've been brought up to read my Bible, and I never forget my prayers every day."

It was so solemn. Perhaps there is no sadder sight on earth than to see an immortal soul on the verge of eternity lulled by the soothing words of the devil, crying to them, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." She had listened to his voice, and believed it, until all terror of death, and "after death the judgment," had left her.

It is easy enough to talk flippantly of death when one is in perfect health, but this young woman had consciously faced it in all its terror, and was not afraid. But it was a *false* peace. Even when she referred again to that dread moment when her life hung in the balance, and none but her Creator knew whether it was to be spared, she was quiet, and calm, and peaceful. But it was a *false* peace. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace" (Luke xi. 21). Satan is that strong man, and he was keeping that young woman as his goods in "peace." But it was a *false* peace.

Scripture says of the wicked, "There are no bands in their death" (Ps. lxxiii. 4). But after death they find how false has their peace been that has soothed them into everlasting destruction.

Perhaps, you did not know the power Satan has over you, even deceiving you as to your imminent peril. May God in His mercy open your eyes, because there is a real peace—a deep, solid, and eternal peace—and you may be the happy possessor of it. It is not found, as the young woman deceived herself into believing, through the merits of her own good life, or her good feelings either. Reading the Bible will not take you to heaven, nor prayers either. The Pharisees did both. They searched the Scriptures, thinking in them they had eternal life, but they crucified the very One of whom the Scriptures testified. It is faith in Christ that saves us. He has "made *peace* through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Christ made it, faith believes it, and the believing soul enjoys it.

"Lord, while our souls in faith repose
Upon Thy precious blood,
Peace like an even river flows,
And mercy like a flood."

E. R. M.

The Teacher Encouraged.

THERE are few Christians who need more encouragement than the Sunday-school teacher. While the gospel preacher may often meet with success in telling out the message of God to sinners, the teacher of the young often has to wait for years before the seed sown springs up, and besides all that, how much indifference is shown by many children! Little do they know how they are trying the hearts of their teachers, who, doubtless, have been praying to the Lord beforehand that He may bless the word spoken, and then to all appearance there has not been one listening ear, or one who has received the seed in good ground, and the teacher is almost ready to say, "I fear I am spending my strength for nought."

Dear fellow-Christian, "Be not weary in well-doing, for in *due* season ye *shall* reap, *if* ye faint not." How many have gone on year after year, and have seen little fruit, but do not forget that this work is God's. If you have set the plain word of God before the dear children, you know He has said, "My word shall *not*

return unto Me void, but it *shall* accomplish that whereunto *I* have sent it," and how often has a soul been brought to the Lord in after years through a word sown in the heart in the Sunday-school.

"Sow ye beside all waters" is another word for you and for me. *Which* is to prosper must be left to Him who knoweth the end from the beginning ; it may be that all are alike good.

Dear reader, do not lose sight of this fact, it is of His own good pleasure that He uses us at all. Could not the Lord accomplish His purposes of grace to the sinner without our help at all? Most certainly. But He desires fruit that may abound to our account, and our own desire should be alone for His glory. Think of the gracious ways of the Lord to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, after His resurrection. They had taken up their occupation again. "But that night they caught *nothing*."

Jesus said, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

They had been trying all night on the *wrong* side. What a lesson for us, dear reader. We must first seek His mind before we try to win souls to Him. You know the result of casting on the right side.

Jesus said, "Bring of the fish which *ye* have now caught." Could He not rightly have said, "Which I have driven into your nets"? But no, He gives them the credit of having caught them. And so it is when our gracious Lord sends one of His children on a message of mercy. He stirs up the conscience, ploughing it up ready to receive the seed. Sometimes we go with slow step and doubting heart to deposit it. He waters it by the word, causes it to spring up, bear fruit, and then gives us the credit of having brought a soul to Christ, and by-and-bye we shall be rewarded for what has been all His own work. Oh, what grace is in the loving heart of Jesus!

May we ever be ready with hands to work and feet to run in His service, not because it is a duty merely, and not for the reward, but because we love Him who has done such wonderful things for us. Not that we can boast of the greatness of *our* love (we can of His), but we can say with Peter, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Well might we say—

"I dare not work my soul to save,
That work my Lord *has* done,
But I would work like any slave,
From *love* to God's dear Son."

I should like to tell you of some young girls in the Bible Class, who have lately confessed Christ, that you may be encouraged in your work of love.

Some Bible questions are written out for those who care to have them about once a month. A little while ago a few personal questions were addressed to them at the end of the paper, and they were exhorted to answer them truly. These were the questions :—

What think *ye* of Christ ?

What is He to *you* ?

What value do *you* put upon the shed blood ?

Was it shed for *you* ?

These questions brought back some bright answers, and here they are :—

1. "Jesus Christ is my Saviour, whose most precious blood was shed to wash away my sins."

—L. B.

2. "I think—

"He's altogether lovely, none can with Him compare,
The chief among ten thousand, the fairest of the fair."

"He is the Perfect One, the One who left His Father's glory to die for me. He is my Saviour, my help in time of trouble. He is the rock on which I stand. He is my all, my everything."

Yes, thank God, His blood was shed for me, and I have accepted it."—N. W.

3. "I think of Christ as my Saviour and Friend. He is to me my Saviour who died on the cross to save me. The shed blood is valuable to me, because in that all my sins were washed away—it was shed for me."—F. M.

4. Another, A. P., said she would rather tell me herself than write it, and so she did, and has since cast in her lot with the people of God.

These young girls have been in this school for years, most probably have received the word in the heart while much younger, which has been watered by other teachers, and now springs up, bringing forth fruit to God. There are many more in the class who do not take the same interest, yet are attentive listeners, so that we can count upon a blessing for them also, and can thank God and take courage.

May we, dear Christian reader, be strengthened to encourage ourselves in the Lord our God, that we may be encouraged by Himself.

I would affectionately ask the unsaved reader to ponder these words, "What think ye of Christ?" Soon you will have to meet Him face to face.

S. R. F.

The Perfect One.

“Behold my Servant,” &c. (Isa. xlii. 1).

“Behold your God !” (Isa. xli. 9).

PERFECT man—as perfect God—
Thus His wondrous path He trod
Pure and perfect in His birth ;
Perfect all His days on earth !

Perfect as a little Child—
Holy, harmless, undefiled ;
Perfect in His opening youth—
Full of wisdom, grace, and truth.

Subject in His earthly home,
Waiting service yet to come ;
Every day delighting still
In His heavenly Father's will.

Nothing sought He of His own,
Glorifying God alone ;
And the Father always smiled
On this perfect, holy Child.

Perfect in His manhood's prime,
When, at God's appointed time,
Lo ! the Spirit, like a dove,
Rested on Him from above.

Wondrous sight to mortals given—
Wondrous words declared from heaven !
God the Father's joy made known
In His well-beloved Son !

Thus revealed the Saviour stood,
Telling forth the heart of God—
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Pledged to seek and save the lost !

How He loved, and toiled, and wept ;
How He prayed, whilst others slept !
Healed the sick, and raised the dead,
Satisfied the poor with bread !

How He met the scorn of men—
Meek, reviling not again ;
Then His life-blood freely gave,
E'en His cruel foes to save !

Praise we for Thy precious blood,
Jesus, Saviour, Lamb of God !
Perfect in Thy dying hour,
Perfect in Thy risen power.

Perfect on the throne above,
Perfect in Thy changeless love ;
Son of God, we Thee adore,
Son of Man for evermore !

Dancing and Dying.

THE quarter-deck of a large ocean steamer was brilliantly illuminated with the electric light, and gaily decorated with banners and flags. A fancy dress ball was engaging the undivided attention of a large number of the passengers. Nothing must intrude itself that would spoil the fun or gaiety of the hour. Let the tinsel and the glitter, the dancing and the drinking continue till night has well nigh passed into day, yet it *must* cease.

Yes, the pleasures of this world, all-absorbing as they may seem for the moment, must pass away. There is nothing enduring about them. Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of these waters shall thirst again."

These waters! Are these words to have no wider application than to the waters of the well of Samaria? Yes, reader, they may with equal force be said of all the springs of pleasure in this poor dying world. All, all is passing, passing, passing.

Who amongst that thoughtless throng of dan-

cers is ready for an immediate summons into the presence of God? and yet there is but a step between that scene of forgetfulness of God and the eternity that each one of those dancers *must* face.

Hush! Do not speak of death. The bare mention of the word would rob the giddy crowd of all their pleasure. "But if a man live **many** years"—and who can expect more than this?—"and rejoice in them **all**," and what, from a human point of view, could be better? Mark it well, reader—a long life of uninterrupted happiness; what more can any one look for in this world? "Yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many" (Eccles. xi. 8).

On the fore-deck of the same steamer, almost within ear-shot of all the frivolity and gaiety of the dance, a sail has been erected into the form of a small tent, within which lies tossing and moaning a poor dying lad. Typhoid fever, that scourge of South Africa, has just hurried his brother into the grave, and now this lad of twenty is nearing the last moment of his short career.

Raising the canvas a little, and creeping underneath, I find myself kneeling at his side,

In the interims of his delirium I ask, "Do you know that you have a great Friend that loves you?"

Poor lad! Alone on that steamer, far away from every earthly friend, his brother dead, his mother, though still alive, all unconscious that her child is dying amongst strangers and far away. But "there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

To my question comes the brief but glad response, "Yes."

"Where is the Friend that loves you most?" I ask, fearing that his mind is travelling to his Cornish home.

"Up there!" with an upward movement of his half-closed eyes.

"Is it Jesus?" I asked.

"Yes," was all that fast failing strength suffered him to reply.

"Yes, Jesus loved you unto death, and His precious blood cleanseth from all sin."

Oh, reader, here was reality! Greater realities, yea, realities of eternity, hung round that canvas tent, than in all the gaudy tinsel of the adjoining gaily decorated ball-room. To speak of Jesus *here* was welcome, to have spoken that name *there* would have been unendurable.

“ Have *you* any room for Jesus,
He who bore your load of sin,
As He knocks and asks admission,
Sinner, will you let Him in ?

Room for pleasure, room for business ;
But for Christ, the crucified—
Not a place that He can enter
In the heart for which He died !

Have you any *time* or Jesus,
As in grace He calls again ?
Oh, ‘ to-day ’ is ‘ time accepted,’
To-morrow you may call in vain.”

A few hours more, and just as the dancers are retiring, I once more lift the canvas and creep into the tent. The friend who had been watching has retired too. The lamp is burning dimly, and there, cold and stiff, lies the body of the young lad.

Serious thoughts filled my mind as I left that scene of death, confident though I felt that the dear lad’s spirit had gone to be with Christ, for was he not trusting in the Saviour’s precious blood ?

But what a contrast between the *unrealities* of a fancy dress ball and the *realities* of a chamber of death !

A. H. B.

Divine Reasoning and Human Reason.

READ ISAIAH i. 18 ; JOB xiii. 3, xlii. 6 ; PSALM xiv. 1 ;
ACTS xxiv. 25 ; ROMANS v. 8.

IN these days of fashionable agnosticism, when unbelief walks abroad under the thin disguise of rational belief, and when man's mind, as it has ever done, seeks to make its own conceptions the measure of God, one would fain lift up the voice in a word of warning, even though it be disregarded.

Are you one who believes that man's reason is the only infallible guide? Think you that your own conceptions are the limit of your responsibility? Then read on, just for a moment, and see Divine reasoning brought into contact with the "infallible" human mind.

First of all it is noticeable that the process of human reasoning in all ages tends upwards. Man reasons from that which is inferior to that which is superior. Witness the many systems of idolatrous worship in which man, forming his ideas of the Supreme Being from lower and created objects degraded God's glory to the likeness of mortal man and beasts (Rom. i.).

In modern times the theory of evolution is a striking example of this.

In a word, man reasons from himself to what he conceives God ought to be, and the result is either as in Psalm xiv. 1, he in his folly says, "There is no God," or else, as is the way of modern thought, limits the Divine by the human, and insists that all in revelation concerning God, which seems to him contrary to or beyond reason, is false, and impossible to be believed.

Thus man reasons up to God, his aim is to understand and define what God is, and the sense of responsibility is the motive of this restless inquiry.

If God is beyond man's conception, then man's responsibility is necessarily infinite.

This would never do, for it would be a confession of helplessness; so man, as said before, solves the difficulty by limiting God, and therefore his own responsibility, by his own reason.

I know, dear reader, that if your mind has at all travelled on this line, you will say that this result is the one arrived at. Moreover, you will own, too, that the result is not entirely satisfactory, that it does not satisfy *you* in your heart of hearts; it may perfectly satisfy your reason, but is that all?

Answer this question to yourself alone, and then turn with me to Job xiii. 3—

“I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to
reason with God.”

I see this strikes a chord in your heart, not your reason. You have reasoned long enough *about* God; would you now “reason *with* God”?

Ay, would you reason with *Him*, about all the sin and sorrow and suffering that fill a world that He has created? Reason with Him as to all the difficulties and inconsistencies which you have found in Him?

Ah, you would then, were it only possible! There might be some solution, which, as you confess, your reason cannot discover.

Well, the man who uttered that wish, apparently so daring, was one who knew God, which you do not. His wish was answered indeed in a way that doubtless even he, knowing God, in nowise expected,—“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind” (Job xxxviii. 1). Tremendous scene! The imagination quails before it. Nevertheless it is a true answer to Job’s desire, and we will turn presently to the result of it.

But you will say, Knowledge and intellect have let in too much light for such manifestations,

even if true, to be possible now ; and how shall *my* desire to reason with God be granted ?

The grace that answered Job is unchanged by modern thought and new light. Your desire can be granted ; and though the granting may be unattended by the manifestations of creatorial power, yet the results must be the same as with Job, if you are, as you profess to be, open to conviction.

Let us look at Isaiah i. 18, "Come *now*, and
let us reason together,
saith the Lord."

No whirlwind is here, just the still small voice, to you, dear reader, answering your desire, "Let *us* reason together."

These are the opening words of the Divine reasoning—

"Though *your sins* . . . "

My sins ! But that is not what I wanted to reason about !

No, friend, it is the last thing in the world you would desire, but you have made the first great discovery.

We have seen that man reasons up from what he is, to God. Now you have discovered that God reasons down from what *He is* to you. It is true, though terrible and painful. No question

now of logical inquiries into the nature of God. God has found you out, brought you into His presence, stripped away the wretched rags of logic with which you would cover from yourself and from Him what you are. You stand revealed. The Divine reasoning makes short work of you, and sets you down a sinner in perfect truth.

There is no need for God to declare what He is—you know enough to seek to obscure that knowledge; nevertheless you know it, and the deep-rooted sense of what God is, and of how far you have come short of the Divine standard, is the secret of your efforts to get behind your logic.

You may not have known it in full consciousness, but now, in the presence of a God perfectly holy, dwelling in light unapproachable, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity or look upon sin, you feel how scarlet your sins are, how deep is the dye of your guilt, how infinitely short you have fallen of that Divine glory.

Do not seek to stifle the feeling; you cannot! God has answered your desire, met you, reasoned with you, and lo! instead of finding your difficulties solved, you find yourself out-faced, overwhelmed with what you are, a sinner before God.

If so, it is well, very well. It was the same with Job. When God reached the end of His wondrous reasoning, Job had reached the end of himself. Listen—

“I abhor myself.”

Do you? There is good cause. You have set up your weak reason, God's gift, against *Him*; have weighed *Him*, the Almighty, in the balances of your miserable criticism; measured *Him* with the compasses of your false science; have esteemed the terrible declension of man shown in the many forms of idolatry, as the progress of the race in the knowledge of that God whose glory they have thus wilfully corrupted! You have sought to evade your responsibility as a creature, and above all, by your very position, exalting man in the flesh, you trample upon God's revelation of Himself in His Son at the cross, count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and despise the blessed Saviour Himself who gave His life for such a one as you.

“I ABHOR MYSELF.”

Dear reader, when you get down to this point, you will find that the Son of God has been lower still.

When you find that you have utterly come

short, and that nothing but wrath can be the due reward of such spurning ; when you tremble before that wrath and own its righteousness, then God will reveal something more—"declare, I say, at this time *His* righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

That is glad tidings—gospel—that Jesus bore all the wrath that was your due, bore it in love to you, met all that God's nature demanded in respect of your sin, satisfied God's holiness, glorified His nature, so that now God can be just, and yet justify such a one as you.

Ah ! love, Divine love, is better than logic. The one has met your needs, and desires to have your heart in order to satisfy it fully for time and eternity,—the other blinds your mind, hardens your heart, leaving it all unsatisfied ; shuts out the Saviour's love, and hands you over in chains, that are gilded with the show of irresponsibility, to the Devil, whose existence doubtless you deny, but who by reason of this very delusion has got you all the more surely in his power.

Which is better, God's love or your logic ? Which will you choose ?

Can a man judge of wine until he has tasted it ? Can a blind man know what the light of the sun is ?

How then can you discuss and weigh God's wondrous love when you have never tasted of it?

To take no higher ground, is it rational to require proof that wine is wine before you taste it, that fire is fire before you draw near to enjoy its heat.

Come then, and instead of trying to disprove that God is Love, taste His love, learn what a wonderful thing it is to have His love shed abroad in your heart.

I cannot speak of Love Divine, cannot describe it to you. I have tasted it, and I can indeed tell you that it passes knowledge. Your reason cannot grasp one atom of it, but it can fill your heart, and nothing else can.

Is it not a love that can only be Divine? God commends it to you, while you are busy reasoning it away.

Is it not Divine love that God should think such creatures as you and me worth the sacrifice of His only Son! that the Son Himself should see in us a treasure worthy the sacrifice of His glory and majesty, and come down to us in our own likeness! For us He was weary and sorrow-laden, despised and rejected; the love we reason about and despise was the love that touched the poor leper, that sat weary beside the well and

poured joy into the heart of a poor woman of no repute.

That was the love that entered into all the sorrows, that wept with them that wept, but turned the weeping into joy. That was the love that led Him to the exceeding sorrow, all the weight of rejection—no one cared for His love then, as now—all the shadow of the darkness that lay before Him.

Dear reader, can your reason stand before the cross?

The love of the Father provided that wondrous ransom in the person of His Son *for you*.

The love of the Son led Him to the cross through a path of suffering to die *for you*.

Oh, triumph of love! Bow your soul before Him who died for you and rose again! Own Him Lord *now*! Let His love conquer now, let it break down every barrier and flood your heart, a blessed exchange for the heartless reasoning that would shut out such love.

Human words are feeble indeed, even with such a theme, but Divine love is mighty, and may that love, that has wrought such a work that God can manifest Himself to you in *all* that He is, consistently with Himself, conquer, change and fill your heart!

S. H. H.

An Echo from Calvary; or,

"I know that God has pardoned me, and
that I am going to Him."

ON the first day of this year, *the day of his twenty-first birthday*, Alexander Vanhamme quitted this world from the scaffold with these words upon his lips. He was executed at Melun, France, in company with an accomplice, for the murder of an old man.

His history, short, sad, and solemn, and yet with so blessed a termination as seen in the light of heaven, was as follows, and is only recorded here as a bright witness to the *present* grace of Him who said to the repentant robber who hung by His side on Calvary, "To-day shalt thou be with ME in paradise;" and in the fervent desire that its perusal may be blessed of God to arrest unconcerned souls still on the road to eternal perdition.

In the providence of God, Vanhamme was bereft of a mother's care when he was only six years of age. Shortly after he was abandoned by his father, and left an uncared-for waif on the sea of criminal life. Growing up without any

education, either moral or religious, he made rapid progress in sin, till he committed the crime by which he forfeited his life. After his condemnation to the guillotine, a French Protestant pastor, of the name of Forjal, was allowed to visit him in his condemned cell. He found him a hardened criminal, who not only professed no religion, but had not the most elementary knowledge of Christianity.

At first the heart of his visitor sank within him, as he thought: How could he in the short time that would elapse before his execution "bring this poor dark soul to the light of the gospel"? But God, who opened the heart of Lydia so that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul, opened this poor darkened heart to receive the Gospel, and His servant learned that things that are impossible with man are possible with God.

Vanhamme had never before heard of the love of God. He had never before heard of a Saviour; but it seemed that from the very first day his heart was touched, and he readily drank in the words of life.

As simply as it was told him, that "God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not

perish but have everlasting life," and that "Christ had once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," he believed it, and with childlike faith received the forgiveness of his sins, and, with this, peace and the knowledge of the possession of eternal life as a *present* thing.

He rapidly grew in the knowledge and enjoyment of divine things ; was baptized on the 31st December in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by his own request partook of the Lord's supper the day before his execution, though he then did not know that he was only within a few hours of his end. This was broken to him the following morning by the pastor, and he heard without a word of complaint or question that the appeal for a commutation of his sentence had been rejected. Left alone with him for a short time, M. Forjal says, "For a quarter of an hour, our hands clasped together, we prayed and talked together as two brothers, not indeed without emotion, but without agitation, realising the presence of God and the nearness of heaven." He adds: "The last verse of the Gospel that I read last evening," said my poor friend, "was, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? I am persuaded that neither death nor life,

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.'”

In the undisturbed sense of this love he walked to meet death, and, as he neared the scaffold, said to M. Forjal, who walked by his side, “I know that God has pardoned me, and that I am going to Him.”

Those of the world who stood around that scaffold, and witnessed the execution of these two poor criminals, saw and thought of nothing beyond the visible fact before their eyes, that told them that the end of “the way of transgressors is hard,” and recognised the power of that government of God, which in this world is His “revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”

Like that similar crowd that stood around the cross at Calvary, and saw nothing there but the execution of two malefactors, knowing nothing of the One who hung between these two, and, as the One sent of the Father “to be the Saviour of the world,” saved one of them, so here they knew nothing of the presence of that unseen Saviour who wrought in saving grace in the heart of poor Vanhamme ; but faith, that looks upon the things that are not seen, which are eternal, saw

all this, and heard an echo from Calvary saying to him, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with ME in paradise."

Unconcerned reader of this solemn end of a fellow-creature as sin's desert in this world, yet touching instance of God's sovereign grace to such an one, be warned as to what your end may be if you continue in your present course of sin and rebellion against that God of grace that seeks to save *you*. Oh! let the love of Him who suffered on the cross *for you* appeal to *your* heart, and lead you, even as you read these words, as a repentant sinner to put your trust in Him Who saved Vanhamme from the very brink of hell, and took him from the scaffold to be with Himself in paradise.

Blessed Lord Jesus! bless the story of Thine own grace to all who read it. Amen. C. W.



The Old Lady's Mistake.

SOME special meetings were being held in a village near the town of S——, in Bedfordshire, God in His great mercy having sent one of His servants to tell the blessed news of His great salvation

for sinners, great and small. Much interest was shown by the villagers, and night after night the tent was well filled with people ; many became earnest about the solemn question of their souls' salvation. The wonderful story of the Saviour's love and grace was told simply and yet with the power of the Holy Spirit.

One evening the preacher's subject turned on "the forgiveness of sins,"—a *present* blessing to be known and enjoyed now by the believing sinner ; and as the servant of Christ was speaking of the joy and blessedness of having his sins forgiven and being in the conscious enjoyment of it, an old lady was noticed to rise from her seat and hasten out of the tent, evidently upset by what she had heard.

Making some visits next day in the village, the evangelist knocked at a cottage door. "Come in," said a voice from within. Lifting the latch and walking into the room, he found himself face to face with the old lady who had so hurriedly left the service on the previous evening.

"Well," said she, "you are the strangest man I ever came near in my life ; you said last night that you knew your sins were forgiven, and I know that no one can know that till the day of

judgment," adding at the same time that she knew more about these things than he did.

Somewhat taken aback by the old lady's attack upon him, the evangelist waited a few moments before replying, and then said, "Well, mother, I suppose you believe that the Bible is the Word of God."

She replied, "Of course I do."

"Then," said he, "let us read what it says." Turning to Acts xiii. 38, 39, he read, "Be it known unto you . . . that through this man (Christ Jesus) is preached UNTO YOU the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." Again, "In whom *we have* redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). Again, "I write unto you . . . because *your sins are* forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 John ii. 12). And lastly, he read the story of the woman in the city, which was a sinner, whose sins were many, but to whom the Lord Jesus said, "Thy sins ARE forgiven" (Luke vii. 48).

The truth at once dawned upon the mind of the old lady, and she ejaculated, "Dear me! I never saw it like that before! how mistaken I have been."

Yes, blessed fact, "Thy sins are forgiven": and you, too, dear reader, may know that your many sins are all forgiven. It may be you have been groaning under the heavy load of your sins, and fearing they would land you in eternal perdition. With another, perhaps, often you have felt and said, "O God, . . . my sins are not hid from Thee" (Psa. lxxix. 5). Yes, God knows all about them; but listen to what the gospel tells you, and it is this: That the blessed Lord Jesus Christ has come down from heaven, down to this earth of sin and wretchedness, to tell out what God is *for the sinner*; that this precious Saviour has died for sinners, and that such is the value before God of the work that Jesus did, that the sinner who trusts Him, who looks by faith to Him, can say—

"He bore on the tree
The sentence for me."

God receives the believing sinner by virtue of the work and blood-shedding of His beloved Son, and not only forgives the sinner but clears him from every charge.

Dear reader, have you made the fatal mistake of thinking it presumptuous to know your sins forgiven? Then turn to God and His word, I pray you, and there read, for yourself, the scriptures

quoted, and may God the Holy Spirit open your heart to receive the blessed soul-emancipating truth of sins forgiven as a present and everlasting reality.

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, TO HIM be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” (Rev. i. 5, 6.)

S. E. B.



“I thank God, I can die happy.”



SOME time ago a vessel arrived in Plymouth Harbour, having crossed the mighty Atlantic without any serious mishap or adventure by the way. The passengers for London were soon transferred from the ship to the special express train which was waiting to convey them to London.

The signal being given, the train commenced her journey, and the driver, getting up steam, soon put on full speed. All went well till near the town of T——, where by some mistake a luggage train had been allowed to remain on the

main line, instead of being shunted on to a siding to allow the express to pass. No signal being out against the latter, an awful collision was the result, and to add to the terrible confusion that reigned the wrecked train caught fire.

The work of rescuing quickly commenced, and one man was heard to exclaim, with almost his last breath, "I thank God, I can die happy." Others were found in a lifeless condition with a pack of cards by their side, having in the act of gambling been suddenly taken into eternity, one fears, all "*without Christ, without God*, and having *no hope* in the world."

Dear reader, does not this awful catastrophe appeal to you? Should death overtake you as suddenly, could you say, "Thank God, I can die happy." This dear man was trusting in the blood of Jesus, which cleanses the sinner from all sin, and gives all who trust in it a title to enter heaven—

"The precious blood of Jesus
Has made my title sure."

The Lord Jesus Christ by His death at Calvary has taken away the sting of death for the believer. By that mighty work He has broken the power of him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14).

Oh! unsaved reader, with the dark shadows of death and eternity resting upon you, I beseech you not to trifle any longer with God and His word. No doubt He has spoken to you many times, and in different ways, but still you are indifferent, like Gallio, who cared for none of these things. Once more He speaks to you through the pages of this little Gospel magazine, and says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3).

Salvation is God's free gift to all who will have it. Will you accept or reject it? "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1).

One of the devil's most fatal delusions is that there is plenty of time to think about these things; but let me remind you, "delays are dangerous." At once, I entreat you, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved*" (Acts xvi. 31); and "if *thou shalt confess* with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and *shalt believe* in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*" (Rom. x. 9). F. H.

The Lifeboat Disaster at Kingstown.

THE storm which took place on Christmas Eve produced its sad result in the loss of many lives. At Kingstown many hearts were saddened by the lifeboat disaster, in which fifteen brave men lost their lives in the effort to rescue the crew of the "Palme" in Dublin Bay. The story is well known, and has awakened deep feelings of sympathy with the bereaved all over the kingdom.

On the afternoon of 24th December a terrible gale from the east swept the sea in huge waves against our coast. A ship was seen in distress drifting towards the outside of the harbour pier. All efforts to prevent her from drifting failed; she dragged her anchor and was carried past the harbour entrance, striking on the sands and remaining at the mercy of the waves. The lifeboat, which was immediately manned and put to sea, could make but poor progress towards the ship in the terrible sea which was then running. Suddenly she was caught in the trough of the sea and overturned by a great wave. To whatever cause it may be attributed, she failed

to right herself, and remained bottom upwards ; and so these brave men lost their lives in the attempt to save others.

This sad incident suggests some very striking lessons. First, those on board the "Palme" were in terrible need ; help must come from *outside* or they would be most certainly lost. So it is with the sinner ; he can do nothing to extricate himself from the position he is in, as awaiting the just judgment of God on account of his sins. Again, we say, help must come from *outside*, or he must perish eternally. How eagerly those sailors must have watched the approach of the lifeboat ! But, alas ! it failed to reach them. Oh, how valuable a lifeboat has been on many and many an occasion : it has saved those who could not save themselves. Just so, Christ has died for the ungodly ; He has come to seek and save the lost, and He can *never, never* fail. Yet, when we were without strength, Christ died for us, and every one who believes on Him as *their* Saviour is perfectly safe. But after all, the lifeboat, looked at in itself, is but a human thing ; and it may fail and be lost. Not so the great and mighty Saviour of whom the lifeboat is but a feeble illustration. Jesus died and rose again, He has won the victory over death, His precious

blood cleanses from *all* sin ; and those who trust in Him share His victory too, for He Himself has said that they shall never perish, and none can pluck them out of His hand.

But help did come at last to the men on the "Palme." When the storm had somewhat abated, the captain of the "Tearaght" bravely put to sea, and at great risk to himself and his crew launched his lifeboat, and, proceeding twice to the wrecked ship, rescued all on board. Christ, the true lifeboat for the lost and perishing sinner, can never fail ; and oh ! how glad these poor people must have been to avail themselves at once of this merciful deliverance. How strange we should have thought it had they signalled to the captain of the steamer that they did not want assistance yet : we should have said that they deserved to perish in the waves. But no—they knew too well their danger, and availed themselves of the deliverance at once.

And yet it may be that some reader is doing just what we should have blamed them for, in the matter of his or her soul's salvation. Are you bartering your never-dying soul for present things ? How many will wake up in the hopeless gloom of a lost eternity to find it is *too late* ! They would not have Christ when He was offered

as the Saviour; they would not be reconciled to God when He *besought* them to be so. The poor shipwrecked people must have felt truly grateful to their deliverers; and so the true Christian can say, in the words of the hymn—

“Oh what a debt I owe
To Him who shed His blood,
And cleansed my soul, and gave me power
To stand before His God.”

B.



IF you saw a murderer on the way to execution, what would you say to the moralist who bade the man conduct himself in a manner suitable to the dignity of humanity? You would bid the prating fool know it was *too late*. Or if a religious man drew near and read the unhappy victim a sermon on the ten commandments, you would cry, Away, mocker, it is *too late*; for such a man there is nothing but the sword of justice and the felon's grave. And so we cry aloud to you, It is too late for morality to save you, too late for religion to save you, eighteen hundred years too late; there is nothing for you, as you are, but the justice of God and everlasting death, if Christ be refused as your Saviour.

No Time to Prepare.

THERE is nothing unusual in the fact of people dying. Ever since the entrance of sin into this world, death has been the general lot of mankind.

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

Appointed unto men—not unto *all* men, as so often misquoted. Enoch never died at all; he "was translated that he should not see death" (Heb. xi. 5)—apt figure of those Christians who shall be alive when the Lord Jesus comes down from heaven into the air to take His people to be for ever with Himself, for they, likewise, will never die; they will be "changed in a moment," and "caught up" to be for ever with the Lord.

But, speaking generally, death is the lot of mankind. Hence no surprise is felt while glancing down the death column of a daily paper, and no sense of the uncertainty of life is experienced.

But from time to time the whole civilised world is startled into serious thought by the announcement of some sudden and unexpected

disaster, whereby hundreds or even thousands of lives are cut short in an instant of time.

God speaketh!

And what else is the awful tornado in America, levelling in one moment a large portion of St Louis—hotels, churches, business premises, and private dwellings? Men returning quietly from their day's work suddenly caught by a whirlwind, and without a moment to think, launched into eternity. Families at home, engaged in various ways, suddenly hurled headlong, and buried beneath the ruins of their dwellings.

Yes, this is God's voice, crying in the ears of men, women, and children,

"Be ye also ready!"

How true it is that we know not what a day may bring forth! But surely the very uncertainty of life which such a disaster presses home upon every one of us should lead to an immediate decision of the great question of the soul's relationship with God for all eternity

Reader, are you saved? Are you ready for an immediate summons into the presence of a thrice-holy God? If not, be warned by the suddenness of the call of these hundreds of our fellow-creatures.

God speaketh once !

But scarcely have we time to recover from the shock of the St Louis disaster than the wail of death reaches us from Moscow. Well nigh five thousand victims ! In a moment of time men, women, and children, in the possession of perfect health, lie crushed, mangled, bleeding, and dead on the ground where but a little ago they slept and danced.

And is not this the voice of God ? "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14). And what a contrast between this dark and dismal spectacle of death and mourning and those gorgeous decorations and public rejoicings which immediately preceded and followed upon the very same ground.

May we not hope that many amongst the exalted personages of this world who flocked to do honour at an Emperor's coronation may have been made to think seriously of the uncertainty of all things here, and of the realities of death, judgment, and eternity !

Men, yea *all* men, be they high or low, rich or poor, have yet to meet face to face the Judge of all the earth. At that supreme moment it will matter not one whit what was the earthly position of wealth or poverty, greatness or insig-

nificance; nor what of gold or silver, rank or title was ours. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. vi. 7). Oh! how will it be with us when we step out of time into eternity?

Reader, what hope have you for the future? On what are you trusting? Have you a foundation that nothing can shake? Can you say—

"My hope on nothing less is built
Than Jesus and the blood He spilt;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on His great name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

Then happy indeed are you! Death for you is robbed of its terror, for you know Him who "stooped to bleed and die" for you—yes, for your sins. You know, too, that He, having borne God's righteous judgment in your stead, is now passed beyond death, beyond the judgment, beyond the grave, and is now raised, seated, and glorified at God's right hand. Are you a believer? If so, then you, too, are seen by God

in Christ,

beyond death, beyond judgment, "quickened together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)," and raised up together, and made to sit together

in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 5, 6). God sees every believer to be not only washed in the blood of Jesus, and so cleansed from all guilt, but also accepted in Him risen from the dead, and there is "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).

But, oh! if still in your sins and out of Christ, how often has not God reproved you? Has He not reproved you for your sins by the accusing voice of conscience? Has not His Word, perhaps read in childhood, but despised in after-life, reproved you with its solemn warnings of "judgment to come"? Has He not by the awe-inspiring acts of His providence reproved you for your folly in neglecting His "so great salvation," which He offers so graciously through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His precious blood? Yes, you have been "often reproved." Have you "hardened your neck"? Remember that you, too, may

"suddenly be destroyed."

For "he that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1).

Remember, too, that as the tree falls so it shall lie. If you die unsaved, you must spend

eternity unsaved ; if you die unforgiven, you can *never be forgiven*.

Salvation and forgiveness must be on this side of the grave, or

never at all!

A. H. B.

**“After this?” or, “I won’t die, no,
I won’t die!”**

THE unforgiven sinner *dies* (and after this the judgment). The forgiven sinner, if the Lord does not personally come previously, only *sleeps* (which means, to use the language of Scripture, being *absent from the body to be present with the Lord*).

“*I won’t die, no, I won’t die,*” she exclaimed. The poor thing was down with the influenza during that well-remembered year, when the late Duke of Clarence passed away, and the epidemic was raging so fearfully on every hand. Being the daughter of a British officer of high rank, as well as a Roman Catholic by religion, the world may be truly said to have claimed her in a very special sense as its own.

But "all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth." So it was in her case; for unexpectedly the death - summons came, and the physician, with sorrowful heart, had to pronounce that all hope was despaired of, and death inevitable.

At this intelligence, her soul was filled with dismay. With a surprising energy, of which the dying are sometimes capable, she arose from her bed, and, giving utterance to those sad words already quoted, threw herself, in a paroxysm of terror, across her pillows, and died.

Perhaps, my reader, you can likewise recall some such incident in your family circle. We also can vouch for the truthfulness of this one. But what if it had been *your* own case? What if death had laid its icy hand upon *your* heart, and silenced its beatings? Nay, but what, if this night, this very night, the angel of death were to knock at *your* door, and usher *your* spirit into eternity? Useless, indeed, would it be to exclaim, "I won't die, no, I won't die"; for, if unforgiven by God, if unsaved by Christ, die YOU MUST, and you know it, for God has so appointed it unto men. And "after this" (oh! my reader, think of it)—"after this," the "*Great*

White Throne"; and "after this" (after the "Great White Throne") must follow its only and terrible consequence—" *Eternal Judgment*."

Will you—dare you risk it?

A beautiful contrast (also well authenticated) is offered to the foregoing sad story in the case of a young Christian, who, when he was dying, wished no tears to be shed on his account. To the one in attendance upon him, he also expressed the desire, that, at the instant of death, she would sing a verse of a certain hymn that he would name.

The moment at length arrived; and, true to her promise, as she was closing the lids of the sightless eyes, she sang as follows, midst streaming tears and with choking voice, the verse in question:—

" Farewell mortality,
Jesus is mine.
Welcome eternity,
Jesus is mine.
He my Redemption is,
Wisdom and Righteousness,
Life, Light, and Holiness,
Jesus is mine."

Jesus is mine! Jesus is mine! Yes, that is

it! Can *you* say so? Have *you* honoured God by receiving Christ *as yours*, who is now offered as the Saviour of the lost?

"What will you do without Him
When death is drawing near?
Without His love,—the only love
That casts out every fear;
When the shadow-valley opens,
Unlighted and unknown,
And the terror of its darkness
Must all be passed alone."

N. L. N.

"How would it have been with you?"

THE recent terrible tidings of the loss of the "Drummond Castle," together with her passengers and crew, has thrilled all hearts, and brought sorrow and bereavement to many homes.

Doubtless all on board had heard God's message of salvation, and like those of old, "some believed . . . and some believed not" (Acts xxviii. 24).

Happy, indeed, those who, ere they lay down

on that fatal night, to what proved to be their last earthly slumber, could say truthfully—

“Wake I soon, or wake I never,
I give my soul to Christ for ever ;”

or in the words of Scripture, “Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s” (Rom. xiv. 8).

They who were Christ’s, wrapped in His arms of love, could never perish. Death was to them but the messenger that led them home to the presence of their Saviour.

Reader! has this no voice for you? If you had been in that company, who, though they knew it not, were never to reach the port that they were so quickly approaching, how would it have been with *you*? Would you have gone to be “with Christ, which is far better,” or would you have been “without God and without hope”?

Oh! the horror of an awakening to eternal woe on the one hand; but, on the other, what an awakening to “fulness of joy”!

But God is “not *willing* that *any* should perish” (2 Pet. iii. 9). Even now, though you have long neglected His call, He waits to save you.

“Hear the word of God beseeching,
‘Whosoever will’ may come.”

Come to Jesus now; delay no longer. Believe

His love, and prove the truth of His own words, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

"To *you* is the word of this salvation sent" (Acts xiii. 26).

"Passing onward, **quickly** passing ;
 Yes, but **whither**? whither bound?
 Is it to the many mansions
 Where eternal rest is found?
 Passing onward—
 Yes, but whither? **whither bound**?"

F. E.

A Helpless Wreck and a Precious Saviour.

THERE are some cases of conversion to God through His grace that one almost fears to relate, lest it should lead souls to indifference about their condition before God until they come to a sick or death bed. We would affectionately warn the unconverted reader not to allow what we are about to relate to have that effect. In the first place, you do not know that you will have a sick-

bed, and it was only last week, in this town where we are living, that there were three funerals one afternoon, all sudden deaths : all young men launched into eternity without a moment's notice. Then, again, the Lord has said that He is coming QUICKLY, and it is only those that are ready who will be taken up to be with the Lord. We would therefore earnestly press upon you the importance of being READY. "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation."

T., whose conversion we would briefly relate, had lived sixty years without Christ, and had frequently given very decided expression to the enmity in his heart to God. This world was everything to him, and though God broke in upon him from time to time, and took one after another from his family circle, yet his conscience was not reached by these dealings of God, nor did he turn to God in his troubles. It is well, dear reader, to remember that when God speaks to us in various ways, it should exercise our conscience. If we take no heed to these things, He sometimes uses very severe measures to bring us to Himself. Thus it was in the case of T. He had just retired, as he thought, to spend the remainder of his days in a com-

fortable little country home, but the first night he arrived there he was taken with a serious illness, from which there was no hope of recovery, and it was during this illness that he was brought to face his condition as a lost sinner before God. His disease soon reduced him to a poor emaciated wreck, and when we first saw him he at once said it was a "thorough break up." When asked what was to come after the break up, he said he was earnestly crying to the Almighty, and hoped it would be "all right." This delusion is a very common one, that if we are only earnest in our crying to God, this is enough, but it really means that we would like to forget our past life, and hope God will forget it too. This ground, we assured T., would not do, and that it would not be "all right"; that God was just and holy, and that the long dark history of his life must be faced, and his sin and guilt cleared away, before he could be fit for God's presence.

We would earnestly press this upon the unsaved reader. That it is a very real thing to have to do with God about our state as lost sinners, and that it is on this ground alone that Christ can become a Saviour to any of us.

But to return to T. The next morning we

saw him again, when he referred to the conversation of the previous day, and, with deep emotion, he said the review of his past life was a painful one, and asked the question if I thought the Lord would save him, adding, "Jesus did come to die for sinners, didn't He?"

It was, indeed, quite a new sound to hear the precious name of Jesus come from his lips, to hear him speak of the Lord Jesus, who came down from heaven to die for sinners, to suffer for sin, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Circumstances took me away from poor T., so that I did not see him again; but not many days after I learned the good news that he was full of peace and happiness, not on the ground of his earnestness in crying to God, but through simple faith in the Lord Jesus.

A Christian friend had called to see him a few days after my last visit to him. He found him rejoicing in the Lord, with a deep sense of the grace that had met him, and of the preciousness of "that blessed Saviour," as he said, "who had taken in hand, and saved such a poor, helpless, wicked old wreck as he was." But this is just like the blessed Lord! He saves fully, freely, and eternally all who come to Him as poor, hopeless, helpless sinners. Has He saved *you*?

The Sinner and the Saviour.

IN a public-house in the country town of B—— lay the publican, *dying*. He had lived an ungodly life, and whilst health and strength lasted, God was not in all his thoughts ; but at length he was proving that “the way of transgressors is hard.”

Like the prodigal in Luke xv., Charley H—— had spent *all*—his whole life—in the far country, far, far away from God ; and like him, he at last awoke to the fact that he had needs which the world could not satisfy.

For many a long year he had tried the streams of earthly enjoyment, and perchance he had *fancied* that they quenched his thirst. But he had discovered the truth of those words of Jesus to one who had also drunk deeply at creature sources, “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again” ; and now he was learning that the world’s resources are but “broken cisterns, which can hold no water.”

He was *dying*. To what spring of human pleasure or desire will he turn for rest of conscience and of heart ? All hopes of this life were ended for him. The reality of eternity stared

him in the face. Will he turn to human religion and the traditions of men? *They* give no peace, for in their very principle they deny the fundamental truth of the Christian faith. They urge men to *make* peace, when the Scriptures record, as the basis of Christianity, the mighty fact that Christ has "*made* peace through the blood of His cross."

To whom then can he turn? God must be met! "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." But *how* meet God? What guilty creature can meet Him in his sins, and propitiate a holy, thrice holy God? This was the question of infinite moment to Charley H——. He was a *sinner* before God: a *lost* sinner who had no claim upon God. And no lie of Satan—whose ministers preach that the love of God will set aside His holiness, and excuse the sinner apart from the judgment of his sins—will deceive a soul on the verge of eternity, and whose conscience is alive to his sinful condition in God's sight.

Man needs a mediator who can bring God and the sinner together in absolute consistency with what God is as both light and love. Cain thought, and alas! how many now also think, to be accepted by God through the work of his own

hands—the fruit of that which was under the curse. The result proved that God will not have the fact of sin ignored. But the gospel proclaims that He has provided *one only place*—a mercy-seat—where He can meet the sinner in righteousness and yet in boundless grace. The cross reveals how this is done.

The cross is God's justification of Himself, if one may say so, before the whole universe. It maintains His absolute holiness, and declares Him to be just in acting as a Saviour-God, whilst at the same time it reveals His sovereign love, and proves it to be perfectly consistent with His ways as "Judge of all the earth." It shows that God *must* judge sin, for there He poured out His wrath against sin upon the person of His own beloved Son, when

"He took the guilty culprit's place,
And suffered in his stead."

Yet, unsaved friend, if ever God could have overlooked sin it was *then*, when He "who knew no sin, was made sin"; but it *could not be*. That cry of unmistakable, though infinitely unfathomable meaning, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was the expression of that utter abandonment which He underwent, when, taking it from God's hands, He drank the cup

of wrath against sin which was due to the sinner. Can you then, in the face of this awful fact, think that God will *excuse* sin in you?

But the cross reveals God's righteousness in saving the sinner as thoroughly as it declares His righteousness in the judgment of sin. And this is the glad tidings. It is no good news to tell the sinner that God must punish sin, though this is surely the truth. But the gospel, clearing away all the fallacies and deceits of men and of Satan, with all the grand simplicity of truth, tells us of "one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all."

The publican was to learn what *grace* is. A servant of Christ who visited him put before him the story of God's grace in sending "His only begotten Son into the world." He told out the wondrous tale of divine love unfolded by the Lord in Luke xv.—of the *lost* sheep, straying away from the only place of safety, and of the One who would "go after that which was lost, until He find it." He spoke of that Good Shepherd who went on to the cross to lay down His life, in order to bring back in righteousness the *lost* sinner, wandering far away from God in the distance he loves so well, into God's presence of present and perfect favour.

What a tale of grace for the heart of a sinner ! Proud self-righteousness may murmur against it, refusing to join in the joy of God over returning prodigals ; but to remain outside *now* is to remain outside *for ever*. It is to condemn God's grace for the wretched satisfaction of justifying self. It is to choose to stand upon the ground of legal self-righteousness, and take the comfort that wrapping one's self in such garments may give, rather than to own that man has no righteousness, and to receive from God all that He has to give. It is to prefer one's own "filthy rags," because they make something of man's doings, to the Father's "best robe," because this makes everything of God's grace.

The dying man drank in God's grace. His conscience refused to justify himself : it justified God in condemning him as a sinner. Grace breaks down the hard heart which it enters. What heart would not be melted to find that the One whom we fancied to be a hard master, reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where He has not strawed, is neither gathering nor reaping (unless it be that His love has been requited with hatred), but is *giving* freely to all who will acknowledge their need by accepting His mercy ?

Like another dying man, who discovered this same grace in the One crucified by his side—the coming King of Glory suffering for sins not His own—so this dying publican immediately rejoiced in the grace that could open heaven at once to a dying sinner, without prayers and penances or purgatorial purgings. Infinite grace! it is divinely suited to man, and it is infinitely worthy of God.

Reader, has grace and truth wrought their double work in you? Conscience is individual in its working. It does not merely own that we all are sinners: it confesses, “I am a sinful man, O LORD.” The heart too is individual in its appropriation. It will not satisfy *it* that Christ died for every one: it says of Him, “Who loved ME, and gave HIMSELF for ME.”

Thus it was with Charley H——. The message that convicted his conscience also reached his heart, and with divinely given intelligence he confessed both his own condition and the love of Christ. Simply and clearly he responded to the tale of God’s grace in Jesus, as he said, “Charley is the lost sheep, and Jesus is the Shepherd.” He owned himself a sinner: he found God to be a Saviour. Precious faith! “Where sin abounded, grace did much more

abound." "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Unsaved reader, pause! Hear once more the pleading words of the apostle, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

W. G. H.



"The Wreck of the 'Drummond Castle.'"

WRECK of a Cape Liner! Two hundred and fifty lives lost! Only three survivors!

These were the startling words that sent a shudder through many, as their eyes fell on the newspaper placards, or scanned the pages of the daily papers for 18th June 1896. [The roll-call of sudden and unexpected death has indeed been heavy since this year opened. It would take a page merely to enumerate the accidents and disasters, both by land and by sea, in South Africa, America, Russia, Japan, and now close to our very shores.]

It seems but yesterday since I myself was homeward bound in a Cape Liner, and passed the ill-fated "Drummond Castle" on her last outward voyage. There she goes, steaming swiftly and proudly southward with her freight of immortal souls. A few years ago I had also been a passenger on board that very ship, and all this makes the horrors of this, her last trip, appear most vividly to my mind. Well can I picture to myself the scene on board that fatal Tuesday evening. The voyage is now practically at an end. All the gaiety of the three short weeks trip is now in the past, the nightly concerts and dances and the daily sports are over, and possibly on this very Tuesday night the farewell entertainment has been given in the saloon.

Eleven o'clock at night, the ship is off Ushant, and doubtless not a few are peering through the darkness to catch the first sight of the lighthouse so well known to all travellers on these coasts. Some are in their berths, just dropped off to sleep. Not a few are smoking, drinking, and card-playing in the smoking-room. All are unconscious of danger, and yet that ship is steaming steadily and swiftly to her destruction.

(We cannot allow this direful calamity to pass without a notice in these pages.] The heart

sickens to think of the suddenness with which those two hundred and fifty lives were cut short, and it is impossible to contemplate the scene without a shudder. Were they ready? Reader, are *you*?

Well do I know the life that is lived on these ocean trips, the godlessness, the sinfulness, the mockery and contempt for all that is of God and Christ. A few amongst them, but, oh, how few! care for the Lord Jesus Christ. The bulk will not listen when spoken to about Him; they laugh at the suggestion that life is uncertain; they mock at those who confess their faith in the Saviour and His atoning sacrifice for sin on the cross. It is too painfully evident that their minds are at enmity against God, and that in their hearts they love the world and the things of the world, while they have no room for Christ, and no desire after God. Had a messenger of God's grace stood up that night to preach God's glad tidings of salvation, would he have been welcomed? Had he warned them of the uncertainty of life, would he have been believed? Reader, do *you* take warning by these few lines? *You* know not what a day may bring forth for you. You may be carried home a corpse before this day is over. Your life may, too, be suddenly cut off. I ask you, How is it with your

soul? Are you ready to die? Dare you meet God, a holy, sin-hating God, this very moment?

"But God is merciful!" you exclaim. True, but God hates sin, and God is holy. Can He suffer your sins to be in His holy presence for all eternity? Nay, heaven would be no heaven if sin were there.

But God has Himself provided a remedy for sin; have you availed yourself of it? The "Drummond Castle" going at full speed struck upon a rock, and with one great and awful plunge went down beneath the deep waters of the Atlantic. *In three minutes she was out of sight*, and her freight of immortal souls was launched into eternity. There was no lifeboat there, no help was near, no means of escape for those poor unhappy men, women, and children. They were doomed, and the wonder is that even three escaped.

But, reader,

you may be saved!

Salvation, the salvation of your soul, is *now* within your reach. You need never be lost, for Jesus has died, "the Just for the unjust," His precious blood can cleanse you from every spot and stain of sin, and make you ready this very moment to stand before God in the unsullied

light of His holy presence. Oh, believe it! Trifle no longer! This may be your last opportunity. Do you sneer at this appeal? Remember that God is not mocked; He has warned you since this year began by one disaster after another; have you not yet heeded? Do you still despise His voice, and neglect His loving entreaty to come to the Lord Jesus Christ?

He will not plead for ever.

Do you remember the solemn words, "He that, being **often reproved**, hardeneth his neck, shall **suddenly be destroyed**, and that without remedy"? (Prov. xxix. 1.) May God grant that this sad and sorrowful disaster may bear fruit for eternity to His praise and glory in the salvation of your soul, dear reader, and in the salvation of many who are now mourning the loss of loved ones whom they will never see again on earth!

A. H. B.

Fear not.

"**F**EAR not, thou art Mine!" Blessed words that the Saviour says to all those who know Him. "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by

thy name, thou art Mine." Oh! dear Christian reader, can you doubt Him when He sends you such a blessed assurance of comfort? "Fear not, thou art Mine," even so. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and can you not go on your way rejoicing, leaving dull cares to Him, and looking only on the bright side of things?

Man may go along with his head down, seeing only the dirty paving-stones and the muddy streets. But that is not for you to do. You are a Christian, and you have to keep your gaze fixed upward, and what will you see? The bright clouds, blue, white, and gold, all mingled together in a splendid harmony. The sun glistening here and there making them even more beautiful, all seeming to tell of the wondrously beautiful heavens beyond.

"Ah!" you think to yourself, "that is all very well when all is bright and beautiful. But how about when dark clouds come, and all seems dull and miserable."

Well, and what of that? Are you not a Christian? Then go on gazing upward, and you will find that even the darkest clouds have a silver lining. And faith will always remember the cheering words, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine."

Dear friend, never forget that the Blessed Lord has said, "Thou art Mine!" Remember that the Lord always looks after His sheep. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." But perhaps you have not yet realised that fact. You know the Lord died, but you have not believed that He died for you, and so you do not belong to Him. Oh! I do pity you if it is so. No refuge to flee to in your distress. Nothing to rest upon, nothing to look forward to but the grave. Oh! poor soul, what will you do if you do not turn to Christ? Oh! you *must* come to Him, there is such a loving welcome. Your dearest earthly friend could not say more than what the Saviour says, indeed not nearly so much, for the Lord says, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine." And if you come to Him it will make such a difference in your life. Every prospect that has once seemed so gloomy will be gilded over with the sunshine of God's love.

How many thousands there are, even in the London city alone, who are singing to-day the words of that well-known song—

"Sunshine above,
Sunshine in my heart."

And yet, alas, how very few there are who really

know what it is to have sunshine in their heart, that real, warm, bright sunshine, which can be had only from above! that sunshine which must make itself seen and felt by every one. I say *must*, because you cannot possibly be a Christian without others knowing it. There is bound to be a difference in some way or other. Perhaps it may be only in seemingly trifling matters, which some would be careless over. But others notice the difference, and they begin to think. Then comes the question, "Are you religious?"

"I am a Christian," you reply, and the secret is out.

Possibly you may be marked as one of "that canting, religious lot,—would not sing songs nor go to concerts or a theatre for anything." Let them say so. You have no wish to go to such places. Christ is your all, and can you have sweeter pleasures than He gives?

And above all, have you not that precious, ever-abiding promise, "Fear not, thou art Mine"? Then trust to Him, dear friend. Go to Him daily for strength and guidance; keep His sunshine ever in your heart, and all will be well.—R. I.

Where will YOU spend Eternity?

"Nothing that requires Settling."

THE lips that spoke these simple words in a few hours after were closed in death. For many years she had known the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and had trusted in His finished work on the cross as the only ground of peace with God, and the only title by which a sinner could enter heaven. How foolish to leave to a deathbed the settlement of the all-important matter of the soul's relationship with God!

In her case death was not exactly unexpected, though it came with suddenness at the last. For two years she had been ill, though still able to get about, and indeed the Sunday before she was called home she had fully intended being present at a gospel service which was held in a tent some miles away from where she lived. A slight increase of her weakness on that day had alone hindered. What an interest she took in these gospel meetings, and how she longed for the conversion of those who attended them, and what a joy to herself to hear that sweet story of the love of God, and the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And it must always be so. When the gospel has entered a heart, and when a real work of God has taken place in a soul, when a sinner is truly converted, there must be a desire for the spiritual and eternal blessing of others. There is much truth in the saying of another, "If you have never sought by act, word, or prayer, the salvation of another, you have much ground to doubt the fact of your own salvation," for "we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts iv. 20).

We are no advocates for the system of "looking within" which prevails so abundantly around us. We are fully convinced that saving faith is the soul's *upward* and *outward*, and not its *inward* look. In other words, the anxious soul can *never* find peace through looking within, or seeking for happy feelings in the heart. Peace with God is alone to be found "through our Lord Jesus Christ," and not through ourselves. It is to be found by *faith*, and not by *feelings*. It is based upon the finished work of Christ upon the cross, and not upon paltry works of ours. Yes, peace with God rests upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; for He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," and "**therefore** being justified by faith, we

have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25 ; v. 1).

Should any of our readers be anxious about the all-important question of the soul's salvation, we invite their attention to these words of Holy Scripture. There is not a syllable here about *our* works, *our* prayers, *our* penances, *our* sacrament-taking, *our* good resolutions, *our* feelings. No, they are all excluded. To have mentioned these in the same breath as the infinite sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, offered up **once for all** on the cross, would have been an insult to His glorious work and Person. We say **once for all**, for the idea of a repeated or a renewed sacrifice, such as is claimed for the Romish Mass, or for the Ritualistic Eucharist, is alike a denial of the plainest statements of the Scriptures and a dishonour to the "**one sacrifice for sins**" offered to, and accepted by a holy God.

Ah, how well we can understand the Romish dread of the Bible! For where is there any room for the doctrine of the Mass or the Confessional in the light of Hebrews x.? Let the reader open his Bible and read the glorious words, so clear and simple that a child may understand:—

"But this Man, after He had offered **one**

sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (v. 12). "For by **one offering** He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (v. 14). "And their sins and iniquities will I remember **no more**. Now where remission of these is, there is **no more offering for sins**" (vv. 17, 18). In like manner as the infinite sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ shuts out all works of ours as a ground-work of salvation, so faith in that finished work shuts out all fear and doubt about salvation from the heart of the sinner who simply trusts in that precious Saviour, and His death and resurrection—"being justified by faith **we have peace with God**, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Reader, there is no doubt nor fear here; there is no room for *hoping* to be saved, all is as sure and certain as Christ's work and God's word can make it.

It was truth like this that for nineteen years had been the stay and comfort of our dying friend; happily for her she had not left it to the last, nor, as people say, to "chance it in the end." As we have said, she had hoped to have been present at the gospel service on Sunday night, but was hindered; so on the Wednesday evening, on my way to another similar service, I dropped in to inquire how she was. She was in

bed, and a glance at her as I entered the room assured me that the end of her life here was near at hand.

Seating myself at her bedside, I remarked, "What a comfort at a time like this to know that all is peace and joy!"

"Yes," she quickly responded, "it is peace, and — **there is nothing that requires settling.**"

These were her last words to me; in a few hours more she was with the Lord, but I left her bedside with the feeling, What a glorious testimony to the peace-giving power of the work of Christ from one on the very borderland of eternity! Reader, can you say the same *now* as you read these lines?

"On earth the song begins;
In heaven more sweet and loud,—
'To Him that cleansed our sins
By His atoning blood;
To Him,' we sing in joyful strain,
'Be honour, power, and praise, Amen.'

Alone He bare the cross,
Alone its grief sustained;
His was the shame and loss,
And He the victory gained;
The mighty work was all His own,
Though we shall share His glorious throne."

Not Hungry.

“ I AM not hungry, therefore it is no use your pressing me. Would you eat if you were not hungry? No. Well, I am not hungry, yet you press me, you persuade me, and you ask me, ‘Why not receive Christ now—now to-night—and have everlasting life?’ Well, all I can say is, as I said before, I hope some day to be a Christian, but as regards now I am not hungry.”

The speaker was a young man of about seventeen years, and he turned away with a look which showed he felt satisfied with the way he had evaded another of the many, many presentations of the glorious gospel of Christ to his soul. He little thought of that Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep, and who goeth after that which is lost till He find it, and when He hath found it, layeth it on His shoulders rejoicing; little thought of the gracious Saviour, who now sits exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and who now this moment looketh down from the throne of God, and upon the lost, unrepentant sinner, still negligent of

God's great salvation, wandering like a lost sheep in the path which, however right in his own eyes, will surely end in eternal misery.

The young man of our narrative for this time again put off the Saviour, and the servant of the Lord left him and turned to others in that hall to point them to Jesus. For some months he continued his daily routine of life, but one morning while at his bench doing his work, suddenly he became troubled in mind about the question of salvation, and pausing in his work, a real conflict began in his soul. One voice seemed to sound in his ear, saying, It's all a fable, there's no proof of there being any hereafter, take no further notice; there is no God and no hell. But another voice came, saying, Behold My works in the heaven above and in the earth beneath. Who wrought these mighty wonders, and these countless variations in this work of creation? Who but I, I the Almighty Creator; and now again I am calling thee to repent and believe the gospel.

The Holy Spirit began to work deeply in his heart, laying it bare before him, showing him how deceitful it was and desperately wicked. Scriptures like Jeremiah xvii. 9 and Matthew xv. 19 came before his mind, mak-

ing him feel how unfit he was (although respectable and upright) to dwell in the presence of God. Isaiah vi. 5 came before him, where seraphims veil their faces, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts : the whole earth is full of His glory." He felt convinced of the reality of all he had heard of God and Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, and dropping his tools on the bench, he walked to the other end, and there in secret poured out his heart to God, and cried unto Him who is mighty to save.

The Good Shepherd had found His sheep, and there at the end of his bench he found peace through believing; and now after thirteen years is still rejoicing in Christ his Saviour. A memorable day for him is the 9th of April 1883. Often has he thought of his own words, spoken in the hall, "I am not hungry," and as often has he praised God for creating a hunger in his soul, and then leading him to the One, the only One, JESUS, who can satisfy *that* hunger. "The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John vi. 33). And Jesus says to you, my reader, "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever."

"Jesus, of Thee we ne'er would tire ;
The new and living food
Can satisfy our hearts' desire,
And life is in Thy blood."

F. R. H.



"A Burial at Sea."



AT a gospel preaching in a large hall some months since, the preacher took for his text four verses in the seventh chapter of Micah. First, verses 3 and 4: "That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward ; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire : so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier : the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge : the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh ; now shall be their perplexity." Secondly, verses 18 and 19 of the same chapter : "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us ; He will subdue

our iniquities ; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

The preacher dwelt a good deal upon the folly of endeavouring to hide or cover up our sins, for God knows all, and there is no way of escape from His omniscient eye. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in the grave (sheol), behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee" (Ps. cxxxix. 7-12). "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. v. 10). And as the Spirit of God, through the wise man, once said: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy 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). "The day of Thy visitation cometh ; now shall be their perplexity."

But let us turn for a moment to the brighter side. "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity . . . passeth by transgression . . . retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy." On the cross, mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

"The new and living way
 Stands open now to heaven ;
 Thence where the blood is seen alway,
 God's gift is given.

The river of His grace,
 Through righteousness supplied,
 Is flowing o'er the barren place
 Where Jesus died !"

Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. The sins of the believer are not only cast into the sea, but into the depths of the sea. A burial at sea is a very solemn thing to witness, and we are told that there are some parts of the sea that never give up their dead.

Some time ago a party went from a nobleman's mansion in Ireland. Six servants and two sailors went on the water for a sail ; but the boat was upset, and all were drowned. Neither

servants nor sailors have since been seen. It was one of those parts where the sea does not give up its dead.

But there is a time coming when the sea *will* give up its dead. Listen now: "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev. xx. 11-14). But that sea into which God casts *all* the sins of the believer *never* gives up its dead. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17). "The Lord hath laid on Him (Christ) the iniquities of us all" (Isa. liii. 6). He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for

our justification. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God" (Rom. v. 1). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).

At that preaching I observed a young woman, a stranger to me, listening with very great attention. On the next evening she was at the prayer meeting, and on the next Thursday at the Scripture reading; on the next Sunday again at the preaching, and on Monday at the prayer meeting. After this, she being a stranger, I spoke to her, asking if she knew any one present.

"I am Mrs G——'s sister," she replied.

Having heard of her as being an unconverted person, I was surprised at her being at the prayer and reading meetings; so I asked, "Do you know the Lord?"

"Yes," she replied, "I do know the Lord."

"And how long have you known Him?" I inquired.

Her answer was, "Last Sunday night week, in this hall, I found that God had cast all my sins into the depths of the sea."

"Into that sea," I remarked, "that *never* gives up its dead."

"Yes," she added, "and never to come up against me."

"You believe that?"

"I do."

"Then that was a burial at sea—and you were there."

"I was."

Her sister was dying of consumption. She lived just long enough to hear the good news of this "burial at sea."

T. A.

Good Cheer;

OR,

HOW THE LORD BROUGHT A YOUNG MAN
"FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT."

*Being a Postscript to a Letter written, Philadelphia,
11th March 1896.*

P.S.—I had written you hastily, and had sealed up my letter to mail, but I concluded to bring it home with me and write you about the *good cheer* the Lord gave last week in bringing a young man, a "Church member," "from darkness into light." The young man first came to my place about four weeks since, to deliver a book that I had printed and sent to the binding to be bound. As he was about to leave, I told

him that I had some nice tracts for him if he would read them, asking at the same time if he was interested in his soul's welfare.

He replied that he was interested in such things, and that he was a member of the "Presbyterian Church."

I asked him if he was a saved "Presbyterian," or a lost "Presbyterian."

He asked me what I meant.

I replied, "Do you think there are any Presbyterians who are unsaved?"

He replied, "Yes."

I said, "That is why I ask you which you are."

He saw the spirit and interest with which I asked, and he said, "To tell you the truth, I cannot tell you that I am saved."

I told him that I was glad to hear him answer the question so frankly, and asked if he did not believe his condition was either one or the other—saved or lost.

He replied, "Yes."

I said, "If you find out that you are lost, the way of salvation is very plain and simple,—yet," said I, "you are going on with the form of things as if you were saved," explaining as I did, that, every time one thus took the bread and the wine, he was practically saying, "This is His

body which was given for me, this is His blood which was shed for me," and if it was not a realised truth in his soul, it would be far better that he had not taken it, for it is written, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself" (1 Cor. xi. 29). I gave him a couple of tracts, one of which was "John iii. 16," and as he left I felt that he was a convicted man.

About a week or so after, he came in to see me again to tell me that he was interested in his soul's salvation,—“that he realised that he was lost.”

I said, “If that is so, it is God who is exercising you, and you are on your way to be saved.” I put it before him that God had done all that was needful for salvation in giving His only begotten Son. 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.” I said, “If you realise that you are perishing, God wants you to believe, and have everlasting life.” I told him that I could not make it any plainer, and neither could God, than He had made it in that very verse (John iii. 16), and that he needed to believe it. He went away this time deeply exercised, taking a couple more tracts with him.

It was on Tuesday of last week he came to my place with a face radiant with joy, and as he came in, he said positively, "**Now I know what you know.**"

"What is that?" I asked.

"I KNOW THAT I AM SAVED."

I expressed my thankfulness to hear it, and asked how he came to know it.

He said he was walking along the street thinking about the tract and the scripture I had brought before him, and he thought to himself — "I will believe anybody, everybody, and everything, but I will not believe God. I said then and there, '*I will believe God: I do believe God, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*' I did believe, and I cannot tell you of the joy that filled my soul, and I have continued so happy ever since."

He said that he wanted to get in to see me the day before when it happened, but that he was kept too busy, and now he had not time to stay longer, but that he wanted some more of the tracts now to give to others to whom he had been telling the good news. I saw him again last Friday afternoon, and he

seemed as happy as ever. I asked if he had not been meeting with opposition since I saw him. .

He said, Yes, but that he did not mind that.

I tried to put it before him that it was Satan's business to oppose him and try to make trouble for him, but that he could rest knowing that he was now "kept by the power of God." He seemed to be so filled with the love of God that even the arch-enemy Satan seemed to be overlooked. It has been some time since I saw the working of the Lord like this, and I can tell you that it has been no small cheer to me to press on with the tract distributing.

May He be pleased to use the tracts I am now sending you, and the praise and the glory be unto Himself.—Yours affectionately in Christ,

H. E. R.



A Solemn Warning.

THERE are many events, constantly occurring in every part of the world, which are warnings to the indifferent and hardened. Sometimes an event transpires which shocks the community, or plunges it into grief, or else fills it with fear and

trembling ; and then, after a while it is forgotten, having been dismissed from the mind, just as though it were a disagreeable dream. But the all-wise and gracious God intends them as warnings, and as such they should exercise the conscience of the unsaved. Alas ! how very few are exercised by God's repeated warnings.

Surely He means them as exhortations of mercy, to flee from the wrath to come by receiving in faith the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour.

A young man in all the energy of youthful vigour and health lived in one of the picturesque villages near the great city of New York. He was frequently spoken to about the Saviour's love in dying for sinners, and warned against treating lightly the gospel which he had heard so often. But all with no avail. He remained quite indifferent and hardened to the love of God.

One day he was swinging up and down upon a swing which was attached to a huge branch of a large tree in his garden, and higher and higher he swung in the full enjoyment of this pastime. An acquaintance, passing by the garden, hailed him with the customary salutation, to which he jestingly but profanely replied, as the swing bounded high in the air, "Good-bye, D—— ; I

am going to hell." The words had barely left his lips, when the great branch broke, throwing him violently to the ground, and crashing into his skull. His friend called for aid, and tenderly and anxiously they lifted him up and carried him into the house. A physician was summoned, and at once pronounced his injury to be a fracture of the skull, and alas! fatal. In a short while he died—unexpectedly taken into eternity with these awful words, the very last he ever uttered, upon his lips. What a warning from God we have here for persons who listen again and again to His glad tidings, yet only to harden their hearts against His grace!

Unconverted reader, unexpectedly death, too, may come to you. In the very best of health to-day; a corpse to-morrow! But is this all? No, no: "But *after* this the *judgment*" (Heb. ix. 27). If you reject Christ as your *Saviour now* in this *world*, you must face Him as the *Judge* in all your sins when heaven and earth pass away, before the great white throne (Rev. xx. 12).

God's message of mercy, testifying of His love and grace to sinners, fills the length and breadth of the world. It tenderly pleads with all to *believe in His Son* as the *only Saviour*. Alas!

the vast majority, young and old, pass through this world as if there was no eternity beyond it; eager in the pursuit of fancied pleasure, or the accumulation of riches, hardened in indifference to the blessed news of salvation by faith in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus. Reader, *that* vast majority are on the downward road to hell! *Do not* you be amongst that number. The Word of God—from the lips of Jesus Himself the statement is definitely and clearly made that *God loves*—tells you 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). And, in I John iv. 9, 10, we read: “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. Herein is love, *not that we loved God, but that He loved us*, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” And again in Romans v. 8, “God *commendeth His love* toward us, in that while we *were yet sinners*, *Christ died for us*.”

Oh! what wonderful love! Dear unconverted reader, does it not melt your heart? Does it not incline you to come by faith to Jesus, with your load of sins? to come just as you are in your state of

ruin and guilt, and accept Him as your Saviour; and pour out your heart in thanksgiving to God for such a great salvation and such a loving Saviour?

The Lord may come at any moment to take up His Church to be for ever with Him (1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17), even before you have finished reading these words, and if you are not saved, if you have not had faith in His finished work upon the cross for your salvation, you will be TOO LATE. Are you amongst those who, cleansed from their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, are expecting the Lord to come? If not, you will be left behind to pass through the judgments that God will pour out upon this earth, after the Church has gone to heaven, and these judgments will end in the eternal condemnation of those who have not obeyed the gospel (2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9, and Jude 15).

Oh! believe in the Lord Jesus Christ NOW, for "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"In the lone land of deep despair,
No ray of heavenly light shall rise;
No God regard your hopeless prayer,
No Saviour call you to the skies."

W. E. S.

"There is"—What?

IF you listen to-day to what men are saying, you will hear continually what, in their opinion, *ought* to be.

A man finds something which offends him; he at once denounces it, and proclaims what *should* be.

Another looks carefully into affairs, and sees many things wrong radically, and sighs for what *might* be—if people would only alter.

A third takes another view, and tries to look at the best side of things, and hopes for what he imagines *will* be—some day.

But how vain is all this talking about what *should be* or *could be*—how useless to a man who may die to-morrow!

You cannot help a man by telling him what he *ought to be* or what he *might be*. It is foolish to speculate as to what *will* be, since we know not what a day may bring forth.

The great and important question for us all to-day is—What *is* there in the way of *help* and *certainty*?

And amidst all the confusion of voices and disputations around, God's Word tells us plainly

not merely what *should* be, but what there *IS*—what *for* me ; what *against* me. And first—

“ There is—one God ” (1 Tim. ii. 5),
who is the God of truth, He is the living God,
the King of eternity (Jer. x. 10).

Oh ! how many seem to have forgotten that,
as ever, “ the Lord is in His holy temple, the
Lord’s throne is in heaven,” and that “ His eyes
behold, His eyelids try, the children of men ”
(Ps. xi. 4).

Here then is One—supreme—untouched by
the clamour of earth’s confused cries, and He is
taking account of the whole scene—One at last
who can tell me the truth of all that is so per-
plexing around—for “ He is the God of truth.”

Nor dare any contradict what He says, for
“ He is God, and there is none else : there is no
God beside Him ” (Isa. xlv. 5).

Reader ! have you ever stopped to heed what
He says about matters which will eternally affect
you ? And what does He say ?

First, He tells us of Himself, that He is God
—“ a *just* God—and a *Saviour* ” (Isa. xlv. 21).

Next, He tells us of ourselves, and declares—

“ There is—none righteous,
no, not one ; ” “ *There is none that doeth good ;* ”

"*There is* no difference;" "All have sinned and come short of His glory" (Rom. iii. 10-23).

This is solemn; for *you* are taken account of here—*excluded* from amongst the righteous, *included* amongst sinners. It is not merely what you or I may think of things here on earth. God has Himself considered *all*. And what does *He* find with man? Sin, guilt, sorrow, death in abundance, but "*none righteous, no, not one.*"

Man, do you now look to God! After hearing *truth's* verdict, it is useless looking to yourself, and remembering what you *ought to be* for God. You cannot recall the past; you will not do better in the future. There is nothing acceptable in you to God. Look now, and see what there is in Him for you.

And yet shall a guilty sinner look to a holy God! What can there be *there* for a sinner—except wrath? Yet turn once more to this Book which represents you such a sinner and read—

"**There is—forgiveness**" (Ps. cxxx. 4).

How wonderful! Sin in man's heart *against* God; forgiveness in God's heart *for* man! How rich, how grand is this! *The grace exceeds the sin*. But how can a *just* God forgive? It is because

"**There is—a Mediator**

between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

And thus this wonderful Book tells me of

A *God* who delights to forgive ;

A *sinner* who needs to be forgiven ;

A *Mediator* who gave His life a ransom.

Reader, mercy allows you to approach and take a place here.

Now we see how it can be declared that "*there is forgiveness.*" The just God must in justice measure out wrath against sin. The guilty sinner must bear this wrath eternally unless a substitute can be found. But Jesus, the "one Mediator," has come in love and "given His life a ransom." The wrath has been poured out upon Him. He has consumed that wrath which should have consumed the sinner. He has tasted death ; has entered the tomb and spoiled the grave ; has risen a mighty Victor over every foe, and is exalted by God "a Prince and a Saviour" (Acts v. 31).

And now *through Him* "is preached . . . the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe, are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). The Word testifies to no improvement in man or his doings. But "to *Him* give all the prophets

witness that through *His name* whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

How different is this from man's gospel! He hopes there *may* be forgiveness in the judgment day *if he does his best*. God declares "*there is forgiveness*" now, in the day of grace, though man has done his worst. Tell me, then, no longer what to you *seems* right, or what you imagine is the best way to prepare to meet God. Remember

"There is—a way which seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12).

Man's shrewdest thought could never devise an escape from perdition, nor has he power to carry into effect any project formed. The fact is, salvation is not to be obtained by the *life* of any man, however well he may deem it lived; but by *death*, the death of Jesus, "the Lamb of God." And further, God tells us "there is no salvation in any other, for

there is—none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12).

Do you trust to Jesus, and to Him only?

"He that believeth hath everlasting life" (John

v. 24). And what blessed assurance He gives to those who trust Him, for

“There is—no condemnation
to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. viii. 1).

Hold it fast, dear fellow-believer, for thy heart’s confidence. Not all the doubters in the universe can disprove it; not all the demons of hell can shake it. For “the God of truth” has spoken it; “the spirit of truth” has recorded it.

“There is no condemnation.”

How precious for the believer! But what of the unbeliever? This—

“There is—wrath.”

And “because there is wrath, beware lest He take *thee* away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee” (Job xxxvi. 18).

The day of grace is closing; the shades of that night of wrath will soon enshroud the earth. Once more the Holy Ghost speaks—the last message from heaven—

“Yet—there is—room” (Luke xiv. 22).

Yes, the Saviour has made room in heaven for the sinner, though the sinner made no room on earth for the Saviour.

“And let him that is athirst *come*. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. xxii. 17).

H. E. B.

A Sunday Night in the Red Sea.

“**Y**OU had little idea how true were your words to-night? How suddenly that poor fellow was called away!”

It was the surgeon of a fine Australian liner who thus addressed me, his whole demeanour bearing witness to a mighty change having come over his feelings towards me, for hitherto he had avoided me, and used no effort to disguise that he treated me with profound contempt.

The fact of the matter was that for the two weeks we had been at sea several gospel services had been held on deck, much to the annoyance of some, though greatly appreciated by others. That the Word of God was being preached within ear-shot of these “lovers of pleasures” was too much even for their feelings of ordinary politeness, and many were their winks and nods and titterings as I used to pass them on deck.

How sad it is to see the rebellion of the human heart against God! The truth of those words in Romans viii. 7—“The carnal mind is enmity against God”—may be manifested any

day, and every day. You have only to introduce the subject of Christ and His claims upon men to evoke their violent opposition and their virulent enmity. Does any one doubt the truth of this? Then let them try, as I have hundreds of times, to preach Christ on board an ocean steamer!

Perhaps, under these circumstances, we see the world just as it is, without varnish or concealment. A service on Sunday mornings in the saloon is just *tolerated* for decency's sake, but anything more than this—no! Down with it! Away with it! According to the same spirit that, when Christ was here, cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"

It was a Sunday night in the Red Sea. The day had been somewhat oppressively hot, but the evening was pleasantly cool, and a large crowd of passengers were gathered on the fore-deck. They were mostly steerage, for the poor have the gospel preached to them. The rich often treat these matters with greater indifference. Through the kindness of the captain we had the use of the electric light whenever these gospel services were held; and on this occasion several hundreds were sitting and standing around listening attentively to the Word of

Life. It was an impressive sight to see those crowds of young men, many of them the picture of health and manly vigour, and to remember that each possessed an immortal soul, that each had a record of sin to account for to a holy God, that each would soon have to meet that God, and that a never-ending eternity lay before each. Were they ready?

While I was preaching, and these thoughts were passing through my mind, the surgeon of the ship walked right through the midst of the crowd. He had been to see a patient in the forecastle, and was obliged to go back that way. I saw him, and fancied I could detect the same haughty look of scorn as he passed me by. That he would stand and listen I did not for one moment expect. Besides the electric light was too strong! He would not have had the moral courage to stand up boldly and listen to the story of Calvary. Poor cowards we are!

He was soon out of my sight, but not out of God's; and I learnt afterwards that he stood behind one of the masts for ten minutes listening where he could not himself be observed.

As the preaching proceeded, I had felt led of God to speak strongly upon the *uncertainty* of life and the *certainty* of having to meet God.

"Young men! you who are now listening to me in the full vigour of health, you may be nearer to eternity than you imagine. Just starting forth, full of hope, to commence life in a new land, filled with bright expectations of success for the future, *you may never reach the shores of Australia.* Are you ready to die? Dare you face a meeting with a holy and sin-hating God as you now stand? If not, why put off for another day the settlement of this momentous question? Come now to the Lord Jesus Christ. Own yourselves to be lost sinners, and trust in Jesus, the Saviour of the lost. Salvation is within your reach at this moment. Why not accept it now? You will never have a better opportunity — indeed, you may never have another."

To these and such-like remarks the crowd around listened with deep attention, and God only knows how many in that company gave heed to the message.

At the close of the service I was asked by a Christian man in the second saloon if I would go and speak to a poor fellow who was dying of consumption in the hospital.

"Certainly," I replied, "but as it is now rather late, perhaps I had better wait until the morning,

as he may now be asleep, and it would be a pity to awake him."

So saying, I walked up the deck. A group of passengers were standing together, and talking in a somewhat subdued manner. "It was very sudden!" I heard one of them remark. Asking what had happened, I was speedily informed that a young man had just died on deck in the after-part of the ship. At once I thought of the consumptive patient, and asked, "Was it the poor fellow in the hospital?"

"Oh, no," was the reply; "it was a young fellow that scarcely seemed to have anything amiss with him. Indeed, he was on deck this afternoon, and was suddenly seized with pain, and almost immediately died. He was one of the strongest-looking young fellows that came on board at Plymouth. Every one remarked what a fine, powerful man he was."

Never shall I forget the impressive scene that I witnessed early the next morning. The poor body had been wrapped and sewn up in canvas, and placed, heavily weighted, on a plank, with the Union Jack spread over all. At six A.M. a signal was given from the bridge to stop the engines. The screw ceased to turn, and amidst the awful stillness that followed, a Romish priest

uttered, or rather muttered, a few unintelligible words, when suddenly the plank was tipped, the body quickly glided off, a splash—and then, once more, the sound of the churning of the screw, and we sped on our way, leaving the body of one of our number miles behind, who but yesterday had been apparently the least likely of all on board to die.

Was he ready for the sudden call? Reader, would you be, if called away this very moment?

From that day and onward to the end of the journey, the preaching of the Word was treated with respect by all on board.

Death is real, and when coming so suddenly into the midst of a little community such as is found on board ship, must produce some serious impressions.

Reader, do not *you* treat these solemn matters lightly! "Remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not" (Eccles. xii. 1).

"For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them" (Eccles. ix. 12).

Farmer Jones.

TOWARDS the summit of a hill among the moors of Yorkshire lived a farmer, whose rough exterior covered a tender heart, softened by the benign influence of personal acquaintance and habitual intercourse with the Lord of Glory, revealed in grace to himself in years long past.

Jones, who was not without the quaintness that is indigenous to that locality, one afternoon, milking his cows in a cowshed adjoining his house, was called upon by a gentlemanly and rather ministerially-got-up person from the civilised south, who introduced himself as "a brother in Christ."

"Oh!" said our farmer, looking up from his cow, "do you know any one worse than yourself?"

As one might naturally suppose, his visitor was slightly disconcerted and rather taken aback at such an unexpected encounter; a certain shock, too, to his ministerial proclivities which found themselves in a moment in the presence of that which was at least their equal, if not more. But being a true man nevertheless, after gathering up

his scattered faculties, he replied, "Well, no, I do not."

"Come in to dinner, then," said our farmer, and having common interests they were soon fast friends.

We may say in passing that we have seen the tears slowly trickling down the cheeks of this seemingly rough man in speaking of the subject that always warmed his heart on that bleak hill-side. He has long since entered into his rest, the end of the path of life, into that presence where there is "fulness of joy," awaiting the resurrection morn, "the morning without clouds"—"the pleasures for evermore."

And now we would ask you, dear friend, the same question, or rather, we would ask you to put it to yourself, "Do you know any one worse than yourself?" Such enlightenment, let us say, is a trait of the household of faith, for it is unknown in the nature of things outside of it—for what can produce it, nothing but the finding of oneself in the presence of light and true holiness.

The Word of God abounds with instances of it, and God Himself is always careful to inculcate it. Job is a bright example of it, as well as of the way to it, under the tuition of the wisdom of

God. After a long and trying process he is brought to confess that "I am vile," but even that was not deep enough for God, who had marked him out for exceptional blessing, so in result we find him exclaiming, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but *now* mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job xlii. 5, 6). And what was God's answer? "My servant Job . . . him will I accept."

The same may be said of Saul of Tarsus, "the chief of sinners," and of Peter likewise, who said when brought into the presence of the glory of Christ, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8). It is the sight of oneself in the true light which *repels*, together with the consciousness of the love and grace which *draws*; and in the light of that Presence what know we of other people's hearts but by our own?

Oh, to be followers of Him, who, though in the form of God, took on Him the form of a servant, and who being found in fashion as a man became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Therefore God* hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name. May each that reads hear that "Echo of Mercy," and

have that "new name," even "My new name," written on them with that indelbleness of His that can never be effaced, is our earnest prayer !

W. F. B.



The Sandwich Man's Confession.

PATROLLING the streets of one of the London suburbs was to be seen some years ago C——, the sandwich man, whose thoughts often took a religious turn until he became a professing Christian. But, sad to say, it was religion without Christ ; he was trusting in himself, his religious observances, his strugglings and strivings, to make himself better, instead of distrusting himself and believing whole-heartedly on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eight years passed away, and the writer was informed of the fact that C—— was dying, and invited to call and see him. We found him reduced to a skeleton by that dreadful disease, consumption, gasping for breath ; but what a change spiritually ! No mention of his goodness

now, instead there were shouts of praise to the Saviour whom he had now learned to trust, and prayers for his unsaved relatives. In broken sentences he confessed that he had been trying to be good, and professing to be a Christian, but, said he, there was nothing in it. "Now I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep and save me. And if anybody comes to see me I tell them about my Saviour, because I want my Saviour to be their Saviour too." He also testified to the unfailing goodness of God in providing for his temporal needs, in that, although the parish only allowed him the sum of two shillings weekly, with a little food, yet he had not been allowed to want for a single penny. "My Saviour provides for me, and I know He will never forsake me. *I know He never will,*" he added with emphasis.

Some scriptures were read to him speaking of the precious blood of Christ, and of the value God sets upon the finished work of His own dear Son, and that the sinner who simply rests on that finished work is saved for ever, because the Saviour went into the sinner's place, bore the punishment in his stead, and satisfied the righteous claims of God.

"Yes," he added, "I believe that, and I'm

trusting Him entirely, and wherever you go, give them old C——'s testimony that I'm a happy man. I'm saved, and going to heaven, and I want my Saviour to be theirs."

A few days later and our friend the sandwich man was called home to be with his Lord. To the last he bore a bright testimony to the saving grace of God.

My reader, from this dying bed we appeal to you. Are you trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation, or are you, like many others, who come to their law keeping, their places of worship, their works, but stop short of coming to Christ? Many are so occupied with the persons, the places, and the things of earth, that they appear to have no time or desire to know Jesus as their Saviour. Oh! sinner, awake to the solemn fact that you are defiled by sin, and that you need God's salvation. Will you turn your ears away from the One who now speaks to you so graciously from heaven? We pray you, see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. "For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. xii. 25).

S. E. B.

A Human Soul—its Value.

HAVE you ever sat down and seriously considered the fact that you have a *soul*? Have you asked yourself how much it is worth?

At what price does *God* value it? It is of greater value than the whole material world, He says, for “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark viii. 36.) Nothing can be found precious enough to barter for it, since He adds, “or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Nor can “silver and gold” suffice to redeem it, for nothing corruptible can equal its price (1 Pet. i. 18).

From time immemorial it has been known that men have souls, and that they are of intrinsic and eternal worth. Why did the Egyptians and other nations bestow such care on embalming and entombing the dead? Because they believed in the soul returning to the body; a representation of this may be seen in the British Museum—a winged soul revisiting a mummied body—the copy of a picture or papyrus found in Egypt. In the same room is another remarkable cartoon from the same source. Among other

scenes we may behold the soul of a man named Ani being weighed in presence of the false god Osiris, the judge of the dead. It may remind us of Daniel's message to the impious king, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." How solemn it is to think of standing before the true "God, the Judge of all"! Soul and body will be together then.

But again let us ask, What is the worth of a human soul? Have we any means of knowing? If any one has ever paid a ransom or redemption price for a soul, that would give us some clue to determining its worth, would it not? The Psalmist says (xlix.) that *man cannot* do this: "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their *soul* is precious." Indeed it is! It costs so much that only God can pay the price, and he goes on to say, "*God* will redeem *my soul* from the power of the grave." What men cannot do, God has done. "*I have found a ransom,*" He has said, "He will deliver *his soul* from going down into the pit" (Job xxxiii.). So that we may say that *souls have* been redeemed by God, "purchased with the blood of His own Son."

It is a marvellous story. The price that God

has paid to redeem from sin and death and hell such poor vile sinners as we are is the blood of His beloved Son! Who else could have wrought such a redemption—could have conceived such a plan?

Many years ago a rich man of the world was pleasing himself by conducting a recent acquaintance over his estate. As they were returning to the house the visitor remarked, "You have a nice place here, but tell me, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'" Ah! his *soul*—he had not given much time to thinking of that—he had prided himself on being all right, and he was very religious too. But that night he entered into what the feelings of that other rich man would have been had he known that God was about to say to him, "This night thy *soul* shall be required of thee," and when morning dawned he was a saved—a new-born soul. Some one—God's Son—had paid the ransom price for *him* too!

"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe."

Not far from the village where the rich man dwelt, and near about the same time, in another village, there lived a wretched character, belying in every way the rural and beautiful scenes of

nature around him. Do you remember the story of the man under Satan's power (Luke viii.) who "had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house"? Yet he had a *soul* (and Jesus knew its value), and so had the wretched character who so very closely resembled him. Henry Cox (or Hen Cox, as he was familiarly called) rarely did any work, and unless sitting in the public-house, seemed to pass his time in wandering about, often with an open knife in his hand, to the terror of all the children of the neighbourhood. It is needless to go into details concerning his miserable life. Suffice it to say that apparently no one ever dreamed of doing him any good, and that his degraded appearance and tattered garments caused most to shun him. But there was one who had recently come to reside in the village who began to pray earnestly for him. She realised that poor Hen Cox had a *soul*, and she knew something of its worth—hers had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ—has yours, dear reader?

So one Sunday afternoon she sallied forth to seek Hen Cox. She turned her steps towards his mother's cottage, for there he lived, if indeed you could say that of a man who more often slept under a haystack than in a bed. For several

Sundays she searched in vain, and when at last she succeeded, oaths and brutal ways were her only reward, for truly he was more like an animal than a man. But she was not weary in well-doing—you must remember she was working for *love*—she loved the One who loved her, and had done so much for her, and whose blood had washed her sins away.

“I would not work my soul to save,
For that my Lord hath done,
But I would work like any slave
From love to God’s dear Son.”

By degrees poor Hen Cox used to watch for her coming. At first he may have had only the vague feeling that somebody cared for his welfare, and gradually he began to wash and clothe himself in readiness for her visits, but by-and-by he listened as she read and talked to him of Jesus as you would to a child, and there was joy in heaven over the lost sheep that was found. Then Hen Cox was seen at a gospel meeting, and in time he was heard to pray at a little village prayer meeting. To the children who had been wont to flee at his approach, it was at first somewhat difficult to sit calmly in the same room with him, but soon they realised that he whom no man had been able to tame was now “clothed and in his right mind.”

"Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

Both Hen Cox and his dear benefactor are now with the Lord—he as a brand plucked out of the fire, showing indeed "how great things" God can do, while she will shine like a star for ever to His praise. She turned poor Hen Cox and yet many others to righteousness. May we follow her faith! (1 Cor. xi. 1.)

Dear reader, once more—*your soul*—is it saved!

H. L. H.



"The Wages of Sin is Death."

AT the N—— Theatre on Monday, August 10th, 1896, a large audience witnessed that "sensational play," "The Sin of the Night."

All went apparently well until the closing scene, when, during a fierce struggle, one man stabs another with a spring dagger. When the blade was pressed upon him, it should have gone into the handle, and the actor would then have had only to *simulate* death.

The "play" being over, the curtain dropped,

and the house having applauded, the spectators went home *apparently* satisfied.

God had spoken plainly to those who were mocking Him by making light of sin and death. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7), should have been sufficient to warn them against trifling with sin and death. But, heedless of all His warnings, one there has to learn in very truth that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). The spring refused to act, the blade entered the poor man's breast, and instead of having to "*simulate*" death, he fell to the floor dying indeed.

Little thought the audience that their rejoicing was at the expense of a soul being launched into eternity.

Think you, dear reader, it was by *chance* that the spring refused to act? No! How long God had in patient grace borne with this daring insult I know not, but now He comes very near, and speaks so loud and clear that none need misunderstand. Should this little paper fall into the hands of "fellow-actors," let me implore you to give heed to this solemn warning, lest you, too, be lost. Who art thou to make light of sin, and "*simulate*" death as though it were not a reality?

Has this no voice to you, reader? "The Sin of the Night"! Ah! Judas knows something of it (see John xiii.). Having steeled his heart against grace, and determined to go on in wickedness, "Satan entered into him." Awful words! "He, then, having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was NIGHT." Night it was, in every sense of the word. A night to his soul that will never, no, never, know the break of day. Could we but call him back for a moment, what a tale he would tell! Would he not say to you, "Beware lest He take *thee* away with His stroke: then a *great ransom* cannot deliver thee"?

Is it nothing to you? Would it be nothing to you to be for ever in the lake of fire? No ransom there! no salvation there! Beware lest thou spend eternity with Judas!

Do you ask, "What must I do to be saved"? Do! my reader. *Nothing!* You are too late, eighteen hundred years too late; all the work needed for your soul's salvation was **done** by the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. Death was our due; but He left that bright glory, and came down here, and went to that cross, that there **He** might die in our stead; that He might bear all the righteous judgment due to our sins. Was ever love like His? Listen to His words:

"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). He was that blessed corn of wheat; it was not His desire that He should abide alone; but that He might have such poor sinners as you and I with Him in the glory, He went to Calvary's cross, and *died*.

The cup of God's wrath against sin had to be drunk, and that we might not drink of it for ever in the lake of fire, Christ drank it on the cross.

Down, down He went, underneath all the judgment of God; all the waves and billows of His wrath rolled over Him, until all the judgment was exhausted, then with one loud shout of triumph He cried, "**It is finished**"!

Well might the earth quake, and the rocks be rent as He went down into death, and met and conquered him who "had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14).

"It is finished"! Satan has been defeated; God's righteous claims have been fully met. God is satisfied with that blessed work, for He has raised Him up from among the dead and exalted Him to His own right hand in glory—a Prince and a Saviour (Acts v. 31).

What think *ye* of Christ? I do not ask,

Have you become moral and religious? for you may be this and be lost for ever. But have you been *converted*? Are you *saved*? There are but two classes of people in the world—those who have believed on the Son of God, and they *have* ETERNAL LIFE; and those who have *not* believed on Him, and the *wrath* of God ABIDES on such (see John iii. 36).

There is no middle course. To which class, then, do you belong? If to the first, happy is your portion. A bright cloudless morning shall soon dawn upon you; Jesus, the One who died for you, will *soon* come again and take you, with all the redeemed, to be for ever with Himself, to sing throughout eternity that new song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v.). No cloud shall cross that summer sky! There is "no night there."

But if you belong to the latter class, pause! think of spending eternity in torment, where all is *night*. Your companions will be Satan and his angels, Judas, and every sinner who has died in his *sins*. There to drink, and drink, and drink of that cup of wrath, but you will NEVER drain it—never exhaust its contents.

Come to the Lord Jesus Christ *now*, own that you are a *lost* sinner, rest your soul on His

finished work, believe in Him, and everlasting life and joy, peace and happiness, will be yours.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou *shalt* be *saved*" (Rom. x. 9; John v. 24). A. T. P.



A Deaf Mute and her Simple Sign.

A LITTLE while ago, on the platform of one of the underground railway stations, might have been seen a group of deaf and dumb, who were evidently enjoying the conversation which was going on between them, and all seemed very happy. They had just come from a gospel meeting, where the blessed Lord Jesus Christ had been preached to them in their own language. I said they all seemed happy, and indeed so they were, for all in that happy group, although so sadly afflicted physically, possessed that which more than made up for their affliction. Each one possessed Christ, and all who receive Him into their hearts receive One who can and does give peace and joy, making such able to say, "Our light affliction, which

is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18).

While thus earnestly talking together concerning the things of the Lord, they were suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a man, who no doubt thought of having a good deal of fun at their expense. His face was blackened, and he held in his hands a tambourine. Staring hard at them, he approached nearer and nearer, and when within a short distance he stopped. Pointing towards them, he said, "Ah! these are all deaf and dumb; they won't enjoy my music, but I can amuse them all the same." Then, speaking louder, he shouted out: "I have performed before lunatics. I can amuse all classes of people." Other things he said, suiting actions to his words, until the attention of all on the platform was attracted to him. Some were laughing at his sayings and doings, but it was quite evident that the people generally did not approve of his making those dear afflicted ones the subject of his wit. At last a gentleman stepped up to the fun-maker, and quietly remonstrated with him. I

think he must have felt a little ashamed, for he said no more, and soon after walked away.

Meanwhile the deaf and dumb, seeing that they were the subject of his remarks, and thinking it best to take no notice of him, turned away and went on with their conversation. But one of their number, a dear earnest Christian woman, felt grieved for the poor man himself, and she felt she would like to speak to him of a loving God, who was ready to pardon, and ready to save. But how should she do this? Speak aloud to him she could not; but a thought occurred to her, and leaving her friends, she quietly walked up to the man, touched him on the shoulder, and pointed up. Looking steadfastly at the man, she still held up her finger, upwards toward God and heaven, till she could see that the man had grasped her meaning, for he nodded his head, saying, "Yes, yes, I know." She then left him.

That simple sign needed no explanation. It is a common sign among the deaf and dumb. It is significant in itself, and the man understood it too. He felt she was pointing him to God, to Him who sees and weighs all our actions, and before whom we all one day must appear to give an account of the deeds done in the body; and

she told me afterwards that she believed the Lord would use that simple sign for the man's eternal blessing.

And now, dear reader, let me do, as this dear deaf and dumb woman did, point YOU to Him. Not as an avenging God, but as a loving and gracious God: One who has shown us His love by the gift of His dear Son Jesus our Lord, and who says that all who come unto Him by Jesus Christ shall receive remission of sins. "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." I point you, then, to a God of love, who is ready and willing to save you now, as you read this simple incident.

F. R. H.



"But the fearful——"

THE gospel was being preached, and the evangelist, after speaking of the freeness of salvation as it is typified by "the fountain of the water of life" (Rev. xxi. 6), passed on to the more solemn message in the eighth verse.

Dwelling on the fact that "the fearful" are

placed by God *first* in the list of those "who shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. xxi. 8), he related the following illustrative incident.

After a gospel meeting, the preacher, passing from one to another, stopped before a man known to him, and asked him, "Are you going to decide for Christ now?"

"No," was the reply; and in excuse was given, "I lack the moral courage."

Time passed, and the same query was repeated. "Not yet," was the answer; "I lack the moral courage, but I am about to take a farm at a distance, where I am unknown, and *then* I will decide for Christ."

A further period elapsed, and the evangelist received a message that the man who had thus replied to his questions was dangerously ill. Hastening to his side, he sought once more to put the gospel before him, but in vain!

"No, it is too late! You only mock me! Do not stay to add to my sufferings!" and the awful lament fell from his lips, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

With a sad heart the servant of God was obliged to go.

As the dying man grew worse, so dreadful was his state that his friends were forced to leave him, and only his wife remained to see the end.

As the sun sank in the west the spirit of the dying farmer took its flight. Just before he passed away he made an effort to speak. His wife, leaning over him, caught these words: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded . . . I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh" (Prov. i. 24, 26). "Beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18). * * *

"The Blood of the Lamb" (Rev. vii. 14); or,
"The Wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 16).

Dear reader, which of the above will you have? You must have one or the other. Under the shelter of "the blood of the Lamb" you will be sheltered from His wrath. Rejecting His blood you will be for ever enduring "the wrath of the Lamb." Again we ask, which will you have?

S. E. B.

Christian or Infidel? Which?

WE are living in an age of infidelity, and yet, strange to say, few amongst the ranks of nineteenth-century unbelievers like the name of "infidel."

The distinctive doctrines of Christianity are to-day abandoned, despised, and denounced by a multitude who resent with anger the refusal to describe them as "Christians."

This does seem strange indeed. Men love to be thought "Christians," even though in reality they could not with any show of reason claim to be Christians. Why so?

That Christianity has been a mighty influence in the world, none can deny. Wherever it has entered, darkness has been dissipated and degradation has fled. True, much of darkness and degradation still exists in lands where Christianity has been longest received, but only in proportion as its spiritual power has been denied, its teaching unheeded, and Christ Himself unknown, even though its *form* has been assumed (2 Tim. iii.).

"Can you tell me why it is that worldly men are so opposed to mission work?" was a question

I addressed to a white-haired and venerable-looking old man whom I met on board a steamer coasting round South Africa. He was a missionary of wide experience; he had laboured amongst many heathen races, and had also toiled for Christ's sake amidst the unresponsive whites, who, while trusting in themselves that they were righteous, despised their black neighbours.

"I have heard so many men say, 'Never trust a mission Kaffir! Of all Kaffir rogues they are the worst!' I know, of course," said I, "that worldly men, especially when inclined to infidelity, owe Christianity a grudge, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and it is Christ that in reality they still dislike and hate, even as they did when He was here on this earth."

The old man's reply set me thinking. "There are many bad, wicked men in this world, sir, but where would you go to find the worst, the most degraded, the most abandoned? Would it not be to London, to Paris, to Rome, to the centres of civilisation and of professed Christianity? Wherever the enlightenment of Christianity has gone and the heart has remained unchanged, there you will find a moral degradation, a refinement of vice and wickedness, which is unknown in all the heathen races! I have

known," he continued, "many Kaffirs truly converted to God, their whole lives changed, and bearing testimony to the reality of their faith; while, on the other hand, a Kaffir who has come in contact with the educational advantages of a mission station, if he remain unconverted, may be and often is less to be trusted than others of his race."

Yes, reader, education is not conversion, and the profession of Christianity, apart from conversion, is utterly worthless. I have known men whose bloated countenances have told a tale of dissipation and vice, whose commercial dealings would not bear the smallest investigation, whose word was not worth the weight of a feather—these very men denounce Christianity and Christians "with the ignorance of a pagan and the animus of an apostate." It is Christ they hate, though they hate Him without a cause.

The world has not changed its true character though it may have changed its cloak, since the Lord Jesus Christ spoke those memorable words, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John xv. 18-21).

After a lengthy conversation with a fellow-passenger on an ocean steamer, in the course of which his disbelief of all the plainest teaching of the Word of God had been unblushingly asserted, I was almost amused, had it not been for the seriousness of the subject, at the injured tone which he adopted on my refusal to recognise him as a "Christian."

"It is just like you uncharitable people, who think everybody wrong but yourselves. Nobody is a Christian but one who thinks as you do!"

"My dear sir," I replied, "it is not a question of you being wrong and I being right, or *vice versa*. This is a plain matter of fact. You deny every doctrine taught in the Christian religion, you refuse belief in Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures [for he had rejected with scorn the doctrines most plainly taught in the Bible, of the fall of man and his sinful state, of the deity of Christ, and of His sin-atoning sacrifice, &c. &c.], and yet you claim to be a 'Christian'! What would you say to a man who claimed to

be called a Mohammedan, and yet loudly asserted his disbelief in Mohammed and the Koran? Would you not say to such a one, 'Whatever you call yourself, do not call yourself a Mohammedan, for *that* you most certainly are not'? And so I say to you, 'Whatever you call yourself, do not call yourself a *Christian*, for that you cannot be while denying Christ and rejecting the Christian faith such as it is taught in the Bible."

The fact of the matter is, reader, we are living in the days of the commencing apostasy, long since foretold (2 Thess. ii. 3), and men now are "departing from the [Christian] faith" (1 Tim. iv. 1). Sad as it is to behold it, it is but plain evidence of the truth of that book which centuries ago revealed by the inspiration of God that such should be the case. We are nearing the end of Christendom's history.

"The coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is coming *in the twinkling of an eye* to translate His own to heaven, and then the professing Church will be spued out of His mouth (Rev. iii. 14-22).

Things are not getting better. No, they are getting worse and worse.

Reader, if you are in danger of giving up faith in Christ and the Scripture, your case is awful. Do not, I beseech you, trifle with infidelity, and do not let "the God of this world" (Satan) blind you into thinking that you are a *Christian* whether you believe in Christ or not.

Moreover, *head belief* is valueless. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9, 10). A. H. B.

On the Danger List.

"**W**ILL you allow me to see Daniel H——?" was asked of the lodge keeper of an hospital near London, not long since.

"Have you come from some mission?"

"No, I have not, I have come to speak to him of Christ."

"Yes, you may see him; please give me your

name." My name was accordingly given, and I with a friend passed into the building.

It was not a regular visiting day, but as this man was placed upon the "danger list," that is to say, was one whose stay in this world was likely to be of short duration, whose days were numbered, visitors were allowed in on any day. After ascending the stairs, and approaching a door that stood open, we found ourselves in a long ward; a row of beds stood on either side, and all, I think, were occupied. A nurse now appearing, we were soon conducted to the last man on the left side of that long line of beds. His was a hopeless case, given up by the doctors, but just the one whom the blessed Lord was waiting to welcome; but man's heart is naturally hardened against God, and although he does not mean to be lost, alas! it is often put off till *too late*.

He was an aged man, and he looked wonderingly at us as we drew near. Oh! will he come? Will this man who is on the verge of eternity close with God's offer of free salvation? "The gift of God" which is "eternal life."

This man was not aware he was on the danger list, but it did not alter the *fact*. Reader, you whose eyes are resting on these lines, are

you on the "danger list"? If you are not under the shelter of the blood, you are as surely on it as he was; you may not know it, but that does not make your danger less. Oh! stay for one moment, and think; you know not what a day may bring forth, do not wait, time is passing.

"Passing onward, quickly passing ;

Yes, but whither? whither bound?

Is it to the many mansions

Where eternal rest is found?

Passing onward—

Yes, but *whither? whither* bound?"

We spoke to him of his body, and then of his soul; he knew he was very ill, but hoped to get better. Words were read to him from God's book, "There is none righteous, *no, not one*;" "There is none that doeth good, *no, not one*;" "*All* have sinned, and come *short* of the glory of God" (Rom. iii.). Unsaved reader, do you know what this means? *You* have not come up to God's standard of holiness, and "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." You may be moral and religious, but of what use will it be to you, if *you* have come *short* of His glory? it will shut *you out of heaven*.

Of what avail would it be to throw a rope to a drowning man if it did not reach him? *None*,

it would be *too* short. Belshazzar was weighed in God's scales, and found *wanting*. Will that be *your* case? Are you trying to save yourself by good works? Thousands have tried it, but all have failed. *All* have come short of His glory; do you think He will make up what you have come short of? No, God must have *all* the glory; how then are you to be saved? Let His own Word speak to your heart, reader: "By *grace* are ye saved through *faith*; and that *not* of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: *not* of *works*, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9). Does God despise good works then? By no means, you can work *from* salvation, but not *for* salvation; you must be *saved* first by His grace, before you can work for Him. God is a giving God; when you have taken what He has to give, even His own beloved Son, then He will accept from you.

When asked if he was a sinner, he replied, "Yes, I am a sinner, and a *big* one too. I don't believe in some who say they have never done anything wrong, they have only got to *look back*." Surely, I thought, this one is ready to believe the message. The tears ran down his face, when speaking of the long nights of suffering with no one to speak a kind word to him.

We told him of the love of the Lord, and of the sweet companionship he would hold with Him, if only he would believe on Him *now*; He would never "leave him, nor forsake him." We read from Romans viii. to show there was "no condemnation" for those who were "in Christ Jesus," and that nothing could separate us from God's love; but he still clung to the hope of recovery. He had been in that hospital twice before, and he did not think he was any worse than he had been at those times. We pleaded with him not to put it off, but to take God's free gift of salvation, for then he would have Christ to live by, and Christ all along the way. He seemed much affected, and we felt hopeful, and left a little book with him, telling him we were only visiting in that part, and might never see him on earth again, but if he would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he would be washed from all his sins, and we should meet him in heaven. His answer was, "Thank you for coming, I hope I shall meet you again."

A Christian called another day, and found him less ready to listen, because he felt somewhat better. Again a Christian visited him, who found him with *no desire* for the Word; he was

"*confident*" he should recover, Then we heard he was *dead*. Alas! for man's confidence; it was but the flickering spark of life before it went out, and the enemy of souls ever on the watch to draw sinners down to the pit of destruction, had blinded his mind, "lest the light of the *glorious* gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto" him (2 Cor. iv. 4).

Dear reader, that man never intended to be lost, nor do you; take warning then: "God speaks *once*, yea, *twice*, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14). If you are travelling on the broad road, and continue to the end, you will find no escape, no turning, no thoroughfare, you will have to spend an eternity "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

There are only two roads, one that leads to eternal life, and one that leads to eternal death,—death to all your hope of heaven, death to all your good resolutions, or turning over of new leaves; it will be all *too late*. "Too late," will cost you an eternity of woe, and you will blame no one but yourself. But while the day of grace is lengthened out, I can tell you upon the authority of God's word, you *may* enter *now* but—

" Ere night that gate *may* close, and seal thy doom,
 Then the last low, long cry, No room, no room,
 No room, no room !
 Oh, woeful cry, No room ! "

Instead of a robe of your own weaving, which will not bear the gaze of a holy God, you may now be covered with one of His own providing, without scar or seam, woven from the *top* throughout, *all of God*.

" Redeemed by the blood of the slain Lamb of God,
 With righteousness covered, *I* cannot be found ;
 I can boast of *His* beauty, *His* glory, *His* grace,
 And sealed by the Spirit, I'm fit for the place."

" In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins " (Col. i. 14).

" Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life *freely* " (Rev. xxii. 17).
S. R. F.



The History of a Bit of Paper.

SOME years ago, during the hot season, in the city of C——, in Bengal, I went as usual to our weekly Bible reading, held in a room which was situated in one of the principal thoroughfares of the place.

Few came up punctually, as the great heat at that time of the year prevented many from attending.

After a short time two young men entered the room ; one, a fine looking Eurasian, whose countenance bore a calm and solemnized appearance. Seating himself at the table, with a Bible in front of him, he narrated the following account of what the Lord had done for his soul :—

“Some months ago I was a terrible drunkard. After one of my drunken fits, I was so miserable that I determined to destroy myself ; and so, after having procured a rope, I adjusted it on the beam of my hut, and placing a stool underneath I proceeded to put the fatal noose round my neck. I then mounted the stool, and was just about to kick it from under me, when the rope catching my *topi* (Indian sun-hat), knocked the hat off. As it fell I noticed a piece of paper, on which my eye discerned something about the things of God. Conscience-stricken, I got down off the stool, and found my way into a prayer-meeting which was being held over the way. There I found peace, and am now rejoicing in Christ my Saviour.”

Thus, dear reader, does God choose “things which are despised to bring to nought things

that are." This shred of paper was doubtless torn from a tract which the Indian hat-maker had used for stuffing the pith frame, which is so placed as to allow a current of air to pass under the hat; and the Lord used this insignificant little bit of paper to the salvation of a soul! Truly, "how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33).

E. C. J.

How Three Sisters were led to know Christ as their Saviour.

PART I.

SOME few years ago a Christian postman, whilst discharging his duties, often found the opportunity of speaking a word for his Lord and Master, both to His own beloved people and to those who were not His.

One day his duties calling him to a certain house, on the door being opened by the servant he felt constrained to quote the following words:—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine *heart*

that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

Having delivered this message he went on his way, praying that it might be for the salvation of her soul, knowing that God's word shall not return to Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases. He afterwards learnt that the word spoken was a message from God that she might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth—to know Him who is the Truth, and by whom grace and truth came, as her *own personal Saviour*.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccles. xi. 1).

Several months had passed away, when one morning on his usual call, the young woman above referred to said: "I wish, if you are free, you would go to ——, and see my sister who is very ill. She would be very glad to see you, and we do not think she will live long."

Earlier than usual he set out the next morning and hastened to perform his duties, that he might be free to carry his Master's message of light and love to a needy sinner. It was in the dark, cold month of November. On arriving at the cottage, and making known why he had come, he was shown to the room where the sick one

lay, and where all was as bright and clean as a mother's thoughtful care and tender love could make it.

The patient was extremely weak and ill, therefore it would be unwise to remain long, or talk too much. So, having sought from the Word of God to show her that *all* were sinners, and needed a Saviour, and that being helpless, hopeless, lost, and powerless to do anything to save themselves, God had come in and given His only begotten Son (the measure and expression of His love to the world), that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John iii. 16), he told her of the *finished* work upon the cross, and how there the claims of eternal justice were fully met, and God glorified about the question of sin and sins; and how well pleased and satisfied He was with His Son, and with the work He had done,—giving assurance thereof in that He had raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in glory,—He “*was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*” (Rom. iv. 25). The work being *finished*, God satisfied, the claims of Divine justice met, all that was left for her to do was to own her lost state and

condition as a sinner before God, and rest on the shed blood and finished work of Christ as the basis of her peace with God; putting her trust in the peerless Accomplisher of that work, whereby God is *just* and the *justifier* of Him that believeth in Jesus; for we are justified not on the ground of works, but every *believer* can say, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

Having sought thus to bring before her what *she* was, what *all* are before God,—sinners by nature and sinners by practice, guilty, lost, and undone,—and having dwelt on God's love to the world in the gift of His only begotten Son, and having spoken of His death and resurrection, and how God, in virtue of what Christ had accomplished, now comes out in all the fulness of His love, and blesses according to the desire of His own heart, he exhorted her to come as a poor *needy* sinner to the sinner's Friend, and He would receive and save her according to the word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi.). He then left, praying for an increase from the seed sown.

All thought that she would not be here long, and frequent visits were paid, and again and

again that same sweet old Gospel-story of the grace of God was sought to be unfolded. It was not a *new* gospel, but the *same* told in various ways, as he felt led to speak from different portions of the Word. The same God of love in sending His Son—the same Saviour seeking the lost—He that *cared* for her soul *waiting* to bring her to God.

Think of the magnitude of His grace, dear reader, for

God cares for your soul,

and will you not honour the Son through believing on Him? Oh, give Him joy in allowing Him to save you from an *eternity* of blackness, despair, and woe in the lake of fire! Think, oh! think, of the love that led Him, from those eternal heights of glory, to the depths of woe which He endured on Calvary, and *all for you* and for *me*! He knew no sin, but was there made sin; and a holy sin-hating God poured out His wrath and forsook that *spotless One*. And why? Because He stood in the sinner's place, a substitute for the sinner, that all who believe on Him might have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life!

The sick one lay for some time as one hovering between life and death, and through the

winter frequent visits were paid. Once when there the sister, first mentioned in this paper, entered the room, and the following conversation took place :—

“Have *you* ever learnt in the presence of God that *you* are a lost sinner, and can do nothing to save your soul?”

“Yes, I have.”

“Do you believe that Christ died for *you*?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Do you believe that when He died He paid all that you owed, and settled everything that stood between you and God?”

“Yes, I do.”

“And why do you believe it, and how do you know it?”

“Because *God says so in His Word.*”

“Now, He says, ‘He that believeth on the Son **hath** everlasting life’ (John iii. 36). Do you believe *this*?”

Her reply again was, “Yes, I do; for God tells me so in His Word, and I believe it; and the *precious blood of Christ has cleansed me from all sin.*”

Ah, she read the Bible, and believed it, and received it as the Word of the *living God*. It was *God* who spoke to her in that Word, and

she heard with the hearing of faith; it was living faith in the living God.

They left the house together, and as they walked along she said, "Do you remember one morning some months ago quoting Romans x. 9 to me when I came to the door?" He could not for the moment recall it; but as she began to quote the passage, it came vividly before him, and he answered, "Yes, I now remember it well."

"God blessed that word to the salvation of my soul," she said; "I had no rest until I did believe with the *heart*, and I thank God, *I am saved*."

R. G.



Rest, Home, Joy.

"**I** AM so weary of this miserable world:
How I wish I were out of it!"
How often we hear this sad speech as
we go on life's journey!

"Weary of this world." Ah! reader, how little you must know of our loving Saviour if you utter such words as these. "Weary of this world"; did you ever think of the Saviour,

how, when He trod this earth, He had not where to lay His head? There was no resting-place for Him, no friend to sympathise; no, He was entirely deserted. He had come down to this earth to win salvation for poor sinners, but was met with rejection on every side, spurned by all, and entirely cast out; yet He had comforting words for all.

Did you ever read those comforting words that He spake to the weary when He was down here? And, reader, they are for you now just as much as they were for the weary then. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." What more could you want? Won't you go to Him and get this rest that you need so much? Oh! dear friend, He wants you so much.

Perhaps you are a poor homeless wanderer, with no place on this earth that you can really call your home. If that is so, why, Jesus can give you the very thing you require. Besides *rest*, He promises a *home* for all those that come to Him. Read John xiv. 2: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place

for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." There, poor, weary, anxious one, is just what you want. The Lord is waiting with outstretched arms ready to receive you.

"To Jesus come, and be made whole,
On Him your heavy burden roll,
Come, anxious sinner, come."

There you have two things offered you—Rest and Home—two things which you sorely need, and now I am going to tell you of a third, and that is *Joy*. Ah! dear soul, I wonder if you know what it is to have "joy"—real and lasting joy? Oh, the joys of this world are indeed poor compared with what we have if we belong to Christ. You may try to get happiness from this world's pleasures. You may go to theatres, balls, concerts; they will last you for a time; you may get intoxicated with the bright shows, the whirl of the gay dancing, but what will the harvest be? A heavy head and aching heart, a longing for something more solid, more lasting than what you have had hitherto. Here is the very prescription you require—

Rest, Home, Joy.

A rest that you may always have, whatever

trouble may come. You may always have this Rest—Rest of conscience, Rest of heart, and a Home.

No matter how bad you are, there is home and forgiveness. Remember the prodigal son. When he had spent his all, he thought he would go back, and perhaps his father would let him act in place of a servant, but no, his father saw him "afar off, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him," and more than that, he said, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it upon him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry." So you see the prodigal had all in returning—Rest, Home, and Joy—and if you only come to Jesus you will have the same. A joy that is lasting, which for ever will endure. Only put your trust in Christ, believe that He died for you, and this joy will be yours. "Your joy no man taketh from you" (John xvi. 22).

IT IS A CERTAINTY that at this moment you are either saved and on the way to endless joy in the paradise of God, or unsaved and on the road to eternal perdition with the devil and the lost.

ON WHICH ROAD ARE YOU TRAVELLING?

“He would not.”

SUCH was the mournful plaint of the Lord Jesus Christ when the nation to whom, in grace, He came, refused their Messiah. And most fittingly may the words be applied to many a rejecter of Christ in our English-speaking lands.

An extremely sad example of this met me some two or three years ago. Too appalling, indeed, is it to write or speak of, save as a warning to those who think there may be time at the last to accept the good which has been refused before. There are those who think that they have only to cry “Lord, have mercy,” when life is passing from them, or that any time will do, when it suits them.

Thus the enemy of souls seeks to blind his poor slaves, till time's privileges shall have given place to an unalterable eternity. That God has His own *time* as well as *way* of bearing witness to the eternal efficacy of the work of Christ, is plain in His Word. That is “*Now!*” Let my reader grasp the moment as it passes. “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

A lady was much interested in a young girl of whom a Christian neighbour had spoken as being very ill. The family were utterly godless, and would, she thought, oppose any visitor likely to bring God's light into that dark home. Alcohol and light literature seemed the methods used to stimulate a delicate frame and an ignorant mind when no company was at hand to divert her thoughts. The pinched features, bright eye, and consumptive complexion, all betokened the mortal disease going on within. And it was melancholy to look at that fragile form, decorated fashionably, yet with the hopelessness of a young fading life, possessing nothing that could brighten the prospect beyond.

The lady tried to show some kindness, and she was welcome, but she feared to raise opposition by attempting to read. Unhappy about this, she spoke of it to me, and was glad to have an offer of help, though she doubted if I should be allowed to open my Bible there. Looking to God, however, for an open door, I asked to see the girl. It was early in the day, and her mother led me to the bed on which poor Emily lay, thin, and worn, and weak, though only seventeen years of age.

As I stayed only a few minutes, and repeated

from memory John iii. 16, both mother and daughter listened, and bore with me, during that brief visit. Next time, I saw the girl alone, and sitting up, when I read the first part of John iii. Although no look of interest brightened her face, yet it seemed well to go on making known the revealed thoughts of God about man's true condition. But stolid and indifferent though her manner was, I knew that with the Word lay the power to convict her of sin. She seemed to have no conception either of her great need as a sinner, nor of the danger of her illness.

The third time I went, the days were brighter, so that Emily had been out, and now she spoke of getting well. Beginning at where I had left off on my previous visit, I read to the end of the chapter. As I closed the book with those solemn words of verse 36, I said, "You will think over this, Emily, will you not?"

With quick impatience she replied, "No! it would send me mad to think of *that*!"

"Do you mean the words of the Bible, Emily?" I asked, in amazement.

"Yes," she quickly answered. "I don't want to hear that, for it worries me after you are gone."

The solemnity of the position was most alarm-

ing and painful as I thought of her poor soul. Mournfully I said, "Emily, God's Word comforts *me*, and that is why I read it to *you*. Will you not hear it?"

With a most emphatic refusal she led me to understand that I should be welcome without my Bible, but not with it. The overwhelming truth thus pressed itself upon me, that while God's thoughts were convicting that poor soul of sin, the will of the flesh was determined to refuse them. No alternative was given but to leave that poor miserable heart alone in her sin, her weakness, and her will.

So I said sadly, "Good-bye, Emily. I cannot force myself upon you, nor come if you do not wish to hear the Word of God. But, if you ever change your mind, will you send for me?"

Emily promised that she would, and I left the only certain address I could, which was that of the friend who had told me of her, and who I knew would willingly forward a message. Alas! alas! for the poor soul, so soon to be in the presence of God! One autumn evening a slip of paper was sent to my friend, saying that Emily was very ill, and, "*according to promise*, we let you know." This lady had also ceased to go when she found that the Bible was refused. She

was soon by that heartrending deathbed, but the sorrowful soul and the dying body were beyond the expression of feeling by words. Taking the thin wasted hand in hers, she said, "Press my hand, if you know me, Emily." A returning pressure told the sad tale, but no sign, no word, that could indicate peace in that poor forlorn and dying girl. Early next morning all was over on earth, and before my friend could tell me the sorrowful story Emily was a corpse.

Such a deliberate rejection of the truth of God, in one so clearly near death, we neither of us had ever seen, and the wish to hear when death was at hand was sorrowful in the extreme.

Dear halting reader, pause before the voice of God, and let Him speak to you in time—**Now**. "Your time is always ready," but that will not do for "the Judge of all the earth." "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Deceit is our natural state, and to meet this the Scripture of truth presents to us the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. "He that is holy, He that is true," contrasts infinitely with what we are. Let it not be said to you, my reader, as of old, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

"Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isa. lv. 3).

G. W.

Sudden Death and—After?

SINCE the year commenced one disaster after another has hurried multitudes into eternity who entered it in health and strength.

Once more the voice of the Lord has sounded forth a warning note in our ears, reminding us of the uncertainty of life. From the Queen on her throne to the pauper in the workhouse, all have been made to feel the suddenness with which human life may be cut short. May we not trust that the Archbishop's unexpected death may be a voice to many, both high and low, warning them to be ready for the summons?

Reader, if you wish to be ready *when you die*,

You must be ready before you die.

It will be too late to get ready when once the chilly hand of Death is laid upon your shoulder.

You who are now reading these lines in health and strength may before to-morrow be dead. Oh, how is it with your soul? Are you ready?

Within the last few weeks we have come in contact with such a number of *sudden deaths* that we feel constrained to warn our readers afresh.

One Tuesday night a few weeks ago the village schoolhouse of W—— was lit up and in readiness for a gospel service which had been announced to be held. Just before the hour I went from house to house to invite the neighbours to attend. Some thanked me courteously and came, others laughed and turned away; the hour was drawing near, and yet there was one lane full of houses uninvited. Quickly I hurried from one to the other, and as there were still a few I stood in the middle of the road and shouted with all my might: "*Come and hear the blessed news of salvation full and free, now to be preached in the schoolhouse.*"

A poor man in yonder house had been urged by a Christian friend to attend, but he turned away with scorn; he now again, and for the last time, hears a free invitation—but he will not come. He cares not for Christ, nor wishes to hear of His redeeming love, nor of His infinite sacrifice for sin upon the cross, whereby sinners such as he may be saved and forgiven.

Three days pass on and this despiser of God's grace is rapidly nearing eternity, and yet he knows it not. Who would have thought it? On Friday night he retires to his rest after a day's work, apparently in full health—he sleeps,

but never to wake again in this world. Ere the morning's sun has risen his soul is in eternity—and where? “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you” (Acts xiii. 41). Again, Jesus said, “**If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins**” (John viii. 24).

If you die in your sins, you will be raised in your sins, and *then be judged for your sins*, and instead of salvation, damnation will be your sad and awful end.

Reader, it is not wise to despise God's grace; it is madness to trample under your feet the precious blood of Christ.

“Passing onward, **quickly passing** !

Many to the downward road,
Careless of their souls immortal,
Heeding not the call of God,
Passing onward,
Trampling on the Saviour's blood.”

A preacher of the gospel, well known to the writer, was announced to take a gospel service in London one Sunday night a few weeks ago. The hour came, but he did not keep his appointment. After waiting a short while, the service

was conducted by another, and a letter was written that night expressing the hope that nothing serious had prevented his coming. The letter reached his house the morning before his funeral. He, too, had suddenly entered eternity.

Eternity! oh, eternity! that word of solemn import for the soul. Reader, again we ask, Are you ready? You, too, may have a sudden death. These are but two of the many that have come before me the last few weeks. But sudden or not, would yours be the end of the despiser of Christ, or that of the proclaimer of His grace? It was a reality to stand at the open grave of the latter, and to sing—

“Glory, honour, praise and power
Be unto the Lamb for ever ;
Jesus Christ is our Redeemer,
Hallelujah !
Praise ye the Lord !”

as we laid the precious dust in the tomb until that moment so near at hand when “the dead in Christ shall rise” to meet the Lord in the air.

A. H. B.

THOSE who know heaven to be their home can look upon all things here as a stepping-stone helping them on up there.

J. W.

Ice-Bound.

AT some distance from the village of B——, near one of the canals which run through Alsace-Lorraine, lived the keeper of a bridge and his wife. The dwelling-place of these worthy people was an isolated cottage, far from any other habitation. This solitude, however, was not oppressive to them, for, though in humble circumstances, they possessed the greatest of treasures. They both knew and loved the Lord Jesus, and rejoiced in the certainty of the forgiveness of their sins, and in the assurance of eternal life.

During the severe winter of 18— there arrived one day from the Rhine a large boat, which was proceeding to Nancy, there to unlade her cargo. For some days the cold had been so intense that the canal was partly frozen, and the boatman had with difficulty come thus far. As it was in the evening that he had passed the bridge, it was necessary to stop for the night ; but in the morning they found that the boat was completely ice-bound, and that there was no possibility of continuing the voyage.

This was far from a pleasant discovery for the

boatman and his mate. If the stoppage had even occurred near to a town or a village it would not have been such a disagreeable matter, for they would have had opportunities for keeping company with men, and some recreation might have been found at the inn. But in this place there was nothing. Far or near, they could see no dwelling-place except the cottage of the keeper. It was really very vexatious; and it is not surprising that the boatman, out of temper, paced up and down the deck of his boat, complaining of this unlucky frost.

The prospect of being obliged to remain, perhaps for weeks, in this solitary region, seemed to him the dullest and most wearisome thing possible. His wife and his mate were on board with him, it is true, but how were they to spend their time in the long winter evenings? and besides, there would be the loss caused by the delay in his voyage.

The first thing he did on leaving the boat was to proceed to the keeper, and bewail his misadventure. The latter consoled him as best he could, and said that his house would be open to him every day, and at the same time invited him to come with his wife and his mate and spend the evening there. This kind invitation was gratefully accepted.

When night began to fall the three strangers made their appearance under the hospitable roof of the keeper, and spent the evening very pleasantly there. They spoke on many subjects, related the events of their lives, and told each other of the various experiences that they had had. The two women were soon quite at home together, and the time for retiring arrived without their being conscious of it. The boatman rose, and was giving the signal for departure, when our friend the keeper said to him, "My wife and I are in the habit of reading a chapter in the Bible every evening; will you attend our simple family worship? It would give us much pleasure."

The strangers seemed a little surprised by this proposal, but remained. The keeper, taking his Bible, read a portion; then in a short prayer thanked God for His help and protection through the day, and asked Him to bless His Word to their souls. He also expressed his conviction that nothing happens by chance, but that the Almighty God directs all our ways, and that thus the occurrence of this day had been permitted by Him for the good of all.

The boatman and his wife were very much struck by what they had heard. They were

completely ignorant of the things of God, not even possessing a Bible, and as they travelled about with their boat they seldom if ever set foot in a church. Careless and indifferent, they had until then lived day after day without God. But the Word of God immediately produced its blessed effect on their hearts. The following evening they appeared, and so on for three weeks, until the frost came to an end, and the boat was set free.

The twenty days of their enforced sojourn near the keeper of the bridge were not lost on them, and by degrees their eyes were opened. Every day they made fresh discoveries of the sad state of their souls before God. They saw with consternation how they had offended against Him, and how great their guilt was. They looked forward with terror to the future which awaits the sinner, and that which they had never before known came to them now with ever-increasing clearness,—they were *lost, lost!*

The keeper and his wife marked with joy, and thanksgivings to the Lord, the change which was working in their friends. They sought to point them to Jesus the Saviour of the lost, and to shew them from Scripture the perfect work of redemption which He had accomplished

for them. Every evening they drew to the throne of grace with them, and offered prayers and supplications for these trembling souls, that they might be able to comprehend the peace made by the blood of the cross. And, behold! before the ice had melted in the canal, the frozen layer which, unconsciously to themselves, was covering the hearts of these poor sinners, had melted beneath the beneficent rays of the sun of grace. And in proportion as the warmth of divine love filled them, the light shone into their darkness, and dispelled it. All three—the boatman, his wife, and his mate—were brought to a true repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus.

“Wonderful!” Such is the name that our God assumes; and truly how marvellous are His works, and He is ever the same. It was He who of old sent Philip the evangelist to the desert of Gaza to proclaim the gospel to the officer of the queen of Ethiopia; it was He who allowed His servants Paul and Silas to be thrown into a dungeon at Philippi in order that the jailer and his household should hear the word of life. It was He also who, on the night that the boat arrived near the keeper’s house, sent the frost which retained it, in order that

those who commanded it should learn to know Jesus, and be saved.

As soon as navigation on the canal was free, the boatman continued his voyage, after having taken leave of the hospitable cottage and its inhabitants, and thanked them heartily. Like the Ethiopian, he "went on his way rejoicing."

Some weeks later the keeper of the bridge received from him and his mate a letter, from which I shall give my readers some passages. They will thus see how powerfully the grace of God had wrought in those hearts.

The boatman wrote:—

"Dear friends! We have received your letter, and it has made us so happy your replying to us. We thank you much for your letter, and your kind exhortations. It is indeed true that he who has the Word of God possesses a great treasure; but he who knows the Lord Jesus, and belongs to Him, has now in this world a foretaste of heavenly joy. He has peace in his heart, and he no longer desires to follow after the good things of this life, which may drag one down into perdition. We have made it a duty not merely to read the Word of God diligently, but also to conform our life to it. May God grant us His blessing, and the power

which we need for this. At first it cost us much trouble and many struggles to pursue this end, but now, thanks be to God, we go on much better. The Bible is becoming more and more clear to us, and it is now a joy to us to read the Word of God, and to walk according to its instructions. We thank you also for your permission to keep the tracts some time longer. . . ."

In his turn the boatman's mate wrote as follows:—

"Dear family! I add these lines to my master's letter, to thank you a thousand times for the pocket-Bible that you have presented to me. It has been of great service to me, and I am so happy to possess it. For some weeks past I have been ill, owing to a fall I had on the boat, but I am somewhat better the last few days. I have rest for my heart, and in all truth I can say that I belong to the Lord Jesus; and more than this, that notwithstanding my illness I am always happy and contented."

Such is the grace of God; it seeks out sinners and makes them happy for time and for eternity. My dear reader, this grace has sought you, and invites you also; have you responded to the call?

From the French.

Make Haste!

“He sought to see Jesus.” . . . “When Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully.”—LUKE xix. 1-10.

“**M**AKE haste!”

The gracious summons fell on ears
Attent to hear, above the noise of life.

The worldly throng unheeding passed along,
But he who half-unconsciously had sought
To see the Saviour as He went that way,
Had climbed above the hindrances of earth
With the one thought intent—to see the Lord!
He heard the gentle summons, met the look,
That wondrous look of love which on him fell,
And thought not how intent his own had been.

Not so the Lord!

And He had caught that glance, and saw it all,
The vague life-longing which that look expressed,
The tale it told of sorrow and of sin,
Of hope deferred, and vain regrets which moaned
Over the stranded wrecks of early years,
And now the longing for a helping hand,
A sympathising heart, a Saviour's love.
He saw it all; and then He gave him back
A glance all full of purest sympathy,
Of tenderness, which could not brook delay,
A glance which uttered, e'er the words were said,
“Make haste! Come down, I want thee here with Me,

And well I know that thou want'st Me ; but I
Have sought thee sorrowing these many years."
And the glad heart responded to the call,
Opened the door, and took the Saviour in,
And joyfully abode inside with Him.
And such the history of a seeking soul,
A seeking Saviour too.

Oh ! is it thine ?

Hast thou beheld His look of speechless love,
Or heard His gentle call, " Come unto Me,"
And, answering to it, gone to dwell with Him ?
If not, delay no longer, but make haste,
Come to the Saviour now, for night is near,
The night of judgment on this guilty world,
And which must fall on thee, if not shut in,
Before the storm descends—at home with Him.
Long has it lingered, but 'twill surely come,
And from the darkening terror of that day,
I fain would speed thy steps !

Oh, it will be

A night of hopeless sorrow and of pain,
Of anguish all unknown throughout the past ;
When never more His look of love thou'lt see,
Or hear His voice with its rich harmony,
Sounding the invitations of His love.
But all that will remain is one long night
Of endless, wild despair !

A night without

One single gleam of hope to cheer the soul,
Or break the awful darkness and the gloom ;
Nothing but horror of a great despair !
An agony of hopelessness and loss,

And bitter memories of rejected love.

And far away,

A glimpse of what is gone,

Gone past beyond recall for ever now !

A glory streaming through an open door

From the glad Father's House.

And sounds of joy

And song,

As if a Master Hand had struck

Some chord of deep and wondrous harmony,

Which flooded all the atmosphere with joy,

And thrilled and quivered through the universe,

Shall float unto thine ears.

And thou shalt see

The Father welcoming each wanderer home,

The Saviour beckoning each redeemed one in,

While thou'rt shut out for ever from the joy,

Shut out for ever from the light and love !

Oh ! can'st thou bear a future such as this ?

And wilt thou brave a lost eternity ?

A. S. M.



What shall the Harvest be ?

IT is impossible for a man to be walking upon two different roads. He cannot be walking on the broad road which leadeth to destruction and on the narrow one leading to life at the same time. It is easy

to deceive oneself, but self-deception is deception of the most fatal form.

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. vii. 13, 14).

Reader, which road are you on? the broad road, or the narrow one? Say not lightly, “It will all come right in the end.” It will come blessedly right at the end of the narrow road, but think of the *end* of the broad road—blackness and darkness for ever. Who in his senses would sow wild oats and expect a profitable wheat harvest? Ah! indeed,

What will the harvest be?

“Sowing the seed on the way-side high,
Sowing the seed on the rocks to die;
Sowing the seed where the thorns will spoil,
Sowing the seed on the fertile soil:
Oh! what shall the harvest be?

Sowing the seed of a ling’ring pain,
Sowing the seed of a maddened brain,
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
Sowing the seed of eternal shame.
Oh! what will the harvest be?”

A Drawn Sword.

“O H, sir! we could not go to bed to-night with that awful sword hanging over our heads.”

So spoke one of two young women after a preaching in a small village in Hampshire. The subject had been a blessed and solemn one, viz., judgment and mercy, as seen in 1 Chronicles xxi. The king in the pride of his heart wished to know the strength of the great and prosperous kingdom over which he reigned. The commander-in-chief of his army, to whom was given the order to number the people, opposed it; but the king would have his way. The thought was sin, for it was the fruit of pride—an abomination in the sight of God.

Can God pass over sin? No! Judgment *must* follow. He therefore commissions an angel to go through the land smiting on every hand. Forth goes the angel on his work of destruction, spreading death and terror all around.

This was perfectly just of God: for we learn from another scripture that God was angry with the nation, for they too, as well as the king, had

sinned ; and He was using this as an occasion to punish (1 Sam. xxiv. 1).

The king and the elders having been made acquainted with the purpose of God, have clothed themselves in sackcloth and ashes, deeply mourning over the news of the thousands that were being slain throughout the land. Then David, lifting up his eyes, saw the angel with his drawn sword standing over Jerusalem. This is more than he can bear. With his heart well-nigh breaking, he and the elders fall upon their faces, and he earnestly beseeches the Lord to stay His hand. Whereupon a prophet is sent, bidding him go and take his place under the angel whose hand had been stayed, but whose sword was still drawn.

The reader must try and picture the feelings of poor David as he slowly makes his way to that awful spot.

There stands the angel in solemn majesty, with his sword drawn, awaiting the Almighty's next command. But a command has been given the king to build an altar there.

With trembling hands, and solemn thought, he erects the altar ; and then places the offering thereon. The king having finished, anxiously awaits the answer from God. What will next

happen—the sword fall upon the head of the guilty king, or the fire from heaven upon the sacrifice?

Solemn scene!

God is looking on, angels also, Satan too, and Israel deeply concerned in the result.

All are wondering what *God* would do. Yes, everything depended upon what *He* would do.

When lo! to the king's unutterable joy, the welcome sign is seen: the fire falls from heaven upon the innocent victim on the altar, and the guilty king with his people is spared. The destroying angel, still standing solemnly waiting, is then commanded to sheathe his awful sword. Yes, the judgment of God (fire) has fallen upon another, and justice thus is satisfied.

Not till that victim had been offered and accepted could the sword of justice be sheathed.

A strikingly beautiful and divinely drawn picture of God's way of salvation.

Jesus is God's salvation (Luke ii. 30).

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

But now He's risen from the dead,
And bears the greatest, sweetest name,
The Lord, almighty now to save,
From sin and death and endless shame.”

Thus that sword is sheathed—for ever sheathed (Heb. x. 14)—for all who believe in Jesus, and are trusting in His precious blood alone for salvation. Two solemn scriptures were referred to during the preaching: “I lift up My hand to heaven, and say, Truly as I live for ever, if I whet My glittering sword, and Mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to Mine enemies, and will reward them that hate Me” (Deut. xxxii. 40, 41); also, “If he turn not, He will whet His sword; He hath bent His bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death” (Ps. vii. 12, 13).

The unconverted ones present were earnestly warned to flee from the wrath to come.

For although the sword is indeed sheathed for every believer, it is unsheathed and still hanging over the head of every other. Yes, for all such “His anger is *not* turned away, but His hand is stretched out still” (Isa. xiv. 26, 27). The wrath of God *abideth on him* (John iii. 36), ready at any moment to overwhelm him. Awful thought!

These two young women could not bear the thought.

Reader, can *you*?

They resolved, God helping them, to have the matter settled that night, without further delay.

Reader, will *you*, now?

God will be as gracious to you as He was to them if you will but give earnest heed to these things. He waits to be gracious (Isa. xxx. 18); while you are reading these lines He is graciously influencing your heart to believe and be saved. Will you not do so?

In less than an hour God gave these two young women rest and peace where it alone can be found—through the precious blood of Christ—God's spotless victim.

Good works will never save you.

David found the only way of salvation from the "glittering sword" was God's acceptance of the innocent victim. It is true he took a low place—clothed in sackcloth and ashes—but the victim on the altar saved him. That victim represents the blessed Lord Jesus—that Lamb of whom Abraham had said, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb" (Gen. xxii. 8); and of whom John said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). We greatly rejoiced with these two in their newly found happiness.

Reader, will not you be made happy too? Oh! do not put it off. Behold, *now* is the accepted time; *to-day* is the day of salvation.

“Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

E. F. B.



How Three Sisters were led to know Christ as their Saviour.

PART II.

WELL-NIGH three years had passed away since the Saviour's message had been carried to that cottage. There had been great changes. The one then so ill, after several months, rallied for a little time, and the mother who so tenderly nursed her had passed into eternity almost suddenly. This was followed by the breaking up of the home, and the father and two of his daughters left the district without any assurance being given by the sick one that she had accepted Christ—God's salvation for lost sinners. She confessed she was a sinner, but she had not

learnt in God's holy presence that she was *so vile that nothing but Christ and His finished work could meet her case*; she had not given up *all*, and trusted in *Him alone*.

Still the Lord was gracious unto her, for He would yet be honoured by her coming to Him, weary and burdened, to find her rest in Him. She went far away, but her sister, who knew the Lord, the friend who first visited her, and another, agreed together to cry to God continually that the seed sown might be blessed to her salvation.

Now in a large city we find her again confined to her bed, where she has been about a year, and the end is drawing near. The converted sister had been sent for, but on arriving the patient was so weak that she did not recognise her for some little time. One day, however, she called her sister by name, and as she bent low to catch the faint whisper, she said, "I came to Him, you know, and He forgave me all."

Her sister, wishing to be assured, said, "How do you know it, dear?"

"Know it! Why, I came to Him, and He forgave me all—yes, *all*."

We praised the Lord for His grace in not only saving her soul, but in allowing such a clear testimony to be given for the comfort and

encouragement of those who, with longing desire, had prayed for it.

She spoke of the visits paid her nearly three years previously, and thanked the Lord for bringing her to Himself.

After this she became unconscious, and rapidly sank, and soon was with the One who loved her, and gave Himself for her, and who had forgiven her *all*. One had planted, another watered, and God alone could, and did, give the increase, answering the prayers of those who prayed incessantly for her salvation. All praise to His name! Fellow-labourers, pray on.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Eccles. xi. 6).

It is very important to remember that God's salvation is for *all*, and not only for the sick, and that He would have us to entreat by the mercy and long-suffering of God, and to warn by the terror of the Lord.

When visiting the sick one I often spoke to others of the Lamb of God's own providing—the ransom that *He* had found to deliver them from going down to the pit. I told them that

God's salvation was not only for the dear one in the upper room, or for those whom *we* think to be near eternity, but also for those in good health. It was for *all* present, if they each would *accept* it—for the young as well as for the old; and possibly those then in good health would be the first to pass into eternity. And indeed how soon this became a reality as to the mother!

Especially did I feel led to press this on a younger sister, who was also in a delicate state of health, feeling that the Lord would have her for His own; and so He did, for, as we shall presently see, she has now for some time been happy in her Saviour's love.

A few days after receiving the news of the increasing weakness of the sick one, a letter was handed to me bearing the post-mark of a village in Kent. On opening it I found it to be from this younger sister, and the following extract is taken from it:—

“Dear Mr ———, at last I can answer your letters, but how can I tell you what is in my thoughts? How I should like to see you; but as this cannot be, I will do the best I can. I know how glad you will be that I can at last say

from my heart that Jesus died for *me*! I do not understand it even now, but I *know it's true*. I feel just as if it was for me, and *no one else*."

Then follow a few lines showing how the old enemy sought to shake her confidence in the Lord and His Word by occupying her with *experience* and *self*, instead of looking to the Lord Himself, and *resting implicitly on the Word of God*, wherein is made known His acceptance of and satisfaction with the work of His beloved Son, and His acceptance of all true believers in Him.

She writes: "I was wondering if I should be able to continue, or whether I should go back again, and then I thought perhaps even now I am mistaken, I am so sinful. Then came the best of all. It seemed just as though I heard some one say, 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name: thou art Mine.' And that seemed enough for me. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and I am sure I am one.

"You said, in one of your letters to me, 'You hoped you would soon hear I was rejoicing in the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and in Christ Jesus my Saviour.' (Oh, how sweet that *my Saviour* is!) Well, what you then hoped for

has come to pass, and I feel I must tell you so, for one reason, because you were the means, *under God*, of first awakening me to a sense of my danger; and although it is two or three years ago now, I did not say much, but it made me feel *very uncomfortable*, and I was not happy from that time, and had no peace until I came to Jesus, and found it in Him. Can you wonder, after being in darkness so long, that when the light did come it so changed everything that I did not know how to take it in? It was indeed a glorious light to me, and I can never thank Him enough for all He has done for me; but I can love and trust Him, and that I mean to do with His help all my life. Be it long or short, it is in my Father's hand, and I know, come what may, it will only be for my good; and if I am in darkness (as it were) for a bit (for I am sometimes), I suppose there is something wrong in myself, so I go to God's Book, and I never fail to find something that clears away all doubt."

Would to God that all Christians did the same!

Before her conversion, she passed through deep agony of soul, and wrote thus to her sister: "I am almost driven to despair; I cannot endure this any longer."

When her sister told this to the one who had first spoken to her about her soul, he said, "Thank God for it, for now she is come to the end of *self*. God can and will work."

Fellow-traveller to eternity, let me ask,

Have you peace with God?

Are you prepared to meet God? Time hastens you on to the end of that journey from which no traveller returns.

Think, oh! think of **eternity**, *that long forever that knows no end!* I beg, yea, I plead with you, to come now to Jesus as you are—lost, guilty, and undone—trust in Him and in His finished work, and then you, with all believers, will be able to say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

Think of what you are doing in refusing to accept Christ—God's salvation. Remember, I pray you, at what a marvellous cost salvation is now offered to you, free and full; and yet you turn from it? Have you ever thought of the love of God in giving His beloved Son to die for such poor, lost, undone sinners as you and I? That spotless One, in His love to you, went to the cross and bore the judgment of God against sin, and "suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust,

that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18); "died for our sins according to the scriptures." He who knew no sin was made sin, and a holy, sin-hating God hid His face from Him, and His blessed lips uttered that agonising cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And all this was for you and for me!

Fellow-traveller, we near eternity! Oh, think of that *mighty, unsolved problem!*

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" **HOW?**

R. G.

GOD is now claiming subjection to His Son. There is not an infidel nor a rebel, however great, who shall not bow the knee to Jesus. If in grace, it is salvation; but if the heart does not bow to the grace, the knee must bow under the judgment. "Wherefore 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 (*i.e.*, celestial), and things in earth (*i.e.*, terrestrial), and things under the earth (*i.e.*, infernal); and that **every tongue** should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11).