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The Gospel Messenger.

THE DETECTED DETECTIVE.

I HAD taken my seat alone in a fast train leaving B—— for the North of England, when, just as the guard's whistle was blowing, a tall military-looking gentleman entered the compartment, making some remarks about the sultry morning as he did so. I replied to his remarks, then silence ensued, as we were strangers to each other.

As we were rushing along my thoughts turned to things of eternity, and how speedily souls were hurled into it by railway accidents and other things. What a fearful thing a *lost eternity* must be! Who can measure it? "The wicked shall be turned into hell"!! (solemn words); "The wicked shall be silent in darkness"!! (Ps. ix. 17; 1 Sam. ii. 9); and other scriptures crowded into my mind. Wondering whether my companion was a "converted" man or not, I tremblingly took from my pocket a number of little books, and handed him one entitled "Is it settled?" (I believe this was the title.) Finding he received it courteously and read it carefully, I was emboldened to address a question to him, when he had finished its perusal, and the following conversation ensued:—



“May I ask whether it is settled yet, sir?” meaning, of course, the question of his sins and his eternal destiny.

Drawing himself erect, he replied, “I prefer not to answer such a question to a stranger.”

“Very good, sir,” said I, leaning back disappointed and grieved.

Still we rushed on, and the possibility of an eternal separation between myself and my companion forced itself upon me and made me long more than ever that he might have the same assurance of salvation that I myself enjoyed. I made bold to approach him again.

“Pardon me, sir, addressing you again, but had I continued the conversation, started by yourself, as to the weather, or turned it to the war or politics, would you then have raised any objection to conversing with me?”

“No, but to my mind religion is nothing more than hypocrisy. The fact is, I am a detective, and my business is to unearth a great deal often covered up under the cloak of religion.”

“Excuse me, sir, do not speak too fast. I grant you there may be many hypocrites, but do not please blame religion. Now, sir, just consider for a moment. Is this hypocrisy? We are fellow-travellers in this train; I judge by your accent that you are a native of Scotland. I was once a fellow-traveller with a Scotchman who was used of God to open my eyes to the fact that I was a poor perishing sinner on the road to hell. I shall thank God for all eternity that I ever

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met R—— M——. He is now in heaven, and if this train meets with an accident and I am killed, I shall join him. But if you were killed also, I should have eternally to regret that I had never spoken to you, my fellow-traveller to eternity. I am a stranger to you ; you neither know where I come from, nor where I am going ; my name and business are unknown to you, and will ever be so, as far as I am concerned. What selfish end can I have to serve ? Your first answer would have repelled me for ever if I had not loved your soul sufficiently to break the ice and approach you again. Is there any hypocrisy in my speaking to you about your soul ? Are not the things of eternity of more moment than the things of time. Why then, as men, should we not speak freely to each other concerning them ? ”

“ Well, sir, I must say I had not thought of that. Of course there cannot be any hypocrisy in what you are now doing, and I must admit I spoke too fast. I do not know why we should be so unwilling to speak on the things of eternity, for, as you say, they are of more moment than the things of time. Perhaps my profession has something to do with it. I am now going to the N—— Races, and often in such places the wickedness and sin I witness makes me shudder and wonder what the end will be.”

“ What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ? They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power ” !! (2 Thess. i. 8, 9).

“But now, sir, you have said that you are a detective; tell me, did you ever know one of your Judges to pardon a prisoner you had brought before him?”

“No, certainly not.”

“No, that could never be. I have been on juries, and we have sometimes taken the prisoner clean out of the hands of the judge by bringing in a verdict of “Not guilty.” But when we returned with a verdict of “Guilty,” the judge could never release the prisoner, but must pass upon him the penalty of the law. Now, sir, I have no doubt you are pretty much where your fellow-countryman met me, *i.e.*, acknowledging that you will have to meet God some day, and hoping that He may find sufficient goodness in you and your works to clear you at last, that heaven may be your portion? Have I not guessed right?”

“Yes, I think that is pretty much how I have looked at things. But I think I see what you mean by the judge not being able to clear the prisoner—that is not his work. Justice must be upheld.”

“Exactly, and for that reason we ought to have to do with God now about our sins while He is making Himself known as a Saviour. The fact is, our trial is over, and three words describe our condition in Romans iii. 19, *viz.*, ‘*Guilty before God.*’ But, sir, there is no reason why you should go before the Bar of God, ‘*The great white throne,*’ there to receive the due reward of your deeds, for Another, even Jesus the Son of God, has died, ‘*the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*’

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(1 Pet. iii. 18). God has found a way to maintain every attribute of His being, and at the same time express His love. 'He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' "See, I beseech of you, how wonderful is God's way of salvation. A prisoner stands in the dock charged with a great crime; the witnesses having been heard, the jury retire, and shortly return with the verdict of guilty. A hush is all through the Court. 'And what will the sentence be?' is the inquiry of every mind. Why does the judge wait, and what does that look of pity mean upon his face? Ah! he loves the prisoner, and wants to release him. But justice, as you have said, must be upheld. A stir is seen in the Court, and forward steps a young man. 'Tis the son of the judge. Reading that look of pity upon the face of his father, and out of pity for the prisoner, he offers himself to bear the penalty of the prisoner's crime, that his father may gratify his heart by clearing the prisoner! See how the prisoner breaks down and weeps in the presence of such love.

"Now, sir, you have not so seen it in any Court of Justice in which you have been. But this feebly represents what has really taken place for both you and me.

'God could not pass the sinner by,
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save yet righteous be.

The sin alights on Jesus' head,
'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid;
Stern justice can demand no more,
And mercy can dispense her store.'

Why should you not here in this railway carriage turn to God, confessing that you are a sinner deserving the judgment that rests upon you, but plead the merits of Christ's atoning blood that you may be justified? I turned to Him thus, under the gunshields of H.M.S. 'R——,' on the West Coast of Africa, fourteen years ago; the burden of my sins was rolled away then and there, and I have been a happy man ever since. The happiest life is the one spent here for the will of God with eternal joys in prospect."

The train was now slowing up. My companion rose from his seat, and grasping me by the hand tightly said: "Sir, in every way you have the best of it, for even in this life it must be far happier to go on with a clear conscience than an accusing one, to say nothing of the future. I would give anything to be like you. Good-bye, sir, and thank you very much."

I trust by this time that that dear man has turned to a Saviour-God who can now, since Christ has died, "justify freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Are you, my dear reader, neglecting salvation, and vainly hoping that the Judge will clear you at the "Great white throne"? Read Revelation xx. 11-15, and flee from such a fatal delusion, I pray you. "The second death, which is the lake of fire," awaits you if you miss the "salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

The children of Israel began their year under the

shelter of the blood in Egypt, and you now may begin your New Year—and a Happy New Year it will indeed be—if only you take your place as a sinner before God, and ask Him to cleanse you through the blood of Jesus, and fill your heart with His boundless love.

“Come to the Saviour now,
 He ready stands to bless ;
 He bids thee nothing bring,
 Only thy guilt confess.
 No anger fills His heart,
 No frown is on His brow,
 His mien is perfect grace,
 He bids thee trust Him now,
 Come, come, come.”

E. E. C.

HADES.

I WROTE a paper some years ago for the *Gospel Messenger*, which was afterwards printed separately and circulated as a booklet. The title was—“*How often would I!*” and its burden was the sorrow of Christ as He wept over Jerusalem, the city of such infinite privilege, but, alas, of such desperate unbelief, until, with tears, He had to say that its day was over, and its judgment and desolation come! Often as He would have blessed, so often was

His grace repelled, and, alas, once too often! This exquisite picture of patience on the part of Christ toward Israel, I used, in my paper, as illustrative of His patience to-day with the sinful sons of men to whom He tenderly calls in the gospel, adding the warning of doom in the event of the heart being finally closed.

Now all this was, I think, right enough, for the parallel was plain. If Jerusalem furnished an example of hard-hearted unbelief and consequent punishment, it is only honest to warn the sinner of to-day, whether Jew or Gentile, of the judgment that must overtake him if he persist in sin and unbelief. To fail in so doing were faithless on the part of a servant of Christ.

Well, I yesterday received, from the hand of a friend, a copy of the said booklet, which had been handed for perusal to a gentleman at a Welsh watering-place in the past summer, who was good enough to read it through, but also to write in pencil on its first page:—“*Too much Hell, too little Heaven; see the Revised Edition of the N.T., where Hell has its proper translation—Hades.*”

“Too much Hell.” On reading the booklet I saw that that word was used only once, but once too often, I fear, for the conscience of the gentleman in question; and in turning to the original of the New Testament I find that the word *Hell* occurs twenty times, ten of which in the original are *Gehenna*, nine *Hades*, and one

Tartarus. Hence, the proper translation of Hell is not always Hades.

Take note of that, my reader! Hell may mean Hades, and it may mean Gehenna, or the Lake of Fire. The Lake of Fire is the eternal doom of the wicked dead, after the judgment of the Great White Throne (see Rev. xx.). Was this gentleman deceived, and did he seek to deceive others on such an awful point? It is well to be undeceived.

"Hell has its proper translation—Hades," and where can we find Hades, this easier Hell, described? We turn to Luke xvi. only to read: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments . . . and he cried and said, I am tormented in this flame . . . I have five brethren . . . testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

Here the word Hell should undoubtedly be translated Hades. The Welsh critic was quite right in this case. Could he have known all this? Could he have ever learned that the Hades to which he sprang, so exultingly, meant the awful agony that is described by our Lord as attaching to it?

If this be Hades, what must Gehenna be? Reader, never speak lightly of Hell. To escape its certain doom turn to Calvary, and Christ's cross and blood, and see the perfect substitution of the Holy Son of God for a poor guilty sinner. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

J. W. S.

**“I WILL APPEASE HIM WITH THE
PRESENT.”**

“I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me” (Gen. xxxii. 20).

“**W**OULD God forgive me if I bought Him that packet of sweeties I saw in Ferguson’s shop-window yesterday?” The speaker was a little lassie of six years; but her question voices the language of many a sinner, as sin presses on the conscience, and he thinks of God.

Little Mary’s mother had gone out and left her in charge of a godly aunt, with instructions to put her to bed at six o’clock. When the hour came her aunt reminded Mary that the hour for retiring had come. The child replied that mother was out, and she would not go to bed. Her aunt rejoined, “Mother’s orders must be obeyed.” Whereupon the little creature replied, “If you put me to bed, I won’t say my prayers.”

“Mother’s orders must be obeyed,” again said her aunt; and accordingly the little one was put to bed, prayerless, as she vowed. The light was turned down, and the young sinner left to her own reflections. In darkness conscience often works, and so it was with Mary, for within half an hour a piteous voice was heard on the stairhead, crying, “Aunt Georgina, Aunt Georgina.”

“I WILL APPEASE HIM WITH THE PRESENT.” 11

“What is the matter, darling?” said aunty, coming up the stair.

“Oh, Aunty, I know I have been naughty and wicked. Would God forgive me if I bought Him that packet of sweeties I saw in Ferguson’s shop-window yesterday?”

Aunty, who was a sincere Christian, told the child that forgiveness was not to be obtained in that manner, but by confession of her sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But really the language of the child here is the expression of the thoughts of many of her elders.

The passage of Scripture which heads this paper voices it thoroughly. Jacob knew he had wronged Esau, and hoped to appease him with the present which he sent before him, when again having to meet his wronged and erstwhile indignant brother.

Man has sinned against God. His conscience tells him that he is a sinner. When alive to this, he naturally wonders what effort on his own part will put things right with God. Something that springs from himself, or is brought by him to God, is usually the suggestion which presents itself to him as the means of rectifying matters with God. To appease Him with a present is really the thought in his mind. With this in view, Luther was found climbing the five hundred steps at the Vatican, hoping to propitiate God, till he remembered, “The just shall live by faith,” and saw that his toil was all in vain. The Indian fakir, who endures the torture of being hung up by a hook in the shoulders under the eye of the

sun for hours, hoping thereby to propitiate an offended deity, is in line with little Mary, Jacob, and Martin Luther. But all such efforts are in vain.

It seems indigenous to the human soul to think that there is something we must do to meet the claims of God's righteousness, and to propitiate His offended majesty. When Naaman was bidden "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean," he was wroth, and went away in a rage. "And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee *do some great thing*, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings v. 10, 13). The prophet did not bid him do some great thing. He was told to get his cleansing in a very simple way. He was to do nothing but bury himself out of his own sight and everybody else's. He did not like that plan. So to-day God's way of salvation—simple faith in Jesus and His finished work—is very unacceptable to the sinner, till, driven by the writhings of his conscience, he heeds God's word, and accepts God's Son as his own and only Saviour.

The idea of appeasing God by some works of our own is uppermost in the human mind; and we frequently meet with sinners who say, they are doing their best, or going to do their best to put matters right.

If my reader be one of this class, let me assure him his efforts are all in vain. When the Lord Jesus

“I WILL APPEASE HIM WITH THE PRESENT.” 13

Christ died on the cross, He said, “It is finished.” The work of atonement was effected. The work of redemption was completed. The work by which God is glorified, sin put away, Satan’s power broken, death annulled, and the bars of the grave broken up, was all finished, and finished for ever. “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Pet. iii. 18). His suffering alone avails to put sins away.

The gospel of God, of necessity, sets aside the presents and works of man. “We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. iii. 28), is a very fine conclusion, which the apostle Paul draws from the fact that God now “justifies freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” In Romans iv. it distinctly states, “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (vers. 4 and 5). Justification, peace, pardon, forgiveness, and salvation, are obtained by faith, without works.

This is very difficult for the legal mind to apprehend. But it is well to bear in mind that God is love; His attitude toward men has been unchanged by man’s sin. It is man who has altered, not God. True, man’s sin has compelled God to sit on the throne of judgment; but He who fills that throne still is love. You have not to appease Him, for He is love. But His righteousness, and His offended majesty in respect to sin, have to be met. This the

death of the Lord Jesus Christ alone can effect, and, thank God, has effected.

Reader, if you have never yet rested on the work, and trusted the Person of the Lord Jesus, let me urge you to now do so. As a new year dawns, begin it with God. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is God's way of salvation. Be wise and accept it. W. T. P. W.

"THERE GO THE SHIPS."

(Ps. civ. 26.)

THERE are many ships sailing the ocean, and there is one thing about them all, which is, they are all making for some *definite port*.

Man is on the ocean of life, and, like the ships, he too is making for some port. Heaven or hell is the port each one is making for.

We will use the ships figuratively, and may our God speak to us, as we go along, as to which ship we are on board of, and the port we are making for. We are surely going on toward the shores of eternity, to the harbour of rest and peace and joy, where the Lord Jesus is, or "to the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"There go the ships." Yes, they are going; and they reach a definite end. And so will you and I, dear reader.

Ships have a name, and the first ship we have to notice is called, *Our own Righteousness*. The winds

that waft her across the seas are self-confidence and ignorance of God's righteousness. Her captain's name is Works. He goes by the chart of Do the best you can, and you will reach heaven at last. Many embark on board this ship, for she is considered very reliable. Publicans and harlots are not admitted on board. Her captain would be shocked at such a thought. Every Sunday he discourses on perseverance in the performance of good works for salvation. The crew are reminded that they must gain the favour of God by following in the footsteps of Jesus, and the ship's company are assured, after the dispensing of the sacrament, that they are perfectly safe. In addition to this, the sacrament is given every time a storm appears, which quiets all fears. And so the ship sails along.

But news comes that she encountered a terrific storm, was driven upon the rocks, and every soul on board was lost.

. Moral: "He that trusteth to his own heart is a fool" (Prov. xxviii. 26). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus iii. 5). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9). "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isa. lxiv. 6).

“There go the ships.” The next ship’s name is *Atheism*. Her captain’s name is Intellect, the wind that speeds her along is Human Will, and her chart is Freethought. It is not a very large ship this, but by those who embark thereon is considered safe. She is well painted, catches the eye, elates the mind, and everything on board appeals to the pride and self-will of man. There is not a Bible on board. Tom Paine, Ingersoll, Byron, &c. &c., are the writers the most prized by those who sail in this ship.

But she encounters fogs, loses her way in the pathless sea, gets drawn into a fearful whirlpool, and every soul on board perishes. A vessel, passing at some distance in the darkness of the night, hears a cry, “O God, have mercy on us!” But it was too late, all were lost!

Moral: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Ps. xiv. 1). “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, and mock when your fear cometh. . . . Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me” (Prov. i. 24-33).

“There go the ships.” The next ship is called *Infidelity*. Her captain’s name is Know-everything, the wind that fills her sails is Logical Argument, and her chart The sayings of great men. Numerous are the passengers on board this well-proportioned ship. Her hull is large, her masts high, her sails great.

They believe in a God, but don't admit that He has given us a revelation. With them the Scriptures are not the Word of God. So the captain preaches every Sunday. He discourses on many subjects; his arguments are logical; his diction faultless; his eloquence charming; his personal appearance attractive; and his sermons conclusive and most satisfactory to all on board. Thus she proceeds on her voyage.

But having discarded the only chart, the Word of God, that guides to the port of heaven, she loses her way among the rocks and quicksands, and one night in a howling storm she was wrecked, and nothing more was heard of her afterwards; and all that was left to tell the tale was a piece of the wreck with *Infidelity* marked on it.

Moral: "They shall know whose word shall stand, mine or theirs" (Jer. xlv. 28). "They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is there in them?" (Jer. viii. 9).

"There go the ships." The next is a very large ship containing many souls. Her name is *The Way of Cain*. Her captain's name is Hater of the Blood of Christ, the wind that sends her through the deep is Intellectuality, and her chart is Carnal reasoning on the Sacred Scriptures. The creed of all on board is, "If I can't go to heaven by my good works, I don't want to go there at all."

Her captain has a good name, discourses ably on the goodness of man, and never loses an opportunity of speaking slightingly of the blood of Christ, and assures his hearers that *he* is convinced that

they are safe. Many of the great and noble of earth are there. The air of intellectuality is on board. The ship is kept in good order, she is well painted, the decks are kept clean with a soap called *Morality*, and according to outward appearance everything is all right.

But appearances are deceitful. In a heavy sea paint is no good, and when you come to the "swellings of Jordan" the soap of *Morality* will not avail much; and when you have discarded the divine glory of Jesus the Son of God and His atoning blood, what will all the able and eloquent discourses of Captain Hater of the Blood of Christ do for you?

This ship encounters a frightful gale in the open sea. Her qualities are fairly tested, but not one of them stands the test. She was engulfed in the mighty ocean, and from the captain down, all were lost.

Moral: "He that denieth the SON, the same hath not the Father" (1 John ii. 23). "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." "Whither I go ye cannot come" (John viii. 21-25). "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy

thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 26-29). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22).

"There go the ships." We will speak of one more, though there are many that we could speak of bearing different names. While there is not much to take the eye about this ship, yet there is the look of security about her. She is built in view of rough weather, to ride out the storms and reach the haven of rest in safety.

Her name is "*The Salvation of God*," her Captain's name is "The Son of God," the wind that wafts her through the deep "the power of the Holy Ghost," her chart is the "Word of God," and those who take passage in her "are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," and the port she is destined for is heaven. Every soul on board is a trophy of the grace of God, a brand plucked out of the fire. They have discarded the filthy rags of their own righteousness, and are trusting to Jesus and His blood. They all have on a particular robe, in which they boast, called Divine Righteousness. There is a calm, a peace filling each heart on board, and while there may be storms and gales and hurricanes to encounter, yet they are kept tranquillised by the presence of their great Captain, the Son of God. He is on board, and therefore all is well.

Their chart is unerring. Every rock and shoal and quicksand and shallow is marked, and the great Captain is acquainted with them all. Those on board repose in His wisdom and power and goodness

and care. One moment in His presence, one look into His face, one word from His lips settles all. The faintest whisper from Him hushes every fear, and makes strong the weakest heart.

See the flag that floats aloft! On it is written, "The Lord our righteousness." On and on she sails to the haven of rest. Salvation from the eternal consequences of sin, salvation from the power of sin, salvation from the world and the craft of Satan, are known. Soon she reaches the heavenly harbour, drops her anchor and furls her sails. And how gladly does every soul on board, as he gazes on the heavenly shore and thinks of the dangers all past, say from his inmost being, "*What hath God wrought!*"

Now in conclusion, beloved reader, let me ask which ship are you on board of? In which have you taken passage for the eternal shore? What is your captain's name? If not the Son of God, he is not the right one. If on the wrong ship, you may yet change and find yourself with the redeemed of God on board the one whose name is "*The Salvation of God,*" and whose Captain is the Son of God.

Friend, if on the wrong ship, change at once, before the end is reached, for there is no changing then.

"Why wilt thou linger, why wilt thou die,
 God's wrath upon thee, judgment so nigh?
 Now is salvation's day,
 Tread the blood-sprinkled way;
 Sinner, no more delay,
 Jesus will come!"

E. A.

A FATAL FALL.

IT is a most unusual thing for a monarch to fall out of a top-story window, but this is what King Ahaziah did. He "fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber," and was taken up and carried to his bed a dying man.

One would have thought that then, if ever, he would have turned to the living God. But so great was his folly, that he sent off post-haste to seek aid of Baal-zebub, one of the infamous objects of Philistine worship.

You may consider this an unparalleled act of madness, but, alas! it is an act that is repeated in many a case in this twentieth century. On every hand people are to be met who are conscious of being spiritually sick. They know they are not what they ought to be; they feel there is something grave the matter with them. But instead of turning to the God who is so ready to bless and to save, they turn to some modern Baal-zebub to recover them of their sickness.

There is INFIDELITY, for instance. How many a man, with goaded conscience and stricken heart, has sought such comfort as the cold shallow unbelief of the day can afford. If his inmost soul could speak, you would hear it talk somewhat after this fashion—

"I don't like to think of having to meet God; so I choose to believe that there is no God. I feel that if ever a sinner deserved hell, I do; so I prefer to believe that there is no hell. The Bible tells me who I am,

what I have done, and where I am going. It is too personal, too searching. I don't like it. So I put the Bible on the same shelf with the Koran, and the Talmud, and other old wives' fables."

But whoever heard of a man overcoming his sins with the aid of infidelity, or recovering from his sickness through scepticism? Unbelief, with all its pretensions, is a quack physician, and a very sorry one too.

Others there are who betake themselves to a very different kind of Baal. The name of their idol is RELIGION.

Do not misunderstand me. Religion is a grand thing. I pity the man who has none of it. But religion in itself never cured a man of his soul's sickness. Not a saint in heaven will ever be able to say, "I was saved from my sins because I was religious."

Religion at best is but an egg-shell. Yet an egg-shell is a very important thing. An egg without a shell might go begging round the world before I would look at it, but a shell without an egg would be a worse bargain still. So with religion, if a man has nothing further, it is not worth a snap of the fingers; yet a man without it is a man in whom no confidence can be placed.

During the year 1895, God was working in a wonderful way in the city of Kingston, Jamaica. Night after night we saw sinners crowding to the Saviour's feet. There was a great wave of blessing, and amongst those who attended our meetings were several of the city ministers.

One evening my friend Mr Mawson and myself had both been speaking on the necessity of having *Christ*, and not a mere religious profession, as the hope of the soul. "NOT RELIGION, BUT CHRIST" had been our watchword on that occasion. We tried to show the people that salvation does not consist of turning over a new leaf, joining some society and becoming religious, but that it is "of the Lord," and depends on the simple reception of Christ.

¶ One of the ministers went away and announced that he would preach in his chapel on "NO RELIGION, NO CHRIST." His aim was to show that it is vain for people to say they believe in Christ unless they prove it by practical religion, and that in this way religion was of great importance.

Now, who was right, that minister or ourselves? I verily believe that *both* were right.

He was right in refusing to believe in any professed faith in Christ unless true religion was the result; and I am sure *we* were right in saying that no amount of religion could save a man's soul, but that only Christ could do that.

Let me warn you, then, against making a Baal of religion. If you feel your need of a physician for your soul, why not turn at once to Christ? Do not walk in the steps of Ephraim, of whom we read, "When Ephraim saw his sickness . . . then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound."

Why try useless experiments when Christ, full of grace and power, stands ready to save you?

At a testimony meeting, a lady handed in a slip of paper with the following words written upon it :

“I knew and felt my guilt. I knew also that the blood of Jesus could cleanse me. I just turned to Him and trusted Him, and now I stand upon a firm foundation, the Rock of Ages cleft for me.”

Is that where *your* hopes are built, reader? How happy to be able to say—

“On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.”

H. P. B.

ONLY ONE WAY TO HEAVEN.

IT is exceedingly encouraging for a soul, anxious to be saved, to be assured that there is but the solitary *one way* to heaven.

If there were several ways to that happy place of life and love and glory, there would be a danger of missing the right one.

When on earth Christ said—

“I AM THE WAY.”

What a mercy that this one heavenly way is free to all alike, and that, so far as God is concerned, there is not the slightest reason why any should miss that way.

After man had done his worst towards the Lord Jesus, God raised Him from the dead, and exalted

Him to His right hand to be "a Prince and a Saviour." Thus God is, as it were, now in a position to offer faith to all. Therefore those who know their need of being saved, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ *get* saved. The mischief is that so many people are hindered by trying their own ways instead of God's *one way*, and in some instances very earnestly too. But "let God be true!" "He that hath the Son *hath* life, and he that hath not the Son of God *hath not* life."

Some people imagine that law-keeping, praying, church going, alms deeds, paying their way, being as good as their neighbour, having their name at the head of the charitable subscription list, and the like, will suffice. We personally know a gentleman to-day who gave up two thousand five hundred pounds sterling a year of his income to make him feel more fit for God, and, when it did not furnish what he needed, he travelled two hundred miles to specially pray in St Paul's Cathedral, London, but even this absolutely failed to supply the felt need. He afterwards received Christ as his Saviour.

We are not fault-finding, but all such fruitless attempts to reach the heavenly home of eternal joy and rest remind us a good deal of

WHAT THE OLD ROMANS USED TO DO

to secure for their dying friends a free entrance to bliss. It is on record that those heathens placed a piece of money in the mouths of those departing this life, to pay their passage into the better land.

This is borne out by the tomb-rusted coins that have been dug up in corpses.

“ All the fitness you require
Is to feel your need of Him ! ”

The Lord Jesus is a perfect Saviour. He needs no help. He has accomplished a full redemption. He was quite equal to the tremendous occasion, and to Him alone be all the praise ! He came on purpose, and successfully, to bridge the distance from man's ruin on earth to the endless joys of the Father's house in glory, so that He might have companions there. All who accept Him get into the full benefit of His finished work. To merely know *of* Christ will not help you. Most people know something *about* Him, as, for instance, when they read the “year of our Lord” at the foot of public proclamations. But, dear reader, we ask,

DO *you* REALLY *know* HIM ?

If, by faith, you have accepted Him as your Sin-bearer, Substitute, and Glory-Winner, you are as sure of being like Him, for ever in glory, as though you were actually there. But if you are still a stranger to that loving Saviour of sinners, remember that “neither is there salvation in *any other* ; for there is *none other* name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

THEN WHY NOT BE SAVED ?

J. N.

"THE GATE WILL CLOSE."

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"THE GATE WILL CLOSE."

GOD'S ways of reaching souls are many, and sometimes very wonderful, as the following will show. A young man went to a dentist to get some teeth out. It was agreed he should have gas, and while under it, and the dentist busy pulling his teeth, he had a dream or vision.

He thought he found himself at the gate of heaven, but, sad to say, he was outside the gate. As he sat there, the gate, which seemed to be hanging overhead, began gradually to descend. It came down, down, down, until at last it was *closed*. Then he wakened up to the fact that the gate was *shut* and he was *outside*. What a horror of soul took possession of him; but just then he came to his senses. He soon got over the effects of the gas, but, happy to say, he could not get away from the vision he had seen.

Like most sinners he was slow to give in—to own what he was, and get a passport to heaven, the precious blood of Christ. But God, who had begun a good work in his soul, was not to let him go on his downward road much longer. A short time after he was going from Edinburgh to Glasgow, when, as he entered the carriage, the following words—left there doubtless by some servant of God—met his eyes: "Young man, *where will you spend eternity?*" That settled the matter for him—Praise the Lord.

From that moment he never rested until, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of salvation, he knew that he would spend eternity in the company of that blessed One, who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Reader, have you a link with that blessed One, the Saviour of sinners? If not, you may be quite certain that should heaven's gate close to-day—and it may—you will be shut *outside for ever*. What horrified the young man we have spoken of, was the thought that he had sat still while the gate was closing until he was too late. And you are going complacently on, thinking there is plenty of time. Of course you mean to be saved some day. Ah! reader, *now* is your only safe time. The gate *will* close, and *it will close soon*. You had better take action. Be like those four lepers who said, "Why sit we here until we die?" (2 Kings vii. 3). If you sit still, you *will die* and be damned. If you flee to Christ, you *will live* for ever.

"Decide for Christ to-day,
And God's salvation see;
Yield soul and body, heart and will,
To Him who died for thee.

Decide for Christ to-day,
Confess Him as thy Lord;
Proclaim to all the Saviour's worth,
How faithful is His word.

Decide for Christ to-day,
Procrastinate no more;
Now mercy pleads, soon wrath will burn—
The Judge is at the door!"

A. C.

"HEAVENLY GOODS."

A FEW years ago I was making a little evangelistic tour in the north of Scotland, preaching the gospel at various places, accompanied by two other servants of the Lord, whose hearts were deeply interested in the salvation of the lost. Passing from town to town we had frequent opportunities of conversation with our fellow-passengers in the train, and of handing to them little gospel booklets.

We were leaving a town on the Banffshire coast when there entered the carriage a middle-aged man, who took his seat in the corner opposite to me. He was inclined to be sociable, and began to speak about the weather and the crops, &c. On the rack over my head I had a good-sized flat leather case, such as commercial travellers often use for their goods. I had specially designed it for carrying hymn-sheets and gospel booklets for use at my meetings. Descrying this case, he at once thought that I was a commercial traveller, and said, "What line are you in?"

"Heavenly goods," I replied.

"Get away with you," was his surprised reply. "You do not expect me to believe that?"

"Indeed, I do," I rejoined. "It is heavenly goods, and heavenly goods only that I am travelling in just now."

"But what are they?" he rejoined.

"The proclamation to sinners of pardon and peace

B

with God ; the tale of eternal life as His gift through faith in His blessed Son, and that whosoever will believe the gospel may now have the knowledge of salvation."

My reply was evidently unsatisfactory to him. He said nothing, but looked very incredulous, and at this point my two companions chimed in, "Oh, it is quite true what he says: that really is the line he is travelling in," and, by way of confirmation of their words, produced a little hand-bill announcing some meetings I was to have a day or two afterwards in Aberdeen. He had no more questions for me, so I thought I would put him one or two.

"What about your own soul, my friend? Are you saved?"

"Ah, that is what no man can know."

"I beg your pardon, it may be known. I know that I am saved, and you may know the same. You have heard the gospel many a time in your day, I expect?"

This evidently awoke in his mind old memories, and with a softened tone he said: "Yes, when I was a laddie and lived in this district. But that is long ago. You see, I have lived in London most of my life. When I was a lad here I used to hear about those things, and think about them too but when I crossed the border, and got into busy London, I flung all religion overboard, and I just set myself to make money."

"And you have made it?" I replied.

“HEAVENLY GOODS.”

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“Yes, I have done well in that line, and I have come north now to see my old friends and the old places, and to enjoy myself.”

“And the money you have made has made you quite happy, I suppose, and you are all right for eternity.”

“Indeed, I am nothing of the kind. Money does not make a man happy, nor save his soul.”

“Quite true,” I replied, “and I think if you are a wise man, you will now seek to get the riches that are abiding, everlasting, and satisfying. In other words, you had better secure the ‘heavenly goods’ that I am speaking of. Would not you be the better of their possession?”

“I believe I would,” said he; “but how am I to get them?”

Then followed a plain conversation as to the gospel, up to the station at which he had to alight. He seemed much interested, took a gospel booklet or two with thankfulness, and a notice of the Aberdeen meetings, saying he would certainly attend them.

On the following Lord’s Day, both afternoon and evening, I observed him among my listeners in the Music Hall, where I was preaching the gospel. I got no opportunity of further personal conversation, but I trust what he heard in the train was clenched by what he heard in the gospel meeting. The day of the Lord will declare.

It is a grand business to travel in the gospel. A man can earn his bread by some honest calling and still do this. No happier service is known on earth.

Reader, do you travel with the gospel? Possibly you have not yet received it. If not, let me urge you to lose no time. Remember that the gospel—the glad tidings—is “the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ.” It does not tell you what you ought to be, or ought to do. The law told you that, and then only condemned you for not being what you ought to have been, and not doing what you should have done. The law can only condemn you. The gospel saves you.

Observe it is “the gospel *of* God,” and is “*concerning* his Son Jesus Christ,” it is all about Jesus. There is nothing about you in the gospel. It is all *about* Jesus. But it is all *for* you. The gospel is *of* God, *about* Jesus, and *for* you. The gospel tells you that God is love; that God has loved the world; that “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8). It unfolds the worth and personal glory of the Lord Jesus, His moral beauty, His untold perfections, His holy life, His atoning death. It manifests Him as the Friend of sinners—such a Friend that He died even for His enemies. What a Saviour! When men cast Him out of this world and sent Him back to His Father, He seized the moment, when dying on the cross, to bear sins—to atone for them, yea, He died for those who cast Him out. He effected atonement; His blood was shed to blot out the sins of sinners; He wrought redemption by the sacrifice of Himself; He lay in the grave, and then, as the mighty Victor, He rose from the dead,

triumphant over Satan, sin, and death. And now, ascended on high, and crowned with glory, He dispenses forgiveness of sins to all who believe in Him.

All you have to do, my reader, is to believe in Him. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). Again, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Again, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (John v. 24). Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," but do not forget the last clause of the verse, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). This is the gospel—the old-fashioned, Christ-glorifying, sinner-saving gospel. You had better make Christ your own, and then go on your way, and tell others what a Saviour you have in Jesus. This is the line I rejoice to travel in. Will not you do similarly? W. T. P. W.

"WILL YOU COME?"

"**A**T this time of year many houses withdraw their travellers and practically close their business."

That time is the brief interval between Christmas and New Year; for it is then that not only are days the shortest, but, as if by common

consent, every one must have a holiday, and a laying aside of business that is not absolutely unavoidable. Hence it was that the above sentence was uttered.

He who spoke was a commercial traveller, and he apparently was not over well pleased with the result of his day's labour. He had taken few orders, and found his ordinary customers little inclined to deal with him.

He seemed therefore depressed. I felt for him, as he, in a friendly manner, opened his heart to a stranger, and I longed to lead his thoughts to a line of things where disappointment need never be.

Hence I said that I knew a House which never closed, and whose travellers could always find more business than they could possibly accomplish!

He was surprised, and asked what House that could be.

In reply I told him that I alluded to His House who said to His servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my House may be filled" (Luke xiv. 23). He who speaks here is God. It is therefore God's House—that is Heaven. The servant is sent forth on his errand of mercy, and his one business is to "compel" people to come in, in order that the House may be filled. Wonderful thought! Then I told my fellow-traveller, as we journeyed together in the train, that the work of Christ's servants is to invite others to the joys of that House. Their work has lasted continuously now for above eighteen hundred years—the House is not yet filled (shortly, though, the last

seat may be taken), and that my happy business at that very moment, ere the year should close, was to invite him!

“*Will you come?*” said I.

But come where? To a House? Nay, more! To a feast? Nay, more! To a sinner’s Saviour? Yes, and to pardon, and love, and life! To God! Yes, and to a Father-God, and His Father’s House, and all the joys and bliss of eternal heaven.

“*Will you come?*” I asked him.

I felt a little of the glorious dignity of being a traveller for such a House at that moment, and that from my lips went forth such a divine invitation—“*Will you come?*” For how soon may heaven’s “*Come*” be changed to eternity’s “*Depart*,” and the long bright year of salvation sink into everlasting night—how soon!

“*Will you come?*” was my query.

“We cannot always answer that question,” was the withering rejoinder.

Why not? If God says to a sinner “*Come*,” why should he not respond?

Just because he does not want to. His wicked will is at work. That is the reason!

And I, too, was disappointed in this particular case. But who, after all, is the loser?

So I thought that if you won’t, some one else will. That House is to be filled somehow, and Christ’s travellers must just go on in quest of those who feel their need, and who by His grace will spring to His invitation. Only, ye rejecters, take heed; this

call, this "Come, and welcome!" may not bide your time nor your pleasure. You will hear it once for the last time—and then?

Then ye shall hear the awful words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41).

"Come" or "Depart" — which? "Come unto me," or "Depart from me"? One or other it must be! But, reader, which?

Once more, "Will *you* come?"

J. W. S.

A GOSPEL ILLUSTRATION.

A POOR wayfaring man, whilst walking along the bank of a broad river, missed his footing and fell into the flowing tide. Vain were his most frantic efforts to save himself, for alas! he could not swim. Attracted by his cries for help, however, a man hastened to the spot with a coil of strong new rope in his hand. With a well-directed aim, he threw it straight to the drowning man, shouting out at the same time, "Lay hold of this, and I will save you." But the friendly voice and proffered aid were unheeded. Again and again, in louder and more urgent tones, the would-be saviour called, "Lay hold of the rope, man, lay hold of the rope." But it was all to no purpose. What was the meaning of such fearful madness?

There, standing on the opposite bank with a bundle of straws under his arm, just gleaned from

the harvest field near by, was an enemy in disguise. With smiling countenance and soft persuasive speech, he had attracted the poor man's attention, and was busily engaged flinging to him the golden wisps. "Here, my good friend," said he, "catch hold of these, and you'll be all right. Don't be alarmed, there's really nought to fear. Heed not that noisy fellow opposite." *He listened.* And then, with the last desperate clutch of a drowning man, laid hold of one, only of course, to find out—when too late—his fatal mistake. Loudly laughed that false friend at the success of his evil scheme, as he saw his victim sink beneath the waters, never more to rise.

Sinner! "THOU art the man."

Fast floats thy precious soul along the swiftly flowing stream of TIME. Must it be that thou, too, shalt sink into ETERNITY, and be *lost—damned?*

How long wilt thou listen to the seducing voice of the devil, as he whispers in thine ear, "Do not be alarmed, enjoy yourself a little longer. You know you mean to be saved some day, but there's plenty of time yet"? Or, if an uneasy conscience will not let thee rest, says he, "Well, then, attend a place of worship more regularly," "try and mend your ways," "read the Bible," "don't neglect your prayers," "do the best you can." Ah! if thou put thy trust in these "wisps of straw," depend upon it, friend, they will not avail thee in thy dying hour. Right well the devil knows such hollow slender reeds can never save thy soul.

Does the cry, then, escape thy lips, "What must I do to be saved"? Listen. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). All that was needed for the salvation of the sinner has been done. When? Over eighteen hundred years ago. Where? On the cross. By whom? By Jesus. "It is *finished*," was the dying Saviour's cry.

Now He is waiting, willing and able to save all who will trust in Him. Jesus is the only true rope of salvation. Hark! the sweet gospel call is sounding. From the glory yonder it comes; o'er the dark waters of sin and sorrow it travels, till it reaches thee. In loving and more urgent entreaty than ever, as if for the last time, it bids thee, poor perishing sinner, "Lay hold of Christ."

Anxious soul, dost thou say, "What must I do to be saved?" Heed the Holy Ghost's plain reply:—

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 30, 31). W. R. P.

**SHOULD THE LORD COME TO-DAY, ARE
YOU READY TO MEET HIM?**

IF the Lord comes and takes you all to heaven, I will become a Jew, and be saved with the Remnant." Such was the utterance of a boy to his mother. At that time he did not know his sins forgiven, and he feared he would be left be-

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hind if the Lord Jesus came for His waiting saints. He resolved in his mind that his only chance would be when the Lord again takes up the Jews for blessing, after the translation of the Church to heaven. He thought he might have a good chance to be saved when the millennium came.

Very often grown people think the same. Religious people generally know something of the millennium, but perhaps not enough to dispel such ignorance. Hardly any godly person doubts that there will yet be a thousand years of blessing for this poor sin-stricken, sorrow-burdened earth, though all may not be agreed as to how it will be brought about.

Those who have heard the gospel and rejected it in Christendom, will never witness millennial blessedness. Such will be morally blinded, like the Jews of old, who, when they had the Light, refused to believe. Hence they were left in darkness. Their minds are blinded, as a people, to this day. Solemn reflection for all Christendom, since Paul says, "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee" (Rom. xi. 21).

Reader, you form part of Christendom, so that warning is most needful, and it is meant for you. If you are Christless, be wise and heed it.

Before the millennium is introduced, the Lord Jesus will come into the air for His true Church. Every person who has been born again by the Spirit of God, has the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, and is indwelt by the Holy Ghost, forms part of the

Church, and such only. It is the blessed hope of the Church to wait and watch for her coming Bridegroom. His last message to her is, "Surely I come quickly." Her response is, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20).

During the last seventy years "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" has been sounded forth with a spiritual energy unknown since the days of the apostles. Much that is helpful has been written on the subject. If the reader cares to have his mind instructed on the subject, we heartily commend to him a book that God has largely used, written by the editor of this magazine.* Many have heard that cry, have wakened up from the slumber of death, and they are now waiting and ready to welcome Him whom they love.

But are we to suppose that this is true of all those who profess the name of Christ in these so-called Christian countries? Are there not many who, though they are not heathen in the true sense of that word, are still fast asleep in their sins? They seem utterly indifferent to Christ, though it may be that once they were taken as infants to a clergyman and baptized in His name.

Look at the drunkards, the harlots, the thieves, the liars, the cheats, the gamblers, and the pleasure-lovers all around us? These are the utterly careless who go nowhere that the name of Christ is mentioned.

* "Behold the Bridegroom": Ten Lectures on the Lord's Second Coming. Price 1s. *Gospel Messenger* Office, 2 Bristo Place, Edinburgh.

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They live in sin, and seem to have no thought of God. They have not obeyed the gospel. Will these all be saved should the Lord come for His own? Read their final doom in Revelation xxi. 8. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH."

Look again at those who do not seem to be indifferent! See them crowd their different places of worship, with Bible, prayer-book, and hymnal under their arms. Will all these be saved when the archangel's voice is heard awakening the sleeping saints?

Are not many of these like those in our Lord's parable of the wise and foolish virgins? When the Bridegroom came some of them had no oil in their vessels, though they had the lamp of profession. To all appearance they were like the wise virgins. But the difference between them became most marked and very manifest when He came. "They that WERE READY went in with him to the marriage, AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT" (Matt. xxv. 10).

Deeply solemn is this to consider!

What made the difference between those that went in and those shut out? Is it not most plain that the real difference was that those that were ready had oil in their vessels, while those who were not ready had none. Most important difference this, It is well known that oil in Scripture represents

the Holy Ghost. He came at Pentecost to form the Church and dwell in all true believers. He also came to testify against the world for crucifying the Lord of Glory. Ah! yes, the world of which you form a part, unsaved reader, crucified Him. Nevertheless the people who did so were very religious. When the Church was first gathered together, all were real believers. "All that believed were together." As time went on, unbelievers crept in unawares, and they became mixed together. This was not the work of the Spirit of God, but the work of Satan, who sought to corrupt the Church and make false professors. Simon Magus, who was baptized by Philip, was the first of these recorded in the New Testament.

The whole mass is now mingled together, and the difficulty is to tell which is which. "The Lord knoweth those that are his." None can deceive Him. He knows those who have been born again and have repented of their sins. He knows all who have really turned to God with burdened hearts and consciences, oppressed with the sense of guilt, and have sought and obtained forgiveness. He knows all who have received the Holy Spirit, and who can intelligently cry "Abba, Father."

Reader, He knows your whole history. He sees you as you are, and where you are. Are you one of those that are ready?

"Tell them the difference, tell them the difference between being *whitewashed* and *washed white*. Tell them the difference between *making* ready and *being*

SHOULD THE LORD COME TO-DAY? 43

ready." Such was the very expressive and graphic language uttered by a man to me one night as he shook my hand after a gospel meeting. I had never seen his face before. Any one can see the great difference in a moment. It requires no explanation.

Thousands of people have the appearance of reality who are not real. To all appearance they are making the needful preparation by attending the means of grace, and all the while they are not ready if death should lay his hand upon them, or the Lord come from heaven.

The thousand years of blessing, of which Scripture speaks, will not be ushered in without the direct judgment by the Lord of the ungodly when He comes out of heaven with His glorified saints. He will judge all those who are false to His name, and those not real in their profession. Scripture is plain. It says, "When 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).

Who are those of whom the Lord speaks as saying, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Luke xiii. 26-28)? Some will even say. "In thy name we have done

many wonderful works." He will say, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 22, 23). What iniquity did they work? Did they worship false gods? No. What then? They professed one thing and acted another. Hypocrisy was their crying sin. Their life was a lie.

Reader, beware of professing one thing and acting another. This is hypocrisy in earnest.

The revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven will be a revelation for judgment on *living people* who will be found in open rebellion against Him, as before the days of the flood, and as in the days of Lot. "The flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. xxiv. 39). These are the Lord's words.

The fact is greatly overlooked that there will be a judgment of the living before ever the dead are judged at the great white throne. Scripture says that God "hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world (the future habitable earth) in righteousness by that man (Christ Jesus) whom he hath ordained" (Acts xvii. 31). In view of this He commands all men everywhere to repent.

Have you repented, dear reader? Face the question in downright honesty of heart before God. Have you repented of your sins? You ask what is it to repent? It is to accept the judgment of God on yourself as a guilty sinner. It is to confess yourself to be as bad as God says you are. You are deserving of His wrath and eternal condemnation on account of your sins. Is this the place you have

in your inmost soul taken before Him who is so holy that the angels veil their faces in His presence? If never before, are you prepared in your own mind and conscience to take it now?

The work in a man's soul is half done when he truly repents.

"Repentant, but not forgiven," was the heading of a little article in one of the Yorkshire dailies I happened to see lying on a gentleman's table one day. I thought to myself, "No soul in hell will ever be able to say that." Why? Because God has joined repentance and remission of sins together. No sooner does a man repent and turn to God than forgiveness is extended to him. "And that repentance and remission of sins be preached in his name among all nations." "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Luke xxix. 47; Acts x. 43).

God delights in mercy. Judgment is His strange work. He is ready to forgive the vilest sinner, *and most willing also*. Those who repent are those who feel their need of forgiveness, and they are those who receive it. Through the blessed One, who in love and grace died for our sins, God offers forgiveness freely. *Freely means for nothing*.

We require not the imposition of priestly hands, nor yet the sprinkling of holy water to obtain this great blessing. The fires of purgatory are not needed to purge our sins away. All this denies the value of the finished work of God's blessed Son. "It is finished," were His last words. What a mighty

triumph was His before heaven, earth, and hell! Hence the Spirit says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us *from all sin*" (1 John i. 7). As the just answer to that finished work, God offers forgiveness to *every sinner under heaven*. It may be yours now, honest reader, if you will in simple faith accept it.

No conditions are required from the man who is in earnest to obtain it. *Repentance is not making yourself better*. No. Repentance is the honest acknowledgment that you cannot possibly make yourself any better. Repenting, you say, "I am so bad that I cannot mend myself." The one who does this before God He will justify, and eternally receive into His favour.

Should this meet the eye of a deep-dyed sinner of the prodigal class, who thinks he has sinned away his day of grace, or committed the unpardonable sin, *there is mercy even for you*. You are hopeless and often despairing perhaps. If you turn to God in all your sins He will gladly say to you, "I, even I, am he that **BLOTTETH OUT** *thy transgressions* for my own sake, **AND WILL NOT REMEMBER THY SINS**" (Isa. xliii. 25). And also, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17). Peace and joy will fill your heart as the result, and praise and thanksgiving your lips for ever. Your song will then be—

"And wending on to glory,
This all my song shall be,
I was a guilty sinner,
But Jesus died for me."

P. W.

"JESUS COME SOON!"

THESSE words were uttered by a middle-aged Maori—a New Zealand aboriginal—about seventy miles up the river Wanganui (the Rhine of New Zealand, as it is often called), where I was visiting a young man whom I had known from his boyhood, and who had been helped into "peace with God" by one of my daughters speaking to him and giving him G. C——'s Tract, "Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment."

This young man had devoted himself to missionary work among the Maori race. "Taking nothing from the Gentiles"—abandoning his interest even in his late father's estate—he determined to get away from the sea-coast, and go up into the interior among the people, whose souls he felt the burden of, and live like and with them, and thus acquire their language. He worked among them and helped them plant their maize, pumpkins, potatoes, &c., build their whorres (houses), &c., and so he lived among them, learned their tongue, and gained their confidence, respect, and esteem. God honoured his faith, and he *leased* a bit of land from these primitive holders of the soil, built a house for his like-minded wife and himself, and a hospital, and treated all the cases that came to him, whether fevers, burns, or accidents, *gratis*.

I went up to see him, found "Temittie" (they could not pronounce his name properly), and I

preached the gospel in their "whorrepines." I spoke as simply as I could from Exodus xii., and my friend interpreted sentence by sentence.

He told me some of the encouragements he had received in his life-work among them. One incident especially stuck in my memory.

"A native man, about fifty years of age, he saw lying on the ground in his garden, with his gun in his hand, one Sunday evening. My friend asked him why and what he was doing there at that time with his gun? He replied that he was going to try and shoot some pheasants which had eaten all his crop of young Indian corn. 'Have they eaten it *all*?' 'Yes, all.' 'Well, is it too late to sow it over again?' 'Yes, it is too late now to sow it again this year; there is only one good month now to sow; things have changed very much to what they used to be in the days of my forefathers.' Then after a moment's reflection, he said, 'AH, NEVER MIND, JESUS COME SOON!'

"'What!' said my friend, with amazed expression, 'Jesus come soon?'

"'Yes,' said the Maori, 'JESUS COME SOON, AND THEN THINGS WILL BE ALL RIGHT!'

"'I know the Lord Jesus *is* coming soon; but it will be a bad job for *you*, Rahoni, for you are a very wicked man!'

"'Yes, that is true; I know it; I all over sin; but the blood of Jesus take all my sin away; and when Jesus come and take you, I go too; for I am all the same as you, now.'

"How do you know that the blood of Jesus has taken all *your* sins away?"

"I hear you read it out of your Bible-book, and then I go and look in my Bible and I *know*' (literally, so now I know).

"The same Maori, on being asked on a subsequent occasion what made him such a bad man as to swear, he replied (of course all these conversations were in the Maori language): 'Oh, the bad dog worry the sheep, and not stop when I call him (figurative language), and the bad man *in me* sometimes get up (meaning get strong, and *manifest* itself) and the new man get down.'"

All this, unsaved reader, shows that God, by His Spirit, can teach a poor ignorant, unlettered Maori, far away from the centres of European civilisation, the truth, and give him faith in the Scriptures as to the efficacy of the precious blood of Jesus, while *you*, with all your boasted educational advantages and the facilities for hearing God's glad tidings of a Saviour-God, and of a full salvation through faith in the "finished" work of Jesus on the cross, yet remain unsaved! You *reason* about it; the Maori *believed* it.

Surely the heathen will rise up in the judgment (Luke xi. 31, 32) against you favoured people in Christendom and condemn you, for they (many of them) believed the simple testimony of God's grace brought to them, and you, unsaved readers, have not, and we say to you, as the young Maori missionary said to the dark-skinned Maori—"Jesus is coming

soon, and it will be A BAD JOB FOR YOU," who having heard (often, maybe) of salvation for sinners preached in the only Name given under heaven whereby you *might* be "saved," have treated it lightly, yea, neglected it. All gospel-neglecters will go down to hell, and spend a lost eternity, where hope, light, and joy never come!

"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" (Prov. i. 24-26). Many, in the recent disaster which overwhelmed so many in the West Indies, would surely recall this solemn scripture!

Do not wait till a like calamity overtake *you* before you seek Christ. "Now is the accepted time."
G. W. G.

A SLEEPING CITY—A WAKEFUL SAVIOUR.

"He beheld the city, and wept over it."

IT is night. The sun has long since set behind the western Carmel, and from mid-heaven the moon shines down upon the great and guilty city. The song of the drunkard is over—he snores among his wine cups. The hollow laughter of the harlot has given place to her wild shriek in

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the grip of some foul nightmare. Yonder the son of toil seeks repose from the labour of the day that was and strength for the day that is to come. There sleep kisses the lines of care from the brow of that tired mother, while at her breast the babe rests peacefully. The merchant has forgotten his haggling, the Pharisee his pride. The city sleeps.

But yonder on the eastern Olivet there stands a stranger, solitary, alone. His garments are travel-stained, and His locks are wet with the dew of night. He stands and looks upon the city, and through His wondrous eyes compassion shines, and as He looks He weeps.

Ah! this is Jesus from the plains of Galilee—the Nazarene. Still the city sleeps; the Weeper and His tears are all unheeded by those for whom He wept. But a wakeful heaven looks on in wonder wrapt, and multitudes of swift-winged angels bow and worship at this sight. These are they that sang aloud with gladness at His birth, and wondered that the earth did not respond in music to their song. They look upon Him now, the rejected One, with broken heart and tear-washed cheek.

But why is this? Jesus is the Lord of heaven, the Son of God, yet here He stands upon the earth His hands had made without a home. Ah! the reason is not far to seek. *Men's hearts were full of sin, and His was full of love.* He came to bring them blessing, to flood their land with joy from heaven, e'en as the sun at morn fills all the earth with light. He came to shield them from the blast

of evil as the mother bird shelters her young beneath her wing when screams the hawk on high. But they would not. All, all had been in vain. They sleep indifferently. His words, His works, His tears have not awakened any love to Him. The city sleeps. How dark and deathful is that slumber.

And yet their hatred did not sleep, for often had their hearts been stirred with rage against Him, and that without a cause; yet spite of all, He loved them. He might have gathered in His fists, the leaping lightnings of the heavens, and blasted all the land for ever, but that He will not do; instead He stands and weeps, then passes onward to the cross.

He passes onward to the cross to die for them, to shed His precious blood that e'en to them salvation might be preached, and to them given not joy on earth which they had forfeited, but joy unspeakable in heaven.

He died, His blood was shed, His love passed through the test. He died for sinners, and being raised out of the grave, He sent His servants with the word of life into the city over which He wept; and wondrous fact, from out that deathful mass there came forth those who hailed Him Lord, that bowed the knee before Him, turned from their sins to Him, receiving pardon through His name.

Nearly two thousand years have passed away since then, still the Saviour Jesus sits on high, and from Him there the message of salvation comes to men on earth. Alas! thousands there are who sleep indifferently; the arms of slumber wrap them round

about—a dark and deathful slumber, the sleep of sin. They want not Christ, nor God, nor heaven—they love their dreams of peace and happiness; and if they rouse themselves at all, 'tis but to show their enmity against the God who longs to bless them.

Oh, ghastly spectacle, for they must wake ere long, and waking, prove how fearfully they have been duped. For hell for ever must be the awful portion of all who will not have the Christ of God.

Oh, reader, to you we turn. Are you awake or sleeping? Are you saved or lost? The Son of God has died, but can you say, "He gave Himself for me." Have you bowed at His feet as did those sinners in Jerusalem long, long ago? If not, why not now? Say, "Christ for me." His blood for my sins, His love for my heart, His path for my feet, His will my law, His heaven my home. Then happy indeed will you be both now and evermore.

J. T. M.

"ONLY A LEAF."

"Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?"—JOB xiii. 25.

I SAW a tiny leaf torn from the branch on which it grew, blown over the fence, driven to and fro, until at last it found a sheltered corner and lay at rest.

I stood on a country railway station waiting for the train, when a constable came up with a young

man in charge, handcuffs on. I learned on inquiry that he had misbehaved himself the previous evening, and was now to pay the penalty of his folly. As we stood there, I noticed a tear start from under his eyelid and trickle down his sunburnt face, and my heart went out in pity for him; and I thought perhaps he was not always homeless, unloved, uncared-for, unkempt; he was not always friendless; a mother's hand has swept across that brow so troubled with sorrow and despair. Maybe she's gone to heaven. *Oh, may he meet her there.*

A leaf driven to and fro. Job asks the question, "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?" Ah, the world would break it; the world will keep a man down when once he is down. Go to the public-houses or the corner of the streets in any city, and you will find numbers of young fellows driven to and fro—no resting-place—at the mercy of the wind. Go to the police courts and the prison gates, see the leaves driven to and fro.

And what will the world do? Only break them.

But put the question to my precious Saviour: "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?" Hear the answer: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

Are you driven to and fro? There is refuge in Jesus.

You have read how the Pharisees brought to Him a poor woman taken in adultery. She was a leaf driven to and fro, and they wanted to break her;

they wanted to stone her ; but Jesus, so full of love, rebukes them, and tells the poor trembling soul to go her way and sin no more. Praise Him !

There hung at the Saviour's side on a cross at Calvary a dying thief—he had been a leaf driven to and fro—and now, man would crush and break him ; but with his latest breath he asks, as it were, "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?" and Jesus in mighty love comforts him and says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Reader, young man, are you a leaf thus driven? Seek refuge from the coming storm in Jesus. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Comrades mine, ye who are the Lord's and seek to serve Him from the home of love and comfort, step up with me to the edge of the forest of human life, and see the tender leaves snatched from their branches and hurled by the whirlwind of folly out into the ocean of sin and vice. Wilt thou break them? Hear them call. Carry the gospel to them; they are crushed by the tempter; let us seek to bring them to Christ, who came into the world to save sinners.

"Why unbelieving? thou canst be blest;
 Jesus will pardon, He'll give thee rest.
 Why wilt thou longer wait?
 Haste to the open gate,
 Come, ere it be too late,
 To Jesus come!"

W. B.—N. Z.

JESUS SAVES.

TUNE---“*Meet me there.*”

Songs of Victory, 461.

TIS a faithful word and true,
And the message comes to you,
'Tis the old yet ever new—
Jesus saves ;
He the victory has won,
And His work is fully done,
All is centred in the Son :
Jesus saves.*

* Jesus saves . . . Jesus saves,
On His Father's throne in glory, Jesus saves,
Once He died upon the tree,
Shed His blood for you and me,
Hallelujah ! Grace is free !
Jesus saves.

From Golgotha's awful gloom,
And the silence of the tomb,
Came the One who met my doom :
Jesus saves ;
In the glory fair and bright,
In the Father's home of light,
Is the One whom men did slight :
Jesus saves.*

Have you heard His loving voice ?
Have you made the Lord your choice ?
Does your heart in Him rejoice ?
Jesus saves ;

Come to Him, oh, come away,
Come to Him without delay,
Come to Him, His call obey !

Jesus saves.* J. S.

"BRING THE YOUNG MAN AGAIN."

(Read 2 Samuel xiii. 23, xiv.)

THE narrative contained in these two chapters shows, most beautifully, the way in which God acts now, in His grace, and in His desire to bring back the sinner to Himself. There is one great point though, in which the narrative differs from, indeed is entirely in contrast to the gospel; because whatever God does is righteous, and if He loves, it is righteous love; whereas the narrative shows us love travelling faster than righteousness, and the sequel is, there is a grand revolt, David's throne is upset, as we see in chapter xv. If God show love, if God save me, He does it righteously; He saves by His grace, He saves utterly, but He saves righteously.

David brings back this young man, but he brings him back unrighteously, without judging his sin, and the consequence was he got bold; and that is what people who do not believe in hell now are, they are bold and defy God. Absalom was a murderer. However deep might be Ammon's guilt, there was no excuse for Absalom. He was a murderer; and yet you hear him saying in the end of chapter xiv., "If there be any iniquity in me." His sin had not been judged, he had been brought back unrighteously, his conscience was hardened, and the consequence was, the moral character of the throne of David was destroyed. Well, says God, "The throne is established by righteousness" (Prov. xvi. 16), and where this is

lacking the moral character of the throne is upset and it provokes a revolt, as chapter xv. tells us.

Now God cannot make light of sin, though He has only love in His heart for the sinner. You have outraged God's character and God's throne, but you have not changed one whit the heart that fills that throne; and though you may be a sinner of the deepest dye, yet you are an object of the love of God; His love has not been destroyed by your sin. And so we see in David, his heart yearns after the runaway.

Notice that it is recorded three times "Absalom fled." Why did he fly? Because his conscience, then fully alive to his guilt, told him that, though his father might be king, yet he himself was a murderer, and that there was nothing, in righteousness, for a murderer but death. So he fled, for sin makes cowards of us all, and when a man has sin upon his conscience, he feels he cannot face God. It is a solemn thing, my friend, to have to face God in your sins. Have to do with God you must; you cannot evade it; and you have sinned. I do not care how much or how little, but you have sinned. It may not be like Absalom's, but sin is sin. Sin is man following the desire of his own heart; and have not you done that? You know you have.

Here, the will of his own heart makes Absalom a murderer, and he flies from the presence of the king. And have not you got away, have not you fled from God? Does not your conscience still keep you at a distance from Him? Friend, do you not desire to get back to God? May His word bring

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you back just now. Why is the gospel preached? Because the world is away from God. If you were not away from God, why need the gospel be preached to you? The gospel tells you that you are away from God, but that His love wants to bring you back. *God wants to have you*, and to this end “Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us *to God*.” Not bring us to heaven, nor to bring us to peace, but to bring us to God; and no soul is brought to God till it is brought to trust the blood of Christ.

Now the grace comes all from God’s side. Have you been seeking to know God? God has been beforehand with you. He has been seeking you. He gave His own Son for me long before I ever had a thought about Him; and now the cross tells me God wants to save me, and the cross tells me God can righteously save me. Are *you* unconverted, with a weight of sins upon your conscience? God wants to bring you back to Himself. The soul of David longed after Absalom; three years had Absalom been away! and how long have you been away? Twenty years? Thirty years? Threescore years? Well, I do not know your age, but this I know, that if unsaved, you have never been near God yet. You have spent your life at a distance from God, but He wants to have you brought back; God wants to have the link of relationship formed between Himself and you.

Cast your eye back for a moment over life’s pathway, and tell me what relationship has there ever

yet been between your soul and God? Has Christ been uppermost? Has He had a place in your thoughts? Has He had a place in your plans? Has He been your object? The soul that is unconverted and honest says, "No, God has had no place in my thoughts hitherto; my plans have all been formed without Him; Christ has not been my object." But you *must* meet God. Why not meet Him now in grace, when in the love of His heart He wants to save you? Oh! when is so good a time to meet Him as this very moment?

The reason man does not accept God's offer of mercy is because he does not care for it. Why did not the men in the Gospels accept the invitation to the feast? Because they were like you, who remain unsaved; they did not care for it, they had no heart to come, and you have not cared to be saved. If the heart had been right, the man with the yoke of oxen would have said, "The oxen are very fine, but I can wait until to-morrow to prove them," and the man with the piece of ground would have said, "I can wait till to-morrow to go and see that," and the man who had married a wife would have said, "I am going to a feast, my dear, and you had better come with me," *i.e.*, he would have gone himself and taken her with him. But they had no heart to go, and hitherto you have had no heart for Christ's invitation; but though your heart is all wrong, God's heart is towards you.

David's heart was towards his guilty son, but he said, "If my heart bring him back, this hand holds

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a sword that must be planted in his bosom as soon as he returns.” Then Joab comes in, through the wise woman of Tekoah, as you read, and the end of it is that David gives way and brings Absalom back without judging his sin. But does God bring back His prodigals without judging their sin? No, no. He has judged it in the cross of Christ.

Until the cross, where Christ suffered and bare sin, there was a barrier between man and God. Until the cross of Christ God was behind the veil; God dwelt between the cherubim (symbol of His righteousness); and there was a thick veil between man and God. The high priest drew near once a year; went inside that veil, alone, with blood of others; but he came out again, and the veil remained. But when Jesus died, when man had nailed Him to the tree, when man had done his worst—for it was man’s hand that drove in those nails, it was man’s hand that planted the crown of thorns upon that peerless brow, it was man’s hand that plunged the spear into that blessed side—then, I say, when man had done his *very worst* against God, He seizes that very moment, in His matchless, His exquisite, His infinite grace, to do His *very best* for man. Christ, in that hour of darkness, when God’s righteous wrath and man’s unrighteous wrath alike fell on His blessed head, did a work that enables God to come out in righteousness and in love to man, and save the vilest.

When Jesus died, not only were the rocks rent, but he who entered the temple next found the veil

rent from the top to the bottom. Why from the top to the bottom? Because it was God's hand that had done it. If man had rent that veil it would only have been to bring swift destruction on himself; and if man goes into God's presence now without Christ's blood, what must it be but sure destruction to him? But God Himself breaks down the barrier. That cross where the Holy One died for the sinner, opened the way into God's very presence. "I am the way," says Christ; and if you seek another way, you are on the wrong way.

David's love, as we have seen, outstrips his righteousness, but when God brings back the sinner He brings him back in righteousness. The cross of Christ tells me this, that God's grace reigns now, in the place where death reigned before, and it reigns through righteousness, not at the expense of righteousness. Instead of death falling on the guilty soul, death falls on Jesus—the death of the cross, death in the dark shades of Golgotha—and that death opens the way into God's presence for you and me.

If I were not brought to God in righteousness, I should be afraid some day He would rake up the question of my sins; but when I know my sins have all been taken up by my substitute, Jesus, and that He has borne every one of them, not as I know them, but as God knows them, then I know that I escape the penalty due to them, through sovereign love indeed, but love that is based on righteousness.

Do you believe this story of the cross? Then do

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you not see in it how God loves you? Yes, He wants you. He tells me first of all that He has gauged my guilt, and that Christ took the full weight of that guilt on Him when He died; and “mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”

The wise woman of Tekoah said, “We must needs die,” *i.e.*, the moral of her story is, “Make haste”; and the moral of my story to you is *make haste*, for you may soon die, you know not how soon, and you must meet God.” “Yet,” she says, “doth he (God) devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.” I have told you God’s means. I know they find no acceptance in the eyes of man. “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness,” but the cross of Christ is God’s only way of salvation. Christ maintains the character of the throne of God in righteousness, while He manifests the character of the heart of God in its deep, deep love. Can you, my friend, agree with a lunatic who once thus exquisitely expressed it?—

“Could I with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill,
Were the whole heaven of parchment made,
And every man a scribe by trade—
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.”

Blessed man! whatever else he did not know, he knew the love of God which “passeth knowledge.”

Now note the contrast between this narrative and the gospel, between David's message and God's message. The king's character breaks down; love reigns at the expense of righteousness; God's love reigns through righteousness. The king's message is, "Go, bring the young man back," but "let him not see my face." What is God's message to you? "Bring him, bring her to *Me*." "Christ suffered to *bring us* to God." Luke xv. says that while the returning prodigal was "yet a great way off, his father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

After two years Absalom gets the kiss, but how long has the sinner now to wait for the Father's kiss? Two years? No! Not two seconds! What do you find when you come to God? That He has open arms for you. I think that prodigal must have stood still in downright sheer amazement when he saw his father *run*, and he kissed his unwashed cheek, kissed him in his rags, fell on his neck and kissed him! What wondrous grace! God's own heart proposes the plan for our salvation. God gives up His Son to die; God's hand raises Him from the dead. God sends down the Holy Ghost, and God now Himself sends out the message, inviting the sinner to come near. It is all wondrous grace and love. In David's heart there is love, but not light. In God there is both. He has shown me up in my true character. He has to make no discoveries of me by-and-by. He has discovered my true state, and love comes in and meets that state. Light shows me my sin, love puts that sin away.

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Oh! will you not turn to this One—the One in whom both love and righteousness are combined? Will you not receive Christ at once? With Him everything is yours. May you receive His grace, and taste the joy of it, and be a witness and confessor of how good is God, how perfect His way, and may you walk accordingly till the day when He shall take you up to Himself.

But oh! my unsaved friend, do not you miss the day of His grace, the day of His love now, and be left to face the day of His terrible judgment.

W. T. P. W.

 THE FIDELITY OF GOD.

IT is evident that everything for man's weal or woe, and for creation itself, hangs upon what God is. For on Him everything must depend, "seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things," and that it is "in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii. 25, 28). Now, if He is the source and sustainer of life, all that lives is absolutely dependent on Him for existence. When He withdraws His hand, death must follow. This is simple enough to the mind that is not infidel, and therefore, in the majority, there is the free acknowledgment of His preserving care, and an ordinarily upright soul will render thanks for daily mercies. This is but seemly, and it is well pleasing to God.

But, seeing that sin has played such havoc with our moral perception, and vitiated our appreciation

of goodness, leading us to ignorance of God and His ways, it is most important that we should know what He is essentially, and not merely creatorily. We need to know (may I say reverently?) His moral character.

How does God present Himself to us in this respect? Can we place our fullest reliance on Him in all matters relating to truth and righteousness? Can the anxious soul count on unswerving fidelity on His part? Oh, how much depends on a correct answer to this question for a soul that is no longer rocked to sleep on the couch of indifference and false security, but that has found out the awful fact of guilt and inherent sinfulness, and wishes to know, beyond all else, whether God has committed Himself, in infinite grace, to the fulfilment of all He has been pleased to write. Are His words trustworthy? The answer is plain. They are. He has committed Himself to all that He has said. He may be fully trusted. "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings" (Rom. iii. 4)—and in every one of them—will be demonstrated shortly. "God is true," and therefore the soul of man, no matter how darkened, or in what depth of perplexity it may be, may reckon on perfect sincerity in God, nay, on a love that spared not His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and that we might live through Him (1 John iv. 9, 10). God is worthy of all confidence.

Let me advance three very important statements which bear closely on this subject:—

First—"Thou canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. i.

3). Here we find one of three impossibilities. God cannot regard iniquity. That which is crooked and morally unequal He cannot allow nor tolerate. He is absolutely holy. Any deviation from perfect rectitude, the least trace of evil, the faintest breath of sin, is abhorrent to Him.

To the sinner He is gracious indeed, but sin He ever condemns. His holiness, therefore, becomes to us a ground of confidence. He can make no compromise with sin.

Again—"God that cannot lie" (Tit. i. 2). These four words corroborate what we have seen already. God has pledged Himself to all that He has said. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mark xiii. 31).

Now, is it not wonderful that God, to whom nothing is impossible, cannot lie, cannot play false, cannot deceive? In His character that element, which is, alas, part and parcel of our own, is utterly absent. He is the true God. He who makes the constellations revolve in their orbit, and on whom all depend for life and breath, is He on whose integrity man may assuredly rely.

Once more—"He cannot deny himself" (2 Tim. ii. 13). Man is inconsistent, changeful, variable. But in Him there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i 17). He is, in every sense "The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). He is absolutely righteous. What infinite comfort this truth carries to poor needy fickle men! And what a solid foundation it lays for faith.

“Thou canst not look on iniquity.”

“God that cannot lie.”

“He cannot deny himself.”

We thus have holiness, truth, and righteousness as integral parts of the character of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

He is holy in what He is.

He is true in what He says.

He is righteous in what He does.

And therefore the heart of man may fully confide in Him.

We have to learn the wretched infidelity of our own hearts, and are humbled thereby, but let us remember that “God is love,” and that all He does, even to the judgment of the impenitent hereafter, is in full accord with that which is His blessed nature. He is light as well as love. And for our eternal weal we must know Him as revealed to us. It is life eternal.

J. W. S.

THREE BRIGHT SUNSETS.

No. I.

IN the city of L——, in the north of Ireland, there lived a godly mother who had two sons and one daughter. This dear mother had often said that she had not so much concern about their *earthly* position; her main concern was about their precious souls' eternal welfare. Within

a fortnight of each other the two sons took ill and died. The elder was twenty-one years old, and the younger fourteen.

The elder was laid down with consumption, and attended by the family physician, who was very kind and attentive. He did all he possibly could to preserve the young man's life, but to no purpose.

When the doctor saw that medical skill was of no avail, and that the *inevitable* was near, he felt it his painful duty to tell the patient so, adding at the same time that he must now prepare for death and make his peace with God.

The young man at once raised himself from his pillow, and, resting his elbow on the bed, with the little remaining strength that he possessed spoke out clearly and distinctly, thus: "*Make my peace with God, doctor! Make my peace with God! Too late now, doctor! If I had that to do I never could do it. I am very weak, and I never could do it. But, thank God, my peace was made eighteen hundred years ago. Jesus made my peace when He died upon the cross.*"

The doctor, who was standing in the middle of the room, said, with tears flooding his eyes, "*Oh, Bobbie, Bobbie, I wish I could say that.*"

That was the last time the doctor saw him. He died about twenty-four hours afterwards in perfect peace, resting simply and sweetly on the precious blood shed for his sins, and by which they were all put away.

The death of Christ *for him* was the firm, immov-

able foundation of his peace with God. Not his prayers, tears, or good works. These would have been all in vain to cancel sin's awful debt. He had the fullest and happiest assurance that he was not only saved from judgment—eternal judgment—which his sins, if not put away by the atoning death of Christ, would have brought upon him, but that he was made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, and that he was going to be for ever with the Lord.

What unspeakable, divine happiness to be thus resting on Jesus, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin, and gives the vilest, blackest sinner who trusts it the conscious knowledge of fitness for the holy presence of God !

“Thy blood is my claim and my title,
Beside it, O Lord, I have none.”

No. II.

The other boy lay in the adjoining room. He had been repeatedly pressed by his dear mother to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him as his own personal Saviour, but his constant reply was, “Mother, I cannot: God must help me.” It is strange but true that people can trust one another in many things but cannot trust a Saviour who shed His life's blood to win their love and gain their confidence. What a shame ! What base ingratitude in the face of such amazing love !

A few days before his death, he called for his mother, saying, “*Come, COME, COME QUICKLY. It is all settled now. IT IS ALL SETTLED NOW.*”

“What is settled, WILLIE?” asked his mother.

“*My sins, mother, MY SINS.*”

After explaining to his mother what had taken place between his soul and God, he immediately called for his grandfather, who was, alas! then unsaved, though nearly eighty years old.

The happy youth, in his own simple way, at once began to speak to his grandfather, beseeching him with burning earnestness, to “FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME.” The old man replied, “WILLIE, I am a hardened old sinner, and you are but a youth that has never done anything wrong.”

The lad replied, “*Remember the thief on the cross; you are not worse or more hardened than he, and yet he was saved in the last hour. It is not the greatness of your sins but the blood that puts them all away.*” The old man burst into tears and went away into his room. What the result was with him it remains for eternity to tell.

What a deeply affecting testimony from a youth in his teens of years to the value of the blood of Christ. “It is not the greatness of your sins, but the blood that puts them all away.” As the Scripture says, “Without shedding of blood there is no remission,” and “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”

Well might Cowper the poet sing:—

“Dear, dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.”

A colonel in the army is said to have been converted by reading in a gentleman's parlour these beautiful lines :—

“ In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see ;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.”

This will be the theme of Mary and Martha, Paul and Peter, John and James, of John Bunyan, the converted tinker and immortal dreamer, of George Whitefield, and John Wesley, and every sinner who has known its cleansing power. Hallelujah !

Will it be your theme, dear reader ?

Afterwards Willie called his sister, who had fled from the room in terror. She was yet unsaved, and had hidden in the attic of the house. When she was brought into his presence, he said to her distinctly with his dying breath, “*Ellen, seek Him, and you shall find Him,*” meaning, of course, that she should seek the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and that He would save her as He had saved him.

“ He welcomes and never refuses,
He died as a ransom for all.”

Shortly afterwards he passed away out of this vale of tears into the bright regions above, to be with Christ for ever. Who would not like to leave such a noble testimony behind them ? It shows what the grace of God can do. It not only displaces the torturing fear of death, but gives confidence and joy in the sight of it.

No. III.

Lastly the dear mother has also gone home, and her dying testimony to the friend who related all to me was, "*Nothing could make me sad! Nothing could make me sad!*"

She had lost much so far as this world was concerned, but she had found Christ, and having Him she had everything. She was happier than a king on his throne. A palace without Christ is poor indeed, a prison with Him is a palace. His presence *enjoyed* in the soul lightens the darkness of the darkest hour and brightens the most dreary, desolate pathway His people may be called to pass through.

Listen to the following statements from the pen of one who called himself the chief of sinners, and thought himself unworthy to be called an apostle, and said he was less than the least of all saints:—

"*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (the body) were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. . . . Now he that hath wrought for us the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are ALWAYS CONFIDENT, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. . . . We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*" "To me to live is Christ, and *to die is gain.*"

To die is the greatest terror and loss to the man of

the world. All his prospects are for this life. When death comes in upon him, it spoils all his joys and pleasures and all his worldly pursuits. It puts its cold hand upon him and asks no questions. He must go. He has no power to say, Nay. It robs him of all that is dear, or goes to make life a pleasure. It says, Come to the bar of God, and answer for your sins and your misspent life. Even Shakespeare said, "Death is a fearful thing."

Can you deny it, honest reader ?

Christ not only saves from the awful penalty and enthralling power of sin, but He satisfies all who come to Him. In Christ the believer is brought into a region of divine satisfaction. "He that cometh to me shall *never* hunger, and he that believeth on me shall *never* thirst." "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Precious words! Great reality for all to prove who will only in simple faith come to Him. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." What gracious words! "In him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Though He tabernacled as man among us, yet was He the mighty God: "God over all, blessed for ever;" "God manifest in the flesh."

Had He not been God as well as man, He could not have made such a wonderful proposal. What mere man could use such language without the highest presumption? What can equal such an offer? The poor world can offer you nothing but what is fleeting, for all it possesses is passing away.

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Its pleasures are like bubbles or passing shadows. "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue," was the dying testimony of Burke, the greatest orator and statesman of the eighteenth century. "I wish I had never been born," said the witty, clever, voluptuous infidel, Voltaire.

Reader, just a loving word with you. If you were on your dying pillow, and were being called away to meet your God, could you say, "Thank God, *my peace is made. Jesus made my peace with God*"? Could you say, "*It is all settled now. It is all settled now*"? Are all your sins forgiven you of God for Christ's sake, and are they gone from your conscience? "*It is not your sins, but the blood that puts them all away,*" that God's holy eye sees, if you believe on Jesus. HE died for sins and rose again without them, and now appears in the presence of God to represent those whose sins He bore. Could you say, "I am satisfied: nothing now can make me sad. I have all I want for time and eternity in Christ the blessed Son of God's love"? "He satisfieth the longing soul."

If you are unsaved be warned in time; there may be but one step between you and death. It may come to you very suddenly and most unexpectedly. Would every member of your household be able to say when the earth had covered your body, "It is well with his soul"?

Remember—

"There are no pardons in the tomb,
And brief is mercy's day."

A CONTRAST.

An old servant who had been invited to stay for change at the castle of her former mistress, who was a duchess, was asked by the duchess when leaving how she had enjoyed herself, to which she replied, with thanks to the duchess, "Very much indeed, your Grace, but I was just thinking, your Grace, that when you die and leave this beautiful place, if you do not step into heaven what an awful change for you."

Not to step into heaven out of a mansion or a palace, but to step into the misery and gloom of hell! What a contrast! There is no middle place. The truth has been so revealed that to hold it back would be cruel. Reader, if you were called to leave this world, would you step into heaven with its endless joys, or into hell with its awful sorrows—which?

The Scripture says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." And, "He that believeth on him (the Son) is not condemned; but he that believeth not the Son is condemned already." Also, "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."

Remember that these words were uttered by Jesus Himself, who was love incarnate. He makes it clear that there is no middle place. You are either a believer on the Son, or an unbeliever. You are either saved or lost. Either you are condemned already or

“I’M TRYING FOR IT.”

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not condemned. The wrath of God abides upon you, or you are the happy possessor of everlasting life.

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

If you are not yet decided about these great realities, my reader, let me entreat you at this moment to lift up your heart to Jesus the Saviour, confessing your sins. He waits to welcome you and pardon you just as you are and where you are.

Do not delay a moment longer. Bow before Him owning Him as your Lord. He claims your submission, and He is worthy of it. He will fill you with peace and joy unspeakable. You will taste a love that passes knowledge, and drink pleasures never ending.

May God grant it for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

P. W.

“I’M TRYING FOR IT.”

WE asked the old parish clerk one day if he had the assurance that his sins were forgiven, to which he made answer—

“I’M TRYING FOR IT.”

We tried to explain to him that this is just where many make a mistake. No one has to try for a gift. For a reward one might try, and strive very hard to possess it, but

A GIFT IS A GIFT,

and all one has to do for it is to put out the hand and receive it. Now that is just what the forgiveness of sins is, it is a free gift from God to every needy sinner who will receive it.

PENANCES CANNOT PROCURE IT.

Prayers, tears, religious exercises cannot be given as an exchange for it. Good works will not be received in payment for it. Faith and faith alone is the ground on which it can be possessed, even as "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 3).

Look at Cornelius in the tenth of Acts. He was a devout man, prayerful, God-fearing, and an alms-giver. Surely says Mr Saved-by-good-works, nothing more could be wanted to make Cornelius a perfect man. Nay, dear reader, it could have been safely said of him until Peter went to him—

"ONE THING THOU LACKEST."

What was that? The definite knowledge of Christ as a Saviour, and the forgiveness of his sins.

Dear reader, let us affectionately put the question to you, *Are your sins forgiven?* Remember, if you pass out of this world unforgiven, you will have to bear the judgment of your sins for all eternity. Perhaps, like the old clerk, you have been trying for it. Oh, give up such folly, we beseech you. It is not

TRYING BUT TRUSTING.

Had not Cornelius tried hard? Without doubt he had, but he was still unsaved, and the apostle Peter was sent to tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved. Listen to the precious soul-assuring message which fell from his lips that day (see Acts x. 43), "To him (*the risen Saviour*) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him

SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS"

Faith in the risen Saviour brought to Cornelius that day the forgiveness of all his sins, whereupon the gift of the Holy Ghost followed, which is the seal of God upon all those who believe the gospel (see Eph. i. 13).

Anxious soul, troubled one, this gift is offered thee. Wilt thou to-day receive it? Thou hast not to try for it, or even to pray for it; the hand of a Saviour-God holds it out to thee—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). Receive this precious gift, and let the Word of God assure you that your sins are put away, and forgiven by Him; and then do not forget to thank the gracious Giver.

"Thy pains, not mine, O Christ,
 Upon the shameful tree
 Have paid redemption's price,
 And purchased peace for me.
 To whom, save Thee, who can alone
 For sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?"

E. E. N.

THE REJECTED MAN AND THE ACCEPTED MAN.

“ I DON'T think God will ever accept me,” said a poor woman, sobbing as if her heart would break in the misery of her soul, when two of the Lord's servants called to see and speak with her.

“ No, that He won't,” replied one of them.

This unexpected rejoinder stopped the flow of tears at once as she looked at him, the very picture of astonishment. “ He won't accept me ? ”

“ No, it is too late ; He has *accepted Another* on your behalf.”

And forgetting for the moment herself and her penitential tears, which she seemed to think apparently were to be a great help, at least in her salvation, she listened with intense eagerness to the tale of God's grace flowing out to poor helpless sinners, rejected after the flesh, on the ground of the finished work of Christ, and the acceptance of that blessed Man in the glory of God.

No troubled soul can get quit of its misery till it apprehends that. It is as natural as to breathe the air for the heart of man to think that something must be done, that in some form or way, morally or religiously, he must improve himself, if he is to be accepted of God. And *all* are very slow practically, even if they accept it doctrinally, to leave themselves out of court (if one may so put it) altogether in this

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momentous matter. "I" has such a very big place in the calculations of our poor deceitful hearts.

Two things, speaking broadly, are absolutely necessary for a soul to be truly happy in the sense of acceptance before God, and before they can go on to apprehend and enjoy all that His grace so richly bestows. Firstly we need to be *justified*, and secondly to be *set free*. God desires that we should have both peace and liberty. And both come to us *through Christ*. In the Old Testament it was a question of law-keeping to be acceptable with God on the earth. That day is past. Christ is the end of law. God has been glorified in Him, and by Him, and has glorified Him (John xiii. 31, 32, xvii. 4). After many hundred years of patient dealing with fallen man, it was fully demonstrated that he was utterly incorrigible, and in the death of Christ, God brought him judicially to an end, and set him aside once and for ever. He was proved to be a hopeless good-for-nothing, both root and branch, after the flesh, worthless before God. So in infinite mercy He gave that man up, and brought him to an end, but introduced another Man, Jesus, His Son, our Lord.

The grave question of sin has been gone into and settled for ever to the eternal glory of God. In His great love to the world He sent His Son. And He, the holy Lamb of God's providing, offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot, was accepted, made sin, and judged as sin on the cross. He cried out, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. His

precious blood was shed. He went into the grave. God raised that Man to highest glory. He is seated and crowned in His presence this day as *the accepted Man.* God has been glorified in that Man, and finds His heart's joy in Him.

Now, on the ground of these accomplished facts, God is ready this moment to freely pardon and justify *every one that believeth.* Not that one, who, ignoring that God has given up fallen man in the flesh, still in his blindness and folly seeks to establish his own righteousness, but every one who accepts God's verdict against him, and submits to His righteousness. Every one (reader, why not *you?*) who, mistrusting himself, believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and takes God at His word. He says to every one who believes, that his sins are forgiven for His name's sake, and that by Him he is justified from all things (1 John ii. 12; Acts xiii. 39). God is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God *through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1). It is all *through Him, and not through you.*

Moreover, through this same blessed, accepted Man, there is not only justification, but acceptance and liberty. It was only recently that the writer of these lines met with the case of one who, though rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins in youth, being won to Christ in the affection of a young heart, confessed many years afterwards to have gone through great

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ploughings of conscience, and only just to have come into liberty. There are thousands of souls on all sides who pass through similar experiences. The gospel not only meets *what I have done*, but *what I am*. To be happy each must learn not only what it is to be justified *through Christ*, but what it is to be *in Him* before God. God forgives and justifies every believer, but does not accept us after the flesh. He has rejected us and accepted Christ. And to be happy, each soul must learn that experimentally. Each must learn that he has been crucified with Christ (Gal. iv. 20), and has died with him, and that he lives henceforth before God *in Him*. It is by learning *our acceptance in Him*, and not in ourselves, that we come into true liberty and are happy.

You may have some knowledge of the finished work of Christ, and have received some measure of blessing thereby, and yet, if still in any way seeking for good in yourself, you can only remain more or less in bondage and misery. But when we learn how utterly futile all our efforts are, and accept God's verdict against ourselves, crying out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and *thank Him through Another, Jesus Christ our Lord*, liberty follows. We are *made free* (Rom. viii. 2). And if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be *free indeed* (John viii. 36).

You may go on for weeks, or months, or years even, self-occupied, and making miserable efforts to improve the flesh, the first fallen man, and this in multitudinous forms and ways, but there can be but

one only result—*misery*. *God has accepted another Man*, the sinless, Holy One, who bore the judgment on Calvary. He has rejected you and *accepted Christ*. He bore *the whole judgment of sin*, died to it, and lives to God (Rom. vi. 10). He sits in glory, *the accepted Man*. And God gives the Spirit to every one who believes Him and is justified, that we may be *in Him*. And when we, by the same Spirit, reckon that we have died to sin with Him, and live to God in Him (Rom. vi. 11), we know and enjoy the blessed truth that *He has accepted us in Christ*, on the other side of death. But on this side, after the flesh, He will never accept either you or me or any one else. So, and only so, do we enter upon *liberty*.

May He in His rich grace give you, dear reader, poor rejected one as to your own righteousness, to realise what it is to be *justified through and accepted in the risen Christ*, the triumphant, crowned, and coming Saviour, seated in highest glory at the right hand of God. Unto Him, and unto Him alone, be all the glory and all the praise in the salvation of any and every poor lost sinner who believes on His blessed and all-glorious name.

“He bore on the tree the sentence for me,
 And now both the Surety and sinner are free.
 Accepted I am in the once-offered Lamb,
 It was God who Himself devised the plan.
 Hallelujah! Thine the glory!
 Hallelujah! Amen!”

E. H. C.

“THIS IS IT.”

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“THIS IS IT.”

“WHEN you believe in witchcraft.”

The utterer of this statement was a hard-headed, intelligent-looking Birmingham mechanic, who occupied a corner seat *vis-a-vis* to me in the carriage in which, some years ago, I was travelling on the Great Western Railway through Oxfordshire. What led up to this strange affirmation I will narrate.

Our compartment was quite full, and I had handed to my fellow travellers some small two-page leaflets which contained nothing but Scripture, presenting the gospel of the grace of God in God's own language. Most of the recipients perused the leaflet; but the foregoing speaker did not do so. The moment he received his copy he glanced at it, made a contemptuous comment to a comrade sitting by his side, let down the window of the carriage, and with a very audible and contemptuous “Whew!” cast the leaflet out.

“If you did not want it you might have returned it to me,” I said quietly.

“Oh, I do not believe at all in those stupid tracts; they are perfectly worthless,” was his rejoinder.

“Many a tract that man has written might be worthless, but what you just now held in your hand was not what man wrote, but what God wrote. It was nothing but His own Word that you thus care-

lessly cast to the winds. In plain language, it was the Word of God."

"And, pray, what is the Word of God?" he sarcastically rejoined.

"This is it," I replied, holding up a small polyglot Bible which I was reading at the moment.

"Oh, you believe in the Bible, do you? I do not. I am a sceptic."

"Most certainly I do; every line of it, from cover to cover. I am perfectly assured it is God's Word, and God's revelation of Himself to man, and I regret to learn that you thus scout it."

"Do you mean to say that you believe it all?" was his next query.

"Yes, all."

"And all that is in it?"

"Yes. God's record of everything I believe."

"Then you believe in witchcraft," was his triumphant rejoinder.

"I thought that was coming," said a cheery voice from the half-divided compartment which was behind us, and looking up I saw a happy-faced Church of England clergyman standing at my back that he might hear our conversation.

My reply to my querist was, "We must first define what you mean by believing in witchcraft. If you mean, by believing in witchcraft, that I accept it, or commit myself to it, use or rely on it, I in no sense believe in it, for I believe it to be thoroughly of the devil. But if, by believing in it, you mean that witchcraft is a power that can be exercised over

men's minds, the Word of God makes it abundantly plain to me that witchcraft, sorcery, necromancy, or spiritualism, by whatever name you like to call it, is a real power, and a satanic system, which God's Word condemns; but which, nevertheless, many a man prefers to traffic in, in face of God's Word."

"But how do you know that the Bible is God's Word," was his reply.

"I could not prove to you that it is God's Word," I said, "but the way I know it is God's Word is this, that He has spoken to my soul through it. By it He made me know I was a lost sinner, for it is written, 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke xix. 10). By it He has given me to know that He is love, and that His Son has died for a sinner like me; for it is written, 'In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins' (1 John iv. 9, 10). He has proclaimed pardon to me through His Son, and given me eternal life in His Son, and all this I have learned through the Scriptures applied to my soul in the power of the Holy Ghost."

"But I do not believe that it is the Word of God," was his reply.

"Very likely. And I do not think you will believe it until by it God wounds you. 'The sword of the Spirit is the word of God.' The proof of this is seen in the effects of that word, 'For the word of

God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart' (Heb. iv. 12). If I held a sharp-pointed sword in my hand, you might argue that it could neither cut nor pierce. But if I ran it through you, or lopped off a limb with it, you would then believe in its edge and its point. Your arguments would all die. Similarly you may argue all your days that Scripture is not the Word of God; but if the Holy Ghost were to apply it, as I trust He will, in power to your conscience, your opposition would cease, your heart would be broken, and your then troubled and guilty conscience would alone be calmed by its precious and peace-giving statements. It reveals Christ, and fills the heart that is led to know Him with peace and happiness. I wish you knew Him, my friend. You would have real happiness then."

"What makes you think I am not happy?" was his sullen rejoinder.

"Your face," I replied, "you do not look at all happy."

"There is very little happiness in this world," was his response, "I am just off to Paris to see if I cannot get some."

"That is a long way to go to get happiness; I do not need to go so far as that to get mine," said I, "I carry mine with me. Christ dwelling in my heart by faith secures abiding joy."

"But I have got a fortnight's holiday, my mate and I, and we are going to the Paris exhibition. We hope to get some happiness there."

"Paris cannot furnish what the knowledge of Christ alone can give you," I replied, "and if you are a wise man, you will turn to Him, the fount of all real joy, long before you get to Paris. But I think I know the reason why you are not happy."

"What is that?" said he, looking me very keenly in the face.

"I have a suspicion you are not a holy man," was my quiet rejoinder, and a furious blush suffused his face ere he softly said, "How do you know that?"

"I did not say I know it, I merely said I suspected it. I know this, that happiness and holiness go together. 'Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.' If you see Him, you will be happy, as were the disciples (see John xx. 20). Let me ask you a plain question, Are you a holy man? are you leading a life of purity?"

The blush deepened, and then faded, leaving his face pallid and wretched as he paused a minute, and then said, "You are right. No, I am not a holy man. I know I am leading a sinful life."

"I thought so," I replied. "When man leaves God out of his life, he gets into the clutch of Satan, and that means self-gratification, indulgence in lust, passion, and sin of every kind, with misery in the heart as the consequence."

The train slowed down at the station where I was to alight, so I could only now with a few words beg

him to turn to Jesus. As I got out he said, "I will think of all you have said to me." I gave him another gospel booklet, which he thankfully received, and we parted, never more I fancy to meet on this earth. Whether I shall see him in heaven God only knows.

Reader, shall I see you there? If you have any doubts about the Word of God, let me ask you quietly to read it. Do not judge it, let it judge you. You will find it will expose you to yourself. That is the reason why most men dislike it. Another working man said once in a train, "I have observed through a long life that good men love the Bible, and wicked men hate it." That witness is true.

W. T. P. W.

AWAKENED IN TIME, OR ETERNITY: WHICH?

AWAKENED IN TIME, OR ETERNITY; WHICH?
Momentous question, *which?*
Yes, my honest reader, one or other it
must be.

A friend of mine was awakened out of his sleep at midnight not long since, and told that the shop underneath his dwelling-house was in flames. It was a rude awakening. The shock was terrible at the moment. Out of the home his wife and children had all to flee for dear life.

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But what of that in comparison to the soul's awakening from its death-sleep in sin to find itself beyond the reach of hope in blank, dark despair?

Mr Cheyne once said to his congregation in preaching, "If you are not awakened in time, you will be awakened in everlasting torment to your eternal confusion." Which will you choose? Face the question in earnest, for face it one day you must. If not made anxious now about your precious soul's salvation the dread alternative will be yours.

I was once staying with a relative who was seized suddenly with a painful illness. He asked me to go for the doctor in all haste. I shall never forget what he said to me as he looked pitifully into my face, "What must the pains of hell be when my sufferings are so awful?"

He was a strong man—strong in body and strong in mind—but all his strength gave way in the presence of what he thought was going to be his death. Conscience began to work. He knew that he was unprepared to meet God. Hence he became most miserable in a moment.

One of the greatest blessings man can have in his present sinful state is a conscience; especially an exercised one. Nothing speaks so loudly, and nothing can make a man so miserable. *If conscience is not awakened in time, it will lash its victim for ever.* Yes, we repeat it, for EVER.

No pain so dreadful as the torments of remorse. Remorse is that which comes from the remembrance of guilt. Guilt is the result of sins committed.

Memory brings back the horrible past, and conscience says silently, "*You did it, and you must meet God about it.*"

Even the bold Deist, Theodore Parker, of Boston, declared that, "From my own experience I know the remorse which comes from conscious violation of my own integrity, from treason to myself and my God. *It transcends all bodily pain, all grief at disappointed schemes, all anguish which comes from sickness, age, from the death of dear ones prematurely taken away.* To these afflictions I bow with a 'Thy will be done.' *But remorse, the pain of sin, that will work.*"

The torments of a guilty conscience have often led to suicide. It was so with Judas. It was only last night that I met a man of highly respectable parentage and of good education. He came into a gospel meeting, where I was, to get relief from his misery. After the meeting was over he unbosomed himself to me. He had all the distinguishing features of good-breeding in his face. He told me how he had fallen. As he recalled the early days of his boyhood, with the stinging yet sweet memory of a godly mother, he was tempted to take his life away, thinking that would end his misery.

But how vain it is to thus seek relief. That would only be to plunge the soul into deeper misery, even the misery of hell itself, of which that same conscience, quickened into an activity that shall never cease, will help to form a part. Hear the Saviour's words, "Where their worm dieth not (con-

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science), and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 48).

If you, dear reader, are suffering from the memory of your own sins and youthful folly, and feel miserable because of it, do not allow Satan to befool you at this critical juncture of your history. There is hope for even you. His skill is marvellous in blinding people. Some he deludes into the folly of thinking they are not sinners, and others into believing they are too great sinners. Such often think that they have sinned away their day of grace, and that there is no hope for them.

He is always seeking to blind men and blacken God. It is the way he keeps men going on in sin, while he instils hard thoughts in their hearts against the God who was so full of love as to give His own Son to die for them. "Christ died for the ungodly." No man can be worse than that. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Are you tempted, dear reader, to think that there is no forgiveness for you? Has your guilt been so aggravated and your conscience so troubled that you have thought of ending your life? Some have been known to go so far, but they turned to God and obtained mercy. So may you.

George Whitfield once surprised an audience of aristocrats in Lady Huntington's drawing-room by telling them that the blessed Lord Jesus Christ was so willing to save even the most abandoned of sinners that He would receive the devil's outcasts. He

preached from the words, "Him that cometh unto me I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT." Blessed, encouraging words! None are too far sunken in sin! None need despair! All may come and find the heartiest welcome!

Proofs are not wanting that many a young man has fallen a prey to infidelity through the torments of a guilty conscience. Leaving his home in the country where there was a praying father and a godly mother, or a saintly sister or brother, whose influence he felt while there, he was forced to seek employment in the large city where all was new and perhaps very glamouring to him at first.

To all appearance he gets into agreeable and pleasant society. He shrinks from what is foul at first, but he is decoyed on step by step until he is entrapped and enchained with sin—sins of theft, sins of impurity, sins of drunkenness and fast living.

He may some day be brought to think and consider the past. He has wasted his life. He has fallen. His moral purity is perhaps lost for ever. He looked on the wine when it was red and gave its colour in the cup. It was very nice to be entertained, and in turn to be able to entertain others. But little did he think that that which was so very pleasing was most deceiving, and had her guests in the depths of hell, and that at last it would bite him like an adder, and sting him like a serpent.

Young man, beware! Put on the brake in time ere it be too late. The end will be awful. "BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT." If it finds

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you out in time and you drag it into God's presence and honestly confess it, mercy will be shown you. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but *whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*"

With moral character gone, and all restraint to stand against temptation gone (because the habit to sin has made sinning easy), and no power to stand against the evil that has eaten his very vitals, you are asked perhaps to go and hear some infidel lecturer or read some infidel book through which the devil easily infuses dreadful poison into your moral veins.

Doctors tell us that a healthy condition can resist almost any disease, but when a man's condition is low, he invariably takes anything that is going. If this is so physically, it is also true morally.

Infidelity seems plausible. In such a low frame of mind it suits such an one to believe that there is no God, or that the Bible is not a revelation from God. In such a state the thought of meeting God is dreadful, therefore there cannot be any God to meet. All sense of responsibility is for the time lost. The young man is blinded, and thus he becomes a prey to the awful demon of infidelity. He is then free to sin with both hands earnestly. The devil laughs, men may pity or deride, but heaven weeps at the spectacle.

If this paper should fall into the hands of such, I appeal to your honesty in the sight of God to let

conscience speak ere it be too late. Can you deny or disprove these statements? Dark, black, miserable, foul-mouthed infidelity would rob you of all that is morally good in life, and plunge you into the depths of darkness and despair at last.

Beware of it as you would a viper! In your own mind turn away from it as you would from a tiger or a reptile! Wake up to your responsibility, and say, "Begone, thou dream of hell!"

A poet has well said:—

"Is yours the life the world calls fast,
An early grave the goal?
What shall it profit, count the cost,
To barter thus the soul?"

The fruit of sin's forbidden tree
Ye snatch with eager hand,
The sights, the sweets, the minstrelsy
The tempter can command.

Pause, brother, pause, that honeyed cup
Shall quickly change to gall,
And he who is the fool to sup
Finds poison in it all.

A hell to shun, a heaven to gain,
A Saviour's love to know,
Neglect, and you have lived in vain
Though lord of all below."

Most people want sympathy, especially the troubled and fallen. Hardness repels. Sympathy draws. Whoever showed such sympathy and compassion for the fallen and tempest-tossed as the Lord Jesus Christ? He told out the love and com-

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passion of God for man in the very lowest stratum of human life.

Strange that men do not think of this ! Strange that such love and sympathy has had so little effect ! He wept over sinners. He relieved them in every possible way when He was on earth. He is the same still. What the Pharisees said in derision of Him is still true, "This man receiveth SINNERS."

Are you a sinner ? Is that the name by which you are known ? Do you actually confess yourself to be *a sinner* ? If so, He will receive you. If He died to save such, He must be very willing to receive such. Nothing could prove His willingness like giving up His sacred life as a ransom for all.

Few of us would give our life even for our nearest or dearest friends. That is the utmost that love could do. It is the true test of love. He gave His life for His enemies. Thus His love surpasses all human love.

What suffering ! What anguish ! What darkness and soul misery He went through on the cross to prove the love of God to sinful men ! Surely such love would never turn a broken-down, bankrupt, out-cast sinner away.

If a loving mother, whose daughter had fallen through sin and left her happy home, would not lock the door at night, but simply leave it on the latch lest the fallen one should think of returning home and find the door bolted and go away, surely divine love, to say the least, is as compassionate as that.

When the daughter returned she had only to lift the latch and walk in. That easily lifted latch told her that her mother's love had not changed to her.

Oh! the boundless, unfathomable love of a Saviour God that, in spite of man's rebel hatred against Him, shown by spitting in the face of His blessed Son, still waits to be gracious and welcome the vilest!

Reader, words of ours cannot express it to you as we would like. Taste it yourself. Come to Him in all your need and wretchedness. Cast yourself on His infinite compassion in Christ. Believe it for yourself and you will be able to tell to all around what a portion is yours.

Let your soul drink in this wonderful verse in all its divine sweetness: "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." Look into the greatness and blessed simplicity of that one verse.

It has been the means of blessing to thousands. Have you ever taken it home to yourself? You are one of the fallen world. You are not an angel either fallen or unfallen. You are a man. Aren't you? Put yourself out of that big circle (the world) you cannot if you try. God so loved you. Can it be true? It is true if you are in the circle of the world.

He might have turned against you because of your sins against Him. He might justly have sent you to hell. Mightn't He? Ah! lift up your heart to Him now at this moment in thanksgiving that, instead

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of putting you into hell for your sins, He put His own dear Son on the cross, in love to you, to bear the judgment of them, that you might go free. Do you see it ? Then thank Him now.

“ Whosoever believeth.” What does that mean ? “ Whosoever ” means you or anybody. “ Believeth ” means that you take all to yourself and give God the credit that He did it for you.

“ Shall not perish but have everlasting life.” Thank God for those simple yet blessed soul-emancipating words. Think of them for a moment. If you believe in the Son of God who died for you, you have everlasting life. You need never fear that you will perish, because Jesus says you shall not.

Death may touch your body, but it cannot rob you of that life that is eternal in its source and duration. “ He that hath the Son hath life.” Precious possession in the Son of God for all who believe ! It is Christ Himself who is our life. “ I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

“ Jesus’ loving heart yearns o’er thee,
And His arms would thee embrace ;
See what wondrous love and glory
Beam in his dear face !
He can meet thy soul so wretched,
And can heal thy deepest woes ;
Lo ! His hand is still outstretched,
This His own word shows.”

P. W.

“BOUND FOR HELL!!”

I WAS waiting on the platform at S—— in Scotland. A train pulled up. “Is this the train, for C——?” I asked an official. “Yes, sir,” he replied. I accordingly took my seat.

Following close upon my heels, and sitting down at the same moment, was a strongly-built man, I judged to be about thirty years of age. I noticed he was greatly agitated. Turning to me suddenly he said, “If I had had time I should have knocked him down, sir.”

“Who do you mean?” I asked.

“Why, that official; he did not give you the same answer he gave me I’ll warrant, sir. I asked him where this train was bound for, and he answered, ‘*Bound for Hell.*’”

The passengers were all attention in a moment.

“What an awful expression,” said I. “And yet, when you consider it, there may be a good deal of truth in what that official said. I do not wish to justify his rudeness for a moment. But in all probability the majority of passengers in this train are truly *bound for Hell*. But I can thank God I am *bound for Heaven*. I was once *bound for Hell*, travelling on as fast as sin could carry me, but God stopped me on the West Coast of Africa and turned me right about, and now my terminus is Heaven.”

Turning to the other occupants of the carriage I asked: “And now, my friends, what about you?”

Are you ‘bound for Hell’ or for Heaven—which? ” Absolute silence reigned! Continuing, I said: “If you are *bound for Hell* on the ‘downward line,’ why not ‘change’ and get on the ‘upward line,’ and be *bound for Heaven*? And now, what about you my friend? turning to the first speaker, “where are you really bound for?”

“Why, sir, I want to be on the road to Heaven. I’m glad I didn’t strike that man. The fact is I have just been liberated from prison this morning, having served twelve months for striking a man who never recovered consciousness. That official was like enough to have sent me back again. But, sir, I came out of prison with the intention of travelling a different road. I have been *bound for Hell* true enough; but during my twelve months in prison my eyes have been opened, and I have learned more than in all my life previously. I have been reading the Bible and the good books sent to the prison, and the chaplain told me to be sure and bolt through my old associates who would be waiting for me at the prison gates, and I did so and got clear of them all; but I almost struck that official.”

“What! do you mean to say then that your hands have been imbrued in a fellow-creature’s blood, and that you have been instrumental in sending a soul into a *lost eternity*? What a mercy you are spared! Tell me, how did it happen?”

“It was a glove fight, sir. I hope he was a *good-living man*.” Here the tears started to his eyes. “I did not intend to do it,” he continued; “the poor

fellow slipped and I struck him at the same moment ; he became unconscious and never opened his eyes again. I was tried for manslaughter and got twelve months. I hope God will forgive me ; I am resolved to live a different life now ; although I did that, I can assure you, sir, I have never used that word hell as that official did. My people are all Christians. I am a disgrace to them, the only black sheep in the family. But God helping me, I'll be different."

"Then what is your name and where is your home ?" I asked.

"My name is D—— M'K——, and my home is —— Street, N——, or that is where my wife and children were living when I last heard of them. I am now going to try and find them." Tears stood in his eyes while saying this.

My heart ached for the poor fellow as I saw the mistake he was making. What a real thing the power of sin and Satan is. And how impossible it is for men in their own strength to break away from it.

"M'K——," said I, "I can see your intention ; you have made up your mind to turn over a *new leaf* and to do *your best* to gain heaven at last, haven't you ?"

"Yes, sir, that I have. I have had enough of the old road."

"Stop, M'K——. You are on the wrong road still. You will never reach heaven by the road you are now travelling. You will find you will blacken your *new leaf* worse than the old leaves, for passion grows

stronger and the devil is ever seeking to lay fresh traps for you. You almost dropped into it this morning. Besides, if you could keep your *new leaf* clean, what about the old leaves? For 'God requireth that which is past,' the Scriptures assure us, and again, 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' Turning over *new leaves* will never save your soul. You must turn back the *old leaves* and repent of your many sins, and get them washed white by the blood of Jesus. What you need, M'K——, is my Saviour. He alone can save you from *sin's penalty*, and He alone can save you from *sin's power*. You are making the greatest mistake in the world in supposing that you can gain heaven without my Saviour's blood and without my Saviour's power. Fifteen years ago I cried to Him to save me from the very sins which are hurrying you down to hell. I was as fond of the boxing booth, &c., as yourself. I can testify to his *saving grace* and *keeping power* ever since that time, for never for one single moment have I practised those sins to which I was enslaved previously. One sin is enough to shut you out of heaven! Think of that passion that rose up just now; it may lead you to the gallows next. Nothing short of salvation will do for you, M'K——. And there at God's right hand sits the Saviour of sinners, waiting to be your Saviour if you will only repent and own your lost condition and cry to Him to save you. 'For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord *shall be saved*'" (Rom. x. 13).

Are you making the same mistake, my reader;

turning your back upon what Christ has done to save you from the *penalty of sin* in the *past*, and all that He is prepared to do to save you from the *power of sin* in the *present*, and seeking to save yourself by your own doings? Fatal delusion! The devil will laugh at you, ere long, for your stupidity. "What saith the Scriptures?" Listen. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy *transgressions* for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25). "*Repent* ye therefore, and be *converted*, that *your sins* may be *blotted out*" (Acts iii. 19). "Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii). "Except ye be *converted*, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3).

"I only wish I could have had an hour with you alone, sir," said poor M'K——, as the train pulled up and I got out at C——, leaving him to go on to N——. Handing him a little book—the history of my own conversion—I bade him good-bye, asking him to meet me in heaven through the *blood of Jesus*. Upon reaching Lincoln I wrote to him at the address given. My letter was returned.

What havoc sin makes now; but oh, think of eternity, my reader, and—

"Flee now to Jesus, flee now to Jesus;
Flee and thy sins all confess;
Flee now to Jesus, flee now to Jesus;
He is still waiting to bless."

E. E. C.

N.B.—Should this meet the eye of D. M'K——, will he send his present address to E. E. C., c/o the Editor of this Magazine.

FALSE SECURITY.

THE terrible disaster in Martinique will be fresh in the minds of most of our readers. It affords a solemn and striking illustration of the false security many will be found in when the Lord comes, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and *they shall not escape.*" Warning had been given, and many terror-stricken inhabitants were desirous of seeking a safe shelter but were prevented, and the assurance given that they were all right, the danger being past; then in a moment a hurricane of fire seemed to sweep down upon them from Mont Pelee, and not one of those thirty-five thousand inhabitants escaped.

It is indeed terrible to think that in that place proverbial for its wickedness, not a single man or woman was left alive; all were swept into eternity in a moment, without warning, without time being given for repentance, no opportunity of turning to God at the close of a misspent life, but cut off in their sins in an instant.

Reader of these lines, if still unsaved, you do well to take this to heart. God forbid that such a death should be yours. Then trifle not with the golden opportunities God has given you, and while you have this present moment to call your own, turn to God, and receive the offered salvation, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The last message received by telegraph from the doomed city is deeply affecting. The telegraph needle moved, and the operator received the message—

“ ALL RIGHT.”

Then there followed an indistinct noise made by the instrument, as though something had gone wrong, and then a faint sign which took the form of a cross, and then all was silent ; for the hand of the operator had ceased to move for ever.

Reader, all this has a voice to you, if but you would heed it. Maybe even now you are trying to persuade yourself that you are all right, when you know matters are not right between your soul and God. What folly ! Let St Pierre stand as a flaming beacon to warn you of your danger, and let this moment be the moment of your decision for Christ ; then come what may, if your trust is in Him, “ 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 *you* from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ” (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

“ Haste, traveller, haste ! the night comes on,
 And many a shining hour is gone ;
 The storm is gathering in the west,
 And thou art far from home and rest.
 Haste, traveller, haste !
 Haste, traveller, haste !
 For thou art far from home and rest.”

E. E. N.

HEAVEN'S SUBTRACTION SUM.

THE rule of subtraction, or taking away, is an important one for the young arithmetician to master. It is no less important for those who would learn in God's school. In Isaiah vi. 6, 7, we find this principle beautifully set forth in the following words: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and *thine iniquity is taken away*, and thy sin purged."

The altar was the place of sacrifice, where the life of a guiltless victim was taken instead of the life of a guilty sinner. The live coal taken from the altar and applied to Isaiah's lips signifies the application of the results of the sacrifice to the believing sinner. When the precious blood of Christ is applied to our souls it is as if God said to us, "Lo, *this* hath touched thy lips, and *thine iniquity is taken away.*"

Here comes a swindler. What a tale of falseness and craft the assistants in his business could tell, if only they dared! But that man, with all his baseness and deceit, kneels at the feet of Jesus a repentant sinner, and a holy calm falls upon his cleansed and renewed soul as he listens to the words, "*Thine iniquity is taken away.*" Oh, blessed subtraction sum!

Here is a man of immoral life. Lust and uncleanness have made his heart like a cage of foul and filthy birds. But he, too, seeks cleansing at the fountain that is open for sin, and over him, even him, the sweet words are breathed, "*Thine iniquity is taken away.*"

And who comes here? A man whose name is Hypocrite. His cheeks would flush crimson with indignation, and he would knit his brow in anger if you were to call him a sinner. He is as full of religiousness outwardly as an egg is full of meat. But in the secret of his soul he has never had to do with Christ. He is still a stranger to redeeming love. One day, however, an arrow of truth, sped by the hand of the Holy Ghost pierces his conscience. The scales fall from his eyes. Stripped of his religious pride, he views himself as he really is, a putrid, loathsome sinner. "O Lord," he cries, "is there cleansing for such as me? Canst Thou, wilt Thou receive me as I am? Then I will trust Thee as only a sinner can. I will and do believe that Thy blood can make me whole." And as the hush of the Saviour's forgiving love falls upon his spirit, he hears the echo of the same sweet message from heaven, "*Thine iniquity is taken away.*"

Who is there that would not learn a rule of subtraction so blessed as this? Is there anything in the world that could make you happier than to have those words spoken to you? There is no reason why they should not be, and that before you lay your head upon your pillow to-night. The word of truth

plainly declares that "*whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins ;*" so that if you, foul with sin, and burdened with guilt, will but trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and stake your soul upon the merits of His blood, *you* shall receive the remission of your sins, and of *you* it shall be said, "*Thine iniquity is taken away.*"

There are many who will be ready to exclaim that what I have said does not apply to their case at all. They do not consider themselves so very bad. They would acknowledge themselves to be sinners, but they feel that with their efforts to be good, their resolutions, their prayers, and their religious inclinations, they have not quite the same need for undergoing the process of subtraction as those whose sins are more glaring and flagrant.

Let me assure all such, however, that their need, instead of being less, is greater. There is *more* of the subtraction work to be done in their case than in the case of those who have no fancied goodness of their own to boast in. For, before they obtain forgiveness not only must their *sins* be taken away, but their self-righteousness must go, and they must part with their false confidence. Oh, it is a vast subtraction sum that is necessary in the case of such.

Quite recently, a grand reception was given to the ladies of the Chinese court, by Mrs Conger, wife of the American Minister at Peking. It was the first event of its kind in the history of China, and special preparations were made to ensure its success. Thirteen

princesses of the Imperial family were invited, and at the appointed hour they arrived. Much to the dismay of their good hostess, however, they came with a retinue of no less than four hundred and sixty-one attendants, all of whom had to be hospitably provided for. Just imagine four hundred and sixty-one unexpected guests arriving at your house !

Now I have met with plenty of people who seek to attend God's feast of blessing accompanied by a numerous retinue of works, resolutions, vows, prayers, ordinances, and so forth. But it will not do. *You* are welcome to God's heavenly feast, but you must dismiss your attendants. The rule of subtraction must be enforced. All confidence in such things as I have named must be taken away if you are to enjoy the favour of God. Both your sins and your self-righteousness must go.

The story goes that when Prince Albert Victor lay dying he took the hand of his royal mother (now Queen Alexandra) in his own, and looking up into her face, repeated the lines :—

“ Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.”

Ah! it looks as if Prince Albert Victor had learned the secret of God's subtraction sum. Prince though he were, he had nothing to cling to but Christ. Empty-handed and helpless he realised that Christ's cross was the only ground upon which blessing could be his. All who from their inmost souls can say the words that the dying prince uttered lose their sins

ETERNITY.

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and gain a Saviour. The assuring words are theirs to rest on, "*Thine iniquity is taken away.*"

Reader, do you know anything of Heaven's blessed rule of subtraction ?

H. P. B.

ETERNITY.

ETERNITY ! how long can that be ?
Eternity ! is it so near ?
Come now, consider, let us count it,
And let each item be a year.

Count the tiny blades of clover,
Count the daisies every one,
Count them all the wide world over,
Count the grasses, miss not one :
Count the trees in every forest,
Count the leaves on every tree,
Count the straws in every cornyard,
Count the drops that make the sea :
Count the very tiny sea-sands,
Every mote on every shore,
Count the great beasts, count the small ones,
Count them all this great world o'er :
Count the houses, count the windows,
Count them all in every town,
Count the books that e'er were written,
Every verb and every noun :

Count each word that e'er was spoken,
 Count each tear that e'er was shed,
 Count the eyes that ever shed them,
 Count the hairs of every head.

· · · · ·
 Think you, when we'd finished counting,
 Would Eternity be done?
 No, ah, no, when all is counted
 Eternity has just begun.
 It is *endless*, and 'tis nearing,
 Hasten them to ready be.
 Spent in heaven, 'twill be all joyous;
 Spent in hell, what must it be?

J. S. C.

There is a sharp, short trite sentence that I would to God were burned deeply in the conscience of every procrastinator—"Remember Lot's wife." She was a person who was almost saved, but was not. She was within sight of the place of safety, but failed to reach it. She was on the verge of getting divinely-appointed security, but missed it. Two things worked in her heart to her ruin. Unbelief and disobedience. She did not in her heart believe that God would judge Sodom, and spite of His plain command to the contrary, she would look back, and in that moment she was cut off, and she stands an everlasting beacon of the awful folly of disobedience. W. T. P. W.

THE CONVERSION OF A CAVALRY OFFICER. 113

THE CONVERSION OF A FORMER
RUSSIAN CAVALRY OFFICER.

NARRATED BY HIMSELF.

“MY parents were Lutherans. My family is one of the first in the land. Born in 1860 on my father’s estate, I grew up without seeing any living Christianity. I was earthly-minded. My chief pleasures were riding and dancing. At the time of my confirmation I was somewhat softened, but good resolutions and softening soon passed away, and when, at the end of my studies, I entered a regiment of the Guards at Petersburg, I ceased to trouble myself about religion, and led a life of sin.

“After serving as officer for two years, I took my leave, bought an estate not far from my parent’s property, and soon after married. My marriage was an unhappy one, and I was dissatisfied with life. Then I went frequently abroad, where I consorted with thoroughly infidel-minded men, who robbed me of the last bit of faith, or what I held for true humanitarian principles, the control and improvement of self. Unrealisable love to one’s neighbour were the views given me in its place. I returned home a confirmed Atheist.

“But however clear these views appeared to me, I was not satisfied. I did not succeed in improving myself, and the fear of death still led me captive. Now it happened that there were some believers of

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a certain creed on my estate, and as they were people who did not steal or drink, I allowed them to assemble together. I hoped that through their influence there would be less theft and drunkenness on the part of others.

“When the first service of God took place in the room which I had assigned for this purpose, I went to it, considering it right to support it by my presence. I do not remember what was said, but this I know, that as I left the place of prayer, I spoke with these brethren, and said, that although I did not share their belief, which was not for well-educated folk, I wished them prosperity in their work. They, however, prayed for me, and several pamphlets, beseeching souls to come to Jesus, came anonymously with loving words into my hands. I laughed at these messages, but was not offended, as I traced love on their part as the source.

“Now it so happened that I one day met with my pastor. He was a discreet, but thoroughly unconverted and self-satisfied man, more of a landlord than a guardian of souls. I said to him, that as I would like to be a better man than I was, but could not attain my desire, would he give me counsel?

“‘Pray, Baron,’ he replied.

“‘How can I pray, when I do not believe in a God?’

“‘Well, that is the only counsel I can give you.’

“‘Then my speaking with you on the subject is useless, if you cannot give me any better counsel than that.’

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“Dissatisfied with his reply, we separated. But God, who can use dead posts as guide-posts, had let me hear the truth through this pastor.

“When I returned home late that evening, I found a packet of books on my table that the bookseller in the town had sent for me to choose from. Among them I found a work of Count Tolstoi. Beginning to read it, I found he handled the question ‘*Why we live,*’ in a philosophical but not in a Christian manner. He counselled the exercise of love, which is the opinion of the noblest men of all ages, as Socrates, Jesus—whom he only regarded as a very noble man—and others. This pleased me. It accorded with my ideas. And I read the book all night. Much was said of the noble Jesus, who was so full of love, who thought and spoke so gloriously, and who calmly suffered unrighteously. It was not the dry incomprehensible teaching, that in no way affects the heart, that I had heard from the pulpits. For the first time I was pleased with Jesus, and was not weary in reading about Him. I read and read with increased interest. In that night I began to love Jesus, as one of his companions on earth loved Him. I felt myself drawn to Him, although not yet knowing that He was God from eternity, and the Lord of glory. I loved Jesus, like so many Germans love Bismarck.

“Then I wanted to know more about this Jesus, and it struck me that I could find details of the life of Jesus in my old Bible. I began to read the four Gospels. And as I read of the words and deeds and

walk of the Lord, He grew in my estimation, ever becoming greater. He seemed to be more than a man in His love, and power, and wisdom. Suddenly, at the end, the thought struck me, Is He then God? as the pastors say. And then I did not know what to believe, or how to get clear.

“Now I said to myself, Should not you pray? But the answer came inwardly, But I do not believe in a God; how then can I pray? However, I can try it. No one will see me, who can laugh at me. So I prayed, ‘O God, if Thou art above, show me the truth.’ This was my first prayer.

“Then I read further in the Gospel of John. And God heard my prayer, and enlightened me by the rays of His light in reading the Word. His Spirit showed me Jesus, and glorified Him. I was obliged continually to repeat, No mere man could think and feel, speak and act like that. In His light I saw light, and the confession was wrung from my heart: ‘Thou art the Son of God. Thou art the King of Israel. Thou art the Lamb of God, that bore my sins on the cross.’

“Then it was that spring came into my heart. Now I could read the Scriptures with quite another understanding. I was filled with inexpressible joy, for Jesus was God. And Jesus, through His precious blood, had fully paid for all, and hence for me. My sins were paid for on the cross of Calvary.

“I thanked, I loved, I praised. I was blessed in His love, redeemed from the fear of death and judgment.

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“Since then I have had to pass through many a severe trial, but I do not regret it. What I do regret is, that I have found so late the only thing worth having on earth, and that since I have known Him, I have served Him so poorly.

“Now I am a soldier of Jesus Christ, bearing His armour, and wielding His weapons till the fight is over, the victory won, and the goal reached with Him in light.”

God's work is perfect and sure. His Spirit is moving in power, where He will, in all parts of the earth. His ways are manifold and wondrous in bringing souls to Himself. He is not willing that any should perish, and He will surely have all His own. Many in Russia, as elsewhere, have turned to Him in His rich grace. Unto Him be all the glory and all the praise.

Dear reader of these lines, what think ye of these things? Perhaps this story of God's great grace may meet the eye of some poor troubled soul, who hitherto similarly has turned to human philosophy, or one of the many vagaries of the blinded mind of man, instead of Christ. Be warned: Christ, and Christ only, a living personal Saviour, can meet your need. The same Jesus, whom this high-born Russian officer learned to love, is the only One who can satisfy your heart. His precious blood was shed for all, and all are invited to participate in its infinite value. You are invited whoever you are. The rejected and crucified One is seated now in highest glory, at the

right hand of the living God. This is full proof that He is the Son of God. Believe on Him, and all your sins shall be blotted out, for His name's sake (1 John ii. 12). Believe on Him, and you shall have everlasting life (John iii. 16). And when He shall keep His faithful promise and return, you, as well as the one of whom you have read, will surely be found among the happy number who shall be claimed by Him for the eternal glory of God. E. H. C.

SEPARATED FOR EVER.

ALL through life, ever since they were classmates at college, Senator Toombs of Georgia, and George Pierce were fast friends.

The senator was an utterly unconverted man, and lived a godless life. He had, however, married an earnest Christian woman, whom he regarded with feelings akin to veneration.

One day, while visiting at his lovely home, Pierce opened a conversation with his friend on this wise:—

“Something's going to happen after a while that will go mighty hard with you, Toombs.”

“What's that?” asked the senator.

“You and your much-loved wife will be separated. She's going to heaven, and you will go to hell.”

“No, that can't be.”

“Yes, it can be, and it will be unless you repent and seek salvation. You will be separated from her for ever.”

Toombs was silent for a few minutes, and then said, "George, I can't stand that. I could never stand such a thing."

That conversation resulted in the senator's conversion. As a guilty sinner he knelt at the Saviour's feet, and trusted Him for pardon, and henceforward walked hand in hand with his wife as a companion of her Christian life.

It is a terrible thought that amongst the readers of these lines there may be two sisters, or two brothers, or two dear friends (it may be husband and wife), who are travelling down the stream of life side by side, but who are going to be separated for all eternity because one has been saved through the blood of Christ, and the other still spurns Him and slights His gracious call.

Quite recently, away in Jamaica, three young girls went to fetch some water from the river. The day was warm, the water was clear and sparkling, and they thought they would have a bath. But the current was running very strong at the time, and one of the girls lost her footing and was being carried away. Another of the three went to her aid, but stumbled and fell into the swiftly running stream. Side by side they were being borne down to destruction. Their screams were in vain, for no one was within hearing save their young companion. She, however, though the smallest of the three, bravely jumped into the water, and succeeded in saving the life of one of the girls. The other, alas, was carried away out of reach, and the next morning

her dead body was found among the river weeds some hundreds of yards below.

One was lost, the other saved. And thus it may be with two of the readers of this gospel monthly. It may be that one is reading this article aloud, and another is listening. Is one to be lost, and the other saved? Is one to be plucked from the jaws of destruction, and the other to pass on to a sinner's hell? *Christ* stands ready to save. It is for you to choose whether you shall be rescued or left to perish.

Be wise and choose Christ for your portion. In choosing Him you choose salvation, joy, peace, and eternal glory; in turning from Him you choose sin, judgment, and the wailing and gnashing of teeth in the outer darkness of despair for ever.

His precious blood has lost none of its ancient virtue. He is as mighty to save to-day as ever He was, and His love is as great as His power. Will you not fly to the arms of infinite love and be safe?

H. P. B.

EARTH, HEAVEN, AND HELL.

(Read Luke xiv. 15-25, xv. 11-32, xvi. 19-31.)

IN this discourse the Lord Jesus brings before us earth, heaven, and hell—earth with its hindrances, heaven with its happiness, hell with its horrors; and all divinely real. The hindrances are real, and you yourself, my dear unsaved reader, are the very witness that they are so; other-

wise, you would have been converted before now. You cannot say you have not been called, sought, and invited. "Oh," you say, "I have been hindered." Take my advice then: take a flying leap over the hindrances of earth, and taste the joys of heaven, lest eternity find you in the horrors of hell.

In the fourteenth chapter we have the invitation; in the fifteenth, the man who accepted the invitation, and how he was welcomed; and in the sixteenth, the man who would not accept it, and from whose eternal future the Lord draws aside the veil. And who was this last? I believe he was the elder brother of Luke xv., the one who would not go in, though the Father came out and entreated him. Why would he not go in? Because he was too good; he would not go in with such company—he refuses to have to do with the younger brother whom grace had saved, and the brothers are sundered for all eternity.

He who will not go in when called by grace must taste the terrible truth of the sixteenth chapter—find himself *outside for ever*: and let me tell you this, my unsaved reader, you cannot find yourself in hell without having *passed the open door of heaven* to reach there. How terrible! To pass heaven's open door, with its joy and its gladness and its love, is to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

In the fourteenth chapter the Lord gives us the paltry excuses of the heart of man; in the fifteenth, the irrepressible love of the heart of God; in the sixteenth, the eternal misery of the one who made

the excuses. He shows us earth and its madness, heaven and its merriment, hell and its misery. You are on earth now: where will you spend eternity? "In heaven, I hope," you say. Make *sure* of it, my reader, make sure of it.

Have I put a false colouring on these chapters, or what do they teach? Is it not *madness* to refuse God's grace, and slight God's mercy, though the "excuse" of chapter xiv. be polite? Does not chapter xv. show a scene of divine gladness—the joy of God over the sinner's salvation, and the sinner called to share that joy for evermore? And is not chapter xvi. the scene of man's misery—utter, eternal misery—as he is seen to fall from the lap of luxury to the lake of fire?

The Lord presents here the piteous condition of the lost soul—its cry for help, its wail. Look! What is all it dares even appeal for? There is given here the circumscribed extent of the prayer of a lost soul in hell. *One drop* of water! *One drop*; and it is denied. Why? Because the guilt of the sinner has landed him in a spot where the mercy of God cannot reach him.

Do you ask, "Is my guilt so great that it cannot be pardoned?" Not now. *Now* there is no blessing God does not offer you freely; *now*, but not *then*; then there is only left for you one thing, to mourn throughout an endless eternity your own terrible folly in rejecting the offer of God's salvation.

Now it is all mercy and no judgment; *then* it will be all judgment and no mercy. *Now* Christ offers you everything His love can give; *then* He can only

judge you. If you refuse His *love* you must taste His *wrath*; if you pass by the open door of heaven, and make light of the voice that bids you come in, there is nothing left but the terrible future of which Luke xvi. is the picture. The rich man dies, and, I dare say, everything that could make a death-bed easy and painless surrounded his—every luxury his money could buy; but he dies—money cannot keep off death. When death comes in, that cold, pale, grim monster, what terror will seize your soul, you that are Christless, unsaved, unpardoned, un-blessed. Do not think that you are going to have a long time to prepare. You may be swept off in a moment, having no time for anything. Mark the rapidity of this scene. He dies and is buried, and in hell he lifts up his eyes. Look at the transition. Life, death, burial, hell, torments! This is the Lord's own solemn picture of the end of an unconverted man. Do you tell me it is but a picture? True; but if the *picture* is so terrible, what, oh what will the *reality* be? Can you brave it? Dare you risk this awful future, this terrible hell?

There is thirst in hell, but there is *no water*; *now*, if any man thirst, there are rivers of living water wherewith to slake his thirst—*now*, but not *then*. Oh, will you not drink now and live? Will you be there, and find even one drop denied you?

“Son, remember!” Yes, memory will go down with you there. You must leave your money, leave your pleasures, leave everything you have prized and valued on earth behind you; but you will carry two

things down with you—*your sins* and *your memory* ! You may try to stifle convictions now, to cover up your sins now, to hush the voice of conscience, and it is quite possible you may succeed. It is quite possible you, who have neglected the gospel, may come to a death-bed, and conscience give you no warning word ; for the wicked have “no bands in their death, but their strength is firm.” Yes, you may come to a death-bed, and have no fear to die, and yet you are *Christless, unsaved*. Why is this ? Because your conscience has been stifled so long, till at last it gives you no warning cry, and mourning friends dry their eyes and say, “He died like a lamb, died like a lamb !” Alas ! *died and was damned* ! “Son, remember !” remember amid the flames of hell, remember those gospel preachings when you wished the preacher would have done, when you thought him mad because he would try to warn you, and seek to draw you into a place of safety.

“Son, remember” how you despised the love of God ; when the portals of heaven stood wide open to receive you, how you refused to go in.

Think of reviewing a lifetime in which you did your best to damn your immortal soul, and to know you had *succeeded* ! Is this true ? Is it a reality ? Is it a fact, that by-and-by, in eternity, you must cast your eye back over your history, and, as the long dark night of eternity rolls on, you must remember that you refused to let God save you ? Yes, it is but too true of every gospel-neglecter, or gospel-rejecter. Are you such, my reader ?

Can you bear to picture yourself in that scene of ceaseless woe, with all your joys gone, all your pleasures gone, all your friends gone, and you having waked up to find yourself a sinner in your sins? Memory reigns supreme there. Memory brings back all your past life, your wasted opportunities, and you say, Will it go on? Will it never end? Yes, it goes on, it goes on, it will *never* end.

The Lord shows here the past, the present, and the future of a soul in hell. "*Remember*"—how that word fills up the *past*! "*Tormented*"—that is the terrible, the everlasting *present*—"Now thou art tormented." "But," you say, "is there *no* escape?" Listen: "*Fixed*"—there is the *future*, "a great gulf *fixed*." What does that mean? That God Himself cannot then bridge it over; He then has, I may say, no power to show you mercy. Your portion is settled for ever: memory crushing you with all the scenes of your lifetime, which is for ever *past*, beyond recall; torment, sorrow unspeakable in the *present*; and for the *future* a "great gulf fixed" between you and those eternal scenes of joy and gladness in which you too might have been, had you not persistently refused to share them.

But, thank God, *now* there is pardon, now there is room, now there is a welcome in the Father's house for you, now God's invitation is going out to call you to His great supper of salvation.

God's feast is a feast of joy, a feast of salvation. He Himself provides the feast; He spreads on the table that which divinely meets the needs of the

guests. But besides meeting *your need* as a sinner, God has a deeper motive. He wants to gratify His own heart by having you as a guest.

What a grand thing it is to know that God wants *me* for His guest! He wants my company. In Luke xiv. the great thought of the heart of God is, He wants to have you, wants to have you for His own. Though man has sinned and gone away from Him, His love remains the same; He comes out in the energy of His grace, and entreats you to come to Him, to be His guest. I find the kind of company, too, who accept the invitation, the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, *i.e.*, those who could bring nothing to the feast.

It is on earth the invitation comes. Earth is the waiting-room, in which the fate of the soul is decided, either on the one hand for glory, or on the other for the dark, the bitter gloom of the lake of fire. Who shall decide? With *you*, my reader, lies the responsibility.

Perhaps you are saying, "I must wait a more convenient season." Take care, lest it never come. Take care, lest, like Felix, your faith may be in a convenient season which never comes. He trembled once, and you may have trembled once in your history. There are moments when God puts the gospel before a soul in such a way that it is almost constrained, almost persuaded to believe; but the soul puts it from him, does *not* decide, and the moment never recurs again.

I ask you, my reader, do you accept or do you decline God's invitation? Either you must accept

it and go in, on the ground of being a lost, ruined sinner, or you must refuse, like the elder brother, who did not like this ground.

Earth has its ranks and stages, but in heaven all are equal. If I ask Nicodemus, the moral man, How came you here in heavenly glory with Christ? "Oh," he would say, "it was the blood of Jesus!" Woman of the city, how came you here? "It was the blood of Jesus!" she replies. Paul, the blasphemer, the persecutor, how came you here? "The blood of Jesus" is again the answer that thrills through heaven; "that blessed, precious blood of Jesus!"

If I look, too, on the terribly dark side which Luke xvi. speaks to us of, it is all the same. What took the rich man to hell? His sin. Look at the category, in Revelation xxi., of those who find themselves in the lake of fire for eternity. "The *fearful*, the *unbelieving*, the *abominable*, *murderers*," &c. What brought each one there? His sin. All rank, all difference is gone then. *Sin* consigns the unbelieving sinner to *hell*, and *blood* brings the believing soul to *glory*; all else is set aside.

Where, then, will *you* be found for eternity? Will you be found among the number of those who tread that golden city with Jesus? Do you accept or refuse His invitation?

We have looked at the man who would not go in—turn now and look at the man who did go in. He says, "I will arise and go to my Father." That is decision. There comes a moment when the soul decides. Do not suppose you have to fit yourself

before you come. Christ meets you where you are and as you are. Christ knows all about you, and He knows too He is the only One who can meet your need, and so He asks you to come to Him. The prodigal said, "I will go;" there was decision, and, oh, how the Lord yearns to meet a returning soul, how He loves to greet that soul, to bid it welcome, to show out all His love to you!

You may be returning with a weary heart, with a slow footstep; but I read, "The father *ran*, and fell on his neck and kissed him." What does that kiss tell? It tells of unchanged affection. The heart of God has never changed towards you. And what did the father say? Why, he did not speak a word. With reverence I might say the father's joy was too deep for utterance.

There is no reproach, no word about the past. If you go to *hell* you must remember the past through eternity; there it is, "*Son, remember.*" If you come to God *now*, the past is all forgiven, all blotted out, no memory of it remaining, and not a word to remind you of it; for God delights to say, "Their sins and iniquities *I will remember no more*" (Heb. x. 17).

True, the prodigal was not worthy, but why did he get the kiss? Because he was worthy? Not at all, but because the father loved him! The prodigal does not say, when he comes to his father, "Make me a servant;" and very rightly, for if he had made a bad son, I do not think he would have made a very good servant; and another thing, if you come back to God, you have no business to tell Him what He

shall say to you, and how He shall treat you, and what He shall make of you. No, no! you have just to leave Him to do as He likes; and what does He do? He folds you to His heart in the tenderest embrace of love! The Lord sees the first returning thought of the prodigal's heart, the very first; and why? Because, I believe, from the very day the prodigal left his father's house, the father never left his post, as it were, of watching the road for his son's return. And oh, how he welcomes him, all unwashed as he was, and in his rags!

"Bring forth the best robe," he says to the servants; and that is my province. That is the Evangelist's work, *i.e.*, to tell you of Christ, to seek to display His attractions before you, to tell you that you have nothing to do, but that Christ has done it all for you. Christ Himself is the best robe. There is the best robe for the worst sinner.

"Put shoes on his feet," too. The law said, "Take off the sandal." Grace says, "Put shoes on," *i.e.*, "I will provide him with fitness to tread those courts above." The law says, "Take your shoes off, you are not fit." Grace says, "I will make you fit."

And then there is the merriment, the joys of heaven, and oh! who would be fool enough to put aside this, and risk what the sixteenth chapter gives? Will you not come to Jesus, hear Him say, "All is forgiven" (and the *all*, you know, is a great deal in *your* case), and taste the gladness of heaven?

"They *began* to be merry." And we never hear that they left off; there was no end. We begin our

joy down here, but it goes on, and on, and on through the countless ages of eternity.

Only come to Jesus, and then you will taste the sweetness and truth of these lines—

“Every sin shall be forgiven,
Thou through grace a child shalt be,
Child of God, and heir of heaven,
Yes, a mansion waits for thee,
Even thee, even thee,
Yes, a mansion waits for thee.”

W. T. P. W.

THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF CHRIST.

IF we are conscious of being followed by some one, we naturally turn to ask what is wanted; and, if charity be solicited, we give according as we deem best. But the mendicant would first endeavour to assure himself of the ability of him from whom he begged. He would hardly beg of one as poor as himself.

“And they followed Jesus” (John i. 37). Thus we read of two of the disciples of John the Baptist. These men had heard their master say, in a kind of rich soliloquy, as though he were meditating aloud: “Behold the Lamb of God.” He added no more. These five words formed the theme of his reflection. And it was whilst looking upon Jesus as He walked that he thus exclaimed.

The attention of his two followers was at once

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directed to Jesus. They left their master—the Baptist—and followed Him.

What mighty magnetism was it that detached them from “the greatest of those born of women” (for such was John), and then attached them to Jesus? There must have been something unusually significant in the five words to produce such a result in their minds and ways. And so there was. The person of Him, who, Himself the Word which pre-existed the beginning, which was with God, and which was God, but which had in infinite grace become flesh—the Son of the Bosom, and the Revealer of the Father—is now presented in the Lamb of God, is seen walking before the eyes of men, and is announced as such by the Baptist.

Was ever such an One seen before? Never!

It is the incarnate Son, beheld in lowly grace in the midst of fallen men, alone able to make the Father known, and alone capable of accomplishing the will of God by a perfect life and a substitutionary death which settles the question of good and evil, and makes also full atonement for sins. Hence the words “Lamb of God.” He was the Lamb of God’s providing, the sacrifice on Calvary which should be made sin and exhaust its judgment.

How far the two followers of John apprehended aught of this cannot, of course, be affirmed, but, at least, “they heard John speak, and they followed Jesus.” And what then? “Jesus turned and saw them following, and said, *What seek ye?*”

By that simple query He opened the way for their

request. He knew that it was no mere trifle that they sought. They had been referred to the Lamb of God, and He it was they wanted, nothing but Himself. Hence they replied, "Master, where dwellest thou?" They craved His company, and if only they could dwell with Him they would find a heaven. His presence would more than compensate for the break of their former ties.

Then, in a reply that beggars every act of charity, "He saith unto them, Come and see." Here we have the ready response of love. He flings the door of welcome wide open. He not only bids them "come," but He also invites them to "see." There is no reserve!

What a charming lesson we may learn in this! Think of the glory of the Person; think of the fact that He had come to make God the Father known in a world of sin; think of the majesty of His walk; think of the moral glory that He displayed, and yet hear His word of welcome to these men, "*Come and see*"!

There is the lovely combination of divine sufficiency and perfect human tenderness, of dignity and yet of accessibility, of holiness and of grace.

Their confidence was thoroughly gained. "They abode with him that day"—not merely where He dwelt but with Him; there they found themselves at home.

"The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." Wonderful grace indeed, but it was in order that by His death, and through faith in Him, we might dwell with Him for ever, not now here below, but in His Father's house, whither He has gone.

THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF CHRIST. 133

Thus hearts are reached and links formed between the Son of God and the children of men effectually, eternally, and withal so simply. And the five words of the Baptist stand out before us as, perhaps, the most pregnant call that ever sounded in the ear of man, with a result which eternity alone shall declare.

The immediate result in one of the two men was to make him find his own brother, Simon, and bring him to Jesus. He must share his joy with others. Then Simon, known afterwards as Peter, became a mighty instrument in the hand of God in blessing to men. The little cloud expanded, the circle of grace widened, till Pentecost bore the record of divine victory in saving power. This victory rings its glad note to-day. What fruit was borne by that simple sentence: "Behold the Lamb of God!" May the reader behold Him—not now the lowly Sufferer, but the ascended Christ of God, where in heaven we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and be attracted to Him for ever.

J. W. S.

"WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD."

(Read Exodus xii.)

THE blood on the lintel secured Israel's peace. There was nothing more required in order to enjoy settled peace, in reference to the destroying angel, than the application of the blood of sprinkling. God did not add anything to

the blood, because nothing more was necessary to obtain salvation from the sword of judgment. He did not say: "When I see the blood, and the unleavened bread or bitter herbs, I will pass over you." By no means. These things had their proper place and proper value, but they never could be regarded as the ground of peace in the presence of God.

It is most needful to be simple and clear as to what it is which constitutes the groundwork of peace. So many things are mixed up with the work of Christ that souls are plunged in darkness and uncertainty as to their acceptance. They know that there is no other way of being saved but by the blood of Christ, but the devils know this, and it avails them naught. What is needed is to know that we are saved—absolutely, perfectly, eternally saved. There is no such thing as being partly saved and partly lost; partly justified and partly guilty; partly alive and partly dead; partly born of God and partly not. There are but two states, and every one must be in one or the other.

The Israelite was not partly sheltered by the blood and partly exposed to the sword of the destroyer. He knew he was safe. He did not hope so. He was not praying to be so. He was perfectly safe. And why? Because God had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." He simply rested upon God's testimony about the shed blood. He set to his seal that God was true. He believed that God meant what He said, and that gave him peace. He was able to take his place at the Paschal feast

in confidence, quietness, and assurance, knowing that the destroyer could not touch him when a spotless victim had died in his stead.

If an Israelite had been asked as to his enjoyment of peace, what would he have said? Would he have said: I know there is no other way of escape but by the blood of the lamb, and I know that this is a divinely perfect way; and, moreover, I know that blood has been shed and sprinkled on my doorpost, but somehow I do not feel quite comfortable; I am not sure I am safe. I fear I do not value the blood as I ought, not loving the God of my fathers as I ought? Would such have been his answer? Assuredly not. And yet hundreds of professing Christians speak thus when asked if they have peace. They put their thoughts about the blood in place of the blood itself, and thus, in result, make salvation as much dependent upon themselves as if they were to be saved by works.

Now, the Israelite was saved by the blood alone, and not by his thoughts about it. His thoughts might be deep or they might be shallow; but, deep or shallow, they had nothing to do with his safety. He was not saved by his thoughts or feelings, but by the blood. God did not say, "When *you* see the blood I will pass over you." No; but "When I see." What gave the Israelite peace was the fact that Jehovah's eye rested on the blood. This tranquillised his heart. The blood was outside and the Israelite inside, so that he could not possibly see it; but God saw, and that was quite enough.

The application of this to the question of a sinner's peace is very plain. Christ having shed His blood as a perfect atonement for sin has entered into the presence of God, and God's testimony assures the believer that everything is settled on his behalf. All the claims of justice have been fully answered; sin has been perfectly put away, so that the full tide of redeeming love may roll down from the heart of God along the channel which the sacrifice of Christ has opened for it.

To this truth the Holy Ghost bears witness. He ever sets forth the fact of God's estimate of the blood of Christ. He points the sinner's eye to the accomplished work of the cross. He declares that all is done; that sin has been put far away and righteousness brought nigh—so nigh that it is "to all them that believe." Believe what? Believe what God says, because He says it, not because they feel it.

Now, we are prone to look at something in ourselves as necessary to form the ground of peace. We are apt to regard the work of the Spirit in us, rather than the work of Christ for us, as the foundation of our peace. This is a mistake. We know that the operations of the Spirit of God have their proper place in Christianity, but His work is never set forth as that on which our peace depends. The Holy Ghost did not make peace, but Christ did. The Holy Ghost is not said to be our peace, but Christ is. God did not send "preaching peace" by the Holy Ghost, but by "Jesus Christ" (Acts x. 36; Eph. ii. 14-17; Col. i. 20).

The Holy Ghost reveals Christ; He makes us to know, enjoy, and feed upon Christ. He bears witness to Christ, takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. He is the power of communion, the seal, the witness, the unction. In short, His operations are essential. Without Him, we can neither see, hear, know, feel, experience, enjoy, nor exhibit aught of Christ. This is plain, and is understood by every rightly instructed Christian.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, the work of the Spirit is not the ground of peace, though He enables us to enjoy the peace. He is not our title, though He reveals our title and enables us to enjoy it. The Holy Ghost is still carrying on His work in the soul of the believer. "He maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered." He labours to bring us into entire conformity with the Lord Jesus Christ. His aim is to "present every man perfect in Christ." He is the author of every right desire, every holy aspiration, every pure and heavenly affection, every divine experience; but His work in and through us will not be complete until we have left this present scene, and taken our place with Christ in glory. Just as in the case of Abraham's servant, his work was not complete until he presented Rebecca to Isaac.

Not so the work of Christ for us. This is absolute and complete. He has said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). And again, "It is finished." The blessed Spirit cannot yet say that He has finished the work. He has been

patiently and faithfully working for the last eighteen hundred years as the true, the divine Vicar of Christ on earth. He still works amid the various hostile influences which surround the sphere of His operations. He still works in the hearts of the people of God in order to bring them up, practically and experimentally, to the divinely appointed standard. But He never teaches a soul to lean on His work for peace in the presence of divine holiness. His office is to speak of Jesus: "He," says Christ, "shall take of mine and show it unto you." He can only present Christ's work as the solid basis on which the soul must rest for ever. Yea, it is on the ground of Christ's perfect atonement that He takes up His abode and carries on His operations in the believer. "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." No power or energy of the Holy Ghost could cancel sin. The blood has done that. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

It is of the utmost importance to distinguish between the Spirit's work in us and Christ's work for us. Where they are confounded, one rarely finds settled peace as to the question of sin. The type of the passover illustrates the distinction very simply. The Israelite's peace was not founded on the unleavened bread or the bitter herbs, but upon the blood. Nor was it by any means a question of what he thought about the blood, but what God thought about it. This gives immense relief and comfort to the heart. God has found a ransom, and He reveals

that ransom to us sinners in order that we might rest therein, on the authority of His Word and by the grace of His Spirit. And albeit our thoughts and feelings must ever fall short of the infinite preciousness of that ransom, yet inasmuch as God tells us that He is perfectly satisfied about our sins, we may be satisfied also. Our conscience may well find settled rest where God's holiness finds rest.

Beloved reader, if you have not as yet found peace in Jesus, we pray you to ponder this deeply. See the simplicity of the ground on which your peace is to rest. God is well pleased in the finished work of Christ—"well pleased for His righteousness' sake." That righteousness is not founded upon your feelings or experience, but upon the shed blood of the Lamb of God; and hence your peace is not dependent upon feelings or experience, but upon the same precious blood which is of changeless value in the judgment of God. What, then, remains for the believer? To what is he called? To keep the feast of unleavened bread by putting away everything contrary to the hallowed purity of his elevated position. It is his privilege to feed upon that Christ whose blood has cancelled all his guilt. Being assured that the sword of the destroyer cannot touch him, because it has fallen upon Christ instead, it is for him to feast in holy repose within the blood-stricken door, under the perfect shelter which God's own love has provided in the blood of the cross.

May God the Holy Ghost lead every doubting, wavering heart to find rest in the divine testimony of

these words: "WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD I WILL PASS OVER YOU."

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. xi. 6).

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John xx. 31).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4).

"WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD I WILL PASS OVER YOU."

"I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.

'Tis everlasting peace!
Sure as Jehovah's name,
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
For evermore the same.

My love is oftentimes low,
My joy still ebbs and flows;
But peace with Him remains the same,
No change Jehovah knows."

C. H. M.

RAHAB AND HER FRIENDS.

(JOSH. ii. 1-21, vi. 1-27.)

THERE is a most instructive comment made by the Spirit of God in the New Testament on this remarkable scene. It is this: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with *them that believed not*, when she had received the spies with peace" (Heb. xi. 31). What marked Rahab was faith. What marked all the rest in the city of Jericho was unbelief. What marks you before God, my friend? Are you of her company? Are you like her? Faith marked Rahab. Does it mark you, my friend, or unbelief, which?

The lesson of these chapters is very simple. It is the contrast between faith and unbelief. Now do you know, beloved reader, how to perish for ever, perish eternally, perish in your sins? Just remain in unbelief. "Oh, but," you may say to me, "I am not an infidel." Well, dear friend, I do not charge you with being an infidel, but whether you have done what Rahab did is the point.

She believed that judgment was coming; she was perfectly certain that she was in a doomed city, and among a doomed company. She believed that. And what did God do? He sent a couple of evangelists, blessed be His name, into her house to show her the way of salvation. Listen again to the record: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with *them that believed not*, when she had received the spies with peace."

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The mass of the world is swamped in unbelief. We cannot shut our eyes to it. I do not shut my eyes to it, and I desire, my reader, that you should not shut your eyes to it. Unbelief is natural to us, and we are indifferent to the call of God, the claims of God, and to the fact of what our sin is, just as much as all Jericho. They perished because of unbelief, and among them was a woman some would be ashamed to walk down the street with, but I believe I shall meet Rahab in heaven.

You will find that the men and women who get saved to-day are those who have a sense of their sin, and whose consciences have charged them with their guilt; they are the people who get Christ. Religious people are not often converted, nor do they want to be, they do not think they need it. Lately I passed by a large building holding two thousand souls, and the man who occupies the pulpit is telling the people every Sunday what they love to hear, viz., "You do not need to be converted." My friend, if still unsaved, I tell you that you do need to be converted, otherwise you are bound to be damned.

I think Rahab's history is a charming one because of the earnestness she shows as she wakes up first of all to discover what God was going to do, and then her soul desires not only her own safety, but the safety of all her friends. If you taste grace yourself you want everybody else to taste it. She had heard the command, "Bind this line of scarlet thread in the window," and had heard also the beautiful promise, "Whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his

blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him" (Josh. ii. 18, 19). The grace of God is a wonderful thing, and if we had a little more of the spirit of Rahab it would be well for us.

If you turn to our chapter you will see that Joshua sent two men into Jericho to spy the land. I think that was all that Joshua contemplated. Do you know what God thought? "I will save that poor wicked woman and her house." I have no doubt that if the spies had known whose house it was they would have taken another lodging. But God had His eye on this poor Gentile. She had a heart to believe in God on the one hand, and to seek the blessing of others on the other. The spies come to Rahab, and somehow or other it leaks out that they are in her house, and the king sends to get the men delivered into his hand. "And the woman took the two men, and hid them."

God's comment on Rahab's action is remarkable. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace" (Heb. xi. 31). She hides God's messengers, and then out comes the whole truth. She says to them: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt" (vers. 9, 10). She was as certain as possible that none could resist God. And she thought because she feared and trembled everybody else would be as

sincere and earnest as herself. Well, how did she know? *She had heard.* More, she believed.

Friend, you have heard of God's doings—heard a great deal in your day—heard the gospel over and over again. And you are not converted yet? You are a daring sinner, for you have been resisting God, and His Christ, and what you have heard. You have not heard a great deal about judgment. Far more often you have heard of grace, of a Saviour's love and death, and of this one being converted and that one converted, and sometimes you trembled, but still neglected to believe. But here was a sinful woman, and all she had heard was that the mighty power of God carried all before it. And God sent His servants her way, and she took the opportunity to talk with them. She says: "We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye *utterly destroyed*" (ver. 10). The tidings had got to Jericho of God's wonderful judgment on His opponent Pharaoh. And she very wisely says, "If God did that, will Jericho stand?" She draws some wise inferences.

My dear friend, it is a mistake for you to oppose God. It is an immense mistake. Be warned now. Let the action, the faith of this sinful woman instruct you. Are you less sinful than she? "Oh, I have not sinned after the sin of that woman." No, my dear friend, you have sinned a great deal more deeply.

Yours is a sin that will never be named with the sin of Rahab, and what is that? You have heard of God's Son, and you have made light of Him. There is no sin like that. You have resisted the Holy Ghost, you have resisted Christ, you have resisted the offer of God and the mercy of God, and you have resisted the sweet tale of the gospel and the melting story of the love of Jesus, and by-and-by you may appear before the throne of God, and you may say, "Lord, I never drank, or lied, or swore, or stole, or murdered, I am not guilty of these things." Quite true, but then the secret sin will come out, you heard of Jesus, and you did not bow to Him. Note the consequence:—"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). God measures sin to-day, not by the mere human standard of morality; He measures it by His Son, and by the treatment you have given His dear and blessed Son.

Well now, look at Rahab again. She had heard, and having heard, she knows full well what will come. She says, "And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man: for the Lord your God he is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath" (ver. 11). Would to God your heart did melt. It ought to be melted by the love of Christ, and by the lovely news I have for you. But do not forget this "God has appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance

unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31). And that is why He commands all men everywhere to repent. Do you observe that? God the Creator, the Almighty and All-powerful, now to-day where you are "commands"—Whom?—"All men"—Where?—"Everywhere" to repent. Rahab was repenting. "Our hearts did melt," she says. There is a repentant sinner. Show me a heart that trembles before God with the sense of its sin, and I will show you a repentant sinner. Now God commands *all men everywhere* to repent. Why? "Because he has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." The Judge is ordained and the day fixed, but in the meantime grace comes in.

All opposition on Rahab's side was gone. "For the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (ver. 11). This poor Gentile sinner had got the sense in her soul, God is God. And he who perishes is the man that is *opposed* to Him. She takes God's side, she shelters His servants, keeps them in safety, and sends them forth in peace. The apostle James tells us, "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot *justified* by her works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" (Jas. ii. 25). There are her *works*. Paul shows us her *faith*. James says she was *justified by works*. There was her action. Faith wrought in her soul, and the saving of the spies was what proved the reality of the faith in her soul. She had faith. I do not doubt it got in through the Word. "Faith

cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17).

Before the day of judgment comes, ere the Lord Christ comes out to deal with this world in judgment, what has taken place? God lingers, sends down the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel, and is showing you how you may get saved. Rahab will show you the way if you look at her for a moment or two. She says: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token. And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death" (vers. 12, 13). She wanted deliverance, she wanted salvation. She was anxious. She is the picture of a downright anxious soul. And I never saw a downright anxious soul that did not want somebody else saved. You will always find that when a person is genuinely awakened they want others to be blessed also.

"And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord through the window, for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall" (vers. 14, 15). And now she looks for and gets real assurance. Ah, here is a fine provision for Rahab. "Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt *bind this line of scarlet thread* in the

window which thou didst let us down by ; and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless : and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him " (vers. 18, 19). That is very plain and simple. For those *outside* what is it? Judgment. But for those *inside*? Well, "his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him." That is to say, "We make ourselves responsible for the safety of the person that is in the house where *the scarlet line* is." And what is the scarlet line? That is the type of the precious blood of Christ. It runs all through Scripture, from end to end. There is no redemption except by blood. From end to end of Scripture you find the story of the blood. From the third chapter of Genesis right down to the very end of Revelation, in type, figure, promise, and actual fact, you have the blessed story of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that here you have a remarkable figure of this. If you want to escape from the judgment of God, you must have faith in that scarlet line. What do we read now? "And she said, According to your words, so be it." That is the most charming faith. That is the soul simply bowing down to God's testimony about Jesus. And I read, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). Faith says, "That is so, Lord." And Scripture adds,

“And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John i. 7). The believing soul says, “So be it, Lord.”

What does Rahab do now? “And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window” (ver. 21). I will guarantee before she went to sleep that night she said, “Well, I cannot tell when they will come—they did not say when—but I have their word, that if I now only put that scarlet line in the window, I shall be safe.” She hung it up in a most conspicuous spot—the window. Her house was upon the town wall, and it was the walls that came down first. But what does she do? “She bound the scarlet line in the window.” She took good care to put it up. Others might inquire what it meant. She knew what it meant—salvation for all in the house—shelter and safety. God knows the moment you get under the shelter of the blood of His blessed Son. You should know it likewise. If you are there, it is all right with you. There is no safety until you are under the shelter of the scarlet line. Have you that scarlet line between you and God?

Let us pass on to chapter vi.: “Now Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in” (ver. 1). And now God sends His hosts round about that city. I daresay you wonder what is the meaning of their circling the city for seven days. There is a beautiful lesson in it of the longsuffering of God. That was a doomed city, the walls were to come down, and what

do we find? The hosts of the Lord came over the Jordan and marched round the city seven days. The Lord seems to say, "I am never in a hurry to judge." Judgment is His strange work. The first day you see some six hundred thousand men or more as they march round that city. Then comes the ark of the Lord, Christ in figure, Christ in type, carried on the shoulders of the priests and the Levites. The blood of atonement has been shed and sprinkled on that ark, and that blood cries for mercy and blessing. That blood has met all the claims of God in righteousness. And now round the city the priests and the Levites go bearing the ark, and before the ark of the Lord went those seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns. What a strange sound they emit; what is the meaning of it? Probably, Jericho sinners said: "What means this? Is this the way to take our city, by these fellows blowing those rams' horns?" Discordant notes they seemed, but they were notes of mercy. That is not the melody that the world wants to-day. The whole city heard those notes of mercy. I think I can interpret those notes. They plainly said, "Rahab, the fall of Jericho is coming, get all your friends into the house."

The first day's march was over, and Jericho said, "What downright tomfoolery, the idea of our city coming down that way!" Yes, I admit that it looked very foolish. Do you know that "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 18). The people of Jericho said, "We can

sleep peacefully to-night." What about Rahab? She went for her friends, and possibly she had a little difficulty in getting them in. The next day Israel march round the city again, and these notes of mercy are heard again. This time they say, "Rahab, you have a little more time to bring them in." And you might even think that as the people of Jericho saw one and another going to Rahab's house, the tale of the scarlet line crept abroad. Possibly business was stopped for a little while, but if their fears were excited, they say, "Nothing has happened, and those silly rams' horns will not blow our walls down." The third day it was the same thing, and men might have said, "Well, this is really monotonous." And then the fourth day it was the same. And Rahab all the while was saying, "Thank God, I got another in to-night." And then the fifth day, she probably got two or three more in, and said, "Praise the Lord, the walls did not come down yesterday, I have got my house nearly filled." And the sixth day it is the same routine.

And now comes the seventh day. The same thing was done. It was Christ carried all round the city, not once but seven times—Christ the power of God, and Christ the salvation of God. Those who did not believe saw nothing in it, but Rahab understood it, she knew its value. And God knew the value of that circling ark. Round they go, once, twice, thrice, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh time. Unsaved reader, what a mercy Christ did not come last night. You would then have been an eternally

damned sinner, but yet there is a chance for you. The seventh circuit is not yet made, so to speak. But oh, those rams' horns, they still breathe the same tale: "Judgment is coming. Rahab, have you any left out, any yet unsaved? Get them under the shelter of the scarlet line."

The seventh circle was made, and then came the word, "Shout." "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city" (vers. 10 and 20). The judgment came. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. v. 3). Sinner, escape now. Young man, get beneath the shelter of that scarlet line at once. Put the cross, the truth of the cross, between your soul and God, I implore you. Young woman, decide for Christ to-day. The people of Jericho might think Rahab was a fool as they saw her scouring the street, bringing in this one and that one, but she was the wisest woman in the city. Parents, are your children saved? You have not much time to lose. Get them in now. In another moment there may be a shout. What sort of a shout? God had said to Joshua, "All the people shall shout with a loud shout." The testimony of God then was this: "Whoever is under the shelter of the scarlet line is safe."

What did the rams' horns say? "Get into the house where the scarlet line is."

At length there came the shout, and down went the walls. So will it be again at the Lord's return. What will close the testimony of grace? A shout! "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." When all the people shouted the walls of Jericho fell down. It was all over with those who were not under the shelter of the scarlet line then, and similarly if you are not now really under the shelter of Christ's blood, you have no time to lose, my friend, be sure of that. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). That is the next thing. No more preaching then. You will never be invited to another gospel meeting after the Lord has come. We people who trouble you now, who plague you now, who spoil your life's rest, we shall all be away, and it will be all over with you. The moment the shout was heard, the rams' horns died away for ever, and judgment swept the scene. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." Are you like her? Are you a believer?

And now the spies enter the city, and go to the house of Rahab, and whoever is there is saved. "And Joshua *saved* Rahab the harlot alive, and her

father's household, and *all that she had*; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho" (ver. 25). That woman was the means, in that sense, of the salvation of all her relations. Wonderful honour! Dear friend, Rahab will get the credit, by-and-by, of being the means of the salvation of all her relations. What a wonderful thing for you to be the means of the salvation of your relations.

Well, God give you, my friend, to get under the shelter of the Lord's blood to-day, if never before. The true Joshua, Jesus, saves every soul that believes in Him. Joshua saved Rahab and all that she had then. Now Jesus, the true Joshua, the living Saviour, the triumphant Saviour at God's right hand, of whom Joshua is but a type, saves all who confide in Him and His blood. Shall He not save you? If you come to Him now and trust in His precious blood, you will get the true token. Your soul will have pardon, peace, and the sense of acceptance before God, and you will be clear from the judgment of God. God give you, my reader, not to put your head on your pillow to-night till you can say, "I am under the shelter of the scarlet line."

"When first, o'erwhelmed with sin and shame,
To Jesus' cross I trembling came,
Burdened with guilt and full of fear,
Yet drawn by love, I ventured near,
And pardon found, and peace with God,
In Jesus' rich, *atoning blood*."

W. T. P. W.

UNDER THE EUCALYPTUS.

I WAS in a great difficulty. A week or two previously our large gospel tent had been erected upon a central site in the city of Kingston, Jamaica. From the very first meeting crowds of interested and anxious listeners had attended, and night after night God had been working in saving grace and power among them.

But on this particular day a messenger had come round to my house with the tidings that the high wind that was blowing from the south-east had wrecked the tent, and that it was hopeless to attempt to re-pitch it. Accompanied by a friend, Mr Powell, I immediately started for the scene of the disaster, and found that the damage done by the gale had been by no means exaggerated. The canvas, already old and well worn, was not only blown down, but it was ripped and rent in every direction to such an extent that repairs were out of the question.

What was to be done? A meeting had been announced for that evening, and in a short time the people would be arriving. Must they be sent home empty and disappointed when they came hungering for the bread of life? God forbid.

Looking up for guidance, in the same momentary way that Nehemiah must have done (when, in the king's presence, he prayed to the God of heaven), the thought occurred to us that we might arrange the benches on the ground adjacent to the spot occupied

by the tent. No sooner thought of than done; and by the time the audience began to gather we were ready for them, and with the aid of a few storm-lanterns hastily rigged up, we were prepared to hold the meeting.

Now came the difficulty. What could I say to the people? I had had no time that day for prayerful preparation. But our God may be counted on in an emergency. In Him we have a sure resource in every trouble. After the opening hymns and prayer, just as I stood up upon the temporary platform close to a lofty eucalyptus tree, I happened to put my hand into my coat pocket, and I felt there a small book, sent me by the author a day or two previously, from England. The little book was called

“GOD’S WONDERFUL A B C OF THE GOSPEL.”*

The sender had told me that this little book, the very first week of its publication, had been used in blessing to some dear lads in Edinburgh.

“I will speak from this little book to-night,” I said to myself, as I drew it from my pocket; “may God make it the means of blessing here as He did at Edinburgh!”

I explained to my hearers that this little A B C book marked out five stages in the journey of a ransomed sinner from the depths of guilt and iniquity to the heights of heavenly glory.

* By E. E. C., Published by L. Laurenson, 38 Rankeillor Street, Edinburgh. 2s. per 100.

The first stage, as described in the book, is

A BLIGHTING CONVICTION.

It is indeed a critical moment in a man's history when his eyes are opened to see that in spite of all that he may be in the sight of his fellow-men, in *God's* sight he is a lost, ruined, hell-deserving rebel. The fondly cherished delusions of a lifetime crumble to pieces. Pretensions to sanctity based upon a moral life and religious observances are discovered to be nothing but a hypocrite's hope. Profession of Christianity, without the saving knowledge of Christ, is seen to be empty, worthless, and delusive.

Signor Pinos has lately invented an instrument known as the hydroscope, by means of which an observer, standing upon the deck of a ship, is enabled to penetrate with his vision the depths of the ocean. But by means of the Word of God the convicted sinner gets a glimpse into still deeper depths—the depths of the depravity and corruption of his own heart—and he turns from himself with loathing. Like Job, he cries, "I am vile . . . I abhor myself." Like Isaiah, he exclaims, "Woe is me; for I am undone." He realises his sinfulness, his danger, his need. The devil's blindfolding bandage is torn from his eyes, and he marvels that he could have been indifferent for so long to his state as a sinner, exposed to the judgment of God.

Conviction prepares the way for something further, and this, according to our little book, is

A BRIGHT CONVERSION.

Now, if there is anything upon which Scripture is emphatic, it is the necessity of conversion. "Except ye be converted," said the Lord Himself, "ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

It follows that it is of prime importance that we should be clear as to what conversion really is.

Some seven years ago the newspapers contained an account of what was called "The *Conversion* of Prince Boris of Bulgaria." This simply meant that the little two-year-old prince, whose father and mother were both Roman Catholics, had been transferred from the religion of his parents to that of the Greek Church, to which the majority of the Bulgarian nation belongs. But conversion is something far more vital than a mere change of religion. It is a complete turning round of a man; a stepping from darkness into light; a passing from death unto life; a coming from distance to nearness to God; an exchange of danger and doom for safety and peace.

The truly converted man can say: "My sins are behind me; and what is more, *they are behind God as well*. He has cast them behind His back for ever. My Saviour bore them all, and God has forgiven and forgotten them. He is now my Father; Christ is my Saviour; the Holy Ghost is my comforter; heaven is my home."

No mere change of ways, reformation, or turning over a new leaf would entitle one to use such language as this. Nothing short of *conversion to God* can place a sinner in such a happy position. My friend, *are you converted?*

Conversion goes hand in hand with another thing,
called in our little book

A BOLD CONFSSION.

This is a thing that the believer is often tempted to shrink from. Thoughts of what others will say and think, and fear of scornful looks or sarcastic words, close his lips. But to be a secret Christian is to be an unhappy one. We are exhorted to add to our faith *courage* (1 Pet. i. 5, N.T.) and the admonition is for our own blessing. Do you think that the afflicted woman of whom we read in Luke viii. would have gone home as happy as she did if the Lord had permitted her to leave His presence without a bold confession. She attempted to do so. Having touched the hem of His garment, and derived healing virtue therefrom, she was about to depart in silence when a question from the Lord detained her. She saw His eyes turned upon her; she cast her timidity to the winds, and "falling down before him, she declared unto him, *before all the people*, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately." Then she heard the message of comfort that she would otherwise have missed: "Be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Happy woman! My earnest counsel to every young convert present is: "Go and do likewise." Hoist your colours to the masthead. Let every one know whose you are. Confess Christ at home, in the office, the shop, and the warehouse.

This is a difficult task, but God can give you grace

and courage. He can make you bold and brave as a lion. One who once quailed at the challenge of a servant-maid was enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit to nobly confront the leaders of the Sanhedrim. What He did for Peter, He can do for you.

We next come to

A BLESSED CONSECRATION.

The believer delights to show his gratitude by consecrating the remainder of his life to the praise of the One who has saved him. At least, so it should be; and Jesus is worthy of all that we can do and give.

I was once passing a building outside of which a notice was exhibited, announcing a meeting to which all "O.O. Christians" were invited. Curiosity prompted me to go in and inquire the meaning of the mystic "O.O."

"Oh," said the gentleman in charge, in answer to my inquiry, "there is nothing very strange about that. By O.O. Christians we simply mean *out-and-out Christians*, and," he added, lovingly, "I hope you are one!"

Now that is what is signified by consecration—being an out-and-out Christian, not seeking to hold the world with one hand and the Saviour with the other, but being a whole-hearted disciple of the rejected Lord, content to bear reproach and loss for His dear name's sake.

The rich reward of love and loyalty lies ahead. It is what our little book describes as

A BEAUTIFUL CROWN.

Shall you wear one? Tell me, when the crowning day comes, what will it bring for you?

Never shall one of heaven's bright crowns rest upon the brow of any but the blood-washed. None whose hopes are based upon their own religiousness will shine among the glory-crowned myriads of the ransomed. For such, a terrible awakening is in store. May God grant that each one who reads these lines may be awakened before it is too late.

Our meeting under the eucalyptus tree ended. The writer's object in giving a wider range to the gospel message that was then delivered is that others too, now careless and indifferent about their souls, may be convicted of sin and converted to God, and led along the Christian pathway to "the crowning day that's coming by-and-by." It is a blessed thing to be able to truly and heartily sing, as, through grace, I can:—

"I then fully trusted in Jesus ;
 And oh, now a joy came to me !
 My heart was filled with His praises
 For saving a sinner like me.
 No longer in darkness I'm walking,
 The light is now shining on me ;
 And now unto others I'm telling
 How He saved a poor sinner like me.
 And when life's journey is over,
 And I the dear Saviour shall see,
 I'll praise Him for ever and ever
 For saving a sinner like me !"

H. P. B.

“NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR
CHAINS.”

WHILE passing along the streets of Aberdeen some time ago, our attention was attracted by a large poster announcing a May Day Socialist Demonstration. At the foot was an appeal, of which the following is the substance:—

“Fellow Workmen! Combine!
You have nothing to lose but your chains;
You have a world to gain.”

As we perused these lines, we instinctively finished the sentence by mentally adding, “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” (Mark viii. 36). Were it possible for these people to get rid of their imaginary chains and to gain the world with all its untold wealth, at length they must leave it, and, what then?

What we wish to say to you, dear reader, is this: If you come to Jesus to-day, you have nothing to lose but your sins; you have everything to gain. Would your loss cause you any regret? Your sins! They are without number, they burden your conscience, they cause an aching void in your heart, they produce a distance between you and God, and they will ultimately sink your soul in the lake of fire for ever and ever, unless you get rid of them. They really are your chains. We speak not of the degree of your guilt. You may be the finest specimen of humanity outside the door of heaven, or you may be

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the vilest creature outside the gates of hell. You are a sinner, God's Word declares it (Rom. iii. 23). You are unfit for His presence, and as you are, you can never enter His glory. Your sins form the one obstacle to your true happiness now, and your security for eternity. Thrice happy day for you, if to-day you lose your sins; therefore we repeat, Come to Jesus.

Do you long to be delivered and set free? Then listen! “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. xv. 3). Hearken yet again! “The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John i. 7). Once more, give ear! “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1 Pet. ii. 24). Weary, burdened, sin-laden soul, come to Jesus! You have everything to gain.

Do you inquire what is the gain? It is all summed up in that one charming name—Jesus. When your sins made it imperative either that He must die or you must perish, God sent Him to die. Read John iii. 16 again, and again, and again, and again. That blessed One, having borne our sins on the cross, finished the work of redemption, glorified God, procured salvation for all who trust Him, and then went back to glory. To-day He fills that scene. He fills God's heart, and He is going to fill the universe.

Come to Jesus now, and He will fill that tiny heart of yours. What a mighty difference He will make therein! Your sins gone, the judgment of God removed, heaven your sure portion for eternity, and

for the present, Jesus filling and satisfying your heart. Satan may tempt, his votaries seek to beguile, and the world may allure, but in the joy of His presence and His love you will say—

“I have heard the voice of Jesus,
Tell me not of ought beside.
I have seen the face of Jesus,
And my heart is satisfied.”

Once more we earnestly and affectionately appeal to you. Come to Jesus, and come just now!

W. B. D.

“TOO LATE, SIR.”

ON our way to the meeting in a little town in Lincolnshire, my friend and I were accosted by a man in great agitation, who told us of a lodger in his house who was apparently dying, in deep concern about his soul; and although many had sought to help him spiritually, yet none had been able to bring “light and peace” to that darkened troubled soul.

After the meeting I called at the house, and found each of its inmates in a state of perplexity and agitation such as I had never before witnessed. I asked the man who had accosted us why they were so troubled, but he seemed not to be able to find words to explain, and the only reply to my questions was this, “You will understand, sir, when you get upstairs.” Hastening upstairs, I soon discovered the

reason of that anxiety below; for scarcely had I entered the room when I heard the words at the head of this paper. They fell from the lips of a man I judged to be about fifty years of age, whose shattered frame, sunken eyes, and weak voice seemed to indicate plainly that death had marked him as his victim.

"I know what you have come for," said he; "you have come to speak to me about my soul; but *it is too late, sir*; there is nothing but a CHRIST-REJECTER'S HELL FOR ME; I might have been *saved*, but now I'm *lost*."

"But," said I, "with God there is forgiveness, and the Scripture plainly says, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive——'"

"All true for others," he interrupted, "but I have sinned away *my* day of grace; I have resisted the strivings of the Spirit; *tell it to others*—it is too late for me. There was a time," he added, "when I ought to have accepted salvation, but I would not yield; God would have saved me, but I would not bow, and now I know where I am going! I am going to hell!"

Again and again did I seek to direct that poor man to God and His grace, to Christ and His finished work. I instanced the dying thief, saved at death's door, so to speak, but to all that I could say, his reply was, "Too late for me!"

Never before, nor, thank God, since, have I had such an experience! I tried to pray for him, but could not find words! And all that I said seemed

to be as powerless as you could possibly conceive. Had it happened to him according to Proverbs i. 1. "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded. . . . They shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. . . . Therefore they shall eat of the fruit of their *own* way, and be filled with their *own* devices" ? (Prov. i. 24-33). How solemn are the words, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." For "GOD IS NOT MOCKED" !

Feeling powerless to help him, I turned to go. Calling me back, he thanked me for visiting him, and said that others beside myself had done all they could, and added: "I have no one to blame but myself; I have nothing but blackness and darkness before me. I might have been saved, but now I'm lost."

Calling next day at the house, I was informed that the poor man had been taken to the infirmary, as we supposed, to die.

I leave the subject of this dark picture and turn to a brighter one. My labours in the gospel called me soon after to a large town in Yorkshire, carrying with me the address of a man who, I was informed, was dying of consumption. Finding the way upstairs, I was struck with the similarity of the two bedrooms and their appointments, but how different were the conditions of everything spiritually. The wasted frame, the sunken eye, and the weak voice were here repeated in a man perhaps five years younger than the other;

but no sooner did I make an inquiry as to whether he had any concern about his soul's welfare, than he replied, "THAT IS ALL MY CONCERN, sir; I have been asking God to forgive me my sins for six weeks now."

How easy it was to sit down and unfold to that desirous soul how God could now righteously forgive his sins, because Christ had atoned for them upon the cross. His one, only eye, seemed to sparkle with gladness as he listened to the tale—the sweet story of the "love of God," *manifested* in the "gift of his only begotten Son" (1 John iv. 9), and "*commended*" to us in the death of Christ (Rom. v. 8). Then, turning to the tenth chapter of Romans—that Scripture that our Saviour-God has graciously blessed to thousands of souls—I read from the eighth to the thirteenth verses, dwelling upon the thirteenth verse especially. I just said to him, "That word *whosoever* takes in Mr C—— lying on this bed," and then repeated slowly, "'For—whosoever—shall—call—upon—the—name—of—the—Lord—shall—be—saved.'" Turning his eye from me in child-like simplicity, with clasped hands he looked up and cried, "O LORD, SAVE ME." Light streamed into his soul immediately, and that burden of sins that had weighed him down, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, was gone.

Now, my reader, one word to you before I pass on: "Take care that that great load of your sins does not weigh you down to the hell you are getting dangerously nearer every day of your neglectful, procrastinating life."

Revisiting dear Mr C—— a few days after, I asked him whether he had any doubts as to his forgiveness. “Doubts, sir,” he replied; “none whatever; my load is all gone, and *my heart is as light as a feather*, and I am only waiting for the Lord to take me home whenever He will, *I am quite ready now.*” For a fortnight his joy seemed unabated; then he passed away to greater joys above.

My reader, take care that your case be not like that of my first narrative, true in every detail.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” as dear C—— did, and you will gain heaven and escape hell, and have a life to live here for God meanwhile, which is far better than trying to creep into heaven at the last moment, when you cannot have earth any longer. What an awful discovery to make at the last moment! Think what it will mean for you, my reader, to have to repeat for all eternity—

“Too late, too late,
I might have been saved, but now I’m lost,
And I’ve no one to blame but myself.”

Turn to God, flee to Christ, eternal joys await you.
Do not miss them, your opportunity is now—

“Now! now! now!
To-morrow too late may be,
Oh sinner, come, the Saviour waits
This hour to welcome thee.

Haste! haste! haste!
Delay not from wrath to flee.
Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste,
Whilst mercy still waits for thee?”

E. E. C.

THE AGNOSTIC AND THE CHRISTIAN.

THE chief of the seven sages of Greece, Socrates, was, as to eternal things, the most unwise amongst them. The famous apothegm upon which he based his philosophy was "Unum scio, me nihil scire"—"One thing I know, that I know nothing." He knew nothing beyond that which the evidence of his senses taught him, and his reason refusing God's revelation, he became the father of the present race of Agnostics, who, in all the things of God, boast as their highest wisdom that they "do not know." "Ignorabimus"—"We shall never know"—being their latest motto.

Now reason taught Socrates some things, if they were only of a negative character. He could see from the heavens and the earth, which he surveyed with reason's eye, that these were not the work of a plurality of gods. He even suffered death for his testimony against this preposterous idea—a death meted out to him as the outcome of a scheme of political aggrandisement, which aimed at universal power over peoples of all climes and religions.

But his reason did not, could not, fallen as it was, with himself, teach him the knowledge of the one true God. This can only be known by revelation, and on the principle of faith, and against this his reason protested as strongly as against the idea of a plurality of gods. He may be taken as a notable

example of the heathen philosophers spoken of in the first part of the second chapter of Romans.

Condemned to death for corrupting the youth of his day, by teaching that the notion of a plurality of gods was contrary to the language of creation and of reason, he was offered the choice of the agent of his death, and elected to die by drinking hemlock.

When the cup was put into his hands he inquired of the executioner, "Is it permitted to pour out a libation to the gods?"

Upon being told that there was but sufficient poison in the cup to do the required work, he said to his friend Crito who stood by his side, "I have vowed a cock to Æsculapius, be sure you pay it after my death."

Here reason failed him, and he had no faith! He who sacrificed his life because he taught that it was impossible there could be many gods, would have offered with his dying hands a drink-offering to them all! Unable to do this, he enjoined his friend to pay a vow he was under to one of them! Where is the consistency of this? Would his gods, which he himself taught were no gods, save him? Alas! no!

True, he met his death philosophically. He did not cry out to any of the gods, "O Baal, hear me!" But he did not turn to the living God. He knew Him *not*. Here he was agnostic. Here all was blank, and he dropped into the grave a self-destroyed man, without any hope in the future to buoy him up.

How closely does the third verse of Romans. ii. apply to him: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that

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judgest them which do such things and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Solemn indeed is this! But beyond all else idolatry is the greatest abomination ever introduced into this world against the living God.

Socrates was honest so far, and owned that he knew not. But without knowledge of the revelation of the one true God he was powerless in the presence of death. He awaits, according to the verse above quoted, the judgment of that God to whom he was accountable, spite of his want of knowledge of Him, in itself the greatest proof of man's fallen state.

Now the scientific facts with which the Agnostic is well acquainted, and from which he ought to know God's eternal power and divinity, so that he is without excuse (Rom. i. 20), do not reveal anything about God's disposition towards a ruined race, nor tell of any means by which a fallen man may be brought into happy relationship with that God. For man by searching cannot find out God.

"How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. xi. 33). All connected with His moral being and the requirements of His holiness in those that approach Him; all connected with His nature, which is love, and the way that nature has itself met the requirements of His throne; all unseen and eternal things must be the subject of revelation. And it is just here that the believer, though he may know nothing of science, is able to say, "I know."

Why should this be thought a thing incredible,

with those who take a delight in searching out and admiring the work of God's hands? Why will they not admit that He is competent to reveal Himself? Would that more amongst those who know by diligent research so much about His creatorial works, were able to say, "I know," with the Christian, when it is a question of Himself and of the revelation He has made of Himself in Christ, connected as this is with the greatest of all His works, even that by which a sinner can be saved.

Could they but change Socrates' motto, "One thing I know, that I know nothing," for that of the man in John x. 25, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," what an immense difference it would make in their present happiness, as in their whole moral being and eternal destiny. How easily then would they go on to appropriate all the treasures of Christian knowledge presented in the Scriptures to faith. And while now with all their knowledge they do not know what *natural life* is, then they would know God, whom to know, revealed as the Father, and Jesus Christ as the Sent One of the Father, is *Eternal Life* (John xvii. 3).

A few items of Christian knowledge as revealed in the Scriptures and made good to the individual in the power of the Holy Spirit may serve to show what the Agnostic misses.

"For *ye know* the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9).

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“And *ye know* that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin” (1 John iii. 5).

“*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).

“*I know* whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim. i. 12).

“And *we know* that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose” (Rom. viii. 28).

“And *we know* that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John v. 20).

“*We know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. v. 1).

True that before we can know these things, we must know and own another and more unpalatable proof, even this: “I know that in me, that is in my flesh, good does not dwell” (Rom. vii. 18). This may be the real reason of a man’s refusal to own a personal God, inasmuch as it at once makes a judge of that God. But here the gospel of that very God comes in, and if any one just honestly *owns* that this is true of himself, he will add to his stores of knowledge the knowledge of

that God as a Saviour-God in the person of Jesus Christ, who will shortly appear as a deliverer from coming wrath for all those that trust Him.

Blessed beyond measure is it for Agnosticism to cease in the knowledge of the one true and living God as a personal Saviour !

G. J. S.

“CREMATION WILL NOT SAVE YOU.”

A SERVANT of the Lord being accosted by a fellow-passenger in a train on the Continent, with whom he found himself for some time alone, the following conversation, in substance, ensued.

After some remarks on the surroundings, he said, “You come from abroad?”

“Yes, from England.”

“It seems to me that that war in South Africa has been more loss than gain, has it not?”

“Possibly! I wish men could settle their differences without destroying each other.”

“That will never be.”

“Not till the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, returns. When He establishes His kingdom, He will make wars to cease.”

“Oh, He won't come in our day.”

“How do *you* know? No man knoweth the day nor the hour. He came once according to promise. He said He would come again, and He surely will.”

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“I don't believe that.”

“Your not believing it does not alter the fact. He said, ‘Behold, I come quickly!’ He *may* return for His own to-day (1 Thess. iv. 15, 18). But should He not return yet, sooner or later *you* will have to *die*. *That is certain.*”

“I suppose it is. Well, I have arranged in my will that I should be *cremated.*”

“What is the good of that? It will not hinder God raising you to judgment. He formed you once, that's clear. And He can and will again. Scripture says, ‘*All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth,*’ &c. (John v. 29). ‘*And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God,*’ &c. (Rev. xx. 12). Do what you will, you cannot get away from that. *Cremation will not save you.* It is only the body that dies, and that is all you can cremate. The soul lives on, is immortal. And God will raise *you*. And hence, if you die as you are, unsaved, you will be in darkness for ever.”

“Where?”

“In darkness.”

“I do not believe that.”

“But you are in darkness now; your replies show it. The Son of God said that men *love darkness* rather than light, and that they *hate the light*, because their deeds are evil. You know it's true, that thousands on all sides love their pleasures, their drinking, and singing, and dancing, and play-going, &c., more than God. They could not do such things in the light of His presence.”

A slight smile of conviction crossed his countenance. He had evidenced by his *first remarks* that his heart was in the world.

“Now, don't you think it would be wise to look matters seriously in the face, to consider your state before God, and to believe the gospel? You cannot be saved from meeting Him by having your body cremated. But He has no desire that you should perish. He gave His Son to die *for all* that they should not perish, and *you* are one. I saw my need many years ago, bowed, and believed on Christ. And His precious blood has cleansed me, and my sins are forgiven. I know for certain, if this train went off the line, and we were killed, I should be with Christ for ever. Where would you be? Such things *do* happen. Your body might be cremated after death, but where would *your soul* be? Why should you not have the same joy and assurance that I have in view of the eternal future? God gave His Son *for all*. *Whosoever* believes in Him *shall receive the remission of sins*. Why not you?”

“I cannot believe that any can *know*?”

“But, my friend, they *do* know. Thousands know. I know. The resurrection of Christ is God's witness before all that He is satisfied *with* and glorified *in* Him and His finished work. And He has accepted and glorified *that Man*. Now He tells us plainly, and He cannot lie, that whosoever believes in Jesus his sins are forgiven for His name's sake. And we take Him at His word. Now, let us suppose that you had been born and brought up in a dark cellar,

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when all of a sudden, a door is opened, and you are led out into the bright sunlight, would you not experience a very great change?”

“Yes, certainly.”

“Well, that is but a feeble figure of the experience that believers make morally in their souls. We were also in darkness, thick darkness, but light from God streamed into our souls. He brought us out of darkness into His marvellous light. Bow to Him, and He will do the same for you.”

The train stopped at a junction, and our friend might easily have parted company. But he was evidently impressed by that which he had heard. Apparently, like Adam and Eve with their fig leaves, he had but little, if any, confidence after all in his salvation from judgment by cremation. Hence he came and stood by his fellow-passenger to hear more.

“It seems to me,” continued the latter, “that God in His great love is speaking to you at this moment. He often speaks to men, once, yea, twice, yet they perceive it not. Be wise, then, and listen to Him. Think seriously over what you have heard. In your deceived heart, you have been trying to escape from Him, who is the only source of blessing, by the cremation of your body. But you have forgotten your soul. Satan has duped you. You form part of a lost world, which lieth in the wicked one (1 John v. 19). But, behold, *now* is the day of salvation—God’s salvation. And if only you bow to Him, and believe on His Son, He will remember your sins no

more, and you will enjoy all the bliss of His presence for ever and for ever."

Listening attentively and earnestly to this moment, his train came up. With a warm shake of the hand, they parted, probably never to meet again on earth. May God grant in His great grace that His own message may do His own blessed work in that poor dark soul. "My word shall not return unto *me* void. It shall accomplish that whereunto I send it."

Dear reader, you may be interested in reading these lines, but what do you think yourself of these things? Whether, after your death (and death is here and near) your body were cremated or buried, either embalmed or cast into the ocean's depth, God knows where your dust lies. With Him all things are possible, and at that solemn moment, when He shall raise the wicked dead, He will raise them *all*. Not some, but *all* (John v. 29), and *you*, if you die in your sins.

But why will ye die? "I have no pleasure," saith He, "in the death of him that dieth." "Come *now*, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i.). Mark it well, "*Come now*." He invites you to *come now*, and to reason with Him *now*. Why? Because *to-morrow* may be too late. To-morrow is always to-morrow, and its issues are in His hand. All the work is done. Jesus did it. On the throne of God the Saviour is seated, the accepted man, who glorified God, His well-beloved

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Son. Nothing whatever is left for you to do, but to leave off all your miserable doings, and to *believe* God's blessed testimony concerning Jesus. Then to *you* the plainest of words are addressed, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." *No more.* He means what He says. Believe it, and rejoice therein.

With faith in Him, you will have no need to listen to Satan and your own poor deceitful heart as to some false way of escape from God, such as the cremation craze. But, as a pardoned soul, you can rejoice in the hope of your Lord's return, and look with joy to be glorified in His likeness for ever, in that heavenly scene where He Himself has gone. May this be your sure and blessed portion for ever, my reader.

E. H. C.

 THE OBJECT OF THE GOSPEL.

THEY are making a huge mistake who think that the gospel is going to convert the world, and gradually to bring in the millennium!

Such was never God's intention in sending it. Nay, if it be "the power of God unto salvation," as it certainly is, we are expressly told that it is so to "every one that believeth" (see Rom. i. 16), and not another soul derives the least saving benefit from it. Its blessings are received by faith and that alone; and painfully certain it is that, up to this day, few,

alas, amid the countless crowds who have been privileged to hear its charming story, and have been therein pointed to Calvary and a sinner's Saviour, have truly believed it, or owned its saving power. The very lands where it went forth from apostolic lips are in absolute darkness now ; and therefore the prospect of a millennium through its means are poor. But, mark, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," though to-day the world is as far from conversion as ever—despite all the praiseworthy efforts of preachers, evangelists, and missionaries—and far more responsible !

Then is Christianity "played out" ? Is its object defeated ? Impossible ! God's objects can never fail.

Then what was His object in sending the gospel ? It was, first and foremost, to make Himself known in the deep love of His heart to those who had hopelessly sinned against Him ; and second, to open a door of escape, through faith in a dead and risen Christ, for any, whether Jew or Gentile, who will but repent of his sins and believe in Him.

Stop and ask yourself, dear reader, whether you have repented of your own sins, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Get the personal matter settled calmly and divinely, and then you will see that the gospel is sent for your own conscious salvation, and not for some general reformation which should only affect the minds of men. The individual and personal salvation of the soul is its second, but very important object. We have a type of this in the ark

of Noah. Then the earth was filled with wickedness, and God, in His hatred of sin, counselled its destruction by water.

The ark bore a double testimony: first, the coming judgment of the then world; and second, a way of escape for those who believed. The reformation of that world was, in no sense, its object, nor did it propose to avert the deluge of waters. Its witness was very different; though, doubtless, the wise men of the day discredited its testimony.

Yet, see the faithful old patriarch going down to the thoroughfare, may we say night by night, when the toil of building was over for the day, to announce a message of righteousness and coming judgment. Little heed was paid, but God had warned him, and he believed the warning. He could but point to the ship as the evidence of his faith. On that vessel he would surmount the deluge and reach the renewed earth beyond. But the deluge had to come first.

Ah! they may have ridiculed his earnestness, and gone on with their eating, drinking, buying and selling, as though Noah had never preached a warning word or built an ark of safety; but, none-the-less, the flood came and destroyed them all—yes, all save Noah and his household—and dear, awfully dear, they had to pay for their crass indifference. That, however, is an old story now; yes, some five thousand years old; but remember that sometimes history repeats itself, and the wilful ignorance that repudiates the judgment of water will

certainly be dissipated by the coming judgment of fire. People shall not always be in the dark.

Then, is there no millennium? There is, only it is preceded by judgment (see Matt. xiii. 41-43). To-day there is grace. To-day Christ is preached in all His ineffable fulness and blessedness. He is infinitely precious to every poor guilty sinner who will only come to Him.

It is another huge mistake not to find refuge in Him, greater far than any other. To be wrong on a point of prophetic doctrine may be serious, but to be wrong as to the salvation of the soul is terrible beyond expression. Better a thousand times to be thus ignorant, than to be "without Christ, to have no hope, and to be without God in the world."

Oh! my reader, make no mistake here. If there is one point on which you should be infallibly clear, it is your own salvation. You have eternity to face. You must give account to God.

You have sinned. Your case is hopeless in your own hands. Christ, in His gracious death, is the only ark of safety. His blood is all-cleansing. You are welcome now and as you are, but only to-day. To-morrow the Lord may come, and then will be seen the closed door, and salvation past for ever.

Take one step out of self into Christ. Then live for Him.

" Here we find the dawn of heaven
While upon the Lamb we gaze ;
See our trespasses forgiven,
And our songs of triumph raise."

J. W. S.

GOD IS LOVE.

(1 John iv. 7-19.)

I WILL ask you, first of all, to turn to the third chapter of the Gospel of John, and again read a verse you well know: "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" (ver. 16). There, from the lips of the incarnate and only begotten Son of God, we have this magnificent statement as to the measure and the character of God's love. It is not there stated that He *is* love, although that is blessedly true. That is stated in John's epistle more than once—"God is love" (iv. 8 and 16).

Now, God did not talk love, He loved. Love does not talk, love acts. I do not say that love does not speak, but I mean love does not merely talk, love acts. And here the blessed Son of God, Jesus the incarnate Son, says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." What led God to give His Son? Love. What did the Son of God bring into this world? Love. What is found, incarnate in this scene, in Him who was the only begotten Son? Love. Love that would give up everything in order to accomplish the will of God, in order to make God known, in order that the world should not perish. And you must understand, dear reader, by the world here, the whole scene where God was not known, and where God was not loved.

I know a great many people say, "God loved the world, that means the righteous world, the good world, the holy world, and the world that goes on as it ought to go." Oh no, that is an immense mistake. There was and is no such world, my dear friend. God loved the world that did not want Him, did not know Him, did not care to receive His Son when He came. He loved the world full of people just exactly like you, my dear unsaved friend. And what are you? You are nothing more or less than a sinner with a mind opposed to God, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. viii. 7). It is a great thing when you get into your soul the sense of whom it is God loves. You thought God was looking for something in you that He could love. Ah, no. God has found all the springs of His acting in what He is Himself. He is love. And His love has led Him to act in a way that can meet all the need that His eye saw here.

If you are not converted, what are you? Godless. What does that mean? You do not know God. You have no link with God. You are not in touch with God. You are godless. Well, look here, are you going to be godless for eternity? That is the question. Are you going to be without God for eternity? It strikes me, my dear unconverted friend, that though it may not have been very long, quite enough of your earthly history has been spent without the knowledge of God, and if you are wise you

will recognise this solemn fact, and in your heart will spring up this desire—I should like to know God.

Should that wish rise in your heart and lead you to God, who will you find? One who loves you. “Oh,” you say, “God does not love me.” That is where you are mistaken. “God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He saw what the end must be, perishing. It is a very striking word. It is a very solemn word. Have you ever thought, dear friend, that you are a perishing sinner? Did you ever ponder the meaning of the word perish? “Well,” you say, “I suppose I shall die some day.” What then? “I shall cease to exist.” Oh no, not that at all, you will exist eternally—exist without the knowledge of God, in a scene where no ray of the love of God can ever come and fill your heart. Ah, beloved friend, that is perishing.

Why do you not believe that “God so loved the world?” “Well,” you say, “I have heard that verse a great many times.” What effect has it had on you? Ah, my friend, it does not need a sermon to convert you. No. If you get this in your heart, “God so loved” me as to give His Son for me, you would be converted on the spot. Can you ever fathom that “so”? Have you a son? “Aye.” Would you give your son to save anybody else? “Ah,” you say, “that is very testing.” You have six sons, perhaps, and you say, “I would not like to part with one of them.” God had one Son, and He

gave that Son for a sinner like you. Ah, get hold of that. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." I get this from the lips of the One who came to reveal and make known the heart of God, what was the mind of God, what were God's thoughts. We have all had hard thoughts of God. We thought Him stern and hard. What was the object of God in giving His Son? "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now, what sort of state were we in when God gave His Son? Will you turn over to the fifth chapter of Romans for a moment, for I want to show you there the four ways in which our state, when God loved us, is presented. There we read, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (ver. 5). Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart yet? Ah! you have not believed the gospel. If you had believed the gospel the love of God would be shed abroad there. What do you mean by shed abroad? Oh, it is a big word. It warms my heart. That love has been the joy of my soul for many a year now. And how do you get to know it? "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is *shed abroad* in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Of course Paul is talking to Christians. But then, the sorrowful thing is this, that you are not a Christian. "Oh no," you say, "I know that I am a sinner." I tell you what I was, a downright sinner till I became a saint. The love

of God met me and turned me into a saint. "A saint; I thought the saints were all in heaven." Many of them are, but not all. Thank God, there are millions of them now on earth. You had better join their number. "The love of God shed abroad in our hearts" is that which gives us to know we are His saints. "Then," you say, "how does it happen?"

Listen to this: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*" (ver. 6). "Oh," says a poor troubled soul, "that is exactly like me." You have been trying to do better, have you not? "I have been very anxious about my soul for some weeks now." Yes, and you have been trying to improve yourself? What have you found out? "Satan is too much for me, the world is too much for me, and sin is too much for me." Exactly so; that is what I expected to hear you say. Again, listen: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*." When I spoke about the godless just now, you thought I was very hard. "Yes, because I am a decent person." But still you are *ungodly*, for you do not know God. But what do I find here? "Christ died for the *ungodly*." I was very glad when I saw that one day, because I was *ungodly*. I said, That is my character, my state. No word could describe me more perfectly. That is exactly what I am. Glorious truth! I once thought Christ died for the *godly*. When I was an unconverted sinner I thought that, and I thought the gospel was only for the *godly*, and I was not such, and then one night the light pierced in that

it was for the *ungodly* Jesus died. I saw it was for me. Oh, beloved friend, that is where the light gets in, do not you see?

What was the "due time"? When the world was seen to be *without strength*. What do you mean by "without strength"? "Oh," you say, "that is my case now." Very well; what is the "due time"? When it was all perfectly manifest what man's condition was—that man was feeble, sinful, and powerless. The apostle suggestively adds, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die." I daresay you know a righteous man? But a purely and simply righteous man is often a hard character. He pays twenty shillings in the pound; he is quite right. And he expects twenty shillings in the pound; he is quite right; anything else is wrong. But his is not a lovable character. Do you think you would die for him? "*Scarcely*," says the apostle here, and then adds, "Yet *peradventure* for a good man some would even dare to die" (ver. 7).

I think a long time would be spent looking for a man who would die for a *righteous* man. But *perhaps* for a *good* man, like John Howard, who even went into prison to learn what prison life was, that when he came out he might help those who went there, some would even dare to die. Would you have died for him? "Ah," you say, "that is a great test." Now look at this contrast, "But God commendeth *his* own love toward us,"—it is the love that is peculiar to God: it is the love that finds its absolute source in what God is—"God commendeth

his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us" (ver. 8). "That is what I am," you say. Exactly so. A sinner. What then? "Christ died for us." Oh, what wonderful news, what glorious news, what charming news for troubled souls. To a person "without strength," "ungodly"—a "sinner"—yea, more, an "enemy"—God commends His love. The Son of God declares that God's love was so great, that He *gave* His only begotten Son. Here it says He commends His love. It comes with a gush. It affects me. "Well," you say, "I can understand a mother giving herself for her child." But here God commends His love, that when He saw me the absolute opposite of all that He is Himself, and absolutely unlike His blessed Son, then Christ died for us.

Note, I would earnestly ask you, what is here added: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, *when we were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (vers. 9, 10). Now there you have man looked at from four sides, if I might so say. I look at one side of Him, "no strength." Another side, "ungodly." Another side, "a sinner." Another side, "an enemy." Now what can a strengthless sinner do? Nothing. And what can a sinner do? Nothing but sin. And what will an ungodly man do? Nothing but ungodliness, nothing but sin. And what does an enemy do? Oppose the one he hates. That is a picture of man,

that is the one God loves and saves. Is it not wonderful? My friend, has that love taken hold of your heart? Has that love reached you? If not, may it reach you now.

W. T. P. W.

“WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?”

IT was late on Saturday night; the tired shopkeeper was preparing to close, and was looking forward with delight to the advent of the Lord's Day, when he should be free from the claims of the world, and, in fellowship with his fellow-Christians, should have the privilege of remembering his precious Lord, and showing forth His death in view of His coming. Two young men, both more or less under the influence of strong drink, just then entered the shop and made a purchase.

While being served, one of them read on a card which hung in the shop, the golden words, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). The shopkeeper had put it up, as a testimony to the love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the varied remarks of those who read it, would form interesting reading. Those who loved the Lord were only too glad to confess Him; some who were religious, but not saved, considered it somewhat out of place; while others hesitated not to openly deride it. To the latter class belonged one of the young men of whom we now write.

"What does that mean?" he asked.

"Just what it says," replied the shopkeeper.

"I do not believe in such nonsense," said he. "If I am to be saved, I shall be saved, and if not I cannot help it."

"Not so," answered the shopkeeper. "God has effected everything for you, He presents the Lord Jesus Christ as the Object of faith for the needy sinner, and all depends upon your acceptance or rejection of Him."

The shopkeeper concluded by appealing to the young man to consider his ways, and the inevitable end of the road he was travelling. This only called forth a torrent of blasphemy which it was painful to hear, and with which he and his mate left.

About a fortnight later, his companion returned. "Do you remember," he asked, "my friend and myself coming in the other Saturday night?"

"I do," was the reply.

"Have you heard about him?"

"No."

"I left him," he said, "in the small hours of Sunday morning; he did not turn up when work commenced on Monday, and shortly after starting a message came that he was dead. He died suddenly soon after I left him that Sunday morning."

Here the curtain drops, so far as that young man is concerned; he is gone, and gone for ever, but, thank God, *you*, dear reader, are still here. Say! are you saved? You may be the most precise, upright, religious person under the sun, or you may be

—what dear George Whitfield called—“one of the devil’s castaways,” a victim of drink, a slave to vice, a servant of sin, a bondsman of Satan, no matter who you are or what you be, young, middle-aged, or old, rich or poor, high born or otherwise, in the sight of God you are lost. God says so; and you have everything to gain by accepting His verdict.

Perishing soul, listen! “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). Lost sinner, give ear! “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke xix. 10). Sin-burdened friend, hearken! “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from ALL sin” (1 John i. 7). Doubting heart, be of good cheer! “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts xvi. 31). Why, oh, why, refuse such love, reject such a Saviour, “neglect so great salvation”? This true incident is but one of many instances of the solemn consequences of resisting the Holy Spirit. “he that being often reprovèd hardeneth his neck, shall *suddenly* be destroyed, and that without remedy” (Prov. xxix. 1). “Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you” (Acts xiii. 40, 41). Reader, trifle not with the grace of God, risk not your immortal soul, but come to Jesus just now.

W. B. D.

"WHY DO WE GROW OLD?"

"WHY do we grow old?" the writer was asked a short time ago. "Why do the beauty and grace of youth fade away and give place to shrivelled, decrepit, and tottering old age? There is nothing beautiful in old age."

A hard-working man he had been, and most abstemious. He had schemed and plotted with but one object before him, and that to retire at a certain age. His purpose is reached, and now he discovers he has but retired to fade away and die. He has plenty of leisure to stand and view the appalling fact that he is slowly and surely decaying!

Montaigne puts the middle of life's arch at thirty-five, and speaks of himself as if life for him, at that age, were practically ended, and there was nothing for him now but to decay at leisure—at literary leisure, but still to decay. "If in this life only we have hope . . . we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor. xv. 19).

No doubt the thought of the Psalmist was in Montaigne's mind, "The days of our years are three score years and ten," although certain wise ones tell us that the middle of life's arch has now shifted to fifty, and is apparently likely to rise higher (?).

Time marches over the heads of men and women and leaves his indelible footprints upon all. Man is no sooner born into the scene than he begins to draw

nearer and nearer the end of his course. He "is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." His "life is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." *An object in this world he may have*, and "if fortune smiles on him," as men speak, and the object is gained, the appalling discovery has at last to be made that there was more pleasure in the anticipation of the object than in the realisation of it. For there is *nothing satisfying* "under the sun."

We were not greatly surprised a few days ago to hear of that most successful man of business, Mr W——, of K. L., having

COMMITTED SUICIDE.

Retiring at the age of forty-nine, in the very zenith of his brain power, as scientists tell us, what an objectless, purposeless existence was before him! His large fortune did not yield him the satisfaction he craved—did not even make his life worth living.

And now he has left his riches for others to get what enjoyment they can out of them. "But he that loveth silver shall *not* be satisfied with silver, . . . neither is his eye satisfied with riches" (Eccles. v. 10). Oh! that poor Mr W—— had known Christ as his Saviour, together with the joy of living the full length of his days for Him, fully satisfied in His love. But alas! his life, his opportunities are all gone now,

HOPELESSLY LOST FOR EVER!

A hat, a coat, and umbrella upon the river bank, with a fortune intact, tell the sad tale of a heart that had

found all under the sun as “vanity.” “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

Let this stand as a beacon, my reader, to warn you, as you spread the sails of your frail barque to catch the breezes of prosperity, and remember that word, “Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee” (Luke xii. 20).

But to return, “Why do we grow old?” The answer is simple, yet profound—“Man corrupted by sin is unfit to remain upon the earth which was given him by God.” Hence three things have come upon him—

DECAY, DISEASE, AND DEATH.

And no matter what the natural status, social position, intellectual ability—nothing can avert it: “It is appointed unto *men* once to die, and after this the judgment.”

The scientist and infidel are alike powerless here. Death’s ruthless hand is laid upon each in his turn, and after this the judgment. Think of every hidden act brought to light, every motive disclosed, and every secret thing laid bare, and the judged one made to face the dreadful fact that having neglected salvation in time, there is no escape for eternity (Heb. ii.).

Reader, do let me, as one who loves your soul, beg of you to pause on your downward course and consider this momentous question. Disease may even now be sapping your vitals, Decay, to say the least,

is going certainly on, and Death is drawing hourly nearer !!

Go on just as you are, and you will be lost for eternity. Hell, with its anguish, and tears, and woe awaits you! But, thank God, heaven, with its love, and joy, and peace still invites you! "Christ has died, yea, rather is risen again." His blood can cleanse the foulest stains. Cast yourself as a hell-deserving sinner, repentant at His feet, and He will surely save you, and "God will justify you freely by his grace." His thought for you is *life*, not *death*.

Turn then from Satan, sin, and death, to God for life and glory. This is conversion. "Repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Remember there is no salvation without repentance.

Have you repented? Are you converted?

E. E. C.

FRAGMENT.

How wise is God to say, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23). Again, as a man "thinketh *in his heart*, so is he" (Prov. xxiii. 7). It is not what I do, or what I say with my lips; but what I really am, is what my heart is, what the affections are occupied with. I believe we are in a day when intelligence goes very far ahead of the heart. I shall not be speaking too plainly if I say the secret of the want of a great deal of spiritual power is pride of heart. Hence would I say before God, let us beware of backsliding in heart. God must have reality.

W. T. P. W.

GOD : DO YOU KNOW HIM ?

THE existence of God is a self-evident fact. That God is, is proclaimed everywhere. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Ps. xix. 1). "The whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. vi.).

Let any one look into the vault of heaven on a starry night, or when the moon is at its full, and sailing through the heavens, in obedience to its Creator's laws; or gaze upon the ocean when calm or when tempestuous; or watch the varied seasons of the year from January to December; or the glorious sun rising and scattering the darkness of the night, and bringing in the light of day; or let him dwell upon the vastness of the universe, worlds on worlds, and systems on systems, all working in perfect order, and without a clash, and then say, "There is no God," he would but proclaim of himself what David long ago proclaimed of him: "The *fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. xiv. 1).

With the universal evidence of God about him, with such an undeniable testimony of God everywhere and on every hand, to say nothing of revelation, to say "There is no God," is to stand out before the eyes of all convicted of being a fool.

"Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Ps. xix. 2-4).

H

Not only does the universe proclaim the fact that God is, but it also proclaims that everything was brought into existence with a design, a specific object in view, and that means a Designer, and that Designer is God.

The creation proclaims that God is; the design, so evident on every hand, makes manifest the Designer, and that Designer to be an infinite and intelligent Being—with a mind to which the universe is but a toy—almighty power to create, and to hold in perfect order, in obedience to the laws that He has established, the universe which He has created.

His beneficence, as well as His power and wisdom, are seen in the creation that came from His hand. True, for His pleasure they are and were created (and rightly so, too), but evidently with a view to the blessing of others.

Is not man a proof of that every day? Does he not receive from his Creator's hand untold blessing, even when he does not recognise the Creator, nor the hand from which he takes the blessing? Who makes the sun to rise upon the evil and the good? *It is God.*

Who sends the rain upon the just and the unjust? Again, *It is God.*

Man puts in the seed, but who gave him the seed? *It is God.*

Who makes it to grow and spring up and bear fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred-fold? *It is God.*

Aye, if man only had eyes to see, and the humble-

ness of mind to own it, he would see the proof of God everywhere—an infinite, intelligent, personal God—God whose glory is displayed in the creation around us, but who, with a beneficent design, wishes His creatures to enjoy the blessings His hand has so lavishly spread around them.

But often, alas, man uses the intelligence that God has given him, and the very functions by which he should glorify God, to deny His existence !

It is a self-evident proposition, then, that God is ; that He is a Being, infinite in power and wisdom, and as kind and good as He is powerful and wise.

This being an established fact, not by the rules of man's carnal reasoning, but by what is seen on every hand, "for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. i. 20), divine revelation follows as a matter of course ; for we cannot deny to God, who is infinite in power and wisdom, the privilege which we claim for ourselves, that is, of communicating our thoughts to others. Man can do that with his fellow, and shall we deny to the blessed God the same prerogative ?

God is not the unknown and the unknowable. Such a god is not the God that made the universe. It may be of man's imagination, and it suits poor man, who wishes to go on living as he lists, to have such a god. But such a god in no way meets the deep cravings of man's being ; but if he admit the universal testimony of creation to the fact that God

is, and that He is a Being of infinite power and wisdom and goodness, and that He is able to communicate to man His thoughts, then he has in his mind a true conception of God, and the beginning of the meeting of that need in the soul that exists in each one. He must go on to redemption, surely, to have that need fully met, but in this lies the beginning, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. xi. 6).

If in creation we see His power and wisdom and goodness, it is in *redemption*, accomplished by the death of God's Son on the cross, we see His love; 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).

This, and this only, meets the deep, deep need of man. God revealed in Christ, God meeting man's need, God accomplishing redemption for man, and God exalting the One who did it: this is what fully satisfies the cravings of man's soul. In Christ God is revealed; and in the death of Christ redemption is accomplished; and in the face of a glorified Christ the glory of God shines; and in the same glorious Person I find an object for my heart and a Saviour for my soul.

Thus is God discovered by the soul, not only as a Creator-God, but also as a Saviour-God.

Let us listen to revelation: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of our Saviour-God; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the

knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 4-6).

It cost God but the word of His power to create the universe; "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast"; but to redeem, to save fallen man, it cost Him His only begotten Son, and what it cost the Son of God the anguish of Calvary can only attest.

" O groundless deep!
O love beyond degree!
The Offender, dies
To set the offender free !"

Again let revelation speak: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

It is the knowledge of God revealed in Christ, and of redemption being accomplished by Christ on the cross, and of Christ being glorified in consequence, that gives rest.

This is rest indeed; rest for the weary and troubled soul; rest pure and unalloyed.

The Saviour says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Beloved reader, do you know what it is to possess it? Can you sing:—

" I rest in Christ the Son of God,
Who took the servant's form;
By faith I flee to Jesus' cross,
My covert from the storm ?"

E. A.

A DIVINE REVOLUTION.

IT must take a mighty power to "turn the world upside down," and yet that very power is exerted by the gospel!

The gentlest thing in the universe contains the greatest moral power. What could be more gentle, more tender, more affecting than the story which tells of God's love to man and of the gift of His Son to die for them? and yet it is just this divine and lovely story, set forth by the Holy Spirit, that appears to accomplish the above result.

True, it may be despised and derided and rejected, but it flows peacefully onward, like a gladdening stream, or as the breeze that bloweth where it listeth, so, in a thousand ways, this heavenly message pursues its life-giving course over the face of the globe. God takes care of it; Satan opposes it; men criticise it, and oftentimes thrust it aside; but the Spirit of truth places His seal on its glorious testimony, and brings it home, in quickening and saving power, to the souls of poor needy sinners.

Hence, it carries its own credentials, and commends its own intrinsic worth.

By the presentation of truth it condemns falsehood; it overcomes evil by goodness; it dissipates error by facts, and darkness by light; it unfolds love in such a way that malice, and hate, and passion of every kind are overturned. Such is the kind of moral revolution which the gospel has brought about. It

has thus turned the world upside down, has set it in tumult, and keeps it in that condition. It will not allow men to sleep in their sins. Its call is constant, and its influence is elevating and moralising. It may use feeble instruments. It employs worms to thrash mountains, and "things that are not, to bring to nought things that are"; but the work is done, and done effectually in those who believe!

Thus Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, preached on three Sabbath days the simple fact of a dead and risen Saviour, who was Jesus the Christ; and this, strange to say, caused such a commotion as set all the city on an uproar, and led them to be accused of turning the world (not only Thessalonica) upside down! This was surely a serious matter. The world must be more easily turned upside down than its inhabitants suppose. It is the gospel that does it! Passing strange! the fact is "the world" is rotten at the core; its foundations are on deceit, and sin, and alienation from God. The fabric is hollow. A breath of truth is enough to shake it and make it totter. Two simple men, acting in the power of God and only speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, are able to make the bubble burst, and produce general consternation. "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Ah! that is the entire secret!

It is a very useful thing to see what this wonderful and idolised *world* really is. A "man of the world" is regarded as a very fine fellow. He has his gun and dogs; his horses and hounds; his place

and pleasures, things in themselves, possibly harmless, but they are his all, his idols, his god; nor do they satisfy him! His poor empty heart needs something infinitely beyond a dog or a horse to meet its craving. It needs, not the world, but God!

Now it is just the heart of man that the gospel claims. It asks not for the world, nor its revolution nor reformation. It makes its direct assault on the individual heart and conscience. It seeks to turn them upside down! Blessed work! The heart of the sinner is wrong side up. It is wrong every way, toward God and self, toward truth and holiness, toward light and salvation; and the discovery of this, by the in-shining of the gospel, is the first part of the grand capsize which leads to the settlement of the soul in the knowledge of God through faith in the work of the Lord Jesus.

Well, the millennium has not yet come, nor shall it come by the preaching of the gospel; but the hearts of men, in countless multitudes, are being overturned and blessed by faith in the message. This will go on until the Master rise up and shut to the door. Then no more gospel.

My reader, have you been convicted, converted, and saved by the gospel?

“The gospel is of God
 To magnify His Son,
 For Jesus Christ, our Lord,
 By power God’s will hath done:
 By power He crushed the serpent’s head,
 By power God raised Him from the dead.”

J. W. S.

CAPTAIN G——'S SUSPENSE.

THE awnings were spread over the white decks of the *Aspasia*, as she lay in the harbour at Malta, awaiting the mails for India.

Her passengers, making themselves as comfortable as the heat of the midday sun permitted, lounged in their canvas chairs, their languor making the maintenance of the desultory conversation a laborious and irksome task.

“A telegram for Captain G——,” was the first intimation that the mails were on board, and the announcement sufficed to infuse a little energy into the listless and tired travellers.

Captain G—— held out his hand for the telegram, and his manner betokened an eagerness which made his fellow-passengers surmise that news of importance was expected.

The captain was an officer in the British army, and was returning from a brief furlough in England to rejoin his regiment in India. A few days previously he had bidden farewell to his only remaining relative, an aunt, a lady possessed of considerable fortune, whose heir Captain G—— took for granted that he would be. She was lying dangerously ill when he had taken leave of her, and the doctor had shaken his head very decidedly when asked if any hope of her recovery remained.

The telegram that reached Captain G—— at Malta announced her death. It stated, however,

that the will had not yet been read, but that another telegram should be despatched to reach the *Aspasia* at Suez with news as to the disposition of the property.

Can my readers imagine the state of the captain's mind between Malta and Suez? Was he, or was he not, the possessor of a great fortune? That was the question that held him in suspense, impairing his appetite, and causing him to pace the steamer's decks with nervous energy. How much those few lines that were to reach him at Suez would mean to him! Which would it be, fortune or disappointment? The suspense was dreadful. Even the certainty of disappointment would have been more tolerable than the uncertainty of hope.

But, reader, there is a possibility of *your* securing a far larger fortune than that which Captain G—— expected to receive. Eternal possessions, a heavenly inheritance, riches beyond the power of tongue to tell, may be yours. If you fail to obtain them, your failure will mean to you infinitely more than the loss of anything earthly. It will mean disgrace and everlasting despair, hopeless sorrow and irrevocable doom.

The question of questions for you is this: Are these great and wonderful things to be yours, or are they not? Let me ask you, as a sincere well-wisher, *How can you remain in suspense as to the final answer to such a momentous question?* With such tremendous issues at stake, how can you give yourself a minute's rest? Does not the thought of your soul trembling in the balance of life and death,

glory or despair, eternal joy or everlasting woe, fill you with anxiety?

We need not return to Captain G——, for surely you are far more interested in your own case than in his. Let me press the matter upon your attention, at the risk of being thought intrusive: *Why not at once seek a settlement of the great question of where you will spend your eternity?*

“Where shall I spend my eternity? How can I tell? I don't see how any mortal man can answer that question!”

So said young Robert M'C—— in reply to a loving and faithful inquiry by a Christian friend. And Robert's words find an echo in thousands of souls to-day.

“Yes,” they say, “we would like to know where we are going; we would like to be sure that heaven will be our home, but how can we know? How can it be possible for any one to be certain of his salvation?”

Some even go so far as to say it is impossible, utterly impossible, for any one in this life to know for certain that he is going to heaven.

But is this so? Are pilgrims to the better land to pursue their way in ignorance as to whether they are travelling in the right direction or not? Are the children of God never to be sure that they have a true title to look up into His face and say, “Father”? Are we all doomed to remain in terrible and unbearable suspense as to our eternal

future as long as we are on earth? Is there no such thing as the assurance of salvation?

Dr Thomson, in his well-known work, "The Land and the Book," tells us that it has been denied, again and again, that the island of Cyprus could be seen from Lebanon. He adds, however, that he himself has viewed it from many a standpoint among those lofty heights, that it is clearly visible, owing to the intense transparency of the atmosphere.

In the same way, though it is repeatedly asserted that it is impossible to behold the gleaming of yon celestial city from our present position in this world of sin and temptation, and that no one can be certain that heaven is to be his eternal dwelling-place, yet there are thousands who can bear testimony to the fact they *have* seen it with the eye of faith, and *can* read their title clear to mansions in the skies. And their testimony is confirmed by the words of Scripture.

Do you doubt it? Then search and see for yourself. Read Ephesians ii. 5; 1 John ii. 12; Acts xiii. 39; Colossians i. 12.

With Dr Thomson, the great point was to get *high* enough to catch a view of the distant island, whose visibility was denied. With us, the great point is to get *low* enough. Like all other rivers, the river of God's grace flows in the valley, and they who seek to reach heaven by climbing the mountains of morality, Christless religion, and lifeless profession, will remain in uncertainty and suspense all their days, and meet with bitter disappointment

at the last. They who come down into the valley of repentance, and take the low place as lost and hell-deserving sinners, are the ones that obtain the assurance of salvation.

Reader, *have you ever got down low at the Saviour's feet, as a repentant sinner, convicted of guilt, and owning your utter unworthiness?* That is the place where divine blessing is received and where salvation is known.

One of our greatest poets has said—

“Who by repentance is not satisfied,
Is nor of heaven nor earth,”

meaning that if an offender repents, his repentance is enough to satisfy any reasonable person.

But is it so? Repentance is certainly what God looks for in those who seek His favour, and it is over the repentant sinner that He rejoices. But is there anything in a sinner's repentance to satisfy God with regard to his sins?

Let me put the question in this way. If any one owed you ten pounds, and was quite unable to pay it, would it satisfy you if he came to you and expressed his regret? He might be very sincere in his repentance; he might be truly sorry for having got into your debt without the ability to pay, but would his sorrow satisfy you?

No. You would say: “Sir, your expressions of regret are all very well. It is quite right that you should be sorry for the way you have treated me. But that is not enough. You cannot expect me to

be satisfied with anything short of *the payment of the debt.*"

Now we are in the position of the debtor with regard to God. He has claims upon us which we have not fulfilled. Repentance is surely the attitude that becomes us in our insolvency, and sin, and helplessness, but something further is needed to meet God's claims, and satisfy Him. And that "something" is altogether beyond our power to produce.

Nothing short of *full payment of the debt* can enable God to righteously forgive and bless unholy sinners. Thank God, this is just what has been achieved by the atoning work of Christ. That mighty work of propitiation has paid the debt of all who trust in the Saviour; and to *that work* the believer can point as that which has completely satisfied God on his behalf.

Reader, is that where you build your hopes? Is the work of Christ the foundation on which you base your expectations of eternal bliss? "All other ground is sinking sand."

"The sinner who believes is free,
Can say, 'The Saviour died for me ;'
Can point to the atoning blood,
And say, 'This made my peace with God.'"

Can you say it?

"It seems to me that to believe that Jesus has done it all, and left us nothing to do, is dangerous doctrine. It must have the effect of making people careless as to their ways."

"Indeed, madam," replied Mrs M——'s visitor,

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“it has the very opposite effect. In Psalm cxxx. 4, we read, ‘There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be *feared*.’ The effect of free forgiveness is that the forgiven one delights to walk in the fear of God, and do things that are pleasing in His sight.”

When King Edward VI. was young, a lad was kept in the palace called the “whipping boy.” If the little prince was naughty and deserved punishment, he was not punished himself, but the boy was whipped in his place.

It is said that the young king was so affected at the sight of another being made to suffer for his faults that he strove earnestly to please his tutors and behave well.

So with the believer in Jesus. In view of Calvary, and all that his Saviour endured there, it will be his earnest desire to live for His honour and glory. Thus practical holiness, as well as eternal salvation, is a result of believing that Jesus did *all* the work, and that His blood is sufficient to cleanse us from *all* sin.

H. P. B.

“I DON'T WANT TO CREEP INTO
HEAVEN.”

THE speaker had been an avowed infidel, but his infidel notions were now scattered to the winds. His favourite author had died saying “I am taking a leap in the dark.” This had aroused him to think of eternity. If that was all

infidelity could afford at the last, it was not good enough for him. Going to his bookcase one day, his Christian wife had the joy of receiving and consigning to the flames all the infidel books in which he had previously revelled, and cared not just at that moment whether the chimney took fire or not.

But he was not yet clear as to how a sinner can be justified in the sight of God. His eyes were opened to the terrible fact that all who die in their sins pass into a lost eternity ; and realising his danger, he was anxious to exchange the road to hell for the road to heaven. Are your eyes open, my reader, to the appalling fact that you are travelling along a road that leads to perpetual night? "They shall be silent in darkness." Such is the testimony of Scripture !

The shaft of conviction had been driven further home at the preaching, and the preacher had called to see him a few days later. "I want to go to heaven," said he, " but I don't want to creep into heaven at the last moment ; it seems to me a miserable thing to spend all one's life for Satan, sin, and self, and then turn to God for heaven when one can't have the earth any longer. I want to spend a few years for God *here* before I go." When the Lord was here, perceiving that one answered wisely, He said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom." The subject of our narrative was only forty-eight hours from it. The Sunday following this conversation found him again under the preaching.

The "Ethiopian eunuch" shamed him, taking

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that long journey to Jerusalem, and here the gospel was brought to his very door. “He preached unto him Jesus.”

JUST WHAT HE WANTED.

“I thought,” said the hitherto infidel to the preacher, “you were holding Jesus out to me, and all I had to do was to take Him for my own. I needed His work to put away my sins, and I wanted Him. I went straight from the meeting to my bedroom, and falling down upon my knees, I told God what a sinner I was, and pleaded the merits of the work of the Lord Jesus who had given Himself to die in my stead. There and then

MY BURDEN WAS ROLLED AWAY,

and if I had died then I should have gone straight to heaven.”

A FEW DAYS LATER HE WAS BAPTIZED.

Before going into the water he said: “Mr C——, I have wasted thirty-nine years. I ought to have come to this years ago.”

Before leaving the water, how earnestly he did pray that the rest of his days might be spent for God! “Make me an example to the world,” he cried, “and enable me to bring up my children in Thy fear!”

His wife's brother called to see him a few days later. “Jack,” said he, “Lizzie and I have only now begun to live: we used to exist before, but we live now.”

You have not yet begun to live, my reader, if

unsaved, for no one lives morally until God has His right place with him, and he has his right place with God. The "Second Death" will be eternal banishment from God. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (Isa. lix. 2) even now, and "your sins have hid his face from you."

Still He calls you to repentance, desiring to bless you with the choicest blessings of heaven.

Christ has taken the sinner's place, and God's face was turned from Him when "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree." How the holiness and righteousness of God shine out here! But, oh! what love is also displayed, for "God commendeth his *love* toward us, in that, while we were yet *sinner*s, *Christ died for us*" (Rom. v. 8).

"Repent ye, and believe the gospel," fell from the lips of Him who is now "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead" (Acts x.). Claim Him as Saviour who now says, "*Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest.*" Or you must, in that "great and terrible day of the Lord," hear that withering word, "*Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.*"

"Are you weary and sad 'neath the burden of sin?

Does it fill all your soul with dismay?

And to meet the just claims of a sin-hating God

Do you know you have nothing to pay?

Come! Come! Come unto Him!

If you own with repentance you've nothing to pay,

He will freely and frankly forgive."

E. E. C.

LOVE MANIFESTED, PERCEIVED, AND ENJOYED.

“God . . . is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins” (Eph. ii. 4).

WHEN did God love us? When we were dead in sins. Looked at in the Epistle to Romans man is seen in the activity of sins. When we come to the Ephesians it is another aspect of man. God looks for life. There is no life. Man is “*dead* in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (that is the devil), the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. ii.). Every man, woman, and child, who is not indwelt by the Spirit of God, and who has not got the love of God shed abroad in his heart, is under Satan’s power. Solemn consideration!

Who are the children of disobedience? All the unsaved, “Among whom also *we all* had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (ver. 3). What do you mean by “children of disobedience”? We took our own way. What do you mean by “children of wrath”? That is what each will discover himself to be, if unreached by grace, at the end of the pathway. But what has God done? Has He exercised His righteous judgment

upon guilty sinners—coming out in the character of One who could not bear sin? No, listen: “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)” (vers. 4, 5). Of course it is Christians Paul is talking of here, but that is God’s love.

God commends His love to us. Perhaps you say, “Oh, that I could see His love.” Very well, you just look at 1 John iii. 16. You have often looked at the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of the Gospel of John. What does it say? “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” There we get the love of God *declared*. The love of God is there most beautifully stated and proclaimed by the Son of God. What does the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John’s first epistle say? “Hereby *perceive* we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.” It is not only love declared, it is love perceived. You say, “I like the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of the gospel.” So do I. And I like the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of the epistle. I never was a happy man till I got hold of it. “Hereby *perceive* we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.” It is the love of Jesus. It is the love of God. They are one. God gave His Son, and His Son is seen laying down His life for us. Charming news for guilty sinners.

The gospel is the revelation of what God is, and

His Son therein is making His heart known. When alive on earth He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). But what do I find here? That He laid down His life for His enemies. Oh, precious love! Friend, let this love in. If the doors of unbelief have been, so to say, fast closed, oh, may the out-shining of the love of God cause you, where you are, to open the door, and say, "Lord, henceforth I will let Thy love in, the love that gave an only begotten Son for a sinner like me."

The love that brought Jesus down to the death of the cross must indeed have been wondrous. You despise His love and you will come into judgment. Make light of His mercy, and you will, in the day of His righteous judgment of sin, yet have to meet the One who is infinitely holy. Has not His love been made manifest? Absolutely! Yes, "God is love," and the man that knows God, loves. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God (John is writing to Christians, I quite admit): and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (chap. iv. 7). When a man is born of God, you will always find he loves. All comes out very simply. The believer knows God. If you knew God you could not help loving. And that is why the apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (chap. iii. 14).

Perhaps my reader says, "I do not know whether I love the Lord." Tell me, do you love His people? Do you love their company? "Yes." Thank God

then, you can raise your note of hallelujah ! Because the apostle adds, “ *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*” You are at home with them, you are happy with them. That is a very simple thing. Swallows do not fly with eagles. Swallows go with swallows. Those that have the love of God in their souls delight to go with those that have similar enjoyment. Unsaved reader, the reason why you are trying to be happy in the world is because you are of the world, and not of God. You should ponder that serious fact.

Now read another verse : “ In this was *manifested* the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him ” (chap. iv. 9). Here we get love manifested. Love is *declared* in the Gospel of John. It is *commended* in the Epistle to the Romans. It is *perceived* in the third chapter of John’s epistle, and *manifested* in the fourth. Here is what I may call the broad basis of the gospel. What was the manifestation of the fact that God loved us ? “ Because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”

God knew that we had not got life. Ephesians said we were dead. What does God propose ? He proposes to give you life. I cannot know God unless I am alive. “ Well,” you say, “ I sometimes think the gospel meets me, and I am sure I wish I were a Christian, but I do not think I have life.” Get hold of this verse (ver. 9). Yours is a world of death. Sin brought in death, and judgment comes next. Eternal

life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why refuse such a priceless gift? Receive Christ and you will have this life, for Christ will be your life.

Now read the next verse: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (ver. 10). I have no doubt that if you or I had been writing the truth of this epistle, we should have talked about the sins first, and the life next. Not so with God. Divine order is perfect. The gospel comes out from God to bring to me, from God, what He only can give. And what is that? Life! "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). The moment I touch Jesus I live. Touch Him and you begin to live, my friend, for the first time. "Oh," you say, "you do not know what a burden I have got." Your sins? Well, what does this tenth verse say? "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Have you the sense of the burden of your sins? "Oh, yes, it is this that has troubled me for a good long time now." I think then that you must have life. You say, "What do you mean?" I will explain.

Suppose a dead man on the floor before us. I get a hundred pound weight and I put it on his bosom. What will he feel? Nothing. What will he do? Nothing. Why? Because he is dead. But now, suppose that by some remarkable power I could infuse life into that man, what would happen? You

say, "He would get up." No, he would not. My impression is that the first thing he would do would be to give a great groan and exclaim, "What a weight is on me." That is just like the sinner touched by the Spirit of God, who for many a day may be heard exclaiming, "My sins, my sins." Ah, thank God, you may depend upon it there is life there. The man never felt the burden till he had life. Of course I am supposing what is naturally impossible, but I believe that is exactly what takes place with a man spiritually. God touches you. The Spirit of God brings His Word to you. In some way or other you are reached. At length to your own eyes you are discovered hopeless, sinful, and lost. In vain you say: "What am I to do? I cannot love the Lord; I am trying to, but I do not do it." Listen: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." He came to give us life, and to blot out our sins.

When Jesus passed out of this scene by the cross, He wrought the work of redemption. God "sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." That is not the life of Jesus. It is His death. Propitiation was effected when Jesus was upon the cross. God then took up between Himself and His blessed Son the whole question of sin and sins. Christ then sustained the whole weight of God's holy hatred and judgment of sin. God then forsook Him. In this lies the essence of atonement. It is God's forsaking of Christ and His soul's suffering for sins that effects

propitiation. But you may ask, "Whose sins did He bear?" "Our sins." I know that takes me in. I am sure, if you wish it, you will find it includes you too. Whom did He die for? Sinners. "You do not know what a sinner I have been." No, but God does. And that is why He sent His Son. "Oh, but the devil says I am an awful sinner, and that frightens me." Admit the truth, face the devil, and then understand this, that Christ died for the ungodly. Therein is love. But perhaps to you, as to others, Satan says, "You do not love the Lord." Admit it and reply, "Yes, quite true, but the Lord loves me."

How do I get peace with God about my sins? By resting on the wonderful fact that His Son died for me. Man could not have life except through death, so God "sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And if you have been trying, my reader, to love the Lord, now you just simply look to Him, and get the sense of His love to you. The love to Him will rise in due time. That is what the apostle says in the end of this chapter: "We love him, because he first loved us" (ver. 19). Do not try to love Him, just believe the wonderful truth that He has loved you. And when was it that Jesus put all my sins away? When He died on the cross. And if He did not put all your sins away then, they will never be put away. Why? Because He will never die again. He will never come a second time to do the work of atonement.

But very likely you will say, "How am I to know whether He died for me?" Well, I do not want to

reason you into believing the gospel, but you would be a new person if you learned that God loved you, and His Son had died for you. You would go to your home dancing with joy, and saying, "I have got peace with God. He has given me peace through the death of His Son."

But more than that, a little lower down in the chapter the apostle says, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (ver. 13). After believing in Christ, the next thing is you receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes and sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts. God loves us, His Son has died for us, and He has given us His Spirit. Are we not well off. Here is the Trinity active in our blessing. The Father has loved me, His Eternal Son has died for me, and His Holy Spirit comes and dwells in me. "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Can you unfurl that blessed flag of testimony? "We have seen and do testify." "I do not say much about these things," you reply. I can tell you the reason thereof, you do not know much about them, but God would have you know and enjoy them.

Christianity consists in knowing and believing God. Mark these words: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (ver. 16). Love is a wonderful place to be brought into and to dwell in. Again, "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have

boldness in the day of judgment" (ver. 17). Think of it. You think of the day of judgment. You say, "I thought I should be afraid." No, you are to have boldness. Why? "Because as he is, so are we, in this world" (ver. 17). That is where the gospel brings you. "As he is." Who? Christ. As He now is, risen from the dead in life, righteousness, and acceptance before God, so is the believer. Life, peace, power, and boldness, belong to the Christian. These wonderful blessings the gospel brings to us.

Possibly you will ask, how do we get them? Through simply believing the love of God. "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we, in this world." Take hold of those nine monosyllables. If there be a doubting person reading this paper, you get hold of them. "As he is." Who? The risen Saviour. The risen, triumphant Victor. "As he is," says the Holy Ghost, "so are we." Who are the "we"? All who believe. I am in the "we," are not you? But when is that true? When we come to glory? No. Listen. "In this world." It is now. Just where we are. Here. "As he is, so are we, in this world." That is where the gospel puts you. It puts you in touch with Christ. It is nothing but love.

I do not wonder that the apostle now adds, "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (ver. 18). You say, "My love to Him is not perfect." Quite true, and it

never will be. It is His love to us that is perfect, not ours to Him. What does that perfect love do? It casts out fear, and the consequence is: "We love him, because he first loved us" (ver. 19). When His love gets in, the fear goes out. There is an old saying, "When poverty comes in at the door, love goes out at the window." I like to say, "When God's love comes in at the door, fear will go out at the window." It will never be seen more.

When you get the sense, "God loves me," then fear goes out, and you can truly say, "I am loved of God." I can quite understand the Holy Ghost saying in the closing epistle of the New Testament, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20, 21). That is, looking for the moment when Jesus will come back and take us to the spot where He is. Love manifested, perceived, and enjoyed by the Holy Ghost is really Christianity.

Reader, do you not think it is worth while being a Christian? I do. I recommend all young people to start with the Lord at once. Oh, what a wonderful thing to be for the Lord in the scene out of which He has been cast, and to have the privilege of testifying of His love to those round about you. God help you to know what it is to have life, peace, power, and boldness, and to pass along witnessing of these blessings, till Jesus come. W. T. P. W.

INVESTIGATE!

NOT long ago I was passing through one of the principal streets of London when a striking advertisement caught my eye. Printed in very large letters, and running the whole height of a hoarding quite fifteen feet high, it must have attracted universal attention. It ran as follows:—

INVESTIGATE! INVESTIGATE!! INVESTIGATE!!!
Investigate what? Well, if I had passed that way a few days later I should probably have seen the space occupied with details of that which was to be investigated, but as I had not opportunity to do so, that is exactly what I don't know.

However, leaving the advertisement aside, I write this little paper to ring this thrice-repeated cry into your ears. Whatever you may be—high-born or low-born, religious or irreligious, refined or rude,—this is the word for you. Indeed, I would that it passed as a watchword from mouth to mouth, throughout the millions of our race.

But again you ask, Investigate what? Ah! this time I can tell you. .

Investigate the stability of the foundation on which you build your hopes for eternity. Investigate that you may ascertain exactly how you stand in reference to God just now. Investigate the end of the journey of life, which fast approaches.

Ten thousand human beings start together on life's

journey. Picture to yourself the throng. You and I are amongst that number. Ten years elapse and at least one-third have gone. The years roll on and only half are now upon the road. The ranks thin with increasing rapidity, many are growing weary and lie down to rise no more. At threescore and ten a brave band of four hundred struggle on. At ninety, a mere handful—thirty tottering patriarchs—remain. Year after year they fall. Perhaps *one*—a lonely marvel—lingers till the century is over. We look again, and the journey of life is finished.

And then eternity. Investigate!

Do not turn aside from this. If you do, whatever your professions may be, we shall become suspicious that there is something wrong. When the heads of large business houses manifest a strange aversion to having their books examined by competent accountants, they always make people uneasy as to their financial stability.

If a true believer, you can welcome it. Investigation will only prove afresh the security of your blessing.

If an unbeliever, you have nothing to fear. It will simply disclose your danger in the presence of that precious Saviour, the Lord Jesus, who waits to be gracious.

How shall we set about it? Well, the only reliable way is to call in the great authority on such subjects, the Word of God, and to thankfully welcome the light that it sheds.

What saith the Scripture? This: "There is no

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difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 22, 23).

This verse reminds me of the Rontgen or X-rays, now so largely used by the medical profession, and for this reason. They possess, as you doubtless know, the peculiar property of being able to throw light on things beneath the surface. Beneath them flesh and blood become almost transparent, the bones and any foreign matters embedded in the flesh become clearly seen. Now what the Rontgen rays would do for your body, this verse will do for your soul.

You may be moral, honest, and religious, then externally there is a great difference between you and the immoral, the dishonest and the irreligious. Apply our verse. Ah! it cuts to the foundation. It lays bare the true nature of your heart and unerringly pronounces, "*There is no difference.*" Why? For two reasons:—

1st—*All have sinned.*

2nd—*All have come short of God's glory.*

That is, *you* have sinned. Do you deny it? You dare not—that is, if you are honest as I have supposed. You have come short of God's glory, you fail to answer to God's requirements.

Pause! and God grant you, my reader, to weigh this fact aright.

You have never done anybody any harm! Perhaps so, but you come "short of the glory of God."

You have always been upright and respectable. Yes, but you come "short of the glory of God."

You do the best you can, are religious, have been baptized, and take the sacrament. Yes ; but, if still unconverted, you come “short of the glory of God.”

What then are your hopes for eternity? *Nil!*

And how do you stand in reference to God? A sinner unable to meet His righteous requirements.

And what will be the end of the journey of *your* life? The judgment of God.

Reader! I pen these words out of love for your precious soul, and earnestly I beg you to turn to Christ, for again it is written—

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8).

Ah! let this verse shine like a ray of light into your soul, not to expose, but to save you. Like sunshine, it combines both light and warmth.

Supposing a man stood before you, the picture of misery, because hopelessly involved in debt, and you were able to assure him that his creditor, far from being incensed at his inability to pay, was full of compassion for him, and most desirous to release him if it could be righteously done. You would kindle hope in that man’s breast. And if again you met him, and could tell him on good authority of a transaction which had righteously settled his debts, he would exchange his hope for a joyful certainty. This verse contains two similar facts—

1st—God’s love TOWARD us.

2nd—Christ’s death FOR us.

God loves you. It is no mere sentiment on His part, nor a passing emotion, but a deep unalterable stream of compassion. He loves you as you are, and He loves you in spite of what you are; circumstances can never alter this glorious fact.

Do you doubt this? If so, then you will only land yourself in uncertainty and gloom. Perhaps you will answer that all your experiences seem to deny it. That may be, but then the fault lies with your experiences and not with God. They have not been long enough. Half-way through his experience, Job would have spoken like that. But the "end" to which God brought Job justified the path by which He took him. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas. v. 2).

There is no greater mistake than that of judging God's love by our feelings towards Him. A man put on the weathercock of his barn the inscription, "God is love." Said one to him, "Do you mean to say that God's love is as changeable as the wind?" "No!" said the man, "I mean that God *is* love whichever way the wind blows." And that witness is blessedly true.

Christ has died for us. Apart from this there is no salvation. Make no mistake on this point, for frantic efforts are being made to-day to "evolve" a gospel in which Christ's death shall be conspicuous by its absence. I feel it a solemn duty to faithfully warn you in the clearest possible language that to refuse or neglect Christ's death as the ground of justi-

fication, and to rest upon anything else, is to court disaster, and ensure an eternity of hopeless damnation.

And mark, it was "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is, Christ's death avails for you just where and as you are. Nothing is demanded from you, neither prayers nor works nor self-improvement, no qualification is needed to recommend you to the Saviour, but the fact of your being a sinner.

Both these—the love of God, and the death of Christ—are for you. Because God loved you He delivered up His blessed Son to death, so that, the claims of righteousness being satisfied, He might be raised for your justification and God's love find its full delight in the blessing of your soul.

Remember, then, the love of God towards you is *the source* of all your blessing: the death of Christ for you *the basis* of all your blessing.

Let us now consult the great authority as to the way of salvation. It is written—

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

According to these verses two things upon our side are necessary if we are to be saved—

1st—*Belief with the heart.*

2nd—*Confession with the mouth.*

Oh! believe me, the cold belief of creed and dogma

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will procure you absolutely nothing, but the faith which springs from a burdened conscience and a trembling heart secures eternal blessing.

“God hath raised him from the dead.” Let faith lay hold of that. It means the complete discharge of every sin, every-claim, every liability.

1st—*God glorified.*

2nd—*Sin discharged.*

The Victor Himself is now crowned with glory.

Once lay hold of that, and you will find no difficulty in confessing Him as Lord with your mouth. It will be but the outward expression of an inward joy.

“Oh! sinner, confess Him, the throne-seated Lord,
And thou shalt be with Him where He is adored.”

F. B. H.

**“THE BLOOD HAS SETTLED
EVERYTHING.”**

CALLED to the death-bed of a dear relative of mine some little time ago, I shall never forget his last words to me before he passed from time into eternity—“absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

We could not call it death, because he simply fell asleep in Jesus. After fifty-eight years of this life, during over thirty of which he had been a Christian, he gave this beautiful testimony before leaving us, “*The blood has settled everything.*”

Dear reader, think of the words of this dying man just passing into eternity. He did not leave this question of settlement to the last moment—he was a wise man, it was all settled between God and his soul years before—so, when the call came, he was ready, everything was settled. Now let me ask you this question: has the blood settled everything for you? if not, why not? Oh! precious blood! What a debt you owe! True, you may not owe your neighbour anything, but what about your God, your life, your sins, those slighted invitations, your precious but neglected immortal soul? How the debt piles up, does it not? Now you need a settlement, there is no doubt about that. If I owed you a thousand pounds and had not one penny to pay, but a kind friend paid it for me, that would *settle it*.

Peter, writing by the power of the Spirit of God, says, “Forasmuch as ye *know* ye were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.” So the precious blood of Christ has *settled* it. Do you believe that? The one of whom we are writing knew it by simple faith in the Word of the Living God, so passed out of time into eternity, without a doubt or a fear, with this sweet testimony upon his lips, “The blood has settled everything.”

Dear reader, how will you meet death? You cannot get away from it — any moment it may overtake you. Be wise, get a settlement *now*. Come to Jesus as a poor guilty sinner (before you

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put this little book out of your hands); He will receive you, and wash away your sins by His own precious blood. Then everything will be settled for time and eternity.

“Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Let it make thee whole,
Let it flow in mighty cleansing
O'er thy soul.”

J. H. F.

 CHRIST'S ALL-PRECIOUS BLOOD.

GOD is holy, and man is a sinner. Hence it is utterly impossible that man can dwell with God unless he be first cleansed from sin. Many and varied are man's thoughts as to *how*. In God's revelation of Himself and His ways alone, that is, in the Scriptures, can we find the solution of the question. The unerring testimony of the Word of God is clear and sure.

1. *What* is it that cleanseth? From one end of the Scripture to the other, speaking broadly, we find the same testimony. *Nothing but blood*. In figure, shadow, and type the Old Testament abounds with it. The whole system of Judaism is based on it. Every sacrifice under the law witnesses to it. On the ground of death and blood shedding alone can any sinner of Adam's race stand before God. In the earliest dealings of God with fallen man, and throughout his history, the same unerring testi-

mony is found, that without blood no sinner is clean in His sight. Self-judgment and confession of sin have their place, and a God-fearing walk and good works follow after, but *without shedding of blood is no remission of sins* (Heb. ix. 22). It is *the blood* which cleanseth.

2. *What* blood cleanseth? None but *the blood of Jesus Christ*, God's Son (1 John i. 7). Not all the blood of beasts slain on the Jewish altars ever took a speck of sin away from a single sinner before the eyes of God. The value of their blood was only typical, as to their standing before and approach to God, as men on earth. *For heaven* no blood but *the blood of Jesus* could possibly suffice. Had the blood of bulls and goats availed, why did Jesus die? Why was His blood shed? The answer is simple and plain. The blood of Jesus Christ His (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin. All the offerings of men's doings, from Cain onwards, until this day are *utterly unavailing to cancel sin*. All the offerings of blood from Abel's firstlings of his flock down to the very last that has been or ever will be offered are *equally so*. Nothing but blood can cleanse from or cancel sin, and none other than the precious blood of Jesus.

3. *Who is He* whose blood cleanseth? It is the blood of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures say that He is *God's Son*. God would cleanse sinners that they might dwell with Him in glory. Neither works nor the blood of bulls and goats could do it; hence, when the fulness of time was come, God sent His

Son. The second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son, who ever dwelleth in the Father's bosom, became Man. "A body hast thou prepared *me*." "And they shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." And Peter confessed Him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is the Lamb of God's providing, a lamb without blemish and without spot. He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God, was accepted, and forsaken of God as the holy sin-bearer on the cross. He gave up His life. *His precious blood was shed. Without it there is no remission of sins. With it there is cleansing from all sin. It is the precious, all-cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son.*

4. *Whom* does His blood cleanse? *Sinners who believe.* It was shed *for all.* All have need of its cleansing power, for all have sinned. There are great moral differences, no doubt, among men, and a greater or lesser degree of guilt. But whether we have sinned ten times or a million, in thought, word, or deed, all alike need its efficiency. No sinner ever did, no sinner does, no sinner ever will enter the glory of God without being cleansed by the blood of Christ. Men trust in themselves, their works, their religion in a thousand different ways, but all is utterly unavailing to commend ourselves to God. He has *given us all up* as hopeless and worthless, and has *given His Son to die for us*—lost, ruined, and hell-deserving sinners. And the greater sinner you are, the greater your need of an

interest in His blood, and the greater the glory to God, when you trust therein and are cleared thereby.

But *you* may be a most moral, careful, religious man, and think you are much less a sinner than thousands around, and yet, when you get into the light of the presence of God, and see yourself there, you will be led to loathe your self-righteousness, as much as you thought you loathed grievous sin. And so you will learn your deep need too, of being cleansed by Christ's blood, as much as the greatest sinner out of hell. The blood of Christ cleanses *sinner*s, sinners of all kinds, great and small, moral, religious, worldly, wicked, all. All, without exception, need to realise its cleansing power to reach the glory of God.

5. *What does Jesus' blood cleanse from? It cleanses from sin.* Now the deeper sense you have of what sin is, the deeper will be your joy and peace, when you are cleansed from it by the blood of Christ. You will never learn the gravity of sin, or the extent of your guilt, by looking at yourself or at others. We all are sinners, and have never known God and His holiness, hence are slow to form a just estimate of it. You will best learn the gravity of sin through what it cost God to put it away. Nothing but the death and blood-shedding of His own Son could accomplish it. The sorrows of the cross, when the Son of God, made sin, endured the judgment, the forsaking of God: the bitter and agonising cry of the Son of the Blessed, as He drained the awful cup, should speak to you, and

humble you to the very dust. All He passed through, to meet the depths of your great need, should speak with power to your soul of the terrible state man had fallen into, under the mastery of sin. Sin is a foul blot on God's creation, and on God's creature, man. You are inextricably fouled and corrupted by it. But Christ's blood can cleanse you, as it has thousands, yea, millions of others. Nothing else can. It was shed to cleanse from sin. Avail yourself then of its cleansing efficacy and power, and you will be clean in the sight of God, and rendered meet for His blessed presence and glory.

6. *How much sin* does His blood cleanse from? *From all sin.* You may see that the blood can cleanse from sin, but may be Satan comes with all his power against you, and your conscience, as you look back upon a more or less misspent life, responds that his accusations are *only too true*. And it seems *too good to be true* that you can be cleansed from all, by the blood alone. Your inmost thought is, Surely I must in some way or other be better first. Nay, that is *impossible*. To be right with God you must be cleansed from all sin; and your best efforts could assuredly never do that. If *you* be satisfied with your efforts, God is not, for you are shutting out the blood. Nay, nay, we repeat it, and press it home upon you, you need the blood,—the blood that cleanses,—that cleanses from sin,—that cleanses from *all* sin. Every spot, every stain, every speck is for ever removed from before the eye of God the moment you trust in the *all-cleansing* blood of Jesus Christ,

His Son. Infinite mercy, wondrous grace, boundless love, the blood, *the precious blood*, the blood of the Lamb of God's providing cleanses us from all—from every sin. A sinner cleansed therein is whiter than snow for ever before God. Not one whit better in himself, but clear and clean before God. It all lies in the infinite value of the precious blood, shed once for all. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses *us* from *all* sin. May God give you to know this for yourself, that peace thereby may be yours now, and glory with Christ hereafter.

7. *When* does His blood cleanse? *Now*. Not in the future, but *now*. This is the last point we would press upon you, one that all seem so prone to forget. To-morrow may be too late for ever. God's time for the sinner to be cleansed is *now*. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Another moment may be too late. Christ is coming, and death too is here. Your life hangs on a thread. At any moment your summons might come. You have no lease here for the future. God, who gave you a soul, will demand it. He *may* do so *to-day*. How does it stand with you? Be honest with yourself, in the light of God, and an eternal future. Are you cleansed from all sin before Him, by the blood of Christ? Or are you not? If not, *now* is the moment to trust Him. Poor, troubled, sin-sick sinner, venture your all on the blood, venture *now*.

This may be your last opportunity. The day of God's grace is running rapidly by. The Lord is about

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to rise up and close the door, and judge the ungodly. But as a Saviour, He sits at God's right hand, and *as a Saviour for you*. He says to *you*, as it were, in this little paper, “Behold My blood, shed for rebels, shed for sinners, shed for all, shed for *you*. Trust that *now*, and it shall cleanse you *now* from all sin; and shortly I will claim you as My blood-bought and cleansed one for Myself, to dwell with Me in glory for ever. Trust then this moment, and be happy, and *follow Me* through this world for My glory, till you dwell with Me in the bright world where I have prepared a place for you to everlasting days.”

E. H. C.

 “HEALED THEM ALL.”

“And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.”—LUKE vi. 17-19.

WHAT a lovely scene must this have been! It is redolent of the grace of Christ. Divine fulness meets all kinds of human misery, and absolutely delivers from Satan's power. The heart loves to dwell on such a picture. Read it again: “The *whole* multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them

all." Not one went away unblessed. Such is ever the way of Christ and the effect of the touch of faith.

During the past summer this passage of Scripture has been much before my mind in bright contrast with that which daily met my eyes at Neuenahr, a pleasant spa in Germany, whose agreeable waters have high renown for curative power in many a malady, as I personally proved. In a large and beautifully shaded park stood a lofty and spacious drinking hall, whence arose the crystal waters to which—glass in hand—all repaired who sought their healing virtues. Over the entrance in bold characters was the inscription—

“SALUTI ET SOLATIO ÆGRORUM.”

This cheerful welcome—which may be translated, “*For the health and comfort of the sick*”—was doubtless well intentioned by the owners of the springs, and gave heart of courage to the thousands of sufferers who—having paid for the privilege—sedulously drank in *hope* of cure. They had come from all quarters of the globe. A strange medley of tongues fell on the ear. More varied still were the maladies they *hoped* to be cured of, and as, day by day, I watched them, and saw in many a case that after days and weeks of steady use of the waters, hope gave place to chagrin, as no healing took place, the “healed them *all*” of Luke vi. came again and again to mind.

One could not but contrast the eager desire that men manifest to have the body healed, and the

pains and expense they will incur to gain this end, with the widespread apathy that, alas! exists in regard of the soul and its diseases.

Reader, what about your soul? Say, have you yet gone to the One and only spring of healing for its maladies? Are you a sin-sick person? Has your condition, as a sinner in the sight of God, ever troubled you? It well may, for though sin certainly has pleasures, it has penalties too—penalties that are eternal. "The pleasures of sin" are but for "a season," and though you "*enjoy*" that season (see Heb. xi. 24-26), do not forget that you must *endure* the penalties for eternity.

This makes the matter of the healing of the soul deeply serious, and important beyond all comparison. In view of this the gospel addresses you with tidings of Christ that may well win your confidence. When He was here on earth we see what took place. Multitudes were blessed by Him. Then He healed the body, to-day He is the great soul-healer.

Notice what took place in Luke vi.: "A great multitude . . . came to *hear* him, and *to be healed* of their diseases . . . and *they were healed.*" How did it happen? Observe and imitate the needy crowd who came to Him. "The whole multitude sought *to touch him*; for there went virtue out of him and HEALED THEM ALL." No disappointed one was to be seen in that host. Jesus never failed the heart that trusted Him. The touch of faith then always secured the needed blessing, for "there went virtue out of him and *healed them all.*"

But has He changed since that day? Not one whit; and *all* who trust Him to-day find that "virtue" still flows, and "healing" still is tasted.

Have you ever noticed, my reader, the way the Spirit of God applies this "healing" to the soul? Listen. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were *healed*. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet. ii. 24, 25).

The way Jesus saves sinners is very simple. On the cross He "bare our sins." There He took the stripes they deserved, and demanded at God's righteous hand. God being glorified, and sins put away, the One who did this wondrous work has been raised from the dead, and is set down in glory. The Holy Ghost has come down from an exalted Christ to turn the sinner's eye to Him. The moment you trust Him, or in faith touch Him, virtue flows from Him, and you learn the sweet truth "by whose stripes ye were *healed*."

None of those who touched the blessed Lord in Luke vi. had any doubt as to their cure. He *healed* them. His work was perfect, His cures effectual and abiding. How could they doubt? Why then should you—if you trust Him—any longer doubt the forgiveness of your sins? Away with all doubt. Give Christ the credit and the thanks He deserves. Then live for the One who has died for you.

W. T. P. W.

JUSTIFICATION.

THE source of it—God’s grace. “Being *justified freely by his grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. iii. 24).

The ground of it—Christ’s work. “Being now *justified by his blood*” (Rom. v. 9).

The instrument of it—Faith. “Therefore being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1).

The evidence of it—Works. “Ye see then how that *by works* a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jas. ii. 24).

WHAT JUSTIFICATION MEANS.

It is that act by which God accounts the believer righteous in His holy presence. He is cleared by virtue of the death of Jesus of every charge of guilt. Scripture amply proves this:—

“To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for *righteousness*” (Rom. iv. 5).

“By him (Jesus) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts xiii. 39).

Nothing can be plainer than this.

THE SOURCE OF IT.

If only the anxious sinner got one real idea of what God’s grace means, it would relieve him once and for ever from connecting his blessing with his own merit

or goodness or worthiness in the least degree. Grace is so foreign to the natural heart of man that it is difficult to find words to express it. It is as difficult as putting God's great ocean into man's tiny tea-spoon.

God's grace is unmerited favour. It expresses itself in the fact that God's attitude towards the sinner is irrespective of anything favourable in the sinner. It is blessing without conditions.

Queen Elizabeth once wanted to attach conditions to a free pardon, but was met by the indignant response, "Grace that is fettered by conditions is no grace at all." Our repentance cannot demand the blessing. Our good works lay God under no obligation to bless us. God's grace is the outcome of His own goodness, and His love is the great spring, the original cause of it all. What wonder that justification is outside all our powers to obtain. It is God's pure sovereign gift.

THE GROUND OF IT—CHRIST'S WORK.

If the believing sinner is to be justified, God must act *righteously*. The work of Christ secures this. All the claims of holiness and righteousness were met at the cross of Calvary. Hence the believer is justified by the blood of Jesus. It is the bulwark and glory and necessity of the gospel that God is "just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

Oh! the rest of conscience that is the happy

portion of the believer when he learns that every question of righteousness and holiness has been settled once and for ever at the cross, and that believing in Jesus he has a perfect standing before God.

It has often been said that the work of Christ—

1. Satisfies God.
2. Silences Satan.
3. Saves the sinner.

THE INSTRUMENT OF IT—FAITH.

How may I get the blessing? is the anxious inquiry of many. By simple faith, is the answer. Alas! people stumble over the very simplicity of the gospel. "If only I could *feel* it, I should be sure," says many an anxious soul. But we do not act like that in the ordinary affairs of life. For instance, suppose most unexpectedly you received a letter from a well-known firm of lawyers announcing that a vast fortune had been left you by a distant relative. I could imagine your saying, "Well, I am a wealthy man now, but I don't *feel* it." You would, however, KNOW that you were a wealthy man. Faith in the letter would lead you justly to that conclusion, and your not realising it, or, in other words, your not feeling it, would not alter your knowledge that you were a rich man.

On the other hand, suppose you woke up one morning and astonished your friends by announcing that you were *sure* that you had a large fortune because you *felt* you had. I can imagine their looking scared, and sending for the doctor at once to

see if you would not be safer in a lunatic asylum. You understand the situation.

Remember feelings always *follow* faith, but are absolutely unreliable as a ground of assurance. Do you believe in Christ? Are all your hopes in Him? If so, then surely this is enough for you. "All that believe *are* justified from all things."

You only need one good title-deed to an estate, and surely one text is amply sufficient to give you peace and assurance.

THE EVIDENCE OF IT—WORKS.

In the common affairs of life it is seen over and over again how intimately faith and works are linked up. For instance a husband goes to a foreign land in search of work. He succeeds, and sends a sum of money to his wife to enable her to settle her affairs in the old country and take steamer to the country where he is. If the wife has faith that her husband wishes her to join him, her faith will express itself by her taking active steps to that end; in other words, she will express her faith by her works.

So with the scriptural illustration given in James ii. The apostle Paul writes, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Abraham had faith in God, and God justified him on that ground. Years afterwards his faith was put to the test. God told Abraham to offer up his son—the child of promise. The writer, James, says, "Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" And

he adds, "And the scripture was fulfilled which sayeth, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness."

JAMES DOES NOT CONTRADICT PAUL.

Evidently James did not think he was contradicting Paul, but instead was confirming him. How was that? Simply that Abraham confessed to have faith in God. The time came when God put that faith to the test for Abraham's own good, and as an example for us all. Abraham proved that he had faith in God by doing what he told him without question, though it seemed contrary to nature to extinguish the light of his eyes upon the sacrificial altar, and to put to death the son in whom all the hopes of the fulfilment of God's promise were wrapped.

So with the believer. He proves by his works that he has faith in God. Has God blessed him and given him a hope of heaven? Then he will be a stranger and pilgrim in this world. He will prove by his good works that he has faith in God.

Two verses in close proximity in Ephesians ii. put the relation between "*no works*" and "*good works*" very beautifully. We read: "*Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*" (vers. 9, 10).

Fellow-believer, let us see to it that our works—the evidence of our faith—justify us, yet let it ever

be clear in the soul that "to him that *worketh* NOT, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," and let our "good works" be, as James puts it, the fulfilment of this.

How true it is, "His glory is great in thy salvation" (Ps. xxi. 5).
A. J. P.

"'TIS ONLY A RISK."

"I'LL be away soon enough."

"Where to?" was the question asked of a man who was on his death-bed some time ago.

"Oh, to heaven or hell, for, after all, 'tis only a risk."

"There need be no risk," was the reply, and then did the servant of God seek to present to the dying man the value of Christ and His work, being in deep anxiety for the eternal welfare of the one whose life was fast ebbing away.

"It is beautiful; I've read the story many a time; aye, beautiful," said he, and that was all. One or two more remarks finished the conversation, which concluded with the servant of God appealing to the man to trust Christ who alone could save.

To leave the question of salvation to one's death-bed is not only selfish, but extremely dangerous, for sudden deaths are no unusual occurrence in our midst.

We have many cases of peace through believing recorded in God's Word, but only one of conversion at the eleventh hour, namely, the thief on the cross. He made no mistake, nor ran any risk. He confessed Jesus as Lord, and what was the result: Jesus said unto him, “ Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise ” (Luke xxiii. 43). One such case is there in Scripture that none should despair, *one only*, that none should presume. There are, and have been conversions at the eleventh hour, but how selfish, how mean, how cowardly it is for one to cry to God in the eve of life, when perhaps the idea of judgment or hell is looming in the distance.

Generally speaking such are death-beds where trouble and pain have racked both body and mind to such an extent that prayerful communion with God is rarely possible, and often out of the question. Rowland Hill called such death-bed conversions, “ Death-bed fear of hell and damnation.” He was right.

If unsaved, dear reader, be persuaded to come to Jesus now, and learn, “ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation ” (Rom. x. 10, 11). Do not risk a lost eternity.

P.

“A MAN OF THE WORLD.”

“**B**UT, my dear sir, these things do not apply to me; I am a man of the world, you know. My cousin, A. M —, is, as you say, a splendid fellow, and, though he is an evangelist, there is no one whose company I enjoy more than his. And then there are my sisters, I know they are right. I have had a great deal of light set before me, yet here I am a man of the world, as I said, with no wish to be any other just at present.”

“‘Just at present.’ Then you do think of altering your course some day?”

“Oh yes, I’m not going to be such a fool as to neglect my soul altogether. I hope to turn to God before I die.”

This “man of the world” was, while speaking, on the rails to join a sporting friend for a fortnight’s holiday. A hale hearty man he then appeared, with the flush of health upon his cheeks, but disease was already sapping his vitals.

But what a boast, “a man of the world” that had slain the prophets of God! that had beheaded the forerunner of Jesus! and has now consummated its guilt by crucifying the peerless Son of God upon a gibbet between two thieves. Such is the world, and Scripture says, “The whole world lieth in the wicked one.” *Who is that?* “Satan,” “The god of this world!” (2 Cor. iv. 4).

Don’t boast of your liberty then, O man of the

"A MAN OF THE WORLD."

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world—you are the *dupe of the devil* and the slave of Satan!! And, what is more, you are the

"ENEMY OF GOD."

A strong indictment, you say. No stronger, I assure you, than Scripture puts it; "For whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God:" (Jas. iv. 4).

Only a few weeks more and this "man of the world" found himself suffering from a disease, which, the doctor assured him, would end in death. Now, when he could have the world no longer, he, according to his word, turned to God and prayed for forgiveness, and,

OH, AMAZING GRACE!

he was forgiven, and rejoiced in the knowledge of it. For long years he had known that God could righteously justify the ungodly through the work of Christ, but still went on enjoying "the pleasures of sin," and at the very last turned to God as a sinner to become the subject of His grace!

Do you say, "That is just as it should be"?

I am amazed at your low thought of righteousness! What would you think of a naval officer, trained by the British Government, if he deserted and spent his years treacherously playing into the hands of every enemy of his country; and then, in old age, returned and asked for a pension? You would despise him. Of course you would!

But this is exactly what you are doing, if you are

thinking of turning to God for mercy, with the miserable fag end of your life! Would you think of handing to your visitor the most faded, drooping rose you could find in your garden? "Of course not," you reply.

And yet you are thinking of treating God in this way! Did you so treat your friend you would account him righteous if he spurned the offer of that faded rose? Take care lest you should miss your opportunity while you are young. "Christ died for the ungodly," and has become the "Author of eternal salvation unto all them *that obey him*" (Heb. v. 9). Turn to Him for forgiveness and salvation now, and He will receive you.

But if you go on in your sins and in allegiance to the world which has crucified Christ, your sovereign, the devil, who has succeeded so well with his words "Too soon!" may blast your soul throughout the endless ages of eternity, and whisper in your ear at the close "Too late! too late!" The writer witnessed a short time ago the distress of a man whose bitter wail was "Too late! too late!"

Listen to the Word of God, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

"Into the depths of endless woe,
Rejecters of the Saviour go;
Forbid the thought that you, who read,
Should longer have no sense of need
Of th' only way to realms of bliss—
O sinner! hast thou thought of this?"

E. E. C.

'TWEEN LONDON AND PLYMOUTH;
OR, "MAN'S EXTREMITY IS GOD'S
OPPORTUNITY."

THE little hamlet of M——, situated in the county of Surrey, consists of a few scattered houses, inhabited by hard-working men and women, and is far away from the rush and din of this busy world, being more than four miles from the nearest station. There lives in this quiet village an old widow whose heart the Lord opened to receive His love and salvation; and having received the grace of God herself, she desired that her neighbours also might have an opportunity of hearing "the old, old story," and has for many years held her humble cottage at the disposal of the Lord, so that His servants might preach the gospel there.

For several months I had the privilege of proclaiming the way of salvation under her roof; and though our numbers were small, seldom exceeding a dozen, yet God was with us, and I believe almost every one who attended received definite blessing.

In the little company gathered together to hear the Word was sometimes to be seen the widow's son, Charlie. I well remember his manly form and fine open countenance, but his pallid face gave warning of the disease that was working within—that terrible foe, consumption. But though it was evident that he was marked out for an early death, he would not allow any one to speak personally to him

about the vital question of his soul's salvation. Our only resource was to leave him with the Lord, trusting that He would win this soul also as one more trophy of His grace.

After I left the neighbourhood, Charlie grew rapidly worse, and at last the doctor told him that the only thing that could save his life was a sea voyage. Having friends in Australia, he determined to go there, and some of the gentry in the neighbourhood very kindly supplied the funds needed for his outfit and passage.

An artist might paint that touching scene—the widow's last farewell—he might depict on his canvas the old thatched cottage, the gravelled path, and the aged grey-haired mother, standing at the wicket gate, watching the form of her son as he passed down the country lane; but no words can describe the sorrow that filled her heart at that moment, for she knew she would never see her son again on earth, and, alas! she had no assurance of seeing him in heaven.

Charlie's sister accompanied him to London, and on the deck of the ocean-bound steamer the final farewell was spoken. They remained together till the bell rang, warning all visitors to leave the ship, and soon after the anchor was weighed, the hawsers cast off, and slowly the great steamer bore away its freight of human souls on its long ocean journey.

The sister made her way through London intending to return home that night, for country maiden though she was, the busy streets and gay sights of the great city had no attraction for her. Her thoughts were

following her brother in his voyage over the sea, wondering whether he would safely reach the other side; and still more did she think of his far more important voyage over the sea of time to the great eternity beyond, and oh! how she longed for some assurance that he was bound for the right haven, the glory-land above.

Occupied with these thoughts, she took little notice of the bustle and confusion all around her, till, attempting to cross the space in front of Charing Cross Station, she was knocked down by a passing cab. Much shaken, but happily not severely hurt, she felt quite unfit to travel that night, and returned to her lodging in London. All that night she could get no sleep, but continually during the silent hours she thought she heard a voice saying to her, "Go to Plymouth and see your brother again."

As the morning dawned this impression was so strong that she felt she must act upon it, and trusting that the good hand of God was guiding her, she took the long railway journey to Plymouth, and there found that the steamer was expected early the following morning.

It was hardly daybreak when she was down at the harbour again, and finding that the vessel was lying at anchor four miles out, procured a boat and was rowed to the steamer.

When she entered the cabin where her brother was lying, the shock was almost too much for him. He threw his arms around her neck and wept tears of joy, and begged her not to leave him, for he

knew now that he was dying, the ship's doctor having told him that it was impossible for him to reach Australia. With womanly tenderness the kind-hearted sailors brought Charlie on deck on his mattress, and let him down into the tender which was lying beside the ship. Thus they brought him ashore, and the sister was able to take him to the temporary lodging she had procured, and here the last two days of his earthly life were spent.

Now she heard how God had answered the many prayers of mother and daughter, and in His grace had visited that lonely traveller between London and Plymouth. From his own lips she heard the story how he had fought against God, how he had resisted the gospel appeal, how he had run away from death. But when he found himself out on the wide waste of waters, alone, surrounded by strangers, confronted by the prospect of an early death and a watery grave, with no loving familiar hand to care for him, then, at that lonely hour, all his pride and self-will broke down, and having no friend on earth to turn to, he looked upward to God and cried to Him with all his heart, that He would have mercy upon him and save him, miserable broken-down sinner as he was. And the God of all grace heard, as He always does, that broken-hearted cry, and the Saviour spoke His blessed word of peace to his soul. Divine rest filled the soul of the lonely sufferer, while the heart of God rejoiced over one more sinner who had turned to Him in true repentance.

Having committed his soul to the Saviour's keep-

ing, he was able also to commit his whole path to Him, dark as it seemed to be, and graciously did the Lord answer the trust by sending his sister down to Plymouth, and giving him the opportunity of gladdening other hearts by telling with his own lips "what great things the Lord had done for him."

On receiving a telegram from her daughter the widowed mother came down to Plymouth. She arrived too late to see her son alive; but her natural sorrow was turned into heavenly joy when she heard the story of the Lord's grace to him. He left a farewell message to all his friends that he died "fully trusting in the Lord Jesus."

This simple and true story has been written first of all in the hope that it may reach the eye of some unconverted reader, who has been doing as Charlie did, *fighting against God, and refusing His message.*

May the story of God's grace and compassion lead you to cease fighting against the only One who perfectly loves you. Lay down your arms and yield to Him now, while in grace He calls you. It is far better to come to Him while you are in health and strength than to leave it till your dying hour.

While such a case as Charlie's magnifies the grace and long-suffering of God in seeking the lost sheep *until* He find it, yet how much did he lose by not turning to the Lord sooner and spending his short life in His happy service instead of fighting against Him. *For that life is only worth living which is lived for Christ.* Besides, my reader, you may never have a death-bed. Heed this warning note: "He

that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, *shall suddenly be destroyed*, and that without remedy."

But I also write in the hope that God will use this illustration of answered prayer to encourage others to continue praying for those who are near and dear to them. Dear parents, faint not, nor grow weary in your labour of love, but pray on for your sons. They need your prayers, both the unsaved and those who are saved, for the warfare is not over yet; indeed conversion is only the first skirmish, if I may say so, of a long but victorious battle with evil. Many and desperate are the attacks of the great enemy of our souls, and no one can tell the fearful struggle often going on in the hearts of Christian young men. It is a battle they must fight out alone with God, but you can mightily help by prayer.

And if this reaches the eye of some lonely one, who through weakness is not able to take an active part in the Lord's service, will you take up the blessed service of prayer (Col. iv. 12), and especially remember the lambs of the flock, that they may be preserved from the raging lion's power.

"Oh, tell through the breadth of creation
That Jesus, the Saviour, has come
To secure an eternal salvation,
A rest, and a heavenly home !

Tell him that's grown old in rebellion
That Jesus entreats him to come ;
Tell also the thoughtless and gay one ;
Tell all, that for all 'there is room.'"

S. H. P.

THE REASON WHY.

NOWADAYS people take nothing for granted. Everything must be turned inside out and rigidly scrutinised, and hence it is that no expression more frequently falls from our lips than “Why?”

I daresay you would like to know the why and wherefore of a good many things, and especially things that relate to religion.

Why on earth do people go about trying to ram religion down people’s throats by thrusting tracts into their hands?

Why? Now listen! Simply because their eyes by the grace of God have been opened to see a certain danger, both imminent and of fearful magnitude, towards which you are drifting with absolute unconcern.

Of course if you are “all right,” as you unconcernedly profess, and if the ruin of man, and death, and judgment, and hell-fire as the sinner’s doom are fables, then religion is all twaddle, and we—*i.e.*, the writer of this booklet, and the individual who put it into your hand—are, to put it mildly, an unwarrantable nuisance. But, on the other hand, if you are all wrong, and these things are facts, and not fables, then we are rendering you a true service in urging upon you, in love to your soul, the fact that there lies before you *a great collision*.

Why? Let me answer by an illustration. A few

weeks ago a party of excursionists went for a day's outing on a motor-car in the neighbourhood of Sandringham—the Norfolk home of the King—and were approaching Wolferton Station, which is situated at the foot of a very steep hill. The car had no sooner turned the crest of the hill than the driver attempted to apply his brake, but to his dismay found it out of order, and utterly useless. The terrified occupants had no other alternative but to sit still. The car swept on with ever-increasing speed until it rounded a corner which brought the railway line with its level crossing full in view, and the sight of a train on the up-line making for the same crossing, and slowing up for Wolferton Station, froze their blood, and turned their dismay into despair. They were face to face with collision.

Why? Because their paths met at a certain point.

(1.) There was a train which could not leave its appointed road, *i.e.*, the rails.

(2.) There was a motor-car which could not be stopped!

Let us in thought step into the presence of a Creator God. You and I are the creatures of His hand. We are responsible to Him, and He certainly has a right to command us, and demand subjection to His will. Moreover He can rule this world, you and me included, as He pleases, and *what* He pleases is very clearly indicated in Scripture.

“God . . . hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world *in righteousness*” (Acts xvii. 31).

The lines then on which God runs are the lines of righteousness, and from these, being what He is, He never swerves. He will take His righteous way through time and through eternity, and if in eternity mortal man is found athwart the righteousness of God, so much the worse for him. This is the God, my reader, in whose presence you are soon to stand.

Now what about yourself. One thing is certain; you are still on the journey of life. Thank God! you have not yet died in your sins.

Perhaps you are young, and still climbing up the hill. What do you live for? The pursuit of pleasure? The greed of gold? Ah! believe me, so long as your life is on the rise of the hill you may find a little passing excitement, but presently you will reach the crest. What then?

Let us face the matter plainly. They say that for the first thirty years of life a man's journey is uphill. At thirty or thereabouts a man reaches the prime of life, and for a space of about twenty years he runs along a level stretch of road. After fifty he starts downhill. Slowly at first, more rapidly later, the signs of age creep on until the level crossing of death is reached.

That is the downhill journey, but what about your brakes? The fact is you have none, at least none that are of any use.

Your pleasures? They are all very well so long as you are young, but their charm soon fades away.

Your money? Very useful, no doubt, and very truly called "The provider of everything save happi-

ness, and the passport to everywhere save heaven," and yet your wealth—if you have it—cannot stave off death one hour, and the gold which by its glitter intoxicates the covetous, slips from the miser's grasp and is as valueless as mud to the man that is dead.

Your friends? They are helpless for this. They can influence you much for good or for evil. But even that decreases as life advances, and death will hush their voices for ever.

Your religion? No! If it be without Christ it is worse than useless, for having a good outward appearance it is more calculated to deceive. It has all the appearances of a good brake. Beware lest you are deceived thereby, and trusting to it, you will discover when too late that it will not act, and you are left to rush helplessly forward to your death, and to your doom.

You have no brakes! You cannot stop! If you could stop, if you could put back the wheels of time, if you could alter what you are, or undo what you have done, there would be hope; or if God were other than what He is, and ran on lines other than what He does, there might be some way of escape; or if His righteousness were a matter of small account so that He could alter His principles to accommodate your case, then, perhaps, collision might be averted. But, no! this cannot be. There lies before you a great collision, and who knows how soon the crash may come.

Reader! this is *the reason why* of our concern.

Now for the rest of our story.

As the motor-car swept round the curve it was seen by the driver of the train, who, suspecting that something was wrong, applied the brakes in their full power, and managed to come to a standstill in the centre of the crossing, just as the motor, with its terrified occupants, came crashing through the white gates, and shattered itself to pieces against the great hulk of his engine. The engine was, of course, unhurt, and the occupants almost miraculously escaped with severe shakings and bruising, nothing worse.

Nothing averted that collision, only its character was modified by the fact of the engine being at a standstill; but how gladly can I tell you that though you must meet God and stand before Him face to face, yet He stands still, so to speak, and if you but rightly approach Him, what would have been a disastrous collision may become a most blessed welcome.

God has made it possible for you to be saved, but not without very great and personal cost to Himself, even the gift of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. For if the penalty which your sins deserve is to be averted, and salvation becomes yours, then something or some one must be found to satisfy the claims of divine righteousness, and at the same time come down to you in all your need.

One Person is needed—The Lord Jesus Christ.

One thing is needed—His precious Blood.

And, thank God, about these there is not the least shadow of doubt. Both are *real*. The Saviour has stooped from heaven to this earth of sin and sorrow.

Having come, He took His toilsome journey of life through shame and reproach right on to the cross of Calvary, and there His precious blood was shed.

“Then onward to the cross,
Through suffering, shame, and loss,
The Man of Sorrows wends His way,
To sheathe the judgment sword,
The wrath He there endured,
And now is crowned in brightest day.”

The claims of righteousness are met, and now it is possible for God—in the words of our illustration—to run on the rails of righteousness without collision with you, the guilty sinner, if you on your side are characterised by two things—

1. *Repentance toward God.*

2. *Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.* (See Acts xx. 21.)

Repent! Why? Because nothing else can stop the inevitable march of doom.

Repent! But what is it to repent? It is to change your mind about yourself, and your whole history, in a spirit of self-judgment. It is to have a collision with *yourself now* instead of with God hereafter. Your life has been defiled, your sins are many, your soul is precious, your moments are fleeting. God grant that you may repent toward Him, and then believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Faith toward Christ.” What is that? Let me answer in an illustrative way by saying that every sovereign has two sides. One bears the likeness of the King’s head upon it, and is called the obverse; the

other a device known as "St George and the dragon," called the reverse. Repentance and faith are the two sides of the gospel coin. Repentance the reverse. Faith the obverse.

When you repent, you reverse all your previous opinions, and pass a vote of no confidence in yourself.

When you turn in faith to Christ, you pass a vote of confidence in Him.

And you may well do so. Think, my friend, of His claims upon you—claims of love; claims established by the fact of His having died for you. Confide in Him you may, with perfect safety, for God has confided to Him everything.

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (John iii. 35).

See to it that you rest where God rests, and you will become possessor of a rest which nothing can disturb, and become one of those concerning whom the Holy Ghost testifies—

"Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17), and then you will be able truly to sing—

"Oh, Infinite Redeemer,
I bring no other plea;
Because Thou dost invite me,
I cast myself on Thee!
Because Thou dost accept me,
I love and I adore!
Because *Thy* love constraineth,
I'll praise Thee evermore!"

F. B. H.

HOW THE LORD SAVED A POLICEMAN.

I WAS born in the "lang toon," Kirkcaldy, Fife, forty-seven years ago. My parents were not Christians, and at the age of five my father left the town for farm work. Fortunately for me the farmer and his wife were Christians, and every Sunday morning the latter gathered all the children—her own and those of the workers—and held a Sunday-school. There we learned Scripture passages and Psalms, and the 23rd comes quite clear yet to my mind. I believe the good seed—the Word of God—was then sown in my heart, which was to bear fruit to His glory in later years.

After a few years' stay at that place, my father removed to a little village named Kirkland, near Leven, where he, however, died very suddenly, after a few hours' illness, and I was left, at sixteen, to be a father to the other four of our family. At the age of twenty-two I married, and shortly afterwards came to Glasgow and joined the police force in 1878.

Being inclined to live a good life, I looked around until I found a church suited to my mind at that time. I succeeded in finding this, though it was only "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." We had ten children born to us. Five were taken from us to be with the Lord, and it was through the death of the youngest that I was led to Christ, which took place in May 1896. For two nights and days baby was more or less the whole time

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in convulsion fits, and my very heart was bleeding to see it suffering so much. I prayed earnestly to God to take it to Himself or restore it to health, and I would give Him myself.

He took it, and I began to lead—as I supposed—a better life, but like others failed miserably. About three weeks after the funeral, on returning from a meeting of a friendly society, I was induced by some of my companions to enter into a public-house, and it was there God spoke to my heart and caused me to remember my promise over my dying child. I left hurriedly, resolved by God's grace never to enter such a place again, and He has kept me from it. About that time I had occasion to be in another district of the city when an old companion, a Christian fellow-constable, spoke to me about eternity. I concurred in all he said, and tried to make him believe that I was saved. After getting away from him, a voice within me said most clearly and distinctly, "You may deceive that man, but you cannot deceive Me."

I tried to turn and go back and confess what I had done, but I could not summon up courage to do so. From that date till the 25th October of that year I was more or less under conviction. That evening, after coming home from duty, and conducting a form of worship, it being Sunday, and after all the household had retired to rest, a little booklet lying near caught my eye. It turned out to be the story of a lady's conversion, and the words used for hers were also my cry unto the Lord: "O Lord,

I give myself to thee ; cast me not away." How long I was on my knees pleading with the Lord in tears I do not know, but I remember going to bed, and crying myself to sleep.

When I awakened it was time to get up to go on duty. I remembered all that had taken place the previous night, and I went to duty with a heavy heart. On reaching the office a little book caught my eye lying on a table. I lifted it and put it in the breast of my coat, and on reaching a quiet street on my beat I pulled it out, and on opening it the first words that met my eyes were "Ashamed of Jesus Christ." I was quite overcome when the truth dawned upon my mind that this was quite true. On reading further on I came upon these verses in Matthew x. 32, 33 : "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

I saw myself standing before the throne, and the Son of God sitting in judgment, but neither by look or sign did He acknowledge me. I thought my heart would break ; and on coming to myself, I resolved by God's help to confess Christ to the first man I knew. The first I met was a neighbouring constable, but he being a Roman Catholic, the devil tempted me sore not to confess to him ; and for a minute or two a terrible fight raged within me. I looked up and seemed to gather strength. Then I made after my neighbour, who had moved off

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during the interval. How I made up to him I know not—it seems to me like a dream—for my legs shook till I thought I would drop. On coming up with him, I told him I had been in a terrible fight, and that I had met the Lord in that back street, and He said to me that if I confessed Him before men, He would confess me before His Father in heaven, and I wished it to be known that from that hour I would give up the service of the devil and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. He looked at me bewildered, and I at him. The burden rolled from my heart, and a flood of joy and light filled my soul. I thought the change was in him, and the world, and he thought I was gone wrong in the head, and expressed his sympathy for me in some kindly words. However, I was too happy to wait, and made off, not knowing whether I was on my feet or my head. I did little else that day but confess Him, otherwise I think I should have burst. My wife gave me a fortnight, my companions three weeks; but, praise God, I am as happy and as safe to-day as the day He saved me, and I am being kept by His power unto salvation, and His grace has been sufficient for me to testify in almost every part of Glasgow and for miles around to His saving and keeping power.

Two years ago He took my wife, last week he took my mother, both to be with Himself, and through these trials I have been more than conqueror, through Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me. The Lord has been pleased to bless His humble servant's

testimony to the salvation of many souls amongst relations, companions, and many others whom I don't know, and I pray He may bless this simple tale to the salvation of some of the readers of the *Gospel Messenger*.

P.C.—A. I.

SAVED FROM THE STORM: AN
ANSWERED PRAYER.

MANY years ago the captain of a merchant vessel found himself in a position of great peril and anxiety.

His ship was at the mercy of one of the most terrific and memorable storms that have ever visited our coasts.

Many a gallant bark, and, alas! many a precious life, was lost that night.

Utterly helpless, the ship drifted before the gale; all bearings were lost, a dangerous coast was near, and every moment those on board expected to be dashed on to the cruel rocks peculiar to that part of the coast of Ireland.

The captain's nephew (a mere child) was lashed to the mast, and doubtless with hearts filled with thoughts of those at home the sailors awaited the death which seemed imminent.

All human aid was hopeless, but the captain who had many times before proved that God was indeed "a very present help in time of trouble," withdrew

to his cabin, and commending himself and all on board to the One who alone is able to save either body or soul, prayed that if it were God's will they might be delivered out of their distress, and restored in safety to their wives and children.

Then once more he returned to his post on deck. Gradually those on board found that they seemed to be carried farther and farther from the fury of the storm, and to be in comparative calm and security. The noise of the tempest seemed to be left behind, but the darkness hid all knowledge of their whereabouts. Morning dawned, and they found that God's hand had indeed been over them in preservation and guidance.

Through a perilously narrow passage, between two rocks, they had been brought into a quiet bay, where their vessel rode in safety and security. Not a few hearts were touched, and hearty thanks were sent up to God who had been indeed "a very present help in trouble" (Ps. xlv. 1).

Years have passed, the captain has long been with the Lord whom he loved and served; he is indeed in the "desired haven." The One whom he trusted as his Pilot and Guide, to whom he entrusted his soul on the troublous sea of life, has indeed received him unto Himself, "to go no more out for ever."

But what of yourself, dear reader? Have you accepted as your Saviour the only One who can bring you safely through all life's storms, steer you clear from all rocks and shoals, and bring you in the end to that heavenly haven where the storms and

tumults of earth will seem as nothing in comparison with "the glory that shall be revealed."

Or are you trying to guide your frail bark alone? Oh, give it up, it is a vain task, and will only bring disappointment, ruin, and wreck. Though now you may glide smoothly along, sooner or later the storm will come, and you *cannot* breast it alone and escape.

But the hands of a once-crucified Saviour hold out life, pardon, and peace to poor perishing sinners. The Lord Jesus gave Himself "a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6). "Himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). The punishment due for your sins and mine, was borne by the Son of God in agonies and blood that we might go free for ever, for "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Oh, as a drowning man would lay hold of a life-buoy, or a rope flung within his grasp, so may you lay hold of God's promises by that faith which is His gift! And faith is simply taking God at His word.

Oh, that your cry might be—

"Hide *me*, Oh my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh receive *my* soul at last."

F. E.

IS IT THE TRUE GOSPEL?

AT a wayside inn in a small township in F——, Victoria, the following conversation was overheard. The subject of it was a young man named P——, lately said to be converted, and occupying the position of a lay reader.

The innkeeper was relating how he had met this young man, and had “tackled him,” as they say, about his religion. The innkeeper had put this question to him:—

“Supposing, P——, you were driving along the road in your cart on a very stormy day, and your horses became restive and would not pull, and you began to swear as you did in the old days, and supposing just as you were swearing the wind blew a tree down on you and killed you instantly, where would you go, to heaven or hell?”

“I should expect to go at once to hell because I was taking the Lord’s name in vain,” replied the young man.

“Well,” said the innkeeper, “if that is your religion, all I can say is, I will have none of it! For to be a Christian I must give up all my present enjoyment, and then, according to you, there is no safety, for after giving up all I might forget myself for a bit, and then be again in the same danger as I am now.”

Reader, is this the true gospel? Surely, no! Emphatically, NO!

Yet how many thousands there are who would

endorse this mere human fallacy! How serious a thing for perishing souls to trust to it!

Admitting the terrible possibility that the true believer may fail and sin, and conscious of the danger of falling into Antinomianism, both of which are involved in the above incident, it is of all importance that souls should be built up in the truth of God, and be able to distinguish it from man's base substitution for it. We would therefore with our readers briefly consider in the light of the Scriptures, Is this the true gospel?

Looking at it in this light we cannot for one moment allow that it is *God's* gospel; yet we can easily understand how it comes to be so largely received. It arises from looking at things from a human standpoint, and attaching importance to a man's *giving himself* to God, as though there were some merit in this act. From this point of view, what man does, may certainly be undone by the same hands.

Ah, yes! But blessed be God, there is the other side. What God does is eternal and can never be reversed! "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor can anything be taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him" (Eccles. iii. 14).

But this is the question, Is salvation of man or of God?

If it be of man, let him do his best and he will fail in the end. If it be of God, it will stand for ever; let not man interfere with it.

God's gospel is no exception to the above rule as to what God does. It comes straight from the heart of God, and declares what is in that heart. God is love and He can never change. The only gospel that can meet man's need, is *God's* gospel (Rom. i. 1).

It comes to *lost* men who are *unable* to turn over a new leaf and to lead a new life and so to save themselves. Could they do this they would need no Saviour.

It tells *lost* men of One who came to seek and to save that which was lost; One who did what they could never do, who settled the question of sin upon the cross, and settled it *for ever*.

It offers them salvation through faith in that blessed work, and in Him who accomplished it for them. An eternal salvation! "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Pet. i. 9). Such are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. i. 5).

It enables them to lead a new life, because they *are* saved and *have* a new life communicated to them. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John v. 11).

They to whom this life is given shall never perish; none shall pluck them out of the hand of Him who gave it. The Father and the Son are one in pledging eternal security to them (John x. 28-30).

"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).

The old controversy still rages. The devil would substitute a false gospel in the place of God's gospel, that souls, aroused as to the need of a change of life, may be deluded and ensnared and lost.

Young readers! Awakened souls! What gospel are you accepting? See to it! Your soul is at stake!

Perishing souls! Souls in the bush! Souls everywhere! Be warned!

All man's works in every department of his existence shall perish for ever!

All that God does is eternal!

Alas, for those who, like the young man above referred to, rest for assurance upon their good conduct when death overtakes them! Such never know what rest or assurance is at all.

Alas, for those who, like the innkeeper, make a fellow-mortal's mistaken notion an excuse for salving their conscience and continuing in a course of sin which must end in death and judgment!

May they accept at God's hand the salvation He offers, wrought out in the blood of Christ and presented in mercy to "whosoever will"; thus obtaining power to abandon, alike their sin and their false doctrine, and to live to Him who died for them, to His praise and glory!

G. J. S.

"GOD SHALL BE WITH YOU."

(A few words spoken over the grave of a fellow-servant in Christ.)

"And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die : but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers" (Gen. xlviii. 21).

"By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph ; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff" (Heb. xi. 21).

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. xiii. 5, 6).

OUR gathering here to-day tells a simple tale. A dear servant of the Lord has been taken away ; all his earthly ministry is over, and affection for this servant of Christ has gathered many to lay his remains in the tomb.

He was undoubtedly a "chosen vessel," a remarkable vessel, whose ministry many enjoyed and profited by, and whose departure many will deeply mourn. That vessel the Potter formed, filled, and sustained. Now the vessel is gone ; *the Potter is not*. Time was when the vessel was in the mind of the Potter, then He formed the vessel and filled it for His service, so that instead of the vessel being in the mind of the Potter, the mind of the Potter was in the vessel (see Jer. xviii. 1-6).

How blessed is it for us to remember that though vessels break, friends depart, and servants go when their service is concluded, the Lord remains.

Truly says the Scripture, "Thou remainest" (Heb. i. 11).

The above-quoted scriptures very sweetly illustrate this thought. How lovely is it to hear the patriarch Jacob say to his son Joseph, "Behold, I die: but God shall be with you." God does not die though Jacob passes away. Cannot every sorrowing heart among God's people to-day, take the deepest comfort from this thought? Whether it be the widow, the orphans, or the Church at large, how full of deep meaning are these words, "God shall be with you."

Years before, when a solitary wanderer from his father's house, God had met Jacob, and had said to him, as his head was pillowed on a stone, "Behold, *I am with thee*, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land; for *I will not leave thee* until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. xxviii. 15).

Had God been faithful to His word? Indeed He had. Many an up-and-down, many a turn, many a twist, and many a divergence had Jacob known, but God had been faithful to His word, and been with him. It was the enjoyed sense of His presence that made him able to say, in the knowledge of His love, as he addresses Joseph, "God shall be with you." Jacob knew God, and the "I will not leave thee" of Genesis xxviii., I am persuaded, led him to speak as he did to Joseph in Genesis xlviii., as, leaning on a staff, he worships and passes off the scene.

But not only to Jacob were these words uttered. When Moses is closing his service, what does he say

to Joshua, who had to take up the work which Moses was laying down? "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; *he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*" (Deut. xxxi. 6). Did God fail Jacob? He did not. Did He fail Joshua? Indeed not. Hear his testimony when he too was passing away: "And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that *not one thing hath failed* of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and *not one thing hath failed thereof*" (Josh. xxiii. 14).

But a third time we get these cheering words in Old Testament Scripture. The history of David is closing, and to Solomon how striking is it to hear him say, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; *he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxviii. 20).

Now we are neither patriarchs, leaders, nor kings, but that which was their solace, support, and strength we have. We are only simple pilgrims on our road to glory, and as we mourn the loss of this one and that one, how blessed is it for us to hear these same words, "He hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*" (Heb. xiii. 4).

Vessels may break, servants go, husbands be re-

moved, and fathers be taken away from those that love them, but *God remains*.

“God shall be with you” are indeed wonderful words to dwell in our hearts, and the Spirit’s beautiful quotation, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” may well be a solace to every heart here to-day.

This being so, what should be the spirit and attitude of our souls? The apostle furnishes the answer. If God say, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” he immediately adds, “We may *boldly* say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”

Indeed, then, we may have the fullest confidence in God. Let who will die, if God be with us we are well off. Our path is a very blessed one—if remaining here, God will be with us, and if we pass away; we shall be with Him, as our dear brother is, and that is “far better.”

“On that eternal love of Thine,
My Lord and Saviour, I recline;
'Tis perfect rest on Thee to lean,
Through all this changing, weary scene.

‘To-day,’ as ‘Yesterday,’ THE SAME,
From everlasting is Thy Name;
The Lord, who earth’s foundations laid,
God’s Lamb, who full atonement made.

Yes! ‘THOU REMAINEST,’ whom have I
In heaven or earth, in sea or sky,
But Thee, with all Thy Love revealed,
My Lord, Belovèd, Friend, and Shield?”

W. T. P. W.

THE INFIDEL DOCTOR'S CONVERSION.*

NINE years ago, the 21st of last January, God graciously used Vol. I. of *The Messenger of Peace* to bring peace and salvation to my soul, in the city of St Louis, U.S.A. I was then engaged in the practice of medicine there. My dear old mother (now with the Lord only a few months) was a good Baptist, given to much prayer for me, her godless, careless, infidel boy. My bedroom at home opened into hers, and at night the door always stood open, and many, many times I was wakened up by her crying to God for mercy and salvation for her poor unsaved boy.

My early education was received at home, under a private tutor, amidst the quiet blessed influences of a Christian home in the country. When I went away to University and Medical School, these vanished, and I drifted rapidly into sin and infidelity (they go well together), and my mother's prayers seemed very likely never would be answered. But they stuck like an arrow in my heart, and I could not efface them from my memory—try as I would, they would come back fresh when I least wanted them.

* An extract from a letter to the Editor of *The Gospel Messenger*, dated 14th July 1903, from Chicago, U.S.A., which he received with joy, and publishes with pleasure. He would like to receive a good many more of a similar nature.

I graduated from the St Louis Medical College, Medical Department of the Washington University, in 1892, and began the practice of my profession in the same city. My success was immediate, but I used it for the gratification of my own lust and will, "living in pleasure," until one Saturday evening in November 1893 I met a Christian gentleman in a drug store near my office and the University, engaged in preaching Christ in an informal way to a few students sitting around the stove. It was near 10 P.M. when I entered, to leave a prescription with the druggist to be sent to a patient I had just left. I made it interesting for him and his audience, and the meeting lasted till half-past eleven.

But he (the Christian gentleman) had a new method for me—his constant appeal to the Word of God (as he insisted on calling the Bible) as a final court of appeal to settle all questions. His confidence in the Bible as the Word of God deeply impressed me. He pressed its testimony on me, and answered my arguments from the Book. I admired his consistency and confidence in it. Before, I had seen ministers, who above all should defend it, not only admit my questions, but suggest others that I never had thought of, and I spoke of this to him. I said these men ought to know its merit and demerit, and they had no confidence in the Bible. To my astonishment he answered this from the Scriptures in a most astonishing way. He read Acts xx. 30, "Of your *own selves* shall men arise, speaking *perverse things*," and from 1 Timothy iv. 2 how that in

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the latter times such were to "speak lies in hypocrisy," and in 2 Timothy ii. 23 they would engage in the discussion of "foolish and unlearned questions" instead of the truth of God, and showed in chapter iii. how they would become "boasters, proud, blasphemers, traitors, heady, highminded," and in chapter iv. 4 that they would at last "turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables." That in chapter iii. 13 they would become "evil men and juggling impostors, advanced in evil (not in godliness), *deceiving* and *being deceived*."

I was dumfounded. This is what I had seen with my very eyes, and heard with my own ears. The thought rushed into my mind, "I am deceived and mistaken—blind myself and being led by the blind—and if I am mistaken, oh, how fatal to me it will be." He pressed on me the fact that I was a sinner, and for that reason nothing awaited me but judgment if I rejected Christ—that I was hopelessly bad, and that there was no hope for me here nor refuge but Christ, whose precious blood would cleanse me from all sin. I could not sleep nor rest, and I was deeply stirred.

Night after night we had our unwritten appointment at the drug store, about 10 P.M., with others. I was broken down and broken up, but said nothing to—I will call him Mr H——, but told it out to God both day and night. He told me of John iii. 16 and v. 24, &c., but they were meaningless formulæ for me. No, they did not belong to me. This trouble went on until just before Christmas, when Mr H—— came into the drug store and told me he was going

away for a week to study the Word of God with two or three hundred other Christians in a neighbouring city, and, slipping Vol. I. of your *Messenger of Peace* into my overcoat pocket, said there was a book he wanted me to read while he was away.

This was Saturday night. I was busy, and thought no more of the book for a week, when on Sunday morning, at breakfast at the hotel, I discovered it in the coat again, as I was looking in the pockets for a handkerchief. I took it out, saying to myself, "There's H——'s book—I wonder what it is." I soon put it to one side for the great American Bible—the Sunday morning newspaper. I was in the habit now of going to hear a Presbyterian minister, but being busy that Sunday morning until after the hour of service, didn't go. At my office between 12 and 1 P.M. I sat in misery. I couldn't read the newspaper. I needed sleep, but couldn't. Obstetric work had kept me up for two nights, and, contrary to my habit, I could not sleep during the day. I thought of my sins, of meeting God in my sins; I sat in my chair, I walked the floor, my head ached dreadfully. Then I saw your *Messenger of Peace*, and took it up, and began to read. I forgot myself, and Christ was revealed to my soul in those wonderful words in John vi. 37, "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out."

Like the prodigal in Luke xv., I had said, "I have sinned"—"There is bread enough"—"I am perishing"—"I will arise," but these were only words, very promising to be sure, but then there was more, there

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was action. I arose, like the prodigal, and found my soul saved, and I blessed beyond conception. I took my Bible, and it had a new meaning—its words were no more empty formulæ but living verities.

By God's grace I have been going on these nearly ten years with His Word and work, trying to minister to saint and sinner. I came here soon after I was saved, and have been devoting my time to preaching and my professional work.

I naturally often think of you, and sometimes a petition goes up to our Father to bless you in far away Edinburgh. I also look forward to a time when I may have the pleasure of seeing you, and rejoicing with you over God's mercy in saving me. But the time has passed rapidly, and I now take this means of telling you, and thanking you. Maybe some time I may have the pleasure of meeting you face to face. My wife joins me with love in Christ for you and yours.

I trust I have not wearied you with my long story.—Yours in the Lord Jesus, P. V. W.

 A SOVEREIGN FOR A SHILLING.

“**A** SOVEREIGN for a shilling.” So cried a man one day a few years ago, standing upon London Bridge. “A real sovereign for a shilling,” but no one heeded him.

The circumstances were as follows. This man

took up a bet with another, that he would stand upon London Bridge for an hour, and offer a real sovereign for a shilling : and more, that nobody would accept his offer.

“A sovereign for a shilling,” he still cried, but amidst the traffic of that busy thoroughfare, nobody paid the slightest attention to him.

“What fools they were,” you say, “not to accept such a good offer. I for one would not have missed it.”

Yes, it was a good offer, and no one accepted it, and I question if you would have done so either, my friend, for if you are still unsaved, you are despising a far greater offer, even the salvation of your never-dying soul, and God gives that for nothing. God has been put in such a position by the death of Christ, that He can offer you as a free gift at this present moment eternal life. “The *gift* of God is eternal life” (Rom. vi. 23). My dear friend, if you are neglecting this gift, you are as great a fool, aye, a thousand times greater than those who refused the sovereign for a shilling. This offer of eternal life may be withdrawn from you at any moment, and *then* you’ll not get it at any price. Why not put in your claim now, and accept Jesus as your own personal Saviour. With Him you have all you need for time and for eternity. Without Him an eternity in the awful burning awaits you. Trust in Him ere it is too late, and by so doing you get *everything* for nothing.

R. P.

YOU HAVE A SOUL.

YES, you have a soul that must live for ever—
somewhere.

“Well, tell us something we don’t know
—we all know that.”

But stay a moment. Your soul must live as long as God lives, either in heaven with its wondrous eternal joys, or in hell with its speechless everlasting woe. Can you tell me, if you died this moment, where your soul would be?

“Well, to be honest I cannot really tell for certain.”

And yet time is so short, life so uncertain, eternity so long, and you cannot tell for certain where you will spend your eternity. Are you serious? Do you mean to tell me all your thoughts are taken up with this life, and you forget the life to come? Do you really acknowledge that you are penny-wise and pound-foolish, time-wise and eternity-foolish, body-wise and soul-foolish? Alas! alas! how Satan and sin blind souls to their true interests.

I will run the risk of repeating myself. **YOU—HAVE—A—SOUL.** Weigh every word over, for I am sure that whilst in a general way you admit the fact, yet you are not at all alive to its importance, and what it means.

Suppose you meet a man with scarcely a piece of leather to hide his aching feet. His clothes are torn, and he looks hungry and woe-begone.

You are informed that he has vast estates, and a rent-roll of ten thousand a year.

You stop him, and say earnestly, "You have an income of ten thousand a year."

He promptly replies, "I know it, tell me something I don't know." What would you think of him?

You reply, "He must be mad; I never heard of such a case."

Stay a moment, friend. I know a case far worse than that. As the prophet Nathan said to King David, so we can say to *you*—"THOU ART THE MAN." Follow me carefully. *You have a soul.* You neglect it. It is infinitely more precious than a vast estate bringing in ten thousand a year. Bring all the gold and diamonds of the world, and heap them high above the Himalayas, and the glittering mass is worthless beside your possession—your one immortal priceless soul. And yet you have neglected it, and its eternal destiny is unsettled. What need to repeat to you earnestly and pointedly, YOU—HAVE—A—SOUL.

The great Lover of souls, the Lord Jesus Christ, when on earth asked: "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).

No Chancellor of the Exchequer has ever been able to give an answer to that question, for the soul is infinite in its preciousness and its duration of existence. No mind has ever been dexterous enough

in the manipulation of figures to solve such a question.

We all pity the man who is so driven to desperation that he puts a revolver against his temples and blows his brains out, or throws himself into the canal and ends his miserable existence, thrusting thus his soul, unsummoned, into the presence of his Maker. The suicide sins against his body, but what of the careless sinner who sins against his soul—*the soul-suicide*?

Let me further illustrate. The King and royal party are expected to arrive at a large station by a certain hour, in order to grace some important event that claims national, rather than local importance. The mayor and officials of the city, and rank and fashion, are waiting to give his Majesty a warm welcome.

The whistle of the royal train is heard. All is expectancy. Instead of drawing up to a standstill opposite the carpeted and balconied platform, the train rushes on at a mad speed.

Just as it whizzes out of sight, some one shouts to the driver, "Where are you going?"

He answers indifferently, "I don't know." What would you call that driver?

"He must be mad," you reply, "to act like that." Stay a moment, friend. I know a case far worse than that. It is your own.

Follow me carefully. You carry fast to the pit of hell an occupant within your breast—*your soul*—infinitely more precious to you than the Sovereign of

England could be to the English nation. You rush madly on, as fast as time can carry you, to eternity. We ask you, "Where are you going?" Is your reply any more sensible than that of the engine driver's? Permit me to tell you that your folly is worse than madness.

You know it is for ever, and for ever, and for ever. You are going, a sinner, to meet God—to face Him about your guilty life and fearful indifference—to a great white throne—to a great gulf fixed—to eternity—to hell. Oh! wake up, ere it be too late. There is a Saviour—there is a way of escape.

The loss of wealth is a great loss; the loss of health is a greater; but the loss of the soul is the greatest possible loss.

Let me relate how a lady was awakened to a sense of her soul's need. She lay dying in the ward of a large London hospital, disease doing its deadly work.

There was put into her hands a copy of that God-honoured book, "Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment." The sufferer read on till she came to the lines—

"To lose your wealth is much,
To lose your health is more,
To lose your soul is such a loss
As no man can restore."

As she read these lines they fitted themselves exactly to her case.

"*To lose your wealth is much.*" Once she had been wealthy, but a course of reckless extravagance had beggared her.

"*To lose your health is more.*" That likewise was

true of her. Wealth and health were alike gone; and she, once the child of fortune, was dying alone and unbefriended in a large London hospital. She mourned over the loss of her wealth, that had taken wings and fled; she mourned over health no longer hers; but her soul she had not thought particularly about. Little as she knew it, she was on the eve of *the greatest possible loss* a man or woman can sustain—the loss of the soul.

As the lines put it—

“*To lose your soul* is such a loss
As no man can restore.”

As she read these four lines she became conscious that she was about to lose more than wealth and health, and she was aroused to a deep concern about her soul, and with the greatest anxiety read on, till by means of the little book she found “joy and peace in believing.”

If her loss of wealth and health led to the salvation of her soul, her loss was a real and substantial gain.

People mourn over losses in this life. Lost fortunes are often retrieved and lost health recovered, but the soul! Once lost, it is lost for ever, and in the words of the Lord Jesus, we would again press home the searching question, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, *and lose his own soul?*”

Reader, you too may be on the eve of that greatest possible loss. If unsaved still, you are running an awful risk. Eternity, long, measureless, unending,

will be all too brief to spell out that short word—l-o-s-t—when the soul is in question.

The great and important question arises, How can your soul be saved?

What lies between your soul and salvation, unsaved reader, is the serious question of your sins.

And here follow with great care. Make no mistake at this point, else it will be fatal.

Is salvation by works? Let Scripture itself answer.

“To him that *worketh not*, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith . . . *not of works*, lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 8).

On the strength of these verses cease your working for salvation. Salvation lies not in your repentance, however sincere; your tears, however profuse; your prayers, however earnest; your good works of any or every kind.

A work must be done, but blessed be God, it has been done by Another. The Lord Jesus Christ has died on the cross of Calvary, and shed his precious atoning blood.

How can sin be removed? “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us *from all sin*.”

Scripture puts the whole matter in a nutshell. “What must I do to be saved?” Hear the blessed answer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31).

“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).

"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).

Reader, we part. Again I remind you earnestly, YOU—HAVE—A—SOUL. Where will you spend eternity? It is admittedly a careless day as to these things, therefore I make one last earnest appeal to you not to leave these matters unfaced, but to lose no time in trusting the Lord Jesus Christ, your only hope for eternity. He must be either your Saviour or your Judge, which shall it be?

A. J. P.

ETERNITY.

READER, thy time on earth is short. Each closing year, each setting sun, each tick of yonder clock, is shortening thy days on earth, and swiftly, silently, but surely carrying thee on—on to ETERNITY and to God.

The year, the day, the hour, the moment will soon arrive, that will close thy life on earth, and begin thy song in heaven or thy wail in hell. No future hour shall come to bring thee back to earth again, thou art there for ever—for ETERNITY.

To-day thy feet stand on time's sinking sand ; *To-morrow* the footprints remain, but thou art gone—Where? Into ETERNITY.

To-day thy hands are busy at work, thine eyes are beholding, thy mind is thinking, thou art planning for the future ; *To-morrow* all is still—the folded arm, the closed eye remain, but thou art gone—gone to ETERNITY.

Others were once busy as thou art, healthy as thou art, thoughtless as thou art ; they are gone—gone to ETERNITY.

The merry voice, the painted clown, the talented singer, whose presence made the theatre, the pantomime, and the concert, an attraction for thee, are gone ; they are removed far from the region of fiction to that of reality—the reality of ETERNITY.

The shrewd merchant whose voice was so familiar to thee on the crowded exchange is silent ; he buys and sells no more—he has entered ETERNITY.

Reader, thine own turn to enter ETERNITY will shortly come. Ask thyself honestly, “Am I prepared for ETERNITY?” Give thy conscience time to answer. Listen ! It speaks to thee to-day ; drown not its voice lest it speak to thee no more. Let the heaven and the hell of the future stand before thee in all their realities ; one of these must be thine eternal dwelling-place, and *To-day* is the time to make thy choice. *To-morrow* may be too late—*one day behind time*. Which art thou living for? Which art thou travelling to?

To go unrenewed from the haunts of pleasure, of

sin, debauchery, and vice, to the presence of God and the Lamb, is impossible; from the crowd of the condemned to the crown of glory—no, never!

Jesus says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3).

Reader, has this ever happened unto you? Have you been born again for an eternal heaven. If so, well; but if not, the horrors of an eternal hell are awaiting you, and to-day you are nearer its unquenchable flame than you have ever been before.

Halt! Why will you meet God with an unsaved soul? He wills it not. *To-day* He pleads—"Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11). *To-day* he points you to yon cross, with the Son of God uplifted, groaning, bleeding, dying, and all for sinners. Yes, reader, for the *guilty* the crown of thorns encircled His brow; for the *lost* the soldier's spear brought the blood from His side; for the *helpless* and *undone* He cried in triumph, "It is finished;" and for you there is salvation free *To-day*.

"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).

"Where will you spend eternity?
This question comes to you and me!
Tell me, what shall your answer be—
Where will you spend eternity?
Eternity! eternity!
Where will you spend eternity?"

C. K.

“CAN YOU?”

CAPTAIN JOHN DAVIS commanded a vessel running to the Cape of Good Hope. On one of his voyages the vessel left the English station in good order, and all went well with the ship for some days. One morning, however, the captain did not make his appearance on deck at the time expected. After about an hour the first mate went to the captain's cabin, and knocking gently at the door, said, “All hands are on deck, sir, waiting for orders.”

“Come in,” a voice faintly replied.

The mate entered. A marvellously sudden change had taken place in the captain. He was very ill; his face wore a pallid hue, and he was evidently very weak. To the mate's inquiry he answered by saying: “I am very ill; I believe I am dying. You will have to take the command of the ship, for I shall never go up on deck again. But oh, can you—can you help me now that I shall have to appear before God?”

“Well, captain,” said the mate, “I'm afraid I can't help you in that matter. As you know, I have never had a bad mark during my entire record; but I've never thought much about God and the next world; and I can't tell what to say to you, for I have had no time to think about these things.”

“Well, then, call the second mate,” said the captain.

The second mate came, and like questions were put to him, and similar answers returned. He knew nothing about real religion, and had never given any serious attention to it.

Others of the officers and crew were called, until, one after another, the whole ship's company had stood before the captain, who, telling them of his fast-approaching end, begged of them, if any of them knew how, to tell him what he wanted to know, how to find peace with God and to be prepared to meet Him.

Alas! they were all alike in the dark as to the way of salvation.

A sad picture is presented here—a scene all too common.

These men were nominally Christians, but with the name their religion began and ended; not one had been enlightened and taught by the Holy Spirit to see his guilty and condemned state as a sinner, no one knew anything of the way of salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In his great distress the captain inquired if all the men had been called down.

“Yes, every one; all the ship's company, excepting the cabin-boy.”

“Then send him to me,” said the captain eagerly.

The cabin-boy, whose name was William Smith, was a young hand, and this was his first voyage. The unexpected summons made the little fellow tremble, for he feared lest he might have done something wrong.

“Did you go to Sunday-school when you were on shore?” asked Captain Davis.

“Yes, sir.”

“Boy, can you tell me anything that may help me as a dying man soon to appear before my God?”

The astonished boy replied, “I don’t know that I can tell you anything, captain; but I’ve got a Bible in my chest, which my mother gave me; shall I fetch that?”

“Yes; go and get it.”

The boy returned with the Bible, and asked, “What shall I read, captain?”

“Read where you used to read to your mother,” said he.

The boy opened the Bible, and began to read Isaiah liii. : “Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

When the boy came to the fifth verse, “But he was wounded for our transgressions,” he paused and asked—

“Shall I read this as my mother taught me to read it?”

“Yes, by all means,” said the captain.

The boy proceeded—

“But he was wounded for William Smith’s trans-

gressions, he was bruised for William Smith's iniquities; the chastisement of William Smith's peace was upon him; and with his stripes William Smith is healed."

"Stop," said the captain; "read that over again, and put my name instead of yours; John Davis instead of William Smith. Read it slowly."

The boy read as he was directed. "But he was wounded for John Davis's transgressions, he was bruised for John Davis's iniquities; the chastisement of John Davis's peace was upon him; and with his stripes John Davis is healed."

"Ah! that will do," said the captain; "that is what I want, that gives me hope."

Thus the anxiety, the gloom, the fear, and the crushing sense of guilt, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, gave place to hope, to firm reliance, and to peace.

This awakening of the captain was a late awakening, and though death-bed repentances are seldom real, we may hope it was a true one. For as far as can be judged he accepted Christ as his substitute, as having been bruised for his iniquities, and as having procured healing for him by His stripes.

Let the reader pause and ask himself what is the foundation of his hope of acceptance with God and entrance into heaven. Can you read in your name as did John Davis? Are you resting on Jesus as having died for you—the just for the unjust—to bring you to God? It is this alone that can give true peace. If your hope has any other foundation, it is

utterly worthless ; nay, worse, it is a delusion and a snare.

Alas ! there are hundreds of thousands of people who attend church, and live an outwardly moral life, who have never realised the fact that they are lost and perishing sinners, and that they need a gracious and almighty Saviour to deliver them from the doom of the impenitent and the unbelieving.

Oh for a trumpet voice to awaken these sleeping and self-secure sinners, lest they perish in their sins !

Now, now, ye that read and hear, awake, awake ! Let Peter's cry be your cry, "Lord, save me." Then shall Peter's confession be your confession, Peter's Rock your Rock, and Peter's God your God.

ANON.

JUSTIFIED OR JUDGED.

(Read Gen. xv. 1-11 ; Rom. iv. 1-8 and 20-25, v. 1-11.)

THE effect of the gospel when received is this, that first a man is justified *by* God, next he has peace *with* God, then further he is reconciled *to* God, and lastly he joys *in* God.

Genesis xv. is a chapter of remarkable history, on which Romans iv. is a comment by the Spirit of God. Abraham comes out as the pattern man as regards justification, and reveals what fits a man to stand before God.

Now if you think, my reader, that you are fit, in

yourself, to stand before God, you have made a profound mistake. No, there is only one Man fit for God. Who is He? The Man that died for those who were *not* fit for God, that is Christ. When I say fit for God, I mean holy, and righteous, and sinless. He was put in the balances, and was not "found wanting." You remember the writing on the wall that appeared to Belshazzar, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (Dan. v. 27). What made Belshazzar tremble might well make *you* tremble. It is not a question of any great profanity, or any great moral sin, but that in the very springs of our moral being you and I are unfit for God. People do not like this truth, because it reduces them, but you will be brought to own it yet. It is an immense thing to get light and truth from God as to our real condition.

Now the gospel is all about Jesus. There is not a word *about* us in it, but it is *for* the man who was in a condition in which death and judgment lie before him, because he is a sinner. You know what the wages of sin is? Death, "and after that the judgment." You may talk lightly about death and judgment, but when you go into eternity with your sins upon you, you will then have more serious thoughts of death. Some day you will have to face God. I beseech you, face Him now. You need not be afraid of Him, because He is on your side. He is against your sins and your ungodliness, but not against you. He desires to justify, not to judge you. Could you justify your life? You say, No,

I could not. Now listen, if you got hold of the gospel you would find that God can justify you righteously, not at the expense of His character, but in perfect consistency with His moral being. He is Love—that is one side of His being, and He is Light—that is another.

Christianity is the only religion that combines holiness and love. Everything in Christianity is in divine accord. There is Love—the perfection of Love, the Love that led the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, to become incarnate, and go down into death, to bring you and me to God in righteousness, cleansed and cleared from all our sins and guilt. Love took Him *into* death, and righteousness took Him *out* of it. Christianity is a magnificent arch in which all the glories of God are displayed, and the buttresses are absolute love and holiness, and if you just repose on that arch you are in a very safe resting-place for time and eternity. Woe be to the man that is not there. There is a storm coming that will sweep away everything but Christ—all must go, and that makes the gospel so beautiful. Love has come out, and I see love in the cross, and righteousness in the cross. I see how God has unsparingly judged sin in the Person of the blessed, holy, sinless substitute—the Lord Jesus.

“ He took the guilty culprit’s place,
 He suffered in his stead.
 For man, oh, miracle of grace,
 For man the Saviour bled.”

Do you believe it? Has your heart ever been

caught by this love? You may well be ashamed of yourself, if it has not; and you *will* be ashamed before long that you have missed this Christ for some bauble of this world, such as science, pleasure, or money.

Christ has been put before you a thousand times, and you have never received Him. You say, you talk to me as though I were a sinner of the deepest dye. Well, are you not? It would be a wonderful thing if you got your eyes opened and saw what a downright sinner you are, and what a glorious Saviour Christ is. Friend, you must take your true place, because there is no other way of being saved but by God's gospel, and it is for the lost. You get into a kind of charmed circle, the circle composed only of consciously lost sinners. There the gospel meets you, cuts you up, makes you see what you are, and then you discover that, guilty sinner as you are, you are an object of the love of God.

But, you say, to be saved surely we must do something. If you *had* something to do you could not do it. The truth is this, the carnal mind is enmity against God, and the very chapter I have read opens with this: "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." Some boast in their strength, and some in their wealth, and some in their wisdom, but Scripture says, "He that boasts, let him boast in the Lord." If you only knew my Father—the power of His arm, the love of

His heart, the value of His Son—you would be a new man. Are you justified yet? All you want is the simple faith that Abraham had, which linked him with God: “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” Abraham stands before us an illustration of the manner in which the guilty sinner is justified before God. Was he justified by works? Clearly not before God, though he was before men, as St James says (chap. ii. 21-26).

Perhaps you have concluded that you had to do something to obtain salvation. The apostle Paul says there is no possibility of works having any part. Man is a sinner, and anything he does is coloured by what he is. There is only one Person who has done that which is absolutely suitable to God, and that is the blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Christ is an absolute necessity to you.

Now, notice God’s way of justifying a sinner, and see the contrast between grace and debt: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5). It is a wonderful verse. I think if I had written it I should have said, “Justifieth the *godly*.” But you say, How can God justify ungodliness? He does not. “The wrath of God is revealed *against* all ungodliness” (Rom. i. 18). He does not justify ungodliness, but those who are in that condition. I wonder if you have found out that you are in that state. “Christ died for the ungodly”—will you take your place with them? You say,

That will be a special class. Are you among them? No. Then you have cut yourself off from the Saviour. You may have been a good husband and father, a faithful friend, the most perfect person possible, but you are a sinner. "Christ died for the ungodly," and you decline to take your place among them. Then I have no other gospel for you, and none other can save you.

Take your true place now, and you will find what Abraham found. The moment he took his true place of nothingness and emptiness he got the blessing God designed for him. The gospel flows from the heart of God, and it is all about His blessed Son and the work He has done. What can *you* do? Well, I can turn over a new leaf. It will not do, "God requireth that which is past." Then what am I to do? Do nothing—take your true place as Abraham did. He was not a *doer*. He was willing to be a *receiver*, saying—"Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" (Gen. xv. 2). God says, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars . . . so shall thy seed be." And what did Abraham do? "He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness," is the divine record (ver. 6). I wish you would be as simple.

You have the seeds of death in you, and one day death will claim you and the grave close over you, and then is that the end? No, you have to rise again, and if you die in your sins you must rise in your sins, because after death comes the judgment. If God justifies you now, how can He judge you then?

Impossible. Again, if He judge you then, how can He justify you? Impossible. There lies before you the question of sin and God's judgment thereof. If you see how that question has been met by Another—by One whom you have never loved and cared for, but who has cared for *you*, blessed be His name—the Lord Jesus Christ—if you wake up to find that He has settled the sin-question in His death, you will believe Him, and you will be saved. I see in the death and resurrection of Jesus divine love intervening between myself and that which otherwise must come on me in the future, if God take cognisance of my sins, which He must do. But at Calvary I see the Son of God going into death—dying for the ungodly, which is what I am—and I learn what divine love has done, that God may be glorified, and the sinner's sin be put away.

“If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,” we get Abraham's blessing—justification. Where does justification come in? In a risen Christ, “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” That wondrous death and resurrection took *me* in, and if you are anxious for peace, pardon, the knowledge of God, present redemption, and eternal glory, you will find that it takes *you* in. What then have you to do to possess this blessing? Nothing. The work is done. It is all finished, absolutely finished. God has accepted it. What is the proof? He has raised from the dead Him who died. And now unto “him that worketh not, but believeth on him

that *justifieth the ungodly*, his *faith* is counted for *righteousness*."

It is a great thing to be among the godly—it is an awful thing to remain among the ungodly. Look at the difference between the godly man and the ungodly: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps. i. 1-3). That is Christ. Now look at the other side: "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away" (ver. 4).

Now mark—and I press it, for I should like to get you roused to see the serious position you are in if still in your sins—your day will soon be over. You say you are set for a long life. Listen—you are set for a long eternity; and if it be a Christless eternity, what about it? Forget not this solemn fact—"The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment." Further, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but *the way of the ungodly shall perish*" (Ps. i. 6). It is a very serious thing to go on any longer in the path you are in. "Ungodly" is the character that is ours until grace meets us, but when grace meets you everything is changed. I do not believe in conversion if the life be not thenceforward much changed.

I hope you will get over the line now, as you read this, for otherwise you may die in your sins

and be in a lost eternity to-morrow. Come to Christ. Leave the ranks of the ungodly. You have wasted your whole life, going on in sin. What a mistake. Your money has not made you happy, nor have "the pleasures of sin" filled your heart with peace and joy. Christ says, "Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness" (Prov. viii. 18). Heed His words and get to Him. Make a clean cut with the world now. It has never satisfied you. Turn now to Him who says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and you will then taste the sweetness of the scripture: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv. 7, 8). Is not he a blessed man? And you have missed this blessedness till now? God give you to have it henceforth, and to know by simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you are *justified by God*. Then you will have *peace with Him*, for you are *reconciled to Him*, and consequently can *joy in God*. This is the effect of receiving "the gospel of God."

"Peace! what a precious sound!
 Tell it the world around:
 Christ hath made peace!
 Our souls are brought to God
 By His atoning blood,
 And crowned with every good:
 Christ hath made peace!"

W. T. P. W.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER AND THE BIBLE.

AT the time of the Crimean War, when the French soldiers were embarking for the seat of war, a Bible colporteur sought and obtained permission to converse with the men of one of the principal regiments then preparing to depart. While surrounded in the court of the barracks by a number of them, and speaking of the value of the Holy Scriptures, the colporteur was addressed by a young soldier of frank and intelligent countenance.

“They have convinced me,” said the young man, in a gentle tone, “of the necessity of getting the Word of God, but alas!” continued he, with a deep sigh, “I have not the money wherewith to make this precious purchase.”

“That need not signify,” the colporteur quickly replied; “if you have so great a desire to possess a copy, it shall not be said that a Christian allowed you to go away to a foreign shore without giving you one, even should it be at my own expense.” Then drawing a New Testament out of his pack, he handed it to the soldier.

But what was his surprise and grief, when the young man broke into a loud laugh, saying: “You are done, my fine fellow. I am jester Number One of the regiment; ask my comrades. It is as clear as the sun that shines that I have made a fool of you. When I am dead, do you see——” and he was pro-

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ceeding with a torrent of profane language, when the colporteur stopped him by saying, "After death the judgment will follow ; and what a judgment !" For a moment the young soldier ceased to laugh, but his levity quickly returned.

"Give me back the book," said the colporteur.

"Nay, my old fellow," replied the mocker, "I should be ashamed to affront you before so respectable a company as this. What will my comrades think of you were they to see you taking back with your left hand the present which your right hand has just offered ? Your book will be of use to me. It will do to light my pipe with." Then making a military salute in a grotesque manner, he walked away. "Lord, forgive him," cried the colporteur ; "he knows not what he does."

Fifteen months passed away, when the colporteur, in the course of his travels, came to a village, three hundred miles away from the spot where the young soldier had taken the New Testament from him. He entered the kitchen of an inn, where he found the people of the house seated, in deep grief. He made inquiry as to the cause of their sorrow, when the landlady, with many tears, said, "Only a few hours ago, and my son, the joy of my life, was placed in the silent grave ; and what a son !"

The colporteur listened to the sad story of her soldier-son—of his departure to the war, and his return to die in his mother's arms. He felt a tender interest in the recital ; and, to abate her grief, he said, "Let me read to you a few lines out of a good

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book ; they are suited to the hour of sorrow." He then turned to several passages which spoke of God's chastening us for our profit, when the woman uttered a loud cry and started up ; but the colporteur proceeded to read a text which set forth Christ as the great High Priest at the right hand of God, through whom we might boldly come to the throne of grace, obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

On hearing these words the woman caught the book out of his hand. "You wicked man," she cried, "you have taken the most precious thing I have still belonging to him." Then dropping the book, as she glanced at it, she added, "No, this is not my precious volume ; mine is torn, but this is perfect."

The woman quickly left the room, and returned, bringing with her a New Testament of the same size as the one she dropped on the floor. The colporteur opened it, when to his astonishment he saw written in French, in the inside fly-leaf, these words :—

*"Received at _____, _____ day of _____.
Despised at first, and badly used, but afterwards
read, believed, and made the instrument of my
salvation.*

"I_____ L_____

"Fourth company of _____ Regiment of the Line."

In an instant light broke upon the mind of the colporteur. Was it indeed the very Testament that had been taken by the young mocker ? Yes, it was the same. A closer inspection showed several leaves

to be missing, and it was concluded that they had been taken to light the soldier's pipe, in accordance with his words. But this work had been wonderfully stopped.

The colporteur made further inquiries, and learned from the bereaved mother some most pleasing intelligence. Her son had told her, that the evening before a battle, serious thoughts of the words of the man whom he had mocked and defrauded of the book came suddenly before his mind. He remembered his warnings and was troubled. God was speaking to his soul. To pacify his mind he took from his knapsack the sacred volume which had become his accuser. As he turned over the leaves, what was his astonishment, when, instead of a number of threatenings, his eye fell on these precious truths: "GOD SENT NOT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD, BUT THAT THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED" (John iii. 17). "COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST" (Matt. xi. 28).

As he pondered the latter passage, the sound of the drum called him to fall into the ranks. In a short time he was engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter. It was a deadly struggle, and many were the dead and dying that lay stretched on the ground. Our young soldier was among the wounded, and, found by his comrades, was carried to the hospital in the rear. For several weeks he lay on the borders of the grave. With him it was a time of serious

thought and prayer. His New Testament was not forgotten; it was his constant companion, and after some little time, was used of God to bring conviction and light to his mind.

After lying for some time in a hospital in a foreign land, he came home to his parents' house to die.

The torn Testament was constantly in his hands. Through the teaching of the Holy Spirit he saw increasingly his need of a Saviour and the fulness of Christ to meet that need, until he was able to rejoice in Him as his salvation and all his desire. In the full enjoyment of the knowledge of the forgiveness of all his sins, and peace resulting therefrom, he was earnest in entreating all who visited him to be reconciled to God; and, after a brief time of testimony to the grace of God to him, he passed away, to be at home with the Lord.

“IS NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED OUT
OF THE FIRE?”

ANON.

THE SCEPTIC HUMBLED.

THE following truly striking letter was written by the late Robert Walker, Vicar of Wymeswold. It is a witness *for* God's grace, and *against* the speculative and false philosophy so rife in our day.

“You well observe in a recent article that the

public is becoming accustomed to the strange vagaries respecting the Bible, into which men of learning and high position in the Church seem so constantly falling.

“I should be glad to express, through the medium of your columns, what appears to me the secret of all this; and I the rather desire to do so, because I am myself a monument of the delivering power and mercy of God in this very matter.

“It may be observed that almost all the men who have thus notoriously erred from the way of truth, are men of some kind of eminence in natural ability. The errors of Mr Maurice, Mr Heath, and especially Bishop Colenso, cannot be attributed to any confusion of mind as to things which differ. Besides, I know from past experience in the same gloomy school, that the possession of very considerable natural acumen does not in the least degree aid a man whose mind is perplexed about the foundations of Bible truth.

“As to the objections to the generally received views of Scripture, and the doctrines which flow so immediately from its simple and spiritual acceptance as the Word of God, sceptics know as well as we do, that they are hackneyed, and as old as our fallen nature, but then that does not remove them. They cannot receive the simple accounts of Scripture, because they have not divine faith. I remember when I first began to read the Bible (and I thought I was sincerely seeking the truth), I was miserable because I could not believe it; I dared not reject any state-

ment I found there, but I could not fully believe it was true. The Bishop of Natal just expresses what I felt; and the fact that we took exactly the same University honours (in different years, of course), draws forth my peculiar sympathy. My own history was just this:—I had read and studied deeply in mathematics; had mastered every fresh subject I had entered upon with ease and delight; had become accustomed (as every mathematician must do) to investigate and discover fundamental differences between things which seem to the uninitiated one and the same; had seen my way into physical astronomy, and the higher parts of Newton's immortal 'Principia,' and had been frequently lost in admiration of his genius till St Mary's clock warned me that midnight was three hours past. I had, in fact (as we say), made myself master of dynamics, and become gradually more and more a believer in the unlimited capabilities of my own mind! This self-conceited idea was only flattered and fostered by eminent success in the Senate House, and by subsequently obtaining a Fellowship at Trinity, and enjoying very considerable popularity as a mathematical lecturer.

“It would have spared me many an hour of misery in after-days, had I really felt what I so often said, viz., that the deeper a man went in science, the humbler he ought to be, and the more cautious in pronouncing an independent opinion on a subject he had not investigated, or could not thoroughly sift. But, though all this was true, I had yet to learn that

this humility in spiritual things is never found in a natural man.

“I took orders and began to preach, and then, like the Bishop among the Zulus, I found out the grand deficit in my theology. I had not been taught by the Holy Spirit myself, and how, then, could I speak ‘in demonstration of the Spirit and of power’?”

“In vain did I read Chalmers, Paley, Butler, Gaussen, &c., and determine that, as I had mastered all the other subjects I had grappled with, so I would the Bible, and that I would make myself a believer. I found a poor ignorant old woman in my parish more than a match for me in divine things. I was distressed to find that she was happy in the enjoyment of the Lord’s mercy to her, and that she found prayer answered, and that all this was proved sincere by her blameless and harmless walk amongst her neighbours; whilst I, with all my science and investigation, was barren, and unprofitable, and miserable—an unbeliever in heart, and yet not daring to avow it, partly from fear of man, but more for a certain inward conviction that all my sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian.

“I was perfectly ashamed to feel in my mind like Voltaire, Volney, or Tom Paine. I could claim no originality for my views, and I found they were no comfort, but a constant source of misery to me.

“May we not compare this kind of state to that which God speaks of in Jeremiah xlix. : ‘Thy terrible-ness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine

heart'? And observe what follows: "Hear the counsel of the Lord . . . Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out.'

"It may now be asked how I came ever to view divine truth differently. I desire to ascribe all praise to Him to whom power belongeth. I desire to put my own mouth in the dust, and be ashamed, and never open my mouth any more, because of my former unbelief. I cannot describe all I passed through, but I desire with humility and gratitude to say, I was made willing in a day of Christ's power. He sweetly melted down my proud heart under a sense of His love. He opened my blind eyes to behold Him as my Saviour. He shut my mouth for ever from cavilling at any difficulties in the written Word; and one of the first things in which this great change appeared was, that whereas before preaching had been a burden to me, now it became my delight to be able to say, without a host of sceptical or infidel doubts rushing into my mind, '*Thus saith the Lord.*' Oh, I am quite certain no unconverted man can see the things of God; and I am equally certain he cannot make himself to do so. 'It was the Lord that exalted Moses and Aaron,' said Samuel; and 'By the grace of God I am what I am,' said Paul; and so in a modified and humble sense, I can truly say.

"It used to be a terrible stumbling-block to me to find so many learned men, so many acute men, so many scientific men, infidels. It is not so now: I see that God has said, 'Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;' I see, as plainly as

it is possible for me to see anything, that no natural man can of himself receive the things of the Spirit of God. Hence I expect to find men of this stamp of intellect coming out boldly with their avowals of unbelief in the written Word of God. The only answer I give to them is, 'God has in mercy taught me better;' and never do I sing those beautiful words in the well-known hymn, but I feel my eyes filling with tears of gratitude to the God of all grace—

'Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God.'

"So it was with me; so it must be with every proud reasoner, if ever he is to know the truth in its power, or to receive the love of the truth that he may be saved.

"I feel very much for the young of this generation, remembering the conflicts I passed through in consequence of the errors of men of ability. I hope the Lord will graciously impress on many hearts the serious truth of the words, '*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit;*' and, '*The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*' My own way of explaining this to myself and others, when required to do so, is by saying: 'It is not a naturally cultivated *intellect*, but new affections, which receive true religion. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.'"

R. W.

LET IT BE NOW.

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LET IT BE NOW.

INNUMERABLE are the devil's methods of blinding the minds of men and women, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. He knows that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and by all the wiles in his power he seeks to hinder and to deceive anxious souls. Joy, peace, liberty, and forgiveness of sins accompany God's salvation, but so long as souls are kept in bondage these cannot be known.

It is the one simple enough to believe the Word of God that "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3), and who in faith puts himself or herself in the "our," or changes it to "Christ died for my sins," that is made joyous in the knowledge of sins pardoned.

Reader, do you know the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered? (Ps. xxxii. 1). I was speaking to a man not long since about his soul, and at last he sought to wind up our conversation by saying, "Well, if I have to be saved I shall be saved, and if I have to be lost I shall be lost."

"Oh! I see," I replied, "when you are brought before God in judgment your plea will be, 'I am here because I was not one of those who had to be saved.' Rather," I continued, "if speech be granted you in that day, you will say, 'I am here because I *would not* be saved.'"

Unsaved reader, the Lord Jesus said on earth, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John v. 40), and true enough still it is that men will not go to Him, who alone can give life. Many are in a state of unrest. Their sins trouble them. They know not what to do. Are you one? Are you in earnest enough to ask yourself the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

"What is the first thing a man should do who wants to be a Christian?" I asked a man who had been attentively listening to an open-air preaching.

"Lead a good life," was his reply.

"Nay," I said, "friend, that is the wrong end to begin. You must confess yourself a lost, undone sinner before God, accept the eternal life which is His gift, and then lead a new life."

How many to-day are trying to be saved, hoping they are saved, or saying as a man said in a railway compartment where I was recently, "I don't think we can know we are saved till the judgment day."

Praise God for better news than that. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24), are the words of the Lord Jesus.

Careless reader, do you say with one who answered me on being asked about eternal things, "I never let these things worry me"? God grant you may awake from your sleep.

"You have an engagement with God you will

have to keep," a Christian brother answered a man, who on being invited to a gospel meeting said he had "another engagement." Time is fleeting. While God in mercy is calling, answer, "Lord, I come." Trust Christ now.

"Let it be now! swift, swift the moments fly,
Each moment lost, is lost eternally,
And, with each, death and doom are drawing nigh,
Oh waste no more, no more."

Trifler, let it be now.

G. W. S.

THE COACHMAN'S CONVERSION.

HAVING been brought up by God-fearing parents, I learned to read the Bible; and when at Sunday school I was taught the Catechism of the Church of England, and also the Presbyterian Longer and Shorter Catechisms.

I was favoured in having such parents. On one occasion I would not go to Sunday school, and had to learn, as a consequence, the first Psalm.

I never forgot this Psalm; and many a time, when in worldly company in my young days, it would recur to my memory:—"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." I do not doubt that it kept me from much evil; and many other such things I learned in those early days which I never forgot.

However, for about six years before it pleased God

to convert my soul, I was under conviction of sin. That was a dreadful time; the sense of sin was terrible. One night I was so miserable that Satan tempted me to take my life. Thank God, I was prevented from the commission of such a crime.

I then tried to become good and to turn over a new leaf. I read a prayer at night, and got Spurgeon's book, "Morning by Morning and Evening by Evening," and another book with prayer for all circumstances, thinking that by this means I should get better. I became more attentive at church, and everybody thought I was a Christian; but I had no real peace nor rest of soul. I felt I had nothing but "dead works," and that I was still far from God. I wanted a Saviour! I deserved God's judgment, for I was a sinner; but I did not know how to escape it. But, thank God, the way of escape was soon shown to me. It came about as follows:—

Having heard from friends who lived at N. C., a place some twenty-five miles away, of a great revival there, and of many souls being brought to God, some of them well known to me, and some who had led a sinful life and never attended church or chapel, I felt deeply interested and desired to hear what the servants of the Lord had preached in that place. They were Mr J. W. S—— and Mr J. G——.

I got news that the first-named was coming to preach at H——, not far from where I lived; and, out of curiosity, I went to hear him. It was on a night in 1874, a long time ago now, but it seems to me as though it were yesterday.

The house where the meeting was held was crowded. The text was, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Exod. xii. 13). The preacher showed how that, on the night of the Passover in Egypt, the only way of safety from the destroyer was the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts. No other means would be of any avail. God looked for the blood and that alone, promising safety wherever it was sprinkled. Those who believed God obeyed His word and escaped. All others had to bear the judgment of the death of the first-born.

Then he showed that all this was a picture of that blood which can cleanse from all sin, and that the Lord Jesus Christ, the holy Lamb of God, came to die for sinners, so that all who believe in Him and trust to His blood are screened from judgment—that His blood, and not their works, is the only ground of salvation. I found, there and then, what I wanted—peace with God, and the knowledge of the Lord as my own blessed Saviour.

Many years have passed since then ; and, though I have seen much in myself to make and keep me humble, yet I can gratefully say that He is precious in my heart, and that I love His ways and His people.

The night following my conversion, my late wife went to the meeting, and, thank God, was saved. Her heart was so full of joy she could not speak. She wept for joy !

That night was a happy night ! and the life of a true Christian is the only truly happy life.

Some say that they have not faith ; well, but faith does not look at self to find happy feelings. It looks at an object outside of self, and that is Christ ! God has glorified Him on high, because He glorified God on the cross, when He made atonement for sin.

Reader, God looks at the blood of His Son as the only means of escape for the sinner. See that you trust in that all-cleansing blood. J. H.

BE YE ALSO READY.

THE clock had reached 9.30 on the night of 20th January 1902, when the writer was called to the bedside of James D——, who was rapidly passing out of time into eternity, and that too without God.

It was a solemn moment, the poor fellow realising his terrible position, for he said, “I have cried to God for mercy, but seem to get no answer, and all is dark and distant.”

He had lived forty years for himself, and now was dying, absolutely unprepared.

I knelt down and cried to God on his behalf, to which he gladly responded, then simply pointed him to Jesus as the risen Saviour at God’s right hand, but no ! blinded by the god of this world, he exclaimed, “I can’t understand, but I’ll try—I’ll try and make my peace with God.”

I endeavoured to show him that peace had been made nineteen hundred years ago by God's beloved Son, repeating, "Having made peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20), and that now peace is proclaimed through that same blessed One who is at the right hand of God. Then I besought him to turn away from himself, look to Jesus, and trust in Him alone for salvation.

He suddenly brightened and replied, "That is clear: I will."

It was getting late, and having to leave, I clasped his hand in mine, and looking him straight in the eyes, I said: "James, it is *your only chance*. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'" I saw him no more. At half-past nine the next morning his soul winged its flight into eternity.

Dear reader, should you be called so quickly, say, are you ready? If not, I implore you, as one who loves your precious never-dying soul, lose no more time, for

"To-morrow's sun may never rise
To bless thy long deluded sight;
This is the time, oh then be wise,
Thou would'st be saved—why not to-night?"

The world has nothing new to give,
It has no true, no pure delight;
Look now to Jesus Christ, and live:
Thou would'st be saved—why not to-night?"

It may be your only chance, close in with God's offers of mercy ere you lay this paper aside. God grant that you may for His name's sake. J. M.

THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION.

THE work of the cross is everything. There Christ took up the question of sin between God and Himself. None but He could settle that question. You are a sinner, and the wages of sin is death. Now if you die for your own sin, you are simply overwhelmed by the consequences of your sin, and cannot rise out of them. Scripture says truly, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). That means the Lake of Fire. A man that gets in there can never get out of it.

That is why David said, "And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. cxliii. 2). David says, If I go there, it is all over with me. If you do not believe that Christ is what He is, your future is serious, for He says, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John viii. 24). Now if a man die in his sins, he is buried in them, and he will lie in them till the resurrection day. And what then? He will rise in them, and be judged in them. And what then? He passes into eternity, he and his sins together, under the exhaustless wrath and judgment of God.

There is only one Man who could go into judgment and come up out of it. That is the Man who is now crowned with glory at God's right hand, whom I want you to know as your own Saviour. He has borne the judgment of God. Think of it—

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the judgment of God. Friend, you have thought very little of it. It has never troubled your soul much. Oh, no. But stop, see how it troubled Christ. Upon the cross He who knew no sin was made sin. And do you know what the effect was? God forsook Him. We read in the Gospels, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 45, 46). Ah, beloved friend, were God to forsake you and me for eternity that would be only right. I believe the lost soul, in the pit of hell for eternity, with the conscious sense that he is forsaken of God, will justify Him in that act. But why was Christ forsaken?—the Son of the Father—the One who ever did His will? I tell you why. Because in voluntary grace He took the sinner's place.

"He took the guilty culprit's place,
He suffered in his stead,
For man, Oh miracle of grace,
For man the Saviour bled."

Yes, He then took up the question of sin. He who knew no sin was made sin. He who had no sins bare sins upon the tree. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet. ii. 24). He took my sins, blessed be His name. I say my sins just to illustrate it. And what more? The stripes my sins

demanded He bare. And what flows from the Man who bare sins? *With His stripes* I am healed. If you see the atoning value of the death of Christ, your soul will slip into peace and gladness. On the cross God forsook Jesus. That was righteousness. Yet never, I believe, did God love Him more than at that moment. But God could not touch sin except to judge it. Sin and God never meet except for judgment. There are two places, and two only, where sin gets its definitive judgment. The cross, where the sinless Substitute took the full totality of God's judgment against sin. It cost Him His life and the presence of God. God forsook Him. And where is the other place? The Lake of Fire, where the sinner will have to bear the judgment himself. The cross was the spot where He who had no sins, I know, bare every one of mine, and I am free. Job says, "If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand" (chap. ix. 3). And if you cannot answer God about one of a thousand of your sins, what about the other 999? Your case is hopeless, you are hasting on to eternal judgment instead of, through reception of the gospel, being now in conscious salvation and blessing. I can tell you what Christ has done for me. He has answered for my 999 sins, and the odd one to boot. Everlasting glory to His blessed name!

And what is the result of His work, for all who trust Him? They are saved for eternity, and He will never hear the last of it. In heavenly glory we shall sing His worth and praise Him. Our harps will

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sweetly celebrate His glory, as, touched by our hands, we ring out the notes that suit Him. For ever and ever we will sing of His grace,—that the sinless One became a Man and died to bring sinners into His Father's house on high. He became a Man that He might die. You die because you are a man, and you have the seed of death in you. Not so Jesus. He was sinless. The devil knew very well He was sinless, for Christ says, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John xiv. 30). Then it was that Satan came and put death before Him, and pressed on Him all that He must pass through if He were to carry out to the end His love to God and to His people. He looked into, and then, in the perfection of His holiness, shrank from that cup. Then in the blessed devotedness of His love, He took that cup of bitter, deep, awful judgment, and He drank it to the very last drop.

At that moment He could say, "Then I restored that which I took not away" (Ps. lxxix. 4). He laid down on the treasury bench of heaven the price of the sinner's redemption, His own life-blood and dying agonies of soul. The result of this is, that not only are sinners saved now, but a new heaven and a new earth are secured. And what is the basis of all this? The blood of atonement shed on Calvary's tree. You and I can anticipate the blessing of that day of glory if we are simple. Get hold of this glorious fact that Jesus drained the cup of God's judgment to the very dregs, that He might put the cup of blessing into our hands. It cost Him His life as He took the cup

of judgment from God's hand. But He puts into our hands the cup of blessing, which His love delights to minister to us, so that we might know God and be in the enjoyment of the love of God for eternity. His last words, as far as this work of atonement is concerned, were, "It is finished!" The substitutionary sufferings of that blessed Saviour were effectual, and He died.

Next they put His blessed body in the tomb. Love put Him in there. It was wickedness that nailed Him to the tree. Then it was righteousness which smote Him, when in grace He seized the occasion, and became the Substitute of His people. Thereafter love took Him down from that tree, and buried Him. Joseph begged His body, and Pilate gave it to him, and He was taken down and put in a new tomb, "wherein never man before was laid." No old tombs for Christ. No second-hand tombs for Christ. And no second-hand hearts for Christ. He never takes a second place. Joseph had a grave prepared for himself, and then gave it up to Christ. Mary had a precious box of ointment, and she gave it to Christ. He wants your heart. He does not need your brains or your money, but He does want your heart. Mary's heart was His. And Joseph's heart was His. And Nicodemus' heart was His: shall not yours be His also?

The Sabbath day rolled by, and the Saviour was in the grave all that day. And then what happened? The haters of Jesus, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, got an inkling about resurrection. He had told His

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disciples the Son of man would rise from the dead, but they did not take it in. After the Transfiguration He said to the disciples, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matt. xvii. 9). Resurrection was spoken of in the Old Testament, it is demonstrated in the New.

But if He rose from the dead, that was a sign of the devil's defeat. The Sadducees, of course, were all against this, tooth and nail, so they go to Pilate and say, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first." What does Pilate say? "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. xxvii. 63-66). Do you know what they did? They put a seal, those brave men, upon the tomb, and set a lot of men round that tomb, with drawn swords, to keep a dead man in. That is the world! Brave men! But, my beloved friend, the resurrection took place. Forget it not. It is the backbone of the gospel. It is the witness of the absolute defeat of the devil, and the pledge of the perfect and complete deliverance of the sinner that trusts in a risen Christ.

And now the resurrection morning comes, and what do you find? The women go out to the tomb, and

they find the stone rolled away. We read, "There had been a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it" (Matt. xxviii. 2). And why was the stone rolled away? To let Jesus out? God forbid the thought. Oh no. Never. Why then? To let the sinner look in and see an empty tomb. And see what? The proof of Jesus' victory. I see the grave-clothes folded together, and the bars of the tomb broken up. The sinner who believes in Him stands in His clearance. The Christian now stands in connection with Christ. The believer stands in association with Christ, and is in the good of all that Christ has accomplished. That is what the resurrection indicates. Christ has gone into the judgment for me, and He has come out of it, and I am out of it in Him. I am in all the clearance of Christ.

Now, dear reader, let me ask you how you stand in relation to Christ. Did you begin this year without Him? Do not so end it. Let His love win your heart. Give Him the confidence of your soul. He is truly worthy. Let not all you have heard and read of Him since 1903 dawned rise as a witness against you in the Day of the Lord. Be persuaded now to decide for the Lord, and if He spare you to see another year, may it and all your future days be spent in His blessed service. If still undecided, let me give you one closing gospel word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

W. T. P. W.