

ECHOES OF MERCY.

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

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ECHOES OF MERCY.

The New Year.

ANOTHER year has flown by on the rapid wings of time, and we are at the commencement of 1904.

When the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness, Moses described to them the promised land they were going to possess ere they entered it. He told them it was "a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, *from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year*" (Deut. xi. 12). We may take it, then, that God notes the New Years and their endings. More than this: He provided for His people during the whole year.

But "no man can find out the work that God maketh from beginning to the end" (Eccles. iii. 11). His ways are past searching out. Yet, "consider the work of God" (Eccles. vii. 13).

You who are reading these lines, have you done so? God has allowed you to live unto this present—all through 1903 your breathing has not ceased, neither has your heart stopped beating. His care has kept the functions of your body in motion. The accidents—known and unknown—from which you escaped as by a hair's-breadth were the evidence of His care; the pestilence to which your neighbour succumbed was warded off from you by His good hand. "He giveth to all life and breath and all things." Have you ever thanked Him? He is "not far from any one of us," for "in Him we live and move and have our being." Will you not "feel after Him and find Him"?

Look back over 1903. How often have you heard the good word of God? How many gospel meetings have you attended? Have you not sometimes even repulsed the strivings of God's Spirit with you? And yet your *last* opportunity must come sooner or later, for in the very nature of things not one of us can live for ever on earth, and come what will, you must face God some day. Consider, then, the work of God; and "this is the work of God, That ye *believe on Him* whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). His long-suffering with you through this

past year has been with a view to your salvation; He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9).

A month ago a small child was dying in a country village. An epidemic had laid the little fellow low, and his anxious parents saw that soon he too must follow others of his class to an early grave. Death is no respecter of persons—young and old alike obey his mandate.

Not very long before his end, the boy called his parents to him and said: "Dadda, you've been good to me always, mother too; but I'll tell you who's been best of all, *that's Jesus.*" Then he asked for his loved Sunday-school teacher, and wished him to come, knowing "of *whom*" he had learned thus to centre his childish faith in a *Person*—"Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

An elderly man was sick in an old ivy-clad cottage in a lane not many miles away from where the little boy died. He was found sitting in the wide chimney-corner and looking very feeble. Hardly knowing his state of mind, after inquiries about his health, his visitor asked: "And do *you* know the Lord Jesus?" With tears in his eyes he replied in four words—words

which, please God, you may be able to re-echo : “ *He DIED for me.*” That was enough. “ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends ;” but “ when *we* were ENEMIES, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” Was ever love like this ?

Dear reader, there is nothing like the present time. Begin the year with God ; use the day of salvation He gives you to consider His work in sending His own Son to die for you ; then His great mercy in sparing you to see the New Year in, will not have been in vain ; and if allowed to see it out, it will be true of you, too, that : “ Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof ” (Eccles. vii. 8). H. L. H.

Links in a Chain.

FOUR boys are in the schoolroom, and it is time for their Scripture lesson. They open their Bibles at the second book of Kings, chapter xxii., and commence to read.

At the end of the first verse the Christian governess quietly says, “ Josiah was eight years

old when he began to reign, and he served the Lord. . . . I wonder when you boys will begin to serve the Lord." After pondering these words for a long time, one of the boys formed a silent resolution. "Josiah was eight years old when he began to serve the Lord," thought he; "I am not eight yet, only seven and a half; when I am eight I too will begin to serve the Lord."

Who put into his heart the determination to delay this great decision, and so cunningly used the very words of Scripture to enforce his argument? God says "**To-day**," but the devil says "**To-morrow**."

Four and a half years pass away. Two of the boys are in the garden. They are twin-brothers, and one of them has just returned from Ilfracombe, where services were being held in connection with the Children's Special Service Mission. A new joy has come into his life, for at one of the services he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. How greatly he desires that his brother may know the same Saviour. So, as they stroll side by side in the garden, he turns to him and shyly says, "When I was at Ilfracombe I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus. Won't you come to Him, too?"

But the boy, who four years ago made up his mind that when he was eight years of age he would come to the Saviour, now gets angry and says, "It is very wicked of you to talk about such things; you ought never to speak about that kind of thing." His brother persists, and speaks of the happiness that now is his, and pleads with him to come to Christ. At length, exasperated, and fighting still against the Holy Spirit, the angry boy strikes his brother in the face. Contrary to expectation, and perhaps for the first time, that blow was not returned.

Only a few weeks pass away, and this boy, with his heart still unchanged, is himself journeying to Ilfracombe for a holiday. At Exeter, a lady gets into the carriage in which he is travelling, and as soon as the train starts she begins to speak to him. After a while she plainly puts the question, "Have you come to Jesus?" The boy turns his face to the window, making no answer, and the lady was unable to get any further response from him.

Ilfracombe is at last reached, and he is in the house of his grandfather, with whom dwells a Christian aunt. He determines that under no circumstances will he allow himself to be alone with her, if he can help it, so greatly afraid is he

that she will ask him the question he so little wants to hear. He knows now that God is calling to him, but he does not wish to come. He could not exactly tell you why. He wants to go his own way and not to be bothered about these things.

A wet evening sets in, and he wanders about the corridors of the house and into the conservatory, reluctant to enter the dining-room where his aunt sits at her work. But when at last he does go in, sure enough, before long she looks up and says, "When your brother was here last month he went to the children's services that were then being held, and before he left he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was so happy, and seemed to enjoy the services more than anything else. You do not seem very happy. When are you going to?" The boy will hear no more, rushes to his bedroom, and throws himself upon the bed. "Why won't these people leave me alone?" he says. It is impossible to describe the fierce struggle that follows. To the bitter cry, "Why won't they leave me alone," echo seemed to answer, "**Why not come now?**" Long into the night the fight goes on. "Why not" seems to get more loud and clear, and every excuse

suggested by the devil more and more unsatisfactory.

“Why not come to the Lord Jesus? Why not? Why not now?”

About midnight the boy gets out of bed and kneels at the bedside, the tears streaming down his cheeks. In simplest language he tells the Lord Jesus that he *will* come to Him now. Only a boy of twelve, and there is no one there to see, and no one to hear—no one but Jesus. But He speaks peace to the young heart, and gives the assurance that his sins are forgiven. The earlier part of the night has been spent in anguish of soul, and in struggling against God; the latter part is spent in joy and gladness, the long siege is over, the heart has surrendered, and the Lord Jesus Christ has taken possession of His own.

Thus two young lives were early yielded to the Saviour, and the twin-brothers, happy in the consciousness that all their sins had been put away through the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, sought to live for Him, and to serve Him, who had won the love of their hearts by His own boundless love to them, for “we love Him because He first loved us.”

Great was the joy in the first boy's heart

when his brother returned and confessed that he too was now "on the Lord's side." During the next term they commenced a weekly boys' meeting at their father's house, to which they invited their schoolfellows, a few of whom responded to the invitation to come. Then they had straight boy-to-boy heart-chats, seeking to win these schoolfellows for Christ. It seems wonderful to the writer, who happens to be one of the boys himself, to write of this eighteen years afterwards. Most people would consider it presumption for two boys of twelve years to do such a thing ; but these fellows were in real earnest, and saw only the solemn side as they set about the work to which they truly believed the loved Master had called them.

One evening, at the close of one of these little gatherings, the elder boy, whom we will call Arthur, put to one of his schoolfellows almost the same question that he had first asked his twin-brother Edward. He knew that his schoolfellow had been touched by what had been said during the evening, and he hoped to lead him there and then to a decision for Christ ; but it was not yet God's time. His schoolfellow avoided the issue, and when he felt he had done all he then could to persuade him, Arthur said, " Well, Frank,

don't put it aside ; let us have another chat to-morrow afternoon, which is a half-holiday. Come for a walk with me then." But Frank refused. Some power seemed to keep him back. Alas ! the same power, the power of evil, has kept back, and is still keeping back, thousands from entering into the narrow way, which is the only path of life, and leading them on the broad one to the destruction of their precious souls.

The next afternoon Frank called at the house and asked to see Arthur. He was out, but Edward came to him. "I called," said Frank, "to see Arthur ; he asked me to go for a walk with him this afternoon, but I refused ; and now I wish I had not, and it is too late, for he is gone out." "Well, old man, I will go with you," replied Edward heartily, and off they started for a good ramble in one of the most beautiful parts of Somersetshire.

It was a lovely autumn afternoon, and after awhile they reached a field in which was a pond surrounded by bushes and trees. The spot commands a splendid view of the surrounding country, and, as it was quite dry and warm, they sat down to rest.

Presently Frank broached the subject that was

uppermost in his mind. "Arthur tried to get me last evening to decide for Christ, but I could not." He said quietly, but distinctly, "You know, I've been an awfully bad fellow, and it seems I'm too bad for God; I can't tell you all, but I've been a dreadful trouble to the mater, and I feel I've made a bad start."

"Well," said Edward, "if that means you feel yourself a sinner, you are surely one of those whom Jesus came to save, for He distinctly said, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Then, again, think of that poor thief who hung on the cross beside the Saviour, with all his life of sin and wickedness. You would not say that he was not forgiven, would you? Why, Jesus Himself said to him, 'This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.'"

Quietly and earnestly the two young fellows talked of these momentous things, until presently Frank said, "I see it all now; oh, how slow I have been to understand that Jesus really bore my sins! I've always thought of it in a general sort of way: I never understood it was for me—my very self; but now I do understand: I know that 'He loved me, and gave Himself for me'; and because of this, if I trust Him, as I

can and do, God will forgive me for His sake. Oh, I should now like to thank God for making me to see and understand His wonderful love; cannot I do so now?"

Edward gladly agreed, and there upon the grass another life was yielded, another precious soul passed from death unto life, and was made safe for time and for eternity, through the precious blood of Christ.

These events all happened in the year 1885, and now there is a still more wonderful sequel to be told. Seventeen years after, the younger of the twin-brothers, Edward, was giving a gospel address at a small village not far from his early home. At the close of his address a lady came forward and said, "Mr X., I feel I must tell you what was the first incident in a chain of circumstances that led to my conversion. Do you remember, many years ago, sitting with another boy by a pond in a field, and having a very earnest conversation, and the result?" "Indeed I do," said Edward; "it is an incident in my life that I shall never forget." "Well," said the lady, "strange though it may seem, I myself was sitting only a little distance away, painting, and although hidden from view by bushes, I overheard all. Before I knew any

one was near you had commenced talking, so that I did not like to make a noise ; but I heard every word that was said, and when you were gone I made up my mind that I too would some day yield myself to the same Saviour, and by His grace so I have—not then, nor for some months ; but I never forgot the scene, of which I had been such an unsuspected and unintentional spectator.”

These are links in the great chain of God's wonderful workings of grace—links forged, one by one, and by no means wholly understood at the time ; but nevertheless they were God's work, and in them He was accomplishing His great desire of bringing sinners to Himself.

Some of those of whom I have written have now passed away to be with the Saviour they learned to love on earth ; but the three boys, now young men, are still living, and although no doubt there have been many failings in their lives, to the glory of God it may be said that they continue to witness for Him,

“Saved by His grace, kept by His power.”

Dear reader, the chain is not yet completed, though no one but God knows when it will be, or how soon the door of salvation may be shut.

This true story is perhaps one of the links that will draw you to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

“Why not? Why not?
Why not come to Him now?”

Do not delay until some more convenient day, which may never come. Yield yourself to Him now, and accept His gift of eternal life, which is in Jesus Christ, and which God is ready and waiting to give to you for His sake.

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” (John x. 27, 28).

E. W. P.

Make Your Choice.

OFTEN in our life's experience we turn aside from everything to consider matters of more or less importance, and after weighing over in our minds the advantages and the disadvantages, the probable gain and the risk of loss—after viewing the

case from various standpoints, we arrive at a conclusion ; we decide either for or against, and often have to abide by the consequences, as we reap the result, whether for good or ill.

Only a short time ago a man was compelled by the urgency of his case, almost on the impulse of the moment, to make his choice. He was in the employ of a railway company, and was walking along the lines near Birmingham, when he accidentally caught his foot in the points, which instantly closed upon it so tightly that he was unable to extricate it ; while he saw to his horror an express train approaching at full speed ; he felt that death was imminent, for he knew that should he remain in that position he had but a few seconds to live. What thoughts must have flashed through his mind in those terrible moments of suspense ! He realised that he must either lose his life or his foot, and quick as thought his mind was made up, his decision was arrived at, his foot must go, if by any means there was the slightest chance of his life being saved. Acting upon this, he hastily threw himself down between the lines, while nearer and nearer approached the ponderous engine. Oh, the agony of those moments ! In vain did the driver endeavour to bring to a standstill the iron

monster. On, on it came, and passed over the man's foot, crushing it so severely that it was necessary to amputate. He acted wisely, and although he lost his foot his life was saved.

Many others, besides the one mentioned above, have made their choice ; some for good, others for ill.

Moses,

when forty years of age, decided as to his future course. He refused rank and greatness ; he esteemed not riches and honour ; he despised luxury and ease ; and counted as worthless the pleasures of sin, choosing affliction and suffering with a despised company of slaves. He had respect unto the recompense of the reward, and his reward was sure.

Years later

the multitude at Jerusalem

made their choice. The great crowd consisted of all classes and professions, from the governor and the elders down to the meanest dweller there. They had to choose between the Son of the living God, whose mission was to save life, and the malefactor Barabbas, who was guilty among other things of taking life. Alas ! for man's choice. With hearts full of prejudice and hatred, and eyes blinded by envy, they

deliberately chose the guilty Barabbas, and refused the Just One, Jesus, exclaiming, "We will not have this man to reign over us;" crying in the hearing of Almighty God, "Let His blood be upon us and our children."

Shortly afterwards,

King Agrippa,

after hearing from the lips of a servant of Christ who was his prisoner, words which awakened his heart and aroused his conscience, said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" Alas! foolish king, indecision is your ruin, for unless you come to a more definite conclusion, the salvation of God you will never have; the peace of God you will never know; the rest which remains for God's people you will never enter; but God's righteous ire will be felt both by you and all your followers who are content to be "almost" saved, almost Christians, almost in heaven, but, alas! for ever outside.

Souls all around us are perishing because they will not come to a decision. They fain would forget the words of the Son of God, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." They are willingly ignorant of the fact that they cannot enjoy the pleasures of sin and the things of God. They do not realise that they cannot be slaves of sin

and the Lord's freemen at the same time ; that they cannot make the best of both worlds ; that they cannot both make an idol of sin and worship the Lord of glory ; that they cannot tread at the same time the broad way to destruction and the narrow road to heaven. They appear not to have grasped the truth that they can never enter heaven unless their sins are cleansed away, unless they come to Jesus, who alone is the passport into eternal glory.

We would further remind you that there is no neutrality on this point. Refusing to be saved, you choose to be lost ; refusing endless joy, you choose eternal woe ; refusing the light, you choose the outer darkness ; refusing eternal life, you choose the "death that never dies" ; refusing God's great mercy, you choose His righteous curse ; refusing the peace He offers, you choose endless remorse ; refusing to enter the narrow way, you choose to continue in the broad road which leadeth to destruction ; refusing heaven, you choose hell. Oh, the awfulness of your choice !

My friend, what is your choice ? Is it Christ or the world ? Choose not the fleeting pleasures of sin, or you will reap the wages—death. Come now to Jesus ; trust your soul to His keeping ;

He will receive you, pardon you, and make you meet for eternal glory. And should you be called, in faithfulness to your Saviour and Master, to part with the things which are displeasing to Him, hereafter you shall know the joy of reigning with Christ, to enjoy the pleasures for evermore.

Dear reader, our God in compassionate love is waiting for your choice. The Saviour bends to hear your cry of penitence. The Spirit of God works in your heart to bring you to repentance. The recording angel waits to record in heaven the salvation of your soul. Therefore,

make your choice ;

choose ye this day, that henceforth you may be enabled to say—

“My eternal choice is made—
Christ for me.”

Think of the manifold blessings which are consequent upon such a choice : blessings as endless as eternity ; blessings which the wealth of the universe could not purchase, but which may be received by simple faith without money or price ; blessings such as the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, justification, peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost. These blessings and many others flow from a personal reception

of the Son of God, for it is still the day of grace, and the promise of God is sure that, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power (or right or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on His name" (John i. 12).

A. G.

"I'll take your advice, Sir."

WHAT strange characters one meets with in this world, and what ridiculous views are sometimes held upon religious matters, almost enough to evoke a smile, were it not for the seriousness of the subject.

"And how long has that house stood empty?" I asked of a man industriously stacking turnips on the other side of the fence.

"A long while, sir."

"That's a pity," said I, "for it's a nice house. The fact is it's built too close to the cemetery, and people don't like to be reminded every day of their lives that perhaps their turn will come next."

"There you are," exclaimed the man, straightening himself up, and coming as close to me as

the intervening hedge would allow ; "and you call this a Christian country, with its religion and its preachers, some of them, they tell me, drawing their £6,000 a year, and all that for talking about things they know nothing whatever about. Why, what is there to be afraid of in death?"

"The thing to be afraid of is not so much death," I replied, "but what comes after death, in the resurrection day, the day when all those graves in that cemetery yonder will open, and be made to give forth their dead. Don't you believe there is to be a resurrection?"

"Why, certainly not," shouted my friend from over the hedge ; "and there are these men with their £6,000 a year paid for their religious talking, and I tell you, they know no more about it than you or I do," and so he went on with increasing emphasis.

I held no brief for these highly-paid ecclesiastical officials, and so I replied : "Let us leave these £6,000 gentlemen alone for the moment ; there's a book, my friend, that you can buy for one penny, one copper penny—now you can't complain of that price ! Get that book and read it, it will tell you all you want to know on the subject of death and the hereafter."

"There you are with your religion again,"

he shouted; "I tell you I'm just as well off as you are with all your religion."

"Now," said I, "be reasonable about it. You can't be as well off as I am. You believe that death is the end of you; you do not believe that the dead will rise; you do not believe that there will be a hereafter, and **therefore you have made no preparation for it.** On the other hand, I am convinced that death is not the end of any man; I am satisfied that there will be a resurrection of all, both of the just and the unjust; I am persuaded that there will be an eternal hereafter for every one, and therefore through God's grace I have made preparation for the journey, and I can say that I am ready—ready, not from anything that I have done or could do, but through what Christ has done for me when He died for sinners on the cross. Now, you must admit that if I am altogether deceived, I shall at any rate be no worse off than you by-and-by; but if I am right, and you are the one that is deceived, you will be infinitely worse off than I am in the end. The fact is, my friend, the devil is fooling you. There will be a hereafter for you, and the devil has hoodwinked you, and made you think there will be none."

At this my friend over the hedge got a little

quieter, but still persisted that he did not believe that reading the Bible would do him any good.

“Well, you try it,” said I, “you can get a New Testament for one penny; and God will judge you not by what the £6,000 gentlemen say, but by what the penny Testament says. Read that penny Testament—read it every day of your life. You think it will do you no good, but the devil is fooling you again. It *will* do you good, for in all the years that I have lived I have never yet seen the man who has diligently read the Bible, who has firmly believed it, and who has honestly sought to shape his life according to its teaching, that has not had his life made holier, purer, and happier than it was before. Have you?” I asked, addressing a man who had all this while kept stacking the turnips, though, at the same time, I could see he had thoroughly appreciated the conversation.

“No, sir, that I haven’t either,” was the ready response.

“No,” said I, again addressing the first speaker, “but I’ll tell you what I have seen; I’ve seen many miserable men in this world, miserable through drink, and lust, and every form of sin—men who have left the Bible out of their lives, and who have lived, and apparently died, with-

out God, and without Christ and without hope. Take my advice, friend, get that penny Testament as soon as you can, read it every day of your life, believe it, and live according to it. It will make you happier here, and give you a certain hope hereafter."

"Thank you sir. Good-day to you. I'll ~~take~~ your advice, sir." And so we parted.

And now, reader, what will that dear man find when he reads that penny Testament? In the first place, that he is a sinner, for it says that,

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

"But he knows that already," perhaps you reply.

Yes, but it makes all the difference when that solemn truth comes home to the soul, with all the awakening power of God's revelation applied by the Spirit of God to the conscience.

In the second place, he will learn that Christ Jesus died for sinners, for it says that—

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

There was only one way in which Christ could save sinners, and that was by dying for their sins. Not His blameless life, but His sacri-

ficial death could atone for sin. And "He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3).

Oh, my dear reader, will you not read your Bible diligently, believe it unquestioningly, and seek to live by it more closely? It will do you good both in this world and in the next.

A. H. B.

"Procrastination."

SOME time ago a youth in one of the large ironworks in Sheffield, was accidentally thrown on to a red-hot armour-plate. When he was rolled off by his fellow-workmen, it was doubtful whether he could live, his injuries were so terrible.

His workmates cried, "Send for the doctor!" But the poor suffering youth cried:—"Never mind the doctor. Is there any one here who can tell me how to get saved? My soul has been neglected, and I am dying without God. Who can help me?" Although there were three hundred men around him, not one could tell him the way of salvation. After about twenty minutes of untold agony, he died.

Alas! how many there are who trifle with the question of the eternal destiny of their souls, putting it off from day to day, and then finding their end somewhat like that of this poor youth! While he lived and was well, his soul was neglected, and he cared not that he was hopeless and without God in the world (see Eph. ii. 12). Have *you* ever thought of it? The Scriptures say, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). God is ready and willing to save you now. He says, "As I live . . . I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11). And He faithfully asks you the question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37). If His gracious voice is not heard in this your present life, you will never hear it in those tones in eternity. It must be now or never.

This dying youth could find none to help him, but the heart of Jesus, during his life, had longed to fill him with joy and peace. He is the One upon whom God has laid help (Ps. lxxxix. 19). How

mighty was He in His love, when He died for lost and guilty sinners! How mighty, too, when He sustained God's righteous wrath and indignation! He passed through the fire of judgment, as the Lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Pet. i. 19), and bore the full penalty of sin; blessed for ever be His name! Mighty was He indeed, when, as the incarnate Son of God, through death, He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (see Heb. ii. 14, 15).

Then after three days He rose as a mighty conqueror, and now sits at the right hand of the majesty on high, crowned with glory and honour. Yes, Jesus is a mighty Saviour.

To-day God offers you a Saviour; **to-morrow** it may be too late. There is no hope, no help beyond death. If you die unsaved, it is only, "**After this the judgment**" (Heb. ix. 27). A renowned man, thought much of in Christendom, recently passed away, and the closing words of his life were: "I ask you to remember me when I am beyond this world, and shall want all the help that my soul may stand in need of." Poor misguided man! if thou hast passed the threshold from time into eternity, without having

known and trusted Jesus as thy Saviour, it is all over! Yes, my reader, this is the day of God's grace.

Oh! heed His voice, which says, "**To-day** if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7). "**Come now**, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

A young girl said to the writer the other day, "I want to enjoy life first, and then I will come to Christ." What a sad mistake, and so often made. What enjoyment is there in life, when an overwhelming burden of sins is upon you? Can there be real joy for those estranged from God? No, no! And yet it is sad to think of the many who are gaily skipping down the broad road, trying hard to get enjoyment and satisfaction. It is far better to commence the battle of life with Jesus, than to keep away from Him, meaning at some future time to become a believer.

Halt no longer, dear reader, between two opinions, but hasten to believe in Christ, and get sheltered by His precious blood. W. G.

The President's Testimony; or, "I do love Jesus."

THE world-wide interest in President Abraham Lincoln, from the time he left his home in Springfield, Illinois, to take the Presidential Chair at Washington in 1861, and the universal and real sorrow for his untimely death on 15th April 1865, were very remarkable. Even to this present day there exists amongst the different nationalities of the earth a great interest in this wise and benevolent ruler.

President Lincoln had endeared himself to the hearts of millions by his human sympathy, great wisdom, and kindly acts alike toward friend and foe in the most critical and difficult period of the history of the United States, and after his death this was more fully realised and appreciated by all. But there was something more than mere human kindness and wisdom as the spring of all this in Lincoln. It was the grace of God wrought in his soul by the power of the Holy Spirit that produced these beautiful traits of character.

When President Lincoln left Springfield, 11th February 1861, on his way to Washington to take the Presidency of the United States to which he was elected, he made the following farewell address:—

“My friends, no one not in my position can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. Here I have lived for a quarter of a century, here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. A duty devolves upon me which is greater perhaps than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support. Again I bid you all an affectionate farewell.”

These simple words, addressed to his friends and neighbours, plainly show a reliance upon God, and indicate a work of God in his soul at that time.

A friend during an interview with Mr Lincoln, long after he had been inaugurated President, asked him if he loved Jesus. The President buried his face in his handkerchief and wept and

sobbed. He then said amid his tears, "When I left home to take the Chair of the State, I was not then a Christian. When my son died—the severest trial of my life—I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg, and looked upon the graves of our dead who had fallen in the defence of their country, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ. I DO LOVE JESUS."

Again, on another occasion he said to a servant of the Lord who had suffered much persecution for Christ's sake, "The spectacle of that crucified One which is before my eyes is more than sublime, it is divine."

A gentleman, having an appointment to meet President Lincoln at five o'clock in the morning, went a quarter of an hour before the time appointed. While waiting for the appointed time, he heard in the next room a voice as if in grave conversation, and asked an attendant standing by, "Who is talking in the next room?"

"It is the President, sir," replied the attendant.

"Is anybody with him?" the gentleman inquired.

"No; he is reading the Bible."

"Is that his habit so early in the morning?"

“Yes, sir ; he spends every morning from four o'clock to five in reading the Scriptures, and praying.”

It is many years ago since President Lincoln has departed from this life on earth, but “to depart and be with Christ is far better” (Phil. i. 23). And he is with his dear Lord and Saviour, whom he loved, and on whom he relied. To be with the Lord is far better, for there is everlasting joy in the presence of the Lord.

Oh ! what untold power there is in the words of the Lord Jesus, who declared to all, whether President or citizen, whether great or small, rich or poor, 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).

It was the fact of the love of God to him, in giving His Son to die for the remission of his sins, that caused President Lincoln to “love Jesus,” and to confess with his mouth before many the Lord Jesus. “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart—that is, the word of faith which we preach—that **if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,** and shalt *believe* in

thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, **thou shalt be saved**" (Rom. x. 8, 9).

Reader, does not that wondrous love and grace of God, as demonstrated to you in the sending of His Son into this world, and in the death of Jesus, the Just for the unjust, produce a response in your heart? We bring before your eyes God's dear Son, who was crucified, and tell you, He died that believing in Him you might be saved. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). And whosoever believeth in Him, the crucified Son of God, has eternal life and shall never perish.

Reader, how is it with you? do you believe in the Son of God? There is no other Saviour but the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other way to be saved but by faith in Him.

"To Him (Jesus Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

Oh! what matchless grace, dear reader, to you and to me! The Lord is coming in flaming fire to judge the world, and the only place of safety is to be with Him; for before He comes in judgment He will take all those who love Him out of this present evil world, as we read in 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17; and then they will

come with Him when He appears in glory (Col. iii. 4).

Reader, do you love Jesus? Will you be *with Him* when He comes in flaming fire to judge the world? **“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”** Oh! believe *now*, for the “coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

“The cross of Christ! what untold *love*,
 What grace was there expressed:
 The only way to heaven above,
 To God’s eternal rest,”

W. E. S.

God’s Question To-day.

GREAT is the hopefulness, well-nigh boundless the aspiration of youth; and the vast Western Continent, more than any other country, perhaps, has attracted youthful enterprise from this side of the Atlantic as affording for it a wider and more unrestricted scope than is found in the home-country.

Urged by such a consideration, some thirty years ago, a young man pushed out from our great metropolis, crossed the stormy ocean, and

found employment in a town in New York State on the banks of the Hudson River. He had been trained in the fear of God, and Sunday evening, therefore, found him in a large well-attended church. The preacher, highly favoured in having such a service committed to him as the proclamation of God's glad tidings to so many, was also greatly gifted for it. Possessed of both learning and culture, he was also endowed with fine judgment and fluency of speech, which enabled him to present the truth in an arresting and attractive form. He had, moreover, a fine presence—"a self-recommending aspect," as John Howe said of another. Above all, he was in earnest—the love of Christ constrained him.

The "gift" received from the victorious ascended Lord (Eph. iv. 11), and used in obedience to His commission (Mark xvi. 15), who may tell the result of that preaching? Our young friend, however, was unimpressed by it.

Beyond all human limit is the diligence of the divine Searcher. It was an arrow shot at a venture that killed the king, and no circumstance or opportunity which infinite wisdom can turn to account is allowed to escape His unerring vigilance.

Ere the message of grace had been fully delivered, an acquaintance sitting beside the young man whispered in His ear, "What think ye of Christ?" It was a simple question of five words, but it was the "still, small voice"; it was *God's* question to him that day. Yea, verily, it was the word of the living God that possesses a penetrativeness and power to which those of the famed Rontgen ray are as nothing. The Spirit of God seized the opportunity. The word gained entrance, and light flashed into that young man's soul. What confusion was revealed! But the redemption coin was found, and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner that repented (Luke xv. 8-10). Conscience now awaked, and deep emotions were stirred which nought of earth could satisfy. No peace had he until he could answer the question without reserve in the quietness of God's own presence. A moral convulsion was wrought in the young man. He was begotten again by the Word. All things were changed to him — his hope transferred from earth to heaven (Heb. x. 10, xiii. 14); his aspiration centred in the glorious Person revealed to him through the question; earthly gain no longer a controlling motive; to win Christ where He is, became the dominant

desire, the supreme joy set before him. Returning to the home-country, he pursued a quiet path, seeking to grow in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour, and to set forth to others the unsearchable riches of Christ. Thirty years have since elapsed ; but when, recently, the same question was raised with him, his ready answer was, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, He is the altogether lovely One."

Reader, suffer us to urge on *you* the consideration of this question. Its importance is beyond exaggeration. On the character of your answer will depend your future, not for this short span of life alone, but for the eternity beyond. It is not our question. It is

God's question to you to-day.

Yea, it is the jealous appeal of a Saviour-God who spared not His Son, His only Son, whom He loved, to provide you a Saviour and Friend—a Saviour from sin, death, and hell ; a Friend who, living in the power of an endless life, can love you with an everlasting love and serve you when time is no more.

Wondrous are the testimonies to Him recorded for us in God's Word. Suffice it here to quote one from the Old Testament and one from the New. In the ninth chapter of Isaiah is found

this one: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." What sublime surpassing of the conceptions of men! What a bringing together of time and eternity, of majesty and tenderness!—the Babe born in time, the Father of eternity! the Son given, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace!

The following precious declaration we have chosen from the New Testament: "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). A devoted servant of the Lord has thus sweetly commented on it: "We are in weakness, we are guilty, we could not bring ourselves near to God. We needed a mediator, who, while maintaining the glory of God, should put us into such a position that He could present us to God in righteousness according to that glory. . . . Christ has revealed God, and all that He is in His own Person, in all the circumstances wherein man could have need either in body or soul. He came down into the lowest depths in order that there should be none even of the most wretched, who could not feel that

God in His goodness was near him and was entirely accessible to him—come down to him—His love finding occasion in misery; and that there was no need to which He was not present, which He could not meet. No tenderness, no power of sympathy, no humanity like His; no human heart that can so understand, so feel with us, whatever the burden may be that oppresses the heart of man.”

“All that God or man could wish
In Jesus richly meet.”

God's first question to fallen men (Himself, thus early, the Seeker) was,

Where art thou?

The shedding of man's blood drew from Him the further question, **What hast thou done?** The Son of man having come to seek and to save that which was lost; Christ having once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God; God having made full provision for our state and for our sins in the Person and work of His beloved Son, of whom and of which He has testified His delight and acceptance, His question now is,

What think ye of Christ?

The work acceptable to God is "to believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). And He is now declared "the Son of God, with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead for the obedience of faith among all nations" (Rom. i. 4, 5).

A. J. H.

The Importance of God's Word.

IN the days of Uzziah king of Judah and of Jeroboam king of Israel, the prophet Amos sounded a solemn note of warning: (chap. viii. 11) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord . . . they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." This was to happen (and who can say how often it *has* happened since then?) **because** they had rejected God's Word.

When the Lord Jesus was in this world, He said to this same people: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. . . .

While ye have light, believe in the light" (John xii. 35).

We may apply both these utterances to ourselves in England. We have the light of God's Word among us, and the influences of His Holy Spirit—do we all value and use them?

The foregoing verses came to mind while reading a missionary letter from Belgium which shall be transcribed here. What England seems to undervalue, hungry souls elsewhere are grasping. We can thank God for it.

"God continues His work of grace here (Belgium—a Roman Catholic country), and there are several interesting cases. Two old people who had lost their last surviving child were seeking rest. They were directed to a gospel meeting. I think the wife has faith in Christ, and we are praying for her husband. They come as often as strength permits.

"At G—— a whole family of Catholics has been marvellously blessed. The father is with the Lord, and the mother, three girls, two sons-in-law, two boys, and an aunt are converted. The Lord makes use of strange things sometimes. All this blessing began through the sale of a sheep to a Christian woman living in this village!

“Another interesting fact let me relate in connection with *the importance of God's Word* :—

“In 1810 a farmer living here found a Bible in some hidden corner of his house. For many a year it had lain there unnoticed. Like every one around him this man was a Catholic, and knew nothing of any other religion but by name. But he was not without some fear of God, and the discovery of a religious book aroused his interest. He therefore read it carefully with his wife, and it worked a complete transformation, though they kept their thoughts to themselves. But as they studied the Bible which they honestly believed to be the Word of God, in course of time they saw that they could no longer continue the practices of the Church of Rome. Then the village became aware of their change of mind, and came to them for an explanation. The couple loyally declared the truth, and spoke of the truths they had found in the Bible. Every one wanted to read it, and it went from house to house and from hand to hand, till a year later a company of Christians was formed. The Lord watched over them. (Their descendants are meeting still as believers.)

“The Word of the Lord *is powerful*. It does its work in hearts and consciences (Isa. lv. 11).

Blessed be God, this is so still, and through grace the servant can say, 'Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds,' and also, feeling that the day of grace is not over, he can add, 'Lord, let it alone this year also.' Our Master is not 'austere,' but infinite in grace, and His love associates us with His service and with His glory!"

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

* * *



"I'm Going Home—Bless the Lord."

A TERRIBLE fatality took place at the L. and S.W. Railway Station quite recently.

The ten o'clock goods train from H. arrived at the station at half-past twelve, and Porter J. B., who was in attendance, attempted to jump on the engine as the train was running through on its way to the goods yard to detach waggons. In doing so, his foot slipped, and being unable to recover himself, he was dragged about fifty yards. Becoming exhausted, he at

length let go, and dropped between the platform and the waggons, several of the carriages passing over him. While he was being rescued, and before he finally lost consciousness, he said to Head Porter T——, "It's all over, Harry; I'm going home—bless the Lord."

The above incident, reader, which we transcribe from a local paper lying before us, is alas! by no means an uncommon occurrence in this world, where we are all exposed more or less to sudden accident so frequently culminating in death; therefore it is not merely to call attention to the fact itself that we write, but rather to what should be to us of vaster importance than even having to meet death in whatever form, and that is the imperative necessity of being ready for so great a change. This young porter so suddenly cut off in the midst of his days, it is refreshing to observe, had certainly given the solemn matter of eternity his serious attention; but how many there are who shelve this most imperative concern, and are cut off in their sins! The reader may often have had this important question put before him; but may we affectionately once more plead with him not to tamper with so mighty an issue as the eternal destiny of the soul. "For

what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. xvi. 26). Remember these questions are put by Christ Himself, who only could form a true estimate of the value of the soul. When we reflect that it cost Him the pangs of death, as none other could have borne them, to accomplish deliverance for the sinner from eternal woe, to say nothing of the blessed alternative of eternal bliss with Himself at His coming again, how urgent a matter it is! Oh, reader, see to it without delay! Delays are often dangerous to our interests in this life, but how finally fatal they might prove in the eternal interests of the soul!

To refer again to this young railway porter. How blessed it is to find that he was ready; that he had had to do with Christ; that he knew, like Paul, in whom he had believed, and that He was able to keep that which he had committed to Him against that day; so that when this sudden and violent death overtook him, his closing words on earth could be, “It’s all over, Harry; I’m going home—bless the Lord.” These few lines may fall into the hands of other railway porters; may we solemnly ask, if such were the case with you, could you say with your fellow-

porter now departed, "I'm going home—bless the Lord"?

As we write from the town where the accident occurred, it may be that Head Porter T—— may read this. We know him, and would make a special appeal to him. If you had been so suddenly called out of time into eternity, instead of your "pal," could you have said as he did, "I'm going home—bless the Lord"? Kind-heartedness, readiness to do another a good turn, is good between man and man. We admire and approve it. But the matter of the soul's salvation hangs on mightier issues than these. Christ alone, in virtue of His blood, can save the lost.

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

H. L.

Decide at Once.

A CHRISTIAN friend writes this morning: "The Lord has been speaking loudly. One lady retired to rest on Saturday night and was found dead in the morning. A business man to whom I had often spoken, fell dead at his office; but as it has

been said, All men think all men mortal but themselves. May the voice of warning be heard before it be too late."

Sudden deaths are by no means uncommon. It is a fatal mistake to put off the decision of the affairs of the soul to a deathbed which may never come. We want to urge all our readers, in this the beginning of the year 1904, to

Decide at once.

The above two cases have taken place in a town only sixteen miles from where we write.

Only last summer we were holding some gospel services in a village close by. One Sunday night, on crossing the green, a Christian woman accosted me, saying, "Oh, I do wish my boy would come to these meetings, but I cannot induce him to." The lad was standing with a group of others at the end of the green; it was their habit to spend the Sunday evenings smoking and amusing themselves.

To those who know the awful truths of death, judgment, and eternity, the prevailing indifference of the times in which we live is truly terrible to contemplate. Men are hurrying on to the eternal world, and never give themselves time to ask,

Where shall I spend eternity?

It seems hopeless to reach such. They will not come and hear. You may urge and entreat them, but all in vain. Thank God! there are some that will listen, and with such it is the evangelist's happy privilege to deal. And so casting a regretful look across the green, I stepped into the mission hall.

The place was packed, and the weather being hot, the windows were opened wide. Soon the meeting was in full swing, and the Spirit of God was felt to be powerfully at work.

Passing down the passage at the close, we remarked to a Christian helper what a refreshing sight to see such a crowded room. "Ah," replied he, "but you did not see all; there was quite a crowd listening at the window." We afterwards learned that the Christian mother's son was amongst the number. Had we told that lad in the full vigour of early youth, "This will be

the last Sunday of your life,"

most probably he would have smiled incredulously, and yet it was so. The following Thursday evening, remarking to his mother that he did not feel very well, he retired early to bed. At five o'clock in the morning *he was dead.*

Whether or not he had received the message of God's love to him, a poor sinner, we cannot say. The coming day will declare. But what we say to you, dear reader, is,

Decide at once.

Two weeks after the above sad incident had happened, a Christian fisherman, an earnest preacher of the gospel residing but a few miles away, was sitting in his cottage at tea. Some boys were throwing stones, and he stepped outside to warn them, when one stone foolishly flung struck him on the head, and *he dropped down dead*. We had heard that dear man most earnestly pleading with a large company of people only three weeks before. He had given out the well-known hymn :

“ Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
 When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
 When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
 Will your anchor drift or firm remain ?”

We can still see his happy face before us, and hear the earnest way in which he sung the words of the chorus :

“ We have an anchor that keeps the soul
 Steadfast and sure while the billows roll ;
 Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
 Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love.”

Happy man! All was well with him. He stepped from that humble cottage into the Paradise of his Saviour's presence. Reader, how is it with you? If sudden death were to overtake you,

Are you ready?

If you have learnt your guiltiness before God, if conscience is troubled about your sins, we would most earnestly and affectionately point you to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only Saviour, but, thank God! an all-sufficient Saviour. That work He accomplished at Calvary has once and for ever satisfied all God's righteous demands, and all who will come simply trusting in Jesus and His finished work are accepted before God, in all the infinite value of Christ's sacrifice, and in all the absolute perfection of His person.

Why not trust Christ now?

Begin this New Year with Christ. Come to Him as a lost sinner; trust Him for salvation; range yourself on His side. Then should death come, you need fear no evil; should the Lord come and take His own away, He will take you, too, to those mansions of love and light and song; or, should He leave you here for a little longer, you

will have greater joy than the world possesses—the joy of abiding in His love, of following and serving Him "till He come."

"Chosen not for good in me ;
Wakened up from wrath to flee ;
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show
By my love how much I owe."

A. H. B.

"I'll be There!"

THERE are not many people who can bring themselves to say that they are absolutely certain that there is no hereafter.

Many hope that the grave will terminate their history for ever, for they feel pretty sure of this, that if there be a God to be met, they are not ready for that meeting ; if there be a judgment day, they dare not face that awful ordeal in their sins.

Most people know in their hearts that they are sinners, and if the Bible be true, to die in their sins would be the most terrible thing that could befall them. And yet they will not come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in

Him for salvation, for forgiveness, for peace and pardon. They will keep putting it off, and hoping that on a deathbed, or at some future time, they may in some way or other be fitted for eternal bliss.

Again we want to impress upon every reader of this gospel magazine the importance of
immediate decision.

We know not what a day may bring forth—not an hour, not even a moment, can we reckon upon.

The town of Hanley, in Staffordshire, has recently been thrown into a state of consternation. For long it was known that dangers lay thickly strewn around in the shape of old disused collieries and coalpit shafts; but on Saturday morning, 12th December 1903, the matter was pressed home with terrible vividness.

A man named Thomas Holland was walking along with a basket on his arm at the early hour of seven. He was singing at the time, when suddenly, and without a moment's warning,

the earth opened,

and he was engulfed, falling headlong down a deep pit. Not a sound was heard beyond the

heavy thud of his body as it reached the bottom of the shaft ; then all was still : one more soul had entered eternity. The basket lay on the pavement ; its bearer had stepped into the presence of God.

How awful ! the reader may exclaim, to die without a moment to prepare ! Thank God, that man was ready, and the words of song that trembled on his lips as he took that fatal plunge were these :

"When the roll is called up yonder,
I'll be there !"

Only two hours before, a young lady, delicately attired, stepped upon that very spot, returning from a ball. May God use the sad occurrence to her soul's salvation ! What would it have been for her had she stepped from the giddy pleasures of the world into the presence of a holy God !

"I'll be there !"

sang the happy Christian, all unconscious of how near he was to that happy land. There, in the presence of his blessed Saviour, he now rests. In life he had learnt to trust Him ; in death, he had nothing to fear. The precious blood of Jesus was his title to be there in mansions of light, peace, and joy.

Reader, will you be there too? We are all exposed to dangers. We none of us know what an hour may bring forth. Why, then, run the awful risk of eternal perdition, when salvation is within your reach? Why rob yourself of the present joy of knowing Christ by pursuing the empty and unsatisfying pleasures of sin?

Once more let the simple gospel message fall upon your ears: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners,

Christ died for us."

Oh, then, be wise now in this day of grace. Own your lost condition; believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you, too, will be able to say, "I'll be there."

A. H. B.

"He's Passed Me By."

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near."—ISA. lv. 6.

A CHRISTIAN once sat by the bedside of a dying man, whom he had been requested to visit, and spoke to him both faithfully and earnestly about the welfare of his precious soul. But alas! he seemed hardened and unconcerned. He then read to him

from God’s Word the well-known narrative of the blind man, who sat by the wayside begging, and laid great stress upon the fact that he called upon the Lord while He was near, and that, consequently, he received the blessing for which he so earnestly sought, and further mentioned that had he not then seized the opportunity of calling upon Him, as Christ Jesus never passed that way again, he doubtless would never have had another; that he called, not only to the right person, but also at the right time. But the dying man seemed to have no ear for the truth, so his visitor left, praying that God would cause him to know his deep need.

A day or two later he again called upon him, only to find him as indifferent to eternal realities as before, and as he sought to arouse him to a sense of his lost condition, the dying man replied, “Don’t speak to me any more about it, for it makes me troubled.” To which the Christian responded, “My friend, it is far better to be troubled now than to be troubled throughout eternity;” but as he seemed opposed to further conversation, he again left. Shortly afterwards, he heard that he had departed this life, his words, as he passed from time into eternity being,

“He’s passed me by, He’s passed me by.”

May the above serve as a warning to you, dear reader, not to trifle with eternal verities, which are more important than all the concerns of this life, for—

“To lose your wealth is much,
To lose your health is more,
To lose your soul is such a loss
That nothing can restore.”

Jesus Christ said, “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” God alone knows the inestimable value of your soul, and prizes its redemption so much that He gave His only-begotten Son, who stooped from the highest glory to taste the bitterness of death upon the cross, that sinners might not perish, but have everlasting life.

Hearken, again, to the cry of the dying man, “**He’s passed me by,**” and beware, lest you miss the passing by of Jesus Christ. He may have passed your way many times, so near that even your boon-companion may have called upon Him, and been delivered from the burden and guilt of his many sins. He will not always call, He will not always be passing, for the day of His grace will not last for ever. Therefore avail yourself now of His mercy, for now may be your golden opportunity.

A. G.

Treasure-Seekers.

PROBABLY most of my readers have seen or heard of the hidden treasure-seekers who day by day have been going out to search for the sums of money hidden by enterprising newspaper advertisers. They see the various placards in large type, saying that such and such a treasure is hidden in a certain town, and that clues to its whereabouts are to be found in a particular paper.

1. They *believe* the announcement, and eagerly await the special issue.

2. They endeavour to get a copy as *early* as possible, not to lose the opportunity through another seeker being first.

3. They read carefully and thoughtfully the directions, and then search diligently and *heartily* for it.

4. *One only* of the seekers gets the prize, and when got what is it? The "gold that perisheth."

Now, dear friends, God wants you to be a treasure-seeker, not for the gold that perisheth, but that which endureth unto life everlasting.

His servants, like the placards, announce that this treasure is to be found. Do you **believe** it? Then get the Word of God, and look for the clues. Turn first to Matthew vii. 7, 8, and there you will find, "Seek, and ye shall find"; "Every one that asketh receiveth"; and "He that seeketh findeth." Ah! that is better news than the hidden treasure-seekers have. **Every one** may have God's treasure, thanks be to the loving Giver of all good.

Now let us see how search is to be made. Look at Proverbs viii. 17, "They that seek Me **early** shall find Me." Now the treasure-seekers get their papers early, lest they should lose the one prize by some one finding it before them. So God wants you to seek early. If you are young, seek early, and have that treasure to go through life with.

Young or old, seek early, not because there is not a treasure for each of you, but because if you delay the opportunity may pass away. Christ may come, and the door of mercy will be shut; or God may require your soul of you this day; and if you pass out of this world without His treasure, it matters not if you have gained the whole world: you have **nothing for eternity** and your soul is lost.

Again, the treasure-seekers sought diligently and heartily, and so must God's treasure-seekers. Read Jeremiah xxix. 13, 14, "Ye shall seek Me and shall find Me, when ye shall search for Me **with all your heart.**" God delights to be found of men, but He wants their hearts.

If you are in earnest in your desire for God, He will make Himself known to you,—“I will be found of you, saith the Lord.” He Himself is the treasure He would have you search for. One of old could say, “O God, Thou art my God ; early will I seek **Thee** ; my soul thirsteth for **Thee**, my flesh longeth for **Thee** in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Ps. lxiii. 1). Have you not, dear reader, found this world to be what it really is, “a dry and thirsty land,” with nothing to satisfy your soul? Happy if it be so, even if you have been taught it by many a trial and sorrow, more perhaps than you think you deserved, for there is One whom the world knows not and desires not, that is longing to satisfy you, and in deep love for your soul has allowed all the afflictions to make you feel your need of Him. Now let us find Him as He makes Himself known to those who seek Him.

The earthly treasure-seekers mostly seek in vain, but the Lord “said not . . . Seek ye Me

in vain" (Isa. xlv. 19). All may find Himself to be their treasure. Himself "a **just God** and a **Saviour**."

The seeking sinner might hesitate in his search at the thought of finding a just God. The sinner's sins call for the due sentence from a just God, and that sentence is death—"death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). But blessed be His name! the God who would be sought after proclaims Himself to be "a Saviour." How can this be? The perfect answer is supplied in Isaiah liii. 5, 6. God has laid on Jesus the iniquity of all who look to Him.

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him: and with His stripes we are healed."

What an eternal treasure, then, have we found in the One who is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." So far for the sinner as a treasure-seeker. But there is Another seeking treasure.

"The Son of man has come to **seek** and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). And just as those who seek for God with their whole heart search not in vain, so the Saviour Jesus

seeks after that which is lost "until He find it" (Luke xv. 5). Jesus looks upon His people as a treasure worth seeking for. Yea, they are to Him like a "pearl of great price" (Matt. xiii. 46), for which He was willing to sell all that He had. How wonderful that He should give up everything—life itself—that He might purchase for His own, such worthless, hell-deserving sinners as you and me! And having found the treasure He set His heart upon, "none can pluck it from His hand" (John x. 28), but "He carries it home rejoicing" (Luke xv. 5), evermore to have it near Himself.

Further, God would have those of us who can rejoice in the treasure we have in Himself and the Son of His love, to be seekers still. "**Seek** those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. iii. 1, 2). Let us not be like the hidden treasure-seekers, or Bunyan's man with the muck-rake, with eyes and heart looking down at earthly things. Christians, look up! Let our hearts, as taught by the Spirit through the Word, become better acquainted with the excellencies and glories of our—yea, of God's—Treasure at His right hand. Thus shall we be

weaned from all that is of this world that passeth away, and when we listen to the voice of our Saviour—yearning to have His blood-bought people with Him—saying, “Surely I come quickly,” the answering desire of our souls will be, “Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus.”

“’Tis the treasure I’ve found in His love
That has made me a pilgrim below ;
And ’tis there, when I reach Him above,
As I’m known, all His fulness I’ll know.”

W. H. S. F.



Three Cries for Mercy.

“Rich in mercy, Thou didst stoop ;
Thence is all Thy people’s hope.
Thou wast poor, that we might be
Rich in glory, Lord, with Thee.”



WHEN God revealed His name to Moses, the first attribute He proclaimed was “Mercy”—“The Lord God, merciful” (Exod. xxxiv. 6) ; and it is beautiful to notice how the Lord Jesus, when as Son of man He trod this earth, delighted to exhibit the same character to the poor sinners who thronged His path.

In Luke xvii. we read of two special cries for mercy which fell upon our Lord's ears as He wended His way up to Jerusalem. His path ever led Him through scenes of suffering and sorrow. Samaria and Galilee, the outcast places, He "must needs" go through. And here, as He passed along, He came upon a pitiable sight. Ten men—lepers—herding together in their fellowship of misery, met Him; but standing afar off, with one consent they cry, "**Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**"

Alas! no uncommon sight this—lepers crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" Will the Lord pass on and leave them in their misery? Nay; no human heart so tender as His. None in this wide world so pitiful as He. That cry for "mercy" must be answered, and at once. He said unto them, "Go, show yourselves unto the priests . . . and as they went **they were cleansed.**"

Physical cleansing this; but sweetly it speaks to us of the Lord's readiness to cleanse and heal the *soul*-disease of all who cry to Him now. When He was on earth, multitudes thronged Him to get relief. All who came were healed, none turned away. To-day He is in heaven, the Great Healer of soul-sickness. And so the

apostle can write to those who had received Him, reminding them how the healing had been obtained—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree . . . by whose stripes *ye were healed.*" Let me ask, Have *you* felt your need, and come to Him for cleansing and cure?

But another appeal fell upon our Lord's ear. It came from a blind beggar. Could aught be more sad! The joys of life, common to most, he had never known; the depths of poverty, he had. And daily he sat by the highway-side begging for alms from the passers-by.

But one day the hopeless monotony of life was broken. Far away—with hearing keenly accentuated by loss of sight—he could detect the tramp of feet, the murmur of voices. Nearer and nearer they come. No ordinary crowd this which passes. Oh for a minute's sight to learn the cause! But, alas! in darkness he must wait, till one more kindly disposed than the rest tells him, "**Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.**" What a moment for Bartimæus—the chance of a lifetime! We can picture him with outstretched arms and sightless eyes turned towards the still approaching footsteps, while above the murmur

of the crowd his voice of passionate entreaty rings out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy upon me!"

Careless of his wretched state, and heedless of the pent-up agony of years, the people would bid him hold his peace. But faith braves all rebukes, and he who hitherto begged for alms from man, now turns for mercy from God. And again the deep longing of his soul goes forth in the cry, "**Have mercy on me!**" There is a pause, a hush, and then willing hands lead him to the One who had commanded, "**Bring him to Me!**" Marvellous sight—the footsteps of the Lord of life and glory arrested by the cry of a blind beggar! "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" "Lord, that I may receive my sight." "And Jesus said, Receive thy sight!" "He spake, and it was done." And the first object those long-darkened eyes beheld was the compassionate face of the Saviour who had shown him mercy. Is it any wonder that we read, "He followed Him, glorifying God"? Has it been so with you, reader? Can you say:

"I have heard the voice of Jesus; tell me not of aught beside.

I have seen the face of Jesus; all my soul is satisfied"?

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But, alas! we hear of another cry for "mercy," not uttered in time, but when the lost soul has been launched into eternity. For a moment the vail is drawn aside, and we get a glimpse of the eternal state of one, who having lived without Christ, died without Christ, and was for ever in hell (Luke xvi. 23).

A prosperous man of the world, with all that heart could wish. But when the short span of life snapped, while the beggar at his gate was "carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom," we only read "he died," "was buried," and "in hell . . . he cried." And what was his appeal? Did he say, "Father Abraham, *pray* me out of this place? or *pay* to have my time here shortened?" Ah, such delusions, if he ever held them, are all swept away! He knows but too well now that hope is over—the gulf fixed—the separation eternal. Then for what does he ask? Oh the anguish of that cry—"mercy," and "*one drop of water.*" Alas! too late this appeal is made. His guilt has landed him in a place where mercy cannot come, where no mitigation of hell's eternal misery can reach those who deliberately turned their back upon heaven—who rejected God's salvation, and scorned God's Christ.

We hear at times of the supposed efficacy of "prayers to the saints." The only prayer to a saint recorded in Scripture is what we get here, and we learn it availed naught. The rich man's day of grace was over. He had had his "good things" in time, his opportunities in time; but now he had entered eternity, and all hope of mercy was for ever past. Four solemn words seem aptly to describe his state:

He died without mercy.

Far, far away in the beautiful cemetery of Melbourne, a marble tombstone bears the short inscription:

"I obtained mercy."

It marks the resting-place of a young man who, having spent the most of his short life "without Christ," before his end came was brightly converted; and the words engraved tell their own blessed story of God's seeking and saving grace.

When you come to die, let me ask which of these epitaphs would be descriptive of you? We read, "Those who despised Moses' law died without mercy" (Heb. x.). Will it not be equally true of those who despise God's salvation?

A certain king "made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were

bidden to the wedding; and they **would not come**. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them, Behold, I have prepared my dinner . . . all things are ready, come unto the marriage. But they **made light of it**, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and slew them. When the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city" (Matt. xxii.).

Thank God, this day of wrath has not yet dawned. But we know not how soon it will. God, who is rich in mercy, lingers over a doomed world. Have you fled to Christ for refuge from the coming storm? Face the question, we entreat you. And if you have not yet "obtained it," cry for "mercy" *now*. Be in earnest, as those poor lepers were. Be in earnest, as the blind man was; and we tell you on the authority of God's Word, the result will be the same. Universal as the effect of sin has been, so universal is the offer of God's mercy to sinners. "He hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." The "same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 12).

A. S. M.

“Forgive us our sins!”

SOME years ago, while holding some special gospel services in a New Zealand township, an incident took place which illustrates very forcibly the vagueness and obscurity with which such a simple and, withal, important subject as the forgiveness of sins is viewed by even serious people.

I had been asked to the house of one whom I had every reason to think was a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and before going out to the gospel service in the Public Hall, a little company of friends sat down to tea. Before partaking of our repast, our host “said grace,” as it is termed, concluding his brief prayer with the words—“and forgive us our sins for Christ’s sake. Amen.”

Looking across the table to him, I remarked, “Mr —, I thought your sins were forgiven?”

Greatly taken aback, he replied, “Well, I hope they are.”

“But are you not certain?” I asked. “Are you not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? And if you are, why then your sins are forgiven, for the Scripture says that ‘we HAVE redemp-

tion through His blood, the forgiveness of sins' (Eph. i. 7)."

"Yes," he replied; "but then we are always sinning."

"That is terrible," said I; "for the Word says to the children of God, 'These things write we unto you, that ye sin not' (1 John ii. 1). While it is perfectly true that the believer has a sinful nature, yet there is no necessity for him to sin, and he ought not to sin, for 'he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not' (1 John v. 18). But were you sincere in your request just now, that God would forgive you your sins for Christ's sake?"

"Yes, I hope so," said my friend. "And do you think that God heard? And do you think that God will grant your request?" I inquired.

"I hope He will," replied our host, "though I must admit you are bringing me to book about this matter in a way I scarcely expected; for, indeed, I fear that the words are used sometimes in a formal and therefore unreal manner."

"And when did you last breathe that petition?" I asked.

"Well, I suppose at dinner-time to-day," was the rejoinder.

"Well, now," said I, "if at two o'clock to-day

you sincerely asked God to forgive you your sins for Christ's sake; and if God heard that prayer of yours, and granted you your request; if 'for Christ's sake' He really did forgive you your sins, what sins have you committed since then that you have now asked God to forgive?"

"I really do not know?" was the frank reply.

"Well, now, supposing your child were to come to you regularly three times every day and say, 'Oh, father, do forgive me!' what would you think and say?" I asked.

"I suppose I should ask him what he had been doing," came the answer.

"And if he were to say, 'Oh, I don't know, but I am always doing wrong things,' would you not say to him, 'My child, I should be only too glad to forgive you, but you must tell me what you have done; for how can I forgive you when you do not tell me what it is that needs to be forgiven?'"

A long conversation ensued upon the deeply important subject of the forgiveness of sins, my friend acknowledging at the close that he had never looked at the matter in that light before, and that whereas hitherto all had been vague and obscure, now he could see clearly, and "give thanks to the Father, which HATH made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the

saints in light : who HATH delivered us from the power of darkness, and HATH translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son : in whom we HAVE redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. i. 12-14).

Reader, are your sins forgiven? If you are *not* a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, depend upon it your sins are *not* forgiven ; and if you were to die in that unforgiven state, you would die in your sins, and as the Lord said to the unbelieving Jews, "I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins : whither I go, ye cannot come" (John viii. 21). It is vain to hope that you will go to heaven if you die in your sins ; and if not to heaven, it must be to hell, there to be shut up for all eternity with the devil and his angels, and with "the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters," &c. (Rev. xx. 10, xxi. 8).

But if you are a believer, then it is your privilege to know that your sins are forgiven, for in the whole family of God there is not such a thing to be found as an unforgiven child. Listen :

"I write unto you, children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 John ii. 12).

Mark it well, that word "are,"—"your sins ARE forgiven you."

The believer then starts on his heavenward journey with the forgiveness of His sins. And with the forgiveness of how many of them? Why, of all of them ; and so he can sing:

“ All our sins were laid upon Him,
 Jesus bore them on the tree ;
 God who knew them, laid them on Him,
 And believing *thou art free.*”

But supposing the child of God sins, what is then to be done? Must he in a vague and indefinite manner go to his Father and ask for forgiveness? No, but he must go and confess his sin, whatever it may be ; and “if we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John i. 9). Where confession to God is honest and deep, the abhorrence of the sin will be much more intense than where there is merely a vague petition for forgiveness.

Satan’s great effort is to keep unbelievers careless and indifferent by making them hope that all will be right in the end in spite of their unforgiven sins ; and on the other hand, to rob true believers of all present comfort and peace by depriving them of the assurance of the present forgiveness of all their sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. H. B.

The Town Crier.

THE town crier was well known some years ago as the proclaimer of important and interesting news. Wherever he went in his rounds about the town, or village, ringing his bell, men, women, and children stood at open doors and windows, or gathered near him in the streets, to listen to his public announcements.

I recollect just such a scene some years ago, in a Yorkshire town, one Guy Fawkes' day. The town crier stood, surrounded by a crowd. After he stopped ringing his bell, amid the silence of that large company, he loudly cried: "Hear ye, hear ye, all ye people." Then he made the announcement of the coming of some important person connected with the Government, to visit the town, with other news of interest. Concluding with these words, "Hear ye, hear ye, *all ye people*," the town crier walked away.

It is now a long while ago since I saw that, to me, peculiar sight. It was the first and the last time the "town crier" was seen by me, but I never forgot him.

And again, in a dream recently, I dreamt of this town crier and of his proclamation. In the dream the question was asked, "Lord, what does this mean, and what is the interpretation thereof?" In a calm but powerful voice, full of tenderest love, the answer came: "Be as that town crier, and say to all, 'The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' Tell sinners this, and say to them that they have sinned against God; but also tell them 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.' 'Therefore *be ye also ready*: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.'" And I awoke, and it was a dream.

Reader, in accordance with this word, which is, I believe, from the Lord to you as His crier, His gospel crier, the cry is herewith sounded out, and hear it—oh! take careful note of it: "**The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.**" Yes, Jesus is coming again. He said He would (John xiv. 3), and His word can never be broken. He will surely come.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). In that little word "**all**" you are included. "As it is written, There is none righteous, **no, not one**" (Rom. iii. 10).

In that scriptural statement you are included. Therefore you are "**lost**" and "**guilty**" before God. And there is no other way of salvation but through the crucified Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. At Calvary Jesus died, His own self bare in His own body on the tree the sins of all those who believe in Him (1 Pet. ii. 24). None, **no, not one**, can be saved by good deeds, nor by "resolutions." But, "be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that **through this man** is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him **all that believe are justified** from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

There is forgiveness of sins, justification, and salvation to all that have faith in the blood of Christ, for He hath declared that "by Him all that believe **are justified from all things**," and have eternal life, and shall never perish (John x. 28). What if the Lord Jesus should come **now**, and find you in your sins? What if He should come **now**, and find you unsaved? Be not deceived; in that case you would be eternally lost, and left outside of heaven, to be banished to hell throughout eternity, and, worst of all, never to know or enjoy the Lord.

Because of the certainty of terrible judgments to come upon the world (Luke xxi. 25, 26) after the Church is caught up out of it to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 18), we entreat you to **repent**, and **believe** the gospel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ now. If you have not believed in Him as your Saviour, when He comes for His Church, you then would surely be left behind, to endure these terrible judgments. And this is not all, for afterwards the Lord will come with the saints, who shall have been previously caught up to meet Him in the air, to "execute judgment upon all." It is then "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9, and Jude ver. 14).

Reader, if you have not believed in the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, just come to Him with all your sins, and believe in Him, yea, believe that He died for you, and you shall be saved (Acts xvi. 31).

Hear ye, all peoples of every land, of every

tongue, of every race, and of every class and rank: "Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2), for "**the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.**"

W. E. S.

The Sunday School.

SUNDAY-school teachers are often discouraged, but among revival records of the past something may be remembered for their encouragement.

We must never forget that when the Lord Jesus was here, He was "much displeased" with those who tried to hinder the little ones being brought to Him to *touch*, and that "*He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them*" (Mark x.). On a previous occasion, too, He had *taken a child in His arms* (ix. 36), so that those around Him ought to have known His love for such. Think of the hands of the blessed Jesus laid on the children! (See Mark v. 23, and ix. 27.)

Well, twenty-six years ago there was a Sunday school in a certain hamlet. The place

boasted no church, so that the children preferred coming to the undenominational school to going to a more distant one, and about seventy usually attended it. Generally speaking they were very naughty, and the faith of the teachers was sorely tried, their courage too, for several of them had to forego their dinner in order to be in time for it. But "though it tarry, wait for it," and the answer came to their prayers when least expected.

An evangelist who had been converted through the Irish revival came to the next village, and there were wonderful meetings night after night, which were attended by hundreds. Besides conversions among the adults, in the course of two months, some eighteen of the elder children were brought to Christ, some of whom remain unto this present day, and many are fallen asleep; but all were trophies of grace, and the Sunday-school teachers were well recompensed, and so the sowers and the reapers rejoiced together.

Last spring, in the course of some special prayer meetings for blessing on the gospel, a brother got up and said he had received a letter which he believed would be of great

interest to all. It was from a lad, now at sea, who had been an attendant at the Sunday school held in that very room in which we were assembled, but who had remained proof against the prayers and entreaties of his teachers. Often they had needed to recollect that "the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath *long patience* for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain." And now this precious rain from Heaven had fallen! Here are extracts from the letters read that night:—

GIBRALTAR, H.M.S. —, *March* 1903.

"DEAR —, —Since I have been here a great change has come over me. I have found out what a great sinner I am and in need of a Saviour. I went to chapel ashore the other day and heard Mr —— preach; he preached from the 103rd Psalm, about the mercies of God; and I saw how merciful God had been to me—a guilty sinner. I was ashore last night, when a lady came up to me and asked me if I would come and hear a gentleman preach. I said I didn't mind; so I went, and the gentleman happened to be Mr ——,* and he spoke

* This Mr —— had been driven back to port by a storm and kept there by stress of weather to hold those

of the wickedness of men and the love of God; and when he had finished speaking he got down on his knees and said: 'Are there any here who would like me to pray for them? If so, let them put up their hands.' There was a conflict went on within me between the devil and Jesus, as to who should win the day: those few moments seemed ages. But, thank God, the devil was defeated, and up went my hand. But I was not the only one; another chap from my ship, the painter, held up his. And after Mr — had prayed, he said: 'Will anybody stand up and own that Christ is his Saviour?' and again the devil tempted me. When Mr — said: 'Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me . . . in this . . . sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father.' When I heard these words I shook the devil off, and stood up and owned Him as my Saviour. I have had many temptations already, but, thank God, I threw them off. The painter is going to let us have his shop for meetings when we can't get ashore, meetings where God had work to be done. "He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind" to carry out His purposes of blessing.

and when we are at sea. I daresay it seems strange to you to see me write like this. I feel more lonely now and in need of a friend; I seem to be in another world, with a change of air . . .”

23rd March 1903.

“DEAR —, —I daresay by the time that you get this letter you will have heard the news. I expect you will think it too good to be true; but, thank God, it is true. Last night at ten, three of us stole down the stokehole and up in the fanflat with our Bibles; we prayed to God to keep us from all temptations and worldly things, and read our Bibles from the First Epistle of St John. It seems rather hard at first breaking off bad habits; one of my mess-mates said to me to-night, ‘Going to have a run round at cards?’ I said, ‘No, I have finished playing cards.’ He answered, ‘What’s up with you now? You another silly—gone reg’lar?’ I don’t mind being silly as long as I am silly on the right side. I shall be glad to have any little tracts you can send me; they will not go through the port this time. . . . Please tell G. of my conversion. . . . Pray for me.—W. G. (A.B.)”

Since these letters were written, several other men on board have been brought to the Lord. Let us then thank God and take courage, for in due season (God's time) we shall reap if we faint not.”

H. L. H.



“Boast not Thyself of To-morrow.”

IT was on a cold evening just before Christmas last, that two young men stood together in a leading thoroughfare in London. The day had been spent in company, and now they were separating. “Good-bye, old chap,” said the elder of the two; “when we next meet, it will be in some out-of-the-way place in India. I'm off on the 29th.” Yes, so had he arranged—passage taken, and everything prepared; but, alas! it is to be feared, without reference to God's will or asking counsel of Him. He went home to his lodgings, and later on to a bed from which he was never to rise again.

In the morning he was called as usual, and as he did not come to breakfast, a gentleman in the house went to his room, touched him, and

found his body "icy cold." A doctor who was summoned immediately, said he had been dead several hours. Only thirty-three! In the prime of life and energy, in good social position, with everything bright and pleasant as far as this world is concerned, suddenly called away; and what then? It is written: "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (Eccles. xi. 3).

Of his state of soul all that can be said is that God knoweth. Conscientious, kind, a good son and brother, was the verdict of friends; but however good these things may be, they are of no avail for salvation in the sight of a holy, heart-searching God, without belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and acceptance of Him as our own personal Saviour.

Reader, if called away thus suddenly, what would be your lot? It is written, "**Once to die, but after this the judgment,**" to one without Christ; but to the believer in His finished work on the cross, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8); "**To depart and be with Christ is far better**" (Phil. i. 23).

Reader, again, which would it be with you? *Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation.

S. H.

Salvation Alone in Christ.

WHILE there are many, in our day, who utterly disregard God's Word, on the other hand, those abound who profess to esteem it as such, but walk in ignorance of many of the truths unmistakably set forth. As there are also numbers who have the form of godliness, but who by conversation and life deny the power thereof, it behoves all to ask themselves the question which so concerns their future welfare, *i.e.*,

What is my hope for eternity

based upon? It is the imperative duty of all to seriously consider the things which are beyond this life—eternal things. And as God states there are such places as heaven and hell, and such experiences as happiness and misery after death, it becomes us to face matters at once, painful though they may be, and be quite clear as to this all-important matter.

Do not, as numbers are doing, trifle with the affairs of your soul, or play fast and loose with eternal realities; for they should be treated with the utmost solemnity, as their serious nature

and tremendous issues demand. Neither banish the thoughts from your mind, for there are many all around us dying with unsaved souls because they will not think. Somebody once remarked, as he gazed upon a number of the aristocracy of earth, "It goes to my heart to consider there is not one in that brilliant circle who is not afraid to go home and think."

Man's authority is often faulty, but the Word of the living God speaks with no uncertainty both of death and judgment, and of salvation and peace. There are many who professedly seek to be guided by its statements, who, owing to their neglect of it, do not clearly understand God's way of blessing; consequently they are building their hopes for eternity on a wrong and unsafe foundation.

Satan, the great arch-enemy of God and man, in his subtlety opposes God's truth in quite a variety of ways, and invents

devices to deceive all classes,

that they may remain at enmity with a loving God who desires their blessing. To the profligate he whispered, "You are too deeply dyed in sin"; while to those who observe the outward forms of religion, who are morally upright, and, viewed

from a human standpoint, are vastly superior, he suggests, "Anxiety about your soul's salvation is quite unnecessary; do the best you can; then Christ will make up the deficiency, for God is so merciful that you will ultimately reach heaven." Beware! this is an invention of Satan to delude you. He plans your eternal loss. His doom is fixed in the lake of fire, and he would deceive and allure you that you may be his eternal associate. Far better never to have been born, than to die in the meshes of Satan, a Christless, unregenerate soul.

Many fancy that, in virtue of their superiority over others, they will be all right for eternity; all such are sadly mistaken, for the judgment of

sinful man is not the criterion,

but the holiness of God. It is now no longer a matter of God trying man to prove what he is—that He has already done in every conceivable way. Weighing him in the balance of divine righteousness, He has found him sadly wanting. Measuring him by His accurate standard, He has found him to come short. Judging him by His perfect law, He has found him verily guilty. And when as a last test He sent His only-begotten Son, and man filled up the measure of

his iniquity by rejecting and finally murdering Him, his time of probation thus ended, and God announced His verdict, which we do well to heed, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This statement allows no exceptions, for all are branded by God as sinners, and described as His enemies. Quantity, or degree of sin, is not the question now at issue, for the committal of one sin

brands man as a sinner.

Neither is respectability, morality, or so-called good works, meritorious to bring the sinner back to God, for they are but as filthy rags in His sight. The words of the Lord Jesus, "They have their reward," truly apply to these things. For his sobriety a man will be esteemed, for his honesty will gain, and for his morality will be honoured; for these and other commendable things he is rewarded in this life, but they will neither give him favour in God's sight nor wash his past sins away; and if his hopes for future glory depend upon them, he will find, when too late, that he has been deceived, and that he has been building upon a foundation of sand, which will sink beneath him, and

great will be his fall.

There are many who have a name to live, but who are dead as regards vital Christianity. They are treading the way which seemeth right in their own eyes, but it is the broad way, and they are passing onward, quickly and with

awful certainty,

to the dark and dreary goal—death; for their many sins are unforgiven. True, they are not drunken and debauched, as many are; granted, they would scorn to sink to the depth of depravity, as many whom they observe all around. But what are they doing? They are, alas for them! committing the soul-destroying sin of rejecting the Son of God. They are treading the same broad way which leadeth to destruction, although it may be on the cleanest side, on the respectable side, or, solemn fact! even on the religious side. Oh! you that apparently are self-satisfied and self-righteous, be not any longer deceived either by your own heart or the lies of Satan; do not continue to walk with haughty look, proud step, and

hardened heart

in the broad way, or, when too late, you may know your poverty, regret your blindness, and feel your lost, ruined condition.

How solemn is your position ! for you are by your assumed superiority excluding yourself from God's mercy, and closing against yourself the only door of hope. For while there are none too bad to participate in God's great salvation, yet there are hundreds who are, in their own estimation,

too good for Christ,

and consequently will be lost for ever. "Ye must be born again," was the solemn truth brought to the notice of Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, by the great Teacher ; and nothing short of this definite work of grace in the heart will do for God. Apart from the new birth, the sinner cannot even see, much less enter, the kingdom of God. God loves sinners. Christ Jesus came to seek and save the lost. The Spirit of God strives with but one class, the ungodly ; and only sinners born again, saved by divine grace, will people the courts of glory.

May the search-light of God's Holy Spirit illumine the reader's heart, discovering to him his sinfulness ! for apart from the guilty one knowing his need, he will not seek the gracious Saviour, and therefore cannot be saved, for his

only qualification for God's mercy

is his deep need, for God delights to bestow His gracious pardon to those alone who know that they are guilty, needy, and lost. Note what the Scriptures of truth state as to this momentous subject.

These statements stand before you as beacons of warning, that you may know yourself, and knowing your sinfulness,

flee to Christ,

who is God's remedy for sin-ruined mankind, for pardon, refuge, and peace. For how can you be unconcerned with these solemn truths before you? Awake to your peril! Judgment is imminent. The floods of divine wrath will shortly overflow this guilty world; the blast of the tempest of His long-withheld fury will soon be manifest; He will make His righteous ire to be felt by those who obey not the truth.

As you value your precious soul, do not any longer rest your hopes for eternity on yourself, on your attainments, or even on your so-called good works, but upon the only sure foundation, the work of the Son of God, for on that ground alone does God prepare the guilty for heavenly glory.

Eternal life is a free gift, conferred by the

One who not only loves, but is love. Although it is so freely given, the cost was immense, for all God's holy claims had to be met, His

righteousness had to be vindicated,

which could only be accomplished by One, and that One not a sinful man born at enmity with God, but One who was holy and spotless—the only-begotten Son of God, who came to die, who gave His life a ransom for many, that God should be satisfied, the sinner's need met, and the immense distance between God and man bridged over. Never was there love like His, so fully proved on Calvary's hill, where the Saviour wrought a full salvation. He was brought into the dust of death, that sinners might not experience the untold

horrors of the second death.

Sorrow and reproach were His, that sinners might not sorrow through the eternal ages. He was enshrouded in darkness, that sinners might not know, to their shame, the outer darkness of the lost world. He suffered at the hands of man from the malice of demons, but above all from the hands of a righteous God, that poor sinners might not suffer the penalty of their sins. All the billows of God's wrath passed over His guilt-

less soul, that sinners saved by sovereign grace might never feel the righteous ire of Almighty God. The

sword of divine justice

awoke and smote the Man, Christ Jesus, when He, the sinless One, was made sin that sinners who believe might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And in that hour of deepest woe, when God laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, He was forsaken by His God, that sinners might not know eternal separation from God and heaven. He was once exceeding sorrowful, but as a consequence of that awful sorrow, He will receive His own with exceeding joy. Oh! the love! He was rich in glory: yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. What infinite grace! that God, whom we had so sinned against, should not only

devise salvation's plan,

give His only-begotten Son, offer the greatest blessing conceivable; but such is the fulness of His heart of love, that He beseeches you to be reconciled to Himself, thus manifesting that He thinks more of your eternal welfare than you do yourself. Oh! the wondrous love of God! Oh!

the depths of the love of Christ! And is it nothing to you? Has it no charm for you? Does it not move your inmost soul? Can you, in face of the fact of the death of Christ, say that you needed it not? If so, you have

no part or lot in the matter.

May the Spirit of the living God open your eyes to see your need, and shake the false foundation under you, causing you to own as one of old, "Behold, I am vile," and knowing your desperate condition, plead before God, not your own works, but the perfect finished work of Christ—bring to Him, not your own name, but the worthy name of the Saviour, for only those who have been to God in His name can say, "He bore my sins in His own body on the tree."

In conclusion, we would remind you that you are in the same condemnation yourself as those whom you consider so very sinful. They are dead in trespasses and sins; so are you. They are the enemies of God; so are you. They have no hope beyond this life; you have

a hope centred in yourself,

therefore false. They are deceived by the pleasures of sin; you are deceived by supposing that your superiority over others will secure you an

entrance into glory. They are without Christ; so are you. They disobey the gospel of God; so do you. They spurn the work of Christ on their behalf; you reject it by thinking you need it not. Hitherto, both the most notorious sinner and yourself, have treated the Son of God the same. Neither trust for eternity in Him, or care aught for

His words of solemn warning.

Neither know Him as their Saviour, whom to know is life eternal. Each is described by Christ Jesus, who said, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life." One sweeping statement of His is the condemnation of all, whether profligate or self-righteous; for the One who spake as never man spake, uttered the remarkable words, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." They prefer their natural darkness to the true light; and although Christ died to save them from the consequences of their sins, yet they esteem Him not; and although God declares both the way of salvation and His willingness to save, yet they with hard, rebellious heart heed not His gracious words of love. O dear reader, we would beseech you to

sue for mercy,

disclaim all hope or merit in yourself, take your true place before God as a needy sinner, trust to the finished work of Christ, for it is life first, then service.

“Till to Jesu’s work you cling,

By a simple faith,

Doing is a deadly thing,

Doing ends in death.

Cast your deadly doing down,

Down at Jesu’s feet ;

Stand in Him, in Him alone,

Gloriously complete.”



“Those Corner Men!”



“**O**H! how I long that those corner men would only come and hear the gospel! There are such numbers of them standing idle about the roads and the corners of the streets. I have asked them just to come in and listen for a little, but they won’t come.”

The speaker was an earnest Christian, a resident in the little seaside town where a series of special gospel services was being held. He had known

the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour for many a year, and he longed that others might know Him too. On this occasion large numbers were attending the meetings, and the Spirit of God seemed to be moving in awakening power amongst the slumbering professors. Many were being aroused to discover that though they had the lamp of profession, they had not the oil of the Spirit's reality, and this it was that made him so desirous that the loafers at the street corners would only drop in and listen.

But there are others, besides these "corner men," in just as great need of the gospel—we might almost say in greater need. For often do we hear the glad gospel message ringing out from earnest lips at the street corners, and many a loafer has thus been reached and brought to God.

But who can reach the high-born and the rich? Encased within the barriers of social etiquette, how can such be warned to flee from the wrath to come? Who dare ask such the pointed question, "**What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**" (Mark viii. 37).

Do we believe in miracles? Yes, thank God, we do; for the same lips that once so solemnly declared, "**How hardly** (or, with what difficulty)

shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" have likewise said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for **with God all things are possible**" (Mark x. 23-28).

We were recently conversing with an earnest Christian, a preacher, too, of the gospel. In his unconverted days he had been in India, an officer in the army. He lived an utterly godless life, and in one incessant whirl of gaiety and pleasure. He *never* heard the Gospel, and was as dark as midnight with reference to the dread realities of sin and judgment and eternity. One night he had a dream. He dreamt that he was on a battlefield, and a flaming dart struck him and plunged itself into his very heart. He awoke, but soon dropped off again. Once more he dreamt the identical dream. Awaking he said to himself:

This is the voice of God.

It changed the whole current of his life, though for long even then he remained in ignorance as to the true character of the gospel. He was groping after God in the dark, and struggling his way under law, until God in His goodness brought him into contact with one who put before him "the true grace of God wherein we stand" (1 Pet. v. 12).

Perhaps the reader asks, Do I need to be saved? Yes, we reply, for

All are lost;

and if not saved before eternity begins, you will be *lost for ever*.

But how can we be saved? Listen, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus iii. 5).

Thank God for those words:

HE—SAVED—US.

God is to-day a Saviour! He invites you to come to Him trusting in Jesus, His well-beloved Son, once slain by man’s wicked hands, but now risen and glorified.

“Him hath God exalted to be

A Prince and a Saviour,

for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts v. 31).

But He who to-day is a Saviour will soon be the Judge, and how will you in that day escape His righteous wrath if to-day you despise His mercy? It is indeed “a fearful thing to fall into

the hands of the living God.”

Listen to His voice, then, now; hearken to the

pleadings of His love; look in simple faith to Jesus, the once crucified and now glorified. By Him all the work has been done; trust Him, and you, too, will be able to sing:

“On the Lamb my soul is resting,
 What His worth no tongue can tell.
 God is satisfied with Jesus,—
 I am satisfied as well.”

A. H. B.

Homeward Bound.

WHAT language can express the joy that fills the mariner's breast, when for the last time on a foreign shore, he hears the welcome command,

“Up anchor!”

Homeward bound! Every heart leaps for joy, every man springs to his station, the capstan is manned, the cable runs in, the anchor is weighed, and the good ship, obedient to her helm, points her bows to the far-off haven. *Homeward bound!* Who can fathom the depth of meaning contained in that sentence to one who for weary months and years has been parted from all that the heart holds dear? But now there is hope of seeing them once more—God speed the ship, and

send fair winds and a prosperous voyage, and fond hearts will be united again.

Dear reader, are you one whose lot is cast upon the mighty deep? If so, I know your heart responds to what I have just written, and I pray God that it may respond to the rest I have to say.

Such were the circumstances in which the writer was placed some years ago, when the British man-of-war "J——," after a long and weary service in the East Indies, received orders to proceed to England.

Among that ship's crew was a seaman by the name of W——, who, at the moment when the welcome command to "Up anchor!" was given, turned to the writer, and, with an expression of affectionate interest in his countenance, said, "Now I shall see the old folks at home, whom I have not seen for nine years." I remember him well—a smart seaman, a thorough sailor, a brave and energetic man, yet one who knew not God, whose soul was unsaved, and, so far as I know, he never fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that God has set before the sons of men. "For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,

we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 11-13).

Yes, fellow-mariner on the ocean of life, it is the *grace of God*, not the works of men, that has brought the salvation you need. For whom has this salvation appeared? For all who feel their need of a Saviour, and in the deep sense of that need, confess the Lordship of Christ, believing in their heart that God hath raised Him from the dead.

"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).

And with a heartfelt prayer to God that you may be saved, I proceed to relate the remainder of this narrative.

Up anchor! homeward bound! every stitch of canvas set to catch the welcome breezes; and after a prosperous voyage, at length we sight the white cliffs of old England, and steaming round the Isle of Wight, drop anchor at Spithead.

The long-expected and longed-for moment has come, and W—— springs lightly on shore to visit the "old folks at home." The desire of

his heart was satisfied ; he saw them, stayed with them a few days, and returned. Poor fellow, little recked he of the sad end that awaited him.

Our ship was again ordered to proceed to the East ; we had just weighed anchor for that purpose, and W——, having just returned from the shore in the second gig (a boat used for taking officers to and from the shore), proceeded to hook her on to the boat's falls (ropes for hoisting boats up to the davits). The order was given to hoist, the crew ran away with the falls, and when about twenty feet out of the water the foremost fall carried away, letting the bows of the boat fall with a crash, pitching W—— into the sea, where, before help could reach him, he rose to the surface and then sank again, to rise no more till the sea shall give up its dead.

And now, dear reader, may I, with affectionate solicitude, ask you the solemn question, Are you prepared to die ? are you prepared to meet God ? O man, whoever you may be, neither the howling tempest nor the rolling billows may ever have dismayed you ; the breaking sea, the falling mast, the dismantled ship, may never have wrecked a nerve like yours ; you may have faced death with heroic courage ; but what will it all avail when the appointed moment arrives, for "it is

appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"? (Heb. ix. 27). How precious, then, is the truth contained in the next verse: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that **look for Him** shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Yes, Christ was offered to bear the sins of many. He becomes the heart's portion of all who believe, and the hope and anchor of the soul for all who love Him,—yes, for all "who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both **sure** and **steadfast**, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. vi. 18, 19).

W. S.

The Lad and the Laird.

SOME years ago a Scotch laird had on his estate a half-witted young fellow whose business it was to look after the cattle on the farm.

The laird was in the habit of talking with him for a few minutes every morning. One day, however, the laird was taken so ill that

for many weeks he was unable to go out for his usual walks. He was so greatly missed by the poor foolish lad, that he made bold and asked the butler at the house where his master was. "Oh, he's gone to heaven, Jamie," was the careless answer. "Ay," said Jamie, "he hasna gane there, for I ne'er heerd the maister talkin' about heaven i' ma life. He'll hae tae think mair about it and talk mair about it afore he'll gang there ava."

The lady of the house overheard the faithful fellow's words, and told her husband about it. He was so struck by the words that he sent for Jamie to come to his room. On entering the room and seeing his master, Jamie joyfully exclaimed, "They telt me ye were gane tae heaven; but I kent fine ye werena gane there, for ye maun think mair about it and talk mair about it afore ye may gang there." "You are right, Jamie," said the laird, and through poor, daft Jamie's simple words the laird was converted.

"God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 27-29).

"Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" (Matt. xxi. 16).

"Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes : even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Luke x. 21).

R.

An Unheeded Warning.

FOUR railway servants killed in a terrible collision, and a number injured, was the sad announcement in the N— S— daily paper of 13th April 1903.

It appears that the driver of the fast freight train which left the city of H— late on Saturday night, had received instructions not to pass the junction about fourteen miles distant, but to wait there, and allow an overdue express train to pass. Whether the driver of the freight train was intoxicated or asleep, remains at present a mystery ; anyway, the warning was unheeded, and the locomotive drawing over eighty cars dashed through the junction. In a few minutes the terrible mistake was realised, but it was then too late. They saw the light of the approaching express coming up in the darkness, and in a few minutes the two huge engines

were locked in each other's embrace, four men being almost instantly ushered into eternity.

Whether these men were ready to meet God, we cannot say; but *ready* or *unready*, the writer and the reader of these lines must one day meet God. "Prepare to meet thy God," is the solemn language of Scripture (Amos iv. 12).

"Therefore be ye also ready" (Matt. xxiv. 44).

"And they that were ready went in, . . . and the door was shut" (Matt. xxv. 10).

Doubtless the reader has received many warnings from God. We read in Job xxxiii. 14, "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed," because God is gracious unto the sinner.

But has the reader heeded the warning God has given? or is he still rushing on like those in the foregoing narrative, to destruction? Every moment, every tick of the clock, brings us nearer heaven or hell. Does the reader say there is plenty of time? The Word of God does not say so. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7). To-morrow you may be in

eternity ; then the arm of God will not save you : it will be too late. I implore you not to neglect the salvation of your soul. Turn to God now. Own yourself a lost, ruined sinner before God ; believe the grace of God in sending His beloved Son into this world to suffer upon the cross for your sins. The work is all done. Jesus has glorified God about the question of sin, and God has owned the completeness of His work by raising Him from the dead, and by putting Him at His own right hand in glory. "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

If the reader refuses to heed the solemn warning God is pleased to give, he must suffer the terrible consequences. "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). Think of the awful consequences of rejecting Christ, and the terrible remorse of waking up in hell, knowing you might have been saved.

Turn to the Lord Jesus Christ now. He is both able and willing to save.

He has said, "**Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.**"

W. H. W.

An Easy Lesson.

GOD declares that "the way of transgressors is hard;" also, that "the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." How often souls in their distance and alienation from God, prove the truth of these verses!

Mr and Mrs J—— were no exception to this; over and over again it was their bitter experience. They could only reap what they had sown (Gal. vi. 7). Drunkenness, with its attendant quarrelling, made their home everything but what a home ought to be. Their only child, of whom the father was very fond, had been ill for several weeks, and had been visited by a Christian lady.

When this little Mary was recovering, she called as usual, and was surprised to find the home changed. Mrs J——, neatly dressed, received her with a happy face and hearty greeting. All this so struck the visitor, that she congratulated her on her altered appearance.

“Fresh people live here now,” Mrs J—— explained, and then she told what had brought about the change. Mr J—— had come home sober the same day that little Mary got up, and to please her, he said he would play with her.

“Oh, daddy, let us have a game of Sunday school, will you?” Mary said. “I’ll be teacher, you be the scholar; you stand there, and I’ll give you an easy lesson first. You must say what I say; won’t you, daddy?”

“Yes,” answered the father, his mind going back to years ago, when he had stood in a Sunday-school class.

“Now, daddy, say ‘Jesus.’”

No answer came from the scholar, but a something like a rising in his throat.

“Now, daddy, you promised you would say what I told you, and it is an easy lesson.”

Mr J—— stood still; for that name he had only mentioned when using it in oaths and cursing. How he wished the lesson over, and as little Mary sat on her cot, patiently waiting, he in a snappish and quick manner repeated the lesson.

“Oh, daddy, you mustn’t say His name like that; you must say it soft and low like this”—

and little Mary said His name in her sweetest manner, and the father softly repeated the lesson, till little Mary said, "Daddy, me don't want to play no more, I feel so tired," and with that dropped her head on the pillow and went off to sleep. But not so Mr J——; he found no rest till God by His Spirit led him to cry for mercy and forgiveness to the One who has never turned a seeking sinner away.

Dear reader, I will ask you to repeat little Mary's lesson. What does that name speak to you of? Does it cause your heart to rejoice at the sound of a Saviour's name? Does it speak to you of forgiveness of sins, through His blood? (Col. i. 14). Does it remind you of One who was delivered for your offences and raised for your justification? (Rom. iv. 25). Can you truthfully say that God made Him to be sin for you, who knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him? (2 Cor. v. 21). Do you own Him Master and Lord, for He is such (John xiii. 13). Are you waiting for that Blessed One to come again to receive you unto Himself? (John xiv. 1-3).

If the above be true of you, praise and worship to God will fill your heart for such wondrous grace and mercy.

“HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON
HATH EVERLASTING LIFE:

and

HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON
SHALL NOT SEE LIFE;

but the

WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM.”

JOHN iii. 36.

In which part of this verse are you?

Every reader is described there, either in the first part or the second.

If you are a true believer on the Son of God you have NOW everlasting life—for **God says so.**

If you are not a believer, and if you enter eternity in that condition, you will never see life, but God's wrath will abide on you eternally.

If death were to come to you suddenly to-day, your eternal destiny would be fixed.

Decide this matter, then, at once.

Here is what a young convert writes:—“I can never cease to thank God for what He has done for me through His Son Jesus Christ. I cannot tell you how great is my joy; neither tongue nor pen can express it. My heart is too full for words, but I know this, that I am far happier than I was before I found my Saviour.”

Travelling to Eternity.

TRAVELLING from L—— to W—— last month, I entered a carriage occupied by three ladies and one gentleman.

Just before leaving R—— station one of the ladies asked if the train went through to O——. I replied, "No! you have to change at W—— Junction."

"But they told me it went through!"

"I am going to O—— myself, and am quite sure we have to change, as this is a London train."

"Had I not inquired again," she said, "I should have gone straight on, as I felt sure I was all right."

"It is a good thing to be put right when on a short journey, but how much more so when on a long one. We are all," I said,

"Travelling to eternity,

and many *think* they are *all right* when they are *all wrong*."

The word **eternity** produced a solemn silence

in the carriage, and each one willingly received an *Echoes of Mercy*.

Whilst waiting at W—— I again addressed the lady, and found signs of a real interest in eternal things, and I again pressed upon her the importance of immediate decision for Christ, for the Word of God says, "**Now** is the accepted time" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

She listened attentively, and appeared to appreciate the interest taken in her soul's welfare; and as in the providence of God we travelled alone as far as O—— I was able to speak of the uncertainty of life and the certainty of meeting God. Scripture says:

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

"The train may be smashed to pieces before we reach O——. I should go to heaven; where would you go?" I asked.

"I am not so sure as you," she replied.

Opening my Bible at John iii. I said, "The 36th verse is divided into two parts; will you read it and tell me where you stand?" She read:

1st. "**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;**

2nd. "**And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth upon him.**"

"I am in the second," she confessed.

"That is a very serious matter," I said; "because it means that if the train were smashed and we were killed, you would be **lost for ever**. Would you not like to be in the first part and have eternal life?"

"I would," she replied.

Having pressed home her need of a Saviour and the reality of having to do with God, I said, "I am assured I have a message from God for you. It is this :

"My righteousness is near . . . My salvation shall be for ever" (Isa. li. 5 and 6).

"This may be your last chance. You may never see another sunrise. You must face the question *now*, and come to a decision. God brings you Christ that you may trust Him as your Saviour. You must either **receive** or **reject** Him. There is no middle course."

This is equally true of you, my unsaved reader. God has brought Christ before you through this very book you are now reading. What is to be your decision? Dare you put it down unsaved? The call of God once more sounds in your ears. The Saviour knocks at your heart's door. Dare you say, "Go thy way for this time : when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (Acts

xxiv. 25), and again close your eyes in sleep, knowing that ere another morning the message may come :

“ This night thy soul shall be required of thee ” (Luke xiii).

Fall down at once on your knees and cry to God to have mercy on your sin-stained, guilty soul, and rise not again until you have found rest and salvation in the Saviour and His work.

Addressing my fellow-passenger, I said, “What an awful thing it would be for you to stand at the Great White Throne and hear God say :

“ ‘ On 19th December 1903, in a railway train, I brought My salvation nigh, but you pushed it away from you. Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.’ ”

“ What is to be your decision? Will you trust Him or refuse Him? ”

“ I will trust Him now, ”

she replied.

“ Then I have good tidings for you. The first thing you need is to know your sins are forgiven.” Turning her to Acts xiii. 38, she read :

“ Be it known unto you . . .

Through this man . . .

The forgiveness of sins.”

"Here," I said, "we learn that the very thing you desire to *know*, God wants you to know. But it is from the next verse we may learn how *our* sins may be forgiven.

"'And by Him'—yes, by Him, not by what we can do, but by what He did on the cross—'**all that believe.**' Will you take your place *now* as you have never done before among the '*all that believe*'?"

"Yes, I will." "What are the next two words?" "**Are justified.**" "Then are you justified?" "I *must* be if I believe?" "From how many things?" "**From all things.**"

Turning to John vii. 47, she read :

"**He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.**"

"Do you now believe on the Lord Jesus?" "Yes." "Have you eternal life?" "I must have." "How do you know it?" "Because it says so here." "Exactly," said I. "*God says* that all who believe on Him **HAVE** eternal life. There is time to turn to one more verse before we reach O——: will you read Romans x. 9?"

"**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.**"

“Where is the Lord Jesus now?” “He is in heaven.” “Who raised Him from the dead?” “God.” “Do you believe that in your **heart**?” “I do.” “Then are you saved?” “Yes, I am.”

“Is your mother a Christian?” “Oh yes,” she replied, and her face brightened at the remembrance of it. “And are your friends at O—— saved people?” “Yes.” “What are you going to do when you get there?”

“Tell them I am saved.”

As we were now nearing O—— I said, “Then you have these three things:

- “1. Forgiveness of sins.
- “2. Eternal life.
- “3. Salvation.

“All are *present* possessions, made good to faith by the abiding work of Christ and the unchanging word of God.”

After expressing her gratitude to me for pointing out the way of salvation so simply, I said, “It is yours now to go home, fall down on your knees, and give ‘thanks unto the Father, which **hath** made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who **hath** delivered us from the power of darkness, and **hath**

translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son : in whom we **have** redemption' (Col. i. 12-14)."

Again I ask my reader, "Have you become the happy possessor of the unsearchable riches of Christ? If not, come to Him **now**, for

"Time is short,
Your soul is precious,
Jesus is worthy."



Are Your Sins Forgiven?



THERE is no doubt whatever that both the writer and the reader of these lines is **a sinner in the sight of God.**

The Bible declares with no uncertain sound that "**all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23); and every one knows that this is an undeniable fact. Yes, reader, our consciences tell us that this is the case. **We are sinners** every one: I have sinned; you have sinned.

Further, God cannot look at sin. **God must judge sin.**

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13).

There is not a man that will allow himself a moment's serious thought but must admit that a holy God and sin cannot abide together. When Adam sinned, he was driven from the Garden of Eden. But before ever God drove him from the garden, Adam's own conscience made him try to hide from God. Since that day when sin entered into the world, **every man possesses a conscience.**

Some years ago a man turned in one Sunday night to a hall where the writer was preaching in London. The next day the preacher started for Aberdeen, and a few days afterwards an urgent message came from a man dying in the Brompton Hospital, saying that he must see the preacher he had heard on Sunday night, for there was "*something on his conscience* that nobody knew but God," and he could not die happy until he had told some one.

What this was I never heard, for the man died. He had broken a blood-vessel on the Monday, and was taken to the hospital, where very soon he passed into eternity.

Oh, what a terrible burden is sin—**unforgiven sin!**

Reader, are your sins forgiven? If all your sins are not forgiven before you die, they will

every one of them rise up against you in the day of judgment. What an awakening will that be for many who have lived lives of sin, and have died without Christ.

“Be not deceived : neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).

Oh, may God open the eyes of every unsaved reader of these pages before the great and terrible day of reckoning comes ; for then it will be too late !

Does the reader ask,

How can sins be forgiven ?

There is but one answer—it is God’s own answer ; He tells us that the one and only way of forgiveness is **“for Christ’s sake.”** Read Ephesians iv. 32, **“God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”**

Again, read 1 John ii. 12, **“Your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.”** Once more, Ephesians i. 7, **“We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”**

The New Testament is full of this most blessed theme. The Lord Jesus Christ took the guilty sinner’s place at Calvary. There He took upon

His own spotless Person the sins of all who believe—He bore them on the tree.

Such was the holiness of a sin-hating God that He hid His face from Jesus as He hung there as the sinner's substitute. That bitter cry of anguish was wrung from His holy soul, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. xxii. 1).

There at the cross all God's nature has been glorified—His majesty has been vindicated; His justice has been satisfied, and He now offers to every and any sinner who repents and believes the gospel, a present, a perfect, and an eternal forgiveness.

"Be it known unto you that through this man (the Lord Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Reader, will you despise this grace? Will you refuse to accept forgiveness on God's terms? Will you put it off a little longer?

Some years ago I was passing down a street in the business part of Valparaiso. A young man ran breathless down the street, and seeing me cried, "Come; come quick!" I followed him into an office on the ground floor of a large building, and there was startled to see a young man lying on the sofa as white as a sheet, and

blood pouring from his mouth. Another gasp and all was over. "Oh, do something for him!" cried his friend. But the poor lad was gone beyond the reach of human help. He, too, had burst a blood-vessel.

Reader, this is not the only form of sudden death. Remember the Chicago fire, and its hecatomb of victims, all in the prime of life. You, too, may be called suddenly into eternity:

Are your sins forgiven?

From Prison to the Workhouse; and then, to Die.

THE important manufacturing town of R—, situated in a beautiful hilly district in the north of Germany, has a world-wide reputation for its small hardware, such as skates, coffee-mills, files, &c., and is the acknowledged centre of steel and iron industries.

But we are writing of a time when R— was but a village, and the trade of to-day was in its infancy. Small factories and workshops gave

occupation to the inhabitants. God had visited the place with the glad tidings of His grace, and the voice of rejoicing and salvation was heard in many a dwelling. The war with France was just ended, as also the two years of suffering and privation through which the hard-working poor had passed.

Into one of the workshops of R—— we will conduct our reader. From eight to ten workmen and a few apprentices were under the godly master, Jacob, working at anvil and turning-lathes from morning to night.

This workshop differed in one respect from many others in the village. Neither swearing nor drinking was allowed. It was the master's custom in moments when work was somewhat slack, to sing hymns with his men, himself taking his place in the middle of the room, and raising the tune, in which any who desired it might join. The German translation of

“There is a fountain filled with blood,”

and

“Jesus, Thy boundless love to me,”

were special favourites.

About this time a new apprentice named Henry arrived. He had been blessed with Chris-

tian parents and surroundings. But we will let him tell his own history.

When I entered into apprenticeship with Jacob, I was not as yet sure of my own salvation, though earnestly desiring to know it. It was therefore not surprising that I became attached to my Christian employer, and gladly accompanied him to the weekly meetings for reading the Scriptures. Every day after breakfast he read the Bible and prayed with us.

The years of my apprenticeship came to an end, and I was promoted to be a workman. But still I had not peace with God. I knew that I was a lost sinner, not fit for heaven. Nevertheless I was looked upon by others as a Christian, on the side of the master, and was, with him, the object of the mockery and scorn of many of my fellow-workmen. Among these was a terrible man, Albert R——, who was only allowed to remain because of his good qualities as a workman. When his blood was up, he behaved like a madman. He rushed round the place, foaming at the mouth. All work was stopped; the men fled before him. But the Lord was, even at that time, awakening anxious thoughts in his soul.

One day he appeared suddenly in the master's

room, and asked him if it were true that a man could know even now that he were saved and would go to heaven. On being assured that he could, Albert further asked, "Are you then quite sure that *you* will go to heaven?" "Quite sure," was the joyful reply. "God Himself assures me in His Word. And you too, Albert, may know it for yourself, if you will. When a poor repentant sinner comes to the Saviour, he receives the assurance that his sins are forgiven, and that he will be in heaven at the end." "Then I will ask Henry the same question," Albert said. Accordingly he came to me in the workshop with the same words: "Tell me, Henry, do you know for certain that you are going to heaven?" For so direct a question I was not prepared. I stood there confounded and silent. If I said "yes," I should be a liar. If I said "no," I should bring discredit on Christianity, and on the Word of God, in the eyes of Albert. Dare I lie? *No*. I tremblingly answered that I could not say I was sure. "Then the master is a liar, and all Christians are hypocrites. If you are not sure of being saved, neither can the master be." From that day he would hear nothing about conversion, and followed his own evil ways worse than ever.

On myself that short interview made a very

deep impression. At the first quiet moment I shut myself in my room, and in an agony of distress cried to the Lord. He heard my cry, and in His great mercy gave me to see, by faith, that Jesus had borne my sins, and had for ever put them away. I knew that I was saved. A little tract which had for title, "Do you wish to be saved? Then why are you not saved?" was greatly blessed to me at that time. I saw that all the hindrance was in myself, and that all the work was God's. **"By grace are ye saved, through faith."**

Now I could praise the Saviour who shed His blood for me on the cross. I hastened to Albert to tell him how sure I now was that I was saved. He only laughed me to scorn, and said he was certain that I said so only to please the master. But I went on my way rejoicing.

Not long after this Albert left for work at another place. I did not remain long after him, but moved to Essen, where I had suitable employment in railway works. Many of the incidents of my life at R—— faded gradually from my memory.

Fifteen years passed. I was still at Essen. I had a fellow-workman named Peter, the strongest man in the works. I remember once

proving his strength in a remarkable way. Four of us were trying to lift a very heavy iron bar to take to the workshop. Peter saw our difficulty, and called to us to stop. He lifted the iron bar alone, put it on his shoulder, and carried it to its place. He was a Romanist, lived a dissolute life, and was a hard drinker. All warnings and friendly counsel were lost upon him. Then came a report that a certain crime was laid to his charge, for which he was taken up, tried, and condemned to five years' imprisonment with hard labour.

Five years later I was, early one Sunday morning, on the high road from Essen to B——, when I saw before me an apparently aged man, bowed, leaning on a stick, and walking with much difficulty. I soon overtook him, and saw that I was mistaken. He was not old, but evidently weak and suffering. When quite close, he turned towards me. The features were not unfamiliar, yet my astonishment was great to recognise in that picture of misery my old companion Peter. Yes, it was himself. He had at once recognised me, putting out his hand with "Good morning, Henry."

"But what are you doing here, Peter?" I asked. "Where do you come from?"

“From W——, from the prison. Don’t you remember that five years ago I was sentenced to five years’ hard labour? My time is up to-day.”

“I do indeed remember; but how changed you are! you who were the strongest amongst us, now an old, broken-down man! And what will you do now? You cannot work; you are not fit for it.”

“I am going to the workhouse; and then, to die.”

“What!” I cried; “out of prison to the workhouse; and then, to die. And, Peter, *what then?*”

He quietly replied, a gleam of joy overspreading his poor, wan features, “Then I shall be with the Lord Jesus!”

We had stopped in the road, and spoke face to face. Had I heard aright? Could it be possible? Was that wretched man, once shunned by all who knew him, one of the Lord’s redeemed ones? Recovered from my surprise, I asked him where he had learned to know the Lord Jesus.

“In the prison,” he replied; “the Lord Jesus is there too. There I found Him; there He found me. Oh, how good it was for me to be in that place! Perhaps I should not otherwise have known Him. I have lost my health and strength, but my soul is saved.” After a pause

he added: "I have a message to you from Albert R——, whom you knew at R——."

"What!" I exclaimed, "is he, too, where you have been?"

"Yes, he is there. In one of his frenzies he attacked a merchant in his own house, and smashed windows and furniture. He was condemned for this to ten years' penal servitude, and has still two years to finish the sentence. But he is a blessing to the whole place. All the hymns which used to be sung at R—— with our old master are sung in the prison at W——. He has told his fellow-prisoners of you, and of your conversations together there. He found his Saviour in the prison."

Peter related to me much besides, as we slowly went our way along the road. My heart was filled with joy. How wonderful are the ways of God! The seed of the Word, which had so long lain dormant in that poor, hopeless heart, had by His grace sprung up; and not only for the salvation of one soul, but for that of others, to whom he was the messenger of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On taking leave of Peter, I promised to go and see him in the workhouse; but before I could fulfil my promise, the tidings reached me

that he had been taken Home—from the prison to the workhouse, and from the workhouse to Jesus.

Dear readers, young and old, what shall we say to this? How rich is the mercy of God, how great and unfathomable His love! Yes; where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. What will it be when all the saved ones—many of whom had been thieves and murderers, drunkards and swearers—are gathered together to praise the Lamb who bore all their sins on the cross, and put them for ever away—their selves made clean and without spot by His precious blood, and changed into His very image who loved them and gave Himself for them.

Dear reader, will *you* be there with that blessed company?

“Never Perish.”

“**H**EAVEN and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” How often one meets with persons, who may have believed on the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, who yet may not be so assured of it as to be proof against the insinua-

tions of Satan, that is, they have not yet *rested* on the absolute statements of the truth in the *Word of God*.

The writer met with one such some time ago, while journeying homewards from the city of G—— on a car-top in company with a friend. At one of the stations an elderly man boarded the car and sat down beside us. The ordinary casual remarks that passed between us very soon led to something of vital importance, and we learned that he had heard statements made about the possibility of a child of God being ultimately lost. We were led to say a few words, which seemed to help him, and he asked: "Then you are not of those who believe that one may be saved to-day and lost to-morrow?"

"Certainly not," we said, and quoted, "**My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish**" (John x. 27, 28). We just got so far in our quotation when our friend stood up before us, on the crowded car-top, and, oblivious of everything else, said, "Praise God for that!" brimming over with the joy that belief in the Lord's own words brings. When we arrived at our destination he got down, and walking between us he began to sing:

“We are strangers in a foreign land,” but could not continue, saying, “Ah! I have got no voice, but I shall have one by-and-by.” What could we do but rejoice at his overflowing heart? The time will soon come when our voices—perfectly attuned by the Spirit of God—will join with the redeemed host, singing, “Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Rev. v. 9).

What, may I ask, made the difference in this man? He seemed at one time to have had a knowledge of his safety as a believer in the Lord Jesus, yet he afterwards heard statements that cast a doubt upon it. This brought trouble and distress; but when he heard the voice of the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep, stating with absolute certainty that he *should never perish*, his distress gave place to joy, and his doubts fled away like the darkness before the rising sun.

Dear reader, are you one who has never yet believed on the Lord Jesus? If so, let me entreat you to do so *now*. Hear His blessed life-giving voice, and hearing, live. Or are you one who may have believed, and is assailed by

doubts and fears? Turn from everything and every one, yourself included, to the Lord Himself—the Good Shepherd—

“Whose love to the utmost was tried,
But firmly endured as a rock.”

Just allow the Spirit of God who is here to take of Christ's things and show them unto us, to fix the vision of your soul upon Himself. “*He is enough the mind and heart to fill,*” and peace and joy in believing will be yours.

A Critical Moment.

A LARGE crowd was rapidly gathering at a well-known seaside resort in the height of the summer season. What could it mean? Many steps were directed thither to seek the cause. Away out to sea could be seen the solitary figure of a young girl standing high above the water on a rock that was perfectly dry; what was she doing there? why did she not get back to the shore? The answer was not difficult to find; the rock upon which she stood was completely surrounded by water!

She had evidently been there some time—probably absorbed in a book, or maybe even sleeping, when suddenly she discovered to her dismay that all retreat to the shore was cut off, and that she was unable to get back. She stood there helpless, with a rapidly-rising tide creeping up to the very spot where she was, threatening to engulf her before the eyes of hundreds of on-lookers. Could she be allowed thus to perish without an effort to save her? were all indifferent as to her safety? Something must be done, and done immediately if to be of any avail. Look! a boatman is straining at the oar, pulling his quickest towards the now nearly submerged rock; the star of hope is shining for her, the imminent danger has been realised by

one able to save.

Right to her very feet salvation comes, and she steps into the boat and is brought safely to shore.

It was a striking incident, and reminded one of the increasing danger of the unbeliever, who is helpless in himself. To have attempted self-deliverance would have been to court destruction, and it was altogether impossible; but another saw the imminent danger, undertook and effected the rescue.

“He saw me ruined in the fall,
 Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
 He saved me from my lost estate,
 His loving-kindness, oh how great!”

Is the unsaved reader alive to the seriousness of his state before God? Scripture uses very plain terms to describe the condition of the sinner—“**without hope,**” “**without God,**” “**without strength,**” but thanks be to God we are not left to perish, for “when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. v. 6). None could of himself take a single step to God, but the grace of God brings salvation to man. Have we thankfully appropriated it?

Not only is the sinner’s position one of gravest peril, but

the danger is increasing.

Each invitation of mercy unanswered, each entreaty unheeded, every warning disregarded, lessens the opportunity for blessing, until at last it becomes true of some—

“Fixed is their everlasting state;
 Could they repent, ’tis now too late.”

Remember that the last opportunity must come; is it to pass away unused? Persistence in sowing the seed of procrastination, means reaping an inevitable harvest of eternal loss.

We would seek to press home this all-important truth from God's Word — *now is the day of salvation.*

Every fleeting moment shortens the time wherein could be settled the soul's everlasting destiny. "Some moments are the mothers of centuries," once said an English writer, and we would put it more strongly: some moments even decide *eternities*. This moment may decide your future, dear reader; let it be for eternal salvation.

"Salvation now, this moment;
Then why, oh, why delay?
You may not see to-morrow,
Now is salvation's day."



The Singers' Corner.

HAVING occasion one day to go to that portion of the cemetery where many once known and loved by us on earth, but now sleeping in Jesus, are interred, I was accompanied by a man from the office. As he left it I heard him give

instructions that if he were wanted he would be found at "The Singers' Corner."

My curiosity was aroused by this, and I asked him for an explanation. "That is what we have long called the part we are now going to," he said; "for years ago at certain funerals they used to sing hymns, and so the place came to be called 'The Singers' Corner.'"

I thought, how strange these hymns must have seemed to some! how out of place songs of thanksgiving must sound in a place of death, like a graveyard! Is there anything more awful in this world than death, and the place of death? Does not the grave close for ever over all hope and joy in this world? Is it not the end of the brightest prospect, of the fondest ambition? Truly it is—then why did the mourners sing on these occasions? Was it because they did not love the one whom they laid to rest? Was it because they had not deep sympathy with those who would never see their loved one here again? Oh no! it was because they could say triumphantly, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And as the bodies, one by one, were laid there of those who had lived and died trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, their friends could indeed say,

“But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,” and they could sing such a hymn as :

“His be the Victor’s name,
Who fought the fight alone ;
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
His conquest was their own.”

A Contrast.

DEATH is a reality, and intense reality usually characterises those who pass through its portals. The following are the dying statements of two well-known persons, one dying in the gall of bitterness, in the bond of iniquity ; the other dying with the blessed knowledge that he, by sovereign grace, was made meet for glory.

Charles IX. of France,

the miserable king, who gave the order for the massacre of the Huguenots, died bathed in blood bursting from his own veins, whilst he exclaimed, “What blood ! What murders ! I know not where I am. How will all this end ? What shall I do ? I am lost for ever. I know it !”

What a contrast between the foregoing and the last words of

J. G. Bellett,

who, clasping his hands together, while tears flowed down his face, said: "My precious Lord Jesus, Thou knowest how fully I can say with Paul, 'to depart and to be with Christ is far better.' Oh! how far better! I do long for it! They come and talk to me of a crown of glory, I bid them cease; of the glories of heaven, I bid them stop. I am not wanting crowns. I have Himself—Himself! I am going to be with Himself! Ah! with the Man of Sychar; with Him who stayed to call Zaccheus; with the Man of John viii.; with the Man who hung upon the cross; with the Man who died! Oh! to be with Him before the glories—the crowns—or the kingdoms appear! It is wonderful!—wonderful! With the Man of Sychar alone, the Man of the gate of the City of Nain; and I am going to be with Him for ever! Exchange this sad, sad scene, which cast Him out; for His presence! Oh! the Man of Sychar!"

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Num. xxiii. 10).

Looking for Tigers.

IT need be no matter of surprise that worldly men should sneer at all efforts on the part of Christians at reaching the souls of their fellows by the gospel.

The carnal mind is enmity against God, and this often shows itself in hostility to all those who labour in the mission field both at home and abroad.

Quite recently I have met with some who poured great contempt upon the spiritual awakening that visited our country during the visit of the late D. L. Moody. "It is nothing but excitement," said one; "it doesn't last! Why, the whole city of B—— was converted during Moody's mission; and where are they now? I never meet one of them."

This has often been said to me, but this leaves God out of the matter. To begin with, is it any wonder that when the dread realities of the eternal world, the awfulness of sin, and the certainty of judgment are urged home in real earnest, that men and women, and children too should be awakened into a state of alarm that

from its intensity appears to the indifferent onlooker as mere excitement.

“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

was the startled exclamation of those who listened to Peter's words at Pentecost—“and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts ii. 41).

“Ah, but those were pentecostal days!” the reader may say. True, but has the power of God diminished in the smallest degree? Unbelief has taken possession of Christendom, and many true Christians are not looking as they might for definite results. But wherever there is a simple and faithful testimony to Christ and His atoning work, wherever the Word of God is preached in the power of the Holy Ghost, and wherever continuous and believing prayer goes up to God, there indeed will results be found both in the conversion of sinners and the refreshing and upbuilding of the people of God.

“Where are all the converts of Moody's mission?” I have met them by the score—I think I should be well within the limit if I said that I have met hundreds. When meeting a Christian for the first time, I constantly ask when and how they were brought to a saving

faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and times without number the answer has been, "When Moody was preaching at So-and-so."

"Well, I never meet any," was the rather curt reply.

"You remind me," said I, "of a story I heard the other day. An old Indian colonel who was known to have a special dislike for missionaries and their work was one day invited by a number of thoughtless young officers to dinner, and in order that they might have a nice bit of fun they likewise invited an old missionary lately returned from the Indian mission field. They had agreed amongst themselves that after dinner they would start the old colonel on his favourite topic of abuse of the missionaries and their work—not a very polite thing on their part, no doubt, but what is not man capable of in his enmity against Christ? 'Away with Him: crucify Him' was their cry when Christ was here on this earth, and many there are who would, if they could, rid the world of all His followers.

"'Say, Colonel, did you ever meet any mission converts in India?'

"'Mission converts!' exclaimed the Colonel contemptuously. 'Mission rubbish! I call it. Money will convert any man to anything you

please. They're nothing but a lot of hypocrites, missionaries and all.'

"Turning to the missionary who was sitting silently at the opposite side of the table, a young fellow asked, 'Do you hear that, sir? What have you to say?'

"'Did I understand you to say that you had been in India any length of time, Colonel?'

"'Yes, was there thirty years, and never saw one. I know what I'm talking about.'

"'Did you ever see any tigers, Colonel, when you were in India?'

"'Tigers! I should think I did, and shot 'em, too,' replied the old warrior with an air of something approaching to pride.

"'Well now, that's strange, Colonel. I was thirty years in India, and I never once saw a tiger,' quietly replied the old missionary.

"'Perhaps you weren't looking for one,' was the unwary rejoinder.

"'Ah, that's it, Colonel; I was looking for converts, and not for tigers. It seems to me you must have been looking for tigers, and not for converts.'"

The tables were completely turned upon the old mission-hater.

But why should men be less in earnest over

their spiritual and eternal interests than over their material and passing concerns? We have read of some of the great financial crises when panic has seized upon the members of the New York Stock Exchange. Men rush wildly about from morning to night shouting their monetary transactions, and emerge from the day's excitement foaming at the mouth, and with coats torn from their backs—and all this because of the gold that perisheth. And what of the soul? what of that never-ending hereafter? what of that eternity of woe or weal?

Reader, **are you saved?** And if not, why are you not saved? Because you have never seen yourself to be a lost sinner. And yet lost you are, and will be to all eternity if you have not believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you do not believe that you are a lost sinner, you will never flee to the Saviour. But when once you do believe that you are lost, and on your way to eternal perdition, you will not be able to rest until you know for certain that you are saved. And this, thank God, you may know before you lay down this gospel magazine.

“Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things

which Philip spake . . . *And there was great joy in that city*" (Acts viii. 6-8).

And, reader, if you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved, and greater joy than you have ever known before will fill your heart.

Christian reader, are you as eagerly looking for converts as the old Indian colonel was "looking for tigers"?



"A Roomful of Salvation."



HOW wonderful and varied are God's ways of acting for the salvation of men. He is mighty to save, and He everywhere hath sway. He speaks in great ways—loudly to the conscience of coming judgment and sins to be answered for; or from small beginnings in the soft accents of His grace, proclaiming Himself a giving God—a Saviour God—that He may find an entrance into hearts, and replace all else there. "**He is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working,**" convicting souls, and arousing them to their sense of need through the solemn declarations

of His truth, or melting them with the presentation of His love. His ends are often reached from small beginnings, that it may be made manifest that the work is not of man but of God, who is wise in heart and mighty in strength.

A little child was sitting on its father's knee ; it had just returned from the Sunday-school, and began to sing a hymn. As it went on singing tears began to flow down the parent's cheeks. He was melted by the tender words that fell from the lips of his child. God spoke by them to his very heart, and shone into it through His grace. He was bowed down and broken before Him, and confidence, and in result joy and peace in believing, took the place of emptiness and nothingness. He was alive now, and alive to God.

This was but the beginning of God's working in that remote and dark quarter, and soon others were brought under the power of it, and joy in God replaced the former ways of careless indifference among rich and poor alike, who now met for prayer together, and the blessing from God was widespread. One of the proprietors who was careless and unbelieving as to these things went down on his knees in prayer where some of his people were brought together, and

to their surprise, solemnly cried to God for His mercy and blessing. It was given, for God is a giving God, more ready to bestow than we are to ask; and henceforth he sought to live for God, and to give Him the first place in his home; and he was only one amongst the many.

Oh! how blessed it is to see men thus turning to God to thank and to praise Him for His salvation given through the work of Christ, without money and without price.

“Salvation! O the joyful sound!
What pleasure to our ears!
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears.”

Two young friends were walking together. One had recently been brought to know Jesus as her Saviour, and was speaking of His love in dying for us and bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; and His rising again without them, and being now a living Saviour in heaven. The other had been led to think seriously of late, and was deeply impressed with the fact that there were many around her now praising and thanking God for His salvation to whom He had been before unknown and unthought of. This made her anxious as to her own state, and as they were crossing a field she said, “Could

we not kneel down behind this haystack and pray?" There they poured out their hearts together, she with a cry for mercy and salvation. God is very pitiful and of tender mercy, and ready to pardon; and there and then as she rose from her knees she was praising God, who had spoken peace to her soul while she was praying. All fear and trembling were gone; her soul was saved, and she went on her way rejoicing—"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord."

Who can tell the far out-reaching blessing that flows from the conversion of *one*. In her case eternity will alone reveal the blessed consequences to the poor, the needy, and the dying, for in her quiet way she pointed the anxious and wearied hearts around her to "the Lamb of God."

Who could look on the path through this world of the meek and lowly Jesus, in all its perfectness, unmoved? or on the cross where He bore the judgment of our sins and was forsaken of God, without being bowed before Him?

There is not one link wanting in God's chain of blessing—it stretches from eternity; and though we may not know it, every word spoken,

every act done, every tear shed for Jesus will never be lost, but shine for ever to His praise and glory, stored in the treasuries of heaven.

Walking along the road with the preacher of the previous evening, a man confronted us who was a small farmer in the neighbourhood, to whom he spoke, telling him in his earnest way of Jesus and His finished work on the cross when He gave Himself to God for us, on the ground of which salvation is freely offered to all, not for any good in us or for anything we can reach to or attain, *but to be believed in and received*. The man listened with close attention, and as he did so he seemed almost unconsciously to thrust his hand into his bosom, and slowly drew out a little book, battered and torn, saying: "I could not tell how often I have read this. It was given to me when I was a soldier in India, and I have carried it about with me ever since and never lost it."

He put it into the preacher's hand, and as I looked at the title of the tract I said, "Oh, the one into whose hand you have put it is the one who wrote it." A look of astonishment and pleasure lighted up his face as he stretched out his hand, saying, "I'm so glad to see you, sir." It was a moment of deep interest, stirring the

heart with the thought of God's wondrous ways. The gospel was fully and clearly put before him, and he who had been an anxious and a seeking soul now received blessing from God. Like Abraham of old, *he believed God*, and his faith was counted to him as righteousness. “There was Abraham at one end of the line and God at the other, and *faith* between.”

Who gave that tract, so carefully kept, to the soldier in India? Who? None can tell; but the record of it is on high—another of those links in the chain of God's working which will be known hereafter. The little book did its intended work, reminding him continually that he had a soul to be saved, and that there was an *assured* salvation for him to be had on the authority of the living God, which he now bowed to and received.

“Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.”

His purposes cannot fail—they stand for ever; and His promises are all Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.

In much desire for blessing and in utter helplessness and weakness, constant prayer

was made to God to bless souls around. Some time passed, and a large company of both rich and poor were assembled to hear the gospel of the grace of God. Isaiah vi. was read. Man's deep need as a sinner was proclaimed, and God's free grace to meet it; and the holiness, greatness, and majesty of that God with whom we have to do, and before whom the very angels veil their faces with their wings, combined with the mercy which in a moment, when man takes his true place before Him as "unclean" and "undone," stoops not only to save, but to crown with blessing. The Altar—the value of the sacrifice made to God on the cross—is ever before the eye of God, and the eternal efficacy of the blood of Christ is applied to the soul; iniquity is taken away, and sin purged. It was a wondrous message from God.*

Eyes filled with tears were to be seen on every

* Though many years have passed—it was the time of the great awakening in Ireland—we retain a vivid recollection of this gospel preaching. We have recently been in the same district and have seen some who were converted at that time: many have gone to heaven who formed part of that "roomful of salvation"; this very week the earthly tabernacle of one dear old saint, who was one of these, was laid in the grave to await the first resurrection. "What a gathering and a greeting there will be!"—ED.

side. The power of God was there, and as the company slowly dispersed the effect produced was marked. Afterwards a message was sent to the preacher, "Come to us," and on his return, he said, "I have left a roomful of salvation." Many will be found in heaven the result of that night, when the grace and love of God were so specially manifested then, and afterwards as the tide of mercy flowed on.

"The river of God is full of water." It is a dark day in which we live, and truth is fallen in the streets. God and His Word are denied—they stand or fall together. Men's minds are trafficking now with the plain truth of the Bible, in which the holiness and love of God shine on every page from beginning to end.

What is the resource at such a time, and where? God Himself is the only resource. He is unchangeably the same, and His word endureth for ever. "His arm is not shortened that it cannot save." He is to be looked to and counted on for blessing at all times and in all ages. Men change, times change — God *never*. He is free to bless, and His grace and love flow on, and will, as long as the world remains, and until the last soul is gathered in by the living power of the Spirit's working.

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

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us *to God*,” to His heart, to His home, to heaven, to be known and enjoyed now, and throughout the endless ages of eternity.

“No mortal tongue can tell Thy ways,
So full of life and light and love.”



A Railway Shunter's Conversion.

“I will glorify Thy name for evermore. For great is Thy mercy toward me.”—Ps. lxxxvi. 12, 13.

OF all positions occupied by railway servants, the work of the shunter is the most dangerous, statistics proving that more shunters are killed at their posts of duty than any other railway employee. The one whose conversion is here recorded, although he has had many very narrow escapes, glories in the fact that his soul is saved, and realises through the grace of God, that whether

in life or death, all is well. He gives the following account :—

“My early days were spent in a midland village, and being of lowly parentage and one of seven children, I did not have the advantage of a good education, being compelled to work hard from my earliest recollections. Boylike, I was often in mischief; in fact, if anything went wrong in the village, I was usually blamed for it.

“I shall ever remember with gratitude that I had a praying mother, who always sought to impress upon my young mind the truth that God beheld all my ways. But like hundreds more, I was very self-willed and endeavoured to forget her loving counsel; although now I can add that her example, her prayers, and her influence have never left me.

“I recall three very anxious times in my experience. When a boy of twelve, I was spoken to by a young man about my sinful state, and I well remember my brokenness of heart as he told me of the Saviour's love; but, alas! the impression soon passed away.

“A few years later, I heard an impressive sermon at the Parish Church, which again awakened me to a sense of my danger and caused distress of soul; my anxiety being at

times so great that I often fell upon my knees behind a hedge, and tried to pray for mercy. But again the word did not profit me, for Satan suggested that I was too bad, and that I must mend my ways, and again attempt that which I had vainly endeavoured to do so many times. As I was ignorant of God's abounding love to guilty sinners, I became disheartened, and even more careless than before.

"But God in grace bore with my stubbornness and rebellion, not leaving me alone, but about six years later bringing me under the sound of these impressive words: 'But man dieth and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?' But I again disobeyed the call of God and sought pleasure in the world. And until I was thirty-two I continued my wild career, without God and without Christ.

"Thus the years passed, until five little children were seated around my table, bringing with them their attendant responsibility and care, and all thoughts of eternity and eternal things were banished from my mind, until death, that dread visitant, called at our home, taking from our midst my wife's mother. This sad event caused me to see the awfulness of a soul passing into

eternity without a ray of hope. Six weeks later my eldest sister passed away, and as we laid her body in the cold grave I felt in utter despair. A fortnight later my youngest boy died, but instead of these sad occurrences softening my heart, I further rebelled against God and complained of His hard and seemingly unrighteous dealings. It was whilst standing by the still form of my beloved child that God again caused me to hear His voice, as the thought vividly presented itself, 'What had it been you?' and I was compelled to acknowledge, 'O God, I should have been in hell.' From that moment for nearly three months I was in great agony of soul, feeling as never before the great burden of sin, causing me to rise from my bed many times in the night to pray to God for light. Once when digging in the garden, I was so deeply convicted of sin that I felt I dare not proceed lest I should open a hole by which I should sink into hell. I immediately went to my room and cried to God for deliverance. Thus God brought me to own as one before had owned, 'O wretched man that I am!'

"Some time after the above experiences I went to hear the gospel preached, and although after the service Christian friends sought to point me

to Christ, I was so very blind and unbelieving that the way of salvation seemed too simple. The following night, when on my way home, a great longing possessed me to be saved, and glancing upward the heavens appeared to open, and what a sight met my enraptured gaze! for I saw the Lord Jesus dying on Calvary's cross, and I heard a voice saying, 'You are refusing salvation through the work of Christ.' My sin-burdened heart was bowed both with sorrow and gratitude, and I exclaimed, 'O Lord, I will refuse no longer,' and there under the broad canopy of heaven I trusted Christ as my Saviour, and joy and peace in believing flooded my heart. It was not long ere I was on my knees, thanking God for His abounding grace and mercy to me, a poor hell-deserving sinner.

"Many times after this Satan suggested that I was deceived, and once when going to work, greatly troubled with doubts as to my acceptance with God, my attention was arrested by a small piece of paper, which was almost covered by sand, lying by the roadside. I picked it up and found it to be a small leaflet, and in it I read how, in the person and work of Christ, God had made a rich provision, both for the past, the present, and the future. It was just what I

needed, and this led me to further praise my God, who had provided such a perfect salvation. My fears all vanished, and from that moment, if doubts arise, I have pointed my adversary to the written Word of God ; and I can with thankfulness add that it has been peace and joy all along the way.

“I record the above to magnify the grace of God in saving my soul and sparing my life, whilst numbers of my mates have been cut down both by disease and accident, many in the prime of life.

“One to whom I had many times spoken about his soul's salvation, had been run over by an engine. I went to where he lay, and when I saw his poor mangled body I knew that he could not last many minutes. Lifting to God a silent prayer, I knelt by his side and whispered, ‘George, look to Jesus ; His precious blood will cleanse from all sin.’ I also repeated other scriptures into his dying ear, but, alas ! he was too far gone to make any reply.

“Another case very different to the above was that of another comrade who was a fireman, to whom I had many times spoken about the realities of eternity. Once, when on night duty, I felt deeply impressed to speak to him about

the welfare of his soul. I was unable to leave my post, so I hastily wrote a passage of Scripture upon a scrap of paper I had by me, and handed it to him as the engine passed. It was some time before I again saw him, when I asked him as to his soul's salvation. 'Thank God, all is right,' he replied. 'How did it come about?' I asked. To which he replied, 'You remember those words of Scripture you gave me? God used them to open my eyes.'

"Now, dear reader, I would add a warning word to you. Do not trifle with the mercy of God, for He has said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.'

"O unsaved comrade, flee to the outstretched arms of my precious Saviour, for He has suffered the just for the unjust. Hark to His cry at Calvary, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' Why was He forsaken? It was because God could not pass over sin, and as Christ took the sinner's place, God poured out His indignation and wrath against sin upon Him.

"Moreover, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Why? That He might righteously spare you and me. Therefore I repeat to you the words of the One who saved me, who will also save

every needy sinner who turns to Him by faith : ' 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.' Believe this glorious message, and your soul shall live."

"Bread Cast upon the Waters."

IN a small village in the county of Essex, there lived a poor woman who earned her daily bread by charing. She was, however, one into whose heart God had caused the light of the gospel to shine.

For some time the spiritual need of the dear village children had lain heavily upon her heart, and she felt led to commence a Sunday-school for them in her own little room.

As was often the case with the poor in those days, she could not read, having received no education ; but she had been taught by a lady that beautiful chapter, the tenth of John ; and so from time to time as the children came together, she would repeat this portion to them, explaining as best she could the precious truth which she herself through grace had received.

This continued for many years, during which time she learned to read a little.

Thus the seed was sown.

Before going further into this interesting work, let us ask the reader to take a Bible and carefully peruse the passage referred to—John x. Therein Jesus says, **“I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”**

One question: Have *you* entered?

Many years have passed away since the establishment of that humble Sunday-school, and this dear, and now aged, Christian is living in London, having lain for six years upon a bed of sickness, proving the sufficiency of God's never-failing grace and faithfulness, delighting to speak of Him and make known His saving grace to any who may visit her.

A few months ago the writer was privileged to read a letter from her, written to comfort one in bereavement. There is in it no mention of her own sufferings, which at times are very great—no murmurings, but much about the goodness of God, the preciousness of Christ, and the joyful hope of His return. It was truly a letter of comfort in the midst of sorrow.

In the chapter already referred to, Jesus says, "**I am the Good Shepherd.**"

Reader, another question: Do *you* know Him as such?

Time rapidly glides away. The days of activity of this humble but faithful servant of God are ended. But the precious seed had been sown in faith, and it pleased the "Lord of the harvest" that this dear servant should see some of the fruit of her labours before being called home. It is written, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccles. xi. 1).

A few years ago a lady returned to England after a somewhat long absence. She had a great desire to find, if possible, her old Sunday-school teacher. Going to the little village where she had been brought up, she learned that her former teacher had married a Mr W——, and had "moved to London." The task of finding Mrs W—— seemed hopeless, but the Lord directed this lady's steps to the house of a Christian minister in London.

While at table one day this gentleman was remarking upon the patience of a "dear Christian woman named Mrs W——," who was bedridden,

and at times in great suffering. It at once occurred to the lady that this was the very person she was seeking.

She determined to lose no time in following up the clue, and on calling at the address she had obtained, soon ascertained that it was indeed as she had hoped. She was admitted by Mrs W——'s daughter, who was taking care of her mother.

On one side of the room lay Mrs W——, her poor afflicted husband on the other. It was some time before the dear old woman could call her visitor to remembrance; but the mention of the little village school brought her back to memory.

"Well," said the visitor, "after leaving the village I went abroad with a lady. There I married. Now both my husband and son have passed away; and I have come to thank you and thank God for the instruction received in your little Sunday-school, which was blessed to my conversion, and through me to my husband and son."

Since that visit it has been the privilege of this lady to minister to her former Sunday-school teacher in temporal things.

And now, dear reader, let this history speak

to you. It is a blessed thing to have every need, bodily and spiritual, met for time and for eternity.

Would you have the blessed assurance of *present possession* of salvation and eternal life? Hear, then, His own words: “I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (ver. 9); and again: “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: **and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.** My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are one” (ver. 27-30).

Do you ask how it is that such great eternal blessing can be secured to *any one* who believes in Jesus?

The chapter before us shows that this immense blessing is the outcome of His unspeakable love: **“The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”**

In order that we might obtain and enjoy the priceless blessing of eternal life, He Himself went down into the deepest, darkest depths of death. He suffered on the cross for you and me. Think of Him there, His holy soul poured

forth a sacrifice for sin—yea, “made sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in Him” (2 Cor. v. 21).

All has been met in that precious Saviour’s death. God is now “just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus” (Rom. iii.). And moreover the “precious blood” which “cleanseth from all sin” has flowed forth.

Now raised from the dead and seated in heaven’s glory, He sends these gracious words to you for your immediate acceptance.

“To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.”

P.S.—Since the above was written, news has been received that the subject of the piece has passed away. The earthly remains were interred on 13th April—“sown in hope,” awaiting that glad day when He shall say, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”



“What Think Ye of Christ?”

(MATT. xxii. 42.)

IN answer to the Lord’s question to the Pharisees in Matthew xxii. 42, “What think ye of Christ?” we find that they reply, “The Son of David.” When questioned further, “no man was able to answer Him

a word." They had not acknowledged the One to whom they were listening as the Son of God.

In Matthew xii. 24, we find what their real thoughts were about that blessed One. They accused Him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Here they were blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, and rejecting God's beloved Son. They would not accept Him as the Christ, therefore they must for ever be shut out of God's presence. What a solemn thought! And even now there are thousands who reject this same Jesus—the Saviour of sinners.

In Matthew xxvii. 4 we find what Judas thought of Christ. He acknowledged his guilt, and then says, "I have betrayed the innocent blood." Yes, this One was the only one of whom these words could be said, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23), and yet, all may be justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (ver. 24). Though Judas acknowledged what he had done, "he departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. xxvii. 5). Pilate's wife expresses her opinion of Christ in this same chapter (ver. 19). She speaks of Him as "a just man," and tells her husband to have nothing to do with Him. She knew that He was not worthy of death, but little she knew that He was the One

who was from the beginning, and by whom worlds were made.

What a contrast we get in turning to the leper's case! (Matt. viii. 5). He says, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." His faith was blest to him, and he was cleansed immediately. Thus it is always with the simple trusting soul that takes God at His word, and believes that the Lord Jesus has finished the work, and that the sinner has nothing whatever to do.

"Only trust Him,
He will save you *now*."

You will then be able to reply to this question—"What think ye of Christ?"—in the words of Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 16), and the Lord's answer to him will be yours too: "Blessed art thou, . . . for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father which is in heaven."

God grant that any unsaved soul who reads these lines may find this blessing, and thus glory will be brought to the name of the Lord Jesus, who in His prayer to His Father said, "Father, glorify Thou Me, with Thine own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John xvii. 5).

Make Haste.

WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ was here upon earth, He one day entered the city of Jericho and passed through it. It was His last visit to that place, for He was on His way to Jerusalem, where He was about to suffer for sinners on the cross.

A man named Zacchæus lived at Jericho. He was a great man in his way, the chief amongst the publicans. These publicans were the tax-collectors, and even to this day in those Eastern lands are very dishonest in their dealings. The appointment of tax collector is put up to public auction, and the highest bidder obtains the post. After a few years they generally retire, having amassed large fortunes by their unrighteous exactions.

Zacchæus, we are told, was rich ; but his riches had not been obtained in this corrupt manner. His riches, however, did not satisfy him ; and whose heart was ever satisfied with wealth ? Who, indeed, was ever satisfied with the world in any shape or form ?

A lady of title, who has moved in the highest

circles of this land, was recently asked, if she had found complete satisfaction in the world. Her reply was, "**There is no such thing as a satisfied heart amongst us.**"

This is true of the world, but, thank God! the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, who walks in communion with Him, knows what true happiness is. Zacchæus sought to see Jesus. But then his difficulties arose. The devil will always oppose the one who turns to the Lord Jesus Christ. He will set your friends against you; he will set the world on to ridicule and sneer at you. But the case is urgent; eternity is too important a matter to be trifled with. Burst through the opposition of the world; rise above the taunts and mockings of your comrades. They cannot help you when you come to stand before God's awful judgment-seat; they cannot answer for you then; their own laughter will be turned into wailing and despair.

Do you want to see Jesus? Do you want to know Him for yourself? Do you want to have Him as your own personal Saviour? Then

be in earnest,

like Zacchæus was. He ran before and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him; for Jesus was to pass that way.

When Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him. Yes, Jesus knew all about him: He knew where he was; He knew his very name. And, friend, Jesus knows all about you. Your sins, your sorrows, your struggles, your temptations, your resolutions, your failures—He knows them all, and He says to you, as He said to Zacchæus, “Make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.”

Make haste.

But why must we make haste? Of course nobody wants to be lost; nobody wants to go to hell; nobody wants to be shut out of heaven; nobody wants to be shut up with devils and the damned for all eternity. Is there not **plenty of time?**

No, no. The word to every unsaved reader of these lines is, **Make haste!** But why?

1. Because a terrible day of judgment is at hand. God has warned the world in no vague and indefinite manner of the judgment which is about to fall. But men scoff and sneer at these things. **This is but a proof of the truth of the Bible.**

“There shall come in the last days scoffers” (2 Pet. iii. 3). The more infidels scoff, the more

clearly does it prove that we are drawing near to the time of the outpouring of the awful judgment of God.

They mocked at Noah

when he, a preacher of righteousness, warned them of the approaching flood. Nineteen hundred years ago God inspired His servant Peter to write, that in the last days of Christendom men should mock and scoff just as they did in the days of Noah.

Men would not believe Noah, and yet the judgment came. Men will not believe to-day, and yet they have less excuse for their unbelief now than then. To-day it is the

ignorance of a hostile will.

Men WON'T believe. But the judgment is coming for all that.

“The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Pet. iii. 7).

Make haste, then ; make haste, for **the judgment day is at hand.**

2. Again, make haste, for a full and free salvation is to-day within your reach. You might be saved now, on the spot. The work whereby any

and every sinner may be saved is a finished work. The blood of Jesus has been shed ; an all-sufficient atonement has been made ; God has been glorified in every attribute of His nature ; His justice has been vindicated ; His righteous claims have been fully met.

“ God is satisfied with Jesus.”

Can you add—

“ I am satisfied as well ” ?

Make haste, then, **make haste** ; for the salvation which is to-day within your reach may to-morrow be impossible. Time is quickly passing ;

eternity is drawing nigh.

3. Lastly, make haste, for God wants you to be happy here on earth, even before you reach the plains of heavenly glory to bask in the eternal sunshine of His love. There indeed will be fulness of joy ; but here, you may have joy unspeakable and full of glory. Jesus is worthy of your heart's trust ; He is worthy of your soul's adoration ; He is worthy of all you have and are.

“ Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye

rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory”
(1 Pet. i. 8).

“Unseen we love Thee, dear Thy name ;
But when our eyes behold,
With joyful wonder we'll exclaim,
'The half had not been told.'”

Yes ; God wants to make you happy here.

Zacchæus made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully.

No one ever yet came to the Lord Jesus Christ and trusted Him as their Saviour without being infinitely happier than ever they were in their worldly days.

Reader, will you not **make haste** ?

A. H. B.

Two friends.

WHAT is that bright red banner stretched across the road? It says, “Come to the Children’s Service every evening this week at half-past six.” Why, it is nearly that time now, and see, the children are going into the Hall. Bright, happy children they seem to be ; are they thinking of the solemnity of listening

to the gospel message once again? Will they accept the Saviour's loving offer of salvation, or will they refuse it?

Two little girls, about twelve years of age, are sitting with a lady who knows them well, and who longs to feel sure that Christ is their Saviour. That they are great friends, one would easily find out. When the earnest address is ended, Miss M—— asks them if they will stay to the after-meeting; but Norah, with a would-be careless expression on her face, hurries out, not waiting to see what her friend will do.

“Will *you* stay, Maggie?”

“I've no one to stay with,” is the answer.

“I will stay with you, dear,” says Miss M——.

The appeal from the speaker is earnest and loving, following up the words which have just been spoken.

“Is thy heart right?” has been the question put that evening, and the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus is shown as the only thing which can cleanse and make us “right” in God's sight. Maggie is touched; she knows that her heart is not right, but she is willing, she says, to give up her own way, and to trust Jesus as her Saviour.

Miss M—— prays with her, and presently says:

"You will go home and tell mother, won't you, Maggie?"

"Yes, Miss."

"And will you tell Norah too?"

No answer, for this is a harder matter; Maggie could not stand being laughed at.

"Maggie, you don't know what a blessing it might be to Norah if you were to tell her that you had come to Jesus; would you not ask God for strength to do it if you thought that?"

"Yes, Miss," very low.

Two days later the two girls were together once again at the children's service. Maggie had confessed Christ to her friend, and brought her with her to the meeting. Once more the gospel message is proclaimed; once more the Saviour's loving invitation is repeated.

At the close there is a sound of sobbing. Poor Norah's heart is too sorrowful to heed those around her; she has seen her sinfulness, the burden of sin is terrible, her heart seems breaking. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." At such sorrow surely the Saviour rejoices, for He has caused the tears to come, and He will Himself turn the sorrow into joy. Miss M—— draws the weeping child into another room, where they can talk undisturbed,

and there the seeking soul and the seeking Saviour find one another, and "there is joy in the presence of the angels."

"Norah, how long have you really wanted to come to Jesus?" Miss M—— asks her presently.

"Since Maggie came," is the answer.

Faithful Maggie, she has spoken a word for Jesus, and He has honoured her testimony ; she has helped to lead her friend to Christ.

For three short weeks Norah lived for Jesus. There was much to overcome—a hasty temper and a quick tongue. "It is hard, Miss," was her confession once. But the Lord was helping His feeble disciple, and it could be seen that her life was changed. Her mother's testimony was very definite. "She is much sweeter and quieter at home," she said. To her friend Maggie she confided that she was "so happy now." And others, too, heard of her new-found joy. "She wasn't ashamed to own it," was the testimony of the most careless girl in her Sunday school class.

Three weeks—and then, "the Lord had need" of her. Only a few days' illness, and she is safe at Home, safe with Jesus, seeing Him "face to face." One June afternoon the children gather under the trees around her grave, and sing :

“Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand,
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy Band. . . .

On earth they sought the Saviour's grace,
On earth they loved His name ;
So now they see Him face to face,
And stand before the Lamb.”

Yes, thank God that on earth Norah did seek the Saviour's grace. Happy Maggie! You are sorrowful now, for Jesus has taken your playmate to Himself; and yet you can rejoice to think that through your words she first longed to come to Jesus, and coming, was made fit for the bright Home above.

Dear Christian children, think of your friends and schoolfellows, your brothers and sisters. Have you told them of the Saviour you have found? Have you told them that He is willing to save them too? God has given you wonderful opportunities and influence; they will listen to what you say more readily perhaps than to any one else. Would it not be a joy too great for words if you could lead them to Jesus? Will you not ask the Lord to use you to be His messenger to others, that some day they may shine as jewels in the Saviour's crown?

“And Then Comes Night.”

“Life is a flower of paper-white,
Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two, and then comes night.”

THESE were the lines that caught my eye when I entered the office one day in January last. They were surrounded by a wreath of flowers which were shortly to accompany the dead body of a colleague to the grave. Were they true—true of him who had just answered to the dread mandate: “This night thy soul shall be required of thee”?

I felt sad as I thought of the meaning of such words—a meaning which perhaps had never crossed the mind of the writer of them:

“and then comes night,”

nothing but the black and dark night.

As I stood looking at the flowers and the lines, there came to my memory several portions of God’s Word—words of truth which men, young and old, do well to heed. Life is a flower; yes, the Word of the Lord says, “All flesh is as grass,

and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever' (1 Pet. i. 24, 25).

Reader, have you ever pondered this—that your life is as a flower? The icy wind blows over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof knows it no more. But men speak and act as if there were no such words as—“**It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment**”; rather do they live as if possessing a lease of life, to be renewed at will. But who can stay the cold clutch of the king of terrors? Who can say “nay” to that summons? And, young man, is there not a voice for us in this? One after another do our fellows go whence they cannot return, cut off before their prime; which of us shall be the next?

Prepare to meet thy God.

“Whereon each one of us may write his word or two” . . . yes, and although the flower may fade, and the life pass away, yet there abides in God's record those words written by us on the pages of our lives. Did not the Lord Christ declare that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account of in the day of

judgment? and that our words either condemn or justify us? When the appointed day arrives and the ordained Judge sits upon the throne, then shall these records be brought forth—call them paper-white or what you please, and men shall be judged according to the things written in the books; and, reader, if your name be not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life, you will be cast into the lake of fire.

But blessed be God, He has found a way of escape from the due reward of our deeds, 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." Those who so believe are those whose names shall be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Reader, **is your name there?** Are you found among those whose only trust is the precious blood of Christ? Faith in the once crucified but now glorified Saviour is the only way of escape from the wrath to come. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house."

But perhaps you care for none of these things; it may be that the world only occupies you, its pleasures of sin which last but for a season. The question is often asked, "Where is the harm?"

This is one of the means the devil, the god of this world, uses to blind the minds and hearts of men to the needs of their souls. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

"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).

"And then comes night"—yes, night, eternal night; blackness of darkness for ever will be the unrelieved portion of every one who refuses God's testimony concerning His Son. Christ came into the world that sinners by faith in Him might not abide in darkness but become light in the Lord and walk in the light. "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth," but he that follows the Son of God has the light of life and knows whither he goes. "There shall be no night" for those who know Jesus: for them to depart this life is to be in the blissful presence of Christ, because they have been already made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, made meet by the blood of Christ.

Reader, which portion is yours? If the call of death came to-day to you, would it be the night that you would enter, the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; or would you depart and be with Christ in His bright glory, joining in that song of joy "unto Him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen"? E.



The Value of the Blood.

HOW varied are the ways in which God deals with souls, and how many different means He uses for bringing about His own purposes of blessing!

This is well illustrated in the following authentic narrative. A Christian lady, interested in the salvation of souls, met another Christian at a seaside place in England, and they were mutually drawn together. The latter of these (whom we will call Mrs S——) was much concerned about the health of her husband, to whom she was tenderly attached. The other, Miss ——, gave her a book, "The Shadow and the Sub-

stance," asking, at the same time, if her husband would like to read it.

Mr S——'s life had been, indeed, most blameless. He was a devoted son, husband, father, &c.—a character which could not outwardly be touched. In fact, as regarded his outward life, he was all that could be desired, and his illness caused universal sorrow, especially as he grew worse and worse.

Several months passed before the two friends already referred to met again—this time in a railway carriage; when Mrs S—— said that the book given to her had spoken in blessing to her husband. So much so, that he had read it again and again, and had purchased copies to give away. Miss —— was very thankful to hear that the book had been of use, and several months passed before they again met. On the next occasion Miss —— learned that Mr S—— was exceedingly ill. The symptoms of his disease had rapidly developed, and the doctor said that the end was near. Mrs S—— also stated that he had lost his peace of mind, and was terribly assailed by the evil one. As this conversation took place in the street, and was hurried, Miss —— promised to call in the evening. She did so, and found poor Mrs S——

almost beside herself. Her devoted husband, to whom she had always looked up, whose life was so blameless and exemplary, was in despair. "No hope!" was his cry. Satan was in the room, he said. He had been a hypocrite, and the hypocrite's hope must perish. Mrs S—— said it was a scene no words could describe. He would see no one; his old, well-known clergyman called in vain. Letters from Christian friends brought no comfort. The very heavens seemed brass. Mrs S—— thanked Miss —— for her letters, as they brought comfort to *her* although not to her husband. Days passed, and the darkness increased—it was truly a thick darkness "which could be felt"—but One was there who had been through the *deeper* darkness, who *alone* had been forsaken of God—

"Deeper depths were known to Him"—

and He was about to appear for this sorely tried one.

One evening Miss —— found Mrs S—— in a state of untold agony. She described a scene in that sick-room which recalled the account in the "Pilgrim's Progress" of Christian passing through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the awful fiends on each side. Miss —— felt she had no words of comfort to offer, she

seemed paralysed. She left feeling very despondent. During the night sleep fled, and she lay seeming in spirit to be in that darkened room where the invalid lay. Words which had encouraged a devoted servant of God, Mr ——, recently departed, came into her mind but Satan seemed to say, "*You* are not Mr ——." She owned that this was indeed true, and cried to the Lord to bring some scripture to her mind to meet these fiery darts. While thus in prayer to Him the following verses came very distinctly before her :—

"When I see the BLOOD, I will pass over you"
(Exod. xii. 13).

"It is the BLOOD that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11).

"Without shedding of BLOOD is no remission"
(Heb. ix. 22).

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout BLOOD and water" (John xix. 34).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers ; but with the precious BLOOD of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

“The BLOOD of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John i. 7).

“Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own BLOOD” (Rev. i. 5).

Satan had been vanquished by the Word of God, and she could now leave her tried friend in the Lord's hands and fall asleep.

Next morning these scriptures came back vividly to her mind, and sitting down, she wrote them out in full, and sent them by an early post to her friend. Having done this, she felt assured that the Lord had undertaken all for her.

The sequel proved that this was indeed so, for the next day she received a letter from Mrs S——, saying she had read the verses to her husband, who said, “Read them again.” Then with the added words, “I see it must be the BLOOD,” a great calm filled his troubled soul. Satan was defeated. Divine peace instead of sorrow and anguish now possessed Mr S——'s heart. He had experienced the truth of the words, “He hath made peace by the BLOOD of His cross.” During the few days he lingered, he requested again and again that those verses on the precious blood should be read to him.

The day before his death, the clergyman, Mrs S——, and her daughter were in the room,

when, after bidding the clergyman good-bye, he said in a loud voice, "Safe in the Everlasting Arms." The bright smile which lit up his features was truly triumphant. These were his last words, for he never spoke again. Next day he departed to be with Christ, in whose presence, with all the redeemed, he will join in the never-ending song, "Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy BLOOD."

* * *

The Bible.

THE new boarder looked up from the book he was reading, and, addressing the young man of the house, said, "Have you a Bible you can lend me for a few moments?"

"A Bible!" said he; "what do you want with a Bible?"

"There are a few scriptural quotations in this book I am reading, and I desire to refer to them. In my haste I have left my Bible at home," replied the boarder.

“We have one somewhere about,” said the young man, “but I seldom use it; look into the next room, perhaps it is there.”

The boarder, who was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and had come from a neighbouring town only a few days before, went into the next room and, seeing the servant, asked the same question. Surprised, she too exclaimed, “A Bible? I don’t know; we never read one from one year’s end to another. I’ll look and see if I can find one.”

Rummaging amongst the books, she at length brought a Bible out from the bottom of them all, and handed it to him.

Now perhaps the reader will think that these people who set so little store on the Bible were exceptionally wicked; but such was not the case. The young man thus addressed was a regular church-goer, a member of the choir, a partaker of the sacrament, also a member of the local church missionary committee. When, however, he was spoken to about the Scriptures, he evinced the utmost indifference as to their importance, being evidently ignorant of their Divine origin and the eternal blessings they offer to those who obey them, or the eternal doom of those who neglect them.

Such indifference to God's Word in this favoured land of England is appalling. In countries like Spain or Russia, for instance, which seem to be under the power and influence of priests whose aim it is to keep people in a state of ignorance, such a thing would not be strange; but in a country which has been so richly blessed for generations in having liberty to print, publish, and read the Bible, such indifference is shocking to any who love the Lord Jesus, and know something of the value of God's Word. There may be very few homes without Bibles in this favoured land, but, alas! many of those who have them show by their ignorance of God's ways that they are seldom, if ever, read.

The Bible is the Word of God, God's message to men. As another has remarked, "The moment we open the Bible, the eye rests upon the words, 'God said'; and the same words, or similar expressions, such as 'The Lord spake' and 'Thus saith the Lord,' are found 501 times in the Pentateuch, 292 times in the Historical Books and Psalms, 1111 times in the Prophets, or 1904 times in the Old Testament; besides almost innumerable allusions to the words contained in these ancient Scriptures as, in fact, the words of Jehovah."

In the New Testament, the words of the Lord Jesus fully prove them to be God's Word. "The word which ye hear is not Mine but the Father's which sent Me" (John xiv. 24); "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me" (John xvii. 8). He was the living Word; God manifest in the flesh; and throughout His brief sojourn here, again and again He turns to the Old Testament writings and sets His seal to their truth in such words as these: "And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke xxiv. 44); "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Many other kindred sayings are scattered throughout the Gospels.

The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," &c. To the saints at Rome he writes, " whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4).

The apostle Peter tells us that "holy men of

God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21); and that "the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which, by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter i. 25).

Truly, indeed, do "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Ps. xiv. 1), and even this testimony of His eternal power and godhead leaves men without excuse (Rom. i. 20). But in the Bible God makes *Himself* known, and His sovereign grace comes out to man in his lost condition ("for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"), revealing to him One who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity, and yet who can, in virtue of the work of His beloved Son, come down and dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit and trembleth at His word.

The Bible has a unique place. God speaks by it to us. Its claims over men are absolute, and it demands implicit obedience. By it God offers "glory, honour, and peace to every one that worketh good," and "tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. ii. 9, 10). God's salvation, concerning His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, is fully set forth by it. If

that blessed Word be neglected, the way of salvation cannot be known.

“How shall we escape,

if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3). Reader, if you “neglect,” there is no escape for you ; and if God were to call you away by death this moment, or if Christ were to come “in the twinkling of an eye” for His saints and thus close the door, your doom would be for ever sealed.

Oh! be warned in time ; neglect not God’s offers of mercy another moment. Heed now His gracious warnings, for in one way or another He is warning you every day. Your very heart, like a muffled drum, is beating its own funeral march to the grave ; every breath you draw, every fleeting moment, brings you nearer eternity. God waits in long-suffering mercy, not willing that you should perish, but that you should come to repentance. Won’t you come now ? He will receive you with open arms and bless you richly for eternity.

Soon He must cease His calling, and if you are still in your sins, if you have neglected His Word in grace, you will be compelled to hear it in judgment : “Because I have called, and ye refused ; I have stretched out My hand, and

no man regarded ; but ye have set at nought all
My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I
also will

laugh at your calamity ;

I will mock when your fear cometh ; when your
fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction
cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and
anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they
call upon Me, but I will not answer ; they
shall seek Me early, but they shall not find
me : for that they hated knowledge, and did not
choose the fear of the Lord ” (Prov. i. 24-29).

J. S.

“Death Spoils All !”

THESE were the words which fell upon
my ear, uttered by a passenger leaving
a railway carriage into which I was
getting in the North of Ireland some
time ago. As I watched him going away, I
thought how true they were. Death does indeed
spoil all, as far as this world is concerned.

How often have we seen a man just reach
the summit of his ambition, obtain at last the

object he had set his heart upon, and then, suddenly, Death enters his house and bids him come! There is no putting off this unwelcome guest, go you must; riches must be left behind, worldly position and place must be relinquished, the happy family circle must be broken up, for **“it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment”** (Heb. ix. 27).

Will my reader turn to the account of one who prospered exceedingly (Luke xii. 16), who had all this world could give him, and who anticipated many years of enjoyment, ease, and luxury, but in making these calculations, left God out? Suddenly the summons came to him—not even a full day’s notice: **“Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.”** Reader, are you leaving God out of your thoughts? Of the wicked we read (Ps. x. 4), “God is not in all his thoughts”; but how blessed is it to know that you have been in God’s thoughts; that when you cared not for Him He cared for you and sent His Son to die on the cross for sinners, for the ungodly, for those who had come short, **“for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. iii. 28). If you take this place of being a sinner, of having come short, forgiveness of sins is yours, eternal life is yours. “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."

God loved, and He gave; you believe, and you have: this is the gospel of the grace of God. If you value your soul's eternal welfare, oh, believe it; then, should death come you need not fear it, for it will only be passing into the presence of One who loved you and gave Himself for you; it will be "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

But perhaps you will not die at all; the Christian is not supposed to be looking for death, but for the Lord Jesus to summon him into the air to meet Him, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 17).

Once more I would say to you ere you put down this book, Have the question settled, come to Jesus as you are, for He says, "**Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out**" (John vi. 37).

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before:
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There exhausted all their power."

How shall we escape?

NONE who have ever found themselves in any danger will treat such a question with carelessness or indifference. No matter what the danger may be, the one great question for all such is this—

How shall we escape?

Standing on the shore some fine but breezy day, you watch that trim little craft flying before the wind. Its four occupants are enjoying the exhilarating sensation, as far removed from all sense of fear as you who are admiring the picturesque scene from the firm and solid beach. Next moment they are tacking, when a sudden squall strikes their sail and capsizes their boat. In one instant they find themselves in the utmost peril, and a piercing cry for help rends the air. Why? **There is danger.**

Away in the city of Chicago some few months ago the Iroquois Theatre is crowded one Saturday afternoon, mostly with ladies and children. It is a worldly scene—devised by the world, for the world's amusement. Nothing there to awaken careless sinners in view of eternity! Nothing

there to feed the people of God with living bread, nor to satisfy them with living waters! Nothing to remind travellers to eternity of the need of their souls! Nothing to bring God and Christ, His blessed Son, before the mind! All is gaiety, laughter, and frivolity, when lo! flames shoot across the stage, and, panic-stricken, the vast audience springs to its feet, and shrieking, rushing, trampling one another down in the mad haste to escape, vainly endeavours to reach some place of safety. Why? **There is danger.** In a few moments hundreds of unfortunate victims lie in heaps, trampled beyond recognition. It is a sickening sight.

Only this very month a heavily-laden pleasure steamer is gliding down the harbour of New York, when volumes of smoke are seen rising from one of the store-rooms, and quickly she is enveloped in flames. To beach the ship seems the only chance of escape, but before this can be done, a surging mass of women and children, nearly one thousand, have perished in the flames, or been drowned within speaking distance of the shore.

Ah, there is danger everywhere. Not an hour of night or day but what every one is exposed to dangers of all sorts and kinds. These are

dangers of the body. But what of the soul? How few appear to take any interest in this!

Perhaps the reader has never felt any need to escape. Why is this? It is because he has never realised his danger. But, **there is danger!** And once again a loving Saviour warns you of your danger, and invites you to escape.

Danger! you exclaim,—what danger? There is danger, friend, because you are a sinner. Every man's conscience tells him that one verse of the Bible at any rate is true: "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

Yes, there is danger—universal danger; and that, because **all have sinned.**

There is danger because God is holy; He cannot look at sin; He cannot tolerate it in His holy presence. And if you stand before Him in the judgment-day with sin upon you, banished you must be for ever from His face.

There is danger, because the judgment is at hand. God has appointed the day in which He will judge the world in righteousness: He has ordained the Judge, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now ready, willing, and able to be your Saviour.

There is danger because eternity will never end, and as you enter it, so will you spend it. If you enter it unsaved, you will be for ever unsaved. If you enter it unforgiven, you will be for ever unforgiven. If you enter it without Christ, you will be for ever without Christ.

But thank God there is a

way of escape.

It is a way of God's own devising. Christ died for guilty sinners, that guilty sinners might escape the judgment that their sins deserve. Christ suffered for our sins, that we might never suffer for them. Christ bore the awful judgment of a sin-hating God, that you and I, dear reader, might never have to bear it. Yes, thank God, there is a way of escape; there is only one, and that way is open for you, whoever you may be. But, "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 4).

But not only is there a way of escape, there is also a

time for escape.

And that time is now—to-day. Perhaps you think that there is plenty of time—that you are too young to think of these things. Remember

that most of the hundreds that perished in a few moments in the Chicago theatre, and in the "General Slocum" steamship, were quite young people. How hard to have young lives cut short so suddenly in the bloom and freshness of boyhood and girlhood. Yes, indeed it seems so; but such things happen, and happen frequently in this sad world; and therefore we urge upon all our young readers, that now, this moment, is the very best time to escape from the coming judgment, by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have lately seen a large number of young people rejoicing in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why not trust Him now?

One word more—If you persist in rejecting the Saviour's loving invitation, it may soon for you be

impossible to escape.

It is said that while the fearful fire was raging in the Iroquois Theatre, a newspaper reporter, anxious to describe the gruesome sight in the evening press, remained to watch its progress, confident that he would himself be able to escape. As one tier of seats after another became enveloped by the devouring flames, he withdrew from gallery to gallery. At length

the furnace of heat became intolerable, and he turned to flee, but only to find, too late, that every door of exit was blocked with corpses, piled high one upon another. He perished in the flames. Why? Because he neglected the way of escape, and despised the time of escape.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” The way of salvation now offered to you is a perfect one. No one ever yet came to the Lord Jesus Christ—

“With this the contrite sinner’s plea,
Thou lovest me—”

and was turned away unsaved. No. Salvation is a certainty for every one that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Oh! what a Saviour is Jesus the Lord,
Well might His name by His saints be adored!
He has redeemed them from hell by His blood,
Saved them for ever, and brought them to God.

Thousands have fled to His spear-piercèd side,
Welcome they all have been, none are denied;
Weary and laden, they all have been blest,
Joyfully now in the Saviour they rest.”

"I am waiting on Him now."

JESUS CHRIST the Saviour is in the glory of God. What glad tidings this is for poor sinners for whom when on earth He died!

"It was for *sinners* Jesus died." He now adorns the throne of God, and the voice heard from that throne is not one of judgment, but of mercy; proclaiming glad tidings to man, whoever and whatever he may be, offering him salvation without money or without price. What a full salvation it is! It takes up a poor sinner in his sins just as he is, it strips him from all that unfits him for the presence of God, and it also clothes him with what fits him for it, and it gives him a link with the Saviour in heaven.

"Our title to glory we read in Thy blood."

It comes to us from the heart of God, and the tender grace of the Saviour seeks to win ours to God that we may joy in Him.

One who had recently been brought to know his Saviour in the glory, and that he was fitted to stand before God in heaven's unclouded rays,

every trace of sin having been removed by His precious blood, was heard to say that he hardly liked the sleeping hours of night, lest they should dim his joy, so great it was. He had gone to a distant land as a soldier when young, and it was there, when far from kith and kin, and all the loved associations of home and country, that he began to feel a need in his soul which increased and deepened as time went on. He knew he was a sinner, and had no standing before God. Unsaved, as he knew he was, he tried to act in the fear of God, and he asked one and another for help to his soul, but he could find nowhere what gave him peace. Where was he to turn? It was useless to ask those around him whose minds were occupied with the world and its honours, and who had no thought of God; and those who ought to have been able and ready to put Christ and His finished work before him were unable to meet his need. What could a dead formality in religion do for him? a soul in agony before God and spending hours in prayer! The answer was to be found from God's side, and in God's way.

He returned to his native land, and that he was in anxiety as to his salvation was evident to those around him. It was said to him one day,

“Since you earnestly desire to know God, of whose love you have heard so much of late, and that He is holding out salvation to you full and free, what is it that you are waiting for?”

His reply was given soberly and seriously—and oh, that all might ponder it!—“I have put myself unreservedly in God’s hands, and I am waiting on Him now.”

There was intense reality in this. He had given God His true place, and he was in his true place before God. He had got to the end of himself; all his efforts and struggles had ceased; he had learned that he was without strength; and what he had tried to be and to do earnestly had only ended in disappointment.

He now stood a sinful man before God and nothing else, and his only hope was in God. Calmly and confidently he was waiting on Him. His soul’s salvation was at stake, eternity was at stake. Solemn moment in the history of a soul. Would God disappoint him, the God of all tenderness and grace? Did He ever disappoint any one who came to Him and put their trust in Him? Never.

“A flax thread in oceans of fire,

How soon swallowed up it would be!

Yet sooner in oceans of mercy

The sinner that cometh to Me.”

And so he found it to be. The Lord completed the work He had begun. His light shone into his soul. He saw by faith, Jesus, the Saviour, who had died for him, and borne his sins in His own body on the tree, on the right hand of the Majesty on high; the triumphant answer to every fear, his troubled conscience was at rest, the longing of his heart satisfied, and he was at peace with God.

Do you wonder at his rejoicing soul? to find that heaven itself was now open to him, and that by faith he saw his Saviour *there*—joy filled his heart, such joy as he had never before experienced or dreamt of, a joy that belonged to heaven and could not be found on earth. He was joying in God.

He started on a new career at once, resolved to live for the God who had wrought salvation for him, eschewing everything that would hinder him from following Christ and serving Him.

How many anxious souls there are in this world! longing to obtain an assured salvation, earnestly striving, it may be, to be better and to fit themselves for God, and finding that their efforts are of no avail. What are they to do? What can they do? Give themselves up in despair? No. "*Stand still*, and see the salva-

tion of God with you.” “The battle is not *yours* but God’s.” Commit yourself to Him. “He waits to be gracious.” He alone can fit you. “He has found a ransom.”

The blood of Jesus Christ has spoken before and on the throne, and salvation is awaiting every one who is wholly cast upon God. The all-sufficient and all-availing sacrifice of Christ has been accepted of God. It stands good before God, and has once and for ever settled every score for you. “Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever.” God’s answer is sure as His Word declares, and readily and quickly it comes. The simple word addressed by the thief on the cross to Jesus, brought out immediately the soul-assuring and comforting answer, “*To-day* shalt thou be *with Me* in Paradise.”

We read in Zechariah iii. that a guilty sinner clothed in filthy garments stood before God. He had no plea to offer or reply to make to the accusations brought against him. Where could he look or what could he do? He was *in the presence of God*, and his verdict must come from God. God Himself took up his cause and said unto him, “Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” God, with whom he had

to do, was on his side, and such are His ways of blessing towards all who come to Him and look to Him alone, as His Word abundantly proves.

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

*Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve !
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come !"*

M. V.

"Nothing Bettered."

A MISSIONARY had been speaking to the men in a City house during the dinner hour. Getting afterwards into conversation with one of them, he sought to help him as to his soul.

"I am trying to be better," the man said.

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Before you can be *better*, you must have been *good*, and there is no goodness inherent or belonging to man. He is "born in sin," and he continues in it.

If you reflect on the story the Lord Jesus told the lawyer who asked Him what good thing he should do to gain eternal life, you will understand this (Luke x.). The "certain man" was beyond the possibility of making himself better—he was "half dead" and stripped of that with which he might have been tempted to better himself; he had no resources left, and was incapable of any effort. To him came one who was furnished with power and boundless love. He did everything for him. "He . . . came where he was; and . . . had compassion on him."

This is what Jesus is still doing for those who are bad—not for the good. "Christ receiveth *sinful* men." He took the place of such. Those who were like sheep going astray can say: "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." He will give His place in glory to all who accept the truth that "He died, the Just for the *unjust*, to bring us to God." No one who looked at Him could think of bettering himself—instead he would exclaim—

"Oh, how vile my low estate,
Since my ransom was so great!"

The Influence of one Life.

IN the early sixties H.M. sloop "S——" was commissioned at Plymouth for service on the Pacific Station. She was a fine heavily-rigged little vessel, and carried a crew of 130 officers and men.

As far as the writer of this paper knew, there was but one man on board at that time to whom the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ was known. This man was a colour-sergeant of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, and in command of the small detachment of his corps on board.

Sergeant B——, from the day he stepped on board the ship, showed his colours as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first evening he was on board he quietly kneeled down at his chest before retiring to his hammock, and though this step met with the derision and disapproval of those around him, his subsequent life and conduct soon showed that he was thoroughly in earnest, and soon became a marvellous power for good on board.

Being well up to his duties, sober and con-

scientious, he soon gained the approbation of his superior officers.

There was some influence about him his shipmates did not understand. He took various opportunities of speaking to them about the eternal verities of life whenever he could ; generally in the night watches, in heavy gales, or when anything occurred more than usual to solemnise the minds of his hearers. When he did introduce these topics, he did it in such a way that interest was excited and no antagonistic feelings aroused.

Before the ship reached Valparaiso, the sergeant had spoken to many of his shipmates, and one quiet Sunday afternoon, when anchored in one of the magnificent inlets of the Magellan Straits, he proposed to hold a Bible Class in the stokehole, the chief engineer having kindly given permission ; three officers and six men attended.

The writer of these lines was one of those who were early interested in heavenly things by Sergeant B——, and well remembers this first meeting, and its rather lugubrious surroundings. It was the first service of the kind that he had ever attended, and made an impression that many long years cannot obliterate. There was a reality in the sergeant's prayers ; a personal

earnest pleading with his Heavenly Father that at the time we could not understand. He spoke "as a man talketh to his friend," and the Lord Jesus was a living bright reality to him.

The writer has never met before or since any one so completely in touch with the intense personality of a living Saviour who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Before the ship was twelve months on the station, the members attending the Bible Classes greatly increased. Sankey's hymns were often sung on Sunday evenings on the *fok'sle*. A week-day prayer meeting was started on Wednesday evenings, and one by one many were brought to the Lord. When lying in port, local services were attended, and quite a revival spread over the ship. Five officers and forty-five men joined the "Blue Lights," as the Christian Association was called, and the little band were quite a power in the ship, and greatly told in influencing for the better the conduct of the ship's company, as could be seen by the small "Punishment Return," an important document annually sent in to the Admiralty.

There were some lapses, and it was not all plain sailing, but the power of a risen Saviour kept most of the little party faithful and firm,

and many of them joining subsequently other ships became centres of Christian effort and were means of blessing in their new spheres.

Sergeant B——, having finished his service, took his pension, and shortly after got an appointment under the London City Mission. The writer of these lines has not heard of him for many years, but he has seen the results of his consecrated life. Many hundreds of naval officers and seamen have reason to thank God that the influence of one life, and that too in a humble position, has been the means of calling them out of darkness into His marvellous light.

B. ST G. D.



“You have left the Lord Jesus out.”

ABOUT July 1903, as I was sitting on a seat by the roadside, an old gentleman came and sat beside me. He was seventy-three years of age, nearly blind, and very hard of hearing. I could see he was very unhappy by the look on his face. I began to speak to him about his soul, and I found he was ready to listen, for he soon told me a sad tale.

He had not a friend on earth to whom he could unburden his mind; and although a wife and four grown-up children were living at home with him, yet he hardly ever got a kind word from them. Alas for such a family! But is not this a sign of the times? "Disobedient to parents . . . without natural affection" (2 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4). Moreover, I found he was concerned about his soul, and he owned that he was a lost sinner harassed by Satan.

In his distress he had cried to God to have mercy on him and forgive him his sins and save his soul. He repeated to me the little prayer which he had made up for himself and used night and morning and sometimes during the day. When I heard it I said, "Your prayer" (which was mostly confession) "is all right so far, but you have left out one thing."

"Have I," he said; "what is that?"

"You have left the Lord Jesus out," I said. "His word is: '*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*'"

"Oh," he said, "I didn't know that we had to go to Jesus to be saved."

"Yes," I said; "God so loved us that He sent His dear Son to die for us poor sinners that we might be saved, and 'there is no other name given

under heaven whereby we must be saved.’ In another place the Lord Jesus says, ‘I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.’”

This had a great effect on the old man; and as he expressed it, he went to that door and found that the Saviour opened that blessed door to him, and brought him out of darkness into the light. He asked me if he might come to my house sometimes to hear the Scriptures read, which request I was happy to grant, and it was a joy to see how eagerly he grasped the precious truth, as if he had been brought up in some heathen land where there is no Bible. Often when listening he would exclaim with tears, “Oh, He is a loving God.” And now his great desire is that other poor sinners may have their eyes opened that they may see the light—he knows there are hundreds who would be glad to be saved, but are like lost sheep, they cannot find their way.

Now, dear unsaved reader, may I ask you what are you resting your hopes upon? You may be very upright and moral, and no one be able to point the finger at you, but remember that you have to meet God. You may be a constant attendant at church or chapel, and be exerting

yourself to do good works, but be sure of this, that until *you* are accepted of God your works cannot be acceptable to Him. Cain took great pains to be accepted of God, but he ignored that terrible question of sin.

“God cannot pass the sinner by,
His sin demands that he must die ;
But through the blood of Christ we see
How God can save, yet righteous be.”

W. P.

“**The never disappoints.**”

A YOUNG woman, the mother of a little family, lay dying of consumption. I do not know what she felt about those she had to leave, but her own soul was at rest. She not only faced the future without dread, but with joy she looked forward to being with the blessed Saviour, who had given His life for her ; whose blood shed on the cross had atoned for all her sins, and made her fit to enter the presence of a holy God.

A very short time before her death, she said quietly to her mother, who was watching by her bedside, “Mother, I have seen the Lord, and He is coming again to-morrow at nine o’clock.”

When the promised hour had nearly arrived, she roused herself from a doze, and asked, “What time is it?”

“Twenty minutes to nine, dear,” replied the mother.

Twice again she asked, although without any anxiety. The third time the mother said regretfully, “Well, dear, it is ten minutes past nine.”

“Oh, mother, then *the clock must be fast; He never disappoints no one!*” Then after a moment’s pause, “Oh, there He is now! so beautiful!—now I’ve only to wait quietly till He comes again.”

She had not to wait long. A day or so more of suffering, and she was at rest in His presence, “to go no more out.”

Reader, this is a simple tale, but it is the embodiment of a great and blessed truth. The Lord Jesus Christ never disappointed any one. In the midst of this passing scene, in a world where change and decay is stamped upon all that surrounds us, what a rest to turn to the One, the *only* One, who never disappoints. Poor burdened soul, wearied with the heavy load of your sins, hearken to His gracious invitation, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28).

Are you afraid that the number and the magnitude of your sins will stand in the way of your acceptance? Then here is a word for you: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all sin*" (1 John i. 7). Are you, hungry and thirsty soul, finding out that no human cistern can ever satisfy your craving and your need? Then turn to the One who says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37). "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John vi. 35). For time and for eternity it is equally true.

"Happy they who trust in Jesus,
Sweet their portion is, and sure."

"Brought low through affliction."

MAN has turned his back upon God, he does not want God in this world, and he does not want to think about the future; indeed he won't think about it until he is in trouble. He seeks a position in this life, money to enjoy the

pleasures of sin, friends to flatter him, lands to call after his name—in fact, anything and everything except God. Then, like the poor prodigal in Luke xv. when he has spent all, he begins to be in want; for man’s resources do not last, and when they are exhausted, he finds only hard treatment in the far country.

Yet God is so gracious, that directly man says, “I want God,” there is a response from His heart, and His promise is fulfilled, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” God has many ways of producing a famine in souls. It may be through sickness, or loss of fortune or friends; and when such is the case, God’s dealings are often said to be hard and unkind, for man has his own ideas of God’s love, learnt in the darkness of his own heart. He is in darkness and cannot know God’s love. He thinks God ought to love him in such a way as to make him happy in this world, that he should have no privations and no trials, but he forgets that he has to pass out of this world some day, and that God wants to make him happy throughout eternity.

One of the malefactors on the cross said, “If thou be Christ, save Thyself and us,” that we may live happily in this world, but Jesus takes

the repentant thief with Him into Paradise instead. What a blessed exchange from this poor earth, with all its misery and sin, to the Paradise of God with Christ, and this is divine love. God loves man even though his heart is full of hatred to Him, and He must do so, because it is His nature to love. God showed His love to man by giving His only Son to die. What must He have felt, when after every possible insult had been heaped on Christ during His life, He saw Him crucified, and His precious blood spilt. Ah! dear reader, it was the blood that cleanseth from all sin. And if you have spent all in the far country, and are beginning to be in want, just turn your face homewards, like the prodigal, and say, "Father, I have sinned against *heaven* and in *Thy sight*." It makes no difference if you have taken a lifetime to spend all, God will receive you in His infinite love and grace. It is against heaven, against Him, that you have sinned, no matter what your outward conduct has been. Doubtless the poor woman which was a sinner (Luke vii.) wept more over her secret sins, than over those which the proud Pharisees had against her. "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

Have you ever read carefully Psalm cvii.? Four times it says, “**Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble**, and He saved them out of their distresses.” Each time they cry to God in their affliction, it is because He has had to bring them low to force them to cry to Him. “Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. **Then they cried** unto the Lord in their trouble,” &c. “Because they rebelled against the words of God, and condemned the counsel of the Most High, therefore He brought down their heart with labour. **Then they cried**,” &c. “Fools, because of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted . . . they draw near unto the gates of death. **Then they cry**,” &c. “He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof, . . . their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro . . . and are at their wit’s end. **Then they cry**,” &c. “Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.” And after all this, God says, “Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the *loving-kindness* of the Lord.”

God is not hard, dear friends, when He sends trouble to bring the sinner back to Himself.

“He doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men.” He does it out of loving-kindness—“All day long have I stretched out My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people ;” but it is often quite at the close of day that man will take those proffered hands of love, and then only because he is in desperate need.

Psalm cvii. relates primarily to Israel, but there have been millions of similar cases for centuries past, and I will tell you of one that came within the circle of my acquaintance. It was that of a man who had been brought up in a Christian home under the frequent sound of the gospel. His parents prayed for him daily, and he had many a time knelt with them at the throne of grace and sat beside them when God’s Word was read. Yet as he grew up he deliberately chose the world in preference to Christ, the world on which his parents and most of his family had turned their backs.

Years passed—the parents died without seeing their prayers answered, and it seemed as though the son had completely forgotten all that he had heard from their lips and witnessed in their lives. But God answers the prayer of faith, and He had watched those parents agonising on their knees before Him for their first-born son, and

He found means of reaching this lost one. It was through affliction that He brought him to own his need. The years drew nigh when he would say, “I have no pleasure in them,” and then God laid him low on a bed of sickness, and there He spoke to him, when he was past recognising any human voice. He had chosen to enjoy the pleasures of this world during his life, and it was only when he drew nigh to the gates of death, when he was in fact at his wit’s end, that he bowed to Him whom he had slighted for a lifetime. Could any one say it was hard of God to melt him then in the furnace of affliction?

One who was closely related to him by the ties of nature, wrote as follows of his last moments:—

“The accounts of our poor — have made my heart rejoice, for now I feel assured that the faithful Shepherd took away all mental power and bodily hindrances, to speak life to his soul, and make him as a little child. While senseless to everything around and not recognising any one, he insisted time after time on rising to *pray*. ‘I must pray.’ ‘Speak reverently.’ ‘Be silent.’ ‘I must kneel on my knees.’ Such sentences came again and again, and he in-

sisted on kneeling up in his bed, burying his face in his hands and praying, but no distinct words could be heard. He saveth to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. 'Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.'"

Have *you* cried unto the Lord in your trouble and been saved by Him? G. P. V.

LOST BY THREE SECONDS.

THERE are many people who do not intend to be lost in the end, but they are nevertheless trifling away their chances of salvation.

When the court-martial was held recently on the loss of Submarine A1 with her gallant crew of eleven, it was stated that she was

lost by three seconds only.

Reader, take warning by this. Do not persist in running the awful risk, but come **now**, as you are, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you learnt that you are a sinner? His precious blood cleanses from all sin.

Believe in the Lord Jesus with your heart, and confess Him with your lips. A. H. B.

When did God first begin to think about you?

IT is ever God's delight to establish the soul in the blessed grace of the gospel, for it is His desire that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. ii. 4).

On this point we cannot be too clear, nor can we urge with too great emphasis the fact that the gospel contains a world-wide invitation to "whosoever will." There are no barriers on God's side. There is no disinclination on His part to save the vilest sinner, to reconcile the most stubborn rebel, nor to pardon the most guilty. A righteous foundation has been laid in the atoning work of His dear Son, on the ground of which, consistently with every attribute of His divine justice, majesty, and glory, He can rescue from Satan's hellish grip the guiltiest and blackest.

But there must be on the sinner's part the acknowledgment of his guilt, and the owning of his lost condition.

It was when Isaiah's confession rung out plain and clear, "Woe is me! for

I am undone,"

that God's immediate and peace-giving answer sped its way on seraph wing—"Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isa. vi. 5-8).

Yes, dear reader, the mighty work of atonement is accomplished—all is finished for God's glory, and the sinner's salvation. On God's side there is no barrier—

"Returning sons He kisses,
And with His robe invests ;
His perfect love dismisses
All terror from our breasts."

But it is ever Satan's effort to raise barriers, to create difficulties, and to stumble inquiring souls. And by no means is he more successful than by a misapplied truth. And such is the doctrine of election when taken from its proper place as a gem of priceless value in the believer's casket of blessings, and thrown as a stumbling-block in the anxious sinner's path to a Saviour God.

Some while ago, while travelling in the West of England with a Christian friend, an instance came before me of the comfort of this very doctrine when rightly understood.

The only other occupant of the carriage was

a professional man busily engaged in official correspondence. Not a very likely subject, thought I to myself, for a conversation on the things of God, especially so absorbed as he was in business.

However, I soon observed my friend feeling in his pocket, as was his custom, for some gospel books, one of which he presently handed to the gentleman opposite.

To my surprise the little book was most politely received, and laying down his correspondence, our fellow-traveller read it right through, returning it to my friend with a genuine "Thank you, sir."

A most interesting conversation followed, during which we found out that our travelling companion had only recently been converted. He had been an utterly careless and worldly man until three years previously, when God brought him to feel his need of a Saviour, and revealed Christ to his soul. He was full of joy, and it evidently gave him pleasure to speak of these subjects.

"And had you no thought about God until three years ago?" inquired my friend.

"No, sir; I think I may say I lived without any thought of Him."

“And when did God first begin to think about you?” was the next question.

“Oh, I suppose He has been thinking of me ever since I was born.”

Taking his Bible from his pocket, my friend opened it, and placing his finger on Ephesians i. 4, handed it across to the other, requesting him to read it aloud.

Slowly and thoughtfully came the words—

“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.”

“Now,” again asked my friend, “when did God first begin to think about you?”

Bible in hand, and with eyes fixed in evident amazement on the verse, came the reply, “Before the foundation of the world—why, that is wonderful; I never thought of that before.”

It seemed to fill him with a fresher and deeper comfort. The salvation of God he had appropriated to himself three years before. He had discovered then that he was a lost sinner, and that Christ was the Saviour of the lost. He trusted that Saviour and rejoiced in His salvation. Now he had learned that from all eternity he had been the object of the heart of God; that he had been chosen in Christ before even the

worlds had been called into being. Nothing then could break the link that bound him to that Saviour, for nothing could ever frustrate the fulfilment of God's purposes which were in Christ before time had begun to be.

Oh, what a comfort is this to the weak and fearful saint—

“The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete ;
His promise is Yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet.

Things future, nor things that are now,
Nor all things below nor above,
Can make Him His purpose forego,
Nor sever my soul from His love.

My name from the palms of His hands,
Eternity will not erase ;
Impressed on His heart it remains
In marks of indelible grace.”

But perhaps the reader may ask, “How may I know that I am one of the elect of God?”

In the same way that this dear man knew it ; in the same way, too, that the Thessalonian converts knew it. The gospel had reached them when they were lost in their sins ; it told them of a Saviour who had suffered for their sins and risen again (Acts xvii.), and believing that

gospel they were saved, so that the Apostle Paul could write to them—

“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”

How did they know it? The next verse supplies the answer: “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance” (1 Thess. i. 4, 5).

The precious truth of election is therefore not to be used as a stumbling-block in the path of the anxious, seeking soul, but as a ground of confidence to the heart that has already tasted the joy of God’s saving grace. A. H. B.

“Christ has already received me.”

A YOUNG wife and mother lay dying. The doctors had done all that human skill could devise to subdue the raging fever, but were at last obliged to admit that their best efforts were futile. One of them, the girl’s own father, had strained every nerve to save her, and had watched with anguish the impotence of each fresh remedy. Then, as

he faced the sad reality that she was dying, he felt that at any rate she must be told the truth as to her state. It would be far better for her to *know* that she was going into eternity.

Very gently and tenderly he broke it to her, but nothing could soften the blow to one so young, and a heartrending struggle ensued. Was her life really over? Must she indeed part with all she loved in this world—babes, husband, parents, brothers and sisters? She had never even thought of having to leave them, and the shadows of grief had not yet crossed her pathway. Earth seemed so bright, and heaven so dim. But it was God’s will, and had He not the right to do as He pleased? It was useless to contend with Him, and besides He knew best. By degrees she grew calm and peaceful. Passages from the Bible were read to her, and the pastor was summoned, as is customary on those sad occasions.

Approaching the bedside, the signs of death were so unmistakable that he said, “Shall I pray God to receive you?”

To the surprise, perhaps, of himself and those who stood by, she quietly answered, “*He has already received me.*”

She had learnt in days of health what the

poor woman in Luke vii. learnt, that "this man *receiveth* sinners,"—what the prodigal in Luke xv. learnt when the father ran to meet him in his rags, and fell on his neck and kissed him, clothing him then in the best robe and killing the fatted calf because he had "*received* him safe and sound." She had learnt what the young children in Judea learnt when Jesus took them up in His arms and blessed them. He had then said, "Suffer the little children to *come unto Me*, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." She had come to Him now, and He had received and blessed her according to His promise.

The seed had been sown early in her young heart, and had sprung and grown up and borne fruit to His eye who had watched over it night and day. She had an aunt who had prayed for her from babyhood, and as she attained years of understanding had sent her regularly every month a gospel periodical bearing the glad tidings from God of peace to her soul, which she had received in faith, and now on her death-bed confessed.

Dear readers, do not despise these little tokens of God's yearning grace over you. You too, perhaps, have Christian friends and relatives

who send you *Echoes of Mercy*, or other gospel periodicals, and you think it a bore to have to read them, and wish they did not come, reminding you of the world to come, of heaven and hell. I entreat you to take heed to these little messengers, for how do you know that you too may not be cut off before your time, as M—— was? What a blessing it was to her to know that she was going, not to an unknown land, but to a Person, the Lord Jesus, who had already received her just as she was, and had washed her from her sins in His own blood.

It is God's delight to bless the sinner, and the “music and the dancing” testified to His joy over the poor returning prodigal whom He had received safe and sound. Can you say like my young friend, “He has already received me”?

To Christian readers I would say: “Do not be disheartened about sending tracts or periodicals to the unconverted. You may only know by-and-by the blessing they have been. Send them with the prayer of faith like M——'s aunt, and God will water and bless the seed sown. And perhaps He will give you, as He gave to her, the comfort and joy of knowing even here that ‘your labour is not in vain in the Lord.’”

Jesus stands waiting to receive every poor sinner that comes to Him by faith—and what a reception He gives both now and hereafter! We are received just as we are, in all our guilt and misery—carried home on His shoulders rejoicing—put to sleep by Him like M——, or waiting for the moment when He will come to meet us in the air and receive us unto Himself for ever. May such a reception be yours!

“Sinners Jesus will receive—

Say this word of grace to all
Who the heavenly pathway leave,
All who linger, all who fall!
This can bring them back again:
Christ receiveth sinful men.

Shepherds seek their wandering sheep,
O'er the mountains bleak and cold—
Jesus such a watch doth keep
O'er the lost ones of His fold—
Seeking them o'er moor and fen:
Christ receiveth sinful men.

Come, and He will give you rest;
Sorrow-stricken, sin-defiled,
He can make the sinfullest
God the Father's blessed child;
Trust Him, for His word is plain:
Christ receiveth sinful men.”

The Slave Dhow.

DEAR reader, I write this little narrative, not to occupy you with slavery or slave dhows, but to show you what actually occurred, and how *faith* can triumph in times of adversity, seeking to illustrate it by the following incident.

In the year 1887 the writer was serving in H.M.S. "Boadicea" with other ships of the British fleet, suppressing the slave trade on the east coast of Africa.

You who dwell in safety in this enlightened and richly endowed country have no idea of the sufferings of the poor African negro, a slave to Satan, to sin, and to his cruel master. Thousands have lived a short life of suffering and bondage of the vilest kind, and at last have sunk into a despised and dishonoured grave.

May I affectionately ask you, dear reader, whether you are delivered from the bondage of Satan, sin, and death. You are unable to deliver yourself, but it is glad tidings for you that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6); and also that "forasmuch then as the children

are partakers of flesh and blood, He also (Christ) Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

It may seem almost incredible to you that men could be so cruel as to act like the heartless Arabs, who on the darkest nights surround the black man's village, and setting fire to it, wait for the shrieking inhabitants to rush out. They then slay the old and the infants, and forming the rest into a long line of sorrowing captives, commence the cruel march down to the sea-coast, where the slave dhow (a small ship of about ninety tons burden) awaits them. They are then bound and crammed into her noisome hold in darkness to make a voyage of four or five days to the place where they are to be sold in the slave markets.

At the time of which I write, the British ships having received news that a large dhow was making her way across, the boats were armed and manned ready to intercept her.

One boat, in which was a Christian by the name of George P——, proceeded up the mouth of a small creek to await her approach. She was soon sighted, and sweeping into the river's

mouth, opened fire on our boat, killing the officer in charge. Our men used their utmost endeavours to board her, so the work of carnage was quickly over, and the victory won. The slaves were delivered, but George P—— had a bullet wound extending from his hip to his breast, and was, as seemed to himself and to all, inevitably dying.

And now, my interested reader, may I, for the love of Christ, and your never-dying soul, tell you of a battle fought and a victory won for you and for me. Yes, beloved reader, no battle fought or victory won will ever equal that when the legions of darkness were gathered together on Calvary's heights to put to death the spotless Son of God. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel of God"—for your sins and the sins of the whole world—"Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). But death could not hold Him; He is risen, and become the living Saviour of all who put their trust in Him. "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts ii. 24).

And now, dear reader, "to Him give *all* the

prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

But what triumphant song is this we hear as George P——, wounded and to all appearance dying, is carried up the side of his ship? Rugged men, hardened sinners, bow their heads and weep, as that sweet sound, that blessed testimony to a Saviour's all-cleansing blood, reaches their ears—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Grace hath hid me safe in thee;
Where the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Are of sin the double cure,
Cleansing from its guilt and power."

Yes, it is George, triumphing in the victory that another has won! With no dear mother or sister near, six thousand miles from home, the life blood flowing from his side, he is celebrating Calvary's victory in sacred song!

Listen, beloved reader, and let your heart be won for Christ—

"While I draw this fleeting breath,
If mine eyes are closed in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
Still of Thee I'll sing alone:—
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
All my boast and joy's in Thee."

Can you say, I shall thus triumph at the end of my course? Yes, friend, you *will* thus triumph if by saving faith in that cleansing blood that flowed from the Saviour's pierced side, your sins are washed away.

“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.”

Dear reader, although expecting and longing at that time to be “absent from the body and present with the Lord,” it pleased God, after a long and painful illness, to raise George P—— up again, and after years of ignorance as to his welfare, the writer has just received news that he is still living and still testifying of that love which sought and won his heart for ever. W. S.

“I have Sinned, and I have Suffered.”

THESE were the words of one who, though unconverted, through the pressure of circumstances was led to admit that in years past she had yielded to the temptation to take “the pleasures of sin for a

season." In consequence of this she had had to eat the fruit of her own ways, and had passed through much trial and sorrow. Deeply she felt this, and still the trial remained.

Do not these words express perhaps the experience of many a soul who has heedlessly and wilfully taken his own way without God? Did not the prodigal find, when he left his father's house and went his own way in the far country, that hardship and degradation were the fruit of his self-willed course?

There are many instances of this in the Word of God from Adam downwards. His one act of disobedience brought death into the world. Then Cain, in his hatred and jealousy of his brother, killed him; and after God had spoken to him, said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Look, too, at Absalom, whose love of power and flattery led to disobedience to his father, and heartless rebellion against him, causing his own death.

We may also note God's dealings with His earthly people Israel. Jehovah had said (Exod. xv. 26), "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight . . . I will put none of these diseases upon thee." But what was the

state of this people when the Lord was on earth? Suffering, disease, and death everywhere plainly showed that they had *not* been obedient, and were then “eating the fruits of their own way.”

We need not multiply instances of this, for we see around us what terrible trials and sorrows have resulted to many who have yielded to the power of the tempter and have had to reap the sad consequences.

Then, again, think of the pain and weariness that a rebuking conscience gives to the erring one. Oh, what days and nights of bitter, bitter weeping and remorse are passed through by such till there seems to be no remedy, no hope! nothing but the future of eternal misery staring one in the face, for we read, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Ps. ix. 17). Yes, God is righteous, and sin must be punished.

But is there no hope? is there no way out of this state of misery? Yes, truly, for there is One who *never* sinned, and yet has “suffered, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” But how can I face God? says one who is willing to confess the sin. Take your Bible, and read, “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). This same "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

That Holy One, of whom it is written, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," suffered that you might not suffer eternally. Listen further to God's own Word: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii.).

Is not this good news? Will you believe it? Can you say before God in simple faith, "He bore *my* sins in His own body on the tree, on that dreadful cross where man crucified this Blessed One"? He whose whole life on earth was for the glory of God—that Holy One who bore not only all the indignities that man could heap upon Him, but also the hiding of God's face on the cross, when He was made sin to meet all the righteous claims of God. Think what an hour that was!

"That hour of deepest woe"

He bore that the sinners He had come to save might be freed from the eternal consequences of their sin.

Do you fear to trust Him? He says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." Did he repel the woman of Samaria, whose life had been one of sin and shame? (John iv.). Was not the woman in Simon's house a sinner (Luke vii.), and she was received by Jesus, and heard what He said of her to the self-righteous Pharisee, who had found fault with the Lord for His grace in receiving her? He says, "Her sins, which are many, are all forgiven." To her His words are, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Confess it all to this gracious God and Saviour, and trust Him who is faithful and just to forgive your many sins. What joy and comfort it will be if you are able to say, His blood was shed for me upon the cross, and I am saved for ever through the death of that One who never sinned but suffered in my stead!

"Yes, there's One—only One!
The blessed, blessed Saviour, He's the One.
When afflictions press the soul,
And waves of trouble roll,
And you need a Friend to help you,
He's the One."

Portraits.

I LIFT my eyes. I look around the room in which I am writing. There are portraits on the wall—*portraits of the dead*: one, two, three, four—I can count a dozen.

They are the pictures of those who were once my best and dearest upon earth, and now they are gone—they are dead. I shall see them no more until I reach that better land where there will be “no *more death*, neither . . . crying.”*

I look back over the years of life. What is to be noted? There are certain milestones—events which mark the years as they glide by—and these milestones are *generally* a death. In such and such a year I lost a brother, in another my mother, my dearest friend, my father; and so it goes on—

“Death like a shadow rests on all below,
E’en fairest landscape wears a tint of woe.”

What is coming next? *My own death.*
Let it not be thought that I would omit or

* Let any who are above middle age glance round their rooms; they will probably find reminiscences of the dead and of death preponderate.

forget the Lord's coming ; I assume only for the moment that death *may* occur before He comes. It is well for each to face it. If a backward glance over the earthly journey make the death-milestones stand out in startling array, the future will naturally be much the same ; could we undraw the curtain for one instant, we should see the same vista of milestones ahead—my death, your death, and so on. Are you afraid ? You *ought* to be, unless you are sheltered by the blood. Yes, unless the precious blood of the Lamb without spot or blemish has been sprinkled outside *your* house, that destroying angel, that king of terrors, *ought* to be a horror, a nightmare, to you.

I was looking down the death column of a newspaper the other day. There I saw recorded the death of a rich man well known in bygone years. I remember him on one occasion especially. He had come to the house full of civility and to do a favour. He encountered more than he expected. He was met by a man—once as worldly as himself—who, having been converted out and out during a recent revival, was now an earnest Christian, and anxious that others should have the same Saviour too. He had weighed the relative value of the world and Christ. So

he buttonholed him at once, and I overheard him ask: "Do you know the *value* of the blood of Christ?" It made a great impression on me at the time. Let me repeat the question to you: "Do *you* know the value of the blood of Christ?"

"His blood has made the vilest clean,
His blood availed for me."

If this be your reply, you need not be afraid to die. The blood was the sign to the destroying angel that night in Egypt. He would not have *dared* to enter any house with such a mark upon it—the blood of the lamb slain by the owner of the house and struck on the posts and on the lintel of his door; it was God's seal on that dwelling: all inside belonged to Him, and all were safe. Like the scarlet line on Rahab's house, it was a "true token." Those within her house knew about it, and they accepted the shelter. If you are docketed thus, if the blood of Jesus be *your* "true token," if it have cleansed you from all sin, never mind the milestones and the portraits of the dead. We may be *glad* to die if death be entrance into the presence of the One who did so much for us. Think what it cost Him! Think of the spear that pierced His side and caused the blood to flow for *you*, for *me*!

“Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
 Shall never lose its power,
 Till every blood-washed saint of God
 Be saved to sin no more.”

H. L. H.

Resist, or Yield? Which?

SOME years ago a case of choosing evil rather than good came under my observation, producing a lasting and profitable impression on the mind and heart. The mention of it may serve as a warning to those who are halting between two opinions. There comes a moment in life when God sets before the soul by His Spirit His own perfect way, and when that is refused, there is and can be no other.

“For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

In the East End of London a young man was giving away tracts in front of a hall, and inviting passers-by to a gospel meeting. Seeing the great need and danger of a young woman who was passing, he invited her into the house

for a little conversation with me. Our few moments together were very solemn, and must have been fraught with grave results to that poor heart-sick, sin-stricken soul.

Never before or since do I remember hearing a poor sinner so fully own a way to be wicked as well as wilful, and yet deliberately refuse to forsake it when urged to do so. Alas! alas! for the innate depravity of heart thus manifested—"desperately wicked," says the prophet Jeremiah.

“‘Almost persuaded’—now to believe;
 ‘Almost persuaded’—Christ to receive;
 Seems now some soul to say,
 ‘Go, Spirit, go Thy way,
 Some more convenient day
 On Thee I’ll call’?”

“‘Almost persuaded’—come, come to-day;
 ‘Almost persuaded’—turn not away;
 Jesus invites you here,
 Angels are lingering near,
 Prayers rise from hearts so dear,
 O wanderer, come!”

That young woman was living in sin, and knew that it could not be for long, while she nominally assented to all that was said to her of the grace, love, and holiness of the living God. But forsake her course she could, would, or

dared not. For though in no hurry to go and leave the sound of God's precious gospel behind her, she ended by passing out and onwards, where I saw her no more. She had left the wooings of God's gracious holy Word, for the wretched life which for a few minutes she had looked at in His light, acknowledged to be wrong and short-lived, and which yet she chose to pursue instead of forsake.

How oft the sight of that poor deluded one has risen before me, as I thought of her going down those steps, that winter's night—fit emblem of the downward course her eyes and heart had taken! "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12).

Is there any reader of this little episode in another's life who has seen and heard of God's free salvation, yet is halting, wavering, leaning, to the downward path? Pause, I ask, in the solemnity of God's holy presence. Think what it may cost you to put off any longer. Think of life's possibilities if you let slip the admonition of *to-day*.

"*To-day* if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the *day* of

salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "Choose ye *this day* whom ye will serve" (Josh. xxiv. 15). You cannot serve till you know your Master, and only the believer can say "Rabboni," *i.e.* to say "Master," as Mary did at morning dawn, when she heard her name on the lips of her risen Lord. There in the garden, the sepulchre could not hold Him, but He stopped to speak to one who sought Him in her sorrow and her love. Are *you* seeking? Do *you* hear His voice? Will *you* answer, "Master"?

"Earthly friends may fail or leave thee,
 One day soothe, the next day grieve thee,
 But this Friend will ne'er deceive thee,
 O how He loves!"

G. W.



Now.

DEAR reader, there is surely a deeply important lesson to be learned from the unavailing earnestness of the rich man, whose story is so solemnly related by the Lord (Luke xvi. 19-31). No doubt you have often been impressed by that terrible picture.

You will remember then that Scripture says, "In hell (hades) he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." He has reached the place where misery is **eternal**—that abyss of gloom where one ray of hope can **never** enter.

None of his requests can now be granted, no matter how earnest they may be—it is **too late** ! but from the words uttered in the depths of that gulf-separated place there sounds out a lesson for others who have not yet passed into eternity—a lesson of which souls to-day would do well to take advantage.

Oh ! that people could throw off the chains of procrastination and indifference which are bound round them. Oh ! that they could be endued, in this the day of God's long-suffering grace, with even the smallest measure of the earnestness of this man in hell. Surely it would mean the salvation of their precious souls !

One meets with many who might be described in the words of a well-known poet—

"How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
'Soul, from thy casement look, and thou shalt see
How He persists to knock and wait for thee !'
And, oh ! how often to that voice of sorrow,
'To-morrow we will open,' I replied ;
And when the morrow came, I answered still, 'To-
morrow.'"

But, dear reader, while it is possible that you may say, "To-morrow or some other convenient season" is time enough to be in earnest about salvation, remember this that God says, "Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Surely the sad case of this eternally-doomed sinner (procrastinator in life as he must have been) should be a solemn warning against trifling with precious time. Let me tell you, that if you have not yet decided for the Lord Jesus, every "to-morrow" finds you weaker, and more a slave than you were yesterday.

Then, "Come to the Saviour, make no delay."

Be in earnest, Now,

and present true happiness and eternal bliss will be yours.

"Come **now**, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

A. S. M.

The Pit and the Ransom.

A SHORT while ago the whole civilised world was stirred at the announcement that two English gentlemen had been seized by brigands and carried away to the mountain fastnesses of Morocco.

Residing with their families in a beautiful villa in the neighbourhood of Tangier, after dinner one night in the month of June last, the brigand chief Raisuli, with a crowd of armed Moors, swept down upon the unsuspecting company, and amid a din of voices and the clatter of swords and rifles and horse hoofs made off with their prey into the darkness. An immense ransom of £20,000 was demanded as the condition of their release.

We see in all this an illustration of the sinner's terrible plight. A stronger and mightier power than that of the Moorish brigand holds all men in his cruel grasp. But, alas! many there are who know not that they are captives in his chains. He hurries them along the downward road to their eternal ruin, enticing them with the varied baits that he knows so well how to

cast before them—drink, lust, the love of money, ambition, pleasure, the praise of men.

Down, down they go, one after another, down to the pit. "There is no God," cries one as he hurries down to the pit, living his life from cradle to grave as if there were no God. But

there is a God.

There is a God in whose presence all must appear. There is a God to whom all must give an account. There is a God who will by no means clear the guilty—a God of righteousness, holiness, and truth. But listen,

"He is gracious."

Ah yes! "God is love." He so loved the world that He gave up His Son for you, friend, that you should not perish.

"There is no hereafter," cries another as he hurries along down the broad road to destruction. "There is no judgment, no hell, no punishment for sin. You may sin, and sin, and sin, and die in your sins; it does not matter, all will get to that bright and holy heaven after all," so shout a chorus of sinners as they pour along the highway of sin; but it is

the way to the pit.

But God is gracious. He has been gracious to countless multitudes of sinners who once pursued the paths of sin, but whose feet shall soon tread the golden courts of the city of God. Washed from their many stains in the precious blood of His dear Son, their voices shall soon "join in the chorus that never will end,"

"From every kingdom of earth they come
To join the triumphal cry,
Singing, 'Worthy the Lamb that once was slain,'
But will *you* be there and I?"

Yes, God is gracious; He has been gracious to me. He waits to be gracious to you. "Deliver him from going

down to the pit,"

He says.

Satan is plotting your ruin, God desires your deliverance from his hellish grip. Satan cries, "There is no pit," and his poor silly thoughtless dupes hurry along blinded, bound, and fettered.

How can they be delivered? How can they be set free? How can they be plucked from his grasp? Listen, "**I have found a ransom.**"

Thank God, then, dear friend, you need not be lost, you need not go down to the pit,

a ransom has been found!

Yes, God Himself has found it, a perfect, an infinite, an all-sufficient ransom.

God is holy and righteous, and man is sinful and guilty. What is to be done? How can that holy God and that guilty sinner stand together?

Ah, there is a mediator—one mediator, and **only one**—a mediator between God and men the Man Christ Jesus. What has He done? Listen, “He gave Himself

a ransom for all.”

Is this not sufficient? It is enough for God—why not, then, for you? Will you be so foolish as to refuse the ransom that God has found? Could we conceive of such folly as that the captives of the Moorish brigand chief should have rejected the costly ransom of £20,000, and should have chosen rather to be Raisuli’s slaves than England’s free men?

Nay, impossible. How they must have counted the days and hours, how they must have scanned the horizon with impatient eagerness to see if there were no signs of friendly messengers bearing the great ransom money. And how their hearts must have danced for joy and their lips thrilled with delight as they would say to one another, “The ransom is found!”

And, friend, why reject the ransom God has provided for sinners?

“Forsake your wretched service,
Your master’s claims are o’er;
Avail yourselves of freedom,
Be Satan’s slaves no more.”

But at any rate be sure of this, that if you are lost in eternity and find yourself in outer darkness, the fault will not be God’s. While warning you of the dread reality of the pit, He announces the glad and joyful tidings of deliverance,

“I have found a ransom.”

A. H. B.

“Give Attendance to Reading.”

I AM dreaming. An old friend is beside me. “Why do I not get on?” I ask; “I am at a stand-still.”

“You do not read God’s Word enough,” he replies. “Take it up many times a day—read a verse or two if there is no time for more.”

Then I awoke. This set me pondering. We *do not* get on nowadays as we should. Can it be that my dream was true, and that we give too little attention to reading God’s Word?

When Samuel was young, he had a dream or vision. Several times God called him, with the ultimate result that He made known to him, young as he was, what He was about to do. Then it says: "The Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh **by the Word of the Lord**" (1 Sam. iii.).

With Timothy it was much the same; faith and salvation had come to him through the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. i. 5, iii. 14, 15). And it was to him that the aged Paul wrote, "Give attendance to reading," as if, even though he had grown somewhat older and was publicly serving God, there was a danger of this being neglected.

There was nothing mystical in this. God does make Himself known to us **by His Word**.

Many years ago a few young people, who were alike desiring a greater knowledge of divine things, used to meet together. They especially wanted to know what communion with God meant, and they imagined that it was very mysterious and extra-spiritual. They thought "I will manifest Myself to him" (John xiv. 21) would be almost a visible appearance, instead of the presence of Christ known to us by the Holy Ghost.

Now their earnest desires were quite right, and

God does and did satisfy the longing soul, but they were in danger of being led astray by their imaginations. God is still to be known to us in His Word as He was to Samuel, only much more so because the Holy Spirit is here to turn our hearts to Christ. An old servant of God was the means of helping these young people. He said that many Christians often wished to have communion with God and thought it impossible, and too high to attain to. “It is a very simple thing,” he said. “Communion with God is about Christ. It is hearing Him speak to us by His Word and replying to Him. God looks down and He says to you: ‘This is My beloved Son in whom *I* am well pleased.’ You can reply: ‘Thank God, *He* is the beloved Son, He pleases *me* too.’ That is communion.”

“God is satisfied with Jesus,
I am satisfied as well.”

Perhaps if we read the Bible more and prayed more, we should not have so much need to complain of not getting on. “Prayer and fasting” (fasting is the contrary to indulging the flesh but not only as regards food) are often forgotten by us, and so we are not instruments in God’s hand as we might be; while if we would have a

dependable weapon in our own hands it must be
 “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word
 of God.”

S. R. H.



“Say Your Prayers in Fair Weather.”

“God moves in a mysterious way
 His wonders to perform ;
 He plants His footsteps on the sea
 And rides upon the storm.”

RETURNING by the Belfast night mail to my distant parish in the North, from the Dublin clerical meetings of the year 1839, I found myself placed opposite to a gentleman, whose appearance engrossed, rather than attracted, my profound attention. His age, as he afterwards told me, was sixty. The coach in which we sat had scarcely cleared the pavement, and was rolling along the comparatively silent highway when my companion addressed me with great ease and politeness.

A few minutes sufficed to show that the predominating sentiment of his heart was religion.

His conversation was almost exclusively of that character, and as he poured out the rich store of gospel truth and experience from the exhaustless treasury of a converted soul, the night had insensibly worn away and the sun was long risen as we changed horses at the last stage.

Little more than an hour remained, and I must probably part for ever from a man by whose conversation I had been inexpressibly captivated. I felt, as may be easily conceived, a strong desire to learn his history, and thus to fix more permanently on my mind the impression he had made. Accordingly I asked him whether the turning of his heart to God had been caused by any sudden danger, or merely connected with his seafaring life (he had already told me that he commanded a vessel trading between Liverpool and America), or was of a gradual growth.

My question seemed to please him, at least he replied to it with the utmost courtesy, saying that in the last year but one of the last war, he was waiting in port with a fleet of merchantmen till convoy should arrive, it being deemed unsafe to sail without such protection. His habits, he observed, had always been irregular, to give them no stronger term, and he passed the period of

detention in practices he could not look back upon without sorrow.

At length the signal to weigh anchor was made, and his ship, as were also many others, was so short of hands that he was glad to accept of any person who offered himself, however inexperienced he might be in navigation. At the very instant of departure a boat came alongside, out of which a tall robust man climbed actively on the deck, and gave himself in as a seaman willing to engage for the voyage. The boat which brought him had returned to the shore and the wind was blowing nearly a gale; but under every circumstance, my friend said, he was glad to get even the addition of an equivocal hand to his scanty crew.

His pleasure, however, was of short duration, for the newcomer was found to be of a most quarrelsome, intractable disposition, a furious blasphemer, and, when opportunity offered, a drunkard. Besides all these disqualifications he was wholly ignorant of nautical affairs, or counterfeited ignorance to escape duty. In short, he was the bane and plague of the vessel, and refused obstinately to give any account of himself, or his family, or his past life.

At length a violent storm arose, all hands were

piped on deck, and all, as the captain thought, were too few to save the ship. When the men were mustered to their quarters the sturdy blasphemer was missing, and my friend went below to seek for him ; great was his surprise at finding him on his knees, repeating the Lord's prayer with wonderful rapidity, over and over again, as if he had bound himself to countless reiterations. Vexed at what he deemed hypocrisy or cowardice, he shook him roughly by the collar, exclaiming,

“Say your prayers in fair weather.”

The man rose up, observing in a low voice, “God grant I may ever see fair weather to say them in.”

In a few hours the storm happily abated, a week more brought them to harbour, and an incident so trivial passed quickly away from the mind of the captain ; the more easily as the man in question was paid off the day after landing, and appeared not again.

Four years had elapsed, during which, though my friend had been twice shipwrecked, and was grievously hurt by the falling of a spar, he pursued without amendment a life of profligacy and contempt of God. At the end of this period

he arrived at the port of New York after a very tedious and dangerous voyage from England.

It was Sunday morning, and the streets were thronged with persons proceeding to the several so-called places of worship with which that city abounds; but the narrator, from whose lips I take this anecdote, was bent on far other occupation, designing to drown the recollection of perils and deliverances in a celebrated tavern which he had too long and too often frequented. As he walked leisurely towards this goal, he encountered a very dear friend, the quondam associate of many a thoughtless hour. Salutations over, the captain seized him by the arm, declaring that he should accompany him to the hotel. "I will do so," replied the other with great calmness, "on condition that you come with me first, for a single hour, into this house (a church) and thank God for His mercies to you on the deep." The captain was ashamed to refuse, so the two friends entered the building together.

Already all the seats were occupied and a dense crowd filled the aisle; but by dint of personal exertion they succeeded in reaching a position right in front of the pulpit, at about five yards' distance. The preacher, one of the most popular of the day, riveted the attention

of the entire congregation, including the captain himself, to whom his features and voice, though he could not assign any time or place of previous meeting, seemed not wholly unknown. At length the preacher's eyes fell upon the spot where the two friends stood. He suddenly paused—still gazing upon the captain, as if to make sure that he was labouring under no optical delusion—and after a silence of more than a minute pronounced with a voice that shook the building,

“Say your prayers in fair weather.”

The audience was lost in amazement; nor was it until a considerable time had elapsed that the preacher recovered sufficient self-possession to recount the incident with which the reader is already acquainted, adding, with deep emotion, that the words which his captain had uttered in the storm, had clung to him by night and by day after his landing, as if an angel had been charged with the duty of repeating them in his ears—that he felt the holy call as coming direct from above, to do the work of his crucified Master—and was now, through grace, such as they saw and heard.

At the conclusion of this affecting address he

called on the audience to join in prayer with himself that the same words might be blessed in turn to him who first used them; but God had outrun their petitions—my friend was already His child before his former shipmate had ceased to tell his story. The power of the Spirit had wrought effectually upon him and subdued every lofty imagination. And so when the people dispersed he exchanged the hotel for the house of the preacher, with whom he tarried six weeks, and parted from him to pursue his profession, with a heart devoted to the Saviour, and with holy and happy assurances, which (as he declared to me, and I confidently rely in his truth) advancing years hallowed, strengthened, and sanctified.

From that companion of a night I then parted, probably not to meet again till we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. His history is too palpably instructive to require that I should add my own reflections, and with one only I conclude—addressing those persons who seek God merely in the hour of danger and trouble—in the words of the captain, "Say your prayers in fair weather."

[The above most interesting story of God's grace has been sent to us for insertion. Our

friend closes his letter by saying that he is "looking to the Lord to bless every effort to reach souls in these closing days. Time is short, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

We add our earnest, Amen!

ED.]



Seven Great Realities.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables."—

2 PETER i. 16.

SIN is a Reality—a fact attested by our police courts, our reformatories, our prisons, our asylums, our graveyards, and our own hearts. It abounds everywhere, it triumphs and reigns from shore to shore and from pole to pole, reminding those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, of the well-known scripture: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

It is a sorrowful truth that all are more or less sunk in its miry clay. Sin has marred God's fair creation, but infinitely more has it marred man, who was made in the image of God, in

whose nostrils God breathed the breath of life, and he became a living soul. Time was when God looked with delight upon His fair creation, and pronounced it "very good." But what a deplorable change sin has made! for, as He now looks from heaven, He beholds quite the reverse, all having lapsed into utter ruin, and His masterpiece—man—sinning against light and knowledge, a sinner by nature, desire, and practice. He sees the havoc sin has made, He observes its blighting effect, as with sadness He beholds the waywardness and unprofitableness of His creatures. How exceedingly dark is the picture! How awful the drama enacted before the great Spectator, who is holy and true; none seeking after Him, all careless even though they are sinners under condemnation; living for self, and not having the fear of God before their eyes. Such is poor, erring man. Sin has such dominion over him, that although God describes him as an enemy, a rebel, and ungodly, yet he seeks to continue in his sin, and to remain alienated from God, who is merciful and gracious, who has devised means that guilty man should not be for ever banished from Him. Oh the love! for, apart from His intervention, man's condition would be for ever hopeless, and

he would remain the slave of sin in one or more of its subtle forms. But blessed be God—

Grace is a Reality—for God is the God of all grace, manifesting unmerited love towards undeserving sinners. Every sin we commit is against God, His throne and dignity, yet there is deliverance both from its terrible power and its awful consequences, for “where sin abounds grace does much more abound.” O wondrous grace! that God loved us and gave His Son to die for our sins. O boundless love! that proclaims that transgressors can be redeemed and made to rejoice in a full, free, and eternal salvation. The grace of God brings salvation so near that the vilest may be saved, it flows from the heart of God, it reaches from heaven to you, for “whosoever will” may come. Will you share the blessings provided by God’s grace? Will you participate in this unasked-for love? For you must experience either His great grace or His great wrath. Why trifle? Why spurn such grace? Why neglect your only hope for eternity? when the glorious news is sounding far and wide that through God’s grace you may know by experience that—

Forgiveness is a Reality, and be amongst

that highly-favoured multitude, whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered. God finds infinite delight in blotting out the sins of those who seek Him in His appointed way. The testimony of Scripture is that—"Through this man [Christ Jesus] is preached to you the forgiveness of sins." This blessed message, laden with untold joys and blessings, is borne upon the wings of time, and lights upon the ear of the sin-weary soul as the music of heaven. Sinner, it is a message from God to you. Moreover, God is righteous in sparing the repentant sinner, because Jesus Christ, as the sinner's substitute, bore the just penalty due to sin, and as—

"Payment God will not twice demand,
First at the dying Surety's hand,
And then again at mine,"

He can now, frankly and freely, forgive all who, with the burden of sin upon their conscience, approach Him, pleading the all-sufficient merit of Christ's person and work. Therefore, be wise, and seek now forgiveness. Time is flying apace. Shortly you will have ended life's voyage, for none will deny that—

Death is a Reality, for its presence and power is evident everywhere. It is in many cases an unwelcome visitor, which claims as its

victims those of all classes, and whose ages vary from the helpless infant to the aged man with bent frame and hoary locks. Many have described it as the "King of Terrors," and it is a potent fact that all the unsaved are, during their lifetime, subject to its bondage. What is our life? It is as a flower of the field, which is cut down and withers, as a vapour that vanishes, as a shadow that passes, and as a leaf which falls and perishes. Whilst eternity is for ever. Furthermore, the Scriptures state, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Hence you see, whatever Satan may suggest, and man may foolishly proclaim—

Judgment is a Reality, and in that great day all will be judged in righteousness according to their works by the Judge of all the earth. The following is a description of it:—

"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."

At that terrible judgment there is no mercy, no way of escape, for sin must be dealt with and punished. Oh the solemnity of the thought that—

Hell is a Reality, or the words of Jesus Christ, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," would be meaningless. With bated breath would we speak of that awful place prepared for the devil and his angels. Oh the darkness of that long, eternal night! Oh the dense gloom of those caverns of despair! Oh the remorse that will rend the heart of the Christless! with a memory for ever reminding them of what might have been had they known the day of their visitation, and called upon the Lord while He was near. "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." If the first death is thought to be so awful, what a terrible thing will it be to experience the second, the death which never dies! Listen to the wail of a lost soul, "I am tormented in this flame." Gladly we turn from this indescribable misery to a scene of infinite delight, for—

Heaven is a Reality. Endless felicity. Everlasting joy. Eternal day. Jesus Christ is soon coming to usher the whole redeemed family into the Father's house of many mansions, taking them from this scene, where grief and joy are so mingled, where conflict and trial are daily experienced, to dwell for ever in their

abiding home. Farewell, then, to this vain changing world! Welcome to the joys of heaven! Welcome the pleasures for evermore! Welcome the unruffled peace! Welcome the unsullied joy! Welcome the untarnished holiness of that place! But, more than all, welcome, a thousand welcomes, to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour, their Lord, their Redeemer and their light, the One through whose grace, blood, and death they are redeemed to God!

With these realities before you, realities founded upon God's unerring Word, be wise, heed not the popular cunningly devised fables of to-day, which emanate from your greatest enemy, who desires your eternal ruin. Escape for your life; flee to the pierced side of Jesus, you will then lose your burden of **sin**. Turn now to God, and prove the great blessings provided by His **grace**, then you will know that you have the **forgiveness** of all your sins, and Christ Jesus, the all-sufficient Saviour, will rob **death** of its sting. You shall not come into **judgment**, nor know the sorrows and remorse of **hell**, but enter by Jesus Christ, the pearly gates, tread the streets of gold, sing the songs of victory in **heaven**.

Once more, in view of these seven great realities, we would ask,

“Where will you spend eternity?”

and implore you to listen to the loving entreaties of a gracious God: to hearken to the gentle pleadings of Jesus Christ, the all-sufficient Saviour of the lost, “for this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. i. 15).

A. G.

“Guilty before God.”

CAN it be possible? It is not only possible, it is what is true of you, dear unsaved reader.

Your authority for such a statement? God's infallible Word. Read it: all the world brought in “**Guilty before God**” (Rom. iii. 19).

That includes you. If guilty, you are subject to the judgment of God. Are you indifferent to this solemn fact? Can it be that you have heard of it before, and, spite of it, are seeking after the pleasures of this world, with a view, it may be, of ridding your mind of it?

Are you aware that to persist in this means eternal judgment? Why not have it settled? It has to be faced.

You must have to do with God.

Imagine a prisoner before a judge guilty of a dreadful crime. Would he be indifferent to the sentence about to be pronounced upon him? Suppose there was the possibility of a pardon, would he be unmoved, unconcerned?

Nay, how eagerly he would snatch at the faintest prospect of it!

How infinitely more solemn is your position! Brought in guilty before a holy God, and therefore exposed to the awful consequences of that guilt, a judgment only suspended through the long-suffering of God!

God, however, is not now executing judgment on the guilty sinner, who, by pleading guilty, may be justified freely by His grace (Rom. iii. 24).

How can God who is holy thus justify you? Because Another has borne the judgment. The Lord Jesus Christ has been to the cross, suffering, the Just for the unjust, that we might be brought to God (1 Peter iii. 18). He has taken the guilty sinner's place, has borne the just judgment of God against sin, and has thus paved the way for God to come out in the riches of His grace to rebel sinners.

By acknowledging your guilt you may get a full pardon. Such is God's grace, and though

up to the present you may have been indifferent to it, yea, even have despised it, He is still longing to pardon you.

What a blessed exchange!

A guilty sinner under judgment, and only awaiting the execution of it, can, by pleading guilty, not only be pardoned, but be perfectly justified (Rom. iv. 24, 25, v. 1). Through the redemption work of the Lord Jesus, which has glorified God, God is now just and the Justifier of him who believes in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26).

Dear reader, will you not accept God's testimony concerning you? He makes no mistake.

But because God is acting in sovereign grace this will not exonerate you if unbelieving. God's righteousness is unto all, but only upon them who believe (Rom. iii. 22). And do not let the devil blind your eyes as to judgment, because it is for the time suspended—your position is one of extreme peril.

Scripture declares (John iii. 18) that "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Beloved reader, do be persuaded in time to give this momentous question your earnest and immediate consideration. The god of this world is seeking to blind

your eyes, is doing his utmost to drag you down to hell. Do not let him be successful; accept God's terms now, for delay is dangerous. The One into whose hands all judgment has been committed will soon be revealed "in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 8, 9).

Those who now accept Christ as their Saviour will be with Him in glory above the scene of judgment; while if still unrepentant when He comes, you will be left behind to await that awful devouring judgment which God's Word describes.

* * *

Moses' Hands.

MANY years ago you might have seen a young girl seated beside an elderly lady in a carriage. The lady was a great invalid, was taking her usual drive, and had invited the child to go too.

As they drove through the lonely lanes, the

lady closed her eyes as she often did, and her little companion thinking her to be asleep went on with her own thoughts. Suddenly she seemed to hear a strange voice in her ear that said, "Now, E——, if you were asked how you know you are saved, what would you say?" It felt to her like the voice of the tempter. This startled her. She was the child of believing parents, and had grown up in the atmosphere of Bible truths, but perhaps she had not hitherto had to do with God very definitely for herself. This moment must come sooner or later to every one who is to possess the happy assurance of "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." That little maiden, who was a captive in the foreign city, had been brought up to know God, but when she spoke of Him and His servant to her mistress as known to herself, she probably experienced a fuller and deeper peace than she had known before.

Before E—— had time to reply to the voice that seemed to suggest a doubt to her, she was still more startled to see the lady open her eyes and look at her, and to hear her say, "E——, if you were asked how you *know* you are saved, what would you say?" Like a flash the answer came to her mind, and she replied, "It says,

'He that believeth *on Me* hath everlasting life' (John vi. 47), and *I believe*." That was all right, for "the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be *given to them that BELIEVE*" (Gal. iii. 22).

We ought to be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us" (1 Peter iii. 15). We are told that Timothy "from a child" had "known the Holy Scriptures," and it is they that are able to make us wise unto salvation. But he may have grown up without being able to say exactly *when* he was converted, and many children of believers find themselves in the same case. Let none be discouraged thereby. The point most important is, not *when* was I converted, but *where*, or *in Whom* am I putting my trust? If Christ be all my salvation, then it is well. If such is the case, the time is sure to come, as it did with E—— that day, when the soul finds itself in God's presence, and *realises*, perhaps for the first time, that it *has* "passed from death unto life." E—— was brought to this point by finding that the tempter was trying to cast a doubt on her salvation. This is just like the devil; he always opposes Christ and His work in a soul.

When Israel came out of Egypt they were met by Amalek. He wanted to prevent their entering into what God had promised. So there was fighting. Moses was upon the top of a hill, and perhaps out of sight of the armies of Israel, and yet **all depended on what he did**. When he held up his hands Israel prevailed, otherwise Amalek would have been victorious. Not to go into detail (read Exodus xvii. 8-16), "Moses' hands were steady until the going down of the sun," and Amalek was defeated. Did you ever think of the hands of our Moses, the blessed Lord Jesus, in heaven now? **His hands are steady**, He is holding up those hands that were pierced for us **always**. We do not see Him (except by faith), but God does, and Satan does. Satan cannot touch us as long as those hands are there, and God will not condemn us because it is "Christ that *died*, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, **who also maketh intercession for us**" (Rom. viii. 34). So if the devil tempts, let us think of those hands; if our faith falters, let us look up and remember that God is looking at Jesus, and take courage. Then we shall be "more than conquerors, through Him that loved us."

"I'm Going to Heaven To-morrow."

"**P**RAISE the Lord, *He is so good to me,*"
said an old Christian.

His wife was dead, and he lived alone, but he often said, "I'm *never* alone," and he was always full of praise and thanksgiving. "Sometimes," he said, "I feel a bit low, and I says to myself, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God.' You've got a good fire to set by, and a nice arm-chair to set in, and a bit o' dinner to eat; what do yer want more? Oh, but the Lord *is* good to me;" and then he would start one of his favourite hymns:

"How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

The old man's joy was catching, and one left him feeling how good it was to know that precious Saviour, who could satisfy the poor, lone, old pilgrim's heart, and keep it singing.

I carried his words, "*God is so good to me,*" to

another poor suffering man, and presently *he* said thoughtfully, "*He's just as good to me!*"

Again I carried this back to the old man, and he laughed aloud for joy, and taking my hand in both of his, he shook it heartily, and said: "Thank the Lord, *that's beautiful.*"

The last time I saw him he was full of gratitude at the way God had provided for him.

"I was just a-settin' by my fire, thankin' the Lord for givin' me half a ton o' coal, for I do feel the coud so, and 'tis all paid for, when I heerd a knock at the door, and a man says, 'I've brought yer half a ton o' coal.' '*Me!*' I says, 'who sent it?' 'I dunno the gentleman's name,' he says. 'I can tell yer,' says I; '*'twas the Lord!*'"

He took me to look at his little cellar heaped up with coals. "Why, it will last you all the winter," I said. "Thank the Lord, I feel as if I could cry for joy," he replied.

He looked pale and fragile as he stood and watched us out of sight that day, but I did not think we should see him no more till we meet around the throne. The last words he said to us that day were, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Only four weeks, and I heard he was gone "Home."

He broke a blood-vessel one night as he lay on his lonely couch. His neighbour, who was always kind and attentive, found him the next morning, and he said, "I've broke a blood-vessel." "Oh, no," she said, thinking it was one of the attacks of bleeding from the nose to which he was subject. "*I have,*" he quietly repeated; and to another woman who came in he said, "*I shall be in heaven to-morrow!*"

A brother in Christ visited him, and again he said, 'I'm going to heaven, and you'll come too.'

He was too weak to speak much, but when his friend sang some of his favourite hymns, he raised his hand and kept time to the words.

When "*to-morrow*" came, true enough, without a sigh or struggle he passed out of all his earthly surroundings and entered into the presence of his Lord and Saviour.

"If here on earth the thoughts of Jesus' love
Lift our poor hearts this weary world above;
If even here the taste of heavenly springs
So cheers the spirit that the pilgrim sings;

What will the sunshine of His glory prove !
 What the unmingled fulness of His love !
 What hallelujahs will His presence raise !
 What but one loud eternal burst of praise ?”

Many will miss the old man's cheery face and voice ; and perhaps some who have scorned his loving entreaties and warnings will say, “ I should like to be as ready to go as he was.”

Well then, dear friend, come to *his Saviour*, the Saviour who made him *ready*.

You are ready to perish. He is “ ready to save.”
 “ Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

J. W. B.

“Need of Nothing.”

LEPROSY in Scripture is invariably a type of sin. Medical men affirm that it is a disease which no one can unwittingly contract, though if the spots break out under the clothes it may for a time be screened from others. There are some illnesses common to man which are less easy to determine, and which may remain doubtful in character for an indefinite period of time ; but

this is never the case with leprosy, and God uses it as a type of sin.

We all *know* that we are sinners, our consciences tell us so, and yet how often do we hear people say, "I have never done any one any harm," or, "I am not so bad as other men!" God has no remedy for such, and their proud thoughts are an abomination to Him. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." But for all who own their sinful condition God has provided salvation. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

A Christian took some tracts with her as she started on a journey, looking to God to guide her in their distribution. Finding herself in a compartment with only one fellow-traveller, she offered her one. "What is it?" said the lady impatiently, taking it in her hand. "Oh, a tract! I do not need it, thank you: give it to that man who has just passed through; he needs it more than I." But she glanced at the contents, and added, as she took up her newspaper, "Oh, I know all about it." A minute later she passed it to the conductor as he returned, who accepted it gratefully.

This poor lady affected ignorance as to her leprous condition, and there are multitudes of people like her in the world seeking to hide their spots under a garb of respectability; but they cannot screen their real state from God, and He desires *truth* in the inward parts.

The Gospels make mention of many recognised ills and maladies which Jesus cured—the blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, lepers, lunatics, people who were sick of fever, those which were possessed with devils, and those which had the palsy. None of these so afflicted could have denied their ills, and they represent sinners who *know* themselves to be such, and that they *need* a Saviour. God is a God “ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.” He welcomes all those who call upon Him in *truth*, and who, like the publican, cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

The lady in the train did not admit her need of a Saviour. She was like the Pharisee who said, “God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men.” She thought to hide her spots of leprosy under her garments of pride and self-righteousness, those filthy rags which are an abomination in God’s sight. But when we stand before the judgment-seat we shall belong to one or other of

two classes—those who are "clothed," or those who are "naked." The "naked" will have had their filthy rags torn off, and their leprosy will appear in all its hideousness, unmasked in the searching light of God's presence. What a terrible moment; it will be too late to cry for mercy, and the solemn words will ring out one by one in their ears, "Take him away and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Dear reader, are you amongst those who are saying now in the day of grace, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have *need of nothing*"? God says to you, Thou "knowest not that thou are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." And He adds, "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be *clothed*, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Will you not hearken to His gracious counsel?

How blessed it will be in the day of judgment to be amongst the "clothed," and to have learnt our need of a Saviour "while He may be found"—a Saviour who "knew no sin," yet was made sin for us "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

A well-known man of science was asked one day, towards the close of his life, "What do you consider was the greatest discovery you ever made?"

"That I have a Saviour," was the unhesitating reply.

May such a discovery be yours!

C. A. W.

Be in Time.

SOME time ago I happened to be on a pleasure steamer as she was leaving the pier at I—— in the Highlands, where there had been some sports, and being on board in good time, I stood watching the various passengers as they came on deck. At last the bell was rung for the third and last time, and a great many who had stayed watching the sports till the last moment rushed on board.

Just as the gangway was being drawn in, two young people came running down the pier. The first being a young man managed, with the help of one of the sailors, to scramble on deck—as he did so, the captain remarked, "**Just in time**"; but to the girl, who was only a few seconds

later, "**Too late, time's up,**" was what he said, and as the boat glided off we saw her standing on the pier wringing her hands in despair, for probably she would have had to stay where she was without her friends until the next day.

This little incident brought to my mind the words, "One shall be taken and the other left" (Matt. xxiv. 40, 41). But that parting will not be for a day, but for the countless ages of eternity. Christ is coming! He has said in His Word—

"Behold, I come quickly."

How soon that may be we cannot tell. May you, dear reader, not be found with those left behind like that poor girl. Many are infatuated by the pleasures around, and think that there will be plenty of time to consider the soul's welfare; but God has said in His Word, "**Now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation."

Oh! listen to the invitation, and take Christ as your Saviour to-day, for to-morrow may be too late. Have you thought what eternity in hell would mean, shut out from God's presence? Awful thought! But if you reject this loving Saviour, there is no alternative, for "he that believeth on the Son of God **hath** everlasting

life ; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but **the wrath of God** abideth on him” (John iii. 36).

“ Be in time ! Be in time !
 While the Saviour still is calling,
 Be in time !
 If in sin you longer wait,
 You may find no open gate,
 And your cry be, ‘ Just too late.’
Be in Time !”

B.

“ Never, Never to Part.”

“ **M**AN proposes, God disposes,” is a well-known and very true French saying.

The apostle James (iv. 13-15) says much the same under the guidance of God’s Spirit : “ Ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life ? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”

How little we know what a day, nay, what an

hour may bring forth! It is generally the unexpected that happens, and often the least desired. Since this is the case, would it not be a mark of wisdom to be *ready* for anything? Sickness, poverty, *death* may come—are you prepared to face either?

The rich man (Luke xii.) counted on a long life and said to himself, “Thou hast much goods laid up for *many years.*” But God said unto him, “*This night* thy soul shall be required of thee.” Not even one day’s illness was accorded to him wherein to prepare for death; he was cut off like the flower of the grass. So it may happen to you, to me—are we ready?

A young man was lately returning from South Africa to be the support of his widowed mother, and he was well worthy of the love she bestowed upon him. His last letter had been full of affection: “Coming home to you, mother,” he wrote, “never, never to part.” It was touching to read, and it filled his mother’s heart with joy as she eagerly reckoned the days ere they should meet, for she had heard that he had actually embarked. But the days lengthened into weeks and the weeks into months—three had passed, till with a heart made sick by “hope deferred,” she said, “He cometh not.” Then came the fatal

day when the tardy War Office apprised her of the heartrending fact that her loved son had succumbed to enteric on the voyage home.

"Never, never to part!" Ah, how those words ring in her ears, and ring in ours too! We cannot apply them to anything on earth; it is the place of partings, of heart-breakings.

Have you ever imagined the feelings of that other mother—a widow and childless—who left the city Nain with the funeral *cortège* of her son and met Jesus on the road? And then have you pictured the return journey with her living son restored to her from the portals of the grave? Yet even then she could not say, "Never, never to part." He had been rescued from the tomb, but only for a space—death and the grave remained ahead of him still—and the sad parting of mother and son must again take place.

The Lord Jesus was the only One who ever came out of the grave never to return thither. He really died, He was really buried "according to the Scriptures," and then He rose triumphant over death, *out from among* the other sleeping dead, "*now no more to return to corruption,*" and believers are to have the same portion. "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also

quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit.” Hence some day the sleeping dead in Christ will rise as He did—forth *from among* the wicked dead they will come—they will find themselves, even as to their bodies, on the other side of death and the grave, and for the first time will be able to say, “Never, *never* to part,” which the widow of Nain even in her overwhelming joy could not say any more than we can. But, thank God, it will come true at last, true to the very letter, in heaven—

“There’ll be no more parting,
There’ll be no parting there.”

Well, friend, *have you* a title to heaven? If “this night your soul be required of you,” will an abundant entrance be granted you into that “haven of eternal rest”? “*To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living*” (Rom. xiv. 9). He died that you might live, He rose that you too might rise from among the dead, He lives that you may be saved by His life. Do not turn away from Him who speaks to you from heaven. He is a Saviour who has proved His love and His power, by doing what none other could do; and through death He now delivers from sin, and Satan, and death,

all who trust Him. Will you not thank Him,
and join in singing—

“Low in the grave He lay—
Jesus, *my* Saviour!
Death cannot keep his prey—
Jesus, *my* Lord!

Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives for ever with His saints to reign:
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose.”

H. L. H.

“Perfected for Ever.”

WHAT blessed words are these!
And what infinite depths of soul-
establishing truth they contain.
God would have every true be-
liever to rejoice in the fact that as far as the
conscience is concerned there is nothing to
hinder his drawing near to Him.

Under the Mosaic economy this could not be,
for the gifts and sacrifices that then were offered
could *not* make him that did the service “perfect,
as pertaining to the conscience.” The law had
a shadow of good things to come, but it could

never with those sacrifices which were offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Once every year (see Lev. xvi.) a solemn day came round in Israel's history. The great question of the people's right and title to stand before God in relationship with Him was raised on the tenth day of the seventh month. This occurred every year. On that day the priest made an atonement for the Jewish people, "to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. xvi. 30).

All this was typical. As a shadow it pointed forward to what was to be fulfilled in perfection in the Lord Jesus Christ. The blood of bulls and goats could not really take away sins. But God was pleased in ages past to give a type of that great sacrifice which for ever has cleared away the believer's sins.

But though the Jewish day of atonement was a type and shadow of what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished at the cross, nevertheless there is a mighty contrast between the two. Every year in Israel the sacrifice had to be repeated—"those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually" (Heb. x. 1). The work was never completed—"once every year"

(Heb. ix. 7), we are told, the high priest entered into the holiest with the blood, and sprinkled it there seven times before and on the mercy-seat. Beautiful type this was of the perfect and all-sufficient atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ. But there was no perfection under the Levitical priesthood, for "the law made nothing perfect" (Heb. vii. 11, 19). The sacrifice offered one year had to be repeated the next, and so on every year, and that continually.

And what was this but a remembrance of sins? Constantly every year the Jewish people were reminded that they were sinners and at a distance from God. The veil barred their way. It would have been death to any one of them to have entered there, where the cloud of Jehovah's glory rested on the golden mercy-seat (Lev. xvi. 2). Even the high priest himself dared not to enter except on that one day when, alone, he passed within that veil—"into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people."

By this very circumstance the Holy Ghost was signifying that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest (Heb. ix. 7, 8). But, thanks be to God! a nobler sacrifice has been found, and

richer blood has been spilt than ever flowed on Jewish altars.

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

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Took all our guilt away ;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.”

His one sacrifice on the cross is infinitely perfect, divinely sufficient, and eternally efficacious. The veil has been removed that once stood as a barrier between the sinner and God. When Christ died it was rent in the midst, from the top to the bottom. Yes, “from the top to the bottom,” for it was God’s own hand that did it. The way, then, is open to the believer in Christ to draw near as a worshipper once purged, who has no more conscience of sins.

“I wish,” said a lady in whose house I was recently visiting, “that Mr —— was at home, for I should so like you to have some conversation with him.” Mr —— was a minister of the Established Church of Scotland, who happened to be away on his holiday, but from his friend I heard that he had very strong leanings towards the Church of Rome. Another member

of his family, also a minister, had already gone over to Rome, and this lady feared that this one might himself do likewise.

It was such a pity, she went on to say, for he was such a nice and earnest man—so sincere, so anxious to be right and to do right; and yet she was sure that this step would be wrong. But how could she help him? She had had long arguments with him, but she had made no headway, and he kept quoting the Fathers of the Church to prove that the Mass as practised by the Church of Rome was right; and she did not know how to answer him. Did I know of any simple little book on the subject that she could put into his hands?

“Yes,” I replied, “I know of just the very thing. It is very short, very clear, and absolutely unanswerable.”

“Where could she get it?”

“You have it in your own house,” I replied. “Read the tenth chapter of Hebrews; it demolishes the whole theory of the Mass. In one short verse it answers conclusively the very questions you have raised. Read it carefully to-night before you go to bed, and tell me in the morning what you think of the fourteenth verse.”

Here let us quote the verse:—

“By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

When once the truth contained in these words takes possession of our souls, it shatters and crumbles into dust the so-called doctrine of the Mass. For what is the Mass? Is it not a continual offering, a daily sacrifice? Is it not the cherished belief of millions to-day that the priest has power to turn the wafer into Christ, and to offer Him up every day as a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead?

Why, Judaism was better than this! “Once every year” was sufficient then; but Christendom to-day, blind to the glorious truth so simply declared in Hebrews ix. and x., persists in the vain attempt to renew and repeat every day what the Holy Ghost declares was completed at the cross.

“**Perfected for ever**”—let the words sink into our souls. Who are perfected? Believers are. Who has perfected them? Christ has. How has He perfected them? By His one offering? For how long has He perfected them? For ever.

With boldness, then, we enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

“The holiest we enter,
At perfect peace with God.”

Every barrier is removed, every hindrance has

been taken out of the way. The precious blood of Christ in all its infinite value, and all its eternal efficacy, is under the eye of God. No more conscience of sins, is, then, the portion of every believing soul. The worshippers *once* purged have *no more* conscience of sins (Heb. x. 2). Mark, it does not say that they have no *consciousness* of *sin in* them, but they have no *conscience* of *sins on* them. The believer in Christ has *sin in* him, but he has no *sins on* him. The morning after the conversation we have just related took place, the lady expressed her sincere thanks for the verse to which we had referred her, adding that she had never noticed it before. How little, alas! do even Christians read their Bibles.

A. H. B.

“What Prospects have you for Eternity?”

JS — was by profession an infidel. Prayerless he rose from his bed in the morning, and prayerless he retired to rest at night. Thankless, too, he received his meals with no acknowledgment of the good-

ness of God. Worse than the brute beasts, he spent much of his time and breath in denying the very existence of the One who daily loaded him with benefits. So alienated from God, and so hardened in sin was he, that he not only hated the Bible himself, but did his utmost to get others to hate it too—that blessed Book which reveals Jesus as a Saviour—the One whose atoning work upon the cross had given him every morsel he put in his mouth, and the very breath he now used in open opposition and blasphemy.

It was Sunday afternoon. The children were just coming out of the village Sunday school. A large crowd, young and old, had gathered around J. S——, into whose ears he poured impious words which, if imbibed, would ruin every precious soul thus deceived.

A young man passed by. Though he was then unsaved, he pitied the poor children who were drinking in such deadly poison, and boldly rebuked the infidel before the whole crowd.

But “men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John iii. 19). They closed the young man’s mouth, and preferred to listen to one who *professed* to prove the Bible to be a myth and a fraud.

The Bible reveals God's holiness and exposes man's guilt. It speaks not only of the death of a Saviour, but of His resurrection. It declares solemnly that *all* will be raised—that there is to be a Judgment Day when every unsaved man will be judged for his sins. It tells not only of redemption and the blessing of the redeemed, but speaks with no uncertain sound of the wailings of the damned in the lake of fire. Here lies the secret of man's futile attempt to get rid of this living and abiding Word. Nevertheless,

“settled for ever in heaven,”

it stands more impregnable than a rock which cannot be shaken, and not one jot or tittle shall pass unfulfilled.

But God's eye was upon that company. His ear heard every word spoken that afternoon. He honoured that young man, and soon after opened his eyes and heart to see and receive both the Blessor and the blessings of which the Bible speaks.

He “passed from death unto life” (John v. 24). He has “peace with God” (Rom. v. 1). For him, there is “no condemnation,” “no accusation,” “no separation” from the love of God (Rom. viii. 1, 33, 38, 39).

Not long since he received a post-card asking him to go and see J. S——, who was then on his deathbed. Hoping to find him anxious about his soul's salvation, he went at once, but great was his disappointment to find it was only this world's business.

After this was settled my friend said, “You are very ill, and will never get up again. I hoped to find you anxious about your soul's welfare. Our business is now settled, and you must pardon my asking,

What prospects have you for eternity?”

It was an unwelcome but searching question. He shuddered at the mention of Eternity, but not a word escaped his lips.

Behind him was a life of sin and rebellion. **Before** him rolled the deep, dark river of death, and **beyond** lay the shoreless ocean of Eternity. **Beside** him rose his crimson sins, mountains high, bearing him on to death, and “**after this the judgment**” (Heb. ix. 27).

The world he must leave behind ; his strength is diminishing, and his last hope has fled. When his breath left his body, his spirit returned to God who gave it (Eccles. xii. 7), and *the question remained unanswered.*

J. S.— is DEAD! But the Bible LIVES!

That very village is now being visited by God in blessing. Many have been gathered, together both on Sunday nights and during the week, to hear afresh "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Every house has received an invitation.

Children's meetings, too, have been held, and many, young and old, have trusted the precious Saviour of whom the Bible speaks.

Happiness has come into their lives, and satisfaction into their hearts. Their sins *are* forgiven (1 John ii. 12). They "have boldness in the day of judgment" (1 John iv. 17), and a glorious home in heaven prepared by their blessed Saviour, who will soon come again, and receive all "His own" to be with Him for ever (John xiv. 1-3).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. xxi. 4, 27).

“Joy and Peace in Believing.”

WHAT a comfort it is that the Word of God is still quick and powerful—still able to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Although frequently rejected by men, yet it is settled in heaven, and settled for ever. Heaven and earth will pass away, but not His word; and it is still true that God has magnified HIS WORD above all His name.

Some years ago I was sitting in one of the parks in London. On the other side of the path, exactly opposite, was a sign-post inscribed with the words “To the Zoological Gardens.” A man came and sat on the seat beside me, looking so sad and unhappy that I longed to speak to him about God. But while hesitating as to doing so, two persons came along, chatting pleasantly together.

Not perceiving the board of direction as they passed it, they paused in front of the man, and asked him the way to the Gardens.

He took his pipe from his mouth, gave them the required information, and then, having watched their receding figures till they were

beyond hearing, turned to me and said, pointing to the sign-post facing us: "There are plain written directions which way people should go; they pass by them and come to *me* to know their way."

"Yes," I said; "but do we not act in the same way with regard to the Word of God? There are plain written directions there, and yet we disregard them and go astray."

"That is another matter," he replied. "My father," he continued, "was a Roman Catholic. I let my children go to the Sunday school, but I care for none of these things."

Then he went on to express many sad thoughts, which I will not repeat; but at the end of a long conversation I said to him, "There *is* joy and peace in believing; but your disbelief of God's Word has not given you peace or rest."

"No, it has not," he replied.

Whether that poor man has yet bowed to the Word of God I cannot say, for I never saw him again.

But how are we treating the plain written directions of God's Word? Through the grace of God this land still has a plentiful supply of Bibles, and the Spirit of God is here to apply that Word of God to the conscience.

But the days are coming, when there will be a famine, not of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it (Amos viii. 11, 12).

Are *we* heeding His Word? God in these last days has spoken to us by His Son. How shall we escape if we disregard His Word and neglect this great salvation which has been brought to us at such cost to Himself? E. U.

Lines written by a Blacksmith.

WHAT is the foulest thing on earth?
 Come tell me if you know.
 It is a soul by sin defiled,
 'Tis only fit for hell;
 It is a horrid, loathsome den
 Where evil spirits dwell.

And what's the purest thing on earth?
 Come, tell me if you know.
 'Tis that same soul by Jesus cleansed,
 Washed whiter than the snow;
 There's naught more pure above the sky,
 There's naught else pure below.

God's eye of flame, that searches all,
 And finds e'en heaven unclean,
 Rests on that soul in pure delight,
 For not a spot is seen ;
 Cleansed every whit in Jesu's blood
 Whate'er the guilt had been.

He sees no sin, but sees the blood
 That covers all the sin :
 'Tis Christ upon the soul without,
 'Tis Christ He sees within ;
 To judge it foul were just to judge
 God's Christ Himself unclean.

O Lamb of God ! Thy precious blood
 This great redemption wrought ;
 Not only snatched from yawning hell,
 But to God's bosom brought,
 And raised the ruined wrecks of sin
 Above created thought.

“Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isa. i. 18).

“The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John i. 7).

“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).

Light at Eventide.

“With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.”—Ps. cxxx. 7.

A CHRISTIAN who through a long and tedious day had been following his usual laborious calling, feeling very fatigued, was retiring to bed rather earlier than was his custom, when he heard a timid knock at the front door.

“Who’s there?” he asked.

“If you please, sir, I’ve come to ask you to come and see mother,” were the words uttered in girlish tones.

“I cannot to-night,” he replied, as he wondered however he could drag his aching limbs to the address given.

“Oh, do come,” pleaded the child.

“I will call early in the morning,” he rejoined. But as the child was turning away he felt suddenly constrained to go, so called out after the retreating child, “But tell mother that I will come along in a few minutes.” And hastily putting on his boots and lifting a silent prayer

to God for His guidance and blessing, he set out to the address given, endeavouring to forget his bodily weariness.

When he arrived at the lowly cottage and was ushered into the bedroom, he saw lying upon a bed a woman whom he at once recognised as being a listener to the glad tidings of God's salvation which he had proclaimed in an adjoining factory some time previously. Upon her face was a look of deep dejection, and she was uttering the solemn words, "I'm lost ; I am going to hell. I'm lost ; I am going to hell."

"You know, then, that you are a poor, lost, helpless sinner," remarked the visitor ; "but let me remind you that God has in His great love provided a way of escape for you. Do you believe the Scriptures?"

"I believe the Bible," was her faint reply.

So turning to that beautiful passage in Gal. ii. 20, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me," he asked, "Do you believe that Christ loved you?" There was a stillness in that chamber for a few minutes, for God the Holy Ghost was speaking to that woman's heart. She was halting between two opinions. Should Christ or Satan have the victory? Should there be rejoicing in heaven

over another soul being brought from darkness to light?

“Do you believe that He loved you?” again asked the visitor.

“Yes,” was her hesitating reply.

“Very well, then,” he continued; “not only does He love, but the verse says, ‘He gave Himself for me,’—*for me*—so you see it requires individual application.”

There was another momentary pause, when suddenly the sick woman exclaimed, her face aglow with newly found joy: “I’ve got it! I see it!” for she saw for the first time in her life, that although she was lost, sinful, and passing onward to endless ruin, yet the love of Jesus Christ was so great that He died for her sins, gave Himself for her. Thus was she born again and made through divine grace an heir of God, even at the eleventh hour. At midnight her ransomed spirit was set free; *under three hours* after the glorious knowledge that her many sins were all forgiven.

The above is not recorded to encourage you, dear reader, to put off the weighty matter of your soul’s salvation until upon your deathbed; but it is written to magnify the triumphant grace of God.

We would remind you that comparatively

speaking the above is an exceptional case, and that sometimes in a soul's history after grace has been wilfully slighted, perhaps for a lifetime, God speaks, saying :

“Let him alone.”

Then the Christ rejecters die as they have lived—unsaved! For, “He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John iii. 36).

A. G.

The Rich Brahmin's Choice.

A SERVANT of God in the East Indies, not so very long ago, was sitting one evening on a bamboo chair in front of the mission-house. Before him stood a little table on which lay some Bibles, New Testaments, and tracts in the language of the country. In the heat of the tropical sun the missionary had held to his post all through the long day, that he might make known to every passer-by the way of salvation, and offer them the Word of God. For the most part

they went on their way without lending an ear to his message. Some stood still for a moment, but only to laugh at his words, and to mock at them as they continued their walk. But there were some who departed with the Word of God in their hands, and a serious look on their faces. Deeply moved, and in prayer for these poor people, the missionary lifted up his eyes to watch the sunset. He was just preparing to leave his post, when a distinguished young native approached. It was quite plain from his magnificent turban and his yellow silk garment that he belonged to the rich and distinguished caste of the Brahmins. As he drew nearer, he bowed to the missionary and seated himself on a mat.

“I have come,” he began, “to tell you that idolatry is a sin. I know from this book that God is One, and that Christianity is the truth. I am a disciple of Jesus, and in order to become so publicly, I ask you to baptize me.”

The missionary, having ascertained from the young Brahmin that his mother was living, and that he was rich in friends besides being wealthy and of good position, pressed on him to consider what he was about to do. He reminded the young convert that in one hour he might lose

everything that he was possessed of—family, friends, and property. But the Brahmin's answer was serious: "I understand you, but I have applied the test. I have weighed in the balance, on the one side the Lord Jesus Christ, His love, and His blood once shed for me; and on the other side I weighed my rank, my friends, and my numerous possessions. But the latter were light indeed as compared with the former. They were lighter than vanity itself. I have proved them to be so."

The missionary found indeed a true heart in the rich Brahmin, who "counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" (Heb. xi. 26).

Not long after his baptism, the rich young man, who had hitherto lived like a prince, found himself poor and lonely, forsaken by his mother and his family, deprived of caste, and robbed of his possessions. Even the lowest of his servants, who had hitherto almost worshipped him, now treated him with contempt, and would have let him die without offering a helping hand, so great is the power of darkness over the human heart. But what of our Brahmin friend? He had become a true, bright Christian. Like the Thessalonians of old, he had left his

idols to serve the living and the true God. In order to earn a living for himself, the once wealthy youth entered a house of business as bookkeeper, at a very modest salary. * * *

Are you Sure that you are Saved?

CAN any one be sure of that? perhaps you ask. Yes; it is the privilege of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to *know* in this world that he is saved.

Listen to God's own Word, and let no "blind leader of the blind" rob you of its precious truth. "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). Here we learn three things: (1) that true believers *are* saved, (2) that they are saved through *faith*, and (3) that salvation is *not on the ground of works*.

But have you ever learnt that you are lost? If not, it is because Satan has blinded your eyes; and, moreover, he tries to keep you in that

state of blindness, and he endeavours, by means of business cares, sinful lusts, and the whole round of worldly pleasures and gaities, to prevent you from thinking seriously of your soul and its eternal interests. And if he cannot entirely prevent you from doing this, he endeavours still to compass your ruin by setting you on the wrong road, and telling you that you can save yourself by means of prayers, good works, and religious observances. But listen again to God's Word: "What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 30, 31).

Here we learn the same blessed truth that salvation is the portion of all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, all believers may know that they are saved.

We would put to the reader another question :

Are your sins forgiven?

Is it possible for any one to know that in this world? Certainly, for the Word of God assures us that in Him, that is, in the Lord Jesus Christ, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. i. 7). If your sins are not forgiven in this world they never will be, for there is no forgiveness after death. No

purgatory after death, no prayers or masses for the dead, will change the state of the soul that has passed from time into eternity. What Jesus said to the Jews in His day is equally true to-day, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John viii. 24). And he who dies in his sins will be raised in his sins to be judged for his sins. But while unbelievers will never be forgiven, all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ may know NOW, while in this world, that they ARE forgiven, for God says, "To Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

Again, "By Him (the risen Christ) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 39). Here again we learn that the forgiveness of sins is to be had on the ground of faith, and not by works of law.

Have you eternal life?

Who can know that in this world? Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ may know that he has eternal life, for the Word of God says, "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). Not that ye may *hope* to have it, but that ye may *know* that ye have it.

"This is the record, that God hath given to us (*i.e.*, believers) eternal life, and this life is in His Son. *He that hath the Son hath life*" (1 John v. 11, 12.) Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is therefore privileged to know three things—(1) That he is saved; (2) that he is forgiven; (3) that he has eternal life.

These three blessings, amongst many others, are his portion here in this world before he dies.

A. H. B.



“Peace with God.”

WHAT a rich mine of truth is suggested by these words! How much they mean to the many who, after efforts of various kinds in order to “make their peace with God,” have learned their own helplessness, and have therefore trusted Christ to save them. Having proved the futility of their works for this purpose, they have accepted the

work of Christ as done for them on the cross. "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God" (Rom. v. 1). How blessed! and increasingly so, as one learns more of one's utter ruin by nature. What a prospect, too, is opened up to the one who is in the settled enjoyment of this! Knowing every question cleared as to the past, he is free to enter into God's mind as to his present walk and worship, and also to enjoy what He has revealed to faith of the future glory.

The value of these words was peculiarly brought home to me when conversing with an aged Christian who was on her deathbed. I had called at her cottage without any idea of the reception I should meet with, but soon found that both husband and wife were in the enjoyment of God's favour. They deplored the work of Ritualism around them, and seemed to be very much shut up to God and the Word of His grace. They had evidently learned a great deal in the school of God. I had quoted various passages of Scripture to them, but it was the mention of "peace with God" that produced the readiest response from the old lady. It was not a strange sound to her, for with brightened face she raised her head as well as possible and told me that she had "read it in Romans." There

was evidently little of earthly comfort in that humble home, but there was the enjoyment of that which money never could buy. In about a fortnight she had "departed to be with Christ, which is far better."

Later in the same day I found myself in very different surroundings. It is true that the conversation in the larger house also turned to "religious things," yet there was a startling contrast between the two cases. The subject was that of an "altar" frontal in a London church which had been visited that day. Fault was found with the colours employed in depicting the angels' wings, &c. No one could give a decision on the point thus raised, and the whole thing, while of no profit, might possibly serve to shut out the contemplation of Christ.

Is my reader content with a mere "shadow," or satisfied with the substance, Christ? That is the question I wish to press in view of the above. When all the religious inventions in the world have passed away, Christ and His Word will remain. What a rest now and for eternity for a needy soul! Never can the trust be questioned which reposes in Him, for God is fully satisfied with His work! Are you? or are you occupied

with that which must soon fail and leave you lost indeed. Be wise to-day, and accept the Saviour without delay.

C. W.

“A Book that Cured Me.”

[The following remarkable extract has been sent from a record of God's gracious work during the early days of Wesley and his honoured fellow-labourers. That “Book” has lost none of its power though it lies despised and unread. May the entrance of the living word of God bring light and understanding to all our readers!—ED.]

SIR RICHARD CRADOCK, a Justice of the Peace, who was a violent hater and persecutor of the Dissenters, and who exerted himself to enforce all the severe laws then in existence against them, happened to live near to Mr Rogers, to whom he bore a particular enmity, and whom he wanted, above all things, to have in his power. Hearing that he was to preach in a place some miles distant, he thought it a fair opportunity for accomplishing his base design, and in order thereto hired two men to go as spies and take down the names of all the hearers whom they knew, that they might appear as witnesses

against both them and Mr Rogers. The plan seemed to succeed to his wishes. These men brought him the names of several persons who were present at the meeting, and he warned such of them as he had a particular spite against, together with Mr Rogers, to appear before him. Knowing the violence of the man, they came with trembling hearts, expecting to be treated with the utmost severity. While they were waiting in the great hall expecting to be called upon, a little girl about six or seven years of age, who was Sir Richard's granddaughter, happened to come into the hall. She looked at Mr Rogers, and was much taken with his venerable appearance. He, being naturally fond of children, took her on his knee and caressed her, which led her to conceive a great fondness for him. At length Sir Richard sent a servant to inform them that one of the witnesses being taken ill, was unable to attend, and that therefore they must come another day. They accordingly came at the time appointed, and being convicted, the Justice ordered their *mittimus* to be written to send them all to prison.

Mr Rogers, expecting to see the little girl again, brought some sweetmeats with him to give her. As soon as she saw him, she came

running to him, and appeared fonder of him than before. This child, being a particular favourite with her grandfather, had got such an ascendancy over him that he could deny her nothing, and she possessed such a violent spirit that she could bear no contradiction, so that she was indulged in everything she wanted. At one time, when she had been contradicted, she ran a penknife into her arm, to the great danger of her life. This bad spirit in the present instance was overruled for good. While she was sitting on Mr Rogers' knee eating the sweetmeats, she looked earnestly at him and asked, "What are you here for?"

He answered, "I believe your grandfather is going to send me and my friends to jail."

"To jail," says she. "Why, what have you done?"

"Why, I did nothing but preach, and they did nothing but hear me."

"He shall not send you to jail," replied she.

"Ay, but, my dear," said he, "I believe he is now making out the *mittimus* to send us all there."

Upon this she ran up to the chamber where Sir Richard was, and knocked with her head and heels till she got in, and said to him, "What

are you doing with my good old gentleman in the hall?"

"That's nothing to you," said he. "Get about your business."

"But I won't," says she. "He tells me that you are going to send him and his friends to jail, and if you send them, I'll drown myself in the pond as soon as they are gone—I will indeed."

When he saw the child thus peremptory, it shook his resolution, and induced him to abandon his malicious design. Taking the *mittimus* in his hand, he went down into the hall, and thus addressed these good men: "I had here made out your *mittimus* to send you all to jail, as you observe, but at my grandchild's request I drop the prosecution, and set you all at liberty."

They all bowed and thanked his worship. But Mr Rogers, going to the child, laid his hand upon her head, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "God bless you, my dear child! May the blessing of that God whose cause you did now plead, though as yet you know Him not, be upon you in life, at death, and to all eternity."

He and his friends then went away.

The above remarkable story was told by Mr

Timothy Rogers, the son of the respected minister, who had frequently heard his father relate it with great pleasure (and the celebrated Mr Bradbury once heard it from him), when he was dining with Mrs Tooley, an eminent Christian lady in London, who was distinguished for her religion and for her love to Christ and His people; whose house and table, like Lydia's, were always open to them.

What follows is yet more remarkable, as containing a striking proof of the answer which was returned to good Mr Rogers' prayer for this child, and the blessing which descended upon her who had been the instrument of such a deliverance for those persecuted servants of God.

Mrs Tooley had listened with uncommon attention to Mr Rogers' story, and when he had ended it, she asked him, "And are you that Mr Rogers' son?" He told her he was, upon which she said, "Well, as long as I have been acquainted with you, I never knew that before. And now I will tell you something you do not know: *I am the very girl* your dear father blessed in the manner you have related, and it made an impression upon me which I could never forget."

Upon this double discovery Mr Rogers and

Mrs Tooley found an additional tie of mutual love and affection ; and then he and Mr Bradbury expressed a desire to know how she, who had been brought up in an aversion to the Dissenters, and to serious religion, now discovered such an attachment to both, upon which she cheerfully gave them the following narrative.

After her grandfather's death she became sole heiress to his estate, which was considerable. Being in the bloom of youth, and having none to control her, she ran into all the fashionable diversions of the age without any restraint ; but she confessed that, when the pleasurable scenes were over, she found a dissatisfaction, both with them and herself, that always struck a damp to her heart which she did not know how to get rid of in any other way than by running the same round over and over again ; but all was in vain.

Having contracted some slight illness she would go to Bath hearing that it was a place for pleasure as well as health. When she came thither she was providentially led to consult a physician, who was a very worthy and religious man. When he inquired what ailed her, she answered, " Why, doctor, I don't ail much as to my body, but I have an uneasy mind that I can't get rid of,"

“Truly, miss,” said he, “I was so till I met with a certain book, and that cured me.”

“Books,” said she, “I get all the books I can lay my hands on—all the plays, novels, and romances I hear of, but after I have read them my uneasiness is the same.”

“That may be, miss,” said he, “and I don’t wonder at it; but as to this book I speak of, I can say of it what I can say of no other book I ever read, that I never tire in reading it, but can begin to read it again, as if I had never read it before, and I always see something new in it.”

“Pray, doctor,” says she, “what book is that?”

“Nay, miss,” answered he, “that is a secret I don’t tell every one.”

“But could not I get a sight of that book?” says she.

“Yes,” replied he, “if you speak me fair I can help you to a sight of it.”

“Pray, then, get it me, doctor, and I’ll give you anything you please.”

“Yes,” said he, “if you will promise me one thing I’ll bring it you, and that is, that you will read it over carefully, and if you should not see much in it at first, that you will give it a second reading.” She promised faithfully that she would.

After coming two or three times without it, to raise her curiosity, he at last took it out of his pocket and gave it to her. That book was the New Testament. When she looked at it, she exclaimed, "Oh, I could get that at any time!"

"Why, miss," said he, "so you might, but I have your solemn promise that you will read it carefully."

"Well," said she, "though I never read it before, I'll give it a reading."

Accordingly she began to read it, and it soon attracted her attention. She saw something in it, wherein she had a deep concern, but her mind now became ten times more uneasy than ever. Not knowing what to do, she soon returned to London, resolved to try again what the diversions there would do to dissipate her gloom. But nothing of this kind answered her purpose.

She lodged at the Court end of the town, where she had with her a lady companion. One Saturday evening she had a remarkable dream, which was—that she was in a place of worship, where she heard a sermon, but when she awoke she could remember nothing but the text. This dream, however, made a deep impression upon her mind, and the idea she had of the place and

of the minister's person was so strong as if she had been long acquainted with both. On Lord's Day morning she told her dream to her companion, and said that after breakfast she was resolved to go in quest of the place, though she should go from one end of London to the other. They accordingly set out, and went into several churches as they passed along, but none answered to what she saw in her dream.

About one o'clock they found themselves in the heart of the city, where they dined, and then set out again in search of this place of worship. Being in the Poultry about half an hour after two o'clock, they saw a great number of people going down Old Jewry, and she determined to see where they went. She mingled with the company, and they conducted her to the meeting-house in the Old Jewry, where Mr Shower was their minister. As soon as she entered the door and surveyed the place, she turned to her companion and said, with some surprise, "This is the very place I saw in my dream."

She had not been long there before she saw Mr Shower go up into the pulpit, and looking at him with greater surprise, she said, "This is the very man I saw in my dream; and if every part

of it holds true, he will take for his text Psalm cxvi. 7, 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.'" When he rose up to pray she was all attention, and every sentence went to her heart. Having finished his prayer, he took that very passage which she had mentioned for his text, and God was pleased to make the discourse founded upon it the means of her saving conversion; and thus she at last found what she had so long sought elsewhere in vain—*Rest to her soul*. And she obtained that blessing from God, the fountain of felicity, which pious Mr Rogers, so many years before, had so solemnly and fervently implored on her behalf.

"It is God that Justifieth."

A CHRISTIAN was visiting a sick person. The nurse had been telling her that she must amend her ways and seek to purify her heart by imitating Christ if she would go to heaven when she died.

"Nurse says I must be like Christ if I would go to heaven."

“Quite true,” replied the Christian, “you must be like Christ.”

“Then I am lost, I shall never go there,” she cried in despair.

“Stop a minute,” said her visitor, “you cannot go there, if you are depending on your own works to take you, but if you trust in Him who said on the cross, ‘It is finished,’ you may enter heaven by virtue of the perfect work which He accomplished for God’s glory.”

None of us, dear readers, would ever go to heaven if our entrance there depended on our own works. God has said, “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” What a blessed thing it is to find out, like this sick woman, that we are “lost,” for the next step is to find the Saviour who came to “seek and to save that which was lost.” And then we have the bright hope that when He comes to take us home to Himself, “we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” But it is all God’s work from beginning to end. “Whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”

A gentleman scarcely past the prime of life lay on his deathbed. He was known in the neighbourhood as an upright, charitable man,

benevolent to the poor, full of good works, and outwardly blameless in his conduct. Men spoke well of him, and, perhaps unknown to himself, he rejoiced in it. He was religious too, and looked up to as a church dignitary, but, like Job, he "justified himself rather than God," and was in the same category as the Pharisees, of whom the Lord said, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." He was still in this frame of mind when he was taken with what proved to be a fatal illness. But God, who loves to bless even at the eleventh hour, sent a Christian to visit him, one who had known him intimately for years, and who had watched and prayed for his soul. The moment had come at last for a word in season to be spoken, and the Christian did not hesitate to point out to the dying man his real state before God. Day by day he read and prayed with his friend, and God's Word, "which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," pierced even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discerned the thoughts and intents of the heart. The dying man had to do with God perhaps for the first

time in his life, and all things were naked and opened to Him. He learnt in His presence that salvation is to “him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.” He learnt how “God can be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,” whereas “all *his* righteousnesses were as filthy rags,” and he passed into the presence of the Lord with these words on his lips,

“God has justified me,”

while those who loved him and mourned his loss, yet wept for joy and thanked God for so bright a testimony to His saving grace. The proud man was stripped of his “rags” and clothed in Christ with the robe of righteousness, to shine for ever in His likeness and to His glory.

“It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

Dear reader, can you say, “God has justified me?” Have you learnt, like the two of whom I have told you, that you are lost and that you cannot go to heaven by your own good works?

If not, let their experience be a voice from God to your soul.

C. A. W.

“Ah, but we must be Careful.”

A SHORT time ago I overtook an old man who was wending his way home after his day's toil. Having offered him a gospel book, which he accepted thankfully, I asked him if he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, to which he replied in a trembling voice, “Aye, young man, I have believed on Him for many years.”

In course of conversation I remarked that it was a blessed thing to know that believers have all their sins forgiven, and that they shall not come into judgment, when his face became grave while he remarked, “Ah, but we must be careful ; if we were sure of having our sins forgiven as you say, it would make us careless in our walk.”

Upon further conversation I found that although doubtless he had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, yet he had not settled peace with God. He thought it not only necessary to believe, but also that his salvation depended upon his walk, and that unless he endured to the end he would finally be lost. But if we give heed to God's Word we need not be in doubt as

to the future. This poor man was sincere in his desires, and how many more are in a similar condition of soul, yet there is no uncertainty in the words of the Lord Jesus—

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

Mark, it says, “He that heareth My word, and believeth.” It is not to him that heareth and worketh, for righteousness is imputed on the principle of faith alone. “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4, 5)—“not of works lest any man should boast.”

Do you, dear reader, believe on God as the One who has sent Jesus into the world? If so, listen to the blessed results—

“Hath everlasting life.”

“Shall not come into condemnation.”

“Is passed from death unto life.”

Do you say in your heart, how can these things be? It is because “Christ also hath once

suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). The blood that made atonement has been shed; without the shedding of that blood there could have been no remission or forgiveness; but if now you receive Jesus as your Saviour, that is by believing on Him, the word to you is, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

On the other hand, God says, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). Jesus has glorified God upon the earth, He has finished the work that God had given Him to do, therefore God has raised Him from the dead, and has exalted Him to His own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins. (Read Acts v. 31.)

Reader, you are either saved or lost, either under the shelter of the blood, or the wrath of God abides upon you. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

Which is it? Saved or lost?