

BEACON LIGHTS ALONG THE SHORES OF LIFE



BEACON LIGHTS

ALONG THE SHORES OF LIFE.

TO WARN THE UNWATCHFUL

AND

TO CHEER THE WEARY.



LONDON :
G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

“Grace & Truth” Gospel Series.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

1. Beacon Lights along the Shores of Life.
2. From the Far Country to the Father's House
3. Believe and Live.
4. Whither Bound ?
5. Building on the Rock
6. The Great Invitation.
7. Far above Rubies.
8. The Captive Freed.
9. Saved and Satisfied.
10. The Valley of Blessing, and how many enter it.
11. Life Streams from the Riven Rock.

Price 1s. 6d. each, post free.

LONDON :

G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

INDEX.

| | PAGE |
|---|-------------|
| A Divine Telegram... | 19 |
| A Faithful Son | 297 |
| A Fragment of Experience | 55 |
| "A Most Impressive Sight, Sir" | 306 |
| A Terrible Exchange | 137 |
| A Willing and a Waiting God | 327 |
| A Word to the Worldly | 163 |
| "Abraham Believed God" | 309 |
| "Anathema Maranatha" | 274 |
| Another "Brand" | 81 |
| Death unto Death, Life unto Life | 127 |
| "Decide for Christ Now" | 241 |
| "Don't Bother Me" | 244 |
| Faith in the Lord Jesus | 326 |
| Faith not Reasoning | 84 |
| Four Parallel Cases | 179 |
| Fragments | 331 |
| From Darkness to Light | 190 |
| "God Says I am Saved" | 221 |
| God's Expostulation | 120 |
| Gospel from the Book of Ruth | |
| " " Chapter I.—Decision for Christ | 1 |
| " " Chapter II.—Meeting with Christ | 29 |
| " " Chapter III.—Rest in Christ | 57 |
| " " Chapter IV.—Relationship to Christ | 85 |
| Gospel Hardened | 70 |
| "Have You Accepted Him?" | 303 |
| "He is My Saviour" | 166 |
| "He's Mine and I Know He Loves Me" | 248 |
| How I was Plucked as "A Brand out of the Fire" ... | 99 |
| Hymn—Music—"God in Mercy sent His Son" ... | 166 |
| " " "Will You be There and I?" ... | 188 |

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| “I Cannot Love God!” | 141 |
| “I Know Ho Won’t Cast Mo Out” | 158 |
| “I’m Saved through the Precious Blood” | 44 |
| “Is Ho Saved?” | 317 |
| Is there a God? | 110 |
| “It is finished!” | 148 |
| It’s all through Jesus Christ | 197 |
| Jonah | 286 |
| Letters to an Anxious Soul | |
| No. 2.—Christ or Feelings; Which? | 130 |
| “Made” | 214 |
| One Died for All | 21 |
| Only One Step | 209 |
| “Peace Made” | 203 |
| Poetry—“And the Door was Shut” | 302 |
| Faith’s Language | 139 |
| He is Coming | 207 |
| Jesus Came | 268 |
| Love Great, and Pure, and True | 324 |
| One Life | 69 |
| The Way, the Truth, the Life | 50 |
| “Thou Fool” | 79 |
| Soul Breathings | 243 |
| Upward | 51 |
| Waiting for You | 332 |
| “Sinners, Jesus came to Save” | 53 |
| Substitution | 152 |
| “That is Plain” | 26 |
| The Ark | 321 |
| The Blood and the Hyssop | 169 |
| The City of Refuge; a Word of Warning | 48 |
| “The Clean Side of the Broad Road” | 281 |
| The Exceeding Riches of God’s Grace | 269 |
| The Finished Work of Christ | 277 |
| The Fisherman’s Sacrifice | 96 |
| The Four Suppers | 253 |
| The Gambler | 52 |
| The Heavy Load and the Light One | 293 |
| The Power of Grace | 225 |
| The Three Steps | 218 |
| “This Man Recciveth Sinners” | 78 |
| Two Solemn Warnings | 250 |
| “What! Is it Only to Touch?” | 113 |
| What is Due to Christ? | 280 |
| “Why Don’t You?” | 140 |
| Why Everybody should Lovo Jesus | 308 |

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

CHAPTER I.—DECISION FOR CHRIST.

Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died ; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab ; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth : and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them ; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab : for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her ; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house : the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them ; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to-night, and should also bear sons ; Would ye tarry for them till they were grown ? would ye stay for them from having husbands ? nay, my daughters ; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again : and Orpah kissed her mother in law ; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods : return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee : for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God : Where thou diest will I die, and there will I

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

be buried : the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi ? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara : for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty : why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me ? So Naomi returned, and Ruth, the Moabitess, her daughter in law with her, which returned out of the country of Moab : and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest."—RUTH i. 1-22.

There are three characters, beloved reader, in this chapter which bring before us and illustrate three entirely distinct states of soul. In Naomi you have the sad and solemn case of a backslider ; in Orpah you have the fearful condition of a soul that prefers the world to Christ ; and in Ruth you have the beautiful picture of a soul that prefers Christ to everything. You can easily tell, my friend, which of these three characters is yours. Are you a backslider ? are you one who prefers the world to Christ ? or, are you one who prefers Christ to anything and everything ? Do not say you do not know ; that is not true. You *do* know. When I was in the world I knew quite well that I preferred the world, and that in my heart there was nothing but enmity to God's beloved Son.

In the old Testament Scriptures, as well as in the new, you have the truth unfolded that God loves us, and wants us to know and love Himself. Men do not believe it, but there ~~is~~ is. Look at Naomi, she is the picture of ~~one~~ who has known the love of God, and turned

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

her back upon Him for something in the world. Is such an one reading this paper?—one who has known the love of God, walked for a while with the Lord, confessing His name, seemed for a time really true-hearted to Him, enjoyed the sweetness of His presence, and then something has come in—something perhaps in your worldly circumstances—and little by little, insensibly perhaps at first, your back has been turned on the Lord. At first the turning away was very slight, but it was turning from Him, and little by little, little by little you got farther and farther off, till at last the soul waked up to find it was utterly empty.

Everything is bitter in the soul that has given up Christ for the world. “Call me not Naomi (i.e., *pleasant*), call me Mara (i.e., *bitter*)”—says Naomi, Ver. 20. Oh, reader, are you one that has got back into the world, and turned your back on the Lord? Fain would I have you turn right round to Him again this moment. Oh, wandering one, return, return! Backslider, the Father has missed thee from the family circle, the Saviour has missed thee from His side, the Shepherd has missed thee from the flock; oh, return, return! Nothing has changed His heart towards you; spite of all your wanderings He loves you still; He would have you back by His own blessed side. In this chapter I get Him bringing back Naomi.

Ten years she and her family had been away from Judah; yet she ought never to have left Judah, the place where God was known. It was quite natural she should go when there was a famine there, you say. Yes, quite natural, for nature

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

always turns its back upon God ; but see the folly of it. Could not God have maintained them in Bethlehem? “Bethlehem” means “*the house of bread* ;” and could not God have maintained them there in peace and plenty? But what does she get by leaving it? Does she get peace and plenty in Moab? No, the heart that leaves God for the world gets plenty of trouble, but not one scrap of peace ; a soul that has slipped away from the Lord, and got back into the world, wakes up, sooner or later, to find itself in misery and wretchedness.

Naomi leaves Judah with her husband and her two sons ; a little while and the one she loves best in the world is taken from her side and laid in the cold tomb. Ah, the Lord knows how to touch a heart by a sorrow like that. He says, Child! I love you too much to let that pillar remain by your side, on which you are leaning. I will take that pillar away that you may lean on Myself. And now Mahlon is sick and dies. (Mahlon means “*sick*,” and Chilion, “*pining*.”) And Chilion too is “*pining*” and dies ; and she is left alone. Here comes the epitome of her history. “The woman was *left* of her two sons and her husband” (ver. 5). Thank God He did not leave her! Thank God, though you leave Him He does not leave you. Do you know what passing through grief, such as this scripture unfolds, means? He would draw your heart by it to Himself.

And now, see how the grace of God draws the heart back to Himself. Naomi rises up to return ; not alone because she had found Moab only a

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

graveyard, but because in the moment of her deepest distress and sorrow, when everything was broken up in Moab, she *heard* that there was plenty in the land she had left. Fool that she was ever to leave it ! She hears that the Lord had “visited his people in giving them bread.” Oh, how our Father loves to visit His people, and give them bread ! He may chasten His people when they need it, but the delight of His heart is to fill them with joy to overflowing. It was the grace of the Lord that drew her back.

What drew Peter after his terrible denial of his Master ? It was that look of love. Though all should deny Him, he would not : he had said he would go to prison and to death for Him, but never deny Him. Full of self-confidence, which is often the secret of backsliding, he says he will never deny Him ; but he was sleeping when he ought to have been praying, he was cutting off the servant’s ear when he ought to have been quiet, he forsook Christ and fled when he should have been near Him, and, though he went into the palace of the high priest afterwards (it was John took him in), he did not get there by clinging to Christ, and a little servant girl can make him afraid and deny that he ever knew his blessed Lord.

“Thou also wast with Jesus,” she says.

“Woman, I know him not,” replies Peter.

Then another said, “Thou art also of them.”

And Peter said, “Man, I am not.”

But soon a third urges “Did I not see thee in the garden with him ?” and then Peter began to curse and to swear, saying “I know not this man of whom ye speak.”

GO\$PEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTII.

Terrible picture of our weakness when away from God! Within ear-shot of Jesus he can turn round and deny that he ever knew Him. And Jesus heard it and turned round and looked at him. "You do not know *me*, Peter?" That was what that look said. "You do not know *me*."

What kind of a look do you think the Lord gave Peter? Was it a withering look of scorn and contempt; Did it say, "Miscreant, liar," in its glance? He deserved that it should, but oh no! it was a look of broken-hearted love. Of love so tender and strong. A look that said, "I love you still, Peter, if you do not know me. I know, I love you." And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

I do not wonder that he wept bitterly. The grace of the heart that he had wounded broke him down, and then afterwards we are told of the Lord's meeting and restoring this back-sliding one. He appeared to Simon after His resurrection. The fact is recorded, but did you ever wonder *how* He restored him? Did you ever wonder what passed between the Lord and Peter that day? He does not tell us. We only know the fact. The Lord does not tell out all that goes on between a soul and Himself. He not only restores Peter, but He brings him to judge the thing that led him away, and then He trusts him again. The backslider never gets right with God till he has it all out with Him. When you get back, and judge the point of departure, then He restoreth the soul. The Lord does what we never do. We say, "I could never trust so and so again, after what has

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

passed." The Lord shows out *to all* how He can trust Peter after He has made him judge himself.

On the shore of Galilee's lake the Lord publicly restores Peter. First of all he says, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Not more than these *fishes*, but Peter had said that though *all* should deny Him he would not. Peter, using a word which implies more than love in general, answers, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I have a special affection for thee."

A second time He asks him, and a second time Peter answers, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I have a special affection for thee."

And now a third time the Lord puts the question. Three times Peter had denied Him, three times He interrogates him ; and this third time He uses Peter's own word, "Hast thou a special affection for me?" and this time Peter flings back the door of his heart and says, Lord, look in. "Thou knowest all things ; *thou* knowest that I have a special affection for thee." No one else would think I love Thee, but Thou knowest ; no one else could believe it possible but Thou. The Lord seems to say, "Now, Peter, you take care of what I love best. I will put into your care that which is dearest to me. 'Feed my lambs,' 'Shepherd my sheep,' 'Feed my sheep.' I can trust you now, that you distrust yourself." That is how the Lord restores, and gives back confidence. May He thus restore you this moment, oh wandering one !

Now turn and look at these two young people who say they will go up with Naomi. Naomi

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

does get back to the land, but on the road see the mischief she does—the irreparable eternal mischief. Oh, backsliding one, if restored, beware how you again slip away from the Lord, lest you be the cause of everlasting ruin to some other soul or souls under your very roof! I charge Naomi solemnly with being the cause of Orpah's everlasting ruin. There is nothing so terrible as backsliding, nothing so disastrous as slipping away from the Lord.

Both these two young people had passed through the same sorrow, were in the same circumstances, under the same influences, and with the same testimony before them ; for Naomi must have unfolded something of God to them, to make Ruth speak as she does afterwards. Orpah thus had the same opportunities, the same privileges, the same advantages as Ruth, and at first they turn their backs on the world together. These two seriously mean to leave it ; and I doubt not, beloved unsaved soul, you too have had your moments of serious thought ; you have had your moments of conviction, have you not? Have you never trembled as you heard the preacher reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come? You know you have. But have you decided for Christ? No doubt you have said, "It is better to be a Christian than not to be one." Your sins have come up before you, and you have trembled as you thought you must some day have 'o do with God, and you have felt afraid of the judgment to come.

But perhaps you say, "I have had no convictions, no anxiety, no fear for the future or

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

thought about my soul and God." Do you say that? Ah! then, my careless, Christless friend, there are days of hopeless sorrow before you ; days of terrible conviction, days of fearful anxiety, days of agony and remorse, and terror unspeakable ; but where? In the place where hope never comes ! when anxiety, and convictions, and sorrow and remorse come all *too late*. Oh, that you may be aroused, awakened, convicted *now*, my unsaved readers ; *now* while you have still time to decide for Christ.

It may be with some of you that deep sorrow has been known in your heart : death has knocked, not at your door, but at the door of one you deeply loved ; and as that one has been taken from you you have felt, "How would it have been had I been called away like that?" Ah! what would it be if you died now?

Young man, what would the issue be if you died this moment in the state in which you now are? Where would *you* spend your eternity—your long, your endless eternity?

Hoary old man grown old in forgetfulness of God, grown grey in rejection of Christ, with all your sins still upon you, if God called you away at this very moment, where would you spend *your* eternity?

Young woman, so gay and thoughtless, thinking only of the world, caring only for pleasure, with no thought of Christ, unwashed, unforgiven, if God were to cut you down now, where you read this, where would *you* go to spend this endless eternity that is before you? It is high time *you* were converted! Oh, turn round to Jesus, your sins shall all be forgiven ; you shall

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

taste the blessedness of knowing the Lord. It is better far to belong to Him, happier far to be numbered among "His own;" and could you have a moment better than the present to accept Him as your Saviour? Could you have a more important moment than *this* moment, in which to decide for Christ. Impossible! He loves you and wants to save you. His name, Jesus (*i.e.* Jehovah, the Saviour), may well invite your trust; but put it off, put it off till to-morrow, and what shall then be? God knows.

But a few days since I was called to see one who had been the day before in life and health: in six hours she was a corpse: and, friend, it may be so with you to-morrow or even to-day, and what do you think it would be to die in your sins? Think! think! I warn you; be warned in time! Have you no care for your precious soul; no anxiety to flee from the wrath to come; no desire to be with God's beloved Son by and bye? Oh, would you not like to know that your sins are all forgiven? would you not like to be found among the ransomed of the Lord, by and bye? would you not like that your voice should swell that chorus of praise to the One who died to save you? would you not like to be there in that scene of life and glory?—Oh, *decide then*, DECIDE NOW, DECIDE FOR CHRIST!

Truly, this world is a scene of sorrow and death. What had Naomi found Moab to be? A graveyard! And what is this world? A great graveyard! Sorrow and death everywhere. The hearse that you meet as you go into the

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

street tells you of death. If you turn from it and go another way, what will presently meet your eye? A house with the blinds all drawn down. Oh, you say, death has been there too. A few steps farther and you meet one draped in deep mourning; death again has been taking away the loved one. You go to your home, and there the first thing you see is a black-edged letter waiting for you, telling once more the tale of sorrow, bereavement, and death; and a morning or two hence some one else may take up the newspaper, and there, the last upon the list, "died suddenly," is *your* name.

Yes, this world is one vast graveyard, but what a relief it is to turn round from it to the *living God!* I cannot tell you what it is to my heart to know that the One who loves me best can never die. The one I love best here is the one with whom my deepest sorrow is connected, for death may come in and take that one away from me. But I have One to love now who can never die. Ah! but you say He *has* died. Yes, and He died for me, that is the best of it; that is what wins the heart for Christ. He died for me, and now the heart may flow out to Christ unhinderedly, and never shall its tendrils be rudely broken. You may love Him deeply, tenderly, yea, with your whole heart; your deepest affections may go out to Him, and never shall they be crushed or disappointed, for you will have found One to love who can never die. You who have known sorrow, would you not like to know Him to comfort you in it? You who have known death taking your dearest, would you not

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

like to know Him who is the Resurrection and the life? You who want an object to live for, would you not like to know Christ? Is your heart empty? He will fill it, for Christ fills to overflowing. There is life for the dead, comfort for the sorrowing, bread for the hungry, everything in Jesus, and an object to last you all your days, One who can *never* die.

Perhaps you say "I should like to be a Christian, it is better far to be a Christian, for the world has never really satisfied me yet." No, nor it ever will, for the heart is too big to be filled with aught except Christ, but He fills it to overflowing. But you tell me, "Some Christians are not happy." I will tell you why, they are like Naomi, backsliding ones. They want to have a bit of the world and a bit of Christ ; to hold the world with one hand and Christ with the other. No wonder they are not happy, they are not the right kind of Christians at all ; they have too much of Christ to really enjoy the world, and too much of the world to fully enjoy Christ ; now, do not they deserve to be miserable for their half-heartedness ? I think so. Besides, look at the damage they do ; what is the effect of their half-heartedness ? Why, by and bye they will say to some young person who wants to be out and out for Christ, "Well, you know, you must not go so far ; if you are going to be as decided for Christ as that, you will have to give a great deal up, you had better not take such a stand."

After this sort speaks Naomi, saying, "Go, return." "Go back." I wish I had been by her side that day. "Go back!" I have no words strong

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

enough in condemnation of such behaviour to enquiring souls. “*Go back*” where? Go back to hell? Go back to the lake of fire? Go back to Moab and its gods, and to hell at the end? for that is the real meaning of it. And this is the advice of one who knew the living God. Get all you can in the world, and everlasting ruin at the end. Even the world holds Christians, who act in such a way, in contempt. Very deep and profound was the contempt I had for unreal Christians when I was in the world. I respected real Christians, though, alas, I hated them, but I despised half-hearted ones. Oh, beware of in anywise ceding the truth one bit, by so doing you lose *everything* and you gain nothing.

Yet Naomi’s words seem kind and plausible, “The Lord deal kindly,” &c. (verse 8); “The Lord grant you that ye may find rest” (verse 9). What mockery! Turn your back on Him, and look for rest! What might they have answered her? “We had everything, and it has all been swept away by death. Our cup was full, but it has been dashed to the ground, and we are empty and desolate in the world, we want something living and abiding.” Just suited are such souls to God to come in and fill, and comfort and satisfy. And they seem in earnest too, and say, “Surely we will return with thee.” They appear so interested, so engaged about it, like a heart almost decided for Christ. But Naomi says, “Turn again.” Oh, how could she? Turn from God. Turn back to the world; the world that had failed to satisfy them. Naomi was the very picture of some crooked, crotchety, cross-grained

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

people who have no expectation of other people being saved ; it is as much as they know they are saved themselves.

I suspect, too, that Naomi had a bit of Scripture in her mind that day, that no Moabite should enter the congregation of the Lord, even to the tenth generation (see Deut. xxiii. 3, 4).

So now she brings out this—If you go with me, your worldly prospects will all be blighted (ver. 11—13) ; go back, and the Lord give you something in the world. Worldly prospects all ruined,—I think I see Orpah's face ; I cannot stand that, she says ; I never thought of that. This brings Orpah to the point, and now, dear reader, comes the point whether *you really* want Christ or not. “But,” you say, “will my worldly prospects be blighted?” So it is often. The moment a person is out and out for Christ, your old companions will slight you and leave you. Do you, therefore, say, It is up-hill work being a Christian ? Yes, it is ; but look at the *top* of the hill, look at the end of the path, it is all brightest glory, the fair scene of light and joy and blessing with Christ for evermore.

When this point is come to, there is decision ; and then comes the line of demarcation. Hitherto, these two had been going on side by side to the same spot ; and there may be two souls in one family, perhaps two sisters, whose hearts are both moved—both think they would like to be Christians ; but now decision is called for. Ah ! I am not prepared for that, says one. I had not counted the cost, says Orpah ; Good-bye, Naomi, good-bye. I

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

shall always feel kindly towards you, and I hope we shall meet again some day ; but I cannot go with you at that cost ; and she turns her back on God and on blessing. From that moment Ruth goes one way, and Orpah another ; the one is decided for God, and the other is decided for the world ; and they separate for ever, each step now taken more widely sundering them from each other sad finale of what seemed so hopeful a beginning.

Oh, but you say, the picture is so dark, so dreary. Shall I lose in this world? Very likely. Will my prospects in life be blighted? Very likely. Then it is so dark I could not be a Christian. And you go back. you choose the world, you reject Christ.

Everything in the world looks fair and bright before you for a time, and you say it is most natural you should cleave to the world and turn away from God ; most natural, but what is the end? A little while and the grass is cut down, and to-morrow—to-morrow it is *cast into the oven*, the solemn end of an unconverted soul. A bright prospect the world has most surely ! No real joy for time, and nothing but real sorrow for eternity. You turn your back on God and blessing, on Christ and His love, and presently you are cast off by God, forsaken by Him, and then you spend your *eternity* where hope and light and love never, never *come* ; and you choose this, and call it a bright picture, do you ? Nay, it is like the rich man in the gospel, who was hurled in one moment from the lap of luxury to the lake of fire ! Your path ends in death now, and judgment for ever.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Oh, I warn anyone who is this moment just balancing the matter. Do you turn back? "I do." Do you answer really, I do? You choose the world. Yes. You turn your back on the truth then, and back into the world in affections you go. Against Christ? "Yes." For the world? "Yes." Back to her people and her gods goes Orpah, and you follow in her steps. Hear what Isaiah says of these gods, "Gods that *cannot* save" (Isaiah xlvi. 20). What an awful picture of a soul that turns its back, deliberately, in cold blood, on God and His Son!

One of these two characters is yours. Either, like Orpah, you refuse Christ and you choose the world; or, like Ruth, you say now, I *cannot* go back; you tell me the road is rough; I care not, it is the end of the road my eye is upon. Ruth is the picture of a soul that says I will have Jesus, come what may in between. There is something in Jesus that attracts my heart, and Him I must have. But it will be a rough road. I care not, I must have Him. Then there will be stones in the way. I know it. There are lions in the path. No matter, "I *will* go!" "Where thou lodgest I will lodge." Mark how she goes into details; let the road be ever so rough, the accommodation ever so bare, she has sat down and counted the cost. "Thy people shall be my people," even though the Lord's people be a despised people, "And thy God my God," that is, the end before Ruth is God Himself.

To the heart that wants salvation, that wants eternal life, I say, What is it you covet?

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

It is God Himself. What do you want to possess? It is God you want. In Isaiah xlv. we hear of gods that cannot save, and then God unfolds what He is, "a just God and a Saviour." How just? Because He will not pass over or make light of sin. How a Saviour? He gave His own beloved Son to die on Calvary's cross. the just for the unjust, to bring us to Himself. And now He is willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him through Jesus. "Look unto me and be ye saved," is His word. If I tell you of my God, what is He? A loving, a gracious God, a saving God, a God who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up to die in order that He might spare you. A God who loves you, and who wants to save you.

Well, do you say "Thy God shall be my God"? My heart delights to hear the words. What a God He is! a just God and a Saviour. "Look unto Me and be ye saved." Does he say, Look unto Me and *feel* saved. No! It is *be ye* saved. If it were *feel* saved, Satan would whisper, but you do not feel aright. It is "*be ye* saved." Are you looking to the Lord? then you *are* saved; the moment your heart says, Well, God is for me, He loves me, He bids me look and live, I do look, then what does He say, "Be ye saved."

It is a blessed thing when the heart says, Christ is mine, I respond to His grace, to His call; henceforward, I am His. I AM DECIDED FOR CHRIST. "When she saw that she was *stedfastly minded to go* with her, she *left speaking*," and so can I! If *decision* for Christ is the word you

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

can say just this moment, my work is done, I trust you are not “a little bit inclined towards” (No! No!) but “*stedfastly minded*” for Christ.

They come back to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest, and in the next chapter we read of Ruth gleaning until the end of barley harvest, and wheat harvest; what does that mean? She came in for *everything*. Whenever the heart is decided for Christ, everything is yours. The Lord grant you to have your heart so fixed on Christ, so pledged to Christ from this hour, that you may know you are Christ’s, and Christ is yours, and all that He has is yours too. The God that gives life to the dead, speaks peace to the troubled soul, and comfort to the sorrowing one, gives life and hope and joy to every believer, and will take each such in a little while to be where He is in scenes of eternal brightness and beauty. Oh! who would not have *such a God*? And you must make your choice. Either you drop this paper *Godless*, or for God. You must decide either against the Lord or for Him. There is not a single person can lay aside this paper undecided. If it is not for Christ, it is against Him. “He that is not with me is against me.” There is no middle ground. Is it among the foes, the adversaries of the Lord, your lot is henceforth to be cast, or numbered with His own,—able, henceforth, to sing this hymn that my heart loves?

“My heart is fixed, o’ernal God,
Fixed on Thee.
And my immortal choice is made,
Christ for me.”

W. T. P. W.

A DIVINE TELEGRAM.

“The entrance of thy words giveth light.”—PSALM cxix. 130.

One day, in the North of England, a young man entered a shop where a servant of God was purchasing some article. He noticed how very ill this young man looked, and was led to ask him if he had found peace. To this question he got the reply, “I have Christ, and He is my peace.” On enquiring how and when this came about, the following account of the way in which God was pleased to carry His own word home to a soul, which He had deeply exercised beforehand, was given by the young man, proving the truth of the passage of that same word which is at the head of this article, and which has been written with the simple desire of magnifying that word. Also that the blessed God I trust will use it to encourage any who have to do with anxious souls, to wield the two-edged sword of the Spirit, looking to God to carry it home to the hearts and consciences of those they are dealing with, and further that He will be pleased to own it to the relief of any precious souls into whose hands this little periodical may fall, who up to this moment have been going about seeking rest and finding none, that THEY may set to their seal that “The ENTRANCE of thy words giveth light.”

About a year and a half previous to this interview this young man had been employed as a clerk in the telegraph department, near Preston. For a long time he had been in deep distress of soul.

“Every Sunday,” he said, “as the day came

A DIVINE TELEGRAM.

round, I went from place to place where I could hear preaching, to see if I could *pick* up any comfort; but God did not intend me to pick it up, He sent it to me in His own way.

“One Monday morning I was standing in the telegraph office, bowed down with sin and sorrow, in the act of asking God to give me relief and forgiveness, or I should go mad. Just at that moment a signal came from Windermere—an address—and then the words, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace;’ That ‘LAMB OF GOD,’ that ‘REDEMPTION,’ that ‘BLOOD,’ those ‘RICHES OF HIS GRACE,’ went right into my poor heart, and no one in the whole world could have had greater joy than I had that Monday morning.

“The message I took myself; it was for a young woman, a servant in the neighbourhood, who had written about her state of soul, being herself very anxious to hear from her master’s brother, who was staying at the lakes; and he had taken this means of replying to her letter. She, too, a short time after, as I heard from her own lips, found this same message to be to her own soul the ‘light of life.’”

Beloved reader, precious, exercised, trembling one, may you also find that “*that Lamb of God,*” “*that redemption,*” “*that blood,*” “*those riches of His grace*” meet, most fully meet, every necessity of thy soul, because these two verses are God’s testimony to the *person* in the

A DIVINE TELEGRAM.

first place, and in the second to the *work* of His dear Son, by whom He has been so glorified about sin and sins that He offers rest to thee *now*—rest in the One in whom He has found rest—the One who *made* peace by the blood of His cross—who is our peace, who believe, at the right hand of God.

S. V. H.

ONE DIED FOR ALL.

“The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”
JOHN iv. 14.

Cold, dull December had come round once again, and with it its usual hard gales, causing terrible shipping disasters, many an anxious night to care-worn mothers who had sons tossing on the sea; making widows and fatherless children, and breaking up many happy homes. It was blowing hard and cold one evening as I was sitting snugly with my rug round me, on the top of a Clapham omnibus, on my way home, after a day's work in the city. I could not help thinking of the poor sailors who were fighting with the gale, and, remembering them before the One who, with a gentle “Peace, be still!” quelled the raging storm on the Sea of Galilee. In the midst of my prayer the omnibus stopped, and a weather-beaten, good-natured looking sailor mounted on to the box by my side. My offering him part of my rug and remarking the state of the weather led to a conversation, which I am sure will, while here, be stamped on my memory, and which I hope will be greatly blessed by the Lord to those who read it.

“We have had some hard gales, my friend,”

ONE DIED FOR ALL.

I remarked, "have you been in many bad ones?"

"Yes, indeed, I have, and am now pretty used to them," my nautical friend replied, "but I have never had such a narrow escape as I did last voyage out to the States, and will tell it to you if you like to hear it, sir, as it is well worth hearing.

"We left Liverpool in the fine steamship — on Saturday afternoon, and with smooth water and fine weather were soon ploughing the dark blue waves of the North Atlantic. The captain seemed pleased at the rapid progress we had made, and said he felt sure we would make a famous run out. The passengers were chatting in groups, some young men were busily speculating on their prospects out in the New World, old ones were talking about the state of the 'Old Country' they had just left, while their wives were discussing domestic affairs, and the hard-worked stokers were up getting a breath of air and chatting with the engineers about the probable number of days they would be on the passage out; when all were startled by a loud explosion, and almost blinded by volumes of steam which came rushing up from the hold of the vessel.

"Wild confusion followed; the women shrieked, the children cried, the men rushed wildly about trying to find out the cause of the explosion, and, altogether, it was a heart-rending scene. In the midst of it all the engineer announced that one of the main pipes had burst, and that in a few minutes, unless somebody went below, at the risk of his own life, and turned

ONE DIED FOR ALL.

some tap in connection with the pipe, they would all be blown up. Immediately there was a frantic rush for the bows and stern of the steamer, all trying to get as far from the boilers as they could. Moments (which seemed like hours) went slowly by. Again the engineer cried out those terrible words, telling the people that unless some one risked his life and turned off the tap they all would be lost. Again interminable moments went by ; shrieks and prayers, mingled with oaths, broke the silence.

“At last a poor stoker, whom we never thought much of, stepped forward, and, with some canvas wrapped round him, went below. All was now still. Suddenly the escape of steam and bubbling ceased, and the engineer and one or two volunteers went down, and then they saw the tap turned and the poor noble stoker lying by the side of it *quite dead*, having been scalded to death. All the ship’s crew and passengers were saved by a poor despised one, who lost his life in doing it.

“What do you think of that, sir? Was not that wondrous love? I tell it to all I can, and can never be tired of praising the poor fellow up. Good night, sir, I come to an anchor.”

Here my nautical friend left me, pondering over the love of the poor stoker who had become the saviour of the ship’s crew and passengers, at the cost of his own life.

Let us pause here, dear reader, and compare our own condition with that of the passengers. They were, to all appearances, on a doomed ship. All, yes, one and all, were expecting every moment to be blown into the sea. Did not they

ONE DIED FOR ALL.

need a saviour? Indeed they did, and found one in a poor stoker, who gave up his own precious life to save them.

And we are a sinful doomed world, getting nearer and nearer to an awful judgment day. Every moment that passes draws us nearer to the end. Do not we need a Saviour? Yes, indeed we do, and we have one, even the Son of God, who left the Father's home on high, where He had been from all eternity, took upon Him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of man, and trod a path of trial and woe, which led Him only to the cross. There He freely offered up His precious life, bearing the sins of many, black and vile as they were, putting them all for ever away. Then taking life again, and rising from the dead, He is gone back to the right hand of God; being made, unto us who believe, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. i. 30).

And now, dear reader, He does not want you to build towers of good works, like Babel of old, to escape the coming judgment, but simply to have faith in Himself, and then, not only do you receive eternal life, but you are made one with Him; as it is written "As he is, so are we, in this world" (1 John iv. 17). A robe of perfect righteousness is yours, as the little hymn says:

"Clad in this robe, how bright I shine!
Angels possess not such a dress;
Angels have not a robe like mine;
Jesus the Lord's my righteousness."

He who is now in the glory will soon leave it to meet in the air all those who love Him, and take them, His own blood bought ones, to be for ever

ONE DIED FOR ALL.

with Himself. I pray you not to refuse Him : you may be black with sin, having led a life far from Him, if so, you need Him the more, and, coming, will not get a refusal from Him. I beseech you to come to Him now, in this day of salvation (2 Cor. vi. 2), while the door is open, or you may be too late, and only hear those awful words "DEPART FROM ME." If you come to Him just as you are, you will find perfect peace, and, like the poor sailor whom I met, delight to tell your friends about your Saviour ; "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."

"Oh ! what has Jesus done for me ?
He pitied me—my Saviour.
My sins were great ; His love was free ;
He died for me—my Saviour.
Exalted by His Father's side,
He pleads for me—my Saviour.
A heavenly mansion He'll provide
For all who love my Saviour.
Jesus, Lord Jesus,
Thy name is sweet—my Saviour.
When shall I see Thee face to face,
My wondrous, blessed Saviour ?
The day will come, 'twill surely come,
So Thou hast said—my Saviour ;
When in Thy glory Thou'l return,
My holy, gracious Saviour.
'Tis then I'll see Thy very face,
And be with Thee for ever ;
And, through the riches of Thy grace,
I shall be like my Saviour.
Jesus, Lord Jesus.
Thy name is sweet—my Saviour.
Then quickly come, and take us home,
Thou wondrous, glorious Saviour ! "

W. S. W.

“THAT IS PLAIN.”

“What are you to do in order to be saved?” was a question put by me to some one in whose spiritual welfare I was interested.

“I must do what the Bible tells me,” was his answer.

“And what is that?” said I.

“Well, I know that we all come short, and fail to walk up to our duty,” he replied.

“That is, no doubt, true, lamentably true—for God declares that man is ‘*altogether become unprofitable*,’ and that ‘*our righteousnesses are but filthy rags*’—but,” I said, “what was the answer given by the Apostle Paul to the earnest enquiry of the Philippian jailer, when, on the night of his conversion, he cried, ‘*What must I do to be saved?*’”

“Oh! he was told to trust in the Lord.”

“Yes,” said I, “he was told ‘*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*’ Now to trust and to believe are substantially the same, and the man who really trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ believes in Him, and is therefore saved.”

“But,” he replied, “there is so much difficulty in this trusting; it seems to be so hard, although in another sense it is so simple; its very simplicity makes it difficult!”

“Stop a moment,” I said, “and take this illustration. Suppose that I had run into some serious difficulty, and was unable to extricate myself without legal advice and assistance, I

“THAT IS PLAIN.”

should call on a lawyer and spread my whole case before him, and, having done this, I should tell him that I trusted it all to him. Thus I should, so far, be relieved, and my sense of relief would be proportionate to my knowledge of the skill of the lawyer. In the same way,” I continued, “is it that we are called to trust the Lord Jesus Christ. The soul learns by the Word and Spirit of God that it is hopelessly ruined, and morally bankrupt—a fearful discovery indeed—and, like the jailer, it cries out, ‘What must I do?’ and the word of God gives answer, ‘*Go to Jesus*’—‘to Jesus the Mediator,’—‘to Jesus the friend of the sinner’—and to Him therefore does it apply ; the whole case is spread out before Him, the whole story is told, and the result is left with Him.”

“That is plain, very plain,” said he.

And so it surely is, so far as the *trusting* goes, but then all would be uncertainty as to the result. That He would never deceive, and never play false, and never lose a case, is all. Divinely sure ; still the soul is destitute of assurance, if the result of its trust were only to be known in the future. What it seeks is a present knowledge and a present assurance.

But the case *has been* in court, and has been tried, and has been settled. Man, as a criminal, has been arraigned, has been tried, has been found guilty, and has been sentenced. All is past. Man is proven to be “**ALL UNDER SIN**,” and the unbeliever is “**CONDEMNED ALREADY**.” Such is the verdict of the Court of Divine equity. Nothing remains, therefore, but the execution

“ THAT IS PLAIN.”

of the sentence, and the consignment of the criminal to the judgment pronounced.

But could not substitution be allowed? Could not the criminal escape, by the execution of the guiltless? Yes! and oh! wonder of wonders—the Judge, in love untold, takes the place of the guilty, bears the punishment, and dies instead—

“ He took the guilty culprit’s place,
And suffered in his stead,
For man—oh! miracle of grace,
For man the Saviour bled.”

And what about the culprit—the condemned and consciously undone sinner? His judgment has all been borne by Another, and **HE IS FREE!**

He looks back to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there beholds the dark judgment-cloud burst upon the soul of his Divine and precious Substitute. The load of sin, the hours of darkness, and the wrath of God, pressed their crushing weight on Him; but the Prince of life broke the bonds of death, and was raised by God, and seated at His right hand in glory; He is there without sin, and there as the measure of the acceptance of the soul that **TRUSTS IN HIM.**

And the case is settled—Truly, “ *it is plain.*”

“ Happy they who trust in Jesus,
Sweet their portion is and sure.”

J. W. S.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

CHAPTER II.—MEETING WITH CHRIST.

“And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech ; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers : and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab : And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves : so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens : Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them : have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband : and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord ; for thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine maidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers : and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz com-

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

manded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not ; And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. So she gleaned in it. And until even, and beat out that she had gleaned : and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city : and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned : and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed. And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day ? and where wroughtest thou ? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest ; and dwelt with her mother in law."—RUTH ii.

This second chapter of Ruth is intimately connected with the first chapter, which tells us briefly that a man named Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, under pressure of circumstances, left the land of Judah,—left Bethlehem (the house of bread), and went down to Moab, the land of idolatry ; turned their back on God and went into the world. A little while and Elimelech dies in Moab ; a little longer and Mahlon is sick and dies, and then Chilion pines and dies likewise. Her husband and her two sons are taken away and Naomi is left alone. She wakes up to find her husband gone, both her sons gone, and she is left the abject picture of desolation and sorrow.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Then she learns that the Lord has visited His people with bread, she hears of the grace of the Lord, and she sets out to return to Judah. Orpah and Ruth, her two daughters in law, say they will leave the land of idolatry and death and go up with her to Canaan. Canaan typifies heaven, and every sinner says he would *like* to go to heaven. They both make the start, and then you get Naomi, in effect, saying, "If you go with me your worldly prospects will be ruined, go back to the world."

Though they both *say* they will go with her, yet Orpah, true to her name, when she hears what Naomi says, turns back, frightened at the prospect. Orpah means "a fawn," and a fawn is a timid, easily frightened creature. How many Orpahs there are now! How many who turn back frightened, afraid of the roughness of the road ; terrified at the difficulties! Orpah turns back to the world—to Moab, "unto her people and unto her gods," *i.e.*, to her *relations* and her *religion*—and what kind of religion was it? Empty forms. A dull Christless religion, with nothing in it for the heart. She is the type of a worldly professor. She goes back, and this brings Ruth to the front.

"Do not ask me to go back," she says, "I will go on." But the way is rough. "Never mind, I will go." But you will lose everything. "It is no matter, I will go on, I must go on. I have had enough of Moab. I lost my husband in Moab, the one I loved best I lost ; the world has only been a scene of sorrow, desolation, and death to me. Is there not a place of light, and joy, and

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

incorruptibility that you can tell me of, and that I may reach? Thy people shall be my people; I will go with you." And now comes the spring of it all, "*Thy God shall be my God.*"

Can you say that, beloved friend? Can you say, "I want Christ?" Oh, blessed soul! if you can say "I want Christ," soon you will wake up to the truth that Christ wants you. Precious, precious truth, *Christ wants you!* He has come into the world and sought you; you have not to seek Him. He has sought you; He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost.

Well, Ruth goes on and gets to Bethlehem-Judah—blessed place! May you get to God's house of bread—the feet of Jesus; may you reach the "house of bread" this day; the place where you shall find rest on the bosom of Jesus. God grant you to meet Jesus even this day. Would you not like to meet Jesus just now? Would you not like to know *Jesus*? Would you not like to have Jesus? Would you not like to be able to say, "This is my Beloved and this is my Friend?" Would to God that this day I could introduce you to Christ! what joy would fill my heart! It is the evangelist's part, as an instrument, to introduce the sinner to the Saviour. You want Jesus? The evangelist comes and tells you Jesus wants you. You want to be made happy? Jesus wants to make you happy. You want eternal life? Jesus wants to give you eternal life. You want your sins forgiven? Jesus wants to forgive you. You want rest? Jesus wants to give you rest. Oh, would you not like to rest

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

on the very bosom of Jesus henceforth? You say, "Yes, I would. I am anxious." Blessed sight! Do you talk to me of pictures? I say the two most lovely pictures under the sun are a company of saints *happy in Christ*, and a company of sinners *wanting Christ*.

Ah, you who want Christ—you are the very one Christ wants! He wants to save you. He wants to have you. He wants to take you with Him to everlasting glory. Will you let Him? Will you let Him save you to-day? Will you yield yourself to Him now? Do you say, "I want Christ"? Well, listen then. I am going to talk to you about a Friend.

"And Naomi had a *kinsman* of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, and his name was Boaz." Boaz is a lovely type of Christ as a kinsman, not, as some say, in His incarnation, He never was that, He only became our kinsman through *death and resurrection*. He stands now, by His death, in the relation of a *Saviour*, willing to do a *Saviour's* part. I have a kinsman of the seed of the woman. A Man who died and rose again. The *Saviour* is a mighty Man of wealth.

Two things come out in Christ the *Saviour*; He is the full revelation of God, and He is a perfect man too. There is a Man who can deliver you from the lake of fire, a Man who can bring you in righteousness to God, "a mighty man of wealth," and His name, His peerless name, is JESUS. He was rich. He had everything. He was the eternal Son, the very delight of God, and in the grace of His

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

heart He passed angels by, came into this world, and, oh, marvel of marvels, He who was God became a man that He might rescue *you*. The first man, in his pride, tried to become as God, and he became a sinner ; but listen ! He who was God became a man, in the grace and love of His heart, in order that He might die and deliver you from the power of sin and Satan, and bring you in righteousness to God. “ 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.” Oh, would you not like to have Christ ? You say, “ I am so poor.” Yes, but He is rich ! this mighty Man of wealth. Tell me, now, would you not like to be possessed of Him ? Would you not like that there should be a link between your soul’s and this mighty Man of wealth ? All that God is He showed in His life, as man on earth. All that the first man is, was fully met by His cross, when he took upon Him, as a substitute, all the sin and guilt, then by dying swept it all away, rose again, and went to heaven as man. He came down as God, He went up as man (God too, always, of course). He perfectly manifested God to man down here, and now He perfectly manifests man to God up there.

“ How wondrous the glories that meet
In Jesus, and from His face shine !
His love is eternal and sweet,
‘Tis human, ‘tis also Divine !
“ His glory—not only God’s Son—
In manhood He had His full part,—
And the union of both join’d in one
Forms the fountain of love in His heart.”

Oh, would you not like to know this Jesus ?

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Well, Ruth goes forth now to glean, "and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging to Boaz*," a very important item that. What does it mean, do you ask? It means this, it was not *sub-let*, thank God. It belonged to Boaz, it was a place where Boaz got his rights, where he was everything. It is the place where Christ's claims are fully acknowledged. There was a chief reaper too, which I doubt not pre-figures the one who carries on the work down here now, the Holy Ghost. But the field belonged to Boaz, and Ruth is among his reapers now. Oh, it is a grand thing to be among Christ's reapers. It is not sowing time now, it is reaping, and there is a day coming when He who sowed and they who reap shall rejoice together. His service is the sweetest joy under the sun, there is only one thing sweeter than His service, and that is Christ Himself. Do you ask, Is it hard work to serve Christ? I know of no joy like it, save the enjoyment of the Person of the Master.

And now, mark the intimacy between the master and the servants. "And Boaz said unto the reapers; The Lord be with you, and they answered him, The Lord bless thee." It is beautiful; there is perfect communion between the Lord and the reapers, and it is most blessed to see the way He comes in and out among them.

"Whose damsel is this?" he now says. He had his eye on the stranger, he marked the stranger and asked about her, and the servant can tell him all about her. He had found out all about her. The Lord puts the servant

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

oftentimes in full knowledge of what is going on in a soul, just in order to meet the need of the soul, by His word, through the servant. Here, however, we have a beautiful picture of the way the Lord Himself deals with a soul now. Look at the tenderness of the Lord ; do not judge of the tenderness of the Master by the roughness oftentimes of the servant. "Hearest thou not, my daughter?" Listen how tenderly He speaks, the moment you enter the field where He is, the moment you become a gleaner in His field, this is what He says, "*My daughter.*"

But, you say, this is an Old Testament scene. Then listen to one from the New Testament. There was a poor woman, when the Master was on earth, sick and weary, and she hears of Jesus, and she wants to get to Him, for she says, "If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole." The crowd throng and press Him. She follows with the multitude, trying to get near Him. The crowd sways and moves, but she presses forward, reaches the person of Jesus, touches the hem of His garment, and, lo! she is healed. The woman would have gone away at once, I think, but Jesus stood still and said, "Who touched my clothes?" If she had gone away, though she was healed, the devil would have suggested—Ah, yes, you are healed now, but you will be just as bad again to-morrow. This the Lord knew, so He arrests her footsteps as she had arrested His, and, ere she departs, most sweetly confirms her. When she heard of Jesus she came, and when she came she touched, and when she touched she was healed, and then,

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

being healed by His *power*, He confirms her faith by His *word*, and sends her away with words which she could never forget, and which I trust may fall as sweetly on your ear and heart, dear reader :—“*Daughter*, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.” Her past was—“thy faith hath made thee whole ;” her present—“go in peace ;” her future—“be whole of thy plague.” He assures her not only is she whole, but she is to *be* so ever after. Is not that a grand confirmation service ?

But, best of all, He *owns* relationship with her. Do you trust Him ? Then He owns you. He acknowledges you the very moment you acknowledge and trust Him.

Again, there was a man sick of the palsy, in the 2nd of Mark, and they bring him where Jesus was. The house is full, but they take off the roof and let him down to the feet of Jesus, and when He saw their faith He said, “*Son*, thy sins be forgiven thee.” And again, “Arise, take up thy bed and go to thine house.” And he went out by the door. He had come in by the roof, lying on his back on the bed. He went out by the door, carrying his bed on his back. Thus, you see, whenever there is faith, the Lord owns relationship with the soul, and then sends it forth a witness of His grace and power. There ought to be no cripples in the Lord’s camp.

“Then said Boaz to Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter ? go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

fast by my maidens ; let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them ; have not I charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? And when thou art athirst go unto the vessels and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground.” His grace breaks her down entirely. What does he do? He puts everything at her disposal, and, the moment a soul trusts Christ, He puts everything at its service. The whole range of Scripture blessing is at your disposal when you trust Him, and you have but to drink of the streams of that fountain of living waters which His own death and resurrection have opened up for your thirsty soul.

“Then she said—Let me find favour in thy sight, for thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly (*to the heart—margin*) unto thine handmaid.” Ah, beloved, when Jesus speaks He speaks to the heart, for there is such grace in His words ; such tenderness, such pity and compassion, such healing of the wounds of the soul.

But this only the more deeply bows down the soul before Him, and, while His grace is thus discovered and enjoyed, there is also discovered and judged what *self* is. *This is repentance* ; a most necessary exercise of the soul, and one which ever accompanies the learning of God’s grace. In figure, Ruth passes through this exercise when she says “Though I be not like to one of thine handmaidens.” She feels, and every new-born soul feels, “I am

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

utterly unworthy of His grace. I do not deserve such love." She judges herself: it is repentance, self-condemnation.

"And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime *come thou hither.*" You see your soul is to feed, but *where* is it to feed? In company with Christ, while withal it feeds on Christ. "Eat of the bread," says Boaz. "He that cometh unto me shall never hunger," re-echoes Jesus. What bread is it? "The living bread," the bread that "endureth to everlasting life." And this Bread is Christ Himself. "I AM the living Bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall LIVE FOR EVER; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood HATH ETERNAL life" (Jno. vi. 51, 54).

"Dip thy morsel in the vinegar" too, Boaz adds. What does that mean? Participation: the soul that knows Jesus is to have full participation with Him in everything. He shares all with us, and feeds us with the finest of the wheat. "And he reached her parched corn." Yes, beloved, that hand that was pierced for us on the cross is the hand that feeds us now, the hand that leads us and guides us. He likes to have us by His side. In the world we shall find people get tired of us, they do not always want us; but there is never a moment when Jesus does not want us by His side; no, never.

And to Christians I would say, be sure and get your regular meals; get them in company with Christ, feeding on "the sincere milk of

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

the word that ye may grow thereby." There is nothing He has He does not place at your disposal the moment you trust Him—and He wants you to take it all from His own hand in full communion with Himself, so that He may see you enjoy, in His own blessed presence, those precious fruits of His work which love like His, alone could make yours.

"And she *did eat*, and *was sufficed*, and *left*." What a picture of a soul simply sitting down and fully receiving the grace of God! What is the first thing I do when His grace offers me Christ, the living bread? Why, I *eat*. What follows? I am *sufficed, satisfied*. The heart is full, the conscience is perfectly purged, the soul is at rest. In place of being like the swallow, ever on the wing, or the sparrow, ever seeking wherewithal to satisfy its hunger, I am deeply content. The old ceaseless cravings and wants of the heart are perfectly, fully, eternally met by Christ and His work; and then, as a simple sequence comes this, there is something (in our case an immensity) "*left*," which we carry off for the benefit of others. Grace magnificently expands the heart, strips it of selfishness, and fills it with desires for the blessing of others. Till Christ is known the heart is aching through its emptiness, for the world is too small to fill it, so deep are its caverns; but when Christ is learned its deepest recesses are filled, and filled to overflowing, and there is abundance "*left*" for others.

But we must yet follow our gleaner, only, however, to learn deeper lessons of the loving

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

heart of the Lord of the harvest. So now, when Ruth is risen up to glean, the word goes forth, “ Let her glean *even among the sheaves*, and reproach her not : and let fall also some of the HANDFULS OF PURPOSE for her, and *leave them that she may glean them.*”

How beautiful is His grace. There is plenty of food, plenty. It is Bethlehem—the house of bread—she has reached most truly. Was not that a blessed handful the Lord gave that poor woman in the gospels, “ Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

“ But,” you say, “ I am afraid of the judgment-day.” Well, then, here is a handful for you. “ He that believeth is *not condemned* ;” and again, “ He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me HATH EVERLASTING LIFE.” Gather up that handful, beat it out, take it home, and eat it. “ Hath everlasting life, and SHALL NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION, but IS PASSED from death unto LIFE.”

What have I for the *present*? EVERLASTING LIFE. What have I for the *future*? “ No CONDEMNATION.” What about the *past*? I was in DEATH, and have “ PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.” What a complete salvation! I have thanked the Lord for that handful many and many a time, dear reader ; and I trust you will gather it too this day, and thank Him likewise for its priceless value.

“ So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.” That is, Ruth knew exactly what she had got, and she had got it in a

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

way in which she could use it. "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting," and many souls do the same. Ruth was not of that sort, she was a diligent gleaner, she was a wise gleaner. She did not take away any of the straw, she only took what she could make use of. What was the use of having it beaten out? She could take it away in a compact bundle and use it. And, when a soul gets hold of Christ, it knows what it has got, it is something tangible, no vague thing. A big bundle of straw may not have a single grain of wheat amongst it. Many people are what I might call straw-carriers. They are full of doubts, and fears, hopes, and feelings, and frames, and experiences, and may-bes, and uncertainties, and ambiguities; and they have nothing distinct. They can never say, "*I know.*" Such, although they may be very diligent both as hearers and readers, have never "*beaten out*" their gleanings.

If you are of this sort, my reader, you take a plain word of warning, and do not trust any longer in uncertainties, but see to it, from God's own word, that Christ is yours and that you are Christ's.

Ruth left the straw behind. What do you mean by leaving the straw? Why, leave the style of the speaker, or the eccentricity of the writer, leave everything I have said, and carry away only the golden grain of God's precious, enduring word, on which your soul is to feed and fatten. One word from God is worth all beside. Get your hearts full of Christ, and go and confess Him. When people have Christ in their

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

hearts it comes out. It is our privilege to know, without a doubt, what our God gives us. Ruth knew exactly what she had got, and she took it home.

“And her mother-in-law *saw* what she had gleaned ; and she *brought forth* and *gave* to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed,”— that is the parched corn that Boaz gave her at meal time. She could not eat it all. He gave her more than she could eat, and she took it home. That is, Christ so satisfies your heart that you are full yourself, and have the flowings over for souls round about. What a blessed result of meeting with Christ !

But now, one warning word ere I close, should this paper be in the hands of one who has not met Him. You have a soul. Is it saved or lost? You are going to Heaven or to hell. Which is it? Friend, decide. Delay no longer. Loiterer, do not linger. Oh, decide now, or you, who are loitering now, and meaning to decide some day, may find that it is too late ; that you are left out in the cold, and the door shut ; that the gospel trumpet is no longer giving its sweet note of entreaty, or its warning note of alarm, but the trumpet of judgment is sounding instead your eternal death-knell, for you are without Christ. You are unsaved. Oh, lingerer, do not risk it ! Turn to the Lord now. Decide now. Yield your heart to Him. Is He not worthy ?.

“Worthy of homage and of praise,
Worthy by all to be adored,
Exhaustless theme of heavenly lays,
Thou, Thou art worthy, Jesus, Lord.”

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Has He never had your heart yet? Then let Him take it now. May your language be—

“Take Thou my heart, and let it be
For ever closed to all but Thee ;
Thy willing servant, let me wear
The seal of love for ever there.”

Will you not have Him now, and go and confess Him? Own you belong to Him, and let every one know you have, and love Him. And then may He feed your soul till you see the Lord in the air—caught up to be for ever with Him.

W. T. P. W.

“I'M SAVED THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.”

Such were the triumphant words with which a poor woman greeted me one day as I entered her cottage just a year ago.

She was the child of a Christian mother who died, however, before her little girl knew her value, and while still in her “teens” she was married to a man of godless and profane habits. For nearly thirty years from that time she lived amidst the cares of her family, without any sense of sin or fear of God, without even the form of going to church or chapel, till within a few months of the day mentioned.

A severe illness then laid her low, and for a time she seemed softened and subdued, and those who were watching for her soul became hopeful, but, alas! returning health was not accompanied with any sign of a new life, and still they waited and prayed.

"I'M SAVED THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD."

On one occasion after this an evangelist, strange to the village in which she lived, called at her cottage and enquired whether she knew her sins forgiven. She could only say "No," and, after setting God's way of peace before her, he left, adding, on parting, "I hope, when I come again, you will be able to tell me your sins *are forgiven.*" These words made a deep impression on her mind, and, when I shortly afterwards visited her, she told them to me with evident feeling.

Very soon after this, it was laid upon our hearts to commence a little weekly afternoon meeting at her cottage, in order that she might hear the truth, though she took no pains to seek it elsewhere. This was continued for about a month; each time we noticed her earnest gaze as we spoke of salvation for poor sinners, but still the blessing tarried. On one of these occasions, the one who was speaking was specially led to dwell on John's testimony, recorded in the 19th chap. of his gospel concerning the blood that flowed from Christ's side, the blood that cleanseth from all sin, the precious blood that speaks *peace.*

One day in the following week, just as we were sitting down to dinner, a messenger arrived, entreating us, at her request, to go and see this poor woman, saying that she was "dying and had *gone mad.*" Immediately I hastened to the cottage, in much conflict of soul, scarcely daring to enter the open door, but I was reassured by sounds of joy, and, on my appearance, though propped up in bed, and surrounded by

“I'M SAVED THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.”

several neighbours, she at once stretched out her arms, her face beaming with delight, and exclaimed, “I'm saved, I'm saved through the precious blood.”

Then she proceeded to tell me in glowing language that for nights she had lain awake *wondering* how *she* could be washed in the blood, till that morning, when, as she sat at breakfast, the light entered her dark soul with such radiant power, that joy for the time had made her (what others called) mad. As I stood in wondering awe and adoring gratitude at her bedside, I could only wish that many “wise and prudent” ones were afflicted with the same *blessed* madness.

Continually she exclaimed, “It's *all true* what you've told me, and I *never* believed it before.” Then, with streaming eyes she poured out praise and thanksgiving to Him who had “opened her eyes,” adding, with great solemnity, “How *blind*, how *deaf* I've been !”

All the time she was gazing upwards, as if at some object or vision, and would speak with rapture of “the glory of *that throne*.” Later in the day I saw her again, and still her joy was the same, expressing itself in verses of hymns, of which, however, she knew but few, but her poor body was evidently groaning under “the weight of glory.”

For a week or two she continued in this blessed frame of soul, very weak in mind and body, but never weary of the one theme,—God's love in saving *her*. The doctor (a man of the world), who was attending her, was constrained to confess that her madness was one of joy not

“I'M SAVED THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.”

melancholy, and to another of his patients he said, “She preached me an excellent sermon.”

As soon as her health was restored, and much of the mental excitement had subsided, it was her great desire and joy to go and tell others whom she had previously known what the Lord had done for her.

Walking along the road, she would speak to way-side beggars and tramps of the happiness she was experiencing, while her simple tale often brought tears to the eyes of hardened men.

As weeks and months wore on the change in her was acknowledged by many who at first looked doubtfully on the excitement, and had ventured to prophesy that it would all wear off. In her own simple language she declared, “He teaches me alone.” Though able to read but little, and knowing scarcely anything of the Bible, her spiritual intelligence was remarkable, and it was indeed a privilege to feed her hungering soul. Whenever she alluded to her conversion, she always called it “a gift,” thereby tracing it at once to its Divine source, and adding her testimony to the truth of God’s word, “By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is *the gift of God*.”

This history is now told in the earnest hope that labourers in the Lord’s vineyard may be encouraged in the blessed work of winning souls. The power of God *must* accompany His own word spoken in the Spirit.

To any who may read this narrative, who have not as yet tasted the peace and joy of forgiveness, let me say that the *same* “precious

“ I’M SAVED THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.”

blood,” shed once and for ever, can make you *clean*. The same mighty, loving Saviour is able to deliver *you* from the power of sin and Satan. You need not wait to *feel* what this poor woman did, *before* you believe. It was not her feelings, or her happy experience that saved her, but her faith that took God at *His word*, and accepted His great salvation *in Christ*.

“ There is life in a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment *for thee*,
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him who was nailed to the tree.”

M. T.

THE CITY OF REFUGE; A WORD OF WARNING.

The cities of refuge (vide Numbers xxxv.) were mercifully given by God to the children of Israel, that a place of shelter might be provided for the manslayer who had taken the life of his neighbour inadvertently. Once arrived in the city of refuge he was safe from the pursuit of “the revenger of blood.” Within the walls of this place of safety, he was as secure as if he had never shed blood; but, found by the avenger outside the city, his life was forfeited, and the law must take effect. “He that sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.”

Unbeliever, you are “by nature a child of wrath, even as others.” Overtaken by the avenger away from Christ—the true and only city of refuge—you must perish everlastinglly. If death find you ere you have fled for refuge to

THE CITY OF REFUGE ; A WORD OF WARNING.

Him who is “mighty to save,” the unmitigated judgment of God upon you as an impenitent sinner—an eternal abode in “the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone” must be your portion.

I beseech you, be not deceived by the lie of the devil which would make this judgment limited or uncertain. I beseech you, further, not to give heed to that still more common wile of the archdeceiver, which would tempt you to reckon on the continuance of life, and to put off coming to Christ till a more “convenient season.” What would have been thought of the manslayer who, with the avenger of blood upon his track, should have postponed for an hour his flight to the only place of security for him? His neighbours would have counted him mad. And what shall be said of him, then, who, when it is not a question of the life of the body merely, but of that of the soul, which must exist for ever, says (like Felix) to the preacher, “Go thy way at this time, and when I have a convenient season I will send for thee.” Where, alas! is that miserable procrastinator now?

But, for thee, dear reader, the gates of the city of refuge stand wide open, and are close at hand. The Lord Jesus still sits on the throne of grace. He sends forth His ambassadors who beseech sinners “in Christ’s stead,” “Be ye reconciled to God.” There is no salvation in any name but His. There is no life but in Him ; but there is life in Him for you if, by faith, you will receive Him in whom it dwells. But, “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

THE CITY OF REFUGE ; A WORD OF WARNING.

Your eternity of weal or of woe hangs upon your acceptance or rejection of the gospel message.

But, once more, I beseech you, delay not—flee for your life,—and flee at once—

“To Jesus may you fly,
Swift as the morning’s light ;
Lest life’s young golden beams should die,
In sudden, endless night.”

J. H. S.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE.

“Jesus saith, I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”—
JOHN xiv. 6.

“I am the Way,”—nor other way is there
That leads to heaven and God. “I am the Way,”
And, having Me, though thou hadst wandered far,
Thou art not wandering now, but in the way.

“I am the Truth,”—full oft thou’st been deceived,
And many a time beguiled thy heart hast been ;
Now, having Me, thou hast the truth received,
And freed art thou from the deceits of men.

“I am the Life,”—once dead in sins thou’st been,
Though in dead works thine energies were rife,
But, oh, how dead ! now Me thine eyes have seen,
And, having Me, thou hast indeed the Life.

Lord Jesus ! Thou alone my glory art,
Poor, weak, and erring, wherein can I boast ?
I dare not trust the promptings of my heart,
But I can trust Thee, Thou dost save the lost.

W. N. T.

“He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the
Son of God hath not life.”—JOHN v. 12.

U P W A R D.

The heart grows old,
The head grows gray,
And all doth run
To swift decay.

Sweet youth is gone,
The childhood's dream ;
And man's chief glory
Passed its beam.

Earth's joy declines,
Like setting sun,
To the night of rest,
When all is done.

Is it rest to me ?
Is it rest, my soul ?
Is it rest to go alone,
Without control ?

Without the hand of GOD,
Without the heart of love,
Without the work of CHRIST,
To bring above ?

Up to the FATHER'S house,
Up where the Lamb is light,
Up where the angelic host
All praise invite.

Up where the throne of GOD
Sends forth the river bright,
The crystal stream of life,
'Midst love and light !

T. M.

THE GAMBLER.

“What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” and yet how many a man is risking his soul for a much lower stake than “the whole world.” For reputation, for wealth, for worldly glory ; aye, and even less than these, for a life of pleasure and of sin, for an hour’s enjoyment, for a bubble, for a shadow, a thing that is gone almost before it is grasped. For any of these will a man risk his soul : his eternal blessing, for eternal woe.

It is but a small bit of the world at most, that you or I can grasp. How limited is the amount which even the wisest, the wealthiest, the mightiest can call their own ; while the greater mass of men live and die, come and go, in suffering, in poverty, and in sin, unknown and unremembered. They live their *little* span (how little a one!) and are gone, having, while here, gambled away their eternity, and for a life of worldliness, of pleasure, or of sin, LOST THEIR OWN SOULS.

MAN knows not the value of a soul, or he would not risk it as he does. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

GOD knows the value of a soul, and when He weighs in the balance the soul in one scale, and the whole world in the other, He declares the gain of the world to be nothing, compared with the loss of the soul.

THE GAMBLER.

And, knowing this, what has God done? Knowing that no man can save himself or "keep alive his own soul," forfeited by sin, God has given His Son, the Just One, for us, the unjust. "CHRIST HAS DIED," has shed "the blood which maketh atonement for the soul." "The precious blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." He is the substitute for the sinner, the Saviour of the lost. His word to such is, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest."

Reader, if you are still unsaved, still leaving your soul at stake, still, like a desperate gambler, risking your ALL for ETERNITY for a little more of the world, or of pleasure, or of sin, "we beseech you in Christ's name, be ye reconciled to God; for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Look to Jesus, who bore the sinner's judgment, the sinner's curse, who paid the sinner's debt, and give up at once, and for ever, your desperate game. See in "the precious blood of Christ" a full satisfaction for sin, and TRUST it. Receive from God that gift of eternal life which is in and from His Son. Behold, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that you may live."

H. C. J. B.

"SINNERS, JESUS CAME TO SAVE."

In talking to people on the subject of salvation, it is hard to make them think ill of themselves, though they do not mind saying they are sinners. Any one would think there were such things as good sinners. I have a

“SINNERS, JESUS CAME TO SAVE.”

story that may, by God's blessing, lead some reader to see the only ground on which sinners can be saved.

A German Prince, travelling through France, visited the arsenal of Toulon, where the galleys are kept. The commandant, as a compliment to his rank, said he was welcome to set any one slave at liberty whom he should choose to select. The Prince, willing to make the best use of this privilege, spoke to many of them in succession, inquiring why they were condemned to the galleys. Injustice, oppression, false accusation, were the only causes they could assign. They were all innocent and ill-treated. At last he came to one who, when asked the same question, answered to this effect:—“My lord, I have no reason to complain; I have been a very wicked, desperate wretch. I have often deserved to be broken alive on the wheel. I account it a great mercy I am here.” The Prince fixed his eyes upon him, gave him a gentle blow upon the head, and said—“You wicked wretch! it is a pity you should be placed among so many honest men; by your own confession you are bad enough to corrupt them all; but you shall not stay with them another day.” Then turning to the officer, he said, “This is the man, sir, whom I wish to see released.”

Such is the story; let me interpret it. If still a prisoner of Satan, apply it to yourself, take your place as guilty, and get the blessing of freedom. These slaves were all offenders, but only one knew and owned it. A deep lesson may be taught to our souls by the way God deals with sinners. He

“ SINNERS, JESUS CAME TO SAVE.”

will have all the *world* before Him as guilty, and every mouth stopped. If we take that place *now*, we get a free discharge, for the blood of Jesus has paid our ransom.

The time is quickly coming when all who are now making excuses for themselves, and looking innocent, will, with shame, have to take their place as guilty, and without hope for evermore. Perhaps we think if those prisoners only had known the worst would have got free, they would all have found themselves that one ! But such is far from the case with the prisoners of sin. They all try to prove that it is not their own fault they are in slavery, which is made so agreeable to them they will not own it as such. They make such a fair show that the chains are hidden ! Yet the “ light that shines in a dark place ” no chain of nature can be hidden from. “ The entrance of thy word giveth light.” There are glad tidings for to-day ; Christ Jesus, our Prince, has come to “ deliver the captives,” and not *one* only, but “ whosoever ” will. “ To-day, if you will hear His voice ” you may be set free.

M. E. C. B.

A FRAGMENT OF EXPERIENCE.

And now, for the first time in my life, I *knew* the Bible was the Word of God, really ; and His word to me, too,—sinner as I was. What a different Book it now became to me. A revelation from God ! “ *God*, who caused the light to shine out of darkness,” giving me His thoughts—

A FRAGMENT OF EXPERIENCE.

His mind ! Oh ! how precious, " Sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." " Who by searching can find out God ?" None, but He reveals Himself ; not demanding but giving—not cursing, but saving, in His own matchless and measureless grace, every poor sinner who bows to the name of Jesus. Yet how sad, how appalling, that, notwithstanding this, man despises God. Think of this, ye careless and indifferent souls. Surely if He speaks His words claim, yea, demand, your attention. Stoop ! I pray thee ; hearken to the sweet tones spoken by your Saviour God. He tells thee of sin put away—of judgment passed. He tells thee of a risen, glorified man in Heaven (once the despised and rejected) who has settled everything that stood against the sinner. Be the past never so black, be the past never so vile, He invites thee ; think of it ; God invites thee to be reconciled to Him. Will you not, now, own His love, His saving grace ? Look to it, I pray you, that you despise it not ! " *Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." Come with a simple, teachable mind to the word of God ; drink in His thoughts and make them your own. How blessed this ! " Lord ! I know nothing—wilt Thou teach me ?" He never denied a needy soul. He satisfieth every living soul. He will tell thee what *thou* art. He will tell thee what His Son has done, and thy heart shall overflow with love and praise to thy Saviour God. And this song, which now thou lispest with weakness, is the same eternal song of praise which, ere long, thou shalt join in that bright scene where thy Saviour is !

J. W. C.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

CHAPTER III.—REST IN CHRIST.

“ Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do. And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid; spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman’s part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth: lie down until the morning. And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city. And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said, Those six measures of barley gave he me: for he

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."—RUTH iii.

There is one little word in the first verse of this chapter that seems to characterise the whole chapter—the little word *Rest*. The early part of the book has given us a soul really decided for God. In chapter i. we have Ruth decided for God, and the people of God. In chapter ii. we have what were the *fruits* of decision,—meeting with Boaz, who is a type of Christ. She is broken down under a sense of His kindness, by His gracious words, but then she leaves Him, type of a soul that has got a sense of Christ's grace, touched the hem of His garment, but then somehow gets away out of the conscious enjoyment of His presence and of His person. Ruth goes back to her mother-in-law, and we hear, for a time, nothing more about Boaz. Now, to be merely benefitted, or saved by Christ, without the full enjoyment of Himself abidingly is not enough. What Christ gives is *rest*—full, abiding, present and eternal rest. We get, then, *rest* in the 3rd chapter, and *relationship* we shall find unfolded in the 4th.

Chapter i. is *Decision for Christ*; chapter ii. *Meeting with Christ*; chapter iii. *Rest in Christ*; and chapter iv. *Relationship to Christ*—being united to Him.

Naomi says, "My daughter, shall I not seek *rest* for thee, that it may be well with thee?" I want to ask you, my friend, one little question here. Have you *rest*? There is no real *rest* for the soul, till it is actually in the

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

place Ruth illustrates in this chapter, and where is that? Where does Ruth find rest? At the feet of Boaz. And where does a soul find rest? At the feet of Jesus! Ruth feels Boaz is the only one in whom she can implicitly confide, and she goes and places herself under his wing. She does what the Lord allows more than one sinner to do in the Gospels,—places herself under his protection,—gets to his feet. Look, for instance, at the woman who was a sinner, in Luke vii. She gets straight to the feet of Jesus, and see *how* He blesses her! Have you found rest at the feet of Jesus yet? You say, What do you mean? Ah! it is clear, then, you do not know it. You have not found rest yet. You have never yet been quietly, calmly seated at the feet of Jesus.

There is no real rest in the world; if you watch the faces as you pass along, how you see care, and anxiety, and restlessness, depicted in almost every countenance, leaving indelible lines. How rarely do you meet a person of whom you can say, What a restful face! Now, there are three rests spoken of in Scripture, and it will be my business in this paper to briefly open up the first two. You know where they both occur, in the end of Matt. xi., after what had been a stormy, dark day to the Lord Jesus. John the Baptist, His forerunner, was doubting if He were the Christ; Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, the cities where His mighty works had been done, had refused to believe Him; men had called Him “a gluttonous man and a winebibber,” and He turns away from this dark, restless scene, upward to His Father, and says, “I thank thee, O Father,

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matt. xi. 25-27).

O, Reader, are you a babe to whom the Son can reveal the depths of the Father's heart? The Father's heart,—the Father's bosom, can only be known by revelation, but the Son perfectly reveals the Father.

Then the Lord turns round again to this restless, troubled world, and gives the loveliest invitation that ever fell on mortal ears. *Resting* Himself in the Father's perfect love, He calls every labouring, laden, restless soul to come to Him, undertaking to introduce the new comer, whoever he may be, or whatever he may have been, to the same sphere of restful delight which He Himself had in the Father's love, spite of any surrounding circumstance. Never from His blessed lips fell there words more God-revealing, soul-need-meeting, love-begetting, and heart-breaking, than these,—"COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST."

Beloved, there is *rest* for the labouring, *rest* for the heavy laden, *rest* for the weary, *rest* for the anxious, *rest* for the troubled, at the feet of Jesus. It is REST of CONSCIENCE. He gives

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

you rest of conscience first of all, a perfect clearing of all that YOU HAVE DONE, through what HE HAS DONE. Have you been thinking you must do something to be saved? Such a thought is a delusion of the devil, and a snare. You can *do* nothing but sin, and you have surely done plenty in that line already. "GOD SAW (what you never did, perhaps) that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that EVERY IMAGINATION OF THE THOUGHTS OF HIS HEART (not to name his acts) was ONLY EVIL continually" (Gen. vi. 5). This is your moral condition, and what fit for God can come from you, then? Nothing, simply NOTHING. "Yes," you reply, "I see that, and I have given up trying to do anything or to be better." What are you waiting for now, then? "For what Christ will do." This is another snare and delusion of the devil. Christ's work is already finished. He will do no more for you than He has done. He can, in this aspect, do no more. He has died once. He has suffered once. He has borne sins once. He has atoned for them once. His blood has been shed once. All this is finished, and never will or can be repeated. God has accepted His sacrifice, and raised Him from the dead in token of His acceptance thereof, and of His perfect delight in Christ.

If, therefore, your sins are not now put away from God's sight by what Christ HAS DONE, they never can be, for you cannot do it yourself, and Christ will do no more in order to do it. Now, then, do you see? Either the work which gives rest to the conscience IS DONE, or IT NEVER CAN

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BE. Which is the truth? “IT IS FINISHED” was the dying Saviour’s legacy of love to the heavy laden sinner, and the soul that hears and believes, gets REST about the solemn matters of sin, iniquity, transgression, and God’s judgment thereof, through faith in Jesus, who died to secure this rest by putting away the sin, which hindered it, and then says, “Come unto me...and I will GIVE YOU REST.”

Then He adds, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall FIND REST unto your souls.” This rest is quite different from the rest of conscience which I get through the work of Christ; it is the REST OF HEART, the rest of spirit, that I get by communion with Him as a living Person from day to day. The first rest is *the Sinner’s rest*; the second rest is *the Saint’s rest*, and there is still another rest, of which the apostle speaks in Heb. iv., 9.—“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” That is *God’s rest*, which we are going to get by and bye. A sinner gets *rest of conscience* in *the work* of Christ; the saint gets *rest of heart* in *the Person* of Christ, and then there is *God’s rest*—GLORY, where sin and its fruits can never come, into which He is going to take us who believe, spirit, soul, and body for eternity; and that is the end of the path on which a soul enters who once trusts Jesus, comes to Jesus, confides in Jesus.

Now, tell me, would you not like to know these *rests*? You know the world cannot give you rest. Have you rest as you think of Death? Have you rest as you think of the Day of Judg-

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

ment? No! you know you have not; "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked;" no peace till you come to Christ. Those who have come to Him have rest. It is impossible for a soul to have come to Christ and not to have rest. If you have not rest you have not simply come to Jesus, that's all; you may have come half way, and you may be a little self-complacent, too, that you are different now from what you used to be, but there is no real rest save in personal contact with the Lord Himself, getting alone with Him, and finding out how He meets the need of the soul.

In the second chapter Boaz seeks Ruth, and speaks to her when there are plenty of others by, but in the third chapter, Ruth goes where she knows she will find Boaz and speak to him *alone*; and when a soul is bowed down with a sense of its own ungodliness, with a sense of its own utter unworthiness and the grace that is in Christ, you will find that it will withdraw, and feel that the Lord Jesus alone is the only One to whom it can really go. Ah, beloved, your whole burden is never rolled off until you get to Him *alone*, until you cast yourself unreservedly upon the bosom of Jesus.

Naomi says, "Shall I not seek rest for thee that it may be well with thee?" And where does she advise her to seek rest? At the feet of Boaz; and to you, dear unsaved one, I say, At the Saviour's feet there is peace for you, there is pardon for you, there is forgiveness for you, there is life for you, there is rest for you; to Him, then, to Him you must go.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Ruth is the picture of a thoroughly earnest soul. She does what she is bidden. She goes where Boaz is, and she casts herself down at his feet.

Perhaps some soul says, "Must I not make myself better first, must I not do something first?" You cannot, try what you will, you cannot make yourself one bit better, one bit more fit for the Saviour's presence. "Ah, but," you say, "Ruth was told to wash and anoint herself." Yes, but *you* are not, and that is the difference, for, as Job says, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean ; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch and mine own clothes shall abhor me." That is, all the efforts of man are not the least use. Snow water is the very purest of all water, and what does snow water typify? Rites and ceremonies, and everything else that springs merely from man's flesh. People are trying all this, but it does not do, snow water does not cleanse from sin ; nothing can cleanse you before God, or give relief to your soul, but the precious blood of Christ. To try to improve yourself is only a snare of the devil to keep you away from the Saviour. There is a little hymn that says—

"If you wait till you are better
You will never come at all."

The devil knows that, and so he whispers, "Improve yourself, try and make yourself better." No, no ! Heed him not ; come ! come ! come as you are ; the more you labour the more tired you will get, and do you get any nearer? Not a bit, only more burdened. It is a great thing when a soul is heavy laden, and when the bur-

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

den gets intolerable. The devil tries to hinder you finding it intolerable by slipping the burden first on one shoulder then on the other ; now on the bosom and then on the back, but the burden is there all the same ; rest you never find till you find it at the feet of Jesus. Oh, listen to his loving call : “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “I will GIVE,” what a word for a helpless sinner. If you only knew the grace of His heart, and how He wants to give you salvation, you would trust Him at once, and receive what your weary soul needs,—rest.

And now Boaz speaks to Ruth. She has done nothing but place herself under his protection, “And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth (which means Beauty) thine handmaid ; spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman. And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, for thou hast showed more kindness at the latter end than at the beginning.” How the Lord delights to have a soul in living contact with Himself! He says, “Thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning.” What does he mean by that? Why, in the 2nd chapter she had gone into the field merely as a gleaner, and there had met Boaz. Now she had gone straight to him, confided in him, put her case entirely into his hands. “Take charge of all my affairs, I claim thy care,” she seems to say, “thou art a near kinsman,” that is, the heart claims Christ, and cannot do without Christ.

Does your heart say that? Do you claim Him?

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

“How can I claim Him?” you ask. By faith. Faith can always appropriate Christ. Because you and I were under sentence of death He became a man, died, and by His dying abolished death and put away sin; and now, in resurrection, He takes all who believe into living union with Himself, so that, by faith, I can go to Him and say, “Thou art a near kinsman.” What is that lovely word which He sends on the morning of His resurrection to those who trust in Him? Listen, “Go to *my brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God.” Who are His brethren? Those who confide in Him. He acknowledges them, He takes the kinsman’s place. He says, “It is true I that am thy *near* kinsman.” He takes *our* place, under the judgment of God, in grace upon the cross, takes our sin upon Him, goes into death and the grave, but He rises from among the dead, and the first thing He does is to share all His spoils with us.

Oh, who would not have such a Christ? a Christ who says to the faith that claims Him, “Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter.” He delights to have a soul in close quarters with Himself. Look at blind Bartimæus; He first brings him near to Him, and then He gives him what he wants. Look at Zaccheus again; He brings him down from the tree and goes with him to his house. He delights to have a soul near to Himself, nothing rejoices His heart like the simple confidence of a soul who can trust Him entirely.

“Thou hast shewed more kindness in the

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

latter end than at the beginning." That is, he says, "You used not to trust me and now you do. You have more confidence in me now than you had." What a lovely picture of the heart of Jesus ! Satan says, "Don't you trust Him ; He will not have you ; you are not good enough ;" but do not you believe Satan. You trust Jesus, there is nothing He values like confidence ; He calls it "kindness," even. He has had hard and cruel treatment from many ; will you not show Him kindness ? Many scorn and despise him ; do you trust Him. Does He see you confiding in Him ? Behold, then, the rich fruit of this confidence. "I will do to thee all that thou requirest." He says, Every need of your heart I will meet. He owns Himself your kinsman. He owns you. He saves you entirely. He does all you require. You have nothing to do but to be still and trust Him.

"Howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I." Yes, there is a kinsman very near, and some of you have had very close dealings with him. You have tried to please him, tried to satisfy his claims, tried to meet his requirements. "Yes," you say, "I have tried to keep the law." You are right, there is the nearer kinsman, but can the law redeem ? Can the law do a kinsman's part ? No ; the law can only condemn, can only prove you guilty ; it cannot redeem.

"But if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth." You have nothing to do but to trust Him. He takes all upon himself. He does the whole work. He blesses you. . He

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

brings you to God, and if you have got to go back into the city (and you and I have to go back and walk through the world after He has saved us), see how He sends you back. He sends you back full. "He said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley and laid it on her, and she went into the city." Six measures of barley ! She could glean for herself about one ephah, and not a bad gleaning either ; but now see what He gives ! And mark this, too. She goes empty to him, holds the empty vail. Ah, there is something carried away that is very tangible when I go to Christ. I carry away something very substantial that I have got from Him. Six measures. And what are His measures ! They are filled full, pressed down, and running over ; that is what He gives a soul that simply trusts in Him.

Then Naomi says, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall : for *the man will not be in rest* until he *have finished* the thing this day." My rest depends on the fact that He will not rest until there is something finished that enables Him to bless me perfectly. You have only to sit still and hear what Jesus says. Cast yourself simply on Him, and then you learn what rest really is. Boaz had something to do, but has Christ something to do ? No ! But will He not do something ? No ! Has he done it, then ? Yes, for we have heard those blessed words, the precious legacy of a dying Saviour, "IT IS FINISHED." "IT IS FINISHED."

W. T. P. W.

ONE LIFE.

THOUGHTS SUBSEQUENT ON HEARING IT REMARKED THAT
A YOUNG LADY WAS VERY MUCH "GONE OFF" OF LATE.

One life,—only one !
Its span, unknown to man ;
It may be short,—or long ;
Days,—months,—or years ;
But, 'twill soon be gone.
Not ended,—but begun.
Life's issues are—*eternal*,—
Mark well that word,
That you may never be
A loser, by what's given thee.

One life,—only one !
Shall it be spent in vain ?
In pleasure, born of which
Is disappointment,—*bitter pain* !
The world is hard to please ;
'Twill soon grow tired of thee,
And call thee *old*, and say thou'rt pass'd
The prime of life ;—*and pity thee*
Because of beauty now no more ;
And thou must stand *aside*,
And see the *end* of all thy pride.

One life,—only one !
Shall it be spent in *sin*,
In base forgetfulness of Him,
Who gave His only Son ?
One life, in which to turn
Thine eyes to Him, and learn
"The way" from earth to heaven :

ONE LIFE.

Thyself, a poor, lost sinner, see,
Then "*look*" to Him, who died for thee,
And His alone, from *henceforth* be,
A liver for—*eternity*.

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 35, 36.

"He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 12.

R. B.

GOSPEL HARDENED.

A few days ago I went to see a person on whom I had been asked to call, trusting that the Lord would give me some word which might be blessed to her.

After a few minutes' conversation, I asked, "Are you able to rejoice in the knowledge that you are saved? Do you know the Lord Jesus as the One who has borne *your* sins?"

Immediately a cloud seemed to pass over her face, and she gave me no answer. I saw she was unable to meet the question, and put another, "Don't you think you need salvation?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, "indeed I do."

"Do you see that you have no hope out of Christ, that anything you could offer to God would be worthless, because of the sinful nature you possess?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, "I know all that, I have been a regular attendant at church, I was always at the Sunday school, I have heard the

GOSPEL HARDENED.

gospel time after time, but it never does me any good, I am gospel hardened ; the Bible says that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that's just what He has done to mine ; I am gospel hardened, and I can't help it."

"Then you don't want to be saved," I said, "you know you are a sinner without hope, you know that an eternity of misery is before you, but you don't want salvation, you don't want Christ?"

"But, indeed, I do," was the earnest reply, "only I'm too hardened."

"You really want to see that Christ can save you?"

"I wish I could," she answered, "but I can't; many a time the thought of the future makes me tremble, but I try to forget it, for it's too late now."

"Do you suppose that Satan would put that wish for salvation into your heart?"

"Oh, no, of course not."

"Do you suppose it came from your own heart, which the Word of God says 'is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked'?"

"Well, I suppose not," she replied.

"Then, who could have given it to you?"

After a few moments' silence she said, "It must have been God."

"And do you suppose He would give you this wish and not give you the power to believe?"

"I shouldn't think He would."

Taking my Testament from my pocket I said, "We will answer that question from the Word of God ; when we only have the words of our fellow-creatures to trust to, we may find that

GOSPEL HARDENED.

they are mistaken, but when we learn these things from God Himself we are in no danger of being deceived. His Word says, 'Let him that is athirst come, and WHOSOEVER WILL let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. xxii. 17). From this we see that *the will* is all that is needed, it says 'whosoever will; have you the will ?'

"I have," she replied, "indeed I have, I *do* want to be saved."

"You say you want to be saved, you acknowledge that such a wish must have come from God, and you see from His Word that anyone who has the wish to come may do so; now do you think that looks as though you were gospel hardened ?"

"Oh, no," she answered, "I see I was wrong there."

"Then we may leave that subject and go to another; you have the will to be saved, now we will find the way."

"I know the way," said she; "it is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to do one's duty."

"We will see if that is what the Word says about it. In Acts xvi. 30, we read that the jailor said to Paul and Silas, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' They didn't mention his duty at all. The Lord Himself says, 'He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life' (John vi. 47). Do you think they spoke the truth ?"

"Yes, I believe all that, I know I'm a sinner, and I believe that Christ died to save sinners, but haven't I to do something ?"

GOSPEL HARDENED.

“The word of God says nothing but ‘Believe,’ ” I answered.

“But I don’t think I ever could act as I ought. When people get converted they get good all at once, and though I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have heard all about His death for us, many a time, I’m not a bit changed, and I thought I must be gospel hardened, and have given up trying.”

“I see you have the same idea of conversion which I once had,” I replied, “but it helped me very much when some one explained to me that conversion is a thorough change in our thoughts about God and about ourselves, and it is from this change of thought that a change of life springs. This change of thought is what you need, for you have been greatly mistaken in your thoughts about Him, as well as about yourself. You thought He did not care about saving you, though His Word says He is ‘long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that ANY should perish’ (2 Peter iii. 9). You thought you must do something for your salvation, though His Word says ‘for by grace ye are saved through faith’—‘NOT OF WORKS lest any man should boast.’ If any works of yours are needed, then Christ’s work is not sufficient, and His Word is not true.”

“But I don’t mean to doubt His Word, I know it is true.”

“There are many people who doubt that Word, who would be very much astonished if any one told them that they were doing so. We cannot appreciate God’s plan of salvation until, in some

GOSPEL HARDENED.

little measure, we learn what we are ; but when we really see that we are LOST, that we have a nature that cannot please God, and that any attempt to do so must be an utter failure, we are only too thankful for the grace which has left us nothing to do, nothing but to believe on Him, the One who has done all that was needed, who has satisfied God's justice, so that He can now bless those who deserved nothing but punishment. We must believe what God says about us, for being so perfectly holy, He sees us as we can never see ourselves, and in Rom. iii. we read that 'There is none righteous'—'none that understandeth'—'none that seeketh after God'—'none that doeth good.' God is too holy to pass over sin, however great His love may be to the sinner. This is proved by the cross, for if God could forgive sin without its penalty having been paid, He need not have sent His Son, His 'beloved Son,' in whom He was 'well pleased,' to suffer in our stead, that 'whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Is this clear to you? do you understand it?"

"Yes," she replied, "but that's so simple, I don't think I ever saw it like that before.; but have I nothing to do?"

"Nothing but to take your place as a lost sinner, to own that you can do nothing for salvation, to believe that Christ bore the judgment in your stead, and that therefore you are free."

"But I always feel as if I ought to *do* something."

GOSPEL HARDENED.

“ If you could add anything to Christ’s work you would spoil it, for anything you could do would have to be rejected. If a man is in prison for murder, and is sentenced to be hanged, however well he might behave in prison, it could not alter the sentence of death he is under ; so it is with us, we are under God’s judgment, and all our good behaviour can make no difference ; we can only be saved by accepting God’s salvation, thus owning that we can do nothing for ourselves. Surely you won’t refuse salvation because it is free ?”

“ Oh, no,” she answered, “ I should be only too glad to know I was saved, but isn’t there a verse somewhere which says ‘ Work out your own salvation ’ ?”

“ Yes, there is, it is in Phil. ii. 12. But first we will see who the epistle is written to. The very first verse says ‘ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the *saints* in Christ Jesus.’ A saint is not an unconverted person. In writing to these saints, these *saved ones*, He says, ‘ Work out *your own* salvation with fear and trembling ;’ the salvation was theirs before they were told to work it out. Working *for* a dress is not the same as working *at* it when once the material is yours. God gives us the salvation and we have to work it out.

“ I think I see it now,” she said ; “ I always thought it meant that we were to work *for* our salvation.”

“ Well, we have found out that God wants to save *you*, that He has given you the will to be

GOSPEL HARDENED.

saved, and that you have nothing to do ~~but~~ ~~to~~ believe on His Son ; is there anything to ~~keep~~ you from being saved now ? ”

“ But I do believe on His Son.”

“ Do you really believe that he came to save you ? ” I asked.

“ Yes, He came to save sinners, and I’m a sinner.”

“ Then He must have come to save you. Did He perform what He came to do ? ”

“ Yes,” she replied.

“ And are you saved ? ”

“ Oh, no, I should be afraid to say that.”

“ Do you doubt God’s word ? He tells us that those who believe in His Son shall never perish ; and the Lord says ‘ He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life ; ’ is that true ? ”

“ The Bible says so,” she answered, “ only I don’t feel as if I were saved.”

“ But God doesn’t want feelings, He wants faith, you will find nothing in His word about feeling saved, we are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus, and we rejoice, not because we *feel* saved, but because of what God says about us.”

“ But, I should like to feel it.”

“ Now just answer me this question,” I said, “ If I had put a £5 note in your pocket, would it not be there whether you felt it or not ? ”

“ Of course it would.”

“ And don’t you think you can be saved by faith in Christ, *if God says so*, whether you feel it or not ? ”

“ I see it now,” she replied, “ we have to believe what God says, only it seems like presump-

GOSPEL HARDENED.

tion to think I'm saved ; there are many people ever so much better than I am who would not like to say that."

"Don't you think it is more like presumption to doubt His word, as if He did not speak the truth?"

"Yes," said she, "I should not like to disbelieve Him."

"Then you must honour Him by taking Him at His word, and trusting to what He says, won't you do so?"

"Yes, I will ; I will trust Him, only I'm afraid that if I sin after this, I shall begin to think I am not saved after all."

"That would be very wrong," I replied, "and very dishonouring to Christ's *finished* work, as though its value depended on your walk. We who are saved ought not to sin, but we read that 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, *shall be able to separate us* from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Rom. viii. 39). Once His, we are His for ever."

Dear reader, perhaps you have been harbouring doubts of God's willingness to save you. Perhaps you have thought that some change of life was needed before He could receive you. Never were you more mistaken. God can accept nothing from you until you have accepted His salvation. His Word says, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8). More than this, He cannot save you unless you accept

GOSPEL HARDENED.

the salvation He offers. If He did, he would not be perfectly just, and if He were not perfectly just and true, how could we trust His word and expect the fulfilment of the promises He has made. It is the perfection of His character that gives us confidence in what He says. He has done His part, He can do no more, and you are now responsible to accept His offer. Will you refuse it any longer?

“As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor. v. 20). T. T. O.

“THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS:”

“This man receiveth sinners.”—Luke xv.2.

Unsaved reader, do you know yourself to be a sinner? Then you are the very one for Christ to receive. That He received such was the charge which the proud Scribes and Pharisees brought against Jesus, the holy, spotless Son of God, and He is the same Jesus now that He was then, ready to receive—whom? the wise, the rich, the noble? SINNERS, Jesus came to save. He says Himself, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke v. 32). Oh, you who feel the load of sin, and know its heavy, weary weight, who perhaps have been trying to drown conscience in so-called pleasure and amusement, come now, just as you are, to Him, the receiver of sinners. Now is God’s time. Come! He never refused one on earth who came to Him in earnest. Let go

“ THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS.”

everything connected with yourself. Cast yourself wholly on Him. When blind Bartimæus came to Jesus, he cast away his garment (Mark x. 50). So, reader, if you want to be clothed with Divine righteousness, you must cast away all your own fig leaves, and come like the blind beggar of old, dependent wholly on Him. He has paid the whole debt of sin which stood between the sinner and God, settled it wholly on Calvary’s cross. Oh, don’t reject His message of love. Time is short, eternity is at hand. Come, ere it be too late. If you reject God’s offers of salvation here, you will have to answer to Him for it hereafter. “ Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ” (Matt. xi. 28). S. E. C.

“ THOU FOOL !”

“ So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”—LUKE xii. 21.

Gathered riches, garnered treasures,
Luxury like eastern tale ;
Life, a gaudy scene of splendour,
Feast and revel without fail :
He who heaven and earth doth rule,
Weighs thy wealth, and cries, “ Thou fool ! ”

Able statesman, gallant soldier,
Ruling with far-sighted skill ;
Fame, a dazzling structure rearing ;
Nations sway’d by one strong will :
He, who heaven and earth doth rule,
Marks thy fame, and cries, “ Thou fool ! ”

“ THOU FOOL.”

Youths and maidens sport light-heart'd,
Flitting gay amid earth's flowers ;
Laugh, and song, and jest, and dancing.
Butterflies for sunny hours :
He, who heaven and earth doth rule,
Sees thy mirth, and cries, “ Thou fool ! ”

Spendthrift, hoarder, idler, worker,
Journeying down life's chequer'd road ;
Oh ! be wise, nor scorn the question,
Asking, “ Are you rich towards God ? ”
Else, before that righteous rule,
Thou shalt hear His verdict,—“ Fool ! ”

Faithful love it is that says it,
Calls earth's baubles what they are ;
Boundless love that would awake men
From illusions, near and far ;
Love that kept not back His Son,
Yearning still above each one.

Oh ! that words of mine were given
Power, some wandering soul to win ;
Glad the welcome that would greet him.
Speaking peace and cleansing sin :
Clothing, seating in God's school,
Never more to roam a “ fool.” O. K.

“ The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God ” (Ps. xiv. 1).
“ The way of a fool is right *in his own eyes* ” (Prov. xii. 15).
“ Fools despise wisdom and instruction ” (Prov. i. 7).
“ Fools die for want of wisdom ” (Prov. x. 21).
“ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ” (Prov. ix. 10).

ANOTHER "BRAND."

Some time since, the Lord sent me to preach the gospel at B—. There was to be a large volunteer review, which would be an attraction for thousands of people, and afforded also a fine opportunity for open air preaching and tract distributing. Many were looking to the Lord for special blessing, who fulfilled His faithful Word, "ask and you *shall* receive, that your joy may be full." Amongst those who received blessing ("Blessed is the man whose iniquities *are*," not, will be, "forgiven,") was an old man of seventy years and upwards. He had gone there to visit some relations and see the review. One of his friends, who was a child of God, persuaded him to go and hear the preaching. It wasn't much in his line of things; still he went. After it was all over he hurried off, and said to his friend outside, "You've been telling the preacher all about me." She had not; but God had been giving His servant the right words, which were fixed and fastened by the Holy Ghost on the old man's heart, and, oh, blessed sight, he was brought to "repentance towards God." "There is joy in the presence of the angels of heaven over one sinner that *repenteth*."

The following day the realities of sin, judgment, and hell were so pressing upon him, that he had no desire to see the review. The things seen and temporal had been displaced by the things unseen and eternal. He came to see me, for there were difficulties in his mind. He be-

ANOTHER "BRAND."

lieved all the Bible, and that Christ died for our sins, and so on, but he could not say that his sins were forgiven. Well, seeing there was a real work in his soul, and knowing that "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it till Jesus Christ's day," my endeavour was to get him there and then to appropriate Christ as *his own personal* Saviour, so we turned to Romans iv.,—"Christ was delivered for our offences," showing clearly that He was there for offences not His own, because he could have had none. Then *why*?

"*Oh, why* was He there as the bearer of sin?
If on Jesus thy sins were not laid;
Oh, why from His side flowed the sin-cleansing blood,
If His dying thy debt has not paid?"

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*." Who? Sinners! Jesus came not to call the righteous, but *sinners*, to *repentance*, and he was just the very man, a repentant sinner! After a little more talk things got clearer and clearer, and he exclaimed, "I always believed that Christ was delivered for our offences, but I never saw till now that Christ was delivered for *my* offences, and raised again for *my* justification," and tears of joy and gratitude ran down his wrinkled face. He soon afterwards went to his friends in C—— and told them "how great things the Lord had done for him, and had had compassion on him," and has since, not only with his lips, but also by his life, brought glory to God, his Father.

ANOTHER " BRAND."

And now, dear reader, just a few plain, pointed words with you. Let me affectionately ask, has the question of sin ever troubled you, ever pressed upon your soul ? God, who has been watching you, hath declared that " the wages of sin is death," and " commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Do not try and ease your conscience by the fact that others are worse than you, for this was the spirit of the self-righteous Pharisee who said, " God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, adulterers, &c. ;" nor think that " turning over a new leaf," and " doing better for the future" will blot out from before God *the past*. If you talk like this, it is evident you do not believe that " the wrath of God abideth on you." But listen, now, and do be wise ; take the place He gives you in His Word, as " shapen in iniquity and born in sin" (Psalm 51), unable, too, to help yourself, because it is written, " a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit ;" so bow to His verdict concerning you ; do not make vain attempts to become better, but " become guilty before Him" (Rom. iii.) ; then will you find that God has a heart filled with love and compassion ; and having given His Son to die, " the just for the unjust," is fully satisfied with His " finished work," and sin being put away, and justice satisfied, He now waits to make Himself known to you " as a just God and a Saviour."

H. T.

FAITH, NOT REASONING.

"Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven ? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep ? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)"—Rom. x. 6, 7.

The *reasonings* of the heart are always at war with God's blessed declaration to us in His Word, and many a soul would find rest at once but for this "*saying in the heart*."

Is it not a fact, a blessed fact, that the Son of God has come down ; *down* from the heights of glory, to the very depths of our ruined condition ? Yes, praise His name ! He has come down "to seek and to save that which was lost," and if we were sunk in sin, He in His wondrous love would go down into the "*deep*" where there was no "*standing*," where the judgment of God must rest upon Him, as our substitute, and there, *forsaken of God*, He made atonement, He died—"the just for the unjust," He "*obtained eternal redemption*." Is this all ? nay ; for, although your *reasonings* would never bring Christ down from above, nor bring Him up again from the dead, yet, now that the work is finished, and sin put away, God has raised Him from the dead and crowned Him with glory and honour. "*The Lord is risen !*" Glorious fact ! He *has come up again from the dead*, and *now* seated at the right hand of God is "*the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him*." By *faith*, not *reasoning*, I see Jesus on the cross, bearing all my sins. I see Him *now* on the throne without my sins, and believe they are for ever put away. Reader, can you say the same ?

T. E. P.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

CHAPTER IV.—RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST.

"Thon went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one I turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it. Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. And the kinsman said; I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe. And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem: And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which hath

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age : for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him. And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi : and they called his name Obed : he is the father of Jesse, the father of David."—RUTH iv. 1-17.

The complete and thorough espousal of our cause by Jesus is that which leads to our espousal to Him. When once I learn my own utter weakness and incapacity as a sinner to rightly respond to the claims of God, I am glad to have my case taken up by one who can settle every difficulty and liquidate every claim that lay against me. This Jesus does.

By nature my relationship to God is grave and serious to a degree. The Psalmist acutely felt it when he said "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5). To this true witness Paul adds his testimony "And you who were *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, the spirit that now worketh in the *children of disobedience* ; 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" (Eph. ii. 1-3).

What solemn statements of God's word regarding man in nature !

Born in sin—shapen in iniquity—dead in sins—children of disobedience—children of wrath.

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Man's history begins in *sin*, and ends in *wrath*. Such, dear reader, is your present relationship to God if not yet brought through grace to own your state, and to trust simply in the Lord Jesus. If this latter be true of you, however, everything is changed, and the above-quoted scriptures, though they most truly describe what *was* your relation to God in no wise apply to you now. Everything is altered the moment I have simply come to Jesus. “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and *all things are of God*, who hath reconciled us to himself” (2 Cor. v. 17, 18).

Jesus is my Saviour, and does a Saviour's part, and all this in view of a deeper purpose of His heart, viz., to have me in relationship to Himself, as a member of His Body, that blessed assembly, which, as His Bride, He will have for ever by His side, the partner of His joys and glory, as well as the witness of His grace.

To have believers thus united to Himself is that for which He apprehends us. No pains, no trouble, are spared to effect this deep and eternal purpose of His heart, and in the action of Boaz in this 4th chapter we have this precious truth illustrated.

“Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman, of whom Boaz spake, came by.” Boaz states the case to this nearer kinsman; but is there any help to be got from the nearer kinsman? Will he redeem? No, he cannot. He says, “I cannot redeem . . . lest I mar mine own inheritance.”

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

The law can do nothing for the poor, guilty sinner but prove his guilt.

You remember the parable in the New Testament of the man who went down from Jerusalem, the place of royal grace, to Jericho, the place of cursing,—figure of man, as a sinner, turning his back on God and the place of blessing, and going down the high road to hell. The poor man falls among thieves, who strip him, and wound him, and leave him half dead. “And by chance there came down a certain priest that way.” By *chance*, mark. “Ah,” you say, “here is just the right man, here is a man of a tender heart, a man who can help,” but “He passed by on the other side.” “I cannot touch him,” he says. Why? Because to touch him would have been to disqualify himself, to make himself unclean; he would, so to speak, have “marred his own inheritance.”

Then there comes a Levite, the second functionary of the law, but he passes by too, he cannot touch him or help him. The priest and the Levite were the “nearer kinsman” of the wounded man, they were both nationally and religiously connected with him, but they cannot help him; the law cannot help, it can only condemn those who are under it. But when the Samaritan, type of the Lord Jesus, came down, he, though not bound to touch the wounded man, who had no claim on him, came where he was, went right down to the spot where he lay, picked him up, and set him in a perfect place of safety, yea, put him in his own place. The law could not help the sin-

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

ver, so, passing by, it made the way clear for the Saviour. The nearer kinsman could not redeem, and the way was made clear for Boaz ; there was no reason why Boaz should take up Ruth's case, save that he loved her ; and there is no reason why Christ should take up our case save that He loved us.

Jesus is ready to do a kinsman's part. He buys us and brings us back to God by the wonderful redemption price of His own life blood which He shed for us. But you ask "Am I worthy?" That is not the question. The whole point is, not your worthiness, but the grace of Christ. A soul brought into contact with the law is necessarily miserable and self-condemned, for its claims cannot be responded to, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin ;" the law gives a man a sight of his guilt, his sin and unworthiness, and the deeper the soul feels that the better, for the more it has the sense of its utter ruin the more suited is it to Christ, for then it is a question only of the total ruin of the sinner and the absolute grace of the Saviour. Oh, take the place of utter ruin, of being thoroughly lost and helpless ; own yourself a sinner, and nothing but a sinner, and then you will find what the grace of His heart is. Nothing can be done to improve you ; Christ takes up the case, and He does the *whole* work ; it is not you doing your part, and Christ doing His, but He has done the whole work. The Gospel is not, as one described it once, like a boat pulled by two oars, one oar "faith" and the other oar "works." That is the devil's gospel ; you do your part, and Christ

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

will do His! No, no, *He* saves the soul ; *He* puts away sin ; *He* brings in redemption ; *He* settles all with God ; *He* brings us to God, and then *He* says, “ You will *walk* differently now, of course, now that you belong to me.”

“ And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech’s, and all that was Chilion’s and Mahlon’s, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife.” The price that Boaz paid we are not told, but the *property* and the coveted *person* became his. Redemption gave him title to claim Ruth as his Bride. And have we not heard of One who both said and acted thus? “ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field ; the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field” (Mat. xiii. 44). The field is the world. The hidden treasure defines the souls in it precious to the Saviour’s heart, and for the sake of them “ He selleth all that he hath,” gives up everything, and in sorrow, and woe, and bloody sweat, and death, and for the glory of God, He, on the cross, makes propitiation, meets the righteous demands of God, pays down the ransom price of His own life, and then makes *all* His own by purchase. For the sake of the treasure—“ His own”—He buys all.

“ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls : who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it”

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

(Matt. xiii. 45, 46). The pearl is usually considered to be Christ, to possess Whom, the sinner sells all. Such a thought is totally without foundation in Scripture. What has the sinner to sell? Nothing, unless you count his sins as being worth something, which is worse than folly. The sinner is guilty, defiled, ruined, bankrupt, lost, and dead in sins, and can do nothing but what ensures God's righteous judgment. To talk of his "selling," therefore, is folly, he has nothing to sell, and Christ cannot be valued at any price you may name.

But how simple and surpassing sweet becomes the similitude when I see Christ as the heavenly merchant-man, who, beholding the Church, figured here as a "goodly pearl," sells all to make her His own. Little wonder that He says, "One pearl of GREAT price," for the price was Himself, and who, I say, can value Christ aright? None!

As the pearl lies deep in the mighty waters, and has to be fetched up by the venturesome diver, so the Church (composed, as it is, of sinners saved by grace) lay deep in sin, ruin, and condemnation, the mighty waters of Divine wrath and judgment righteously impending on every soul thereof. And what did Jesus do? "Christ LOVED the church, and (1,) GAVE HIMSELF for it; (2) that he might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE it with the washing of water by the Word, (3) that he might PRESENT IT TO HIMSELF a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 25-27).

Yes, blessed be His name! deep into the dark

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

waters of our condition did He fling Himself, that by dying He might blot out our guilt, and then, rising from the dead, connect us with Himself in everlasting glory. His love was the spring of it all, and here is presented in a three-fold aspect. In the *past*, "He gave himself," —that settled every question of our guilty state before God. For the *present*, He sanctifies, purifying us by the water of the Word. In the *future*, He will present us to Himself, as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, glorious and spotless, suited to Himself, His intelligent helpmeet for ever, sharer of His glories and joys. What love! Our past, present, and future are canopied with a love that leaves nothing to be desired but a more appreciative heart, to return to Him the blessed affections which fill His own bosom, and which alone can be gratified by such return, for *love is only satisfied with love*, and can brook no less requital.

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife." What an unexpected, but bright and happy finale to the path that opened full of sorrow and loneliness, when with firm purpose of heart she turned her back on Moab and its gods to go to Israel's land and to confide in Israel's God. But such is this touching history (full of deepest meaning, too, as truly typical of Israel's future days of blessing under a risen and reigning Christ), and so, too, dear reader, will it be with you if Jesus is now the object of your heart by faith. You are *related* to Him in a new, living, and eternal manner by the Holy Ghost which dwells in you. The nuptial day is not yet come,

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

but in the meantime the Holy Ghost forgets not to say, “I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor. xi. 2, 3).

As espoused to Him, O beloved, let there be chastity of heart to Him, simplicity, fervour, faithfulness, earnestness, confidence, unfeigned affection, untiring industry, unswerving loyalty of love, till the moment when He shall come and gather us up to be with Himself, and then shall every desire of His heart and ours be satisfied. He will have us in His own likeness and glory, and we shall have the joy of unbroken fellowship with Him for ever. I wonder not at all that in Rev. xix. 7-9, of that day it is said, “*Let us be glad and rejoice*, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

It is the day for which He waits, shall not we, with joy and patience, do the same?

The place nearest His heart, the highest place of all, is the place we shall get by and bye. He will come and take us into the Father’s house, and then the marriage of the Lamb will be consummated. O, blessed Lord, hasten the day!

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

But, ere I close this sweet and fruitful book, I must put a few pointed queries to thee, dear reader.

Now, tell me, will you be there? Are you going to spend your eternity in those bright scenes of eternal joy and rest, or are you going to spend your eternity shut out from them, and in the lake of fire?

The day is coming, dear unsaved soul, when all you cling to so tightly will be torn from your grasp most ruthlessly, and you must pass into eternity. And, listen, you have not wanted Christ here, and you have lived without Him here, and you must live on without Jesus there. When a man dies here, he passes out of the sight of his fellow-men, this is the first death; but then there comes the *second death*, and what is that? He passes from God's sight for ever.

Ah! beloved, does he still exist? Listen! "The fearful," that is, those who are afraid to confess Christ, ashamed to own Jesus now; "and the unbelieving," that is the scoffer, the rationalist, the sceptic; "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" (Rev. xxi. 8).

Sinner, there is your eternity. As God lives in heaven you must live in the lake of fire. The first death closes irrevocably all intercourse with man; the second death closes irrevocably all intercourse with God. And oh, I ask, are you going to brave it? Are you going to risk it? Do you say "I do not believe that bit of the

GOSPEL FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Bible"? Then throw it all in the fire. It is all true, or none of it is true. If God is worth believing at all, He is worth believing entirely; and whether you believe or not, still is His word true. But then there is the other side, Jesus says, "I want you to live with me. I want you to be loved by me. I want you to dwell for ever in my Father's house." But man often, alas, replies, "I would rather live without God, and die without Him, and be damned without Him, than bow down to be blessed by Jesus."

Ah, my friend, there will be no pride in hell; there will be no rebellion in hell, and you will carry down your memory with you there, and then you will remember how His grace besought you here. Oh, turn, turn to Jesus now, accept Him now, and in that day when He makes up His jewels you will be there, as, through His grace, I know I shall be there. If He has loved me enough to die for me, He is worthy of having all my heart. You may depend upon it you could not do a better thing than turn to Jesus now. He will give you rest for your conscience through His work, rest for your heart in Himself, from day to day, and, by and bye, He will stoop down and lift you into the rest of God, where your song shall be of Him and His grace through all eternity's blessed bridal day.

"Thine eye in that bright cloudless day,
Shall, with supreme delight,
Thy fair and glorious bride survey,
Unblemish'd in Thy sight."

W. T. P. W.

THE FISHERMAN'S SACRIFICE.

Poor dear J——! He was a tender, fair-haired child, marked as one on whom death would soon prey, as signs of consumption showed themselves in very early years. His fond mother's heart yearned over him, and an anxious father's eye often watched him as he sat by his side after his return from sea, for his father was a fisherman. It was thought this summer that a cruise with his father would perhaps brace him up a little, if not finally restore health, and so his mother took a fond farewell, and he left his home for what was to be his first and last trip to sea.

For a time all went well, when, one day, the cry came, "J—— is overboard!" The poor father sprang on deck to see his dear child struggling with the waves some distance astern. Giving orders to put the vessel about, he sprang into the sea, and with some difficulty succeeded in reaching his child, who had already sunk and risen several times. The moment he touched him the boy seized his father with convulsive grasp, and clung so closely to him as to completely prevent him from swimming, and after a few struggles both went down, it was feared never to rise again. But again they came to the surface, with death staring both in the face, and now the strong feeling of self-preservation became paramount for the moment, and in a fit of desperation the father, by a last violent effort,

THE FISHERMAN'S SACRIFICE.

flung off his child to perish in the wild, deep sea. Thus flung off, dear J—— sank to rise no more until called forth by the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God. The parent, now free, was enabled to keep afloat until assistance arrived, and he was hauled on board all but lifeless.

I will not attempt, dear reader, to pen the painful reflections that passed through the bereaved father's mind. His action bore fruits which few could calmly calculate at such a moment, and I will not attempt to decide as to whether the parent did right or not. Some would doubtless have perished sooner than have given up the child, but then, there were the other dear ones at home, and a fond wife and mother besides; and, perhaps, he did well, even though he had little time to consider, and so dear J—— was *sacrificed* and the father *saved*.

But I would ask you, does not this story suggest something to your mind? It is a short, sad tale, told by a poor fisher boy, who had just come ashore at G——, with the sad news for the mother and little brothers and sisters ; it was not gospel or glad tidings he brought, so he did well to look sad. But, dear reader, surely it has suggested to you Him who, in all the holy calm and self-possession of One who was equal to the conflict, and who knew full well the fearful cost of coming to our rescue, yet came in the true nobility of His holy love and affection for us, and *falterred not*, even though at the foot of the cross in spirit, and anticipating the fearful agony of the coming three hours of darkness, in

THE FISHERMAN'S SACRIFICE.

agonies and blood, said, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done,” but was never more subject than at that hour to His Father’s will.

In the volume of the Book, in the counsels of eternity, it was written of Him, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,” and now the hour had come what should He say, “Father, save me from this hour”? no; “Father, glorify thy name.” This was His whole soul’s desire, let it cost Him what it would. And so the hour drew on, and offering Himself by the eternal Spirit without spot to God, soon He was made sin for us, and bare our sins in His own body on the tree; soon they were wrapped as weeds about His precious head, soon he sank in deep waters where there was no standing. Refused by earth, denied heaven, and forsaken of God at that hour, the fearful judgment was poured out on that precious Lamb of God, who, to save Himself, **CAST US NOT AWAY**, but took our place as One mighty to save, and for us poured out His soul unto death.

God in His mercy has veiled that scene; no human eye could pierce that cloud which wrapped the Lord in darkness, when God and His Christ, the Lamb, alone in redemption as in creation, wrought the mighty work that should form the true basis of peace, and enable a holy God to come out in the fulness of His love, and, in righteousness, bless rebel man, according to the riches of His grace. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” is the bitter cry which reaches us in this distant day from amidst that awful scene; and to many a sceptic now,

THE FISHERMAN'S SACRIFICE.

as then, is the subject of cold comment as they pass on.

Is it so with you, dear reader, or have you, learning the emptiness and increasing uncertainty of everything here under the sun, pillow'd your head, by faith, upon that bosom, which, in answer to the Roman spear, gave forth the water to cleanse and the blood to atone? Myriads, through grace, have done so, and he who now addresses you is among the number, whose earnest prayer is that, as you read, the still, small voice of grace may whisper, "Come!" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." God is satisfied, every claim has been met on your behalf, if you will but cast out the unbelief of your heart, and set to your seal that God is true, who has recorded for our comfort and blessing, "It is finished." G. C. M.

HOW I WAS PLUCKED AS "A BRANCH OUT OF THE FIRE."

In relating the story of God's love to me, whereby I was delivered from a state of existence truly wretched and miserable; "having no hope, and without God in the world," and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, I earnestly pray that God, who is rich in mercy and love, may own and bless the narrative to the conversion of precious souls, and to the comfort and help of those who have found, and who do enjoy, the peace which the world can neither give nor take away

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

At the age of 12 years the Lord saw fit to put His hand heavily upon me, by laying me on a bed of never-ceasing pain, which lasted with more or less intensity for four years, and from which I but slowly recovered, gradually awaking to the reality that I should be lame for life. I had been brought up by Christian parents. My father died very suddenly a few months after he had brought me home from school. All these things had not the effect of making me *think* of the uncertainty of this life, and how very near I was lying myself to the brink of the grave.

I had often heard of Jesus and His love in dying for me. I had heard of the joys of heaven and the miseries of hell, but all seemed to be *idle tales*, though I confess I sometimes felt a fear of death, and did believe that if I died as I then was, I should go straight to hell. I smothered these thoughts as much as I possibly could, but often, when I was lying between life and death, Christian friends would speak in such a way as to frighten me terribly, yet the moment their backs were turned I forgot it all, or rather *tried* to forget it.

One thing I remember very distinctly—I was carried to my dear mother's bedside the morning my poor father died. She was so overcome by grief she could scarcely speak, but my attentive ear caught the faint words—“Read the 27th Psalm.” I opened the Bible that I found there, and read on till I came to the 10th verse, then she looked at me lovingly and said, “Yes, when your father *and* your mother forsake you, then the Lord *will* take you up.” She could say no

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

more, and I went away. But, do what I could, those words kept ringing in my ears, and many a time afterwards did I hope the words would prove true. Through all that long illness I was watched over by *a mother's* tender love and care, and at night, when lying in bed, she fancying that I was asleep (she always slept in my room) I have heard that loving mother interceding and wrestling with God in prayer *aloud*, in her extreme anxiety for my bodily health, but above all for the salvation of my soul.

But things went on as usual. My only brother came home from school in England (our happy home was in Ireland), and he was, like myself, in the truest sense, "unconverted."

Years rolled on. I went to school again, and seldom, or ever, did my thoughts rest on the unseen things of eternity. Just about ten years after my father's death, I received a telegram from my brother while I was in England, bidding me come home at once, as my mother was dangerously ill. I only arrived in time to find her insensible, in which condition she remained for many days, and then died without ever having regained consciousness for one minute. Now, then, thought I "My father and my mother have left me, I wonder will the Lord take me up."

I soon returned to the east of England for more than a year, during which time, instead of my poor mother's words proving true, I felt that I was more a stranger to grace and to God than ever. I became worse and worse, indulging in all kinds of sin and wickedness, until at last I remember thinking

HOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

that even Jesus Himself could not save such a sinner as I was. Here was where I began to feel I *was* a sinner, in other words, was beginning “to come to myself.”

Very soon after coming to this conclusion, I received a letter from my brother, who was then at a hydropathic establishment, at Limp-ley Stoke, near Bath, asking me to come there. I went; and on the following day my brother met me and said, “Will you join a little meeting?” I was quite thunderstruck, and said in my own mind, What on earth has come over him that he should talk of meetings, knowing full well that he used to hate them just as much as I. I said something to the effect that “I hoped it was nothing about religion.” He said “Never mind, come on.” So I went, and found that the little meeting consisted of a Major R —, my brother, and myself. I felt horribly uncomfortable, and when Major R — opened his Bible, and began to speak of Jesus, His love in having come into the world to save sinners, and to save *me*, I would have given all I had to have been elsewhere. I thought that he spoke and explained things better than I had ever heard any one do before. I considered him a wonderfully clever man; yet I was greatly relieved when we stood up to separate. But, on going out of the door, he looked at me quietly and said, “*Are you saved?*” “Saved!” I said, “no, I’m not, and not much chance of it,” and rushed away, feeling that I hated that man more than any one I had ever met.

A word here in passing. Long afterwards my brother told me that, owing to the conversations he held with Major R —, he was *then* very anxious about his soul's salvation, and his first thoughts were, like Andrew (John i. 41, 42) to bring his brother to Jesus, so he told Major R — *never to leave me alone*. The following will show how fully he fulfilled the request.

I have said that I disliked the man, consequently I endeavoured to keep at as great a distance from him as possible, but I was forced to meet him every morning in the breakfast room, when he invariably used to say, "Well, how are you getting on? Are you saved?" For some time I smothered down my increasing rage, and merely shook my head. During the day, when walking about the grounds, I was almost sure to come face to face with him, and he always put the same question, "Are you saved?" I often lost my temper and said—"I told you yesterday I was not, so where is the use of tormenting me in this manner?" He would quietly answer—"Ah, there has been plenty of time for your immortal soul to be saved since then." Before I could get away he would open his Bible (which was his constant companion) and read a verse or two to suit my case. Somehow I respected him (though I took care not to show it) for being so true to his colours, and did not dislike having a verse to think about during my lonely rambles, but I never gave him the satisfaction of knowing that I ever thought of what he said.

Things went on much in the same way for

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

nearly a month, when at last I said to myself, "I can't stand this any longer, and this eternal question 'Are you saved?'" So one day I left, and went to M—, where I thought I would have some peace. Soon after arriving there I was introduced to a countryman of mine who happened to be staying there. Well, thought I, this is great luck. After breakfast he asked me if I would take a walk; and he would show me the beauties of the country. I said I would be delighted, so off we started. For the first quarter of an hour I thought him silent and stupid, very different from what I had expected, when all at once he seemed to awake from a dream, and abruptly asked—"Are you saved?" I could scarcely believe my ears. Is this the way, thought I, he is going to show me the country? It seems I have jumped "out of the frying pan into the fire." I frankly told him I was not saved. Then he began to tell me the "old, old story of Jesus and His love," and how He was willing and anxious to save my soul. He never ceased talking till we arrived home again. I had seen nothing of the country, and I had gained no comfort from what he had said. Each day he asked me to walk with him, and each day asked me "Are you saved?" I felt I was not, and was more and more unhappy.

At the end of a fortnight I could bear this man no longer, so I determined to go away. He came to the railway station with me, and just before the train started he said, "Will you tell me if you are anxious to be saved?" "I am," I said, "but I fear there is no chance of it."

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

“Ah,” he said, “God will very soon cause you to realise the fact *that you are saved.*” “I hope so,” I said, and I believe the words came from my heart.

I had made up my mind to go back to Limpley Stoke in the hope that I would find Major R — had left. The train started and I found myself in a carriage alone. I felt relieved, and my spirits began to revive. This did not last long, however, for on entering a long tunnel the train began to stop. I got frightened, thinking there was going to be an accident; there was no light in the carriage, and for the first time in my life I felt what *real fear* was. How I longed to have some one to speak to, how vividly did all the scenes and words of the past few months crowd before my memory! Then the little question, “Are you saved?” seemed to *mock me*; I felt I had turned a deaf ear to it, and now, perhaps, it was “*too late.*” But, after a while, the train moved on again, and the sun soon shone in all its glory and splendour into the carriage. I never felt so relieved. I felt as though I had come out of hell. Then thought I, If the light of the sun can give such relief by dispelling the darkness of the tunnel, what must the relief be when the Sun of Righteousness, in His love, dispels the thick darkness of the sinner’s soul? I felt a little bit happy, as, for the first time, I fancied *God was working in me.* However, this all soon vanished, and the old feelings of fear and hatred revived on finding that Major R — was awaiting me with the same old question, “Are you saved?”

He followed me about as usual, and never left

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

a stone unturned to frighten me, *as I thought*. One morning in particular he was very pressing, trying to induce me *to think*, when again I found I could not bear it, and made up my mind to go to Bath for the day to play billiards. Very soon I found myself in the train with five other men in the carriage. Soon after the train started I was both surprised and amazed to find the gentleman who was sitting opposite to me staring very hard at me, and more so still, when he quietly asked me, “Are you saved?” I had never seen him before to my knowledge. My temper rose at once, and I said in the most insulting tone I could command, “I don’t know whether I am or not; what business is it of yours?” I will never forget the *quiet, calm, gentle* expression of his face. I would have much preferred his striking me on the spot to looking at me as he did. I felt there was a mild rebuke in his look more than words could express. He remained silent for some time, evidently perceiving I was in a violent temper, and wisely allowing time for it to subside before speaking again. The thoughts that were running through my mind at the time were something to this effect:—I have endeavoured to escape as much as possible from this tormenting question “Are you saved?” but it seems I can’t escape, and here I am at last shut up in a railway carriage, with one of my tormentors, face to face, so I must bear it now. I felt I was a great fool to exhibit so much temper, so I endeavoured, after a time, to put as bright a face on it as possible. Then the gentleman said, “I will ask

HOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

you three questions, will you answer them?"

"Yes," I said, "I will answer as many questions as you like. We will not be together very long, so you may make the best of your time."

"Well," he said, "Do you believe in God?"

I was quite surprised to be asked such a question, and answered, "Yes, of course I do, so does every one in England, I should think."

"Do you believe the Bible?"

"Yes," I said, "I do, as long as I can recollect I have been taught to read and believe the Bible."

"Do you believe that Jesus Christ was sent into the world to save sinners?"

"Yes," I said, "I believe that," and mind, I really did believe all that; I never doubted it.

"Well," said he, "here's a marvellous thing; I have asked you the plain question, 'Are you saved?' and you say you don't know, still you confess that you believe the Bible, and believe that Jesus was sent into the world to save you. And what does your Bible say? 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved*' (Acts xvi. 31). Now, then, what have you to say?"

Words cannot express the feelings that I then experienced. I could scarcely speak. I felt that a ray of heavenly light had descended from on high into my soul. I felt that Jesus had died *for me*. I felt I did believe on Him, I took him simply at His word when He said, "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John vi. 47). With trembling voice I said, "I do, at last, blessed be God, *believe*. I

NOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

now know and feel that *I am saved*. And were the train to run off the line, and were I to be among the killed, it would be to me but the entrance to everlasting joy and blessedness."

He looked up, and, with tears glistening in his eyes, he thanked his heavenly Father for *my conversion*.

Billiards did not enter my head that day. When I came home I went down on my knees, and *prayed* for the first time in my life. I had often *repeated* prayers, but, oh, the difference between *praying*, and *saying* prayers. I thanked my Father (I could now view Him as a Father) for having plucked me as a brand from the burning, and I asked Him to increase the spark of faith He had kindled in my heart.

Nearly all that night I could think of nothing else but that there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who had repented.

But the next morning, when the sun shone brightly into my room, I did not feel quite so happy, and I said to myself, "Can it be it was all a dream?"

During the day, when walking about and feeling uneasy, who should walk up to me but the gentleman who had met me in the train. "Well, my dear young friend," he said, "how are you getting on?"—there was no more "Are you saved?"

"I don't quite know," I said, "I am full of doubts and fears, in fact, I am doubting the reality of all I felt."

"Now," he said, "will you listen to reason?"

HOW I WAS PLUCKED AS, ETC.

“Indeed, I will listen to anything you say,” I at once exclaimed.

“You have been walking for a great many years hand in hand with the devil. Yesterday, you threw him ‘overboard,’ as it were, and took Jesus in his place. Do you think he will let you go on your way rejoicing, without endeavouring, in every possible way, to bring you back to him again?”

“No,” I said, “I don’t believe he will, and I feel that it is the devil that is now putting these doubts into my mind. Christ has begun a good work in me, and I am confident He will finish it” (Phil. i. 6).

“You are right,” he said; “when you feel these doubts and fears rising before you, remember that it is the devil, and look to Jesus, *at once*, for power to overcome him; and remember that if you ‘resist the devil he will flee from you’” (James iv. 7).

I have done so, and I have found Jesus to be “a very present help in time of trouble.” Yes, by continually looking to Him for help, the devil’s power and temptations have, *by degrees*, been weakened.

I have found Jesus to be a “friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” And deeply anxious do I feel that you, dear reader, should share this great happiness. If you have not yet come to Jesus, oh, do not delay another moment, but cleave to Him, with full purpose of heart, and you will find that He will never leave you, and never forsake you.

G.

IS THERE A GOD?

A question such as this sounds strange in our ears, and we are about to ask, Is there any one so wholly under the power of the devil as to say, There is no God? Awful as it may and does sound, it is but too true. There are souls in Protestant England professing to believe there is no God, and there are thousands shewing, by their daily lives, that they virtually deny His existence. Satan loves to get a man so full of the world, with all its cares, and snares, and pleasures, that there is no room for a single thought of God ; he loves to blot Him out of his memory, and to lead him on through life blindfolded, walking at the edge of a precipice, to be dashed over, at any moment, into eternal punishment. Dear fellow sinner, are *you* such an one as I have described, *without God in the world?* Are *you* one whose mind the god of this world has *blinded*, *lest* the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into it? Oh, let me beg of you for one moment to give the Lord Jesus Christ a place in your thoughts, and think with me on *What He is* and *What He will be*. It is joy to tell you what He is, whoever you are and whatever you are, the blackest and the vilest : *He is all love to you.* As your eye falls on this page He is looking down upon you with a look of perfect love, waiting to be gracious, willing and longing to save you, and to make you "clean, every whit," from every spot of sin. At this moment He is holding out to you, in wondrous grace, a full and perfect salvation,

IS THERE A GOD?

inviting you, nay, pleading with you, to come and take it. “*Come now*, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah i. 18). “Ye will not come to me, that that ye might have life” (John v. 40). “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). Yes ! fellow sinner, Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, suffered death upon the cross that you might be saved. The Lord of life and glory left His throne in heaven and came down to be the “Man of Sorrows,” and to be brought into the dust of death, that you might never know what the flames of hell are.

“*Behold* the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world !” Behold the One who died, the just One, for the unjust, to bring us to God ! Behold the One who has broken down every barrier that your sins had made, and left the way perfectly clear and open. Look, dear soul, straight up to God by faith, and take from His hand the pardon for all your sins and the eternal life which He is holding out to you. “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man (the Man Christ Jesus, who was once the *sin bearer*, nailed to the cross, but is *now* upon the Father’s throne), is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*, and by him all that believe *are justified* from *all* things” (Acts xiii. 38, 39). “The wages of sin is death, but the *gift of God* is *eternal life*.

IS THERE A GOD ?

through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans vi. 23). "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). It availed for the thief upon the cross, it availed for Mary Magdalene, the seven-deviled sinner, it availed for me, and it avails for *you*, dear reader ; for *you*, poor drunkard ; for *you*, poor soul, who art saying There is *no* God. Trust to that precious blood *now*, or to-morrow the day of grace may be over.

This brings us to our second thought : what the Lord Jesus Christ will be. He will be *thy judge*, poor rejecter. "God hath 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). He will cast into outer darkness, into that lake of fire prepared (*not for* you, poor scoffer but) *for the devil* and his angels, all who go on slighting His offers of mercy. "Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God ?" "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 29-31). "See that *ye* refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. xii. 25).

May the Lord bless your precious, never-dying soul, dear reader, and lead you to take home to yourself, and rejoice in those blessed words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). M.

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

On hearing of the illness of poor F H——, I had a great desire to go and speak with him, for, from the slight acquaintance we had, I felt certain that he was not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and all the solemnity of such a condition came up before me,—drawing near to the grave, and without hope in the future, who can measure the awfulness of such a position? And yet, thousands go on in health, and even in sickness, without allowing the thought ever to have a passing place in their minds ; or, if for a moment, it does press itself on their attention, it is only to be as soon dismissed as an unpleasant subject.

The young man about whom I write, was one who had been carefully brought up, and, as a son and brother, was all that could be wished for; and, in an external way, he had a respect for the things of God, and would be found regularly at the church which he usually attended ; but, with all this, the Lord Jesus, as a Saviour of the *lost*, had no place in his heart, nor had he any true sense of his own *lost* condition.

The immediate cause of his illness was his constant attendance at an entertainment given by a Professor of mesmerism, where he himself was one of the chief actors, for, being a good “subject,” he was constantly there, and the strain on both mind and body was such that it at length brought on consumption. Yet, such was the infatuation, that, notwithstanding the ev-

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

treaty of his friends, and a mother's earnest request to the Professor that he would cease to exercise his power over her son, who was losing his health thereby, the thing went on, and his then present condition was the result of it.

My first desire to call upon him was somewhat checked by the fact of my not knowing his family, and the objection which I was pretty sure they would raise to his being visited. However, after waiting much upon the Lord, I sent a request that I might see him. At first they objected to having his mind alarmed, which would be the effect of his being spoken to about his soul, but after a couple of days they sent for me, saying F—— would be glad to see me.

On entering his room I was convinced that I was about to speak to a soul drawing very near to the grave, and I felt somewhat the importance of the few moments which were given me.

After a few enquiries as to his body, I opened the subject which was uppermost in my thoughts. I found him full of the thought of recovery. I tried to speak plainly and faithfully to him, but it did not appear to make the smallest impression. He spoke lightly, and even carelessly, and avoided most carefully every word which brought the truth home to his conscience. I told him he was upon a sick-bed, and one which possibly he might never leave alive, and asked him if he was prepared to meet the One whom he and all of us had so offended.

He said, in reply, it was only a slight attack he had, and that there really was no occasion to look so seriously upon it.

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

Oh, how difficult it is to reach the natural heart. Truly we can say it is “impossible to man,” but, blessed be His name, “possible to God.”

When leaving, he expressed a wish that I should call again, which I promised to do, and went away with a heavy heart.

A few days passed, and I began to think it time to see him, when I received an urgent message, saying he would like to see me *at once*. I gladly responded to it, and called the same evening. The doctors had broken to him that morning that there was little hope of his recovery, and as the prospect of meeting God came before him the retrospect of his history made him tremble.

He said, “I have been reading the book you gave me, and it has made me uneasy, and I have been longing to see you again; and when the doctor told me to-day that I was not likely to recover, I sent at once for you.”

I then asked what he wished to see me for.

He earnestly replied, “Cannot you say something to comfort me?”

I sat down with a heart overflowing with thankfulness to the Lord, who had evidently been working in his soul, and told him the sweet tale of the love of Christ. I sought to put it before him in many varied ways, as day after day I saw him, but to no purpose; and each day, if possible, I left him more wretched than before.

One day, as I was leaving town to preach the gospel at some distance, and did not expect to be back before a late hour, I asked a friend to

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

go and see him, and I cannot do better than give her own account of the way in which this precious soul was brought into perfect peace, and enabled to rejoice with exceeding great joy.

“On entering the house I thought he was dying, as again and again I heard the question put to him, ‘Oh, F——, won’t you say one word to give us some hope?’ with no reply, but violent coughing. When I entered the room the poor fellow looked at me and turned his face to the wall, and, as we all thought, slept; while his sorrowing sister, and others who were present, recounted all that had been done for him, physician after physician prescribing, and still he was no better. Oh, what a picture of our hopeless, helpless condition! We are not able to reach the blessing ourselves, and we have no friend who can help us (John v. 7).

“Mark v. 24-34, which I had been reading that day was pressed on my mind. Man’s efforts of no avail,—but there was a turning point in the history of this poor woman. When she heard of Jesus, she said, ‘If I may touch but his garment I shall be whole.’ She leaves physicians behind, and presses forward, through all hindrances, to reach Jesus. Let man’s efforts come in the way of *help*, as the physicians, or in the way of *hindrance*, as the crowd, each and all are as nothing,—press through the crowd she will, for she said ‘If I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole.’ One of those present said that a visitor had told F—— that ‘If’ was a good word, for too great confidence amounted to presumption. I quoted John v. 24, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, he

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.’ I said, surely the man who said ‘If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean’ (Luke v. 12), limited the grace of Christ, though not his power, but this poor woman’s ‘If referred rather to the fear of not reaching Jesus. But she touches Him and is made whole, for there was not one shade of doubt upon her mind, ‘*If I may but touch, I shall be made whole.*’

“At this moment the dear young man turned round, and, with the most intense anxiety depicted on his face, fixed his eyes upon me, and said, ‘*What! is it only to touch?* Oh, my! Oh, my!’ He then lay back, uttering now and again, incoherent words.

“His sister, dreading the result of a fit of coughing, begged for silence, when he laid his finger upon his mouth, and there was perfect silence for half an hour. The silence ended in a work of grace, for he turned round, raised and clasped his emaciated hands, and cried with a loud voice, ‘Lord Jesus, I desire to touch you by faith.’ Again there was silence. He looked so calm and peaceful, his eyes closed, but his lips were moving as if in prayer.

“After a little rest he said to his sister, ‘Where is my beloved mother? help her to come in’ (she too, was an invalid); and then, his countenance beaming with delight, he said, ‘Mother, I am happy now; never before this day.’

“She said, ‘What makes you happy, my own dear child?’

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

“‘Now I am a child of God,’ he replied, and, raising his hands and passing one over the other, as if to show how it was done, added, ‘because Jesus has put all my sins away,’ and then lay back quite overcome. When a little stronger, he said to his sister, ‘Send and tell Mr. F—— that now I know the Lord: his prayer for such a heedless sinner has been heard and answered.’

“Later in the day, when I was about to leave, he said. ‘Do write on the wall over against me, that I may read it again and again during the night, that this day at twelve o’clock I found Christ.’

“One present said, ‘No, but He found you.’

“‘No,’ he said, turning to me, ‘you tell them, I cannot speak.’

“I replied, ‘Perhaps the Lord has given him that word, “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee” (Jer. xxxi. 3), but it is only to-day he has believed it.’

“He smiled, and faintly uttered the words Yes, yes.’

“I said, ‘Now he won’t ask for the writing on the wall, he can see by faith his name in the Lamb’s book of life.’

“He then pressed my hand, and said, ‘It is enough.’

“Next day, after a happy night (which he said beforehand he dreaded as dark), his heart was overflowing with delight, at the prospect of soon being *with Him*; he said, ‘Oh, I shall wave the palm of victory, and wear the crown, in the presence of my Saviour.’ Then, referring to Mark

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

v. 28, he said, ‘No literal touch now, Jesus is risen, the object of faith.’

“The bitter grief of one to whom he was engaged pressing upon his heart, he called her and said, ‘My own beloved, I was to have been yours for *time*, but I belong to the Lord Jesus for eternity.’ Overcome in a measure he lay back, feeling, he said, extreme weakness, and truly, his poor pallid face giving expression to his intense suffering.

“He once said, ‘Oh, I have no rest;’ but, immediately checking himself, added, with beaming face, ‘*but, surely, I have rest.*’ He repeated, over and over again, the words, ‘*with Him*;’ they were the last words I heard him utter when taking a final leave of him, for that same night he departed to be with Christ, which is far better.”

Such, dear reader, is the beautiful simplicity of the grace of God; it comes down to meet us in all our deep need, applying itself to every aspect of our condition, leaving nothing for us to do, Christ having done everything; for well He knew that if there was even the smallest thing left for us to do, it must remain undone for ever, and we must be lost. It is only to touch,—such was the discovery this poor burdened one made; and such is the discovery which you, poor burdened one (if my reader be such), may make at this moment; the touch of faith brings virtue from Christ. Sin is put away, the conscience purged, and the heart made perfectly free, to be at home in the very light of God’s presence, and to rejoice in hope of the glory; all this is “to

“WHAT! IS IT ONLY TO TOUCH?”

him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly ; his faith is counted for righteousness ” (Rom. iv. 5).

I shall long remember the beaming face which looked upon me, when late that night I returned, and having driven round to enquire how my young friend was, I was ushered into his room. He was wearied waiting for me, for he was longing to tell me of the peace and joy which filled his heart, and how simple it all was ; he had sent three messages for me that day, none of which, of course, I received, but now, as I had at last come, he was happy. I could but sit down beside him with a heart filled with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and listen to what, in broken sentences, he was able to tell me of the love and grace which sought and found such a sinner as he was.

The last time I saw him he took leave of me, saying, “ We shall not again meet *here*, but we shall *there*,” pointing upwards. The next morning when I called a crape hung upon the door : he had gone to be with the Lord. G. W. F.

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

“ How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge ? Turn ye at my reproof.”—PROV. i. 22, 23.

The world, the entire community whereby the earth is peopled, is divided by God into two grand classes, the saved and the unsaved ; or, the “children of God,” and the “children of

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

wrath." But the latter class, that of the unsaved, is subdivided into three minor classes.

True, they are all equally unsaved, equally the children of wrath, and equally, without difference in the mind of God, sinful, unprofitable, and helpless. Yet, whilst this is the case, the distinction between the three classes is marked and unmistakable.

There are first of all the "*simple*." Those who compose this class move in a region of moral and spiritual quietude. They are not troubled by the great question of judgment to come. They take for granted that with them all is right and well. They follow the religion of their ancestors, nor do they see the need of vexing themselves with points of doctrine that appear to perplex the wisest and devoutest of divines. To them there appears to be no certainty in such matters, and hence they agree to let them lie. They move gradually onward from youth to manhood, and from manhood to senility, destitute of that deep heart-exercise that characterises some, at least, of their neighbours. Times of misgiving, indeed, there may be, yet relapses come, and the conscience is lulled by the sluggard's petition, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep," and thus all is quiet again, all is peaceful, all is silent, but it is the *silence of death*.

Like the log that glides without a motion down the surface of the stream, unconscious of its dangerous proximity to the yawning cataract beyond, or like the light and feathery down of the thistle that is borne by the breeze to the fierce

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

conflagration ahead, so are these "simple ones" drifted along. The veil is upon their eyes. The false congratulation of the devil suffices to still their fears. They believe his lie. He whispers his lullaby of "*peace, peace,*" and they are content. His opiate succeeds. His drug is successful. Their souls are deceived. "*How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?*"

How long, oh, how long, ye simple ones, will ye yield to your simplicity? Your day is fading, your time is passing, your danger is constant, your judgment approaches. Say not, "We have no time, no leisure, no opportunity, no ability." You have time for the things of this world, leisure for your pleasure, opportunity for your business, and ability for the calls of this life. "*Ye love simplicity.*" Ye love that state of indifference to the truth which maintains you on good terms with the world and with its ways. You care not to clash with your old companions and friends. To go with the stream is easier than to go against it. So you find it. But remember that judgment is ahead. *How long?* Oh! venture on so foolhardy a course no more. Hearken to God's expostulation, and "*turn at his reproof.*"

Secondly, there are the *scorners*. Differing widely from the composed and self-complacent constituents of the first class, those who come under the second subdivision are far from "loving simplicity." Far from taking for granted that everything is right, they set their brains to work, and pluming themselves on the "infallibility of logic" and the "accuracy of reason," they discover, to their own satisfaction, what appears

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

unreasonable in the revelation—the Word of God. That that revelation should be within the province of faith, and outside that of reason altogether, they cannot allow; and, acting by reason instead of faith, they pretend to find discrepancy and contradiction. Hence their contempt, their pride, their *scorn*.

From their hearts they despise one who, in the divine sense of it, "loves simplicity," that true, and beautiful, and childlike simplicity that leads the humble child of God to believe Him because He speaks. This they cannot endure.

Never shall I forget the look of supreme and absolute disdain that was cast upon me by one of these, who, when he asked me if I really believed that Jesus had been raised from the dead, was met by the firm reply, "*I am sure of it.*" His countenance betrayed the evidence of his scorn; but that look of contempt did not shake my confidence in the glorious truth of Christianity, that "Christ is risen," and that therefore those who believe are not in their sins. My simplicity may have galled and annoyed him, as may also the deep, calm joy that abode in my heart and expressed itself in my words. But if the scorn were on his side the joy and peace were on mine, and I could truly afford to pity him.

Oh, ye scorners, "the turning away of the simple shall slay you, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy you."

"*How long, ye scorners, will ye delight in your scorning?*" Believe me, soon your steps will begin to stagger, your lips to chill, your tongue to grow heavy, and soon will your brains turn

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

to powder and commingle with the dust. Soon, ye scorers, must you appear before the judgment seat of that Christ whose name you dis honour and whose throne you disregard ; and, mark me, there are none of your class in hell. Not one infidel, scoffing tongue shall raise its note of blasphemy there, infidelity has no place there ; all is stern reality and stubborn fact in that place of torment. The "*fixed gulf*" and *everlasting fire* preclude all unbelief as to their existence.

Oh ! scouter, "*how long ?*" You may have your own way now. Grace may suffer with you long, *but not for ever*. God will take you in hand one day, and, believe me, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Scouter, "turn ye at my reproof."

Thirdly. In the last subdivision we may anticipate a character that has not been pourtrayed in those which have preceded it. We have seen the simple ones, we have heard the scouter,— the one having no character, and the other having one, not of open sin as generally understood, but of profound contempt for that which acknowledges the written Word of God.

Now, however, we have to deal with the openly wicked, the profligate and abandoned, those who "*hate knowledge*," those doers of evil, who, as the Lord said in John iii. 20, "*hate the light, neither come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.*" To them the light, the truth, and "*knowledge*" are hateful. The light exposes their evil ways, the truth forbids their evil practices, and knowledge would lead

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

into a path of obedience to God, and therefore of denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts. This they eschew. Sin has its pleasures, and therefore its followers and its slaves. None can commit sin without being its servant. Sin has many guises, many garbs, and many dresses. It makes itself as agreeable as it can, and its paths are broad and highly decorated. The "strait gate" and the "narrow way" that lead unto life are extremely distasteful to this class, and therefore the "narrow way" is not only avoided but hated. Oh, what crowds throng the "broad way." Alas ! how popular, how fashionable, how pleasant is that way ! Look at the public-houses, the theatres, the gambling saloons, the race-courses. What bell needs to ring the commencement of their services ? What slumberer needs to be awakened to hear their call ?

I have heard of an earnest young preacher, who had laboured long and hard to awaken from their sins those around him, telling them a dream. He had seen two devils, the one thickly clad, yet cold, and compelled to wrap his cloak the more closely about him ; the other wholly nude, yet perspiring profusely. The first had been placed in charge of the theatre and had to decoy people into it until it was filled. His post was, however, so easy, that he had not sufficient work to keep himself warm ; the other was commanded to prevent people from entering the place where this devoted servant of the Lord was preaching. He had to stop the enquiries of the people, had to raise difficulties in their minds

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION.

as to their freedom to attend the meetings, had to create false reports as to the character and doctrine of the preacher, and had by all means to retard the work of the Lord. Well did he fulfil his charge. The people listened to him ; despised the preacher, questioned his sincerity, disregarded his appeals, and turned into the theatre instead. A solemn dream ; but what servant of the Lord cannot see truth stamped upon its face ?

“How long will fools hate knowledge ?”

Ah, thoughtless one, God calls thee a *fool*. It is the *only* word that explains thy character. Thy sins are going before to judgment, and thou wilt meet them there. “ *Whosoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,*” and “ *Thy sin will find thee out.*”

“Turn at God's reproof.” The one earnest call is “ *turn,*” “ *TURN,*” “ *TURN.*” Ye simple ones, turn ! ye scorners, turn !! ye fools, turn !!! otherwise God “ *WILL LAUGH AT YOUR CALAMITY AND WILL MOCK WHEN YOUR FEAR COMETH.*”

Man, woman, thy soul, thy priceless soul, is at stake. Unsaved one, pause and think, eternity is before thee. Awake, hearken, turn ; God enjoins thee to turn, to yield, to submit, to flee from coming wrath, to trust in the atoning blood of His Son, that thou mayest be saved. Spurn not His call. Reject not His reproof. Trample not His Son under thy foot. Jesus died for us. God gave Him. “ *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*”

J. W. S.

DEATH UNTO DEATH, LIFE UNTO LIFE.

She came in, leaning on the tender and loving support of her husband, frail and faded as a plucked and withered flower. The lack-lustre eye, the dejected features, pallid and weary, told the tale of the ruin within ; the faint flush flitting over the cheek—the mere mockery of the vanished roses of youth and health, now gone, never to return, never more on this side of the grave. The most unobservant could discern the gravity of the condition, the merest tyro in physic could say for her there was no remedy. But love in the lover by her side would hide all this from his eyes, though in the poor weakened body you might hear again repeated the very words out of Job's mouth, " My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me."

Love, the poor human love, had been active in its way to cover its object with all dainty and goodly things, to hide away the ugly ravages of the inexorable disease, and had spread over and around the poor breaking vessel the costly silks of the merchant, the warm furs, and the delicate veil to cover and shroud the wan face. The light of jewels sparkled on the trembling fingers, but how plain to one who looked at the bald facts of the sad case, that this poor show and effort to hide the truth was as one who speaketh flattery to his friends, and yet could say the eye of love is dim by reason of sorrow.

DEATH UNTO DEATH, LIFE UNTO LIFE.

The office of the physician in such a case is to give all the help and comfort which the conditions render possible, to give all reasonable encouragement and hope which science may discern, and art find remedy to ensure.

But, when this was done, I turned to her and spake of Him who hath, as sent of God, brought up life and incorruptibility from the grave—not direct from heaven as man would suppose, but strange, unexpected place, out of the grave—His grave! I told her of the tender love and wondrous grace of God the Father, who sent the Son to seek and save the lost, of the devotedness of Him who came to do the will of God the Father, of the Son of God, with life in Himself, who broke into the house of death, the house appointed for all living, to rob it of its victims, even as Lazarus, who lay four days with corruption for his father, and the worm for his mother and his sister (Job xvii. 14) ; him who was afterwards seen reclining at the same table with the One who raised him up from among the dead, the One who could say of His own person, “I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” A wondrous story, ever fresh to the needy, weary heart thirsting for the truth—the glad tidings of the grace of God—in Him who said “I am the truth, the way, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

But, alas! with this dying one it fell upon a shut ear. The word about the crucified and risen Christ fell among thorns, and the seed was choked by the cares of this world and the deceit-

DEATH UNTO DEATH, LIFE UNTO LIFE.

fulness of riches. Like the drowning one, she clung to the highest straw, and despised the life-boat with its sure and certain security ; would listen eagerly for any remedy for the poor, frail body, but turned wearily from the Word of Eternal Life. She saw no beauty in Him to desire Him !

Days after, the sorrowing husband came alone to tell of failing strength, and the thick coming proof that the house of life of her whom he cherished, as the wife of his youth, was fast breaking up, the bitter end was at hand.

As he was about to leave I said to him, in effect, "Now we have spoken of the poor perishing body, how about her immortal soul ? You heard what I said to her, do you think she has received it as the WORD OF GOD ? "

He looked at me sadly, but remained silent, though his heart was full.

"What !" I said, "no response to such a message from God, when all of nature is slipping from her feet ? no answer, no need expressed ? "

His silence still gave the expressive negative. I repeated as to myself, "What ! no result from such a message ? "

And now he looked up and smiled simply as he said, "Yes."

"How ? where ? "

"In me. I have received it as the WORD OF GOD for my own soul " (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16).

T. M.

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.—No. 2. CHRIST OR FEELINGS; WHICH?

Dear —,—I have your letter. You say concerning mine, “It makes me feel such a longing to *feel* that my sins are forgiven. Oh, how I wish I could *feel* happy ;” and further on you speak of distraction from worldly thoughts.

You are making the mistake which thousands of earnest seekers after salvation are making—*trying to obtain peace before you believe what God says in His Word.* You say, “I do believe that Jesus died for lost and ruined sinners ; but yet I cannot, as it were, take it home to myself, and claim it for my own.”

Do you believe yourself to be, by nature, lost and ruined, a child of wrath, and also one “dead in trespasses and sins”? (Eph. 2).

I do not doubt for a moment that you not only believe, but realise all this. Your letter shows that plainly ; for you speak of that longing to feel that your sins are forgiven, and of being “most miserable.” You tell me, in effect, that you believe yourself to be lost and ruined ; that you believe Jesus died for the lost and ruined ; but yet cannot believe that He died for *you*.

Let me give you an illustration. Suppose I am hungry, and I see, in front of a rich man’s house, a board bearing this inscription, “All who are hungry, on applying within, will receive a loaf of bread.” If I believe the notice is in good faith, what do I do? I apply at once within, and get my need supplied. And why? Because

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

I am a hungry one, I go as a hungry one, and plead nothing but my hunger *and the notice on the board outside*. I put the case to myself thus: It says, hungry people will be supplied; *I* am hungry, therefore *I* shall be supplied.

But suppose some one comes along and says, "You'll not get anything because your name isn't on the board." I say to him, "No matter, my friend; I'm even more sure of getting a loaf than if my name were there, because there are others bearing the same name, and thus it might not be meant for me; but because it says 'All who are *hungry*,' I'm certain of getting supplied, because *I'm hungry*."

Now, dear soul, let me apply this illustration to the case of the sinner, and God's salvation. I find it written in 1 Timothy i. 15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save SINNERS, of whom I am chief." Am I a sinner? Yes. Do I *know* that I am a sinner? Yes. Has my conscience been awakened to ask the momentous question, "What must I do to be saved?" Yes. Then what does God answer? Why, He says, Poor burdened, anxious soul, you have got nothing at all to *do* to be saved, because Christ Jesus came into the world to **SAVE** sinners, not to *half-save* them; and, therefore, poor sinner, all that is left to thee is to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I "believe God" (Acts xxvii. 25); I say "Blessed God, Thou hast accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on account of my sins (Romans iv. 25); and, in proof of Thine acceptance of His finished work

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

on my behalf, Thou hast raised Him up from the dead and given Him glory (1 Peter i. 21); *Thou* art satisfied, and, blessed God, *I* am satisfied too; for that which has satisfied Thine Holiness and glorified Thee, is more than enough to satisfy my conscience—it causes me to rejoice; to joy in Thee (Romans v. 11); I can call Thee my Father now (Rom. viii. 8, 14, 17; Gal. iv. 6, 7); O, my God, my heart is at rest in Thee; I am reconciled; I am saved" (John v. 24; vi. 47; Col. i. 12, 14; 1 Tim. i. 9).

But immediately I have this "peace with God," (Romans v. 1), some one may ask, "How can you say that you are saved? your name is not in the Bible." I answer at once, "No, I am even *glad* to say it is not; for there might be some doubt, as there are others bearing the same name, whether I was the person meant, if the name by which I am known to *men* were there; but, thank God, the name by which *He* knows me is there—the name of SINNER; I go to God in that name (Luke xviii. 13), but I link with it another name—the name of that One who was treated, on the cross, for my sake, as though He had borne *my* name. He was made sin for me; and I say, 'Lord, Thy Word says that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*; I am a sinner; therefore Jesus came to save *me*; I believe on Jesus (Acts viii. 31), and, therefore, am 'accepted in the Beloved'" (Eph. i. 6).

And when **do** I feel happy, and know that my sins are forgiven? The moment I believe on His name, (John i. 12; 1 John ii. 12). Do I

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

feel happy first and then believe? Surely not. I believe first, and then feel happy *because* I believe. Did I feel I had the loaf of bread first, and then go and fetch it? No; I first *believed the notice*, went in as a hungry one, and received the bread, and then *felt* that I had it, and began to eat.

What is it that makes me happy and at rest? The knowledge I have through believing God's Word, that Jesus has died for me, the sinner, and has borne *my* sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter, ii. 21). Immediately I believe this I am at liberty, and begin to rejoice; because I see that God is on my side and justifies me, (Romans viii.), the spirit of bondage or fear is cast out, and the spirit of adoption takes its place.

What is it, then, which has hitherto made you so miserable? The knowledge that you are a *sinner*, and that God *must* punish sin. But the moment you believe on Jesus, accept Him as your substitute, your Saviour, the One who has been punished for you, you will be filled with joy and peace in believing (Romans xv. 13).

Your position, then, dear soul, is a simple one. You believe that Jesus died for sinners, and that *you* are a sinner. Now, as you read this, *think for a moment or two before the Lord*. You have just another step to take, namely, to believe that Jesus died for *YOU*, because you are a sinner, and the burden is gone; you are at rest (Matt. xi. 28) and saved. Peace comes through *taking home to yourself God's salvation, by faith*. The reason God so honours faith is, that with honours

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

Him, and He says, “Them that honour me I will honour” (1 Sam. ii. 30). The peace of the trusting sinner rests upon the fact that God never changes (Heb. i. 12), and that Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8).

“*I change—He changes not ;
My Christ can never die ;
His love, not mine, the resting-place,
His truth, not mine, the tie.*”

Jesus says concerning those that trust Him, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall *never perish*; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand” (John x. 28). *My* feelings are changing, and if I were to ground my peace on my feelings, I should never be certain whether I had peace at all ; but I do not rest in feeling, but on what God says in His Word to me, the trusting sinner. He tells me that I shall not perish, but have everlasting life, because I believe on His Son ; and I believe it, because He says it. I believe in Jesus as my Saviour and my all, and I joyfully believe God when He tells me that I *have* everlasting life. God does not say in His Word, Look unto me and *feel* saved, but, “Look unto me, and *be ye saved*” (Isaiah xlv. 22). Peace comes not from looking *at* my poor sinful self, but from looking *away from* my poor sinful self to Jesus. In Jesus, by faith, I see the One who has suffered for my sins, atoned for my sins, and put away my sins, sitting in Heaven at the right hand of God *because* He has put away my sins. Ah, this is

“Peace, peace, deep as a river !”

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

a peace, I humbly and thankfully say, nothing can shake, because it is not founded on anything which I have done, or can do, nor yet upon my often-varying feelings, but upon the glorious finished and *accepted* work on my behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ—made known to me by the Word of the Living God.

You know that a representative is one who stands in the place of, and acts for, another. Jesus was my representative on the Cross. He stood in my place, and bore the wrath of God due to me on account of my sins ; and now He is my representative in Heaven as the Accepted One, and faith in Him puts me into the place of *His* representative down here ; that is, of representing what He is to the world, according to the measure of my grace.

Be no longer, then, occupied with yourself, but with *Him* ; and this will bring deliverance the moment by faith you look. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *even so* must the Son of Man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John iii. 14, 15). I believe these two verses to be the simplest two verses about salvation to be found in the Bible ; and, often as they are quoted by preachers, I wonder they are not more frequently quoted. Mark the two little words “as,” “so.” “As Moses lifted up the serpent.” How was that ? Upon a pole betwixt earth and heaven. “Even *so* must the Son of Man be lifted up.” How was Christ lifted up ? Nailed to a cross, betwixt earth and heaven, and between two thieves. *Why* did

LETTERS TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

Moses raise the serpent? That every one that was bitten when he looked might live. *Why* was Christ lifted up? “That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” *When* did the stricken one get healing and revive? “*When* he beheld the serpent of brass he lived” (Numbers xxi.). *When* does the perishing sinner get life? “*Believing*” he has “life through his name” (John xx. 31), that is, of course, *the moment* he believes, otherwise the analogy would not hold good, because it is said, “as”—“so,”—the story in Numbers xxi. is the exact counterpart, in the method of its application to the sinner, of the story in John iii.

Suppose an Israelite had said to Moses, “The agony I am suffering is fearful: Oh, that I could *feel* better,” what would Moses have said? “Turn your eye to this; and when you look, you live.”

But suppose an Israelite said, “I can believe that is for *others*, but I cannot believe it is for *me*,” what would have been Moses’ answer? “The Lord has said, ‘*Every one* that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.’”

“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.” Precious soul, answer to God one question—CHRIST, or FEELINGS—Which?—In deepest interest, Yours,

R. H. G.

A TERRIBLE EXCHANGE.

What an exchange for those who die without Christ hell will be! as it is written, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm ix.) The rich man of Luke xvi., when alive upon earth, was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. But, tremendous fact, he died, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment! Oh, what an exchange was this! from his palace, his purple, his fine linen, his sumptuous board, to the flames of an eternal hell! Not, indeed, because he had been rich, but because he had lived and died without God; he had shut out God, and lavished his abundant riches upon himself. Oh, what a mistake, eternal in its consequences, was his! And thus shall it be with all who live and die as he did. To live without God is to die without Him; and to die without Him is to spend an eternity banished from His blessed presence. "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

My reader, which course have you taken? which road are you on? The one that leads to heaven, or the one that leads to hell? Often people say, there will be plenty of company in hell. But this is a dreadful mistake. Satan will stand in his own intense individuality, and the most miserable wretch there; and so with the rich man, and so with each and all. Each one will stand in his own world of self-earned

A TERRIBLE EXCHANGE.

and eternal misery. No window of hope, no beam of light, no refreshing stream to slake the burning thirst or cool the parched tongue—but the rolling billows of divine wrath flowing on and over the souls of the damned, through one eternal night. May God arrest thee at once, my reader, may He, in His boundless mercy, create in your soul a deep sense of your danger, of this terrible eternity.

Reader, you have sinned against God, you are a sinner before Him, to die unpardonable is to ensure a place in hell. Thy world there shall be a world of woe, thy eternity an eternity the very opposite of blessedness. The cross alone will avail for you. Behold, then, the Lamb of God bleeding there. See, the "Just One" suffers in the stead of the unjust, the Sinless One for the sinner. Would you be on the opposite side of the eternally fixed gulf to that of the rich man?—he is in hell; would you be in heaven? Then you must know the cross, naught but that will meet thy desperate case as a sinner. Apart from the sacrifice of Jesus the God of holiness, cannot pardon thee, cannot save thy precious, immortal soul. His holiness forbids the thought of your entering heaven with your sins unpardonable. Oh, then, hell must engulf you if you are found in that day without Christ, and that for ever. Be not a dupe to folly, let not Satan blind thee any longer; view matters, I beseech thee, in their right light. One word from God calls thee hence, and then, oh, what then? I beseech thee, by all that is dear and precious to thee, to come to Christ and

A TERRIBLE EXCHANGE.

be saved. Surely, there is argument enough in the fact of your being a sinner, of your having to do with the God of holiness, of your having to live for eternity, of eternal damnation, or of eternal glory, to move thee to come to Christ, to put simple faith in Him who died for such as thee, and rose again for the everlasting justification of all those who believe on Him. Come with all your sins, your guilt, and He will pardon your sins, and purge away your guilt by His precious blood, for "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). See, then, that you make not the tremendous mistake of stepping from time into eternity unprepared,—from this earth into the flames of hell.

E. A.

FAITH'S LANGUAGE.

God of all grace, I gladly own
What, in His death, Thy Christ *has done*
What He is there beside Thy throne,
What Christ is *now*, and Christ *alone*
Is all my joyful plea.
He's all my trust, He's all my boast,
For, since *He died to save the lost*,
I'm sure He died for *me*.

“WHY DON’T YOU?”

Some time since, Jim was brought to feel his need of a Saviour. He got very unhappy and could find no peace ; over and over again, the gospel of the grace of God was presented to him. He was told it was for *sinners* Jesus came, that it was “to seek and to save that which was lost” He left the glory and became a man. But all this could bring no comfort to poor Jim, and for some days he continued very wretched. At last he told his wife the cause of his unhappiness, and said, “I want to come to Christ.”

She replied, “Why don’t you?”

This word was used of God. Jim saw that Christ had finished the work, and was offering him salvation as a free gift, and all he had to do was to take it. So he came to Jesus as he was, and since then has gone on his way rejoicing.

And now, dear reader, if you are not saved, why don’t you come to Jesus? Are you troubled and unhappy as Jim was? Then, why not come to Jesus just as you are? No matter how bad you feel yourself to be, Jesus knows all about your badness much better than you know yourself. He knows all, yet loves you better than He knows. His word to you is, “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” “As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” “And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ.” And it can be all yours if you will only *take* it. Oh, then, delay not ; now is the accepted time.

H. M.

“I CANNOT LOVE GOD!”

My friend and I were preaching at O——, in Canada, where a very blessed work of God in the conversion of souls had been done some little time before our arrival, through the instrumentality of several of God’s servants.

Nine months had elapsed since their departure, when, through God’s grace, we found ourselves preaching night after night, *God’s present and eternal salvation* for lost sinners, through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, to numbers who attended the meetings.

In the coming glory it will be joy to meet many precious souls who during that happy season received Christ as their own Saviour!

But the circumstance more especially on my heart to relate just now, is the case of a dear woman who was brought to a knowledge of Christ at this time.

It so happens that nearly every person really seeking to be saved has some *difficulties* to be settled before getting *peace with God*. Many and varied are the obstacles that Satan puts in the way of an anxious soul, to darken and obscure God’s full and free message of Love, “*lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them*” ; but it frequently happens that what is the difficulty of *one* is the difficulty of *others* ; and as you, my reader, may be troubled as Mrs. S—— (the person alluded to) was, it may be that God will graciously

“I CANNOT LOVE GOD!”

deign to help you by the same means as He helped her, so I will briefly relate her case.

As the people were assembling for the preaching one evening, my friend and I observed a very sickly, dying-looking young woman being borne into the hall by two men. They placed her in a half-recumbent position in a corner seat, propped her up with pillows, covered her with shawls and blankets, and then sitting down themselves left her to recover herself as much as possible, before the meeting began, from the fatigue occasioned by the journey she had taken. The night was piercingly cold, the thermometer stood several degrees below zero, and she had come some miles in a sleigh through the snow.

My friend, who was about to preach, said to me in a whisper, “*There’s* an anxious soul, and no mistake! Let us ask the Lord to convert her to Himself to-night,” or words to this effect.

Our hearts went up in silent prayer to the Lord to reveal Himself to her if she were still unsaved, for it was clear she had but a short time to live.

The meeting commenced, and my friend spoke. Towards the end of his address he took up some of the general difficulties that souls seeking peace are found frequently to labour under, endeavouring in each case to remove the difficulty by passages from the Word of God. Towards the close he said something to the following effect:—

“*There is another* difficulty to which I should like to allude before I close. *There are some who imagine that God requires people to love Him in order to be saved.* They look into their hearts, and find there, *not one particle* of love to God, but just

“ I CANNOT LOVE GOD ! ”

the opposite—preferring the world, or the merest trifling pleasure, or vanity, to God. They pray to Him perhaps to soften their hard hearts, they try to leave off their gross sins, attend their ‘place of worship’ more regularly, take more advantage of the ‘ordinances of religion,’ and the ‘means of grace’ (as people speak), read the Bible oftener, and so forth: but alas ! after all these well-meant efforts they find they do not love God one bit better than they did before.

“ Now, I wonder,” continued the preacher, “ can there be any person in this hall to-night who is kept from peace with God by supposing that God requires sinners to love Him before He would accept them. If so *you are deluded, you are deceived.* GOD DOES NOT REQUIRE SINNERS TO LOVE HIM BEFORE HE ACCEPTS AND SAVES THEM. See what God says in 1 John iv. 10, ‘ HEREIN IS LOVE, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US AND GAVE HIS SON TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS.’ All our notions must be subjected to the test of the Word of God ; ‘ To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.’ Isaiah viii. 20. Now when we bring this not uncommon idea to the test of the Word of God we find it to be *the very reverse of the truth* ; indeed, it is *fatal error*, for we read in Rom. viii. 7, ‘ The carnal mind is enmity against God.’ How could man’s heart, which in its very *essence* is *enmity against God*, be supposed to be able to *love God* ? If we had to wait until we were able to love God in order to be saved, then indeed we should never be saved at all.

"I CANNOT LOVE GOD!"

"Ah! it has ever been Satan's great aim and delight to reverse the Word of God, in order to entrap and ensnare poor souls into everlasting perdition. The first thing we read of the Serpent, is a flat contradiction given to the Word of the Lord God, in the garden of Eden. No sooner had God said, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*', than Satan says, 'Thou shalt NOT surely die.' He denied then the *Righteousness* of God which assigned *Death* as the punishment of sin; and *now* he *adds* to it a denial of the *Love* of God to the *Sinner*. Let us insist upon the blessed truth of God then, 'Herein is love, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US!'

"God loves you, poor sinner, even though you are an enemy (see Rom. v. 10, also Col. i. 21), so *come just as you are*, without a particle of Love to God. It is quite certain that you *ought* to love God, but it is *as* certain that you *don't*, and *cannot*; and *just as certain* is it too, blessed be God, *that He will accept you without any love to Him*, that He will FORGIVE you, and that He will SAVE you, for, as the end of the verse says, 'He gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

"Then, when you *know* you are forgiven and saved, on the simple authority of His Word, you will understand the force and beauty of the nineteenth verse, 'We love Him, BECAUSE He FIRST loved us.' If *your* idea were correct, then, it would read: 'He loves us, because we first loved Him.' But this is the *reverse* of what God says; so may your soul bow at once and for ever to the blessed truth, and believe that *God will accept you as you are, without any love to Him*, and when you

"I CANNOT LOVE GOD!"

believe in His love to you, you will find that the inevitable and happy result is that you will love Him '*because He first loved*' you."

The meeting closed, the people dispersed, and all returned to their respective homes. Next day, a Christian lady, Mrs. B—, drove me in her sleigh into "the bush," to the house of the dear dying one who had appeared in the meeting the night before. The snow was deep in some places, but we soon reached the little wooden "shanty" in which Mrs. S— lived.

Upon entering the little room, she was seen stretched on a couch close up to an American stove which stood in the middle of the room, rendering the heat inside the house almost as extreme as the cold outside. Her face was flushed, her breathing very rapid, consumption doing its deadly work ; but her countenance bore a happy contrast to the suffering body, as it beamed and sparkled with joy.

A servant girl, who seemed the only other occupant of the house at the time, invited us to sit down, and taking a chair herself at the foot of the couch, listened with evident interest, if not anxiety, to the conversation with Mrs. S— that ensued.

After a little I asked Mrs. S— whether she had *peace with God*. "Oh yes!" she replied, as her eyes filled with tears of gratitude and joy, "I found peace last night while that dear gentleman was speaking. I was beginning to think I never should be saved, for when, some months ago, several were here preaching for a long time, I went night after night to the meetings, but came

“ I CANNOT LOVE GOD ! ”

away as often as I went, unsaved ! I saw numbers of people that *professed* to get, and I believe *did* get peace. They said their sins were forgiven, their souls were saved, and that they had eternal life, *but it seemed to be not for me* ; I could never understand it, although people told me it was so simple. Many spoke to me privately besides, but all seemed in vain. The preaching ceased, and the evangelists that were here for so long went away, and I was left *still unsaved and miserable*. To make matters worse my health was giving way, and has been ever since, and now *I am dying* ! When I had almost despaired of ever being saved, I heard that meetings were again started in the city, and I determined I would go once more, although I knew I was dying.

“ My husband said it was *madness*, that it would *kill* me to venture out in such extreme cold, or else it would hasten my death. I replied that I had no doubt it would make me worse, but that *it was better to lessen my days on earth, than to spend an Eternity in the Lake of Fire !!* He yielded to what I said, so they put me in a sleigh, covered me up with blankets, and took me to the meeting ; and oh ! how I can now thank God that I went, for it was the means of bringing *life and peace* to my soul !

“ I always thought *that I had to love God before He would have anything to say to me*. I *prayed*, and *laboured*, and *cried*, and *read my Bible*, and did *all I could* ; but I was getting *worse and worse* every day instead of better, and *I could not love God*. Oh ! now I see my mistake. I was so occupied with trying to work up some love to

“I CANNOT LOVE GOD !”

God out of my hard, wretched heart that I was blinding myself to *all His love to me*. Oh! that beautiful verse, ‘*Herein is love, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US, and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*’

“Now I see it all, *God loved me all the time I was hating and resisting Him*. Jesus died and shed His BLOOD for *me*; my sins are washed away, and now *I have REASON TO LOVE GOD* : ‘*We love Him BECAUSE HE FIRST loved us.*’”

It was in language such as this that Mrs. S—— with deep emotion related to us how the Lord had revealed Himself to her soul, and shown her that the difficulty *was of her own creating and not His*. It was joy indeed to see the simplicity with which she had now, after months of unbelief, received the simple story of God’s love.

After thanking the God of all grace for revealing Himself to her, Mrs. B—— and I bade her farewell, and left the little house and its happy occupant with, it is needless to say, full hearts. I was never to see her again on earth, as not many weeks after, on my return to Europe, a letter came saying her ransomed spirit had passed away to be with Christ for ever, where throughout eternity her joy will be to *dwell* in that “Love of Christ which passeth knowledge,” a love from which nothing in Time or Eternity, nothing in Heaven or Earth, or Hell itself shall be able to separate us; for says one whose spirit has now been 1800 years with Christ, “I am *persuaded* that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things Present, nor things to Come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor ANY

“ IT IS FINISHED ! ”

OTHER CREATURE shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

In conclusion, dear reader, let me press upon you once more that “ *Herein is Love*, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US, and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins,” and that “ We love Him BECAUSE He FIRST LOVED US.”

“ Love that no tongue can teach,
Love that no thought can reach,
No LOVE LIKE HIS.
God is its blessed Source,
Death ne'er can stop its course,
NOTHING can stay its force,
MATCHLESS IT IS.”

April, 1874.

J. C. T.

“ IT IS FINISHED ! ”

AN architect contracts to build a house; he performs his work, fulfils his contract, builds and completes. It is finished. A shipbuilder builds a ship ; the keel is laid, the ribs, lining, and outside planks are put into their respective places, the deck is put on, the masts are stepped, the rigging is set up and rattled down; she is ready for sea. His work is finished. How easy to understand the words, “ It is finished,” in relation to the building of a house or a ship.

Now, let me draw my reader’s attention to the words, “ It is finished,” in relation to something else. We shall find them in John xix. verso 30, “ When Jesus had therefore received the vinegar,

“IT IS FINISHED!”

he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

Nothing can be more precious to poor, needy, sinful man than these three words, “It is finished.” May my reader bow to their wondrous meaning, and know in his soul their infinite preciousness. Let him remember that they were the last words of the expiring Saviour. He said, “It is finished: and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.” Surely there is a meaning in these words full of blessing for the sinner. Why was the blessed Son of God upon the cross at all? Why did He give expression to such words ere He gave up the ghost? Sin had placed between God and man an immeasurable distance. God was holy, man was unholy, sinful, and undone.

Reader, think of this. God must ever be opposed to sin; “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity.” You have sinned; there is then a distance between you and God. Your conscience tells you that you are guilty and condemned, that you cannot meet God in peace; yea you cannot even now think of Him with any degree of joy. This is terrible, is it not? How dreadful is sin, how terrible are its consequences! Not only separation from God here, but separation from God for ever, for those who die unforgiven.

But what can be done to bring the sinner to God? what can be done to satisfy God’s justice and set forth the love and the mercy of God to the sinner? Ah, this is a momentous question, a question of eternal importance.

Dear reader, I beseech you to think of it. To

"IT IS FINISHED!"

die with it unsolved, with the answer unknown, is to be damned for your sins to all eternity. Awful thought! Awful, because so true!

The more we examine into man's state before God, as described in the Word, the more we see that man is utterly incapable of working himself into God's favour. As well might he try to step from this globe to the nearest fixed star, a distance of twenty billions of miles, as attempt to bring himself to God by aught he can perform.

In Psalm xiv. we get God looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. His conclusion is: "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Solemn conclusion, the result of His unerring investigation. The ruin is universal. The whole human family is pronounced guilty by God Himself. God now steps into the scene. He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to die. If God hates the sinner's sin, He loves the sinner. The blessed Son of God comes down here, and, upon the cross, spans the distance between God and the sinner. He, as it were, constructs a bridge across the yawning chasm sin has made, so that the sinner may reach God in peace. "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. 5, 6).

Oh, my reader, look at the cross, and consider the sight that meets your gaze there. The Son of God expiring! Amazing thought! And why? Divine justice could not be satisfied with less. Its

"IT IS FINISHED!"

claims were infinite, and an infinite sacrifice must be offered up. Blessed be God, this was offered by Jesus, His dear Son, upon the accursed tree. The "Just One" stood in the place of the unjust to bear the sins, to receive, in His own person, the judgment, to finish atonement, and to bring the sinner who believes to God. Was there a work to perform which was infinitely beyond the sinner's power? Jesus, upon the cross, finished that work. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He glorified God about it, He, by the efficacy of His own sacrifice, accomplished redemption; and, ere He gave up the ghost, He uttered those memorable and ever blessed words, "It is finished."

Do we need further witness that all is finished which forms the everlasting and imperishable basis upon which the salvation of the sinner rests? God has raised His Son from the dead, and given Him glory. Here is evidence of the indisputable truth of Christ's words, "It is finished"; and not only proof of the verity of His words, but also of God's appreciation of what He has done upon the cross.

But what is all this to the sinner? It meets his case and need perfectly. "It is finished," is a downy bed, upon which he, by faith, can recline his weary, sin-sick soul. Through believing in Jesus he is, by virtue of that finished work, brought to God, and saved. Blessed fact!

Is it a question of his sins? They are all forgiven (Acts x. 43). Does his soul need peace? He has peace and joy in believing (Rom. xv. 13). Does he feel that his conscience needs purging? It is purged by the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 14).

SUBSTITUTION.

But he needs righteousness. He is made the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Cor. v. 21.) What of life eternal? He is made possessor of life eternal. (John iii. 14, 15.) And the glory of God? He rejoices in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 2.)

Yes, my reader, it is Jesus who has finished the work: you are called on simply to repose upon Him by faith. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." God's justice stands upon this finished work, sheathes its sword, and shelters every sinner who avails himself of Jesus—who believes in Jesus. Oh, my reader, think on this. God calls upon you to behold what He, in love, has done for you. He says, "The work is all finished, come, come and be saved." Can you resist His love, His invitation? Beware of trifling with it, for He says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." To rest upon this finished work of Christ is to be saved now, and for ever. To die in your sins is to be engulfed in unutterable and everlasting woe. Oh! then, I beseech you, flee to Jesus and escape the woe.

E. A.

SUBSTITUTION.

WHEN in China some fifteen years ago, I became acquainted with a custom which was then, I was informed, practised among that people, and which very forcibly illustrates the above vital truth.

The Chinese are Bhuddists by religion, and one

SUBSTITUTION.

of the articles of their creed is that of the transmigration of souls—that is to say, they believe that as soon as they die in one body they are again born into the world in another, and that it depends on their conduct in their present bodies whether they will be born again in a *higher* or *lower* position in life.

Death is therefore not feared, except by those who have been very badly behaved.

Notwithstanding this, death is a very common punishment under the Chinese law; but the custom of which I wish to tell you is that when a Chinese is sentenced to death, the law allows him, if he can, to find a substitute to suffer for him—and for a money consideration he finds little or no difficulty in finding one among the many very poor Chinese. A married man who has been unfortunate in providing for his family, finds, in giving himself as a substitute, an easy way of doing so, and by performing a most meritorious action confidently expects to be born in the family of a wealthy trader, or even of a mandarin.

No man can be put to death in China except under a warrant signed by the Emperor; and this document has to be endorsed by the judge who tried the case, that “sentence may be carried out by substitution, and that he approves of Chung Alvo* as substitute in this case,” the judge having previously satisfied himself that the *law has no claim on Chung Alvo*. For this certificate the judge receives a fee out of the substitution money, which is generally about fifty dollars (rather over £10).

* A common Chinese name.

SUBSTITUTION

On the morning appointed for the execution, the officer appointed to see it carried out brings the real criminal to the place of execution, where all is ready for carrying out the extreme penalty of the law, and proceeds to read the sentence and calls on the executioner to carry it out. When the substitute steps forward, the officer refers to the endorsement on the warrant, and finding it correctly signed by the judge, orders the real criminal to be released and the substitute to kneel beside the basket; he then gives the signal, and the executioner with one stroke of his sword severs Chung Alvo's head from his body. The officer in charge writes on the death warrant that sentence on the real criminal has been carried out, and hands the document to him, and from that moment his existence in the eye of the law is ignored, and he is henceforth known only by the name of his substitute, Chung Alvo.

This story illustrates (though in a feeble way) something of the wondrous manner in which *our* desperate case was met. We are all *by nature* children of wrath, condemned already, and the sentence about to be executed, yet careless and never looking for a way of escape; but *God* comes upon the scene. The poor criminal had to seek for a substitute and pay money for him; he had to take him to the judge and get the judge to pronounce the substitute free from all condemnation. Oh, how different our case! God provides the substitute, the moving power—not money—“God so loved the world.” The substitute must himself be blameless, have himself nothing to suffer for; where shall we find such an one? The Substitute of God's providing is “holy, harmless, undefiled.” The sub-

SUBSTITUTION.

stituto himself receivod monoy; God's Substitute is provided "without money and without price." This substitute was for one criminal; God's Substitute is a Substitute for all that believe, "for by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This substitute suffered for the wrongdoing of the criminal. God's Substitute "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The criminal was dead in the eye of the Chinese law the instant the substitute died; all who believe in Christ (the Substitute of God's providing) "are become dead to the law by the body of Christ."

The criminal walks abroad in perfect conscious safety because he has in his possession the death warrant on which is endorsed the certificate that the penalty of death due by him had been paid; and much more may they who trust in God's Substitute, for they have God's certificate in His Word "that Christ died for oursins according to the Scriptures."

The criminal's identity was lost, he was now called Chung Alvo; so those who trust in God's Substitute are "dead with Christ," but can say, "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Dear reader, this is how "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 18-21). Have you yielded yourself to obey Him? This is how He comes preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all). Will you take God's Substitute to be your Substitute? Then not merely has God made Him sin for you, but it is that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

G. G.

GOD IN MEROY SENT HIS SON.

MENDELSSOHN.

God in mer - oy sent His Son, To a world by
sin un - done; Je - sus Christ was cru - ci - fied:
'Twas for sin - ners Je - sus died. O the glo - ry
of the grace, Shin - ing in the Saviour's face,

Tell-ing sin-ners, from a-bove, "God is light," and

"God is love"; Tell-ing sin-ners, from a-bove,

"God is light," and "God is love."

2.

Sin and death no more shall reign,
Jesus died and lives again!
In the glory's highest height,
See Him, God's supreme delight.

O the glory, &c.

3.

All who in His name believe,
Everlasting life receive;
Lord of all is Jesus now,
Every knee to Him must bow.

O the glory, &c.

4.

Christ the Lord will come again,
He who suffered once will reign,
Every tongue at last shall own,
"Worthy is the Lamb" alone.

O the glory, &c.

“I KNOW HE WON’T CAST ME OUT.”

THE first time I saw Mrs. — was at a meeting where her deep attention to the message of God’s grace then proclaimed interested me, and when on leaving she said with evident emotion, “Oh that I had heard words like these four months ago when I was ill,” I resolved, the Lord willing, to visit her at home as soon as possible. This I did and was heartily welcomed; I found her open to conversation about her soul’s eternal welfare. She had been very ill for some months, and during that time of suffering, her heart, which had hitherto been content with the form of godliness, was made to feel its power; anxiety seized her soul and she sought peace, but where it never can be found, by strivings of her own, and was as far from knowing it when I met her as when she first commenced the search. You may say, is that true? I answer, indeed it is. Man’s doings must entirely cease ere peace with God can be known; as it is written, “Being justified by *faith* we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Now 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.”

“And if by grace, then it is *no more* of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” Think not of *doing* aught to please God when He has told us in the Word, that “they that are in the flesh,” that is “dead in trespasses and sins,” children

“I KNOW HE WON’T CAST ME OUT.”

of the first Adam, *cannot* please God, and what is more, Jesus Christ has left nothing for you to do. He said upon the cross, “It is finished.”

“When He from His lofty throne,
Stoop’d to do and die;
Everything was fully done,
Hearken to His cry—
‘It is finished.’ ”

He came into this dark scene to do the will of God, and to restore that which He took not away, but which man came short (and robbed God) of, even His glory: well, this perfect One to whom the Father bore testimony, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” who “knew no sin,” was put to death—“made sin for us,” but God raised Him up, and seated Him at His own right hand in glory. And now the question for you is, Do you know Him? Do you believe that Jesus Christ who was crucified in weakness and raised by the mighty power of God, is the Son of God? Have you accepted, or have you rejected the “great salvation” He offers to all who believe on Him?

Mrs. — told me that she had heard of our meeting through another, and had earnestly longed to come, thinking that there she would hear words which would give rest to her troubled soul; and she had set out for this purpose, but Satan hindered and turned her steps aside by means of a friend. Again, another week she ventured, and again the adversary met her, and succeeded (this time by a sister) in sending her back. Once more she determined to come, and once more the enemy of souls tried his best to

“I KNOW HE WON’T CAST ME OUT.”

restrain by sending her daughter to meet her in the way; but this time she was not to be hindered. She sent the daughter home to wait her return.

I prayed, conversed, and read God’s Word with her, and then left; I did not see her again for more than three weeks, and then the Lord sent me with His own message fresh and warm from Himself. He said, Go, and I went, not knowing what I should say, but looking to Him to charge me with the right ammunition. I found her at home, and met with the same hearty welcome as at the first. She had been to a hospital as an out-patient several times, but still looked thin and weak in body, which after inquiring into, I alluded to the state of her soul, and asked, had she found peace in believing? No, but she felt confident she should some day. I told her this was the enemy’s work, that God’s Word was *Now*. She then related an anecdote she had heard on this very subject, about a young man who when requested by some one to meet him for conversation about his soul in the morning said, “I can’t wait till another time, I want it *Now*.” I felt the power of the Lord was present to heal this wounded soul. It was wonderful to see the eagerness with which she listened with eyes intently fixed upon me, to the words He enabled me to speak, and the cry of her heart was, “I understand what you tell me, but somehow I can’t say it’s mine.” I repeated the oft heard words which now seemed clothed with life-giving energy, “Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out,” and illustrated them

"I KNOW HE WON'T CAST ME OUT."

by saying, if thoro wero to bo a sciolol treat noxt wook, and your little girl came to you and said, "Mother, may I go to the treat?" and you told her, Yes, what would you think if ovory day she came and repeated the same words, "Mother, may I go to the treat?" She replied, evidently struck with the thought, "Why I should feel she did not believe me."

"Just so," I said. "You are making God a liar when you say you come to Christ, and then hope to be saved some day."

"Oh, but," she said, "I do believe He won't cast me out."

"Yes," I replied, "but there's one thing you have never yet believed—not only that He won't cast you out, but that He has taken you in."

I went to the door, but before finally leaving I turned and looking at her said, "Do you believe that He has taken you in?"

"I do," was the glorious answer.

I left her, but that night felt I could thank God that she now knew that peace which "passeth all understanding." The next day I met her in the street. It was raining, but under the cover of my umbrella we stood while she told me, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, that it was even so; she was full of joy, and had been telling a friend that same afternoon of her newly found peace. "He (Christ Jesus) is our peace." "Having made peace by the blood of His cross, and you (the apostle is here writing to saints) who were once alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled."

Dear reader, are you reconciled to God? do

"I KNOW HE WON'T CAST ME OUT."

you know this peace—the living Christ? if not where are you going? "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man"—is this your way—does it seem right in your own eyes? Thus far then the Word of God and you are agreed; but hearken! "the *end* thereof are the ways of death." Did you never think of the end? then consider it now, and "turn ye, turn ye. Why will ye die?" A little school girl said, "Where are we to go to?" May you repeat the question in the singular number and say, "Where am I to go, for I cannot take one more step in the road that leads to eternal woe?" The Word of God fully and completely answers your important question. "Ye *must* be born again." "How?" you say. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). You must come to the Person who says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," and when you have come to Christ do believe like Mrs. —— that He has taken you in. Remember the Word, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

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

I change, He changes not;
My Christ can never die:
His love, not mine, the resting place,
His truth, not mine, the tie."

R. B.

A WORD TO THE WORLDLY.

DEAR friend, I want as the Lord leads me to speak a few words to you who are in the world. When I say in the world I mean engaged in its pursuits, its ambitions, its amusements, its religion. Have you ever thought how all will end? for the fairest, brightest earthly dreams and hope must come to an end. Oh! bear with me, do not put this thought away from you—your eternal welfare is at stake, and, dear friend, the only object I have in thus writing to you is that the Lord may cause these feeble words to sink into your heart, and lead you to accept the Lord Jesus as your Saviour—as the One who will deliver you from going down to the pit.

Perhaps you are young, gay and thoughtless, surrounded by all that is thought to make life happy, and you think in common with many of the foolish world "*Time Enough*"—time enough for these things when one grows old and the world has ceased to woo. Time enough when one comes to die." But do not people die young? Yes, and unconscious too. Oh, thoughtless one, are you going to come to Christ when all you have and are has been spent in the devil's service? When in life and health you laughed at the thought of eternity, and wished that those who spoke to you about such things would mind their own affairs. Beware! Beware! "God is not mocked." "Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation." But let me ask you is the world worth what you are paying for it? does it give you

A WORD TO THE WORLDLY.

real happiness, real peace, real rest? No! No! it does not even promise that. It gives so called pleasure, which when the excitement has passed away leaves an empty void. You will not always be young, and things will lose the bright look they wear to the eye of youth. Troubles will come, for God's Word says, "Man is born to trouble" (Job v. 7). Come they will to all, and then you will find, if you have not before, the utter emptiness of this world's attractions.

God says "the world passeth away" (1 John ii. 17). And you, dear reader, will pass away also. Whither? To *Heaven*, or to *Hell* for eternity. Are you asleep? has the devil lulled you so with his opiates? Oh awake! awake! oh that you could see your danger: moral, amiable, attending your place of worship on Sunday, and yet without Christ—a rejector. But you say, I have never rejected Christ. Let me ask you, have you accepted Him as your Saviour? Has He saved you? (for the word saviour means one who saves) if not you are still in your sins, still a rejector. God only recognises the two classes—the acceptors or rejectors. Oh, have you heard Jesus say, *Come*, and like Levi of old left all and followed Him? If you have not He speaks now, He says *Come*; that is the word He always has for the poor lost sinner. He said to the woman of Samaria (John iv. 16), "Go call thy husband" (that was to show her her sin—her need of a Saviour), "and *come* hither." Oh, dear one, would that you know the love that is in the heart of Jesus for you. Do not any longer halt between two opinions. Remember you are living in a world that cruci-

A WORD TO THE WORLDLY.

fied God's Anointed, and still despises and rejects Him (Isaiah liii. 6). One day God will judge this world for the murder of His Son, and if you persist in your present way you will stand there with the rest of the guilty world awaiting your just doom.

But perhaps in the foolishness of your heart you are too proud to stoop—to stoop to the feet of Jesus. You want to save yourself or to help to save. "The gift of God is eternal life;" you can do nothing to save yourself; all your good works, prayers, church or chapel-going will not save you; Christ alone can save. Proud ones, come down from your own good works and accept the finished work of Jesus; hear what God says of you, "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination unto the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished" (Prov. xvi. 5). Oh, but think of it, an abomination to the Lord! Proud one, humble yourself before it be too late; come as a lost sinner, for "He came to seek and save that which was lost."

Here is good news, "This Man receiveth sinners." Come to Him now; you will have a welcome like that the prodigal son had; you will have the sweet knowledge of sin forgiven, and a Saviour's love. And you will when weary find Him "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;" and soon, very soon, He may come Himself or call you up thither where you will enter in at the pearly gates, walk the golden streets, wear the promised crown, and sing the song of the redeemed, "Unto Him that loveth us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. i. 5), yea, best of all,

“HE IS MY SAVIOUR.”

see Jesus as He is. Now as God has enabled me I have put life and death before you; which are you going to accept? Do not say, I will think of these things—that is the devil's whisper; do not listen to him; he is a liar; and well he has acted his character as such. Oh, now, before you lay down this paper, close with God's terms of salvation. Remember if you reject His mercy you have yourself to blame, your blood be upon your own head. I am free; you cannot say in Hell, I was never warned. “Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the Prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish” (Acts xiii. 40, 41). S. E. C.

“HE IS MY SAVIOUR.”

WHILE on my way to a little Gospel meeting in the village of C—, I was asked by a Christian person to visit a young woman, who was evidently dying, and whose state of soul she was anxious to ascertain.

Following her directions I mounted an outside stair, and entered a small attic room where the signs of deepest poverty were manifest in every direction. The only occupants of the room were a middle-aged woman, on whose face care and toil had left indelible traces, and her daughter, a girl of twenty summers. It was just sunset, and the little window facing in that direction, permitted a full stream of golden light to

“HE IS MY SAVIOUR.”

enter the apartment, which only made more visible the squalor and dirt which reigned supreme.

The evening rays fell full on the recess containing the bed whereon lay the one whom I sought. She had evidently been a tall and handsome girl, but now the fell destroyer, Consumption, had left nothing save skin and bones. Her hair, jet black, lay in tangled quantities scattered over the pillow, in striking contrast with the pallid pinched face which was turned towards me, the brow covered with a cold dew, while the lips and eyelids were firmly closed. I saw at a glance that death was near at hand, which a touch of the pulseless wrist confirmed.

Having addressed a few inquiries as to her illness to the mother, who seemed pleased to see me, I turned to the dying one and said, “Are you in pain?” Receiving no reply I repeated my query in a louder tone. Again there was no response, and then the mother put in, “I don’t think she can hear you, sir, she’s too far gone now to hear.” It almost seemed so, but I determined to try again, so bending over her I said, “Do you know Jesus?” Oh the power of that Name on the heart that knows its meaning! Immediately the departing spirit seemed to be called back from the border land, the eyelids lifted to permit a lustrous pair of eyes to fix themselves a moment on the stranger who put this simple query, the lips parted, a smile of unutterable sweetness lit up the dying countenance, and then faintly and with effort she whispered, “He is my Saviour.” “Thank God,” I rejoined; “and how long have you known Him as *your* Saviour?”

“HE IS MY SAVIOUR.”

Her eyes filled with tears at the remembrance of His mercy, as she replied : “Not long, only since I lay down. I have been a terrible sinner, but Jesus loved me, and died for me, and I know He has washed all my sins away in His precious blood.”

“And you are quite ready, and happy to go?”

“Quite happy,” was her answer, while the smile of joy again brightened up her moistened cheek, and then, her strength exhausted, she relapsed into the soporous state from which the mention of the Name of Jesus alone could recall her.

I left, and she passed away a few hours after.

Rarely have I seen a more touching instance of the power of the Name of Jesus. “Thou shalt call His Name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins.” To the believer’s ear that Name is fragrant beyond description. Reader, may I ask, has it any fragrance for your heart? Do you know Jesus? Can you say “He is my Saviour?”

Rest not merely in saying He is *a* Saviour. The devils know that. You are not right till you can say, “He is *my* Saviour.”

It is really a most blessed thing to be able to truly say those words. And who can say them? Every poor guilty sinner who trusts in Jesus’ precious Name. He likes to hear the sinner say, “*My* Saviour.” All the world will sooner or later own that He is *a* Saviour, but what He prizes is the simple confidence of the heart that simply yet boldly says, “He is *my* Saviour.” Would you not like to be able to say it? Well, then, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved.*”

W. T. P. W.

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt. . . . And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.”—EXODUS xii. 13, 22.

ISRAEL’s redemption and exodus from Egypt are a striking type of the Gospel and its effects now.

These verses show us God’s way of salvation, and the way man must act in order to avail himself of God’s rich and wondrous provision for his need. Judgment was about to fall on man. Egypt and all its households were exposed to this sure and certain judgment, the Israelite as much as the Egyptian—true figure of the world’s present condition with God’s eternal judgment of sin looming in the distance. Death is at the very threshold. The Judge is passing by. Can His righteous wrath be averted? Can His entrance in this terrible character be arrested? These are the momentous questions of that night, and also of the present moment. Reader, can you answer them? Unless you know in reality the meaning of the two verses I have quoted you cannot do so; but if still in darkness, may God in His infinite mercy open your eyes.

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

There are a great many people who would tell you without hesitation that they fully believe the Word of God as to the death of Christ being the only ground of a sinner's hope before God, that they had given up all idea of self-righteousness as a means of keeping out the coming judgment—and yet they are not saved. Why is this? They believe Jesus died, and yet they are not saved. Why is this? "Oh," you say, "they have not faith." I suppose that is at the root of it. No sensible man—no man honest, no man who has a notion of what God is, but must come to this conclusion, "I stand in danger." And then too he must believe as an historical fact the death of Jesus. Still such are not saved. The reason is, the blood is still in the basin, and not sprinkled on the lintel and two side-posts. This is an illustration of what I mean.

It is as though you had gone into the house of an Israelite that night and put the question to him, "Do you believe judgment is coming? Nine woes are past, but do you believe the last worst woe is coming?"

"Oh yes, I believe it, and I have done as Moses commanded: the lamb is slain, the blood is shed."

"Is the blood in the basin?"

"Yes."

"Is it on the lintel and side-posts?"

"No, not yet."

"And why not on the lintel and side-posts?"

"I do not know how to put it there."

"But are you safe from the destroyer?"

"I am not sure ; I hope so."

Now this is just your case perhaps. You believe the blood of the Lamb has been shed ; you know Jesus died. You know there is only shelter beneath that precious blood, but there has been no real application of the death of Christ to your own soul. Why is this ? There has been no taking the bunch of hyssop and sprinkling the blood with it. The bunch of hyssop is a very insignificant thing—a poor contemptible thing—and people are not willing to go down so low.

Knowledge may ruin a person if there is not the application of the thing known to the heart. Remember you may go down to hell with the Bible at your fingers' ends, for knowledge is not faith nor repentance. But the bunch of hyssop, though a very poor, insignificant thing, is a Divine necessity. Had it been a bunch of cedar, you could have understood it—the cedar with its lofty grandeur that could almost shelter an army beneath its wide-spreading branches. Solomon spake of all things "from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall"—a little thing that does not take root in a decent fashion even, but springs out from between two stones ! The cedar and the hyssop are the two extremes in nature, the highest and the lowest. You must take the blood up with a bunch of hyssop ; that is, you must go and shelter yourself under that precious blood with the full consciousness that you are a *lost* soul without a particle of innate worthiness or goodness.

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

In Lev. xiv. the hyssop was buried out of sight; in Numbers xix. it was burned out of sight. David says in Ps. li.: "Purgo me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." There is no mistake about that man; he wants cleansing. "I will take hyssop," says David. "Oh, cast me where you will, treat me as you will, only cleanse me. 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'"

But further, it was on the end of a bunch of hyssop, that spake of the lowest and most degrading thing in nature, they gave the Lord Jesus a sponge of vinegar in the day of His death, when He was suffering to put away sins. Yes, they could taunt Him with the bunch of hyssop in the hour of His agony, His deep untold suffering—His suffering for us; and Jesus in the grace of His heart received it, and said, "*It is finished.*" What does that mean? It means He there was undergoing from the hand of God the wrath, the dark, bitter agony that was due to you and me. *He died for us that we might live with Him.*

Are you prepared, dear reader, to accept the bunch of hyssop yourself; in other words, to take the place of repentance and self-judgment before God? Mark! there never entered an unrepentant soul within the doors of heaven. Faith and repentance go together. Using the bunch of hyssop is a man going down before God in the acknowledgment of his true lost and ungodly state; not resting content with saying, "I know Jesus died, but I must *wait* till I go through some edifying experience, as I have heard of others having done, before I can know I am saved,"

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

but sheltering himself as a lost man under cover of that precious blood—applying it to his own heart. “But,” you say, “I never saw the blood of Christ.” Nor did I! I never saw the blood of Christ, and never shall see it, but I believe what God has told me about it. It is not when *you* see the blood, but God says “When *I* see the blood I will pass over.”

But you ask, “Why sprinkle it only on the lintel and on the two side-posts? Why not on the ground, why not on the floor or basement?” I will tell you why. Because it is left for a careless soul like you to trample the blood of Jesus beneath the feet—to despise and scorn it. What does faith do? Faith looks up to it, shelters beneath it, and says: “I stand beneath a blood-stained canopy.” There was but one eye saw the blood that night. No Israelite saw the blood. They simply obeyed the Word of God, they put it on the *outside* of their houses in *faith*, and they remained *inside* in *peace*, secure under its shelter; and if God has told you that on the Cross His blessed Son died to put away your sins, what have you to do? Simply to repose on the truth of what God has told you. God bids us shelter ourselves beneath that blood, that precious blood which has been shed (Heb. ix. 11, 12). Christ’s blood has been shed on the Cross, and He having there suffered in our stead, once, and once only—having borne the judgment—has entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. On the ground of what He is, and what He has done and endured, we can enter in also.

Christ having borne sins, having taken them upon Him, having been on the Cross made sin, put Himself in grace as a substitute in a place, out of which He could not extricate Himself save by putting away those sins. He was there on the Cross with sins upon Him. He was on that tree under the judgment of sin not His own, blessed be God, but *ours!* *ouxs!* On the Cross, in the deepest grace, He hung in the sinner's place. He endured the wrath for the sinner, He died for the sinner. He was *sacrificed for us.* "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." "*Sacrificed for us!*" Charming word! It might charm the heart of the most hardened sinner. He *sacrificed Himself.* Yes, He SACRIFICED HIMSELF FOR US, and yet *you* have never sacrificed a single half-hour for Christ. You never sacrificed a bit of pleasure for Christ, you never sacrificed your own will or your own way a single moment for Christ. You have sacrificed many a thing, everything, for your own pleasure, but nothing for Him. Is this not so?

Pause, think for a moment. He *sacrificed Himself* for us, and then passed into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us. And the apostle then adds: "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" If, in Exodus xii., the blood of the Lamb could preserve the greatest sinner all through that long night, so that no death or destruction could enter *in* there, "*How much more,*" O careless sinner, "*How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve*

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

the living God"—that blood that has met the claims of God—that precious blood that has silenced the accuser—how much more shall it bring a defiled, guilty sinner into God's presence pardoned, blessed, forgiven, saved, to serve *Him!* Magnificent word "*How much more!*" Scripture all through speaks of the blood of Christ, and points the sinner to the blood of Christ that has met God, and satisfied His claims, and now there is nothing for you to do but trust it. If you despise it you must perish; if you shelter beneath it you receive eternal life.

It is an awful thing to despise the blood of Christ. Mark well the word in Exodus xi. which God whispers as it were in the ear of Moses to tell to Pharaoh. "Yet will I bring one plague more." Mark it you who care not to be ranked among the despised followers of Jesus, who have trampled under foot His precious blood, there remains for you one plague more—*one plague more*—and oh! tell me, What will you do when this plague overtakes you? Will you try and escape it? Impossible! Will you try to put it off? Impossible! Impossible! Will you say as a dying man, a rich man, once said to his physician when he told him the plain truth that he could not live much longer? "Oh! doctor, I will give you all I possess if you can only give me one day more of life:" Impossible! Impossible! that day he died. And, sinner, what will you do the day that plague overtakes you, the day the iron hand of Death seizes you in its relentless grasp? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment.*"

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

God had only "one plague more" for Pharaoh, but, O Christless soul, God has two plagues more for you! "After this the judgment!" "After this the judgment!" How will you meet it? Oh! if you have never decided for Christ before, will you not decide for Him now? Will you not come to Him now? Will you not put yourself under the shelter of His precious blood before this coming judgment day arrives? I put my queries to you specially who have been moved under the Word of God before, but are still undecided for Christ, still unsettled. Oh! I appeal to you, risk no longer meeting these two plagues more. No longer let the god of this world blind your eyes to the coming danger, or harden your heart. Let not procrastination lead you astray.

I would you knew my Saviour! my Jesus! the Saviour I know, the Jesus I know—my blessed, precious Saviour. Now just tell me, Would not you like to know Him? Does not your heart sometimes long to know rest and peace? You will find it nowhere else—but you will find rest in knowing Him. Do you tremble to meet these two plagues more—these two coming plagues, from which there is no escape? Then listen to this. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "So Christ." If my sin demands death and judgment—so Christ was once offered, bearing sins, and enduring judgment from the hand of God to bring me salvation! "I am content," I say, "I am content." Beneath the shelter of that precious blood I will crouch—I am safe, I am happy.

I am to stay in the house until the morning peaceful and happy, keeping the feast within—feeding on Christ, enjoying Christ—feasting on Him each day.

“None of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.” I have clean done with the world; I want nothing from outside. Outside there is only death and destruction. The long dark time of Jesus’ absence He calls the night. In the morning Jesus comes and takes us right out of the scene; and until then we are to remain in the house. Safely resting beneath the shelter of that blood, done with the world, we only wait till the morning, that bright and sunny morning, when He shall come to take us into the Father’s house—when we shall hear His own voice calling us: “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”

“Ah!” you say, “I would like to be there in that morning.” Well, if you would be there *then*, decide for Jesus *now*. Who can say you will get another opportunity? And mark! mark well! there are two plagues more! *Two plagues more!* but not for me. He has taken those two plagues for me, and now what is a Christian looking for? Looking for Him! “To them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” An unconverted man is looking for two plagues more—he may shut his eyes to the fact—but

THE BLOOD AND THE HYSSOP.

there they are before him. Do you ask me : “What about the two plagues for you ?” I answer : “They are behind me ; Jesus has taken them for me, and I am looking for Him !”

May the Lord bless His Word, and give strength and courage to those who receive Him to come clean out of the world, and to live only to please and serve and follow Him. Do you think that is hard work and dreadful bondage ? That is because you know nothing about it ! It is hard work and dreadful bondage to labour in the brick-kilns of the world, and then go down into the depths of hell at the end. I call that dreadful bondage to go on serving Satan now—and then to go down with him where no drop of water shall ever cool your tongue—where the voice of God is never heard—into the darkness of an eternal night, which no ray of light shall ever penetrate. Shut out from Jesus ? Yes, shut out from Him then for ever ! Oh ! decide for Him now. You must decide for yourself ; no one can decide for you. What a difference ! Shut out from Him for ever, in the depths of hell, or going to be for ever with Him ! Oh, will you not decide ? I made my choice long ago ; so now I know that death and judgment are behind me, and only Jesus before me. Will you not make your choice and choose Him just now ? The Lord grant it. God has provided the “Blood,” do you use the “Hyssop.”

W. T. P. W.

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

FOUR vessels sailed from port. The first had on board neither compass nor chart, but was possessed of a helm. The second had a helm and chart, but no compass. The third carried all three, but the chart unfortunately, being but carelessly preserved, dropped overboard and was lost—albeit she succeeded in reaching her destination. The fourth carried and guarded both helm, compass, and chart. It was a matter of great interest to watch each of these vessels. Leaving port was especially full of charm to the spectators—and, so far as the outward appearance of the ships was concerned, none could presage but that the one had as good a chance as the other of mastering the billow and reaching the haven. But this of course rested with the respective crews, and on them depended the success of the voyage.

The first sailed bravely out of port. Soon every stitch of canvas was set and filled out with the fair and welcome breeze. Presently, however, the breeze stiffened into a gale and the gale into a storm, and the vessel was tossed like a cork on the wave. Her peril was great. Billow after billow washed over her deck, and one sea stronger than the others struck her helm and broke it away, and there, at the mercy of the foaming ocean, now riding the crest of the wave and now lost to sight in its trough, she trembles as though in hopeless and helpless despair. Without chart or compass or helm she lies like a log on the

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

face of the deep. She settles ! She sinks ! And all is over ! A little vortex of snow-white brine tells the tale of her complete submersion. Sad overthrow ! Fearful ending to a voyage so full of promise.

The second was somewhat more fully equipped. A good chart and a strong and well adjusted helm were carefully appended to her general furniture, and the master professed a thorough knowledge of his business and of the seas through which his vessel had to sail. One important item, however, had been omitted—nor indeed could this omission be remedied even by the supposed skill of the master or seaworthiness of the ship. There was no compass on board ! However, out sailed the vessel. Utmost confidence prevailed. Each heart looked forward with fullest expectation for the haven. The weather too was remarkably favourable. No gale—no storm broke upon the ship. Everything betokened prosperity, and if fear should arise in any bosom for a moment, or the propriety of crossing the ocean without a compass appear to be foolhardy, this was silenced by the fact of the general success of the voyage. Thus day after day passed quietly, and the vessel cut her way through the deep. Such undeviating prosperity, however, had the effect of producing an unwatchful and self-confident disposition in the sailors, and resulted, as might have been expected, in the total wreck of the ship. The catastrophe thus occurred. One night, when all was dark, and the stars overhead were mantled by heavy clouds, and when there was no external aid or

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

beacon, the vessel was driven upon the shoals. The noise of the distant breakers could be heard distinctly, and forthwith the cry was raised "*Breakers ahead!*" The master, perplexed and confused, fled to the chart. He looked! He read! He saw that this bank of rocks was clearly detailed. But having trusted his own wisdom rather than the unerring disclosures of the chart, nor having possessed a compass to guide according to the directions of the chart, he now found out, when too late, his sad mistake. The vessel struck and parted, and all on board perished. Such was the end of this vessel.

The third was fully furnished. Her chart, compass and helm, were all in first-rate condition. After leaving port she encountered some rough weather. Angry waves lashed her sides. High winds too blew upon her, and tried her sailing powers. However, this opposition of the elements only caused greater caution, and the consequence was a clear, steady course. Soon the storms abated. The waves came to their level. The clouds rolled away, and the rays of the warm and enervating sun appeared. This change had a bad effect. It was genial and pleasant after the cold, rough blasts. It produced amongst the crew a spirit, not of self-confidence, but of neglect and carelessness. The course of the vessel was cared for too little. The chart fell negligently overboard. Yet the vessel glided onward and the faithful needle kept her point to the north. Things went on thus for some time, until a sudden squall caught her at unawares. She was driven from her course, and but

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

for the assistance of the compass, and the stability of the pole to which it pointed, the vessel would have foundered. As it was, such was the effect of the surprise, that she suffered severely, and came to harbour little more than a hulk. No praise awaited the heedless crew! They reached the haven, but that was all!

The fourth like the third was fully equipped, but unlike her predecessors, her course was marked by untiring vigilance and unwearied care. She had to encounter storm and sunshine. Her course was strangely varied and chequered. Now she ploughed the deep apace; now she lay nearly becalmed; now she bravely breasted the billow; now she seemed to gather up her strength for a fresh essay. But throughout all there was constant reference both to the chart and compass, whilst the helm did her part in the true guidance of the ship. She gained port full sail, and loud acclamations awaited the crew.

Four men set forth on the voyage of life. The first possessed neither the compass of faith nor the chart of Divine truth in his soul. Still, in a world which does not possess truth for one of its elements, and which does not therefore call for the need or exercise of faith, these qualities may be dispensed with easily. But the helm of conscience, natural conscience, is the heirloom of all Adam's posterity, and this may, so far, guide the soul. It may "excuse or accuse," and supply the knowledge of good and evil. It is, however, subject to will. Its voice may be disregarded and itself be seared. Its admonitions therefore may be trodden under foot. The will

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

of man is vitiated by sin—it is opposed to God, and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” The will of man is therefore one of sin, of opposition to God, and such being the case, the conscience is made subservient, and the man is ruled by a sinful will.

Hence without truth, without faith in God, and with a down-trodden conscience, the first is seen plunging into those excesses that are tasteful to him. Watch his career. Reckless, heedless, wilful, and worldly, he sweeps along—but his “end is destruction.” Infatuated by the “pleasures of sin,” and abetted by the world and the devil, he founders at last, excluded from God, and included in an eternal hell to endure the wrath of a sin-hating God.

Sinner! “Now IS THE DAY OF SALVATION!” “Escape for thy life.” Accept salvation as the gift of God, and accept it *now!* else through eternity will you rue the fruits of your present heedless course.

But now with reference to our second vessel and to the illustration it supplies. The compass was wanting. The chart and helm were in good working order. Truth was on board, so far, at least, as the mere possession of it was concerned. There was “the knowledge of the truth” (see Heb. x. 26) and the helm of conscience; but, alas, the compass of faith—that which is a *sine quâ non*—that without which, in every sense, “it is impossible to please God”—that which alone can justify in His sight or put the soul in possession of salvation was wanting. Without it destruction is inevitable. “He that *believeth*

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

not shall be damned ; ” and therefore conscience however upright, and head-knowledge however clear, either separately or together, fail to save. “ To live up to one’s conscience ” is a popular idea of the way of salvation ! But if conscience should fail to apprehend the mind of God, is every sinner who, forsooth, makes a standard of his own individual conscience—his own idea of right and wrong—his own supposition of what becomes God, is every such sinner, I say, to find a place in heaven ? Truly many heavens would be needed to meet the many different standards of right and wrong. Suppose that a sinner in all good conscience should commit murder, should slay his fellow creatures in cold blood and plead conscience—for so did Saul of Tarsus —what a state of things we should run into !!

True, Saul was a Jew ; and believing that the Church was wrongfully opposed to his religion, he sought to exterminate its members by every species of cruelty. He “ stood by ” at the death of Stephen. Very well, Saul had a conscience, and was moreover possessed of the Scriptures, and how came he to act as he did ? Simply because there was no divine apprehension of the true meaning of those Scriptures—in a word *no faith !* A breakdown followed, but, through mercy, one that led him in time to acknowledge that he had sinned, that his righteousnesses were but filthy rags, and his hot zeal only injury, blasphemy, and persecution—so that he was ~~led~~ to count those very things which had been a “ gain ” to him, now to be loss for Christ.

From this we may easily learn that there may,

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

in our own day, be a knowledge of the truth—a brain acquaintance with facts and doctrines and theology, and along therewith uprightness of conscience, fair dealing, honesty, and a measure of zeal toward God, but yet the absence of that which alone can save—the absence of *faith*. Such a case is not ideal. How many—oh! what a majority of the respectable of the community at large are merely formal—very formal, very exact, very scrupulous, very praiseworthy, but faithless, lifeless, Christless, and about to founder!

Professors, “YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.” “YE MUST!” For ye lack the compass! Your course may have been prosperous, your waters calm and unruffled. Nothing may have arisen to cause you the least fear. Ah! no—Satan knows his game! Let me forewarn you, there are “*breakers ahead.*” “He that falleth on this stone shall be broken,” said the Lord Jesus Christ; and you know that whatever outward respect you may have for Him, there does not exist the link of faith in Him as a personal Saviour. You know that you are not saved. You merely hope that you may be. Ah! souls, this will never do. *Awake to your danger!*

The third case comes before us now. Chart, compass, and helm are all on board. Truth, faith, and conscience are all in possession. Faith in the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour, truth implanted by the Spirit of God, and the conscience enlightened by that truth. Out sails the vessel—forth sallies the new-born soul on the ocean of life. Converted to God and therefore detached from “the course of the world,”

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

the storms of persecution assail it, old friends become enemies, and the devil does his utmost to regain his prey. All this, however, has the effect of begetting vigilance and determination to be faithful. The storms but drive it closer to the Shepherd's breast. They cease, and are succeeded by sunshine. The things of the world, its cares, its riches, its interests, press themselves upon its attention. Vigilance is neglected. The word of truth becomes less studied and, therefore, less enjoyed. Prayer is set aside for other duties, and spiritual declension steals over the soul. The "first love" is left, and the first blessedness is gone. The soul becomes barren. The world has gained the victory. Satan rejoices. Christ is dishonoured and the Spirit grieved. Miserable spectacle! Awful sight! The vessel moves along, but the chart is despised and lost. True, the compass and helm do their work, but the crew is deeply guilty.

Ah! poor unhappy backslider. Fair was the day you sailed from port, and loudly you sang of the
"Happy day when Jesus washed my sins away."

Then your sky was radiant. Your stand for Christ was firm and unflinching. Persecution but pressed you the nearer to His bosom and caused the Word and prayer to be the more precious; but, alas, when circumstances changed you changed with them, and what the cold northerly blast could not effect was accomplished by the world's sunshine. The smile of the world achieved what its frown could not. You yielded. You fell. True, you have not rejected Christ as a Saviour. When trouble comes you apply to

FOUR PARALLEL CASES.

Him, and a faint hope in His mercy buoys you up all along. Faith points to her magnet. But no "abundant entrance" awaits you, no "well done," no Master's smile. You will be "ashamed before Him at His coming." You will be "saved so as by fire." Such will be your ending. Poor thoughtless soul! Be wise in time. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Act upon that.

How refreshing to notice the course of our fourth and last vessel. Fitted up with chart, compass, and helm, she leaves port, masters the storm, and enters the haven full sail. Such a course is rare indeed. Not many can say with Paul, "I have finished my course, *I have kept the faith.*" Yet few, if any, are called to cross such rough and turbulent waters as he. He "died daily." He had "great things to suffer for the name of the Lord Jesus." His labours were more abundant, and his stripes above measure. By the grace of God he was what he was. There was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, and the Master's glad "well done" was to be pronounced over him.

"He wrestled on toward heaven
'Gainst wind and storm and tide."

He ran with patience the race set before him, looking unto Jesus, and entered full sail.

Dear fellow soldier, what need for us to keep the faith, to be sober and vigilant, and to watch unto prayer. "The just shall live by faith." May grace sustain and strengthen us till the port be gained.

J. W. S.

WILL YOU BE THERE AND I ?

We know there's a bright and a

glorious home, A - way in the hea-vens

high, Where all the redeemed shall with

Je - sus dwell; But will you be there, and

I ? Will you be there, and I ? . . . Will

you be there, and I ? Where all the redeemed shall with

WILL YOU BE THERE AND I ?



Je-sus dwell, But will you be there, and I ?

2.

In robes of white, o'er the streets of gold,
Beneath a cloudless sky,
They walk in the light of their Father's smile ;
But will you be there, and I ?

Will you be there, &c.

3.

From every kingdom of earth they come
To join the triumphal cry,
Singing, "Worthy the Lamb that once was slain ;"
But will you be there, and I ?

Will you be there, &c.

4.

If you take the loving Saviour now,
Who for sinners once did die,
When He gathers His own in that bright home—
Then you'll be there, and I.

Then you'll be there, &c.

5.

If we are sheltered by the Cross,
And through the blood brought nigh,
Our utmost gain we'll count but loss,
Since you'll be there, and I.

Since you'll be there, &c.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

I look out upon the night. The sky is serene—one uniform deep grey-blue—but oh! so dark, so heavy, so lowering! The moon is away. Its beautiful light might *never* have shined in the heavens, so utterly cheerless is the vast expanse above me—so destitute of one ray of brightness.

The stars are hidden; oh! it is black, hopeless—and yet so calm, as though it had never known another aspect—as though it needed nothing to throw beauty and warmth into its cold darkness. It knows not its own lack, and so is content to abide unchanged. Only the on-looker who has felt the gladness of a sky ablaze with light is saddened and depressed to find it gone, leaving behind such gloom.

Even as I looked my mind descried a type—a picture. I saw my own heart (only twelve months younger than it is to-day) in that dark sky. I saw it imaged; for oh! my heart *was* dark, heavy, dead when last spring's sun was shining. And like this firmament it was calm and undisturbed, for it knew not its own hopelessness—knew not it was shutting out the Light of Life—that Light “which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Truly the darkness comprehended it not—knew not even that it was shining!

I remember being examined by a phrenologist some years ago. Among other marks of character, I was pronounced to have a strong

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

religious propensity, and I wondered within myself, "Shall I verify the prophecy?" I used to have fits of earnestness at long intervals, excited by hearing a good sermon or reading some record of a nobly-spent life. At such seasons I felt that I ought to be *better*, more sincere—and yet I knew not how to become so. I used to **SAY** my prayers : I asked that I might be forgiven all my sins, and that I might be enabled to overcome my temper (a terrible fire in this poor heart!). It was the *one* evil I had discovered—the *only* thing I knew within as sin—the only thing that prevented my acceptance with God.

I prayed, but I always rose from my knees feeling that I had not prayed earnestly enough, and so *could* not *expect* to be answered ; for, Satan whispered, "God would of course hear none but a *very* earnest prayer." I thought, "Shall I *ever* be able so to pray as to *compel* a hearing?" Seeing God would not help me, I sought to conquer in my own strength ; but though I tried hard, oh ! so hard sometimes, I only failed miserably, and at last I gave it up in despair, feeling it was hopeless. My burden had been made too heavy for my strength ; I had never been *meant* to bear it entirely !

But all this was the effect not of grief for offending a loving Father, but of a faintly-disturbed conscience, a self-condemned heart. I had never sat under a Gospel ministry. I had not a thought or a suspicion of existing rebellion and hatred against God—of innate, indwelling sin. Truly darkness was on the depths of my

soul—the Spirit of God had never moved upon those waters!

I read my Bible nightly AS A DUTY, but I read with blind eyes—seeing, I saw not, and hearing, I did not understand; and yet the while suspected not my own lack. Nay, was I not *better* than so-and-so? I generally went to church *three* times on Sundays; I gave most of my pocket-money to the offertory; I taught in the Sunday-school, and was not an unfrequent communicant! In fact I was well enough, were it not for that unfortunate temper! I was doing my best; surely God would consider my temptations, and have mercy on me at the last! Unconsciously I whispered to my heart—“Thou art rich and have need of nothing,” and knew not all the while that I was “wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.” My eyes had never lighted on the “gold tried in the fire”; and the “white raiment” of Another’s righteousness I envied not, for was I not already clothed? Ah! it was truly a dark land I groped in—the blackness of darkness!

But *He* had marked me—the Great God of Heaven—in whose sight every creature that moveth is manifest. *He* had watched the prodigal’s wanderings further and further into the far country, had yearned over him and gone swiftly out to meet him “while he was yet a great way off!”

I had spent the winter abroad. Oh, *such* husks of worldly joys I had fed on! And yet the Deceiver had made them very sweet to my taste. I only hungered a *very* little sometimes,

for—I knew not what ; but this sense of want only made me taste more abundantly of the one supply I knew. Oh, my Father ! my Father ! I did not even *think* on Thine house of plenty, and yet Thou wert never for a moment unmindful of Thy long-missing child !

I spent some weeks in London before returning, and one Lord's Day had a tract put into my hand. Strangely enough, I had never had one given me before, and looked with astonishment at the donor. I put it carelessly into my pocket and forgot it till the evening, when I took it up and glanced at the heading—“Faith.”

I read a line or two. It put before me very plainly that salvation was full and free by grace through faith. “Salvation by faith *alone*,” I inwardly cried ; “what nonsense !” and taking up a Bible, I found the references given, and read again from the Word itself what I had seen and *totally disbelieved* in the tract. I could hardly believe my eyes, and thinking I was misunderstanding the verses, I went down to the friend whose guest I was, and asked, had she ever heard of this way of salvation ? “Of course I have ! As if every one had not !” I was astonished ; but my self-love was wounded at having shown my ignorance of an evidently universally-known fact, and I soon changed the subject, and forgot, in the excitement of making plans for the day, what had before interested me. Ah ! Satan was ready to pluck away the good seed, but the ground had been thereby prepared for the sowing-time so blessedly near.

I left my friends and returned home. The

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

season was just beginning, and I plunged into all its excitement and gaiety, enjoying it thoroughly. Those poor, paltry, meaningless pleasures ! How soon they were to fade into nothingness by reason of the great joy so soon to fill my empty heart !

Quite by—CHANCE I had almost written—chance ! can we thus speak and yet know that the same God who knows the falling of a sparrow, who gives to the winds a decree and to the waves a commandment, is also He who marks out the way we must tread, making all things work together for good to them that love God ? Chance ! when it is written—“He worketh *all* things after *the counsel of His own will*” (Eph. i. 11), nay, rather would I say—by His grace, His love—He let my path cross that of one of His servants who was to be to me the bearer of the “glad tidings,” and when all things were ready, bid me to the banquet-house, and spread before me His rich, rare feast of love ! Happy, happy day.

Oh ! the first breaking up of the darkness within ! The mixture of astonishment, and joy, and despair. Was I misunderstanding the King’s message—offering me a free, full, complete salvation *now*—that night, that hour ? Surely my ears deceived me. How could it be a *present* salvation for me when I had done so few good works ? Ah ! the Spirit’s work was already begun ; and before I left the meeting that night, I saw myself a sinner, undone, condemned ; and yet my eyes were too bedimmed with tears of sorrow to behold Jesus, the Deliverer, waiting to whisper “Peace.”

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

I was left in this bitterness of spirit for I think three days. Oh, those long, weary days of weeping ! What a cheerless time it was, for Satan had blinded my eyes so that I could not see the Sun of Righteousness arising with the healing in His wings my wounded heart so needed. I was occupied only with *self*. I was struggling to *make myself* believe—to *give myself* faith—God's gift, which His royal Hand *only* could bestow ; truly I had read blindly, “ saved through faith, and that *not* of yourselves ; it is the gift of God.”

At last in an agony of despair I felt I must give it all up, and with heart and brain alike bursting, I lay there and felt I was lost—lost—unless Jesus would help me. Then it was that He who had so long stood knocking at the door of my heart, discerning the thought *before* it came forth, entered in conqueror. I had a sense of a strange calm on the surging waves of condemnation rolling over my soul, but I hardly understood it ; it was not yet “ *perfect* peace.” Oh ! my loving Father ! He was very, very tender with His faithless, trembling child !

Again He gave the word to His servant to speak in season to me, being weary ; and coming out from the Master's presence, he brought His Word to me, and opening John v. 24, spoke out the message—“ Verily, verily, (*surely, surely*) I, Jesus, say unto you, he that *heareth* my word, and *believeth* on him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and shall *not* come into condemnation, but IS passed from death unto life.” That message opened the flood-gates, and a mighty

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

ocean of peace and joy and rejoicing swept into my long-divided heart, and I was at rest, at rest!

And He has kept me rejoicing before Him with the joy of His salvation up to this hour, and *will* keep me till the fruition of that thrice-blessed hope of His appearing; when, caught up in rapture to meet Him in the air, I shall learn the new song, and sing through endless ages the praises of Him who "loved me, and gave Himself *for* me."

Reader, the same Jesus who sent His messenger to testify to *me* these things is this moment speaking: "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me *hath* everlasting life." Do you believe on Him? Then *you* have *eternal life*, for it is written (1 John v. 11): "This is the record, that God *hath* given to us *eternal life*, and this life is in His Son." And again (ver. 13): "These things have I written unto you that *believe* on the name of the Son of God; that ye may *know* that ye *have* *eternal life*." Are you still *out* of Christ? Oh then hear His voice *to-day*: "Unto *you*, O men, I call; and my voice is unto the sons of men;" "Come unto *Me*, and I *will* give *you* rest," for "Him that cometh unto *Me* I will in *no wise* cast out."

A. T. E. C.

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

I HAVE been asked to give a brief account of the dealings of God's grace as told to me on a death-bed—the sweet story of God's wondrous love in delivering the captive, turning from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto Himself. In the day of the appearing of Jesus Christ this one shall be there to swell the song of praise, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"—a trophy of redeeming love.

I was never personally acquainted with W.W. until sent for during his last illness. I knew him only by sight, and had heard he was a most godless man, and much prospered in business. Hearing he was ill my brother visited him, and spoke to him of Jesus, and left the little book of verses, called "The Old, Old Story," begging him to have it read to him. This was the first thing that gave him a little light, as he afterwards told me, and that whenever he had a fresh attack of cold which kept him in the house he would ask for this to be read to him; then, getting better, he would be again engrossed in business and pleasure, and forget all about it. Some time after I heard he was seriously ill, and my brother and I spoke of the desirability of my going to visit him, being anxious for his precious soul. We agreed that, considering the circumstances in which he was living, it would not be well for me to go into the house, but that I should leave at the door a plain Gospel tract, and this text, which was in very large letters :

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Little, indeed, did we venture to hope the blessed results God would bring about by this little act, which will be told hereafter in his own words, and which, in looking back, I remember was done with a yearning desire for his salvation.

The next thing I heard was that he was pronounced to be in rapid decline, and that the doctors gave no hope of his life. I was deeply concerned, and wondered whether the time was come for me to visit him, and asked the Lord that if He had a message for me to take I might be sent for. I shall not forget the trembling between hope and fear when a messenger arrived summoning me to the sick man. This was to be our first meeting. The beaming joyful face, the glassy bright eye, the thin hand stretched out to grasp mine, the panting breath, the eagerness to tell, though only in broken accents, of the precious Jesus he had found, the insatiable desire to use the few hours that might be left in speaking of the way He was known to him, I can never adequately describe. Tears of joy were chasing down his cheeks and mine; yes, and more, there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over that sinner brought to repentance. So impressive was the scene, and the words uttered with such labouring breath; that it was an easy matter on reaching home to put them down; and I now transcribe them in the earnest hope they may be used of God to enlighten some who may now be as dark as the subject of this little history once was.

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

"Everybody knows what a wicked man I've been. There is not a sin I have not done; but I want to tell what Jesus has shown me. This is how I have sorted it out, for you know I can't read. God made man for His own pleasure, to enjoy Him and to delight in Him. He gave him only one thing not to do, but man transgressed. Now it was as if God said: 'What must be done? I cannot have any pleasure in men now. My word is holy; I can't go back from it. I have given away My power to forgive because of My *Word*. I will prepare a body for My Son. He shall go into the world and stand for them. He is One that cannot be tampered with, and I will give to Him the power to forgive sins, so that everyone who trusts in Him I shall be able to have back again to My love.'

"God has not only been satisfied about sin, but glorified; sin has been put out of God's sight for *every believer*, so that it is not now a question of sin, for Jesus has 'borne our sins in His own body on the tree,' and He being raised from the dead is the Father's acknowledgement that sin is for ever put away for us. Oh! it's so simple! so simple!! How I grieve I did not see it long ago. I have lived in sin thirty-three years, and Jesus toiled for my salvation thirty-three years down here. All my life He has been so kind to me, prospering me in business and helping me to lay up money, and I never once thought of Him who was doing it all. And when I was first taken bad, I murmured and thought it hard that I could not go

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

on with my money-getting business—for having had nothing to begin with, I thought I had made it all myself, and naturally valued it very much, for latterly I was making £300 a month profit—but then the Lord said to me, ‘I’ve been letting you get all this, and now I’m going to show you *Myselv*, and what a home I’ve been preparing for you.’ Oh ! bless His Name ! I will praise Him as long as I live, and with my dying breath I’ll praise Him. I have given Him my soul, body, spirit, confidence, doubts, fears, and He has taken all, and He’s going to take this poor frame presently. I want nothing now but this bed to rest on, and I have given away all that He gave me, as He has directed. I have given £1,000 to my poor dear mother.” Here he sobbed and said, “Oh ! how different it is crying for yourself, or crying for others. I had no one to cry for me. If my poor dear old mother will only follow me where I’m going.”

On leaving that sick room where I had expected to have to tell faithfully the Gospel message, I knelt, and praised with a full heart that blessed Saviour God whose power and love had been so richly manifested in saving grace. The next time it was my privilege to see him, he greeted me by saying, “I’m as happy as a bird on the wing.” I could scarcely ascertain from him any particulars as to how he had passed the night—his health being the last subject he was willing to take up the time in speaking of. He was most anxious that I should be able to bear a clear testimony as to the blessed change that had taken place in him, and said, “I was like a

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

man groping in the dark. I could not get clear, but one Saturday you brought me a tract about the Gospel, and this text—‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,’ *then I could see it all*—that word ‘THROUGH’ let me into the secret, IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST—*He has done it all.*”

He had ordered a large quantity of the little book—“The Old, Old Story”—and gave me some, saying, “Please give these away, with my love, and tell them it was the first thing that gave me a little light. Tell them all Jesus is the only Gateway, and there is no other—they must have His Ticket. And then the Father wont say ‘No’ when He sees they have His Ticket.”

There was a knock at the door, and hearing who it was he said, “It is a man I sent for to forgive him ; he robbed me of six hundred pounds, and I want to shake hands with him—I want to die quite free.”

He told me the doctor had said, “Don’t you trouble to speak to everyone,” but he replied, “I must tell them what Jesus has done for me. Your profession could not keep my soul from going the wrong way ; my body is of no consequence—you can’t cure it—but the *soul*, that’s what is of consequence.”

During this interview he said to me, “I want you to go and see a Mr. S—. His poor wife has been praying for him for twenty-two years, and he has been a cruel husband to her. I sent for him, and told him what the Lord has shown me, and I do think he sees it too ; he sat and cried like a child, and his dear wife is so happy,

IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

and now he wants talking nicely to and mellowing.”

Knowing so little of Scripture, he was anxious to hear what God's Word said on many points, and asked me simply as a child, “Shall I be with Christ *directly*, or shall I have to wait?” I read to him 2 Cor. v. 8—“Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” This gave him great joy. Again he asked, “Tell me about the judgment day. Does it not say, ‘The dead in Christ shall rise first?’” I replied that believers will not be judged as to their sins, for it is written, “He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (or judgment) but is passed from death unto life,” and that the dead in Christ will rise when “the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout,” and we “shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thes. iv. 16, 17). In speaking of the Book of Life (Rev. xx. 12), he said, “We have life in Jesus, so our names are in ‘the book of life.’”

To his mother he said, “Mother, the world is just as unbelieving now as when Jesus was here—if He were down here to-day, they would not receive Him.” When he saw his mother and others weeping, he said, “Don't cry for me—cry for yourselves—Jesus is mine, and I am His.”

I only saw him once more. The laboured breath and great difficulty in speaking told the tale: the end was near—but Jesus was precious—not one cloud to dim His sight—he was like a bird longing to take flight. The last sentences

“PEACE MADE.”

were very sweet—“The Lord keeps me here as a sample of what His grace can do for others.” I never could have had salvation if it had not been for my precious Christ. If I did not know Jesus I should be cursing now. This poor frame belongs to Jesus, and He is going to take it home—I shall have plenty of breath to praise Him *there*, for ever,” pointing upwards. There was never a murmur, and often he gasped out, “I shall be better presently,” meaning when he was with the Lord—then added, “Let me say good-bye now, if I don’t have breath enough again. We’re sure to meet where we shall be much happier. I feel so light.”

A few more hours of suffering, and he had entered into the joy of His Lord.

I would mention that the poor man alluded to as Mr. S—. received the Gospel, believed it, and a few months after died, leaving behind the blessed testimony that he was eternally saved.

M. C.

“PEACE MADE.”

“HE gave every evidence of having made up his peace with God.” Such were the words of one as she told me of a friend who had died but the day before.

Trusting indeed that he had accepted God’s salvation, and was reconciled to God by the death of His Son, I would turn to thee, dear reader, and ask thee as to the whereabouts of thy

“PEACE MADE.”

soul in relation to God—He who made thee, feeds thee, and clothes thee. Art thou still at war with Him who not only surrounds thee with many mercies every day, but who in His wondrous love gave up to the death His well-beloved Son that thereby thou mightest be reconciled and find thy home and rest in His own presence?

Having listened to the woman's tale of her departed friend, I said to her that Jesus had *made my peace* more than eighteen hundred years ago, and that if this important question had been left to me I never could have made up my peace to my own satisfaction, far less to God's who is holy and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

To tell a seeking soul that it's time he was making up his peace with God must surely plunge it into deeper darkness, and set it working for that peace which a simple trust in the finished work of Christ would eternally secure to it. Yet, alas! how common a question it is—“Have you made up your peace with God?” and this too in the light of accomplished redemption and a risen Saviour—the living proof that God is satisfied with the work which He gave His Son to do, so that now He can preach peace by Jesus Christ (Acts x. 36).

Perhaps, dear reader, you are anxious to find a resting-place for your soul amid the rough tossings of this present evil world, and in view of a long eternity which ere long you and I must enter; and may be you are one of those who are trying to live and act so that God, you trust, will at last have mercy on you. But, dear soul, dost thou

not know that all thine endeavours spring from a heart estranged from God, and prove that the “way of peace” is still unknown to thee (Rom. iii. 17). Still thou art really in earnest as one who has to meet God; then listen to the voice of Jesus speaking to thee, “Come unto me *all ye* that *labour* and are *heavy-laden*, and *I will give you rest*” (Matt. xi. 28); and again, “I am the *way*, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me” (Jno. xiv. 6). Surely these words are enough to make you cease your doings, seeing it is *only by Christ* that you can be saved and get that peace which your weary efforts would put further from you than ever. Not only has God provided but *one* way, *one* Saviour—and this none other than His dear Son—but He is now beseeching you to be reconciled through Him (2 Cor. v. 20), to lay down your arms whether of open rebellion or religious profession, and, while owning your deserts could only be the depths of hell for ever, to accept on God’s *own* terms the peace which His Son made “through the blood of His cross” (Col. i. 20), and which God is now preaching to you by Him (Acts x. 36), and which you now are responsible to receive or reject.

Shall I add to the work of Christ? Shall I slight that one eternal sacrifice for sin by any paltry doings of my own carnal mind, by trying to find my own way back to God, and to work out a peace which is but after all a device of the devil to keep me in his grasp? Nay, nay, dear anxious soul; cease all your doings; give Jesus *all the credit*, and God *all the praise* by

“PEACE MADE.”

accepting the salvation you could never earn, and receiving the pardon you could never deserve. Then shall you be able to sing—

“Peace with our holy God,
Peace from the fear of death,
Peace through our Saviour’s precious blood,
Sweet peace the fruit of faith.”

And as the Apostle Paul, by the Spirit, likewise says, “Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1). Dear soul, is this the language of thy heart, or art thou indifferent as to this all-important matter, deluded by a false peace and a treacherous security, because not Divine? Then let me plead with you to think of that day, fast approaching, when every false peace will be shattered, and you, if still Christless, shall be shut out from the presence of God for ever, and shall exchange for your dreams of safety the unceasing torments of an eternal hell, “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark ix. 44, 46); and, no longer careless, you shall know the realities of the “outer darkness” where there is “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. xxii. 13). On the other hand think of the realities of the cross of Christ; of what it cost Him to secure for those who believe this peace of which I speak!

Did not the sun refuse to shine upon Him, and had not Jehovah to hide His face from that spotless One when He once and for ever made an atonement for sins, and when He drank that bitter cup of unmixed wrath? And why? That the believing soul might have unmixed

HE IS COMING.

peace and the joys of His own presence for ever. Therefore, O reader, be wise in time; face these solemn facts; accept the judgment of God against yourself and your sins; see Christ in His own person bearing that judgment for you on Calvary's cross; behold Him now, seated at the right hand of God, past all the judgment. By faith identify yourself with Him, and rejoice that thou art seen by God *in Him*; yea, see Him there as *thy peace* (Ephes. ii. 14); and then may you live as one who has such a surety, as one "accepted in the Beloved," knowing that "heaven and earth shall pass away," yet God's Word, on which you rest, "shall not pass away," for "the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (Matt. xxiv. 35.—1 Pet. i. 25). T. E. P.

HE IS COMING.

He is coming, coming for us ;
Soon we'll see His light afar,
On the dark horizon rising,
As the Bright and Morning Star,
Cheering many a waking watcher,
As the star whose kindly ray
Heralds the approaching morning
Just before the break of day.
Oh ! what joy, as night hangs round us,
'Tis to think of morning's ray ;
Sweet to know He's coming for us,
Just before the break of day.

He is coming, coming for us ;
Soon we'll hear His voice on high ;
Dead and living, rising, changing,
In the twinkling of an eye

HE IS COMING.

Shall be caught up all together,
For the meeting in the air ;
With a shout the Lord, descending,
Shall Himself await us there.
Oh ! what joy that great foregathering,
Trysted meeting in the air ;
Sweet to know He's coming for us,
Calling us to join Him there.

He is coming—oh ! how solemn
When the Judge's voice is heard,
And in His own light He shows us
Every thought, and act, and word.
Deeds of merit as we thought them,
He will show us were but sin,
Little acts we had forgotten
He will tell us were for Him.
Oh ! what joy when He imputeth
Righteousness instead of sin ;
Sweet to take the linen garments,
All a gift, and all from Him.

He is coming as the Bridegroom,
Coming to unfold at last
The great secret of His purpose,
Mystery of ages past.
And the Bride, to her is granted
In His beauty now to shine,
As in rapture she exclaimeth,
“ I am His, and He is mine.”
Oh ! what joy that marriage union,
Mystery of love divine ;
Sweet to sing in all its fulness,
“ I am His, and He is mine.”

He is coming, coming with us ;
Armies follow in His train ;
On His head are crowns of glory,
For He cometh now to reign.
See Him clothed in bloody vesture,
On His thigh behold the words,
Written for a name of glory—
“ King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

ONLY ONE STEP.

Oh ! what joy to see His glory,
On our lips to take the words—
“ Glory be to Him who cometh,
King of kings, and Lord of lords.”
A. A. M.

ONLY ONE STEP.

“ ONLY one step and He would have been safe.” Such were the words which fell on my ear as my fellow-travellers pressed forward to the open window of the railway-carriage to inquire the cause of the delay. We were on the line between Limerick and Waterford. The train had been moving on as usual—its occupants quite unconscious that the same engine which was conveying them so safely and swiftly along was crushing out the life of a fellow-creature—till suddenly the train stopped, then slowly backed some distance. A man had been run over. It was strange—when first the guard perceived him he was standing on the rail in such a position that it would only have needed him to take a single step and he would have been out of the reach of danger. The driver naturally thought he would do so on the approach of the train, and when he perceived that the man remained motionless it was too late to stop the engine; the buffers of the engine knocked the unfortunate man under the wheels, where he was crushed to death. I saw him carried past the window a mangled bleeding corpse.

Various were the suppositions of my fellow-

ONLY ONE STEP.

travellers relative to the man's not stepping aside out of the way of danger—some thought he must have been blind, some concluded he was either deaf, or had become paralyzed with fear on seeing the approach of the train. But all agreed that if that *one* step had been taken his life would have been saved.

One step; think of it, dear reader. Has this true incident no voice for you? God's train of judgments are coming down upon this guilty earth. Are you off the track? Are you still in the place where the judgment will fall? Think of this in the light of eternity, sinful, careless ones. Now the God of all grace is ready to receive and pardon such as you. Take heed how you hear His message. He has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezi. xviii. 20). You have sinned, though, perhaps, the number of your sins is small in comparison with that of others. But a tree is known by its fruits, and one fruit on a tree is enough to determine its nature. So one sin alone marks you as a sinner, "And the wages of sin is death." Look back on the past years of your life—years of carelessness and disobedience, and, still worse, forgetfulness of God, and thank Him for the grace which still offers you salvation.

Now I want to ask you a simple question. Do you believe yourself to be what God says you are—a sinner under condemnation? If so, Jesus is the sinner's Saviour. Come to Him as you are, now—"This man receiveth sinners" (Luke xv. 2). But perhaps you think, I must fit myself to

ONLY ONE STEP.

come to Him, turn over a new leaf, and get my heart in a right state. Did you ever hear of a patient trying to make himself better before meeting the doctor? Oh, no. One goes to the doctor to get cured, and before he can prescribe the remedy he must be fully aware of the nature and progress of the disease; and when we poor sinners come to the Great Physician, to get cured of our sin-sickness, we must come as we are—sinners, lost and condemned, and accept Him (Jesus) as a whole Saviour.

But you say, Must I not repent? Oh, yes, indeed you must. Repentance means a change of mind—a change of mind towards God; and what a change it is when a sinner who has been thinking all his life long that God is his enemy—the One who wishes to send him to hell—finds out his mistake, learns that that One of whom he thought such hard bitter thoughts is the gracious loving God who gave his well-beloved Son to die for sinners, and is beseeching them to be reconciled (2 Cor. v. 21). Repentance is necessary as an evidence, but useless as a plea for salvation. Now just think! How is it with you? Do you belong to Christ or to the Devil? These are solemn days we are living in; there is a great deal of profession but very little reality. This world is under condemnation—God's train of judgments is coming down upon this guilty earth. Are you off the track?

You say, "Time enough yet, I'll wait till I get older. I will have my fling now." Take care, God is not mocked; in the church-yard lie the bodies of young men and women, as well

ONLY ONE STEP.

as of children, middle-aged, and old people. I ask you solemnly to think what are you selling your soul for? What shall it profit if you gain the whole world and lose your soul? Remember, you have but *one soul* to lose! Perhaps you will say—What must I do to be saved? The answer is the same for you as it was for the Philippian jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). The law says, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” God says, speaking through His servant Paul, “*All have sinned and come short*” (Rom. iii. 23). “But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then being now *justified* by His *blood*, we shall be *saved from wrath* through Him” (Rom. v. 8-9). Do you see it now? That precious blood blots out all your sins. You become a believer by accepting Jesus as your Saviour; the Lord Jesus says, “He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life” (John vi. 47). “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that *whosoever believeth* in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John iii. 14-15). Oh, think what it must have cost the Lord Jesus to die on Calvary; think of His love, and thank Him for the great salvation which He has purchased for poor sinners with His precious blood.

Before I leave off writing I would relate to you a little anecdote. It was in the vast prairies of America, through which a party were passing. Day after day they had pursued their journey quietly, little dreaming that e'er long

ONLY ONE STEP.

terror would blanch the face and make every heart in the company beat quick. One day one of the travellers pointed out to the guide a small lurid cloud which he had just perceived on the horizon. Well the Indian knows it—the prairies are on fire ! What is to be done ? Some think of taking refuge in flight, but a moment's consideration tells them that the flames would outstrip the swiftest Arab horse. But what is the Indian doing ? Already he has struck a match and set fire to the long grasses before him. With the rapidity of lightning the wind sweeps the flames onward, leaving behind the charred blackened ground where a few moments before the graceful prairie-grass swayed in the breeze. On this ground the party quickly take their stand. On comes the fire from behind, on to the edge of the blackened ground, and there it stops—Why ? The fire has been there before and done its work, and the travellers stand secure, while on every side the fire rages. Sinner, there is a place of security for you—eighteen hundred years ago “the Lord laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all” (Isa. liii. 6). All the billows of God’s wrath swept over the head of His holy spotless Son as He hung on Calvary’s cross in the place of the guilty. Now do you see why I told you the anecdote of the prairie-fire ? There was safety for the travellers in the spot where fire had been ; and, dear fellow sinner, there is a place of safety for us at the feet of Jesus. Oh, will you not take your place there ? Can you turn away from the loving Lord ? Think of it : a little restless pleasure now—then Hell

“MADE.”

for eternity ! Look at the other side—peace, rest for the present, a loving Father's hand guiding, and Heaven for eternity. Which will you choose? May the Lord break down your proud heart and lead you to Himself. S. E. C.

“MADE.”

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” In reading the account of what the Lord here refers to, which you will find in the 21st chapter of the book of Numbers, one word arrested the deep attention of my soul, and I pray God may not only arrest your precious soul, unsaved one, but also detain it. Well, let us look for a moment at the picture; truly it is a dark scene that meets our eye. The people had sinned—spoken against God, and against Moses, His servant; and not only that, but what was the crowning sin of all—they had “*loathed*” and called “*light*” the provision which God gave from heaven to meet their need; and this reminds me of a solemn passage in the New Testament, where God sent a message of invitation, and “they made *light* of it, and went their ways.” Ah ! dear soul, are you going *your* way, the end of which is eternal judgment, and making *light* of Christ (God's way), which the manna sent down from heaven set forth ? Oh ! then, that like Israel you may turn to the Lord

“MADE.”

and say, “I have sinned”—this is true repentance—judging self, and thereby justifying God’s word—this was their confession.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses *made* a serpent of brass.” This is the word that was brought with such power in the Holy Ghost to my heart—it was all over with the people; they had sinned, and the wages of sin—*death*—was the due of each; God’s just sentence was being executed: “much people of Israel died.” Think of the scene—the serpent-bitten ones dying, or dead; they could do nothing that would avail them aught before God; they were utterly lost and ruined by sin, and so far as they were concerned, their case was hopeless;—the blackness of darkness had closed in all around them, and shut them up to the terrible fact that death was passed upon all, for all had sinned. I have said that all hope in themselves was gone, all question as to themselves was over; they were, if I may use such an expression for the sake of plainness, *done for*: whether they realized it or not, the fact was the same; their unbelief could in no wise alter the truth of God’s word.

And now I think I hear each anxious heart inquire, What hath the Lord spoken? and see each strained eye eagerly turned upon the despised Moses to see what he will do (we have read what the Lord commanded). “And Moses *made* a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole,

“MADE.”

and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” Do you see? What Moses *made* (in obedience to the command of God) was the object for faith to gaze upon, and the instant a bitten Israelite gave heed to the word “Look!” he lived. What Moses *made* alone met the deep need of those bitten ones; to look at themselves was speedy death; to look at what Moses *made* was instant life; and the one who turned from the contemplation of himself and gazed upon the lifted up serpent had faith in God’s word (that is, he believed what God had said), the effect of which is *salvation*.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath *made* Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be *made* the righteousness of God in Him.” Here is the reality of that which has been before our hearts; God has *made* Christ who knew no sin, to be sin for us. Do you not see that just as what Moses *made* suited the case of the bitten Israelites, so what God has *made* Christ to be suits your case, unsaved sinner? It is no longer a question of anything you can do, but of what God has *made* Christ to be. We read of Him, “Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but *made* Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was *made* in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore

“MADE.”

God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

It was on the cross that He was *made* sin—no one but Himself and God know the full meaning of that ; but it is enough for the sinner that believes in Him to know that God *made* Christ to be sin there, and that all His righteous claims have been fully met and satisfied, seeing God hath raised Him up from among the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in glory, saying, “Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” At the name of Jesus (the One who is despised and rejected of men) every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Oh, sinner ! will you not bow your heart to Him *now*, and with your mouth confess that He is *your* Saviour, *your* Lord ? Do not, I beseech you, wait until that day when all *must* bow, enemies as well as friends, but *now*—while it is still the day of salvation and you *may* bow—come ! and fall down before Him just as you are. He said when upon earth, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all to Me.” Oh ! that the attractions of His glorious Person, and the perfections of His finished work, may now *draw* you to Himself, that of you, as of the blind man of old, it may be said, “And immediately he received his sight,

THE THREE STEPS.

and followed Him, glorifying God : and all the people when they saw it gave praise to God." Then you will be able to say, " He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

" So near, so very near to God,
I cannot nearer be ;
For in the Person of His Son
I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be ;
The love wherewith He loves His Son,
Such is His love to me."

R. B.

THE THREE STEPS.

AN old lady once said that there were only three steps to get into heaven. On being asked what those steps were, she replied—1st, out of self; 2nd, into Christ; 3rd, into glory. This is exceedingly simple, true, and blessed. They are just the three steps that faith takes to reach heaven.

First we see the worthlessness of self and its belongings, and the sinfulness of all that flows from it we become fully convinced that salvation is not from that quarter whatever—we cease to trust in self, or anything that it can perform. Moreover we learn that we are so utterly bad that nothing but the death of God's Son will do for God, or meet our need as sinners, and that He was actually delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. By simple

faith we receive Him as a Saviour—we have done with trusting self, and trust Him alone; we cease to trust in our doings, and rest in Christ's eternal done. In fact, as the old lady said, we step out of self into Christ.

“But now IN Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Ep. ii. 13). And what a blessed step this is for an anxious soul to take that has been tossing about, and groaning under the heavy load of sin for many a year. How blessed it is for such a one to have done with wretched unmendable self and trust wholly to Christ—to step out of self into Christ, and know salvation by God's free grace. Many are trying to mend self. Oh, they say, if I could only become good I should be all right. This is a fatal mistake. How can we make good that which God has condemned? Self with all its belongings has been condemned in the cross of Christ. God never intends to mend it: He has set it aside. “Ye must be born again” (or from above) is the word of the Lord, and it cannot be revoked. It is not bettering self—the old nature, but the reception of a new, a Divine nature. Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ one gets deliverance from self, and eternal life in the Son of God. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (1 John v. 11).

And having stepped out of self into Christ, we wait to take the next step when the Lord comes for His people, that is, to step into the glory of God. To wait for God's Son from

THE THREE STEPS.

neaven is to bo delivorod from tho wrath to como. (1 Thess. i. 10.) "For the Lord Himsolf shall descend from heaven with a shout, with tho voico of tho arohangel, and with tho trump of God: and tho dead in Christ shall riso first: then wo 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). What a scene is presented to us in the foregoing passage! How transcendently glorious! Not a single mention of judgment—no thought of it: but caught up to meet the descending Lord in the air—to be taken away to the Father's house—yea, to be for ever with the Lord.

Reader, this is the old lady's third step—into glory. Would you take that glorious step if the Lord were to come now as you read this paper? I demand of you, would *you* rise with the blood-washed company to meet the Lord in the air—to be for ever with Him, if He were to descend with a shout now, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God? Do not tell me you hope so: either you are ready to mount up to meet him, or you are not. You are either in your sins, or you are not—they are either charged to you, or they are all forgiven and washed away in the Saviour's blood. To be left behind is to be a subject with which the judicial hand of God will deal; and at the revelation of Jesus Christ 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, you, with

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

the other rejectors of God's grace, will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. (2 Thess. i. 7-9.) I would entreat you, if you would escape the terrible frown and vengeance of that descending Judge—the flaming fire—the everlasting destruction—flee to Jesus repair to Him at once in all your sins; own to Him that you are a poor lost sheep, and He will receive you. For the Good Shepherd laid down His life for the sheep.—“The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” Then thou shalt know the meaning of the three steps—out of self, into Christ, into glory. “The Lord is at hand” (Phil. iv. 5). “Believe and live.”

E. A.

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

Not long since I was asked to visit a young girl, about seventeen years of age, who had injured herself, and was thought to be dying. I had known her for some time, and was aware she was very delicate, but on calling learned she had fallen out of bed, and received an injury to the back of her head, which would eventually prove fatal it was judged. Being under the care of another surgeon, I had nothing to do with her treatment, so after making a few inquiries as to her bodily suffering, which was great (specially when moved by others, for she was almost completely paralysed), I began to speak to her about the state of her soul.

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

“Are you quite happy ?” I said.

“No, sir.”

“Why? Are you not saved ?”

“I am not sure.”

“But why are you not sure; do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ ?”

“Yes, but I don’t *feel* saved.”

“Do you feel *lost*? ”

“Yes I do ;” and she now began to weep.

“Why do you know you are lost ?”

“Because I am a sinner, and God’s Word says so.”

“Then you believe His Word, do you ?”

“Oh! Yes, sir, indeed I do.”

“Well, then, His Word says, ‘Look unto Me, and be ye saved ;’ do you believe that ?”

“Yes.”

“But are you looking to Jesus ?”

“Yes, sir, but I don’t *feel* as I should like to.”

“Granted; but does it say, ‘Look unto Me and *feel* saved ?’”

“No.”

“What then ?”

“Be ye saved.”

“What?”

“Be ye saved.”

“When is that, to-day or to-morrow ?”

“When I look.”

“But are you looking ?”

“Yes, I am really looking to Jesus.”

“Then are you saved ?” She paused a moment and then firmly replied,

“I don’t *feel* it, but God says I am saved. I

“GOD SAYS : AM SAVED.”

see it now.” The next momont her eye lit up, and her pallid face told the tale of a new spring of joy having been opened to her.

“Well,” I said, “if any one were to come in and ask you now if you were saved, what would you say ?”

“I would say ‘Yes.’”

“And if they asked you how you knew it and were sure of it, what would you say ?”

“I would say that I do believe in Jesus, and God says in His Word, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but *have* everlasting life; and though I don’t *feel* it, I do believe what God says.”

“Then you rest your soul on Jesus and on God’s Word ?”

“Yes, sir, I do ; and I could die happy now. I’d like to go at once to Jesus.”

“You have no fears ?”

“No, none.”

“No doubts ?”

“No ; why should I ? I see it all clearly. I’m only a poor sinner—and *Jesus died for me*—and *I believe in Him*—and *God says I’m saved*—and *so I know I am*.”

I had a little more conversation, and called two days after to find her truly filled with joy and peace in believing. Her face shone with the joy the knowledge of God alone can impart. Leaving town for a few weeks, I found, on my return, that she had lingered about a month, giving a constant bright testimony of Christ to all about her, and, full of quiet, calm rest and joy in Christ until the end, had at length passed to be for ever with Him.

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

And now, dear reader, a word with you about the state of *your* soul. Are you *saved*—or *lost*? Which? Don't shirk the question. It must be answered soon. The longest life has its end. Who has given you a lease of long life? A long eternity you shall have. Where will you spend it? Another day may find you in it. Gone for ever from earth, where Christ died, “suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Gone where? With Christ? Or without Him? Would it be without Him? You tremble to say “Yes.” Stop—listen. Your future is awful. *Forgotten* by man—*forsaken* by God—for ever in hell. Oh! pause a moment in your downward course. List the voice of love speaking to *you*—speaking from heaven—“Come unto Me”—“Look unto Me”—“I am Jesus.”—“By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”

You have naught to do but take your true place as a *lost* sinner *now* before God. Acknowledge *your sin*. Justify Him—He'll justify you. It is all summed up in the sweet confession of the dying girl. May you this day be able to say like her, “*I'm only a poor sinner—Jesus died for me—I believe in Him—God says I am saved and so I know I am.*”

“Rise, my soul ! behold 'tis Jesus,
Jesus fills my wondering eyes ;
See Him now, in glory seated,
Where thy sins no more can rise.”

W. T. P. W.



THE POWER OF GRACE.

“I NEVER felt so powerless as to-day,” said an earnest evangelist, as he entered the garret of an aged saint, with whom some of us were wont to mingle our prayers that God would strengthen us for His service, and that He, who alone can quicken the dead, would grant the salvation of some for whose blessing we yearned. “The word fell like water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again,” continued he “I can only liken that poor woman to the man with the unclean spirit who had his dwelling amongst the tombs, and no man could bind him, no not with chains. She cries in the bitterness of her spirit—the sharp arrows of conviction pierce her soul—and the devil provokes her to blaspheme the God who made her: Satan seems to command her thoughts. Nothing I could say touched her.”

“Oh! my brother,” said the old woman, who sat propped up by pillows in her large arm-chair by the fireside, “no *mere* man could tame the demoniac, but the Lord of heaven did, the blessed Jesus, our Master, and we will lay this poor soul at His feet. Let us have faith *in God*, who in a moment can say, ‘Peace, be still,’ to the storm that rages in her bosom.”

She lifted her voice in prayer. Her manner was remarkable, and her language most quaint. She spoke as to One she well knew, asking Him to do the work for which His servant was powerless.

THE POWER OF GRACE.

In earlier days this old woman had herself been active in Gospel work, and the Lord had given her many souls; but now she was called aside to learn deep lessons in the school of affliction. She had been a handsome woman, but little trace of it remained. Through inflammation one eye was quite closed, and both had to be shaded from the light of day. Rheumatism nailed her to the chair, to which in the morning she was with difficulty removed from her little bed in the corner of the room. This was all the exertion which she who had once been so active could now make; but not a murmur escaped her lips, and her spirit breathed His praise who chastened that she might be partaker of His holiness. Lovely specimen of a holy priest! Like David, she could say, "My praise shall be continually of Thee."

One day I said to her, "Would you not like to go about, and speak of Jesus, as you used to do?" "No, my dear," she quickly replied; "if He needed that of me now He would give me the strength for it—holy and blessed be His name. I can pray in my corner here and that's my service. To love His will is the joy of my soul." Her words rebuked the less restful spirit in me, and I thanked the Lord for lessons learned through this lowly saint, who had drunk so sweetly in His spirit, and in whom shone so brightly the virtues of Christ.

We spent some part of the afternoon, on which my story opens, in prayer; then I got the name and address of the woman, for whom we had praycd together, purposing soon to see her.

THE POWER OF GRACE.

A week later I again visited my old friend in the attic-room, and on entering she inquired with eagerness, "Well, what of that poor soul? The Lord has laid her heavily on my heart, I have been night and day in prayer about her, and I believe He will use you in blessing to her."

My heart smote me. Alas! the case had passed from my mind: other interests had engaged me, and I had not been to see her. I told the truth to our aged sister, who was much disappointed at my little zeal for souls, but added, "Now we will again together plead for that troubled one, with Him who is full of love and compassion, and you will go direct to her house, as from the sanctuary of His presence, which, bless His name, we have often known in this little room." We prayed, and both felt we had the thing we had asked of the Lord (Mark xi. 24). In expectation of blessing I proceeded to the house of Mrs. R. and found her at home.

I explained my errand, telling her I knew the blessedness of having God as my Father, that I had no fear I should ever meet Him as a judge, and that I desired she should have this comfort also.

"Oh!" she said, "you need not speak to me like that; I am lost—I wish I had never been born, I have such awful thoughts of God. I would not dare to tell them to you, and sometimes I *almost* believe there is no God! But," she added with a sigh, "I would be happier if I could always believe that. Something warns me there is a God, and that He is sending me to hell."

THE POWER OF GRACE.

“Poor soul!” I replied, “conscience, that witness which God has set in every bosom, speaks true when it warns you that there is a God, and keeps you from quietly yielding to the deluding suggestions of the ‘Father of lies.’ You know there is a God, and that He is holy: your conscience convicts you that you are unholy, and unfit for His presence; and the question you must have answered before you can find rest is, ‘How can I be just with God?’ It is my joy to-day to be able to tell you, God has solved this great difficulty: He has found a ransom, and the way is open for *you* to be in the presence of the holy God in perfect peace.”

God; whom Satan makes you *think* so badly of, *loves you*, even now, when you are without any strength to love Him. Though you be ungodly, His enemy—as all those thoughts now raging in your bosom prove you to be—though you be but a poor sinner—in the past He so loved you as to give His only Son, who eternally dwelt in His bosom, to die a shameful death, that you might never go to hell. This is the God you tell me is *sending you* to hell. Now the devil succeeds in making you wrong Him! Jesus went into the dust of death that God might have sinners, such as you, brought into the sweet relationship of children, on whom He could lavish the riches of His grace. God does not send you to hell, and if you go there it must be past the open door of Heaven, laden with the guilt of having spurned God’s love, and refused the salvation He now so freely offers you. To-day He would make you His child, and a co-heir with Christ

THE POWER OF GRACE.

of all the glory of Heaven. Do you prefer to be the captive of Satan?"

"Oh! no," she eagerly replied "but how can I know all you tell me is true?"

"I have the authority of God's Word for all I say, and that Word will, I believe, carry home conviction with it; for I trust God will use it as the sword of the Spirit, to put to flight all the fiery darts Satan is aiming at your soul. Hell was not made for *man*, but for the devil and his angels, and it is he who is now seeking to drag you to his dark domain. Yet it is true, if you will not listen to God's gracious message of salvation, there is no place for you but hell. It would be misery for you to be in Heaven if you did not know Christ, for He will be the great, the engrossing, object of joy there. I have come to-day to seek to win your heart for that Blessed One, by telling you of His great love. It is said of human affection that 'love begets love,' and this may sometimes prove true, but to-day I am confident the tale of Divine love will win your heart for Christ. You have been much prayed for by one who is no stranger to the prayer-hearing, and prayer-answering God. Children of God also have met together to ask for your salvation, counting on the promise, 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven;' and I came straight to your house from the room of an aged saint, who prayed with me on your behalf, and who sent me to you in faith that you are to-day to break company with Satan, and through grace

THE POWER OF GRACE.

delivered from his cruel bondage. ‘If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.’”

“Oh!” said she “I would be thankful if I could get rid of those awful thoughts, but I cannot,” and she burst into a fit of wild grief.

“Dear distracted one,” I rejoined, “you are sorely driven of Satan, the great enemy of Christ and of your soul, but his victor, the Lord Jesus Christ, now in the glory of God, has His eye upon you,—and well does Satan know it, else this tempest would not now be raging in your bosom. He keeps his goods in peace, till the stronger than he comes to snatch his victims from his deadly grasp. I am come to you with a message of love from the Living God, who can say to Satan, ‘Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther.’ His message to you is, ‘Thou hast destroyed thyself, but *in Me* is thine help.’ ‘Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.’ ‘God commendeth His love towards us,’ such is the gracious attitude He has taken towards the sinner, ‘in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.’ These are the words God gave me for you. Oh! think of it, He is the *giving* God. He gave His Son, and He will give you salvation if you will receive it. Dear Mrs. R., the day hastens when we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and knowing the terror of that moment for the unsaved, I would persuade you to take the position which these lines express—

‘ I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,

THE POWER OF GRACE.

I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.' "

"Could God have mercy on one so bad as I am?" she slowly inquired. "My whole thoughts are wicked, and my actions have been little better. I am utterly vile; I could not be worse; I loathe myself. What a profitless life mine has been!" Some time she continued in this strain of self-condemnation. I did not interrupt her, knowing what a relief it would be for the anguish of her soul to find vent; and my heart rejoiced as I marked the deep repentance which, unknown to herself, God was working in her. Naturally we think well of ourselves, and are self-excusers, but when the Holy Ghost convinces us of sin we become self-accusers.

When she was silent, I said, "I am so glad this is the estimate you have formed of yourself." She looked aghast. "Very glad indeed," I added, "and I am going to read some verses from the Word of God, which show it is only such as you God *can* save." She sunk into a chair by my side as I opened the Scriptures and read from Rom. iii., beginning at the 10th verse and ending at the 19th. I commented on each verse as we went through them, and inquired if she would not plead guilty to what it said. When I had finished I said, "Now, Mrs. R., that was a good picture of me before God in His mercy saved my soul, and do you not think it will do for you?"

"Oh! Yes," was her reply, "that's just what I am—guilty before God."

"Then your mouth is shut, and you have nothing to say for yourself?"

“Nothing! oh, nothing!” she emphatically answered.

“Well, I do rejoice, for now you and God are at one about your state of soul, and this is the first step towards salvation. In order to be saved there are two things the sinner must believe, and only two. I must believe what God says about myself, and what He tells me of Christ the Saviour. You have added your Amen to the first, for you have bowed to God’s verdict on you as a lost sinner. You believe you stand condemned before Him, and now it only remains for me to unfold the record which God has given us of His Son, and on this your faith will find a resting-place. When God, by His Spirit, begins to deal with a soul, His first great object is to get the individual, in his own estimation, right down amongst the company of sinners; for Christ came ‘not to call the righteous, but *sinners*,’ those who own there is nothing in or about them that God can commend. Before Him ‘there is none righteous, no, not one.’ ‘There is not a just man on the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not;’ but everlasting praise be unto Him who died, ‘the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.’”

With joy I watched the Spirit’s work in Mrs. R. She had fully owned her unworthiness, and unto such “the righteousness of God” is addressed. It is “unto all, and upon all them that believe.” How free! Unto all! God is rich in grace, and He calls the sinner to receive His bounty—a full and free salvation! None need perish if they will only *receive* the glad tidings,

THE POWER OF GRACE.

and accept the salvation God brings. I called Mrs. R.'s attention to the Scripture in Titus ii. 11, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation," asking her to mark the expression *bringeth*, and told her she did not need to ask or pray for it. Jesus died on the cross and bore the full judgment of sin, so that God can now *offer* salvation, adding, "He offers it to you to-day, if you will simply believe what He says."

We turned to 1 Pet. ii. 21—24, and read of the Saviour as there detailed, and then I said, "In your stead Christ was on Calvary's tree; there He underwent the judgment of sin—the thing so hateful to God that when His beloved Son was *made* sin, though it was not His own, God had to hide His face, even from Him, for He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and then Jesus cried, in the bitterness of His soul, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' Dear Mrs. R., I can answer His question; God forsook that Blessed One then, that I, that you, if you will simply trust His Word, might for ever bask in the sunshine of the Father's love.

' Oh, ye, who sit in darkness
 Ever mourning for your sin,
Open the window of your soul
 Let the warm sunshine in;
Every ray was purchased for you
 By the matchless love of One
Who suffered in the shadow
 That you might see the sun !'

"You see the sinner has nothing to do, and he must not try to do anything. 'It is to him that *worketh not*, but believeth' (Rom. iv. 4). Every-

THE POWER OF GRACE.

thing was done by Christ on the cross. He cried, 'It is finished,' and you have simply to rest on that fact. How wondrous His grace! He beseeches you to be reconciled,—you who have been so alienated from Him, filled with such thoughts that you said you would not dare to tell them to me. He has seen them all, for He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, and yet He pleads with you to forget them, and be reconciled to Him!"

Whilst I spoke, she listened with increasing interest as each new phase of the heart and ways of our Saviour God passed before her. At last she said, "Do you mean to tell me, it will be all my own fault if I am not saved now?"

"Yes, indeed," I replied; "it will be your fault; nay more, your guilt. You cannot blame God; for in love He lingers over you; but if you refuse the grace He offers you must land in hell, and the direst woe of that scene will be the thought, I have none to blame but myself. Then you will brood on the fact, as one once said, that God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. These words will be no glad tidings then, but the knell of your eternal condemnation. Conscience will not forget this great truth, and it will ever taunt you with it when your doom is sealed, and you are where the worm of remorse never dies, and the fire of God's righteous judgment never goes out. Ah, Mrs. R., let God have His way to-day, for it is bound up with your blessing, and I know you wish to be happy. Tell me have

THE POWER OF GRACE.

you been so whilst you let the devil rule your heart?"

"No, indeed," she answered; "and I do desire to be happy."

"And God desires it," I added; "and you must turn your back on His loving entreaties if you go to bed to-night without peace—eternal peace, filling your soul." I spoke a little more of Him, who is altogether lovely, fairer than the sons of men, "Heaven's beloved One," and, ere she knew it, Mrs. R. was sitting at "the feet of Jesus," "with open face beholding the glory of the Lord." The burden of her sins *had* gone. Her eye brightened, and a calm, restful expression took the place of anxious fears. I uttered His words, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace." She smiled! It was the glad response of a heart that rested in the deep love of the bosom of Jesus. She knew now that heart was hers. What a treasure! And she too was His treasure; "redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Satan had lost his prize, and she, whom he had so governed, sat clothed and in her right mind at Jesus' feet.

It was a moment of great joy in a quiet out-of-the-way cottage, down an obscure lane, in the city of A—, joy in unison with that which pealed through the courts of Heaven, in the presence of the Angels of God over a sinner who had repented—one, whom the Shepherd had brought home to God, on His shoulder, rejoicing. God truly had share in that, which, for some hours that afternoon, had engrossed two souls on earth.

THE POWER OF GRACE.

We bowed the knee together—the new-born child lisped her first note of praise to her Redeemer God—her Father. “What hath God wrought,” was the thought of both our hearts. We were as the dust before Him, but He claimed us as His portion, and we rejoiced together in His love. We felt, that He who had given Himself for us, a sacrifice even unto *death*, deserved that we should present our bodies, a living sacrifice to Him, as the Holy Ghost in Rom. xii. 1 beseeches. We asked Him to keep us for Himself.

The shades of evening were closing in, warning me I should be looked for in my own home, and that I must leave her, to whom my soul was knit in the love of God; but I desired to drop a word as to the confession of Christ, which God looks for from the One He *has saved*.

I repeated the words of Rom. x. 9, and charged Mrs. R. at once to tell her husband, when he returned from his daily labour, of God’s goodness to her.

“You do not need to tell me that,” was her reply; “I am only too thankful to have such good news to give him. I must speak of it, I am so happy.” Sweet testimony to the place Christ had gotten for Himself in the affections of her heart! “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

“The fowler’s snare is broken
And loosed my captive wing,
And shall the bird be silent
Which Thou has taught to sing ?”

I bade her adieu, but she lingered on the doorstep, as I passed through the cottage garden.

THE POWER OF GRACE.

Her expression told me there was something yet she desired to ask of me. I returned, and laying my hand on her shoulder, said, "You are very happy, dear Mrs. R., are you not?"

"Oh, very," was her reply; "but what should I do, if I ever had another bad thought of Him; it would be so much more awful now that I know He so loves me?" How blessed to see, that as her soul deepened in the sense of God's love to her, so did the exceeding hatefulness of sin! Manifestly repentance is a progressive work in the soul that is brought to God, and the thoughts of the heart grow in union with His mind!

I told her she now belonged to Christ, and that "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him." He had given her eternal life, and would preserve her from every snare in the way, till she was safely landed in the glory of God. "Look steadfastly on Jesus, as you see Stephen doing in Acts vii.," I said, "and thus run the race, which, through grace, you have to-day begun. Tell Him *all* that is in your heart: things you could tell to no one else you will learn *His* ear is bent to hear. Every care He will delight to relieve you of, every duty He will strengthen you for, and the love of His heart will prove your unfailing stay. Keep so near to Him that He may hear your feeblest whisper, and like John, whose resting place was on the Saviour's bosom, you will catch the words that fall from His lips, which those at a distance may not. Satan will try to disturb your peace, but do not listen to him. Tell every evil thought to Jesus, and He will give you grace not to harbour

THE POWER OF GRACE.

“ ‘Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin,’ is the attitude of soul God would have the believer ever to maintain. There never would be the sins of word or deed if wrong thoughts were not cherished; they are the darts of the Evil one, and the shield of faith can alone defend you from them. May you, dear Mrs. R., have it ever ready, and God will prove to you the truth of that word, ‘Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.’ Satan is a conquered foe to the feeblest saint, who has faith in the blessed victor, our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It was due to my old friend in the attic that she should share in the joy of Mrs. R.’s conversion. When I lifted the latch of her door the voice of prayer again fell upon my ear. It was the evangelist who had told us of Mrs. R.’s misery of soul. My entrance did not disturb him, I also knelt in prayer, rejoiced to unite with those whose hearts were glad with the joy of His presence, “and who drank of the river of His pleasures.” When he paused, I said, “Now give thanks to the Lord, Mrs. R. is one of the ransomed band; God in grace has fully met the need of her soul, and she rests simply in the fact that He loves *her*, and gave His Son to die for *her*.” Joy filled each heart, and our combined praise gave Him the glory, who had again proved Himself the prayer-hearing and prayer-unswerving God.

How sweet such fellowship in soul-gathering. Would that the children of God knew more of it. What fragrant incense to Him who is the Lord of the harvest, who cheers each labourer

THE POWER OF GRACE.

going forth to serve, with the word, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." In this instance how fully we proved that One, the Great Sower, had to make the good seed of the word take root, whilst in richest grace He permitted us, whom He deigns to call His fellows, to enter into His labours; and now as joyful reapers we sent up our song of praise, in unison with that which was sounding in the presence of the heavenly host.

Often, after this, it was my joy and privilege to visit Mrs. R. Satan did his best to shake her confidence in God, but she proved the power of faith, and learned its patience. She fed on the Word of God, as a new-born babe, desiring its sincere milk. She waited upon the Lord in prayer, and thus renewed her strength, remembering the words, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. xxx. 15). "Like a tree planted by the waters" her soul prospered, and like Andrew of old, having found Christ, she sought to bring others to Him (John i. 41). One day she joyfully told me her husband was anxious about his soul, and begged I would go to see him the following Lord's day afternoon. He had listened to the tale of his wife's conversion, but that would have had little effect had he not marked a wonderful change in her life. The daily walk is louder testimony than that which falls from the lip. The confession of the mouth should not be absent, but it is worthless unless thrown into relief by the telling background of

THE POWER OF GRACE.

a spirit subject to the Lord in the little details of every-day life. To accept the sentence of death on the flesh and its workings, and to manifest the spirit of Christ is that to which we are called.

Does this meet the eye of some child of God, unequally yoked with an unbelieving husband? Has he wearied of hearing you speak of Christ? and is your spirit tried, because of enforced silence on the subject of all others most dear to you? Let the words of the Apostle Peter encourage you, "Wives be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they may *without the word* be won by the conversation (the walk) of the wives."

Thomas R. was not one of this class. He loved his wife and listened to her earnest entreaties that he would accept salvation. Through her words he saw he was lost, he sought the Saviour, and, through grace, when I met with him on the appointed Lord's day afternoon, he learned that the Saviour sought him, for the Son of Man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost. The seeking sinner and the loving Saviour met, and Thomas R. rejoiced that *all his sins* were put away through the finished work of Christ.

Husband and wife were henceforth one in Christ, and daily they gathered their little ones around them, when the Word of God was read, and prayer ascended to Him who alone is able to keep us from falling, and who will one day present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Thomas R. and his wife are now well known

“DECIDE FOR CHRIST NOW.”

to many of God's children, and my heart has often thrilled with joy when told of the simplicity of their trust in Christ, and manifest desire to know and do the will of God.

Has this tale of God's gracious dealing with a soul whom Satan so sorely tried met the eye of one who is vexed by infidel thoughts? May it arouse you to see all such thoughts are suggested by the Father of Lies, who seeks to keep God from having you as His child, and you from knowing the joys which belong to that rest of love which God now offers you as *your* soul's abiding portion. Let me entreat you no longer to give quarter to those arrows from Satan's quiver, but let God's loving gracious words find an entrance into your heart. Believe in His love, who shrank not from death that life eternal might *now* be yours, with all those blessings so real to the one who walks by faith *with* God, and who waits to share with Christ the never-ending glories of God's eternal day.

R.

“DECIDE FOR CHRIST NOW.”

“*Will you decide now?*” was the question I put to an elderly man; but no answer followed. His head was bowed in thought. I waited, and still waited, but no reply came.

“*When will you decide?*” was my next interrogation, but yet no response.

“*Will you decide twenty years hence?*” Twenty years; twenty years, and the man already old!

“DECIDE FOR CHRIST NOW.”

“No,” said he; “it is not likely that I shall live twenty years!”

“Then will you decide ten years hence?”

“No,” said he; “I dare not put it off ten years?”

“Then will you decide five years hence?”

“No,” he replied; “I dare not delay for five years!”

“Then will you decide this time next year?”

“No,” said he; “I might die before next year.”

“Then will you decide this day next month?

His answer was delayed.

It may be that the devil suggested that four weeks would soon roll round and that he might safely wait that length of time; but at last after mature consideration, he said—

“No, I should not wait a month.”

“Then will you decide this day next week?”

Again he said “No.”

“Then will you decide this time to-morrow?”

To-morrow, so near at hand! To-morrow, only a few hours away! To-morrow! “No,” said the old man, “I ought to decide now!”

Why now? Age, wisdom, conscience, time, eternity, Scripture furnish the reason why. Their combined and unanimous, their long and loud and only cry is now, now, NOW!!

Undecided reader, say when shall it be? *When?* It may be NOW OR NEVER. God places a period before you. He says, “Now is the day of Salvation”—nay more, He says, “Now is the accepted time.” *Decide for Christ now.*

J. W. S.

SOUL BREATHINGS.

Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour,
My heart belongs to Thee,
Thou hast from sin relieved me,
From bondage set me free.
At home with Thee for ever
I'll fully know Thy love,
And gaze upon Thy beauty,
Light of the courts above.

But what can e'er transcend, Lord,
The glory of Thy grace,
Shown in humiliation
When Thou did'st take our place ;
When on the cursed tree, Lord,
The judgment due to sin,
Jehovah's ire and passion,
Consumed Thy soul within ?

The burning drought of judgment,
The fearfulness of thirst,
The portion of the sinner,
The chain he ne'er could burst ;
Thou did'st accept it all Lord,
In pity and in love,
That we might drink the river
Of God's delight above.

The thoughtless, haughty rich man,
Careless of God Most High,
Woke up to find it written,
" The soul that sins shall die !"
Fulfilled in thirsty torments,
God's sentence against sin ;
The gates of hopeless darkness
He finds himself within.

Lest Scripture should be broken
Thou, too, did'st say, " I thirst ;"
The spring of joy from Heaven
Thou must be riven first ;

“DON’T BOTHER ME.”

The stream of grace and blessing,
The love that brought Thee here,
Could find no other outlet
Than by the soldier’s spear.

O, Lord, how much I owe Thee
I could not even say !
’Tis past all computation—
The debt I ne’er can pay.
I would not if I could, Lord,
For then I should be free,
But love that paid my ransom
Has made a slave of me.

Make me to serve Thee better
The “little while” I’m here :
Be Thy felt presence, Saviour,
My comfort and my cheer ;
That while I journey homeward,
This thought may be my guide,
I go to dwell for ever
Close by Thy holy side.

C.

“DON’T BOTHER ME.”

It will seem almost incredible that the above words, strictly and literally as they stand, should have been uttered by a soul, a young woman, knowing that her little span of life was all but over, and that she was about to enter eternity ; but it is a solemn and terrible fact that they were so uttered, and under such circumstances ; spoken, too, in reply to the warning of a nurse in the hospital where she was dying, who told her that the end was near, and asked her a question about her poor perishing soul. “Don’t bother me” was the only answer she got, and two hours later

“DON’T BOTHER ME.”

that soul passed into eternity—the words in which she rejected the grace of God and the message of His love being almost, if not quite, the last that passed her lips. And what makes it more solemn is that some weeks before, when there was still a hope of recovery if the operation it was necessary she should undergo should be successful, she seemed to listen to one who then spoke to her about her soul, and to be, apparently at least, anxious as to her state. But, oh, fatal mistake! she *put it off* in the hope she might recover, or that at least she might have time at the last to repent; and when the time came, that heart which had trifled with the message of grace was hardened against it, and in three little words she rejected it for ever, and hopeless and helpless she passed away—not to “Depart and be with Christ which is far better,” but to wait with those “dead, small and great” who “stand before God,” and whose names are “not written in the Book of Life,” and who are “cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. xx. 12-15).

Is it not wonderful that there are people, and how many too, who believe, or profess to believe, that they have immortal souls—souls that will live throughout the countless ages of eternity, either in endless bliss or endless torment, either *in* the presence of God, or *out* of it; and who yet persist in *putting off* that great question in comparison with which every other question is nothing? It was but yesterday I was speaking to one who, in reply to my remarks, said he did his best to keep the law, and when obliged to admit, which he did freely, that he constantly

“DON’T BOTHER ME.”

broke it, added that there was. “hope to the last;” and even pointed to that wondrous instance of the grace of God, the poor thief upon the cross, to confirm his statement. How many there are who do the same, thus using this most blessed story of God’s super-abounding grace to go on with the world which crucified His Son, and enjoy its so-called pleasures to the last. But they forget, wilfully forget, that there were *two* thieves dying there, and that the one who perished everlastinglly was as near to the Saviour he rejected, as the one who looked and lived.

Let me ask you, dear reader, earnestly and affectionately : Are you trifling with that great question, the question of eternity, as if you were going to live as long as *you* pleased, and then at the last, as a mere kind formality, you would repent and go to Heaven? Perhaps you would be horrified to say so, but if you are going on doing your own will, and living for yourself in this world, you are saying so by your life, if not with your lips. You know well you cannot claim the next moment as your own, and yet you are living as if you had unlimited years before you. As I recall those terrible God-rejecting words which form the title of this little paper, I think of that solemn warning found in the Word of God, “Because I have called, and ye refused ; I also will laugh at your calamity ; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will *not* answer ; they shall seek Me early, but they shall *not* find Me.” (Prov. i., 24-28.)

“DON’T BOTHER ME.”

But I turn from the warning of judgment to the invitation of grace ; to those blessed words of the Son of God, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” (Matt. xi., 28). Do you “labour” under the weight of your guilt? Are you “heavy laden” with the burden of your sins? how many God only knows. Do you crave for “rest,” rest of conscience as to those very sins with which you know yourself to be laden, and which unfit you for the presence of a righteous God who cannot look at sin? Do you tremble at the thought of the righteousness of God, and say, “Oh, tell me about His love and mercy, and not about His righteousness.” Why it is to that very righteousness I would point you as the most certain and sure foundation on which to rest every hope. Surely God is Love, and the cross of His Son is the measure of His love to a world lost and ruined, and to a sinner dead in trespasses and sins; but it is not love which passes over sin as if it were nothing; *that* is not what God is, or what God does. He requires payment to the very last farthing. But He points the poor, burdened, weary sinner to the One who *has* paid to the very last farthing; and while he learns the fulness of the love of God at the cross of His Son, he learns there also the righteousness that cannot impute the sin to the Saviour and the sinner too. And when the soul knows that the righteousness of God has been met and so vindicated, and that that is all settled, it can enter into and enjoy His love, and not before: grace reigns indeed, but, blessed be God, it reigns “through righteousness unto

“HE’S MINE, AND I KNOW HE LOVES ME.”

eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. v. 21).

As God cannot in righteousness pass over sin, not even a single thought of sin, so He cannot in righteousness impute sin, not even a single thought of sin, if it has been imputed to His Son upon the cross. Oh, wondrous blessed thought, nay *fact*, the Son of God has become a man, and taken *my* standing and place before God, that He may give me *His* standing and place before God; and Christ, and Christ only is the measure of my acceptance before God, and of the love wherewith I am loved! Can you say this, dear reader? If not, why not? Is it God’s fault if you reject the free offer of His grace? He is “not willing that any should perish.” Only take it while He offers it I entreat you, and don’t *put it off* to a death-bed which you may never have, for you may be cut off in your sins. This moment is yours, in the goodness of God—the next, and you may be gone for ever to that place from which there is no return.

A. P. G.

“HE’S MINE, AND I KNOW HE LOVES ME.”

SEVERAL months since, in company with a brother in the Lord, I was giving away some tracts at F—. A woman was carrying a bucket of water, and as I went up to her to offer her a tract my brother in Christ said to her, “Would you like to read something about Jesus?” “Yes

“HE’S MINE, AND I KNOW HE LOVES ME.”

thank you,” she immediately replied, her face beaming with joy ; “ *He’s mine, and I know He loves me* ; ” and at once offered us her hand in Christian affection.

We entered into conversation with her, and learnt she had been brought to the Lord about five years before, during a time of large awakening.

We may not meet that dear woman again down here, but we SHALL surely meet and spend eternity—a cloudless, praise-filled eternity—together. Her words became fixed on our hearts, and enshrined there. “ He’s mine, and I know He loves me.”

And this was not only a note of joy to *our* ears, but, far better still, it was a note of praise in the Lord’s ear. It was the language of the Bride in the Canticles—“ I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine ; . . . and His desire is toward me : ” a song which some poor, trembling, but believing sinners are not able to sing all their life long ; but a song the trusting sinner is entitled to sing *the moment he trusts*. Yes, the MOMENT the sinner trusts Christ, THAT MOMENT is he entitled to sing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, “ I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine ; . . and His desire is toward me.”

And what security, what holy joy, what deep, deep calm of soul is the portion of the trusting sinner whose song this is !

“ *This, this indeed is peace !* ”

But it is more than that—it is the all-powerful motive to a life of devotedness to Christ—whole-

TWO SOLEMN WARNINGS.

heartedness for Christ—a life whose evry action tells, “Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ;” and “For me to live is Christ.”

Beloved reader, can you say that this Christ, Jesus, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Saviour and the “Eternal Lover” of His trusting ones, is yours ?

If so, you can use the words of that dear woman—“He’s mine, and I know He loves me.”

R. H. G.

TWO SOLEMN WARNINGS.

IT was the evening of the weekly Gospel preaching at Q——’s cottage, in the village of O——. The weather was fine and warm, and as many pleasure-seekers were passing and repassing it was suggested that we should have the meeting out of doors. We accordingly took our stand at a point where three roads met, close by the shop of a baker, and there a goodly number listened for nearly an hour and a half to the old, old story, of God’s glad tidings to sinners about His Son, Jesus Christ, and amongst the number none appeared more attentive than the baker, who stood in his doorway. Ah ! little did he think as he heard the Gospel that it was for the last time, and that in less than a week he should pass away from this scene, and his eternal doom be inevitably fixed. But so it was ; one hour in

TWO SOLEMN WARNINGS.

apparent health and strength, the next hour a corpse. Of his spiritual state we knew little or nothing; like too many, alas! we fear he was careless about his soul. God alone knows if he received His message; “that **day**” will declare.

Just a week after that last message to the baker, we were again on the same spot, and the word again pressed home upon a number of souls. Many were there who knew of the solemn event, and occasion was taken to urge those present to accept the message of mercy *now*, and to warn them against putting it off till a more convenient season—having thus one more proof before their eyes of the uncertainty of life, they were urged to flee at once to the refuge set before them. Amongst the hearers this time was a sailor, one of those who carried the body of the baker to the grave. He had once *professed* to be a child of God, but had gone deeply in the paths of sin and ruin. He too listened for the last time to the message of love and peace, the good news of the blessed God,—as freely offered to the poor backslider as to the sinner in his sins.

That the word fell faithfully and distinctly on the outward ear there could be no doubt whatever. For a long time he listened, apparently riveted to the spot, but about his soul, if he heard, and in hearing received eternal life, again “that **day**” will declare, but to all human appearances we could not think so. His end was a sad one indeed.

On the Friday he listened to the good news of salvation, and to the solemn warnings of God’s Word; on the Lord’s day he was intoxicated, and

TWO SOLEMN WARNINGS.

sought with a companion in sin in a public-house, there he received a severe blow, which ultimately mortified, and on the following Friday, just one week from the time we first saw him, he was in eternity. I saw him not, but to some who visited him he spoke of heaven, but we could gather nothing satisfactory of his state.

How solemn that word of Abraham to a rejector of Christ in the gulf of despair, "Son, remember." Yes, there is memory in hell. How many oft-heard and unheeded warnings and Gospel invitations will be recalled there, and how bitter will be the remembrance of mercy unheeded and rejected in the dark abode of the lost. How unspeakably awful to think of the remembrance of the Gospel *in hell*, to recall the Saviour's loving words, "I would, but ye would not."

"A river is flowing of pure living water,
It comes from the temple of God and the Lamb,
The invite is issued to every quarter
For all who are thirsty : who hears should proclaim.
Who drinketh shall live and be saved for ever,
Who hears and neglects it draws near to the day,
When careless and scorers, where hope cometh never,
Shall *think* of the water they once threw away."

W. R. H.

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

You will find four suppers spoken of in the New Testament—all entirely different in character.

God invites us to be present at three, but not at the fourth. It is because men will pay no heed to the invitation to the first supper that they will be present at the last. Whoever is present at the first supper, and a partaker of it, has the privilege of being at the second supper, will certainly be present at the third, and will not be at the fourth. On the other hand, whoever rejects the first, even though he takes the second, will certainly not be present at the third, and is in very great danger of being present at the fourth.

I. THE SUPPER OF SALVATION.

The first is given from the lips of our blessed Lord in the fourteenth chapter of Luke, which I would ask my reader to carefully peruse. There we see the Lord going into the Pharisee's house; He heals the man with dropsy; He bids them choose the lower place, and then in verse 13 He says, "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Here we get instruction from the lips of the Lord about the resurrection of the just as contrasted with the resurrection of the unjust, and from other parts of Scripture we learn that the former takes place at least a thousand years before the latter.

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

“And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”

I suppose there is no person but would echo this and say, What a blessed thing to eat bread in the kingdom of God! to be in the resurrection of the just—a time of full and thorough blessing under the hand of God in a future day—what a blessed thing to be with the Lord! a blessed thing to be saved! Yes, but let me ask you, *Do you know it? Are you saved? Are you blessed? Have you eaten this bread?* You say, “I cannot tell.” Then you do not really believe it is blessed. This man was a mere religionist, who wished to pay the Lord a compliment, like those in the present day who are content with a mere form of religion, who have never been broken down before God, and have never eaten this bread, have never entered into what Jesus is. If I really believe it is blessed to eat bread in the kingdom of God, I shall leave no stone unturned until I am sure I have eaten it.

The Lord at once detects what the state of the man is. Everyone says, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God”—but when you bring the Gospel down to man, alas! man does not care for it. Man is so deeply degraded, so full of himself, so proud too, that he does not care to go down amongst the poor, the halt, the maimed, and the blind—he has got a great many things between himself and God to hinder this.

Have not you, dear reader, paid attention to

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

everything within your reach, and the only thing you have really neglected is your soul? Your body you have cared for well—you have fed it, clothed it, cared for it, protected it, pampered it, indulged it; but as for your soul, you have cared nothing for it. The salvation of the soul with men was always a secondary thing, and is always displaced by pleasure and endeavouring to get on in this world; and is it not the same with you? Yes, unless you have been broken down by the grace of God, smashed to pieces as it were before Jesus, and been made glad to take salvation.

The Lord then says, as it were, to this man, “I will test you. You say, ‘Blessed is he that shall eat bread,’ &c. I will see whether you are really in earnest. ‘A certain man made a great supper and bade many.’” The “certain man” is God. Mark the word *great*: it is not merely a supper, but “a *great* supper”—great because of the elements included in the supper, great because of the One who spreads it, great because of the wondrous grace that spread it for those who alas! would only slight and despise it.

Why is it a supper? No doubt the Lord meant here the blessed Gospel, that love of God which is travelling out now to sinners, and pressing on them that which He gives—eternal life through the Saviour’s precious name. There is something peculiarly interesting in its being *supper*—not breakfast, nor dinner, but *supper*. Which meal is that? The last meal in the day. I understand therefore that this is the last dealing of God in grace towards man; the Gospel

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

now preached is the very last dealing of God in grace with man: the next dealing will be the *midnight* of judgment.

When Israel was in Egypt, in Exodus xii. we read, "At midnight there was a cry heard." God is abroad in the land at midnight: there is nothing but destruction, and ruin, and judgment for those who had no part in the supper inside, where the blood of the lamb was upon the door-post. What a lesson is therein taught us!

There was a *morning* of innocence, where everything was beautiful and bright, and all shone fair; but the woman was deceived by the devil, Adam followed his wife into ruin and sin, and man was cast out. Then came the *noonday*—the trying and testing of man under law, and man became a lawbreaker. Then the Lord Jesus comes Himself in the *evening* of the ways of God, in fulness of grace, gentleness, kindness, and goodness. What then? They spit in His face, and say "Away with Him." The last thing is, the Holy Ghost comes down and tells the news "It is finished"—that God has spread a feast for man, and that all that man has to do is to eat of the feast God in blessed love has provided.

Who has He bidden? He has bidden you. Have you believed it? Have you accepted it? God prepares a supper, and sends servants to say "Come, for all things are now ready." There is the Gospel note! Do you want salvation? "Come, for all things are now ready." Do you want pardon, forgiveness, eternal life? "Come." Do not stop away and think you have something to do—"all things are now ready." How sweet

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

is that word "*Come.*" Whoever you are, Come! and find all ready. I want righteousness, you tell me. God has provided righteousness in Christ—life, cleansing, justification, *all things* are ready in Christ.

But now of the bidden ones, what did they do? "They all with one consent began to make excuse"—every one of them. Have not *you* made excuse? One said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it." The man puts his bit of land in between his soul and God. Another says, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused." There is no open rebellion, yea, there is external politeness—"I pray thee have me excused." The moment God wants to have you and Himself in close quarters, you say No. Man cannot have it. "I pray thee have me excused." How solemn!

If God spreads a supper, it is not merely that you are to be blessed, though that is included—the grand and great thought in God's heart is that He wants you and me near to Himself.

If I go to a supper I go because of the person who bids me and makes me welcome. God says, "I want to have you in My presence, to feed you with what I have provided." Man says, "I pray Thee have me excused." Oh! what a heart man has got! And *what* a heart has God got, longing to bless!

You say, What a desperately bad man that must have been. Stop, have *you* eaten the bread? Have *you* accepted? Not yet. Then *you* are the man, because you have put something in

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

between—it may not be a piece of land, it may not be five yoke of oxen, but it is something that keeps God and you asunder.

Another says, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Was that a good excuse for refusing God's supper? Had he been a right-minded man, had he had a sense of the grace of him who invited him, he would have gone himself, and taken his wife with him; but he makes her the excuse. How easily the Lord reads thus the secrets of our hearts! How easily the devil finds an excuse in the things of life to hinder us!

If you are in earnest, if you have got a deep sense that you are on the verge of eternal damnation, you will not care for wife, husband, father, mother, brother, sister, master, or servant, you will fling all aside in determined unquenchable desire to have salvation.

If you do not know your need, if you are not thoroughly broken down, you are always glad to make an excuse, and you think it a good one. Do you think it will be a good excuse when the Lord says, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" You will be speechless then, and He will say "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness." If, my friend, you are an excuse-maker (what an awful occupation! yet the devil has crowds of apprentices young and old), give that trade up on the spot, for you are forging the chains, soldering the rings that must hold you through all eternity in the depths of hell.

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

Excuses have ruined and damned thousands of souls. Have you one solitary excuse that will bear the light of that day? Not one! You say "I am too bad, too old, too young." No, the Lord says, "Ye *will* not come to Me that ye might have life." Oh! that the Lord may show you the sin of these devilish (for so they are in truth) excuses why you should not come to God. The true reason is you do not like Jesus, you like anything and anybody but God, close dealings with any one under the sun but God. But you must have to do with Him, you must be brought face to face with God; better far be brought face to face with Him now in the day of grace, than in the day of judgment—now when He calls you in love and spreads before you a supper. Why not come? Why not accept Him? Do not hold back in the thought of anything you must do, anything you must bring or provide. Come as you are!

"So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." These grand ones, these self-occupied ones, he says, shall not eat of my supper—bring in the poor.

The sinner without Christ is a very poor person. Though he may have the riches of the whole world in his coffers, he is poor without Christ—poor indeed. There are very few rich people converted—riches are often the ruin of the rich. The Lord says, "How hardly shall they

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" When I get a person who is poor, broken down, outcast, with neither character nor fortune, I can tell him of one Friend—the Friend called Jesus. Tell me, have you a Friend called Jesus; do you know Him, trust Him, adore Him? Is He the object of your heart, the One you delight in? There is nothing so sweet to me as the company of my friends, and there is no company so sweet as the company of Jesus.

The "maimed" are those whom sin has wounded and crippled—and what maims a person as sin does?—all vitality, vigour, freshness, and power gone. "The halt," that is, the lame, those who are unable to walk. Who can enter the pearly gates crippled by sin, unable to walk in? Furthermore, "the blind" are called. Who are "the blind"? You are, if still Christless. Do you see any beauty in the Lord Jesus? Well, I can't say I do. Then *you* are blind. Jesus is the most lovely object in the universe of God—the "Chifest among ten thousand." If the Christian is asked what he thinks of Christ, he answers "He is altogether lovely." Though I might paint the most lovely descriptions on canvas, and tell of it to a blind man, he cannot understand it, for he cannot see it. The real state of man is that he is "born blind."

"The poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind," this is God's company—not the good, but the bad. Whoever you are, I am bidden by my Master to make you welcome.

Now see how the urgency of the charity of God comes out here, and the universality of its

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

expression: "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and *compel* them to come in." Yes, says God, I have still room for many wayward sinners--go, compel them to come in. I thank God for that word. May I not entreat, implore, invoke you to come? I am bid to *compel* you to come in. Perhaps you do not care to come, you are not interested or anxious: Go, says the Lord, "compel them to come." Oh! sinner, do you want to be damned? "No," you say. You certainly must be if you turn your back on Jesus. Oh! listen to His grace—"Go, compel them to come in." You have nothing to do, His grace has provided all: the blood of atonement is shed, the claims of God have all been met on the cross by the Lord Jesus, and the sinner has now only to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved on the very spot. Oh! receive this word, let it sink down deeply into your heart; look back at the cross, see the shed blood of the Saviour, see the atonement finished, God's claims all met, the whole question of sin settled for ever. Now that work being done, the cup of wrath drunk, the righteousness of God vindicated, His truth maintained, His character fully revealed, and man's need fully met, what remains? Jesus has died, but God raises Him, puts Him at His own right hand in glory, sends down the Holy Ghost, and what then? God says "Come and eat." You want to eat bread in the kingdom of God—come and be His guest. He would have you come. He invites you as you are to accept salvation. He invites you to His supper, to glory, to over-

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

lasting rest with Christ. He bids you come to have forgiveness, and says if you do not, you will offend Him. You must either receive or refuse. God brings before you Christ as a living, loving Saviour. Make your choice, but do not, oh! do not refuse, do not despise such grace; when He bids you, come—when he invites you, respond. At your peril make an excuse.

The Gospel feast then is the first feast, the supper of salvation. If you eat God's supper you are a saved soul—if you look to Jesus you will be saved, and be washed whiter than snow. “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” That is the supper of salvation.

II. THE SUPPER OF COMMUNION.

The second supper is the Lord's Supper, the supper of communion. Look at 1 Cor. x. 16-21, xi. 23-34, “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.” And who takes this supper? Do you who are not converted? you who are not washed in the blood? Oh! but you say, “It is a means of grace.” No! it is a means of *judgment*, because the very thing the Lord will answer when you say, “We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence,” will be, “Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.” The only one who has the privilege of the Lord's Supper is the one who knows he has partaken of the Gospel supper—the real, true Christian.

The Lord's Supper is, as it were, a photograph. A photograph is a faint and always feeble resem-

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

blance of an absent one. This supper then is a lovely, beautiful photograph of Jesus—not as He now is alive in glory, but as He once was, dead on the cross for our sins. Therefore the gathering round the Lord's table to eat that supper is the memorial of the Lord's death. There is nothing like it! it has the greatest and sweetest claim on our hearts. I remember a betrayed, denied, *thong-bound, thorn-crowned*, crucified Christ. If being unconverted, you partake of this supper, I would warn you, never do it again. You reply, "I have the minister's communion token." Have you had God's communion token? "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." "And THE BLOOD shall be to you for a TOKEN." God's communion token is the blood.

This briefly is the supper of communion. May the Lord give us to enjoy, understand, and appreciate it more. We are called to walk worthy of it, separate from all that is of the world. That cup tells me of the blood by which I am separated from my sins, from wrath, and from judgment; but it tells me also that I am separated from the world, and am to walk through it as a pilgrim and a stranger.

Let us look now at the two suppers given in Rev. xix.

III. THE SUPPER OF JOY.

This is the marriage supper of the Lamb by-and-by (vv. 6-9). I do not wonder at the word, "Let us be glad and rejoice." Heaven breaks out in melody, the hosts of heaven in thanksgiving—it is the bridal supper. It is the moment when the Lord has gathered His own

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

people up in heaven with Him—all are caught up to meet the Lord, all are bright with His likeness—the day of the marriage comes, the day of the joy of His heart and ours. “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” In that day the Church, the bride of Christ, shall be “arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the *righteousness* of saints.” We have done here some little sweet acts of service, perhaps, for the Lord: He has marked all, every cup of cold water, every loving deed, and He will reward it by-and-by. In that day the practical righteousness, the godly conduct of the believer down here in the world, will find its counterpart and answer. As you have walked down here, so you will be known up there; our practical life and conduct will be remembered and manifested in the presence of the Lord. It is spoken of as a garment, because it will be seen—it is what is manifest, external. Nobody has seen your service down here, everybody will see up there what you have been and done for the Lord during your pilgrim sojourn on earth during His absence. How beautiful to go to the supper of salvation, the supper of communion, and now to the supper of the Lamb—the day of joy when with our blessed Lord, we see Him face to face, and are like Him.

If, my beloved reader, you have not taken the first, though you may have taken the second, you will not be at this one—these three go together. The supper of salvation meets me as a sinner, the supper of communion as a saint, and by-and-

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

by the bride will be with her Lord, and like Him.

IV. THE SUPPER OF JUDGMENT.

The last is not a supper of brightness, or gladness, or communion—it will be the dark, black supper of judgment, to which God will invite many guests, and they will all come. It is the Lord coming to deal with this earth in judgment (see vv. 11-21), coming down in solemn, fearful judgment on this scene where you and I now are. They refused Him on earth when He came in grace, but He will come back to make war. They crowned Him with thorns, God crowns Him with glory ; they parted His raiment amongst them, and cast lots upon His vesture—here on His vesture He has a name written, “King of kings and Lord of lords,” and they will see Him again clothed. The world will see Jesus come back again. When did the world see Jesus last? What was the last glimpse the world had of Him? They had stripped Him, crowned Him with thorns, nailed Him to a tree, His blood flowing down to stain the very earth they trod upon. When they see Him again He has still a crown, but not of thorns: “on His head were many crowns,” crowns of glory. His hand, once pierced and nailed to the tree, holds now a sceptre. He is clothed with a vesture dyed with blood. It is the Lord coming in swift, solemn judgment—a day that draws terribly near.

“He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” It is the wrath of God poured out on man, who has refused the

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

supper of the blessed God. Now the dealings of God are reversed, it is not grace but judgment. The Lord Jesus comes as the administrator of the judicial power of God. He comes to tread the winepress. In the vintage time the luxuriant bunches are cut down one by one, and thrown into the winepress ; presently down comes the weight, till every grape is crushed. So will the blood be crushed from His enemies. Do you know a figure more fearful ? You have trifled with God once too often when that day comes. His patience then worn out, His wrath will come on the surface. He will come as “King of kings and Lord of lords” ; you have never owned His Kingship, His Lordship yet. Christ and you are strangers ; He loves you, but you do not love Him, and now comes the hour when you must know Him in His Kingship and His Lordship, and be crushed by His wrath.

Oh ! careless soul, brave not, risk not that day. Then goes forth the word, “Come, and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.” It is another “Come”—no longer the “Come” of grace, of invitation to the Gospel feast. It is, Come, ye fowls, be a witness of the righteous judgment of God, “eat the flesh of kings,” &c. Man in the end rises up in daring rebellion against the Lord ; the once despised, refused Jesus comes as King of kings and Lord of lords, and swift destruction overtakes them all. In the 20th verse we see the beast and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire—two men cast alive into the lake of fire, as in the Old Testament we get two men taken up to

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

heaven alive. Men may delude themselves with the thought of coming days of brightness—but one of these days like lightning everything will be altered : the saints will be taken up, and desolation will begin to cover the earth. Satan will have the reins of government in his hands, the name of God will be cast out of the earth. Then the Lord of glory appears, and this fourth supper is enacted.

Will you be there? It is possible, nay, probable—because if the Lord Jesus came this hour and took up His saints, not one Gospel rejector then left behind would be saved; for God says He will send you strong delusion. “In the twinkling of an eye” we shall be taken. The world may miss us a day or two, but not one week or month will have rolled by before the mischief will appear, the power of Satan will be displayed. When the world is led astray by the devil, ruled over by antichrist, it will go on till at length God’s patience tires, and then this terrible judgment takes place. The Lord shall come from heaven in judgment. And all this precedes the Millennium, the thousand years of blessing, when the Lord will reign on the earth. I would not risk being at the fourth supper. I have made sure of the first, delight in the second, know I shall be at the third, and am sure I shall not be at the fourth. Friend, be thou of the same mind. May God give you to hear and believe His word in faith, and by-and-by, when Jesus comes, be found in that bright company, with Him and like Him for ever!

W. T. P. W.

JESUS CAME.

THE Son of God who dwelt in light,
Unreached by mortal eye,
Came forth as man the foe to fight,
And won the victory.

Jesus, the Father's sent One, came,
While one with Him above,
To glorify His holy name,
To tell that "God is love."

And where His enemy and ours
Had dared that love deny,
The Cross defeated hell's dark powers.
For Jesus came to die.

Oh ! wondrous way of grace Divine,
Unfathomed and untold :
Still while eternal ages shine,
Its glories shall unfold.

In perfect light was sin laid bare,
And met its utmost due ;
While perfect love in triumph there
Revealed salvation too.

Who but the sinless One could be
Sin-offering meet for God ?
And who in heaven or earth but He
Could cleanse me with His blood ?

To save the sinner Jesus came,
To set the captive free :
And now my willing lips proclaim
What He hath done for me.

His finished work is all my trust,
And now He lives above,
Eternal proof that God is just
In all this way of love.

Delivered from the wrath to come,
I soon shall see His face ;
And praise in God's eternal home
The riches of His grace.

ANON.

THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE.

As I ponder over God's grace and love to me a poor lost sinner, without God, without hope, far, *far* from my Father's home and love; when I think of His patience and perseverance in bringing my wayward feet where there was "bread enough and to spare," I can but exclaim with wonder and surprise,

"Mercy from first to last!"

And as with the Lord's help I will try to give an account of His ways with me, I pray the Lord may use it to some dear unsaved soul, in whose ear the voice of the tender Shepherd has been heard in different ways.

When a child I was taught by my mother the way of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Though this truth did not then reach my heart, I seemingly received it, and for a time was happy. However as I grew older, temptations came, the world appeared very beautiful before my eyes, and ere long, "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life" filled my heart completely and shut out almost all serious thought. A few years later, a brother of mine was brought to see the truth as it is in Jesus; he was very happy, resting in the *finished* work of Christ, "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our *justification*," and rejoicing in the hope of His coming again. This had a very strong impression on my mind, but I *lored the world*

THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE..

and could not let it go. Soon after other members of the family were brought into the same glorious deliverance of sins for ever put away by the sacrifice of *Himself*. An absent brother came home with this joy too, and as I often heard them speak together of the one subject engrossing their hearts, and of the Lord's soon expected return for His saints, my heart would sink as I thought, *If the Lord comes to-night, I will be left behind!* Oh how the voice of the tender Shepherd *besought* me to come in while *yet* it was time. But my heart was becoming hardened, and in these moments of realized danger I tried to calm my troubled soul by thinking I had yet a long time before I would have to appear before my God. I had made plans in the world and was determined to fulfil them.

By Christian parents I was much restrained from *outward* worldliness, but I believe my *heart* was as much bound up in it as anyone's could be. A few months passed on in this way. The Lord was *pressing* and *pleading* with me to be "reconciled to God," and flee from the wrath to come.

Once when reading my Bible my eyes fell upon this passage, "*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). For several days these words sounded in my ears : they were *so tender!* they would have reached my soul. But oh the hardness of my heart! I tried to forget them, for they troubled me.

THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE.

Shortly after this I had another opportunity of seeing God's love and mercy manifested toward me. I was riding alone one afternoon, when my horse tripped and fell, throwing me some distance in the road; in a moment's time, and before I had scarcely reached the ground, I uttered a silent prayer: "Lord, spare me this *once* and I will turn to Thee." And He did even more than I had asked, for I was not at all hurt. However, when out of danger *my promise* to God was soon forgotten, and after a few vain efforts to "*give up*" some things for Him, I found myself sunk deeper than ever in sin, and farther still from God than before.

About this time a message enclosed in a letter from my brother to my mother awoke me again from my soul's dangerous sleep. Oh what untiring love the Lord manifests toward poor rebellious sinners! The good Shepherd could not rest while His sheep was in such danger, so His voice called again. My mother read me the following sentence from my brother's letter: "How long will dear —— linger between Christ and the world? It is a *dangerous risk*." I cannot say how much these words troubled me. I had never thought of it in this light before. I had never thought I was *really* choosing the world and *refusing Christ*. For a while my selfish heart weighed the two. The world was *very* tempting, the wrath to come was *dreadful*. A life spent for Christ was (as I thought) monotonous, but I well knew the happy end of such a life. I wanted both the *world* and *heaven*. But the Lord had already spoken *twice* and I heeded it not, now He was to speak again a *third* time.

THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE.

The next afternoon my sister (who had been converted for some time) was taking a walk with me. We were both silent for some time. After a while I turned to ask her a question, but received no answer. I turned on all sides to find her, but she was not there. As a flash of lightning the thought came to me, *The Lord has come, He has taken her away and I am left behind!* The agony and despair of that moment (and it seemed like hours) I *cannot* describe. In a moment my *sins*, my broken promises to God, my rejection of Christ and of His constant pleadings, my choosing the world and its (now) empty glory appeared before me in their true light. It was not a dream, but an *awful reality*. A great heavy load weighed me down, it was the *heavy* load of my own sins resting on *my own head*. It was the anguish of a soul who knows it is **FOR EVER** too **LATE**! My mouth was stopped, I had *no excuse*. A few minutes before the Lord was pressing salvation upon me. I did not want it *then*, and now—*now* it was *too late for ever*. Oh! for **ONE** more chance! Oh! to have recalled *one hour*! but *no*—**too LATE**! In my distress I cried aloud! At that moment my sister rose from the tall grass in which she had playfully hid. Oh what a deliverance! saved from such a dreadful fate! Now I had still one more chance of being saved. My sister asked me why I was so frightened, and, dreadful to say, I told her I thought she had gone to the house and left me! But this time the Lord had spoken to my soul in a way I could *never* forget, and from that night to the same of the following

THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE.

week I had *no rest* anywhere. I tried to *fit* myself to receive Him. I prayed, mourned for my sins, confessed often and much to God; in one word, I tried "to climb some other way." I was afraid to leave for a moment those of the family whom I knew were the Lord's, fearing He would take them away. I was afraid to die, and to have to appear before an offended, and as I thought, angry God.

I remained in this state for a week; night came and I went to bed, but I could not sleep—how could I sleep when my eyes were opened to my danger? My constant cry was, "Be merciful to me a sinner!" It was in the middle of the night the Lord revealed Himself to my soul. He spoke to me by this passage, "And HAVING MADE PEACE through the blood of His cross." Then and there I saw my peace WAS MADE—all I had to do was to believe it; I saw the *finished* work of Christ for *me*. I believed and I was *saved*, SAVED, SAVED. Love and gratitude filled my soul, and I longed to see Him who had loved me with so *great* a love.

Dear unsaved reader, does not this story of God's love to a poor rebellious sinner reach your soul? Sinner, Jesus *loves* you: He gave *Himself* for you. God *loves* you: He gave the Son of His bosom, His *best gift*, the joy of His heart for you. The Holy Ghost is trying to win your soul by showing you the love of God in the sacrifice of His Son. The Godhead *for* you, then who can be against you? Oh listen to His voice while He yet speaks. Let go yourself, your "righteousness" as well as your sinfulness, and launch out

“ΑΝΑΤΗΕΜΑ ΜΑΡΑΝΑΤΗΑ.”

into that ocean of love where the Saviour awaits you with open arms. “There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents.” The Father’s household must rejoice when the poor prodigal has returned home. Oh “the *exceeding riches*” of God’s grace and love shall be the song of all those who have tasted of that love !

“ When Thy blood-bought Church, Lord Jesus,
Is complete,
And each soul is safely landed
At Thy feet,
What a story ! in the glory
She’ll repeat ! ”

L.

“ANATHEMA MARANATHA.”

A CRY TO THE CARELESS.

“*If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha*” (cursed at His coming)—1 Cor. xvi. 22.

AN unconverted youth once had his conscience so aroused to his state as a guilty sinner, and to the fact that at any moment the Lord might come, that he awoke his parents during the night by his cries. They found him in a corner of the room, trembling from head to foot with terror and dread lest before morning Christ would return, and, finding him unconverted, leave him for judgment, at the same moment severing his Christian parents from him by taking them to be for ever with Himself.

Such was wholesome fear, and but for man’s

“ANATHEMA MARANATHA.”

callous heart of unbelief many more would be trembling at the prospect of “the terror of the Lord,” whose swift return would seal their eternal doom. The faithful and true witness says, “Behold ! I come quickly;” and the apostle declares, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha.”

Oh ! careless and unsaved reader, let me speak a word of loving warning in thine ear, for the time is short—the coming of the Lord draweth nigh—the Judge standeth at the door. Too well thou knowest that thou lovest not the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : the mention of His worthy name awakes no response in thine heart, is no melody in thine ear, and there is no beauty in Him that thou shouldest desire Him. A stranger to grace, thy life has been one long course of selfwill and indifference to His rightful claims. Love for Him and His exists not in thine heart, but rather aversion and contempt for His blessed Word. Hearken then to the solemn sentence, “If any man *love not* the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha.” This is a judgment which may overwhelm thy guilty soul in the twinkling of an eye, plunging thee into unfathomable depths of despair; for “in such an hour as ye *think not*” the Lord will come. Not yet “revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance,” but He returns to take away His own, to raise the dead in Christ, and change those who are alive, then, taking them up in the cloud into glory with Himself, all the unbelievers will

“ANATHEMA MARANATHA.”

be left behind to be destroyed by the “strong delusion,” and that “without remedy” (1 Thess. iv. 13—17; 2 Thess. i. 7-10.)

Arouse thee, guilty Christ rejecter, or too late thou mayest bemoan thy hapless fate, and curse thy folly for ever, remembering that when He would have saved thee thou wouldest not. “Ah,” these men say, “Christ will not come in my day; many have expected Him and been disappointed; there will yet be time enough to repent.” Away vain thought. He has written, “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*” (Thess. v. 3). The poet said truthfully—

“There are no pardons in the tomb,
And brief is mercy’s day.”

But it can be also said—Nor will there be mercy for those despisers of present grace through Jesus Christ who will be alive at His return. Thousands trifle with convictions, in hope of time for a death-bed repentance, which will never be given; for He calls again, “Surely I come quickly.” Then woe to thee, unsaved sinner.

Perhaps though thou knowest not Him thou hast wrapped close round thee a garment of religious profession. Alas! His eye will detect thy counterfeit, and His awful sentence be—“Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Ponder again these awful words, “Anathema Maranatha.” Oh! dear sinner, wilt thou brook His fierce anger and bear His

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST.

withering frown, before which earth and heaven shall flee away? Rush not against the thick bosses of the Almighty—mighty to curse *then*, yet mighty to save now—wanting to save—for with Him is plenteous redemption that He may be feared. Humble thyself in faith now before Him, who in lowly grace came to seek and save that which was lost—yea! died for the ungodly. Thy sins are many, thy guilt untold, but His abundant mercy towers far above all, and still He says, “Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.” Come, oh! come, by faith to the Saviour now, before He *comes* as judge of quick and dead. “Kiss ye the Son lest He be angry, and ye *perish* from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” “Behold! he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so. Amen!”

T. R. D.

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST.

PREACHING in the neighbourhood of N—— lately, after the meeting one evening, having set forth the finished work of Christ, and the results flowing from it, I went up to a young woman who was looking very sad, feeling that God had a message for her soul. Sitting down beside her, I asked her, “Well, my friend, have you accepted God’s Christ yet? Are you saved.”

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST.

“No, sir, I am not.” “Why should you not be? has not Christ finished the work, and glorified God?” “Yes, he has.” “Then tell me, if Jesus Christ has done it all, what is there left for you to do?” “Nothing.” “Then do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?” “Yes, I do believe from my heart that Jesus Christ bore my sins on the cross.”

Opening my Bible at John iii. 36, I let her read, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” “Now,” I asked, “what does God say of those who believe on His Son?” “They have eternal life.” “Will you tell me then if you believe on the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ?” “Yes, I’m sure I do.” “Then what does God say of you?” “I have everlasting life,” she replied. “I never saw it before. I was always trying to be good, and hoped to be saved. And I was afraid when I heard of Jesus Christ coming back, for I was afraid I would be left behind. Now I see that Jesus has done it all; He has finished the work, and we are just to believe on Him. I’m so glad I came here to-night, for if Jesus were to come now I should go with Him, but I never heard it put that way before.” The sad look had left her face now, and it was lit up with a happy smile, while her soul was filled with joy and peace in believing.

And now, dear reader, let me ask you ere you lay down this little paper—What about your soul? have you accepted God’s Christ yet? Are you saved? If not, why not? Oh! I do pray you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST.

you are trying to be good, but you have no peace yet. Cease from your own doings; take the place of a lost sinner, and receive the lost sinner's Saviour. Yes, I say, believe on the Eternal Son of God, and this moment God will make good to you the whole of the finished work of His Son. Don't delay; time is short. Eternity is coming fast upon you; that pale horse with his grim rider (Death) may be close upon you, his sword may be unsheathed to plunge in your bosom, and hell follows with him. Think of spending a Christless Eternity,—and where? In the Lake of Fire! Oh! shelter in Jesus now; think of God's love in giving His Son; think of that sorrowful death of the Son of God on the cross; think how you have resisted the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus sent down, and who has been pleading with you. Do not do so any longer.

Jesus said; "It is finished" (John xix. 30). Oh! believe it. God has not only been satisfied, but glorified about the question of sin, and now the One who bore the fierce wrath and judgment of God against sin has been raised from the dead and glorified in Heaven, by the same God that poured out His wrath upon Him on the cross, and God can now be just and justify the man that believes in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26). On the ground of the finished work of Christ, God can bring you to Himself in righteousness; not only forgive you your sins, having crucified and set aside for ever the nature from which the sins spring, but bring you into a new creation, and give you the Holy Ghost to dwell in you for ever, linking you on to the Man in the Glory. Oh! reader, what a

WHAT IS DUE TO CHRIST?

place God wants to give you. He wants you to find your delight in the very same object He has found His in, even Christ, and all on the ground of the finished work of Christ. Will you have it? May God the Holy Ghost reveal these things to you. Remember, if you die without Christ after reading this paper yours will be a deep, deep hell. The Lord save you from it.

W. E.

WHAT IS DUE TO CHRIST?

If the question of the position of the soul before God is raised, it is fully answered by this, What is due to Christ? To the sinner nothing is due but wrath and condemnation—to Christ, on the contrary, who has already borne in grace that wrath and condemnation in His own person on the tree, it is only due, on the part of God, that the soul that trusts in Him should be associated with Him in the place He now has taken—yea, been exalted to—by God Himself. What a precious, heart-cheering truth. Christ has taken *our* place, and the judgment due to us, and now we are to get *His* place—for such is *due* to Him, and is itself a part of the righteousness of God.

Such being our place *before* God as the result of what is due to Christ; let us ask also, what is our place *here* as His saints? Again, What is due to Christ will settle this question fully in all the details of life, whether domestic, ecclesiastical, or otherwise.

W. T. P. W.

“THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE BROAD ROAD.”

I MET lately a young man of considerable intelligence who answered as nearly as possible to the case described in Mark x. 17-21. There we read that “There came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto Him, Master, *all these things have I observed* from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, *One thing thou lackest.*”

Now we may reasonably hope that as this young man was not guilty of having borne false witness of others, neither did he bear false witness of himself. He had not violated any of the above commandments. He had “observed all these things from his youth.” The page of his history was clear of every moral blot, and his character unstained by transgression. He could readily throw open his bosom to the keen and all-discerning eye of the Master. He meant what he said. He was honest. The witness he had borne of himself was correct. He had observed all these things from his youth. Could anything more be claimed? With the letter of these commands he was acquainted, and he had

“THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE BROAD ROAD.”

obeyed them to the letter; but the spirit of them—their real, vital, spiritual significance—their moral import—reached much further. When carried to their conclusion they affected not the mere overt conduct only, but they touched the springs of the heart. They said, “Thou shalt not steal”—but they signified “Thou shalt love.”

To refrain from appropriating another’s goods may be easy enough; but to love the other so as to share your goods with him is a very different matter. But this is implied in the command which this earnest young man professed to have kept. That he did not understand it in this light is plain. He had viewed the decalogue as addressing itself to outward actions only, as did Saul of Tarsus in a later day. He too was alive without the law once! Not that he broke it, or proved himself to be an open and incorrigible transgressor; but he lived under it without its keen spiritual point being forced on his conscience. “When the commandment came,” then, said he, “sin revived and I died.” When in his soul he conceived by Divine teaching the searching nature of the commandment—how that it forbade not only transgression, but lust; not only open disobedience, but the motions and pulsations and breathings of sin within—then he found his lost estate. And so with the rich young man of Mark x. To him the Lord, in His own masterly way, brought the commandment home by bidding him go his way, sell whatsoever he had, give to the poor; come, take his cross, and follow Him! A tremendous test to one who clung to his earthly possessions, and one which laid bare

“THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE BROAD ROAD.”

in a moment the unrevealed and hidden spring of covetousness. What ! sell all that he had, leaving himself destitute, so that he might enrich others and make them comfortable at his own cost; then take up the cross, heavy as it would be, and lastly, follow Jesus, who had no possessions, no place, who was the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief!—how could he do this? The demand was excessive; he declined to meet it. He “went away grieved, for he had great possessions.” He “lacked one thing.”

But to lack only one thing is to lack everything. God demands perfection. Nothing short of that which is perfect can possibly meet His approval. To offend in one point is to be guilty of all. Absolute righteousness alone can answer the claims of Divine holiness. Eternal life cannot be inherited on any other basis, ground, or platform whatever. God can have nothing less. But then there can be no hope, since, irrespectively of outward conduct, man himself is unclean—his heart is “desperately wicked,” and his nature “corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” Lust, covetousness, sin, dwells by nature within, and, even if checked as to any expression of itself, still it is there, and on that ground alone man is lost. He is therefore hopeless! True, he is lost indeed—“dead in trespasses and sins,” and in that sense thoroughly hopeless—has “no hope” in the world. But, strange to say, this is the very ground of hope. Had the young man known he was lost, he would never have said, “What shall I *do* that I may inherit eternal life?” A dead man cannot do

“THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE BROAD ROAD.”

anything. He needs life, even as a lost man needs some one to find him. But to say “What shall I *do*?” was at once to throw himself into the awful crucible of law which, when applied, fails not to upset everyone. So it proved in his case. “Sell whatsoever thou hast,” that by giving to the poor he might “love his neighbour as himself,” was the stern demand of law, and that demand, as indeed every similar demand of law, proved itself too heavy. It was a “yoke that could not be borne.” It was, may I say, a mirror, which made known most faithfully his moral defects and shortcomings.

Is it not strange that people should look into this mirror with eyes so blinded that their sins remain unknown to them? Yet so it is. They keep the letter—the bare wording of the law, but fail to apprehend the true character of it.

And so it was in the case of the intelligent young man to whom I have made reference. He told me that he had scrupulously avoided all outward sin, and that he had always discountenanced bad company or language. I had no doubt in my mind that he spoke the truth of himself, surprised though I may have been. When I found him proof against the charges of open sin and violation of the law, I applied another test. “His righteousnesses,” I said, “were but filthy rags,” and that what settled the whole question of his fitness for heaven was the truth of the second birth; I asked him if he had been born again. On this I noticed that his countenance fell. He appeared as one condemned—“He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved.” His

“THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE BROAD ROAD.”

great possessions of good works proved to be of no value when nothing short of the second birth could avail. He found it difficult to part with them all and take the ground of being *lost and unclean*. It was a hard saying, and withering to natural pride—yet a tremendous necessity! And down, down, down, to the low dead level of lost and unclean must come all, whether pharisee or publican, prince or pauper, professor or profane. Down must they come to the common platform. Pride must be broken ; self-righteousness must be swept away, and the soul must

“ Stoop down and drink and live.”

This is no doubt most humbling. A proud man, possessed of a quantity of good works, to be classed along with the openly reprobate and abandoned. It must shock his feelings. Nevertheless it is written, “*All* have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and this truth in one broad sweeping stroke makes short work of all human pretension. If all have *not* sinned equally, still all have sinned. They are in kind the same, and God cannot look on sin. Some may be on the clean side of the broad road, others on the unclean ; yet, if on that road at all, they are lost.

But I would repeat the truth that “ the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Such are the objects of His grace. Did not the shepherd seek and find the *lost* sheep? Did not the woman seek and find the *lost* piece of silver? Did not the father say, “ This my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was *lost* and is found”?

JONAH.

Has this no meaning? What shepherd would seek a sheep that was not *lost*? And what necessity was there for the death of the blessed Son of God if man was not dead and lost? But, precious truth! because man was dead Jesus died, and His death is the way of life—and the only way! “The Son of Man *must* be lifted up.” “Without shedding of blood there is no remission.” But on the other hand “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” The demand of Divine justice is fully met. No more is asked. The death of Christ shows me the extent of my sin; but, through grace, it also shows to me the sword of justice sheathed, the stroke having fallen on my holy and blessed Substitute. He now is my “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,” and in Him I glory.

My beloved reader, can you make all this personal? Has it no application, no voice to yourself? It is full of meaning and of blessing too. Say, do you purpose to cling to “good works” and still continue on the broad road that leadeth to destruction, or come down to the dead level where Christ is found?

J. W. S.

JONAH.

A FEW days since a young lady, in the full enjoyment of health, forming one of a party met together for an evening's amusement, after dancing a set of quadrilles, and immediately

remarking to a friend that she had never known an hour's illness, suddenly dropped dead on the floor.

A gentleman left his house the other evening for the purpose of coming into town to sign his will. A few hours later his dead body was found on the roadside.

Another gentleman coming into a public office to transact business, apparently in perfect health, suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, I'm dying!" and passed into eternity. This occurred in the writer's presence.

A ship, on fire for nearly two days, rushed into one of our harbours the other day. The crew were so occupied in endeavouring to extinguish the flames that they had not discovered their near approach to port in time to lessen the speed of their vessel, which collided with great force against a schooner in the harbour, and crushed its captain to death between the two ships.

Dear unsaved reader, death is a *reality*, HELL is a *reality*, ETERNITY is a *REALITY*. Oh, sinner, what power Satan has over you. He keeps you asleep when God would rouse you by such solemn warnings to think of your own soul; or if you are aroused for the moment, proves his power over you by causing you to fall asleep again. How solemn to think that he works in you (Eph. ii. 2); and his great work is to blind your mind, lest the light of the Gospel should shine unto you (2 Cor. iv. 4). Yes, dear soul, he keeps you asleep and ignorant of the deeply awful, solemn fact, that you are walking on a volcano, which at any moment may break forth

and engulf you in its depths—the cavernous depths of the LAKE of FIRE. God forbid that we should say, like some, “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace. Would we see a man asleep in a house on fire, and say to him, “Sleep on, there is no danger”? and how could we, before God, say so to you? Nay, beloved reader, we feel bound to warn you, to arouse you from your death-like sleep, because you are in the greatest danger—in danger of HELL FIRE; none the less so that you are asleep and ignorant of it. We would cry to you, and may God awaken you by the word, “What meanest thou, O SLEEPER?” Arise, arise, flee from the wrath to come. The clouds of judgment are thickening on every side, ready soon to break over this devoted world; the wrath of God is even now abiding on *you*.

Look with me at the first chapter of Jonah; what a scene in the fourth verse—a mighty tempest—the ship like to be broken—the mariners afraid, as well they might be. This is your condition. “Ready to perish.” Judgment—that terrible tempest—waiting to fall on you. Your ship like to be broken—you know not at what moment God may summon you unto His presence. Are you, like the mariners, awakened to a sense of your dangerous position? Are you “afraid” to die, “afraid” to meet God? or are you, like Jonah, still “fast asleep”? Oh, if you are, again I say, “What meanest thou, O sleeper?” What do you *mean* by sleeping when the vessel in which you sail is like to be broken by the “mighty tempest” of judgment?

Awake, awake, and see your condition—your awful condition. Behold yourself ready to be engulfed in the judgment of God. Know, sinner, that but for the longsuffering of the Lord, which is salvation, you would ere now be in the place of outer darkness, where there is “WEEPING, and WAILING, and GNASHING of TEETH,” where “their worm dieth not; and the FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.”

And now see what the awakened soul turns to when he is aroused and feels afraid of death—“They cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them.” So the sinner, aroused to a sense of his position, attempts to better it by working; by “casting forth,” as it were, some particular sins; but it is to no purpose. And why? Why could not the mariners improve their position by casting forth their wares? Ah, reader, SIN was there. Jonah was disobedient to God. The wages of SIN is DEATH. Thus all their efforts to relieve themselves, to improve their position, end in their getting into a worse state than ever. They are “EXCEEDINGLY AFRAID.” In verse 5 they are “afraid,” because they see the threatened judgment. In verse 10 they became “exceedingly afraid,” because they have found out the cause thereof. The soul that sinneth, it shall DIE. Reader, have you discovered that *you* are a *sinner*? That therefore you DESERVE to DIE? and to be cast into HELL? Do you OWN yourself a LOST, RUINED, HELPLESS, HELL-DESERVING SINNER? Oh, are you EXCEEDINGLY AFRAID? Then there is

JONAH.

hope for you. For you are awakened out of your sleep to realize your position. This is the work of God the Holy Ghost. It is Satan's work to put to sleep. Thank God if you are awakened out of that sleep. For when you know your danger we can speak of the way of escape, but it is useless to talk of escaping from danger to a man who does not know he is in it.

Well, these men ask Jonah what they shall do ; their position was becoming increasingly precarious, for the sea was growing "more and more tempestuous" (marg.), and what are they to do ? They *must cast Jonah into the sea !* Only one way of escape, and that *through death*. Sin's penalty *must* be paid, even death. But they still try to earn their salvation. Aye, they try *hard*. "They rowed HARD to bring the ship to land, but they COULD NOT." Oh, sinner, have you gone so far as this, to discover not only that you are guilty and deserving of hell, but that you CANNOT deliver yourself ? Have you discovered that you are WITHOUT STRENGTH ? Blessed be God if you have. For "WHEN we were WITHOUT STRENGTH, in due time, Christ DIED FOR the ungodly." As we get it in the type, "They took up Jonah and cast him into the sea." One goes into the waves of death and judgment for them all ; and oh, blessed result, "The sea ceased from her raging." The storm is over, the waves cease from roaring, the billows from surging. Do you ask why ? Do you say, How are God's righteous claims against sin met ? Listen to the voice of the One who has gone into death. He says : "ALL Thy

JONAH.

billows and Thy waves passed over ME." They spend their fury on Him, the holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Unlike Jonah in this respect, who suffered for his own sin, Jesus was made sin FOR US. He went under the sea of judgment for our sins. Hear Him cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Sinner, was He not forsaken for YOU? He took the cup of wrath from the hand of God, the cup that you and I deserved to drink, and **HE DRANK IT.** Not a drop remains.

" No wrath God's heart retaineth
To us-ward who believe."

Have you found out your *inability* to deliver yourself? Listen. He died that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death (that is, the Devil) and **DELIVER** them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Sinner, Jesus died to **DELIVER** you when you *couldn't deliver yourself*. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou **SHALT BE SAVED**. A work had to be done. Jesus **HAS DONE IT**. The penalty had to be paid. Jesus **HAS PAID IT**. It is finished; so that now it is no longer working or doing, no longer casting your wares into the sea, or rowing hard to bring your ship to land. **All, ALL** is already done. Done on the Cross of Christ. Salvation is of the Lord, not of works. Then

" Weary, working, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so?
Cease *your doing*, **ALL WAS DONE**
Long, long ago."

And done by Jesus, the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

JONAH.

Ah ! cannot you turn from your own miserable, uncertain works to that blessed, perfect, finished work of His, and find perfect rest in it ? " Being justified by faith, we have PEACE with God." What a word is this ! Now no longer afraid, but at peace. No longer dreading death, but longing to " depart and be with Christ, which is far better." No longer toiling, but resting. No longer fearing, but worshipping, " offering sacrifice." Oh, what a change ! and yet it is not an overdrawn picture. Not a greater change than that which takes place in the sinner, who simply believes ; For he that believeth " is PASSED from DEATH unto LIFE."

The Lord bless His own Word to you, dear reader. I leave it with you ; but I ask you in conclusion not to trifle with your immortal soul. Do not turn away from the voice of God's Spirit calling to you to awaken. Say not, like the sluggard, " yet a little sleep, and a little slumber," lest you awaken when TOO LATE to find yourself in HELL. " HOW LONG wilt thou sleep, O sluggard ? WHEN wilt thou arise from thy sleep ? " I say it solemnly, feeling how awfully true it is, that if after you have known yourself deserving of hell, you turn away from and despise the offer of God to save you from it ; if you say, " A little folding of the hands to sleep," you are courting the judgment —courting the waves and billow of the lake of fire. God forbid that you should be found doing this. May God lead you into His own presence, there to discover all that you are, and all that He is, and has shown Himself to be, in giving—

THE HEAVY LOAD AND THE LIGHT ONE.

GIVING—His Son to save you from going down into the pit, and may you be brought NOW—in the accepted time and the day of salvation—to trust in that finished work—to believe in Jesus—that you may, like the Ethiopian eunuch, “go” henceforth “on your way rejoicing.”

H. P. A. G.

THE HEAVY LOAD AND THE LIGHT ONE.

“Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matthew xi. 28).

Blessed invitation! and surely the voice of Him who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8) is still crying to weary souls to part with their *heavy load* of guilt, which must ere long seal the doom of every unrepentant soul and plunge it into the dark abyss of eternal woe. What would you think of a man returning from a far off land with his bag of hard earned gold clinging to that when the ship had gone to pieces, and trying to make for the distant shore with his heavy load? Would you not be constrained to cry out, “Drop your burden! never mind your gold! swim for your life?” And yet, dear soul, perchance you are still loathe to part with your sins, rolling them as a sweet morsel under your tongue: but do you not know that though you love them as a miser his gold, and find in them your pleasure for a season, yet will they prove but a dead weight to you, and sink you into the depths of hell? for ever shutting you

THE HEAVY LOAD AND THE LIGHT ONE.

out from the presence of Jesus, whose voice you may now hear inviting you to *rest in Him* and to share His joys throughout eternity.

Dear reader, what about your *sins*? Are they still a *pleasure* to you? then beware of the tempting bait which the god of this world holds out to you, for long experience has he had in snaring souls to the place whence there is no returning (Job x. 21), “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. xxv. 41). What if you are a ready prey of his, “taken captive by him at his will” (2 Tim. ii. 26), and shortly find your fancied enjoyment and boasted freedom a delusion, all unconscious of the deep plot that is laid for your soul by the wicked one, and of the impending judgment of a righteous God, which must soon overtake you if still in your sins.

Awake, O soul! and learn that even now the goodness of God would lead thee to repentance. If still careless, again I say beware, for “after thy hardness and impenitent heart thou art treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, despising the *riches of His goodness*, and forbearance, and longsuffering” (Rom. ii. 4, 5), which leads Him to withhold His judgment that you may be saved; and this is the testimony of God’s own word to you if only you will bow to it.

On the other hand you may have lost all pleasure in your sins and are now feeling them to be a *load*, getting heavier as they must every day in spite of all your endeavours to keep your lusts in check.

What glorious words are these, dear friend, if such be your case, “*Come unto Me all ye that*

THE HEAVY LOAD AND THE LIGHT ONE.

labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." And who is it that so invites you to come? None other than Jesus the sinner's friend, the One deputed of God to bear in His own person on the cross the terrible load of sin. And now that the work is finished, that the cup of wrath has been drained, and God's holiness has been vindicated, with what assurance can you hear the voice of the risen Saviour speaking to you, dear burdened one, "*Come unto Me and I will give you rest!*" What a right has He to bid you part with your load, and should not you be willing to let it go after what Christ the substitute from God has endured on the cross, seeing what it cost Him, even the hiding of God's face, when in that dark hour, "*Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all*" (Isa. liii. 6), when the deep waters of judgment went over His soul! Behold Him there made sin (2 Cor. iv. 21), learn that your heavy load was borne by another, by the Son of God Himself, and *come, come now, and rest in Him.*

"Weary, working, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so?

Cease your doings all was done
Long, long ago.

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

If now, dear reader, you have come to this blessed Saviour, have parted with your heavy load and are at rest, *knowing* that all your sins have been put away, *believing* that Jesus "bore

THE HEAVY LOAD AND THE LIGHT ONE.

them all in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24), then what is left for your liberated soul but still to hear the voice of Jesus, which after saying, "*Come unto Me...and rest*," goes on to say, "*Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light*" (Matt. xi. 29, 30). Light indeed to the disciple of Christ; and now that He has taken our heavy load, having borne it on the cross, and is risen from the dead free from it all—and "*as He is, so are we in this world*" (1 John iv. 17)—how gladly should we follow Him, whom this world has cast out, and share in His rejection, bearing His *yoke which is easy*, seeing that He sustains us and cheers us on! And freed from all condemnation (John v. 24) is it not our joy to be His willing slaves who set us free? whose presence with us here keeps our hearts light and happy day by day, making every storm a calm because He is here; whose grace makes us strong, and though a rugged path be ours in following Him, yet will He walk with us in it, and shall soon call us to be with Himself in that eternal rest above, where all taint of sin shall be removed, and our only load shall be a heart burdened with praise pouring itself out to Him *who washed our sins in His own blood* (Rev. i. 5), who once was bowed in death, enduring for us all the fierceness of God's wrath, standing in our stead, bearing that heavy load of guilt which we should justly have borne, having put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. ix. 26). He has left us down here for a little while to learn of Him *who is*

A FAITHFUL SON.

meek and lowly in heart, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light, to prove that the One who had saved us from judgment could keep us from falling, teaching our hearts to rest in His own love and care for us amid all the unrest of this world which passeth away.

*O fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That with Thy beauty occupied
We elsewhere none may see.*

T. E. P.

A FAITHFUL SON.

IT is for the purpose of giving you a copy of a letter written by a young man (a friend of mine) to his mother, that I write these few lines. He left London last October on board a ship bound for Calcutta, and at that time was as gay and careless as to his soul's salvation as any young man at the age of nineteen well could be. If the name of Jesus was ever mentioned to him by his relations, it most certainly was very seldom, for it is the enjoyment of this world they are seeking after, and not Christ. But the Lord sought after him, and found him on the deep ocean. The steward was a Christian, and it was through his instrumentality that the writer of this letter found the Lord ; his heart is (as you may see) so full of Christ that he gives us no information about himself. He has found Him, who alone fully and perfectly satisfies the heart, and who fills it with joy and

A FAITHFUL SON.

gladness ; and now his desire is that others may find Him. He writes as follows :

“ Written at Sea.

“ Calcutta, 4th February, 1874.

“ My dearest mother,

“ I have again arrived here, and am in the best health imaginable, as I hope this letter will find you and all my dear sisters. In this letter I am going to tell you something that I trust will make you rejoice, and which, I thank God, He has spared me to tell. You know I was on the point of not coming by this ship last voyage, but I am so glad that I did, for when I look back I can see God’s hand in it all ; for it has pleased Him to draw me by the cords of His love to believe on Jesus Christ, *my Saviour*, whom I am not ashamed to own. Oh ! dear mother, He has drawn the scales from my eyes, He has shown me my own vileness, and has given me faith to believe and be saved—aye, saved ! Oh ! how I wish that all of us, as a family, could say this. I know that my dear earthly father had this faith, and that he trusted in Christ for salvation. My prayers are for you and my dear sisters, that it may be so with them ; but, my dear mother, they are not being taught aright ; they think that by going to church, receiving the sacrament, and by their own good works, they will go to heaven. It is a fearful mistake ; they cannot be justified by the works of the law. We cannot keep the commandments. Oh, that God in His infinite mercy may show them their true state ! May He lead them to the foot of the cross, that they may trust alone in Him, whc

A FAITHFUL SON.

died for them, and washed away sins in His own precious blood. Oh, that they would believe this!

“ Dear mother, let me ask you to write at once and tell them this, and let me also ask you, Are you saved? or how do you think you can be saved? You say, If I keep the commandments, or try to keep them, I will be saved. Now, if only one commandment had to be kept for salvation, tell me who could be saved? Dear mother, redemption through the blood of Christ is a very different thing from our trying to keep the commandments. We must first have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins. Obedience will follow; not obedience to law-keeping for your salvation, for you are saved directly you believe. Oh, that I could speak more clearly. You have some indistinct thought that it is something you have to do for God that will save you. Oh, no! it is what Christ has done for us. God has said: ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the law to do them.’ And you know that you cannot continue in them. Again and again you have tried, but all in vain. You cannot even be what *you* wish, much less what God requires. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Yes; the death of Christ is God’s own remedy for sin: to deny it, or doubt it, is to make Him a liar. St Paul says, If we are justified by keeping the law, then Christ is dead

A FAITHFUL SON.

in vain. Oh, what wondrous love, dear mother, that He who know no sin, was made sin for us. How simple! So simple that people won't believe it.

" You will no doubt say, ' I do believe on Him ; I was taught to believe on Him ; but I was not taught that by *believing* I was saved everlastingly.' I wish I could clearly impress on your mind the need of a substitute. Oh, that I could get you to accept Jesus as that substitute ! Read Romans iii. 23 ; Matt. xi. 28 ; John vi. 37 ; Gal. iii. 10 ; 1 John i. 7 ; 1 Tim. i. 15 ; 1 John i. 7. My dear mother, if you believed this you would have told me long ago, and would not have seen me standing on the brink of destruction. You have other children. Warn them that they may be led to consider this important matter. What care I what the world may say ? if we are ashamed of Christ, He will be ashamed of us. And mind, it is not an easy way ; it is full of trial and trouble ; but only for a little while, and then — Oh ! when Jesus comes again to gather His saints, we will meet Him in the air ; we will be like Him for ever and ever. Cannot we, then, bear to suffer a little, and be laughed at by the world ? The servant cannot be greater than his Lord, so as Jesus was rebuked and scorned, so must we, His brethren and sisters, heirs of heaven, and joint heirs with Christ, suffer with Him. But God will give us that peace which passeth all understanding. He will dwell in us, and we will serve Him who has done all for us, and will not grieve Him.

A FAITHFUL SON.

“ My own darling mother, I hope that you and I may meet together at His personal return, when He comes for us. The day is not far off when He will come ; but we must remember that He said, ‘ Lo, I come quickly.’ He is now gathering in those ordained from the beginning to eternal life. May God, in His mercy, bless this letter to the saving of your soul, for Jesus’ sake, Amen. I hope you will read and think over what I have written. My prayers are for you and all.

“ I remain, my dear mother,
“ Your affectionate son.”

* * *

And now, beloved reader, my prayer is that the Lord may not only bless this letter to the conversion of the mother and sisters of this young man, but to you who read it, and know not that your sins have been washed away in the precious blood of Christ. May you find no rest till you can say, “ He died for me.” Oh, yes ! He died for you, and He longs to have you as His own. Do not delay any longer, I beseech you, but just come to Jesus as you are, and He will in no wise cast you out. His words are : “ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Think of the many thousands that go down to hell, having heard the Gospel, and *meaning* to come to Jesus at some more convenient season, which Satan takes good care shall never come. “ Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.” You cannot tell how much longer the Lord will wait before he closes

“ AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT.”

For ever this day of salvation ; but remember it
is either *for ever* with Jesus in the glory, or *for
ever* in that world of torment without Him.

“ For ever with the Lord !”

Amen ! so let it be ;
Life from the dead is in that word,
‘Tis immortality.”

S. P.

“ AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT.”

THEY stood without, their lamps unlit,
All else had entered there ;
And loud their wailing voices rose
In wild, yet vain despair.

“ Too late ! Too late ! ye cry in vain,
“ There’s none to ope the door ;
Depart, depart, I know ye not—
Depart for evermore.”

Weeping and desolate they stand,
For mercy’s hour is gone,
With brows of woe, yet holding still
The lamps that never shone.

The bridal halls were bright within—
The marriage feast begun—
For God was celebrating now
The marriage of His Son.

And glad the loud hosannas rung
From lips that never cease ;
And every strain was happiness,
And every thought was peace.

Without ‘twas dark, and still they stood
With trembling, pleading sighs,
And unavailing, useless prayers,
And woe that never dies.

“ HAVE YOU ACCEPTED HIM ? ”

Woe, woe, unutterable woe,
For ever, evermore ;
No refuge but the lake of fire,
For every hope is o'er.

Sinner, the door is open now,
The feast will soon begin ;
O trim your lamp, there still is time,
O enter, enter in.

H. W

“ HAVE YOU ACCEPTED HIM ? ”

“ 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.

WE have all *read* this verse over and over again, but how few *believe* it ! and yet it is so easy to understand ; I mean as to our acceptance of it. Now, dear friend, just look with me at this beautiful verse. “ God so loved.” Who was it He “ so loved ” ? His enemies—you and me, dear reader. What did this love lead Him to do ? “ He gave His only begotten Son ” (the Son who had been with Him from all eternity), “ that *whosoever believeth in Him* should *not perish*, but *have everlasting life*.” Now everyone knows the meaning of the word “ *whosoever*.” Are not you, dear reader, included in that statement ? If God had mentioned *your name* you could not be sure it was meant for you after all, because there might be someone else of the same name, but “ *whosoever* ” includes *all*.

The commandant of —— Prison was to give pardon to five of the prisoners ; they were all assembled, anxiously waiting to know which

"HAVE YOU ACCEPTED HIM?"

were the pardoned ones. The commandant rose and said: "I have five pardons for five prisoners; the first is for Joshua Huxley." He of course expected Joshua would immediately answer, but no one came forward. Again he called, "Joshua Huxley," and again a third time. At last some one at his side said, pointing to the man, "That is Joshua Huxley." "Why do you not answer to your name?" asked the commandant. "Oh, sir," said he, "I did not think it could mean *me*. I was waiting, thinking it meant some one else of the same name."

Now God has no limit to His pardon. He does not promise pardon to a certain number, but leaves us no excuse for doubt. He says: "*Whosoever believeth*," nothing more. You say "*I don't feel I am saved*." Ah, now, you must begin to reason, and put your own thoughts before God's. God did not say "*Whosoever feels this or that*." He simply says, "*Believe, and you have everlasting life*." It is so simple. *Believe. Hath. Nothing to do.* "*They that are in the flesh cannot please God*." You must come to God *just as you are*, with all your sins, and all your *bad* deeds, pleading what Jesus Christ *has done* for you by shedding His precious blood, and because of what *Jesus has done*, God will *accept you*. All that had to be *done* to meet God's righteous requirements was *done fully* by the Lord Jesus Christ, and "*raised from the dead*," He now offers to you life, pardon, salvation, and nothing to do!

It is no use waiting till you are *better* to come to Jesus: it will only be with you as it was with

“HAVE YOU ACCEPTED HIM?”

the poor woman who had an infirmity twelve years—she got “nothing better, but rather grew worse,” and as it is in the hymn—

“ If you tarry till you’re better
You will never come at all.”

It is to “him that *worketh not* but *believeth*” that salvation is given. What could the thief on the cross do to save himself? He just owned Jesus as Lord, believed He could save him, and Jesus said: “*To-day* shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.”

A gentleman was hurrying for a train, but through his watch being *two* minutes slow, he lost it. The thought came into his mind, “I’ll walk on to the next station.” As he went he saw a young man walking from the rectory. He went up to him, and asked him the question, “Where is your rector?” “He is dead,” said the young man. “And did he preach Christ?” “Yes,” he replied. “Well, my friend, have you accepted Him?” The young man seemed indignant, and there was a struggle going on in his mind. “Now, my friend,” said this gentleman, “don’t reason. Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead). But what saith it? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart;—that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’ Now,”

“A MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHT, SIR!”

added the gentleman, “do you believe in Him ? It is just as simple as that,—do you accept Jesus for your Saviour ?” A strange light broke upon the young man’s countenance. With his whole heart he replied : “Yes, sir, I do,” and “he went on his way *rejoicing.*” One minute a *lost* sinner, the next *saved*, safe *for ever*, “*shall not* come into condemnation.” God only offers you mercy to-day—you know not what may take place before to-morrow. I have heard of two cases lately, one of a man saved at three o’clock in the morning, and before twelve there was an explosion in the mine where he worked, and before they could get to him he died. The other, a young woman, saved one night ; the next morning crushed to death. *To-day*, then, I beseech you, accept God’s offer of salvation

“ ‘ Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distressed ?
Come to Me,’ saith one, ‘ and coming
Be at rest.’

If I ask Him to receive me
Will He say me ‘ Nay ? ’
Not till earth, and not till heaven
Pass away ! ”

M. J. E. B.

“A MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHT, SIR!”

It was Saturday night. I was travelling by rail from W—— to S—— for the Lord’s Day. At E—— stood a number of young volunteers, many of whom got into the carriage in which I was, and some lighting cigars and

“A MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHT, SIR!”

pipes, my first thought was to get into another carriage; but immediately these words rested on my mind: “There’s need here,” and I stayed.

As the train moved on I began to offer tracts to my fellow-passengers, which all received—some laughingly, others with soberness.

One young man was evidently interested in what he was reading, and when he had read the tract through, handed it back to me, and asked for another, which I gave him, and which he also read. When he had finished it he told me that he with the rest had just returned from a review of all the volunteers in the county, on H—— Common.

“It was a most impressive sight, sir; a fine sight for young volunteers!” and with all the enthusiasm of youth he went on to describe the evolutions, the effect upon himself and others, &c., and wound up by telling me how the commanding officer complimented them upon the soldierlike manner in which they had acquitted themselves.

I listened till he finished the account. We were nearing H——, the junction at which I must change, and the train was already slackening speed.

“You have told me,” I said, “of a sight which you felt to be *most impressive*, though only the gathering of a few thousand men; but there is a sight far, far more impressive than the one of which you have spoken, which you and I *must* see one day—*the dead, small and great, standing before God; the books opened, and*

MPRESSIVE SIGHT, SIR! ”

the dead judged out of those things that are written in the books! That will be an impressive sight, indeed! Where will it find YOU?”

The train had come to a stand. I spoke not another word, save, after a solemn pause, “ good night.”

As I left him the expression of great solemnity was upon his countenance.

Unsaved reader, where will it find YOU?

R. H. G.

WHY EVERYBODY SHOULD LOVE JESUS.

IT is related of one of Dr. Doddridge’s children, who was a general favourite, that she was one day asked by her father why everybody loved her? when she simply but beautifully replied, “ I do not know, unless it be because I love everybody.”

Is not this sweet child’s answer the very reason why everyone should love Jesus, because He loves everybody? Was it not a great proof of His love shown in a wonderfully earnest way when He came down from heaven, took upon Himself our sins; yea, verily, bore our sins in His own Body on the tree, so that by His stripes we are healed? Let us add to this the remembrance that, while we were yet sinners, rebels, cold-hearted towards Him; when not a spark of holy love lodged in our hearts, nor a thought was lifted up towards Him; nay, more, were hardening our hearts against God’s truth and love—even then He loved with a yearning love, and “ gave Himself for us.”

J. W. B.

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

“The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me? . . . And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And He said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto Him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.”—GEN. xv. 1-11.

“If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”—ROM. iv. 2-3.

ROMANS iv. is the Divine comment on Genesis xv.—“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” He believed God. Now there is not one person who has not thought at some time in his or her history that he or she had something to do to be saved. Christian, did not you think so? “Yes,” you answer; “I always thought I had something to do, until I saw that Christ had died, and done everything for me.” Yes, He has died and done everything, and therefore if the Word of the Lord comes to me and tells me the work is finished, I have nothing to do but to believe it. When God’s Word appeals to you—addresses you—be like Abraham; *believe it.*

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

God first says to Abraham, “*Fear not.*” And why? Because, He says, “I am thy Shield.” Is it not a blessed thing to have God for your shield? The soul that has God for its shield is securely sheltered; though Satan let fly his most fiery darts, they fall harmless to the ground—they cannot touch it.

God is coming to Abraham in *grace*, in this chapter, and Abraham is before God in *need*; and if you, dear unsaved one, are to get blessing you must take the place of a sinner in need. And what do you need? You need pardon, you need salvation, you need grace, you need to be washed from your sins, you need just what God has got for you. And God is ready to *GIVE* you just what you need. God Himself is the Fountain, the Source of the supply; the Gospel comes out from the heart of the Eternal God. Peace is preached unto you, but where does that healing stream rise which sweetly soothes the troubled conscience? It rises in the bosom of the Eternal God.

Well wrote the poet:—

“The Father’s boundless love we sing,
The fountain! whence our blessings spring;
How great the depth, how high it flows,
No saint can tell, no angel knows.

Its length and breadth no eye can trace,
No thought explore the bounds of grace;
The love that saved our souls from hell
Transcends the creature’s power to tell.”

“*Fear not,*” is the word which He loves to speak to the heart of the empty, troubled one.

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

Do you ask, “What will He say to me?” “Fear not.” “But I am afraid.” “Fear not.” “But I am unfit for God.” He knows it well. “Fear not.” He seems to say, “I will throw my sheltering wing over you.” And oh! what can give the sense of protection like that? The moment you know God is on your side, though the devil may accuse you and man may upbraid you, and your own conscience may convict you, you can go to God, and say, like Abraham, “Lord God, what wilt *Thou* give me?”

Abraham takes his true place, that of a needy soul before God. It is the picture of a thoroughly upright soul who takes the place of nothingness, and goes to God with its need. Then the Word of the Lord came to him again, and God brings out Abraham, and there towards the starry firmament He points, and says: “Look now TOWARD HEAVEN, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. . . . So shall thy seed be. **AND HE BELIEVED IN THE LORD;** and He counted it to him for righteousness.” And what, dear friend, does your soul stand in need of? And where are you bid to look for all the blessings you need? Toward heaven. Is it Look within? No, Toward heaven. “*Look unto me,*” He says, and faith, sweetly responsive, pierces the cloud; yes, faith unfolds her wings, soars aloft, and never droops her pinions till at the feet of Jesus she calmly rests. Faith says Jesus has died for me. He has done it all, and I trust Him. Oh, dear one, “Look now.” God never says, “Look to-morrow.” To-morrow is not thine; to-morrow may find thee no longer

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

on earth, but thy guilty soul plunged for ever in an everlasting hell.

“*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness,*” and if you believe God you will get the blessing too. “*If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,*” blessing is ours. God calls you now to believe, to look, not as Abraham to the stars—you are to look beyond the stars. God bids you look at that precious Saviour once on the Cross for sins, but now alive and in the glory, to look to Him and be saved. His heart lingers over thee in love now. He will bless thee now if thou wilt take thy true place, a ruined, wretched sinner at the feet of the Lord. If a soul takes its true place in need, God comes out in grace, calling on it to “believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for *our offences*, and raised again for *our justification.*”

Abraham was called on to believe what God was *going to do*. You and I are called on to believe what God *has done*. Abraham *believed God*. Everything was against him, but he believed God, and I think there are not three finer words in Scripture recorded of any soul than these three. There was Abraham in his littleness, and God in His greatness, but there was an indissoluble link formed that day between Abraham and God—a link that could never, never after be snapped asunder.

Another thing comes out then in this 15th of Genesis—not merely blessing, but *inheritance*. “The stars” tell of heavenly blessings. When

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

I know that Christ bore my sins in His own body on the tree I can look up and see Him by faith at God’s right hand, and enjoy all that I possess in Him.

“Abraham believed God,” do you? The great point of the first part of Romans iv. is that you count God worthy of being believed—you credit what He says, and you stand before God, linked with God, and justified by Him. He espouses your cause, because you trust Him. First, I get unfeigned confidence in what God says, then God enables me to know why I am so sure of blessing. It was the grace of God that gave Abraham the blessing, and it is the grace of God that gives you pardon to your soul. Then Abraham gets the perfect knowledge of the ground of the blessing. *Sacrifice.* Why do I draw near to God? Because of the sacrifice. How are my sins put away? By the sacrifice. A sacrifice that you have made? No! but which God has provided. God’s Word is what reaches my soul first of all. Then I want to know by what right I can know my sins are forgiven. And He says: “Take Me an heifer,” &c, *i.e.* because of the sacrifice. Peace springs from the work of Jesus. He “made peace by the blood of His Cross.” The *WORD of God*, and the *work of Christ* are the pillars of my peace. The *work* was completely done by the blessed Jesus, and with His dying breath the last *word* for us He left on earth was “Finished.” But rising from the dead, what was His first word? “*Peace.*” His last word was “Finished,” His first word, returning to bless, was “*Peace.*” What a solid foundation for faith to repose on!

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

But Abraham inquires, “Lord God, whereby shall I *know* that I shall inherit it? And He said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove and a young pigeon.” You ask, Why the five; would not one have been sufficient as a sacrifice? I believe it would; but that these express the difference in the grasp souls get of the value of the work of Christ. I look back at the cross of Jesus and I may have a very feeble view of Christ; that would be the pigeon: but I might get by the side of a saint who has a stupendous grasp of the value of the work of Christ, that would be like the heifer. Which is the safest, the cleanest? the one who has the feeble grasp of Christ and His work, or the one who has the mighty grasp of it? You reply, I should think the one that has the largest grasp of Christ. Then you think perfectly wrong, because it is *Christ* the soul has hold of; however feeble your faith may be, one look at Christ links your soul with Him and that link can never be broken. Heaven may be shaken, and earth shall be shaken, but you shall never be shaken who have put your trust in Christ. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word shall not pass away; “he that believeth on Me *hath* everlasting life.”

But most likely you will answer, I have such doubts and fears. Listen then, “And when the fowls came down upon the carcases Abram drove them away.” The fowls are figures of Satan, and Satan’s powers, and he will always try to disturb your view of Christ. “Abram drove

“ ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD.”

them away,” and that is what you must do. Do not allow Satan’s suggestions a place for a moment ; his one object is to prevent your eye being fixed on Christ. Rest simply on what God has said, and Christ has done, and what is the result ? Peace, peace about the past because Christ’s work is so perfect that I cannot add to it. God has accepted that work for me and I will rest in it, and the Saviour that did it, and I have peace with God ; and more, I am a justified soul. If I look at the past it is peace. Peace about my sins because they are cancelled by Christ, and I believe it, and my soul has a link with God ; the sins that used to come between God and me have been borne by Christ, and now God has nothing at all against me. “Being justified by faith we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this *grace* (or favour) wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the *glory* of God.”

Think of it I pray you, how beautiful to know you stand in the favour of God. You stand according to the acceptance of Christ. You have a right to the presence of God ; the blood of Christ gives you that right. God’s favour rests upon you, because you trust Christ, and you “rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Hope never means uncertainty in Scripture. We are not uncertain as to whether we will get it or not, we know the glory belongs to us, because the gift of God has made it ours. Oh ! believe now—listen to His own words :—“The glory which thou gavest me I have given them ;

"ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD."

that they may be one, even as we are one." It is a gift. How do I know that I shall be in the glory by and bye? Because it is my Saviour's gift to me. How do I know my sins are washed away? Because my Saviour died for me. How do I know God's favour rests on me? Because I stand accepted in Christ. The moment you come to Jesus, His blood cleanses you from all sin and that moment you are as fit for the glory of God, as the blood of Christ can make you. I get peace, deep peace about the *past*, grace for the *present*,—I know His love for me and rejoice in it—and glory for the *future*, my Saviour's gift to me.

Beloved reader, let me beseech you to decide to be the Lord's now. If you still persist in unbelief, never expect to hear the Gospel again. Why? If you are cut off in your sins and damned for eternity, will you not deserve it? Oh! look to Him now—believe on Him now, and do not be ashamed to confess Him, and to own to all that He is your Saviour.

This year you began and have continued in unbelief, oh let it not so depart. Is not God worthy of being believed? Surely. Is not the Lord Jesus worthy of you heart's affections? Most surely. Shall He not have both your confidence and affection? Would to God that I could hear you respond again, Surely, most surely; "I believe God." W. T. P. W.



“ IS HE SAVED ? ”

“ OH ! I could bear it if I only knew that he was saved ! ” was the awe-stricken cry of the new-made widow during most of the six long hours I spent with her.

It must have been between six and seven years since I had last seen her ; at that interview I hoped she had found peace of conscience through the finished work of Christ, but she went on with the world, while, through the Lord’s great grace, His aggressive love had in some small measure separated me to Himself, and so the distance between us had widened ; but now, in answer to the single word “ Come ” on a post-card, I found myself once more with her—the high-born woman of fashion, now utterly desolate—a widow indeed. Oh ! what a mockery did all the luxury of refinement and wealth seem to the stern reality of her agony. I read death, death, death, on each beautiful object in her stately rooms.

Desolate, bereaved, widowed, her own side of her sorrow was lost sight of, in this deeper anguish, the *too late* care for his soul—“ Is he saved ? ” Again and again she went over with me each shred of hope, memory hunting up the feeblest expression of trust. “ If I had but cared for his soul as I did for his body,” was but one among the many utterances of her remorse. She was quite past cheating herself into any false hope. The memory of his upright, honourable, spotless career (and it was all this) was

“IS HE SAVED?”

quite thrown into shade now, for pleasant to nature only could it be as the one cry of her heart were met. She knew—deep down in her own soul she knew—that personal heart contact with the living Lord who had died—that real living faith in His blood shed, alone could avail. She knew that though it takes but “little” to save, that that “little” is a reality, and she could not deceive herself, much as her strong love wished it; she *could* not put aught in the place of the touch of living faith in the “Blood that cleanses from all sin.” The remembrance of goodness, of sacraments, and of prayers, could satisfy her not; what was needed to comfort her mourning heart alas! was wanting.

Only you who have seen the like can have any idea of what it is to come face to face with such hopeless woe. I could but commend her silently to Him who is the answer to fear and woe, as I had the anguish of meeting over and over again her questioning agony with a terrible silence only too eloquent; and by-and-by to press on her her loss, in letting this come between Christ and her soul.

And now, you who read, I ask you, *Are you saved?* Ah! do not shirk my question, do not deceive yourself with a careless “No one can know,” for, you *may* know, thousands *do* know, do positively, certainly know, and why not you? and more, be assured of this—that if you really do want to know, you most certainly will, for the Lord never sends any needy one empty away.

“ IS HE SAVED ? ”

This one did not despise God's salvation, far from it: to use his own words, “ I believe every word of the Bible ; ” he went to church, took the sacrament, honoured God outwardly—but what of that which went on within ? No, no, he did not despise, his profession was all right—he only “ neglected.” Are you “ neglecting ? ” Quite possibly you do not despise, but what about *neglecting* ? It is written, “ How shall we escape if we *neglect* so great salvation ” ? It is God's salvation. Do you care for it ? or, do you neglect it ? Christ Jesus came to seek sinners. He was down here,—think of it,—did actually walk up and down on this earth—the Perfect One, in the midst of sinners, seeking to win back the hearts of such to Himself. A few only would have Him ; others cried “ Crucify Him ; ” the most *neglected*—with indifference neglected Him, Pilate to wit.

His word of grace was then, and is to-day , “ Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ; ” and again, “ Him that cometh unto Me I will in *no wise cast out.* ” Do you say, “ How can I come ? ” Well, the way to come is very simple, it is just *to believe Him*,—take Him at His word, and you will prove that He is as good as His word ; but again, remember it is written, “ How shall we escape if we NEGLECT so great salvation ? ”

God has *a* way, not many ways, back to Himself—*one* only way, *the* way, Christ Jesus. Hear His words, “ I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Again I ask you, have you come to God, by God's way—the way Christ Jesus ? No other

"IS THE SAVED?"

way will do. To refuse God's way is to refuse your own way. He waits to be gracious, but see to it that you neglect not this great salvation. The blessed Son of God did die, in order to make a way back to God for "sinners in disgrace;" and do you think that the death of the Son of His love is a *light* thing in God's sight? It is *everything*. That cross was the place where the question of sin was settled; there that Blessed One, the Lord Jesus, went through all the wrath of God, the hiding of His face, that we might be brought back to God. That death of the Son of His love is God's measure of sin. Blessed be His name, He gave Himself and now "*whosoever will*" may have everlasting life; mark, it is "*whosoever will*"—will you? But what if you "*neglect*"? "*There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*" "*There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*"

And to you who talk of "hoping you are saved," and say "If only I had assurance," let me tell you that it is ever God's mind that His own should know the peace and rest of a present salvation; if you do believe, and yet are a doubting one, the fault lies in yourself. And now what is the hindrance? May be, you are trying to go on with God and the world; if so, no wonder you do not know peace—the enjoyment of God's favour and the love of the world *cannot go on together*. I speak from experience, for I have tried it.

S. S.

THE ARK.

THROUGHOUT Scripture we cannot find a more beautiful and striking type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners, than we have in the ark. In the days of Noah sin so abounded that God could suffer it no longer, and was, so to speak, forced to sweep from off the face of the earth all who would not take warning, but who went heedlessly on in their own ways, fearing not God. But God in His love, willing to save, prepared an ark by the hands of Noah, and when we consider the length of time taken to build the ark, the longsuffering of God is magnificently set forth. One word from God and the ark could have been in readiness ; but not so, one man is put to work, and plenty of time is given for all to hear of the coming flood and this place of refuge. Every nail driven was not only a warning voice, but a gracious invitation to believe and live. But, oh ! solemn thought, thorough indifference reigned ; the voice of Noah fell upon their ears as rain upon the flinty rock, opinions passing, most likely, from one to another upon the weakness of mind and folly of Noah. They would not believe the message from God ; God can justly say, "I would, but ye would not." But after one hundred and twenty years, or thereabouts, of warning, the time was up—God's longsuffering came to an end ; the ark was finished, all the animals God wished saved were gathered into the ark, then Noah, his wife and family, "and the Lord shut him in" (Gen. vii. 16). The door was shut.

Dear unsaved one, what a voice of warning is this to you! Forget not that God's word is as true to-day as it was in the days of Noah. Christ is now the Ark of God, prepared by God upon Calvary's Cross, while He was nailed to that accursed tree. Oh, what a voice to the sons of men! nails driven through those precious blessed hands and feet of the adorable Lamb of God, and all, all to prepare an ark for sinners. And yet innumerable are the souls who treat all this work of God with indifference, who think of none of these things. But God is not mocked; the day is fast approaching when He will again shut to the door, and those who have not entered into the Ark must be left outside for judgment, for there is no other way of escape. In the days of Noah some might have climbed to the top of the highest mountain, but all was of no use; the ark was the only place of safety. And so it is now, dear reader; no safety out of Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1); but all who have heard the Gospel and who are not in Him must perish. "But how am I to get into Christ?" you may ask. Well, I will tell you the way. Christ is the way; Christ is the door; Christ is the ark. Come to Him. "Him that cometh to Me (says the Lord Jesus Christ) I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). He will take you in if you will only come to Him; the only hindrance is with yourself; ye will not come to Him. How often has the blessed Lord to say, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life" (John v. 40). Other vessels

THE ARK.

may be afloat very like an ark. Beware of anything short of Christ, the Ark of God. Religion is not the ark, neither are prayers—nothing short of Christ. “By Me (says the blessed Lord) if any man enter in he shall be saved” (John x. 9).

This is a very simple warning and invitation; but, dear unsaved one, it is another message to you, and adds to your responsibility if you go on without Christ.

In these days men are treating God’s message of love very much like the people in the days of Noah. Look, for instance, at one of God’s beloved servants standing in the street, crying with a loud voice, “Judgment is approaching; believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” One and another will venture forward for a minute, and then turn away as if from an idle tale; others with scornful indifference pass by as if they would not deign to look upon one so foolish, and haughtily refuse to accept a tract containing the glad tidings of God; but, dear reader, “it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe” (1 Cor. i. 21). Again God must say, “I would, but ye would not.” Many tell you they are doing the best they can. What would doing of any kind, good or bad, have availed for those in the days of Noah outside the ark? Nothing, dear reader, nothing; neither will doing of any kind serve those who are not in Christ. You may say, “But I am working to get in.” Did God ask the people in the days of Noah to work to get into the ark? Distinctly not. What God asked them was simply to believe the message that

LOVE GREAT, AND PURE, AND TRUE.

they were lost and ruined, and ere long judgment would overtake them, and directed them to the ark as the only place of safety ; and God's message is the same to-day. Sinner, you are lost and ruined ; get into the Ark, else you will perish. Oh, believe the message ; go at once to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, and He will take you in just as you are and land you safe in glory. He loves you, and in love beseeches you to take refuge in Him, the Ark of God.

“ O'er mountain, hill, and vale,
Glides safely on
The ark. ”

How high the billows rise,
But higher is
The ark. ”

The wind blows strong and keen,
But stronger is
The ark. ”

How safe, how very safe,
Are all within
The ark ! ”

L. S.

LOVE GREAT, AND PURE, AND TRUE.

“ The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

O NEVER could the human heart
Conceive a love so *great*
As that displayed by Jesus Christ,
Who stooped to man's estate,
To bear his sin, to bear his woo,
And suffer in his stead ;
For man—O miracle of love !
For guilty man His bled !

LOVE GREAT, AND PURE, AND TRUE.

O never could the human heart
Conceive a love so *pure*
As that which brought the Son of God
Man's judgment to endure.
Ah, yes! for man He bled—He died,
Rebellious guilty man;
Sure no such love has e'er been known
Since time its course began!

O never could the human heart
Conceive a love so *true*
As that which man's unrighteousness
From Christ the Saviour drew;
For though it cost His precious blood
To save the guilty soul,
He gave His life—He gave His all:
What love unspeakable!

O may such wondrous love exert
Its mighty power in me;
May I, the saved, at such a price,
Live only, Lord, to Thee;
Thy witness in this dark, dark world,
Thy name to glorify,
Till Thou shalt place the crown on me
In yon bright courts on high.

That crown of life Thy blood hath won
For all who look to Thee;
That crown of glory, crown of joy,
Thy gifts so large and free.
Once in the distance, now brought nigh,
Accepted, loved, forgiven;
Ah, mine shall be the sweetest praise
In all the courts of heaven!

A. M.

FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS.

THE answer of Paul and Silas, in *Acts xvi.*, to the jailor at Philippi in reply to his troubled question, “What must I do to be saved?” is of immense import. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” said they, “and thou shalt be saved” (ver. 31).

Now when the sinner’s faith is directed to another, the Lord Jesus Christ, it is clearly implied that there is nothing whatever in himself to rest upon or to look to. Solemn truth! man—the sinner—is *ruined*. Such is the testimony of Scripture. Were man capable of helping himself in the matter of salvation in any way, the call to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ would have no meaning.

The jailor believed himself lost, and trembling from head to foot, fell down at the apostles’ feet, asking a question which showed beyond doubt that he felt somewhat of the reality of being an undone one.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” is God’s answer to the sinner’s troubled cry, “What shall I do to be saved?”

Now let us look at this a moment. The sinner can do *nothing*. God calls upon him to repent, that is, to judge himself in the light of His presence, which discloses the sinner’s guilt. This is the very opposite of doing anything. There being repentance towards God, the next thing is faith towards the Lord Jesus. And oh, how blessed! God asks him to believe on His

A WILLING AND A WAITING GOD.

Son—and why? First, because he is ruined in himself, and, secondly, because that Peerless One, who is God over all, became a man, and in infinite love died for lost ones, went down into the tomb, triumphed over death, and was raised by the glory of the Father and set on the throne above. All then has been done by Jesus—“done as God would have it done.”

Art thou, reader, anxious about thy soul, earnestly desiring salvation? Well, here it is—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

T. T. E.

A WILLING AND A WAITING GOD.

“*This is THE WILL of Him that sent Me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*”—JOHN vi. 40.

“*God our Saviour, who will (is willing to) have all men to be saved.*”—1 TIM. ii. 4.

“*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, NOT WILLING (not taking counsel) that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*”—2 PETER iii. 9.

“*The longsuffering of God WAITED in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.*”—1 PETER iii. 20.

“*And therefore will the Lord WAIT, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you.*”—IS. xxx. 18.

“*The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.*”—2 PETER iii. 15.

Yes, dear unsaved reader, He cares for you! He longs after you! He is waiting for you! And the very fact that while numbers around have

A WILLING AND A WAITING GOD.

been called during the past year from time to Eternity—from the world and its feverish haste and excitement to meet God—you have been spared to this the last month of 1874—spared to hear once more of a Saviour's love, and once more have repeated to you the offer of forgiveness, life, and glory in Him—proves that in His longsuffering grace and love, *God is still willing, and still waiting to save you!* The all-important question for your soul now is—Are you willing to be saved? or do you want to go on still with a God-forgetting, Christ-rejecting world?

What if you had been one of that vast number who have had to face death during the past year? Ah, you shrink from the thought! It is one of dread—of uncertainty—of gloom—and you seek to push it aside. You are *not* ready to die. You are not ready to meet God. You are *not* saved, and you know it! And so you cannot bear to think that there is a time coming when life's dearest and strongest ties must be broken; when the lights of earth will be quenched; its music silent; its flowers dead; and when, wearied and unsatisfied with all its hollow vanities, you will have dropped out of its crowded ranks to die! Oh! in view of that solemn moment—that moment when you will have to face God, to pass out of Time, to enter Eternity—I beseech you to pause and consider your terrible condition! With sin unforgiven—with eternal life unsecured—with Eternity at hand—how can you hurry on through life so heedless and indifferent? How can you calmly face each new day or year, while every one is bringing you nearer and nearer

A WILLING AND A WAITING GOD.

to a Christless Eternity—to judgment to come—to “blackness of darkness for ever”? What a terrible road this is along which you are travelling! What a fearful goal to which you are hastening. And it is from this God is waiting to save you. He “is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance.” Each passing day greets you with a welcome from Him—each throb of your heart is a moment given you by Him to accept Christ and be eternally saved! Oh, will you not do so *now*? Shall not “His great love”—His patient waiting—His longsuffering grace—win your heart? There is no reluctance on His part; let there be none on yours! “God *so loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” And now we can sing—

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

But more than this, He is *waiting* to save. As of old we read “He *waited* in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (1 Peter iii. 20), so He is waiting now for you. Staying back with one hand, as it were, the heavy lurid cloud of judgment which is hanging over this doomed world, while the other is stretched out in loving entreaty and welcome to guilty sinners. Before it is too late, then, I entreat you to awake from your sleep of indifference. Listen to His own words: “Behold, I stand at

A WILLING AND A WAITING GOD.

the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20). How often has He knocked at your heart during the past year ? You and He alone know. But you have not yet responded to *one* appeal ! Your heart is still closed ; He is still outside ; and in matchless grace He is still waiting — still seeking admission, and still desiring to find a place and a home there. Oh, do not delay any longer. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Open to Him *now* ; receive Him to-day ; and receive in Him every blessing that God can give. "As many as *received* *Him*, to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (John i. 12). "And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17).

And now in these last days of the old year, we who are His children ; we who have proved His willingness to save ; we who are lifting up our heads in joyful expectancy, knowing that "our redemption draweth nigh," unitedly make *one appeal more* ; and entreat you to accept Christ *now*, while we echo the message which God is sending out to every unsaved soul throughout the length and breadth of the land—COME ! From the "far country" of sin, and ruin, and destitution—"Come!" From the fading, unreal, unsatisfying world—"Come!" From the "broken cisterns" of earthly pleasure which can hold no water—"Come!"

" Come to the Saviour now :
He ready stands to bless ;

WAITING FOR YOU.

No bids thou nothing bring—
Only thy guilt confess."

Come to the Fountain of Living Waters and quench your soul-thirst for ever! Come to the Father's house, with its joy, its beauty, its abundance; yea, come to the Father's *heart*—that heart which has all these years been following you with its changeless love, and is still yearning over you, not willing that you should perish, but WILLING and WAITING to save—to satisfy and to bless!

A. S. O.



FRAGMENTS.

"THE certainty that God will *never* remember our sins and iniquities is founded on the stedfast will of God, on the perfect offering of Christ, now consequently seated at the right hand of God, and on the sure testimony of the Holy Ghost. It is a matter of *faith* that God will *never* remember our sins."

"WHEN we begin as sinners with a Saviour, our journey is wonderful and glorious beyond all thought, for sin leads us to Christ, and then Christ leads us to the Father. And what a path that is! It stretches all along from the darkest and most distant places of creation, where sin and death reign, up to the highest heavens, where love and glory dwell and shine for ever."

WAITING FOR YOU.

“And therefore will the Lord *wait*, that He may be gracious unto you.”—ISAIAH xxx. 18.

In the gladsome light of morning,
'Mid its music and its song ;
While your heart is fresh and hopeful
Knowing nought of wreck or wrong.
From the storm-cloud in the distance,
Stealing o'er life's tranquil sea,
Some have fled to Him for refuge,
And He *waits* to shelter *thee* !

By some “well” of earthly pleasure,
In the noontide hour of life,
Once He waited with the offer
Of an “everlasting life.”
But you passed Him by unheeding,
Drinking deeper draughts anew ;
But He knows you still are thirsting,
So He's *waiting still* for you !

From the shades of evening falling
O'er a life grown grey with care,
He would lead thee to a region
Ever bright, and ever fair !
All these years He has been calling,
Longing sore to set thee free ;
Now 'mid darkness, storm, and trouble
He is *waiting still for thee* !

Do not keep Him any longer,
For the day will soon be past ;
And His voice of gentle pleading
Will be heard no more at last !
Soon the night of wrath and judgment,
From which now He bids thee flee,
Will o'ertake you in its blackness,
And He'll wait no more for thee !

A. S. O.