

# GOD CARES;

And other Gospel Narratives.

By X.

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## God Cares.

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“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.

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“AND did you come six miles that day on purpose to see me, a poor fellow that you had never seen, and knew nothing about, except that he was sick and in trouble?”

“Yes, I came on purpose to see you, and was very glad to come. You know I was asked to come by Mr S., who thought perhaps you would listen to God’s Word if a lady came and read it to you.”

“And do you really tell me you know no one else in all this big place, and came six miles for me alone, a poor man, who can never do anything for you in

return, and who never has done anything to win such kindness ? ”

“ It is true ; I know no one here but you. But you make far too much of my kindness, as you call it. I am glad to come, and bring you God’s message out of His own Word ; and the greatest joy I could have, would be to see you receiving His message of pardon and love, and showing to Him the gratitude you so freely show to me, whose interest is so small compared with His.”

A moment or two of silence followed ; then in a low trembling voice the sick man said : “ Perhaps I have been a fool all my life. . . . Perhaps my thoughts have been all wrong together. . . . Perhaps after all *God cares*. . . . *If you could care, maybe He cares.*”

“ ‘ God *so loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Is not that caring ? ”

“ Will you come and see me—not on a visiting day—when I am alone, and can listen without the distraction of so many round ? ”

Gladly I promised to try and get permission to

go and see him quietly, and left him for that day, feeling sure that the Spirit of God had begun to work, by opening his heart to take in the possibility even of God's love, and that He who had begun would carry on His work.

The subject of these few pages was a man about thirty-five years of age, who was lying very ill in one of our large hospitals. Though a bookbinder by trade, and in good work, and though belonging to a respectable family, and himself a very intelligent man, yet, strange to say, he could not read, which surprised me very much. A few of the capital letters he knew, perhaps nearly all of them, but he could not read sufficiently to make out a verse of Scripture even.

I had been asked to go and see him by a perfect stranger, who found out in a remarkable way that I was in the habit of going to one of the hospitals, though I had never been to this one. Thus the strangeness of the way in which I was sent, made me feel as though the Lord had a purpose of blessing in store for this man's soul, and was going to let me be to him a "messenger of peace."

It was this assurance which kept me from being

altogether dismayed, when, at my first visit, I found round his bed his wife, a quiet, respectable woman, two young children, and a baby in arms, and also a fellow-workman. How can I speak before all these? I thought: it seemed so like intrusion; and then the word came to me, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong, and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee," and I went forward.

I had heard of him as believing, that if there were a God, He was too mighty, and lived too far off, to take any thought about the sufferings, or sorrows, or sins either, of His creatures down here; that chance was pretty much the God of this world; and every one must just do the best he could for himself during his life; and the end was "a leap in the dark." Of there being any hereafter he had considerable doubt.

I introduced myself as best I could, probably very clumsily, for I felt anything but at home. The beds each side of his had several visitors round them, and a great many were in the ward, and the place was altogether strange; but I remember I said I had been asked to come and see him by Mr S.,

whom he knew, and that as I had come from a distance, though I saw he had other friends with him, I thought I would not like to go away again without having a few words with him.

His fellow-workman had risen to give me his chair, and Robert R., the sick man, said, "Take it, ma'am, my mate is going away in a few minutes back to his work."

"Then," I said, "I will not disturb his talk with you," for I saw they were speaking in a low tone together. "I will go round to the other side and wait, and your wife will show me her babies," for indeed all three were little more than babies.

A little talk about her children, and a few words of sympathy, soon made the woman open her heart to me as to an old friend. From her I learned that her husband had been already many weeks in the hospital, a neglected cold having settled on his lungs before he had any advice, and now she feared he was "pretty far gone in consumption."

From her, too, I found out that she was the daughter of Christian parents, and though she had not given God a thought during her married life, and was herself unconverted, yet now that she feared

her husband might be going to die, the pious teaching of her godly parents came back to her.

She knew her husband was all wrong ; knew there was a God by whom actions are weighed ; knew too that there was a hereafter, when each soul must give an account of itself to God—to the God slighted and forgotten, and kept at a distance down here, when He had given His Son to bridge over that distance, and to bring the soul to Himself.

“ I know he is not prepared to die,” she said, “ but I am not fit to speak to him myself. He could not listen to me, for he knows I have lived just as he has lived, though I knew better. Perhaps if I had been different he would have been different ; but, oh ! if I only knew his soul was safe, I could bear my trouble better. I am thankful to God, and to you, ma’am, if you have come to speak to him about his soul.”

By this time Robert’s friend had left him, and I took his place by his side. I wondered if he could be so very ill ; to me he seemed to have so much life and energy about him. I told him again who had asked me to come, and asked him one or two questions about his illness. He answered me very

frankly ; told me he did not fret about himself, “for,” he said, “I am nursed, and tended, and cared for in every way here, but I do fret over my poor wife and the children. It’s a sore job when the bread-winner is cut down. There’s one thing comes specially hard upon us—my wife could get plenty of good work, but she cannot leave the babies. If only she could keep our eldest girl at home from school to take care of them, she could earn enough to fill all their mouths, but she has already been fined by the School Board for keeping her at home while she went out to work, though she had to get food for them.”

Finding out the parish, and all about it, I told them I had a friend through whom I thought I could get the case taken up, and the girl allowed to remain at home while her father was in the hospital.

His gratitude was touching ; tears stood in his eyes ; he “thought shame,” he said, “to be such a trouble. If only I were not lying here, I could take care of them all.”

“Robert,” I said, “there is One who can take care of the little ones though you cannot ; the One who, when on earth, took them up in His arms and

blessed them ; but I am afraid you do not know Him—Jesus the Son of God, the blessed Lord.”

“I do not wish to say anything rude to you, ma’am,” he said, “but I do not believe there is a God who troubles Himself about what goes on down here. I was lucky the first part of my life, and my wife and children had plenty ; and now I am unlucky, and the worst of it is, the trouble falls on them ; but if God knows, I do not believe He cares.”

“That is because you do not know Him ; but I know Him, and I know His Word is true, and that Word says : ‘Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and *one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.* But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows’ (Matt. x. 29-31). And again, in another place, He says : ‘Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?’ (Matt. vi. 26). If God says that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without His knowledge, and that He takes care of

the fowls of the air, and feeds them, can you say that He neither knows nor cares about man—man who has a soul that can never die? I believe He is thinking about you, caring about you now, and that He has sent me to you to-day to tell you so. Oh, He cares—cares about your sins too, for He hates sin, and cannot have it in His presence; cares that you have slighted Him, and disbelieved Him all your life, are unbelieving still. Let me read to you from His Word now the story of how He has proved that He cares.” I read to him Luke xxiii., asking the Lord in a very few words to open his heart to receive the tale of His Divine unutterable love.

The wife sat and listened, her eyes fixed on her husband’s face, as though she would gather some hope and consolation from the expression of it. I made no comment as I closed the book. Something of the feeling of awe, I think, stole over us all. The majesty, yet the lowliness, the awfulness, yet the inexpressible touching sweetness of that death scene, which had brought life to me and to thousands, seemed to stand out before me with such vividness, as though almost I could hear the rabble shout their bloodthirsty wild Satanic shouts, “Away with

*him,*” “Crucify *him,*” —hear, too, that patient, loving cry of the God-man, “Father, forgive them”; hear His promise to share the paradise of God that day with the dying robber by His side; above all, hear the awful cry of that holy spotless Sufferer, out of the darkness, when all God’s billows and His waves went over Him, and when the work of our salvation was completely finished.

It seemed as though that day human words would mar the majesty of His words, and I rose to leave. Robert said nothing, but when I asked, “May I come back and read to you again next visiting day?” he wrung my hand and said, “I could not have asked you, for I don’t know how you ever took the trouble to come once; but, indeed, I’ll be glad to see you; you seem to have brought my wife a bit of comfort already.”

At my next visit I found two men with him, besides his wife and children; but he saw me as soon as I entered the ward, and seemed expecting me.

His wife said at once to the men, “The lady is coming to read to Robert.” She seemed to be in earnest that nothing should hinder his hearing the

Word of Life. They also were fellow-workmen. The sick man seemed to be popular among them. The men did not go away, but sat listening while I read John iii. I could see that Robert listened intently, and when I left he asked me if I would come back again ; but I had no quiet time with him that day.

It was at my third visit to him that the conversation with which this little paper commenced took place. He had been deeply interested in the reading, and greatly distressed at the talking all round, which was distracting.

At his own request I had read to him over again John iii., dwelling a little on the love of God, and the *necessity* of the death of Christ to meet the claims of God's holiness, to vindicate His throne, and to meet the need of the poor sinner. At the close of our reading he suddenly asked me where I lived. I told him, and he answered, " Why, that is six miles from here ! " and though I always assured him it was not as much, he continued to call it six miles.

I left the hospital that day deeply thankful, for I felt that God had overthrown the greatest barrier

when Robert took in the possibility that Satan, and his own heart, had been deceiving him all along as to the character of God, and as to his own character too, for I saw, with the thought of God being altogether different from what he had believed, there was also raised the question of sin in himself, as he exclaimed—"If God has been taking any notice of me all these years, and looking at me, what has He seen? Nothing for Him to look at; only sin and folly, and utter disregard of Him."

This was what I found him much occupied with when I next went. This time he was all alone, and the ward was quiet. Through the kindness of the chaplain I was allowed to visit him at any time when the presence of a visitor did not interfere with the hospital routine.

I did not wish to lessen his sense of sin, and unfitness to meet the eye of God; for I knew that the more thoroughly he saw his own utter ruin and wretchedness, the more would he value the work of Christ, and the love of God, who could give His own Son to meet the need of such as he.

"You have taught me," he said, "that God takes notice of everything, even the smallest thing down

here, that He cares whether we do right or do wrong ; but now I think I am more miserable than ever, for He has nothing to look at in me but wrong-doing all my life ; and if, as you say, He gave His Son to put sin for ever out of His presence, why, He must put me out of His presence, for I am all sin ; and yet . . . and yet . . . I like to think He cares.”

“ But the Lord Jesus died for two things : to clear God’s character, meet His claims, and put sin out of His sight ; and also to meet the need of the guilty sinner, to wash and cleanse him and fit him for His holy presence. ‘ The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ ”

“ Yes, but how can that undo what I have done ? I have *done* these wicked things, and they are done, and cannot be undone. I cannot begin my life over again, and if I live to be seventy I cannot blot out the past.”

“ Hear what God says, ‘ 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.’ YOU cannot blot out your past life, but the blood

of Christ can ; . . . God looks at the blood of Christ *wherever* that rests. The blood of Christ blots out from the sight of God all sin, for the guiltiest sinner who trusts it. It is the value of that precious blood that does it all, Robert.”

His eyes were riveted on me. I opened the Bible again, at Exodus xii., and asked him had he ever heard of the Passover and the children of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. He said “No.” I read Exodus xi. and xii., explaining as simply to him as I could as I read on. When I came to ver. 13 of chap. xii., “When I see *the blood* I will pass over;” and tried to explain to him, how it was not the goodness of the Israelites, but the *blood* outside their houses, which made them safe ; and how that was a figure of what the blood of Christ does for us first of all, makes us safe from the judgment of God, for God looks on and sees where the blood rests ;—he started, fixed his eyes on the opposite wall as though watching something, and to my amazement said :

“Yes, I see—I see it all! And was that the Passover, and that the type of how God can pass over us, sinners though we are? Yes, I see the

houses, and the blood, and the destroying angel in flames of fire in the darkness. I begin to understand—that scene makes it all clear!”

Then, seeing my surprise, he said, “I beg your pardon, ma’am ; but I saw that *acted* some years ago *in a theatre in Paris*, during Lent. Ah! the devil did not think that night that the wickedness of man would be turned round by God to make one poor sinner see clearly the way of salvation. I have not thought of that night at the theatre for years. I did not know they were acting something out of the Bible till you read those chapters ; and as you explained to me, I saw the whole scene again, and it seemed to make it quite plain—all—the judgment—the way of escape—the blood the only security—everywhere else death. I suppose a poor Egyptian would have been safe if he had been in a house with the blood on it?”

“Quite safe ; for God does not say, ‘When I see the *Israelites*,’ but ‘when I see the *blood*, I will pass over.’”

“I see it ; I see it. The blood of a lamb was enough to secure the Israelites, though in all that big nation there must have been wicked people ;

the blood of God's Son must be enough to secure me, though I myself am all bad. When I get well, I must go to a night-school and learn to read. I should so like to be able to read to myself—I think of so many things in the night when I cannot sleep—and if I could only read the Bible for myself, it would help me so. But, thank God, I see the way, and I do trust *His blood*."

As I passed out that day, I asked the "sister" of the ward what hopes were entertained of Robert's recovery. To my sorrow and surprise she said, "None whatever. The doctors think that not only is there no hope, but that his time is very short indeed; they would not be surprised at his going any day."

"Is it possible?" I said. "He does not give me the impression a bit of being so ill, and I am sure he does not think so himself."

"No, I know he does not; nor does his wife, though she thinks more gravely of it than he. I know he ought to be told, for he may not be prepared to die. I have tried to tell him several times, but cannot. We are all so interested in him; he is so patient and grateful, and no trouble at

all, and puts such a good face on things, that, as you say, no one who did not know would think he was so ill. I wish you would break the truth to him."

I promised to do so, but felt it need not be that day. It seemed better to leave him in quietness then, to meditate on the greatness of God's salvation, and on the mighty sacrifice by which it had been secured to him. I had no doubts of his being "prepared to die," for I knew he was resting on the blood of Christ, and on the love of God.

When next I went to see Robert, I found him very peaceful, and very eager for what was to him like the bread of life, the Word of God. I had taken him a verse printed all in capital letters, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." With this he was greatly delighted. I read it over a great many times slowly to him, till he could make out the words for himself. He kept it on the bed by his side from that day.

"*He suffered* to bring me to God," he said, "and God was the last person I wanted to meet; I thought all my life that He did not care, but left

the world to its fate, . . . and yet His Son *suffered* that I might know Him ; it is wonderful.”

He asked me to read to him again the history of the passover, and I did, connecting it with 1 Corinthians v. 7, “ For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”

To him almost every word of the Bible was new. He said, when he first knew his wife, her parents had objected to their marriage because he had no fear of God before his eyes, and had spoken to him about his soul. But he put it from him as old wives' fables. But the day I had first come to the hospital, it had flashed over him—Why should an utter stranger care about his soul, and come miles to speak to him about it? and day after day the thought would not be put away, that it must be God's doing. Then he had been deeply touched by the wondrous story of the Cross and sufferings of the Son of God. In the long quiet nights he had pondered, pondered over these things, feeling ever more strongly his own sin and folly, till at last the whole plan of God's redemption was made plain to him as completely meeting his ruin and his need.

“ And now,” he said, “ I am longing to go and tell

my mates how God has blessed me. I often think what a different home ours will be, for my wife will not rest now till she has got for herself what God has given me. Our eldest girl and boy are quite scholars, and will read to us till I can read for myself."

I was quiet for a minute or two, and then I said, "Robert, what would you think if the Lord wanted you to come very soon to His home?"

He looked startled, then presently he said, "Do you think I am not going to get better?"

"Yes, I think the Lord wants you up there with Himself before long. Should you like to go?"

He waited a moment or two, then said, "He knows best, and I will not doubt Him again. I had thought He would let me go back where I have dishonoured Him, and seek to live for Him for a time. For myself *all* is secure—the blood is on my house—and I want to be with Him too; but I think of the wife and the little ones. Who will care for them?"

"There is a verse in the Bible that says, 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me'" (Jer. xlix. 11).

“Does God say that?” he said. “Then He will do it, and I will trust Him with them. Do the doctors think I am really dying?”

“Yes, Robert, they think so ; and ‘Sister’ thought you ought to know, lest you might not be prepared to die ; but you are ready, are you not?”

“Yes, thank God, ready ; safe, through the blood of God’s Lamb. You will come back still and read to me ; I would like to know more. I know nothing but that God cares for me, and that He has saved me.”

I need not say I promised to go as often as possible, and many more times I saw him ere the Lord called him to Himself. No doubts again disturbed his soul ; “God looks on the blood,” he would tell his wife so often.

He it was who broke to her the tidings that he was never to be again in their earthly home, and besought her to meet him with the Lord Jesus by-and-by, and to bring their children with her. “Not one must be left behind, Martha ; not one,” he used to say. “Bring them up for God ; He will take care of them and you.”

He lived for five weeks longer, during which time

he had the joy of seeing his wife also resting, for time and eternity, on God's word and Christ's work ; and then a day came, when he was " absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

At the last it was quite sudden. I had left him that day no worse than usual, saying, " The Lord may come and take us all up together now, Robert." And his answer was with a smile, " That would be good." Next morning I had a note that told me that he was waiting with the Lord, for the day of which we had last spoken together, when " the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord " (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17).

Reader, how does that day affect you ? Will that day be to you a day of joy and gladness, or a day of woe unceasing ? Ask yourself this solemn question, and rest not, till you can answer like my sick friend, " That would be good."



## Religion or Christ.



“WILLIE has brought a bonny wife home with winsome ways and a loving heart, but I’m wondering all the time if she knows the Lord Jesus Himself, father.”

“Well, wife, I am hoping so. It may not be just her way to talk about Him, as you and I do; you see we have grown used to His company. He has made the third in all our plans ever since Jamie died, and Willie was a baby, and that is well-nigh six and twenty years now, before she was born. But I’m thinking she must care about Him, for I found her reading His Word to-day, or a book that looked just like it.”

“Ay, a book that looked just like it,” the mother said in a low tone, with a sigh; then speaking out again, she added more cheerily, “Well, father, we will just tell Himself all our hopes and fears, and ask Him to make her coming a blessing to herself

and to us all ; and when He has the matter left in His own hands we can wait and trust Him ;” and the pious old couple turned together into the little chamber, in which for many a long year they had been accustomed to pour out their hearts to the One who was to them, not merely their Saviour and their God, but their known and tried personal Friend, and the confidant of all their joys and sorrows, as well as the One in whose presence they enjoyed to sit, when they had neither joys nor sorrows to tell Him of, but because they loved His company.

This was the hallowed home into which Willie, their only remaining son, had brought his young wife on a visit, and to introduce her to his parents. She was a *professing* Christian, they were *possessing* Christians ; and she had not been many hours in the house before the godly old mother, who took her to her heart from the moment she saw her, discovered that in spite of what was naturally very lovable, and in spite also of what was outwardly very religious, there was something lacking, and that something, she too truly felt, was the personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The discovery was a sorrowful one to Willie's mother, and she had poured forth her heart to the only One who could help her ere she spoke of it to her husband even. When Willie had written from London some months before, to tell his parents in the north of his approaching marriage, he had described his Alice as one not merely naturally bright and attractive, but as one who loved the Lord, and was devoted to His service; and the old couple had rejoiced in the thought of her being a real helper of his faith, and had longed for the time when they should see her, and mingle their prayers and praises together. Now she had come, they had found her all they could wish, save on the point where their wishes were deepest.

Not that Alice had been a hypocrite; she had been a diligent Sunday-school teacher, her class was always the most orderly in the school, and her scholars the most visited in their homes by their teacher. She was interested in missionary work, abroad and at home. She visited among the sick, and read the Bible, and prayers from a book, to them; she was an active member of the Dorcas meeting, and was thought by every

one, what Willie thought her, a truly earnest Christian. Nay, more, she herself believed she was this.

Sometimes after their marriage Willie puzzled her, when he spoke of conversion as a something that passed between his soul and God, of which she felt she knew nothing. There were moments when his prayers made her uncomfortable; there seemed to her to be something in them which was beyond her, a real link with One unseen, quite different from what she felt as, day by day, she read over some prayers, read them reverently too, though oftentimes not really wanting the petitions asked in them.

Alice was no Pharisee, she did not pride herself in her works or her religious duties, she was simply satisfied with them; she was amiable, and liked serving others, so she worked; and she thought God demanded it of her, so she went through forms and ceremonies. The question of sin had never been raised between her soul and God, so she knew nothing of substitution, she had never found out she was lost, and therefore she knew no need of a SAVIOUR, who must be her own personal Saviour,

though of course she talked of "our Saviour" in a general way.

She too discovered there was a difference between her new relations and herself, and one day said to her husband, "I do not understand your parents' religion, though I love them dearly. It makes me uncomfortable. They speak of our Saviour as though He were a third person in the room with them, at meals, every time; it often makes me shiver. It is as though they had only their bodies down here, and their thoughts, and hopes, and joys were far off." Even then he did not discern that his wife's was only an outward performance of duties, and no living link with a Person, and he answered, "Yes, truly, Alice, the Lord is no God afar off to my parents, and they love to speak to Him, and of Him. I think, maybe, we have been too much occupied with our work for Him, and perhaps, too, with the earthly joy He has given us, and too little with the Giver. It will help us both being here."

Alice was silent; she felt she did not understand, there seemed to be a something separating her from the husband by her side, and everything

looked chill and dark. He had been showing her some parts of his beautiful native city, and speaking of the days when men, and women too, had counted the privilege of reading God's Word in their own language as dearer to them than their lives. "Let us turn back," she said presently, "I feel strangely tired."

That night there were touching sounds of joy and sorrow in Willie's old home. A young life was given, but the mother lay at the gates of the grave. They watched her tenderly, and prayer went up continually, the husband pleading, though submissively, for natural life; but his parents' pleadings were deeper, they asked that she might know *Jesus*, whom to know is *life eternal*. Day and night their cry went up: "Take her not away, Lord, till Thou hast revealed *Thyself* to her." She was too ill to be spoken to, but they knew well that the shortest way to her heart was round by heaven.

Days, even weeks, went by, and she hovered between life and death. Then came a slight rallying, which very slowly increased. She had moaned continually, "I cannot die, I cannot die;" else, of what was passing in her soul, they knew nothing.

The first day she could speak again, she said to her mother, "Read—me—a—prayer—from—my—little—book—mother." But the mother said gently, "We will tell Him ourselves just what we want, dear child," and, by the sick-bed, the aged believer poured forth in few and simple words her heart's desire, a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, for that poor sick and weary one.

Her daughter-in-law lay with closed eyes as she ended, and she left her request with God.

After this, most days she read a verse or two, as she was able to bear it to her, never wearying her, never going into explanations or long talkings, but just leaving the Word of God to do its own work.

Then came the parting between husband and wife; he was obliged to return to his occupation, having already had his holiday more than once extended, and she, though out of immediate danger, was far too ill to travel, or even to leave her bed. She told me long afterwards, it was with feelings little short of despair she said "Good-bye," for she had then no hope for this world or the next; and when he said, "The Lord who loves us both will care for you; and we have the joy of knowing for

certain that our eternity is to be together with Him," she would not distress him by acknowledging she had not this joyful assurance, she only hid her head in the bedclothes and wept.

Meantime the aged believers spoke to the Lord, and in confidence expected His answer, and waited for it. Three weeks more passed, and then the Lord took the little one to Himself. Alice's grief was terrible. She had been lifted into the adjoining room to be present while the Word of God was read, and prayer offered, ere the little coffin, with the precious remains of her babe, was carried from the house. When all had gone, and she was left alone with her mother-in-law, her reserve gave way, and putting her head on her shoulder she said, "Mother, you will be with Jesus, and Willie, and my baby boy, but I shall be outside. Mother, I am lost." Very quiet was the answer, "I know it, my child, but Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. He has been seeking, seeking you for long, now let Him save you."

"But you do not know, mother, how my life has been all a sham. I have professed to teach others what I did not know myself. I have been at His

table, and I did not know Him ; have I not eaten and drunk damnation to myself ? ”

“ Eternal damnation only follows the final rejection of Christ, the only Saviour ; the apostle is speaking there of judgment and chastening *now*. I am not denying the sin, my child, of being there with a lie in one’s mouth, professing to remember One whom we never knew, but sin now cannot shut you out from the Saviour. He says, ‘ I came not to call the righteous, but *sinner*s to repentance.’ ”

“ But, mother, I do not know Him, and I cannot see Him ; I cannot live like this, and I do not know how to die ; how can I know Him ? Oh, if I had lived in the days when He was on earth, I would have crawled to His feet, though I had died there.’ ”

The mother lifted up her heart to the Lord to teach this troubled soul Himself ; then she said : “ But, my child, you need take no toilsome journey to His blessed feet now, He is here in this room listening, waiting for you to accept what He offers, pardon, salvation, peace, and Himself. ‘ *Look unto me, and be ye saved,*’ He says ; and, ‘ Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have *believed.*’ It is not He who needs to be entreated to draw near to you.

The Apostle Paul says, '*We pray you in Christ's stead*, be ye reconciled to God.'

"Oh, if I could hear Him say He forgives me, and that He would have me!"

"He speaks now by His Word, my child, and He says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* cast out.' He has purchased the right to say this to you, at the cost of His own life's blood. His death is the price at which you can have life; but the price *has been paid*, the ransom has been accepted. The sinner's substitute has risen from the dead, and made a 'new and living way' for you and me right home to God."

"Mother, pray," was all Alice answered. And the mother "went and told Jesus" all their wants.

After a time of quiet Alice spoke again, "Mother, I see; my sham life, my religiousness, my dead works, my hollow prayers, all met by the cross,—all known to Him when He gave His life; I see *God is satisfied*, He wants nothing from me; I may rest in His arms."

When the father returned, after committing to the dust the babe so loved, Alice was sleeping almost as peacefully as that babe, though the tear

drops still stood upon her cheek. Truly that day the Lord turned the house of mourning into one of praise.

It was months ere she was able to travel and return with her husband to her London home. In them she learned much of the Lord Himself. From her own lips many years after I heard her story, told to me with many a detail not given here, as well as much that passed in her soul of deep dark agony, as she faced death for herself, and then again in what she loved better than herself. But out of death God brought life.

When I knew her first the aged saints had gone to the Lord they so loved, and Alice, with her husband, and three children were all looking for the moment when the Lord Himself shall return, and them that sleep in Jesus God will bring with Him, for "yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." So that to-day, dear unsaved reader, "to-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart;" for "*now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."



## “Who is Jesus?”



“BUT who is Jesus?”

“Oh, do you not know that, my dear? He is a great Spirit.”

You will think, dear reader, that these words must have been spoken in another tongue, and in some far distant heathen land, where the Bible is an unknown book, and where men and women live and die without once hearing the blessed, and to us, oft-told story, that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” and that, when this Son of God was about to be born into this world, God said, by the mouth of His messenger, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus [Jehovah the Saviour], for he shall save his people from their sins.” But no, the words were spoken in our own highly favoured England, in this age of boasted progress and enlightenment : and not

by some poor little city arab, whose only home had been the streets, or some den of vice and infamy, but by those whose entire ignorance on this, the greatest and most important, as well as most blessed of all subjects, quite bewildered as well as appalled me.

The first speaker was a young respectable-looking married woman, about three-and-twenty, the wife of a bookbinder with good wages. The second speaker, who seemed a little ashamed that the other should display such ignorance before me, was her mother-in-law, an active-looking, decently-dressed woman about five-and-forty.

I could not then, and cannot now, account for this utter ignorance, for the younger woman had been in the hospital ward, in which I met her, a fortnight before this conversation took place, and it was the daily custom for a portion of the Scriptures to be read in the ward, and a prayer said; and even this, I should have thought, would have made her acquainted with the blessed name of Jesus. I had noticed her pleasant cheerful face several times as I had gone in and out, but the ward was so very large, and I knew so many in it,

that the time for leaving had always come without my being able to make her acquaintance.

On this day, however, as I passed her bed, to go to a dying woman in the corner very near to her, she smiled and said, “Will you not try to give me a visit to-day?”

I promised to come back to her after I had seen my friend in the corner, about whom I was very anxious, for I knew death was nearly approaching her, and to her he was still the “king of terrors,” as she had been trusting to her own good deeds for acceptance with God, and had just awoke to the discovery that they would avail her nothing as a ground of entrance to heaven, of which she had all her life before felt secure.

When I came back to Mrs N—— (my new friend), it was quite with the hope of finding a Christian, for I thought it was surely for that reason she wished to speak with me; and after she had spoken calmly of her illness, which it was feared would prove an incurable one, and moreover was a very trying one, I said, “But you know what it is to have Jesus as your Saviour and friend, do you not, making all your bed in your sickness?”

Then came the words which so utterly astonished me, that I can never forget them, "But who is Jesus?" and the answer of her mother-in-law, who had been allowed to come in to see her, though it was not the usual visiting hour, "Oh, do you not know that, my dear? He is a great Spirit."

I had met those who hated, those who despised, the things of God, or those who were careless and indifferent about them, but never before had I met one, beyond the age of childhood, who knew no more of the story of the life and death of the Son of God, than the one who heweth down a tree, and "burneth part thereof in the fire, . . . and the residue thereof he maketh a god, . . . and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god" (Isa. xlv. 16, 17).

For a few moments I felt quite bewildered; then sitting down by her side, and in my heart asking the Lord for suited words, I tried to put before her, as simply as to a child, the story of man's utter ruin, and of God's wondrous love—the old, old story, yet ever fresh and new. She listened with eager attention. I read to her Luke xxiii., and she wept when I came to the part where the dying, suffering

Son of man, yet Son of God, prayed for His murderers, and promised the paradise of God, in company with Himself that day, to the thief dying by His side, who had recognised the glory of His person, and owned Him Lord, and the coming King, though hanging between heaven and earth on a cross of wood, nailed there by wicked hands.

It was all new to Mrs N——, and it thrilled and captivated her heart. “Did God then love me?” she said, “and did His Son die like this,—die such a cruel death for *me*? And yet I never knew it till to-day, and I have never thought about Him. Oh, I do love Him for it. I do love Him to-day. I must tell my husband; he cannot know, or he would have told me. Mother, did you know God loved us, and God gave up His Son to die instead of us? And Jesus is God too, and yet He died! Oh, He died such a cruel death for us,—for you and me, mother. Oh, is it not strange, He died for *me*, and yet I never heard about it until now?”

The love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, won her heart; she listened to God’s Word, telling of His Son’s work, and she received it and believed it like a little child. She pondered over it

all and wondered at it, but she never thought of doubting it.

I offered to leave with her my little Testament, which had good print, but then I found she could not read, did not even know her letters. "You will come back soon and tell me more," she said. When I went in next, I took with me a large card with the alphabet and tiny words printed on it, and offered to begin to teach her to read. She was very grateful, and got on with surprising rapidity. The first name she wanted to learn to spell was the name of Jesus, and then she used to lie for hours trying to find out in the New Testament wherever that name, now become so precious to her, occurred.

She was full of her newly found joy, and could not hold her peace. She spoke of it to the patients in the beds each side of her; she spoke of it to the nurses, as well as to her husband, and to each one who came in to see her,—“Jesus died for *me*! God gave Him, and I never knew it,—never loved Him. Oh, I love Him for it now. I do not mind about getting well now; I shall see the One who loved me and died for me.”

Even when afterwards, in the light of God's presence, she learned more of the utter evil of her own heart, Satan could never shake her confidence. “He loved me; He gave Himself for me;” was always her rest and her joy. It was not her need that drove her to Him, it was “His mighty love” that attracted her, and took her heart captive,—“a captive in the chains of love.”

Before she went out of the hospital, four months after, she could spell out verses quite nicely by herself, and often learned them by heart; and would say to me all her new ones, and ask me to find out others for her, that she might go over them by herself when I had gone.

She left for her home in the month of April, not cured—there was no hope of that—but her condition ameliorated for the time, it was hoped; but before the year had run its course she was back there again, and this time she came back to die. Yet not to die, but there to be put to sleep by Jesus, in the “sure and certain hope” of being raised again by Him; and, meanwhile, of resting with Him, waiting *with Him*, for the day for which He waits, the day of the gladness of His heart,

when He will have every one of His blood-bought ones with Himself.

"My husband has promised to meet me there with Jesus," she cried; "I have nothing now to keep me here. I wanted to tell him all. He could not see it at first; he thought his sins must keep him from the Saviour; but now he sees the Saviour died on purpose for those sins, and he trusts Him. Mother, you will yet learn to trust Him entirely too," she added, turning round to the one I had first seen with her, her husband's mother.

With the older woman the case had been very different. The Lord began to work in her heart from the day her daughter-in-law received the truth so simply; but she had gone through months of doubt and trouble and distress, and, as yet, the question of sin was unsettled between her and God; for to her the Bible was no new book, as it had been to her daughter-in-law. As a young woman she had been a Bible reader, though not herself converted, but she married a godless man, and through his influence gave it up, and sank to the level of those about her. Her husband did not believe in the Bible, so there had been no Bible in

her house. Her son had been brought up like his father. They had prospered, and God was utterly forgotten. Her first trouble came with the illness of her son's wife, to whom she was much attached.

Thus, with her, the first work of the Spirit of God had been to convince her of sin, and for months she had groaned under the burden of it. While her daughter's constant words were, "He loved me; He gave himself for *me!*" hers were, "Oh, my sins, my sins; they are too great." The entrance of the one into eternal rest, was the means of giving rest of conscience to the other. By her dying daughter-in-law's bed, she saw that the blessed One, who had so entirely captivated her child's heart and attached her to Himself, had also met every claim of God about sin; that His great work had been to remove sin from God's sight, as well as to save the believing sinner; that God is satisfied with the blood of Christ, that it meets every claim of His holiness, every demand that righteous judgment could make; yea, that God can be *just*, and yet "the *justifier* of him that believeth in Jesus."

She saw that the blood, in the efficacy of which the *Sin-bearer* ascended in righteousness to the very throne of God, must first have cleared sin away. She saw that God looked on Jesus and is satisfied ; she looked and was satisfied too.

"Mother," said the dying one, "I had nothing to pay. He frankly forgave me. 'He loved me, and gave Himself for me.' He will frankly forgive you too."

"He has, dear ; He has. I see it all now. I owed the great debt, and you the little one ; but He forgave *both*. I owe him most. It is *much forgiven* with me ; may He get much love now."

We had read Luke vii. together many times, and it was to the latter part of this the two women referred. It had been a favourite portion with Mrs N——, as were all the portions that spoke of the Lord Himself—His own acts, His own words, details of His love and grace.

Mrs N—— closed her eyes with a little contented smile, and her lips moved slightly as though in thanksgiving. I could see, when I left, the end was very near, and my thought proved correct. I never saw either again. The younger went home

to the Lord, who had loved her, and whom she loved, that night. The old woman went back to her country home at once with her son, taking with them the body of their loved one, to commit it to the dust in the quiet little cemetery near to which they dwelt, and I soon after left the city. So we all separated, *I doubt not, to meet again* in the Father's house, the house prepared for us by Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

Reader, can you say, like this dying woman, “I had nothing to pay; He frankly forgave me. He loved *me*, and gave Himself for me”?

Are you weary and sad 'neath the burden of sin?

Does it fill all your soul with dismay?

And to meet the just claims of a sin-hating God

Do you know you have “nothing to pay”?

*Come! come! come unto Him!*

*If you own, with repentance, you've “nothing to pay,”*

*He will freely and “frankly forgive.”*

All your tears and your sorrows will never atone,

Nor by works can you clear away sin,—

Then turn to the One who can help you alone,

To the Saviour in confidence cling!

## "WHO IS JESUS?"

He's the One who has come from God's glory above,  
To save you from ruin and loss ;  
For He paid the full debt in His own precious blood  
When He " put away sin " on the cross.

Then come, ruined sinner ! no longer delay,  
Nor in bondage and misery live ;  
If you own, with repentance, you've " nothing to pay,"  
He will freely and " frankly forgive."

## Saved.

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IT was early morning, at the pretty watering-place of E——, a bright summer's morning. The blue sea rippled and sparkled underneath the blue sky, and the sun shone cheerily down, but as yet there were but few people astir.

The beach was almost deserted, save by here and there a straggler who thought the fresh cool morning hours too precious to be missed.

Had there been any watchers, they might have seen a swimmer strike out boldly to sea, through those rippling waves. A strong swimmer he was, and every stroke told, and put the shore at a greater distance from him. He was alone, and a stranger to the place, having only arrived there the evening before.

Had he asked the fishermen, they would have told him of strong and dangerous currents, they

would have warned him of risk, and counselled him to care ; but he was in the very prime of manhood's strength, and he never thought of danger ; so on the swimmer went, and never turned his head to see how far he had left the shore behind, till at last, a little wearied, he rested a moment and thought of returning. Then he found he had been carried out far beyond his thoughts or intentions by the strength of the current, and that between him and the shore there was a long distance. "It is time, indeed, to return," he said to himself, and struck out once more for land.

But the Lord's eye was on him, and He had something to say to him alone on the face of the deep ere he touched the land again.

I have said he was strong, and a bold swimmer, but now he found he had wind and current both against him, and his utmost efforts made no appreciable headway against them. For long he battled on, but the shore was still far off, too far off for any cry of distress to reach it. He raised himself and shouted ; no answering voice, no friendly shout replied. Still he struggled on, till, worn out by his exertions and utterly exhausted, he felt nothing but

a watery grave was before him. His strokes got feebler and more unsteady each time, and he knew he was losing the little way he had made and was being drifted seaward. Then he ceased struggling, turned on his back, and gave himself up for lost.

There and then the Lord spoke to his soul. He had been religiously brought up ; nay more, Lord's Day after Lord's Day, from the pulpit of a fashionable church, he had preached to a large congregation Bible truths as to the way of salvation. He had made Scripture his text, and discoursed ably from it. He had read prayers in public and in private. He had visited in his parish, and administered the sacrament to the dying. He had lived a careful life, and attended to every rite ; and till this moment he had been on very good terms with himself, fully persuaded that a life such as his was fit to bring to God.

Now, with death and eternity before him, his soul awoke to find he had no hope for eternity ; he had never met God, he was not ready to die,—he had one thing lacking, he had no link with Christ.

Horror and agony seized him. The noise of the waves seemed to be roaring this verse into his ears

again and again, "Lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

He felt he had preached a Christ he did not know, had told others of a salvation he himself had not got. His whole life came before him, with its outward ceremonies and its inward hollowness. The life he had so prided himself in, he loathed now, as only mockery of the God who had said, "My son, give me thine *heart*."

He felt he had given Him his time and money, but never his heart; and had thought to merit heaven by these poor gifts. Now he saw them at their true value, "dead works." Now he saw that "without faith it is impossible to please him"; that the work that could save his soul must be done for him, and done by another; that the righteousness he had prided himself in, God looked on as "filthy rags"; and his offerings to God had been like Cain's bloodless offerings, and "without shedding of blood there is *no remission*."

It was not concerning his body, but his soul, that he cried there on the mighty deep, there alone with God on the waves, a great cry, "*Lord*, save *me*, or I perish; God be merciful to *me* a sinner, a hypocrite,

—save *me!*” Even as he cried the answer came, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin ; whosoever believeth on him shall *not perish*, but have everlasting life.”

Faint and weary, with the natural life almost gone, the once strong man murmured, “Lord, I believe that precious blood was shed for me” ; and with that murmur, life, and peace, and rest, came to his soul, and then utter unconsciousness.

“ Father, father, look ahead ; what is that on the waters,—surely it’s a man ? ” said the young son of the skipper of a fishing smack, which was putting in towards the shore. One moment the father looked in the direction his son indicated, the next he sprang to an oar, calling out to the little crew, “ Row for very life, men, there’s a fellow-creature perishing.” The men rowed with a will, not waiting even to ask a question ; rowed in silence, bending all their energies to the task. The skipper looked ahead, saw the body of a man sink once and rise again, rise farther from the shore and nearer to the boat ; sink a second time, and this time he concluded it would rise almost close to them if they made a desperate effort. “ Bend to your oars,

men," he cried, "for one last pull, and then stop ; it is now or never." They did so. When next the body rose, it was within arm's length of the boat. Strong arms were stretched out to grasp it, and more than one was prepared for a plunge.

They saw that the man was apparently lifeless ; he could not help himself ; if he were to be rescued, it must be entirely through the work of those in the boat.

It was no easy task. Had there been more sea on, it would have been an impossibility to bring that apparently lifeless body into the boat. But they managed it, and then took every means in their power to restore animation, making all possible haste towards the shore to get more efficient help. By the time they reached it, they had the satisfaction of seeing the man they had rescued show some signs of life.

Plenty of willing hands were found to carry him ashore, for it was a living, breathing man they carried, and not a corpse,—a living man in two ways, possessing now not merely natural life, but eternal life.

A week later, in that same fishing smack, the one

that had been lifted into it from the waves in utter helplessness was sitting, in the calm of a summer's evening, telling the skipper and his crew, with some others of the fishermen who had gathered round, the story of what the Lord had done for his soul only a week before, when death, and judgment to follow, had threatened him.

The men listened intently. He was an object of special interest to them ; for had they not saved him from a watery grave ?

He spoke to them of Jesus the Saviour, of the impossibility of our doing anything to save ourselves ; the work must all be done by Him, or we must be lost ; and he read to them these verses from God's Word :

“ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved). . . For by grace ye are saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast.”

He illustrated his meaning by referring to his own condition. “ When you saw me in the water that morning, was I in need of salvation, skipper ? ”

“ Ay, ay, sir, indeed you were, as much in need of it as ever I saw any one yet.”

“ Could I help myself ? ”

“ No, sir, you were o’er far gone for that, you were like dead.”

“ Did I feel my need even ? ”

“ No, sir, no, you were past feeling.”

“ Then I owe everything to you and your brave men ? ”

“ Well, sir, if we had not been by it would have gone badly with you.”

“ Exactly ; did I pray and beseech you to help me, or save me, or take me into the boat ? ”

“ Why, no, sir, you couldn’t have done it, and we didn’t need it ; we should have been worse than brutes to see a fellow-creature perishing, and not put out a hand to save him.”

“ Just so ; I did not pray you to save me, I did not help you to save me ; *you* did all the work, and *I* got all the good. I never even lifted a finger for myself. Now, my friends, do you not see how it is with the Lord and us ? He does all the work, and we get all the good. We, dead in sins, could do nothing for ourselves. We did not even ask Him

to come and save us. He came unasked, took our sins on Himself, the sinless One, suffered in our stead, and now offers salvation as His free gift; that is, *He took our place*, and offers us His place. You risked getting into my place in order to bring me into your place that morning.”

“Oh, sir,” said the men in concert, “don’t say any more about that; you make too much of what we did. But we see what you mean, sir, it’s very plain; we think God has taught us all a lesson by this.”

“One word more, my friends, let me say about your act. Do you think, however long I live, I shall ever forget that morning, ever cease to be thankful to the brave men who rescued me from a watery grave? Do you not think I shall always carry about with me feelings of gratitude and love for the men who did so much for me? Nay, do not mind my saying it,” he continued, as the men disclaimed having done anything but what any one would do, “I must feel and express my gratitude to you, and this is how it is with us to the Lord. When I know He has saved me at such a cost, I cannot go on just as I did before, as though it were

all nothing. I want my life to show out my gratitude and love and praise ; I want to be a friend of Christ, as I am your friend to-day."

The men were silent ; there was a reality about the whole thing which deeply touched them, and every head was bowed and reverently uncovered during the few words of prayer that followed—earnest supplication for their souls. In more than one case there was complete surrender to Christ at the time ; and the whole of the fruit unto life eternal of that morning's incident, will perhaps never be known till "the day" declares it.

Reader, what must you do to be saved, beyond believing in Jesus ?

*"Nothing either great or small ;  
Nothing, sinner, no ;  
Jesus did it, did it all,  
Long, long ago."*

## Something to Rest upon.

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“**B**IDE with me, and give me some comfort if you can. I am dying, and I’m afraid to go away into the darkness alone, and they have given me nothing to rest upon,—nothing—nothing ;” and the head of the speaker moved to and fro on the pillow, while her bright and clear, though sunken and restless, eyes seemed to pierce me through. “Penance, good works,” she murmured, “it’s too late for those, too late—purgatory—eh, but it’s awfu’, it’s awfu’, and how could I ever get out? Who would say masses for the soul of the likes of me? My gudeman couldna get them said, though he would try his best. Oh, I have nothing to rest on,—nothing, nothing ; and I’m dying, and who kens what’s before me?”

The words were spoken with a mixture of Scotch and Irish accent. The speaker was Irish

by birth, but had lived nearly all her life in Scotland.

Her bed was in the side room of a large hospital ward. The nurses had had to move her from the general ward, for she started and moaned all the night through, so that the other patients could not sleep. Her constant cry was, "I canna' dee. I canna' dee. It's all dark, and I am afeard. Oh, they've given me nothing to rest upon."

It was the first time, after some months of absence, that I had been to that hospital, and I had already outstayed my time in the large ward, and had only gone into the side ward for a moment to leave some fresh roses, but this piteous wail of a soul in agony arrested me by her bed.

"Have you never heard of One who said, 'Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest,' even Jesus, the blessed Son of God, who came down here and suffered, and shed His blood and died, that He might be able to give rest to every weary heart that comes to Him?"

The restless turning of the head ceased, an eager gaze, pitiful in its intensity, was still fixed on me. "Sit down," she said, "don't go yet, it's all dark

with me. I want rest, I am dying, and I don't know what's to come after, and they've given me nothing to rest upon."

"Are you so ill?" I asked, "is the pain great?"

"Ay, the pain is bad enough, but I'm no' thinking of that, it's my soul I'm troubled about. I'm a sinner, and I'm dying, and I canna' meet the Almighty, and I've no time to do anything now."

Opening my little Bible, I read, "'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners.*' Will that do to rest upon?"

"You do not know what a sinner I have been. I've lived a long life, and forgotten God all through, though I aye meant to do better, and now I'm afeard to meet Him. Those words canna' be for sinners like me. Who says them?"

"God says them in His own Word, by the pen of the Apostle Paul; and hear what else He says by the Apostle John, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin'; and when God told the apostle to write that word, '*all*,' He meant all. Not one sin of any sinner was unknown to Him, or forgotten by Him."

“Eh, if I could but be sure, if I could but trust to it; but there must be works to be done, to get the pardon, . . . and penance, . . . I can do nothing; I’ve no time, and no strength.”

“Then you are just the very one that Christ came for, for the Lord Jesus must do all the work Himself. He will not do part, and let you make up the rest. Listen again to what God says in Romans v. 6: ‘For when we were yet *without strength*, Christ died for the *ungodly* ;’ and again (v. 8), ‘But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.’ Is not that your case exactly, without strength, ungodly, a sinner?”

“Ay, that’s me exactly, for sure. Eh, if I could but feel certain; but God hates sin, I know that.”

“Yes, He hates sin, but He loves the sinner; and what He proposes to do is to put his or her sins all away, so that He can have the sinner in His presence, and show His love to him or her. Hear the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when He was on earth: ‘For God so *loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,

that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Now you are in the world that He so loved, and 'whosoever' means everybody, so that must take in you. Then the question is, Do you believe Him? Can you trust His work alone, without any of yours? I must leave you now, but I will turn down the leaves of this Testament, that you may find the places easily, and read the words for yourself."

"I am no scholar, I canna' read a word. Eh, must you go? If I could but get rest."

"I will read the verses once more for you," I said; and turning to the patient who occupied the only other bed in the ward, and who was pretty well, and up, I asked if she would read them to her afterwards.

"I'll do anything that I can if it will give her a morsel of comfort, poor body," she answered in a kindly way, "for she's sore putten about."

I read once more slowly and distinctly the precious words, "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*," and added, "He did what He came to do, for the Apostle John says, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

Then we learn that He wants no doing of ours : 'For when we were yet *without strength*,' that is, could do nothing, 'Christ died for the ungodly' ; and though God does hate sin, yet He loves the sinner, 'For God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ;' and 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' "

"It's all new to me," she said. "Oh, if I could but take it all in, and find rest. Can you stay to read the words once again?"

The deepening twilight made it impossible to see to read any more, but I repeated the well-known words this time from memory, with the earnest hope that the Lord Himself would print them on her heart ; and then I said good-bye, promising to return on the day but one following.

Next time I went I found her eagerly watching for me. "You are late," she said ; "I was afraid you had forgotten."

"Only five minutes late ; I was stopped on the stairs by a patient going out. Have you any good news for me?"

“No. I canna’ see light through it. I have aye heard that we must have works, and I hae none; and how can I rest, and my time I know is so short?”

A terribly distressing cough almost choked her at each word or two, but she wanted no sympathy for her bodily illness. I never saw any one so entirely indifferent to bodily suffering, because so absorbed by concern about her soul.

“Do you believe this Bible is *God’s* Word?” I asked.

“I do that,” she said.

“Then hear what God says in the Epistle to the Romans (iv. 5), ‘To him that *worketh not*, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.’”

“That is awfu’ strange. What can it mean? I never heard tell o’ the likes o’ that before.”

“It means that we could not save ourselves by our works, for our works, done by sinful men and women, must be like ourselves, sinful too,—‘filthy rags,’ God calls them. But when we could not save ourselves, the Lord Jesus came and did a work that could save us. He took our place, bore

our punishment, hung on the cross, and was there forsaken of God because He had our sins upon Him. He offered Himself to God, the sinless One instead of the sinful ; and God accepted the offering, and you and I can be accepted because of the perfection of that offering. God can be just now, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. He can not only pardon, but justify us,—that is, make us as clean as though we had never sinned. A righteous God must punish sin, but the Lord Jesus became our Substitute,—that is, He took the sin on Himself, and He took the punishment due to it, so it is His work that must save you, not your works. As I read to you on Monday, ‘the blood of Jesus Christ his (God’s) Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ Will not the love of God and the work of Christ give you something, both solid and restful, to pillow your weary troubled soul upon ?”

A wistful look rested on me as I spoke a little longer to her. She was terribly weak and exhausted by the incessant cough, and I feared to stay too long with her ; but ere I left I read once more to her the verses I had read on my last visit, with this added one, “To him that worketh not,

but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." As I rose to go she said, "You'll no' be long in coming back ; my time here is very short, I know."

Three days after, as I entered her room, I did not need to ask the question, "Have you any good news for me?" Instead, I said, "You have good news to-day for me, I see it by your face?"

"Oh, such good news," she said ; "it was Thursday night, in the night. Bit by bit my neighbour had learned me the words, till I knew each one of those verses, and the light came in all sudden like. It was between night and morning, and I was saying to myself, for well-nigh on to the fiftieth time, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' and a light seemed to shine right into my heart, and I said out loud, 'I believe You, Lord, then I am clean ; Lord, I do thank You so much.' I never slept, and I never felt any pain all the rest of the night. I know you'll be so glad, I wanted you to come that I might tell you the load is all gone. My sins I mean, not one of my many, many sins forgotten, but *all* washed away by the blood of Jesus. This is rest. If only my gudeman

knew it too. But I've gotten my neighbour to write and tell him all about it. He'll understand it quicker than I did, for he is a scholar, and he was brought up different too. I'll no' see him again on earth, for he isna able to come so far to me. But I am glad I ever came here. I only thought of my body when I came, but God thought of my soul; and when He turned my thoughts to my soul I didna mind about the body, if I could only get rest for my mind."

The words were spoken a few at a time, she stopping for breath in between each little sentence, but with such a glad ring in her feeble voice.

I never heard anything more of her history than that her husband lived more than a hundred miles away, and was old, that he had been a good husband to her, and was a "scholar"; and she seemed to feel quite confident that if only he heard what the Lord had done for her, he would trust Him too.

Before she rested her troubled soul on Christ and His finished work, she was too anxious to care for any other subject to be spoken about; and after she found out that Jesus had loved her, and

died for her, long before she ever thought about Him, this subject was so sweet to her that she grudged my occupying a moment of the short times we had together, even by asking about her poor suffering body, therefore I never knew as little of the earthly history of any one I ever visited as of hers.

“Dinna mind the poor body,” she would say, “I shall soon have done with that, and I like to hear about my Saviour, and have bits to feed upon, ye ken, in the nights. Though, indeed, it’s good nights I’m getting the now—quiet bits of sleep on and off—but when I waken I aye likes to have something put by to think upon.”

Her need had brought her to the Saviour, and He fully met that need ; and then during the short time she remained on earth she learned something of the One who had met and blessed her, of how He had done far more than put away her sins, and save her from hell. He had glorified God, had manifested Him perfectly, both as Light and Love, had swept away the foul stain of sin from before Him, and left Him free to follow the dictates of His own heart of love, and in perfect righteousness

to be able to give the Father's kiss, and the best robe, and the ring and the shoes, to the returning prodigal.

"Eh, but it's grand. Eh, but it's just wonderfu,' and I'll be with Him soon—very soon. But it's grand to learn a bit about Him before I go," were some of her favourite comments on what was read to her.

Several of the Lord's people saw her, and were struck with the simplicity of her faith in the all-sufficient work of the Lord Jesus, and her childlike attachment to Him.

The peace which now she enjoyed seemed to act on her body too. There were no more restless turnings and moanings at night, and frightened awakenings. The patient in the next bed told me that when she slept now, it was like the untroubled sleep of a child, and it was spoken of freely in the big ward that some great change had come over her.

And thus quietly and peacefully the last and greatest change came, and He whom, not having seen, she had loved, though only for a few short weeks, Himself, one early autumn morning, put

her to sleep for the last time on earth, to awaken in His own blessed presence, and, with Him, to await the moment for which the whole Church waits, when "them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Reader, have you something to rest on,—something that will satisfy God as well as satisfy you? As one beautifully expresses it, "The eyes of God and of the sinner meet on Jesus, and both are satisfied."

"Jesus! I rest in Thee,  
In Thee myself I hide;  
Laden with guilt and misery,  
Where can I rest beside?  
'Tis on Thy meek and lowly breast  
My weary soul alone can rest.

Thou Holy One of God,  
The Father rests in Thee;  
And in the savour of that blood  
Which speaks to Him for me,  
The curse is gone—through Thee I'm blest;  
God rests in Thee—in Thee I rest."



## A Last Warning ; or, “Just in Time.”

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“JUST in time,” I exclaimed, as I stood with a friend on the pier at —, watching the departure of the large passenger steamer “E. O.” My exclamation was called forth by seeing a gentleman come rapidly down the pier, elbow his way energetically through the crowd of bystanders, and though the gangways had been already removed and the ship was in motion, throw hatbox and small portmanteau first, and then spring lightly from the pier, and land safely on the deck of the vessel.

“He was indeed only just in time ; how narrowly he escaped being too late !” answered my friend. “I admire his courage and determination to make a desperate effort to gain the vessel while there was

still even a hope. But what a risk he ran! It reminds me forcibly of an incident that occurred not long ago to one whom I knew well, and whose description of it made a very forcible impression on my memory, it seemed to me such an instance of the patience and longsuffering grace of our God, of His unwillingness that any should perish, and of the warning cries that He sends out."

"Tell me," I said ; and he gave me the following short account, using, he said, as nearly as he could remember them, his friend's own words :—

"A little time back I was spending the afternoon of the Lord's Day in distributing gospel books and tracts among a number of miners in the county of ——. It was a lovely summer's day, and the men were gathered in groups here and there, either sauntering slowly along, or sitting under the trees talking together, and enjoying the pure air and the sunlight. The sunlight seemed a joy in itself to them, and the fresh air priceless, after working all the week in the darkness and unwholesome atmosphere of the mine. I was well known among them, and received many a hearty 'Good day,' or 'God bless you,' as I passed in and out among them, now

sitting down to read for a time with some, now speaking a few words as to their souls' salvation with others, as I gave them the little silent messengers, which all told the same tale, though by different pens and in different ways, of the Saviour's love—the old old story, so wonderful yet so divinely true, the story of that Saviour's cross of shame, His death to win life for guilty ruined man.

"I had given away nearly all the large package of books I had brought out with me, and was returning slowly to my home. I had almost reached it, indeed I was crossing the last field that separated me from my own garden gate, when I met two young miners coming slowly towards me. I stopped as we were about to pass each other, and selecting two little books from the few that remained in my hand, held out one to each and said :

" ' Will you accept and read this ? ' "

" Each took the book I held out, and thanked me ; and one, a fine, strong, healthy, and handsome young man of about twenty-five or twenty-six, stood still and read out the title-page of his, ' Just in Time. ' "

"A deep feeling of solemnity, amounting even to awe, crept over my soul, and looking up into his frank open countenance, I said :

"'Yes, my friend, and God grant that you may be just in time for salvation, just in time for heaven.' Again I repeated it, 'God grant that *you* may be just in time.'

"He was a stranger to me, and I could not account for my sudden and deep interest in him. We had met for the first time that afternoon, and to look at him you would have said he had long years of life and health before him.

"He did not sneer or scoff at my words, though he seemed surprised at a stranger thus so solemnly accosting him. 'Thank you,' he said quite earnestly, and we each passed on our way, I going home to ask the Lord of the harvest for His own blessing on the seed sown by the wayside, that He would not allow it to be devoured by the fowls of the air, so ready to snatch it away. Even as I prayed this young man's face came before me again and again, till I cried, 'Bless him, Lord ; save him.' Little I thought how soon, and under what circumstances, we should meet again.

"On the following Tuesday night, only two days later, I had just retired to my room for the night, and was about to extinguish my light, when a loud knocking at the street door made me throw up my window to see what was the matter.

"'Who is there?' I asked, seeing a young man standing at the door.

"'Are you Mr ——?' was the answer.

"'Yes.'

"'Will you come at once and see a young man in E—— Street? He is dying, and wants you.'

"'Have you not made a mistake? I know no one in E—— Street.'

"'No, sir; are you not the gentleman who gave a young man a book on Sunday afternoon called "Just in Time"?'

"'Yes, I am; what of it?'

"'Please come at once,' he said, 'and I will tell you going along.'

"Hastily I dressed and went out into the summer's night, guided by my companion. On our way towards E—— Street he told me that his mate had gone down the shaft that afternoon as usual,

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and had jumped out of the bucket ere it had reached the bottom ; he had done it dozens of times before and feared no danger, but this time as he jumped his foot slipped. The descent of the bucket closed an iron trap-door, thus making a firm foundation for the vessel to rest upon. Owing to his foot slipping he was a moment too late to get clear of the iron door, and was caught by its closing, and crushed between it and the side of the shaft. His breast bones were broken in, and he was lying there, his friend said, in terrible agony, unable to speak, only making a gurgling sound if he attempted to, and just gasping for breath, while his life seemed ebbing away.

“By the time the young man had finished his story, adding many details which I need not relate to you now, we reached the cottage, and I entered. What a scene met my gaze ! There lay the fine strong man, whom I had seen only two days before in the full vigour of health and youth, now absolutely helpless. The pallor of his face was ghastly, his eyes were almost starting in their sockets, feebly he gasped for breath, and over him hung his young wife, the wife of but one short week, with lips and

cheeks almost as colourless as his own, in speechless, tearless agony.

"He looked fixedly at me as I entered, and tried to speak ; it was useless, no word would come.

"'Shall I read with you and pray for you?' I said.

"He made a low hissing sound, the only approach to 'Yes' he could make.

"I read to him that 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life ;' and I spoke to him of the love of God in desiring his salvation ; of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to save him. I told him he was lost and ruined by nature, but Jesus came to seek and to save the lost ; that Jesus had been seeking him, wanting him ; that having done the work by which sin could be put away out of God's sight, He could now bring the sinner right into God's presence. As simply as I could, I besought him to take his place as a sinner and trust Jesus as a Saviour ; and then I knelt down, and besought the God of grace to give him faith now to lay hold of Christ, ere it were too late, to give him the know-

ledge of the forgiveness of all his sins through that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin.

"Even as I prayed, one after another of his mates came crowding into the little room, all full of rough sympathy, and many a coat sleeve was brushed across the eyes of brave men to hide the tears, that would rise, unbidden, at the sight of the strong man's agony, and the young wife's speechless woe.

"The scene was too much for me, and for a few moments I went aside into the open air, lest I should break down entirely, for rarely, if ever, had I seen a sight so pitiful.

"I had been but a few minutes out of the room when my name was called hurriedly, and I returned to the sick man's side. As I entered the room his eyes rested on me entreatingly, with a look at once despairing and beseeching. Again I said, 'Shall I read and pray?' and again came the painful effort on his part to speak, and then the low hissing sound of assent. I read to him this time the story of the father and the prodigal (Luke xv.), and then I also read to him the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican, and repeated this one verse, 'Him that

cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' And while strong men bowed and wept, I cried to God once more, to the living God, to save his soul now at the eleventh hour, and to give him the knowledge of pardon and peace and salvation through the blood of the Lamb.

"As I finished, his face changed. The damp of death and the pallor of the grave were upon it, but hope lighted it up, despair had fled. He signed for a drink, and his wife held the glass of water to his lips while she raised his head gently to enable him to take it. He drank a little, and then, to the amazement of all, he who had been unable to utter a sound beyond the low hissing noise so painful to hear, said out in a clear painless voice, and with eyes lifted up as though he saw the One to whom he was speaking :

" 'Just in time ! God be merciful to *me* a sinner, for *Jesus Christ's* sake, Amen !'

"He had scarcely uttered the last word when his head fell back on the pillow, a little shivering sigh escaped him, and we were in the presence of the dead.

"Never shall I forget the scene. To many a one

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present it was a warning word from the very gates of death, the brink of eternity, and God used it for blessing."

Reader, will not you take warning by it, lest for you not "Just in time," but "Too late," be the terrible words that record your fate?

## A Word in Season, how Good it is.

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“HOW were you first brought to know the Lord?” I asked one day of a young woman, who was in great bodily suffering, and with no prospect of recovery.

“It was a godly man’s prayer for me that first touched my heart, and made me think,” was the answer she made, and then went on to say: “I was living as servant in a clergyman’s house, and though I went to prayers morning and evening, and thought it quite right and proper, I never thought about my soul or its eternal welfare, never prayed for myself. After a time another clergyman came to stay with my master and mistress, and the first morning he was there, and each morning while he stayed, he took morning prayers, and, before closing, he prayed for my master and mistress, and then

for *me*. Many clergymen had stayed there before, and I was used to hearing my master and mistress prayed for, but to my knowledge I had never been prayed for in my life before, and he prayed for me as though he really wanted me to be blessed and saved.

“ I went about my work as usual, but I could not forget it. It seemed so strange that any one should do for me what I had never done for myself, —ask for my salvation. Next morning it was the same ; again that man of God prayed for me. How I listened to every word ! He seemed to think the Lord was interested even in me, and I wondered if he could be right. It evidently struck my master, for at evening prayers he too prayed for me ; he had never done so before, nor did he after that visit of the clergyman’s. Three days passed so, and now I was terribly anxious to know how I could be saved. How I was crying to God to let me see how I might be saved ! I did not like to speak to my master or mistress, still less to their stranger-guest, and I longed for Sunday and church-time.

“ The strange clergyman occupied my master’s pulpit. I listened eagerly for every word of the

sermon. The text was, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' He showed our lost condition by nature, God's great love, the work of Christ by which we can be saved, and the simplicity of what our part is,—we have nothing to do but to believe it all, and trust the blood of Jesus. He spoke of salvation as God's gift, which we must have as a gift, or not at all. I saw then how I might be saved, but I was not sure if I trusted enough in Jesus, if I believed aright, and I came home still miserable.

"I was putting the tea on the table, when the clergyman who had preached came into the dining-room. Perhaps he noticed that I had been crying; I do not know; but he asked me, very kindly, if I understood the sermon. I said, 'Yes.' Then he asked me, 'Have you this gift of everlasting life?' and I said, 'I am afraid I have not.' 'Do you want to have it?' he asked; and now I could not keep back the tears any more. 'I want it more than anything,' I said; 'I would give everything to know I had it.' 'Come into the study with me,'

he said. I said something about my work, but he said, 'I will speak to your mistress ;' and I followed him into the study. He prayed first very earnestly, asking the Lord to open my eyes, to show me how simple a thing it is to trust Jesus. And then he read me two or three scriptures, such as, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out ;' and showed me it is the One we come to who saves, the One we believe in who *gives* everlasting life, and not the greatness of our faith, the strength of our belief, that gains it for us—that God delights to give it to every soul who wants it.

"I left the study, knowing that God had given it to me, and ever since then I have never had a doubt. It is five years since, and I have had sickness and sorrow, but the Lord has been with me in it all ; and oh ! I shall bless Him for ever and ever, that He put it into His servant's heart to pray for me, only the servant of the house, whom he had never seen before. But for that I might now be dying without Christ."

"Sow ye beside *all waters*."

## “ Faith must come First.”

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IN the summer of 188—, after a long and severe illness, it was thought advisable that I should spend some months out of England; and, as we moved from place to place, we asked the Lord to guide us to the right spots in which to take up our abode, and that while health, in my case, was being restored to the body, we might have the opportunity of presenting Christ, as the Great Physician, to some sin-sick souls—be channels of blessing from the heart of a loving, giving God, to some needy human hearts, whether they felt their need or not.

The Lord, in His abounding grace, gave us many answers to our prayers; but one answer, though long delayed, filled us, when it came, with special thanksgiving.

Early in August we took rooms in an hotel near a village bordering on the Rhine. The view from our windows was lovely; and, as I was then unable

to walk, my sofa was placed each day on the broad balcony which faced the hills, and the setting sun, with only gardens, and vineyards, and shady woods, and a rapid stream in between.

It always seemed to us afterwards that the hand of our Father placed us in these special rooms, for they were not the ones we had chosen, and in which we passed our first night. Through some mistake, about which the landlord came to us in trouble, those had been promised to some one else, and we willingly offered to change.

Through this change, *apparently* so accidental, we came to know one who was wandering far off on the dark mountains of unbelief, but over whom the Good Shepherd's heart so yearned, that He did not rest till He had her in His arms, "carried like a child."

The balcony that adjoined ours was connected with a suite of rooms, evidently only separated from ours by a thin partition, for each evening we heard a musical voice reading aloud, sometimes in French, sometimes in Italian, occasionally, but rarely, in German. We could hear the voice distinctly, and sometimes a few words—just enough to know the

language that was being read—though never a connected sentence ; but the sound of the voice so near, and yet the speaker hidden, kept that speaker in a curious way before us, and we felt interested in her, and often spoke of her, wondering as to her nationality, as to whether we should meet—above all, as to whether she knew our Saviour.

After a few days we saw on the next balcony a young and handsome lady. The face was thoughtful ; at times there was even a sad look in the clear dark eyes, but the expression of the face was ever varying ; now it was lighted with keen intellectual brightness and then again softened and subdued by womanly tenderness. We knew this must be the reader whose voice we had heard, and we felt still more attracted to her. She was accompanied by a gentleman of soldierly bearing, who seemed devoted to her. We learned from the visitors' book they were Austrians of rank.

After a day or two, during which we saw them casually on the balcony, I was ill for a short time, and then a lovely little bouquet of flowers was sent in, with the Baroness von C——'s card, and the courteous offer of the services of her maid, also

asking if she herself might call when I was well enough. This threw down, figuratively, the iron palisade between the two balconies. When I was better we met daily. The Baron took long walks with my husband, and the Baroness and I were then left together, during which time she told me much of her history.

Though then only twenty-five she had been married seven years. Her husband was her idol, and she his. She was not strong; and he had given up a distinguished career that he might not be called away from her, and had left his ancestral home because its climate did not suit her. They travelled constantly, now settling for a few weeks, and then again for a few months, according to the effect of the different places on her health. She told me she had not been well during the first few days of our coming to the hotel, which accounted for our not having seen her; but, she said, they had watched us intently, and she had wanted so much to know us, because she thought we always seemed so very happy. We felt the whole circumstances were ordered by the Lord, especially when she told us it was the first time they had ever

sought the acquaintance of any strangers who came to the different hotels in which they stayed.

We soon found that, though so attractive naturally, the young Baroness did not know Christ ; and that there was an unsatisfied void in her heart, though she had so much for earth—a secret longing, to which she could not give expression, yet which was always there. How plainly it testified that wealth, rank, youth, beauty, intellect, and even the best of human love, all together, cannot fill and satisfy a heart created to know God, and to enjoy God. He alone—God in Christ—can meet and satisfy those deep yearnings which each one of you, my readers, has doubtless felt at some time, even though you have tried your utmost, either to fill the void, or to forget the heartache.

We spoke of Jesus to our new friend as the secret of our joy, as the One who had met the claims of a righteous God against us by dying in our place—the Just One for the unjust—and who had thus acquired the right to put us in His place before God ; who had taken our past upon Himself, and made our future secure, and was, all the way along, the dearest to each of us—making bright days

brighter by His love, and lighting up otherwise dark ones.

She was interested, attracted. Jesus seemed a Friend she would like to have, a good Example to follow; but as *God's Son*, Himself God, this she could not accept, it upset her previous thoughts. She could not see the *necessity* for the atonement, but reasoned about it. The authority of the Bible, as a whole—as God's Word—she disputed, though willing to receive some parts of it. Courted and caressed on all sides, she could not take in, that, in God's sight, she was a *lost* sinner; and that Jesus must be to her what His name implies, "Jehovah the Saviour," or nothing.

The days wore on; her interest deepened, her heart was attracted, but her human reasoning always came in the way. Her anxiety to know the truth increased; she wept often as we spoke of these things; she was "almost persuaded"; she almost accepted God's salvation in Christ—"almost, but not quite."

When the last day of our stay arrived, she parted from us with much affection, and with tears. We promised to write, and exchanged addresses—for

they also were leaving that place the following week.

The Baron had none of his wife's doubts and difficulties ; but, also, he had none of her interest. He accepted the whole thing as quite true ; but, alas ! it was nothing to him. Religion, he thought, was only for women and priests.

After our return to England we wrote, as we had promised, and sent some books which we hoped might help the young Baroness ; but no answer came. We spoke of her often to each other, and to the Lord ; she had seemed so near to safety, and yet not safe.

Four years rolled away, during which our paths did not again cross, and we had heard no tidings of her. It was summer time once more, and we were preparing to leave England, when, in our own city, my husband one day met the Baron. The meeting seemed accidental, but the circumstances that led to it were so unusual, that we felt sure at once the Lord had arranged it.

“How glad my wife will be when I go back and tell her that I have seen you,” were the Baron's first words ; “she has so much wished to meet you

again ; and, by mistake, your cards were packed in a desk left behind in —, so we could not tell where to find you."

"We will come and see her this afternoon," was the answer, and we did. "Oh!" she said, "I am so glad to see you ; I have not forgotten one word you both said to me, and I have prayed that, if it were all true, and all for *me*, I might meet you again. It did not seem likely in this large city ; but, ever since I knew we were coming to England, I have been praying about it, and specially since we came here. I thought no answer could be coming, for we leave in three days ; and to-day, when my husband came in, I could scarcely believe the answer had come. It seems as if God must be thinking of me!"

Before we left that day the Baroness told us how she had written once and again, but had never sent the letters. She could not tell us she believed, and she thought we should grieve to know she was just where we had left her. The world, in various ways, and Satan, had been busy with her, trying to uproot the seed sown ; but it remained in the soil, though, as yet, it had not brought forth fruit.

It was arranged that the Baron and Baroness should come to us on the following day, and we besought the Lord earnestly Himself to open their eyes that they might see Jesus. In her case He answered. She saw that God had either left us without a revelation of Himself, or that the Bible was that revelation ; and that to accept part, and not the whole, was not to accept it as God’s Word at all. Page after page we looked together at God’s testimony concerning His Son. Faith took the place of reason in her soul, and peace and rest followed. Her own words, written afterwards, best describe the change :—

“ I had asked the Lord to let me know the truth about Jesus, and when I heard your husband speak last week, that was the Lord’s answer to me. I never can thank you for all your patience with me, —it is like the Lord’s. I used to wonder why it was so difficult to believe, but I see now the greatest difficulty was in my own want of humility. When I reasoned about Him and His Word, in my own foolish pride, I could understand nothing ; but when I came to Him simply, letting my own thoughts go, and asking Him humbly to give me

His thoughts, He made everything so clear. I feel so unworthy ; but when I think of all the agony, and the death Jesus had to endure for my sin, and that just my sin was the cause of my not finding Him sooner, it draws out my heart so to Him, that I want to find all my joy in Him.”

The entrance of the love of Christ into her heart made the young Baroness very touchingly humble. Referring to a very dear relative, she wrote, “ Do you think I may venture to tell her what the Lord has done for me ? I am so afraid of hindering her by not putting the truth quite clearly. I send her on all your letters to read.”

I gave her in reply one verse : “ Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.”

In her answer she says : “ I have written to —, and begged her to ask the Lord Himself to show her His truth ; and I told her that, if she wanted it, He would as surely answer her as He answered me. I used to think you must understand in order to believe, but I found that *faith must come first*, and then we begin to understand. I see how very stupid it was of me to think that we—weak, and

sinful, and finite creatures—ever, of ourselves, could understand the infinite and holy God. I ask Him to keep me, and to teach me more and more about Himself; and, above everything, to draw to Him my dear husband.”

Later on, she tells us, in a letter, of one or two near relatives having found the Lord also; but still she waits for the joy of knowing her husband is one with her—not merely for time, but for eternity. From the first he never opposed her; she was so the centre of all his thoughts, that he seemed glad that she had one great joy more, even though he did not share it. But this does not satisfy her; it could not satisfy a heart that had found out what the love of Christ is, and that had realised something of what eternity *without* Christ would be; she cannot be content till he shares her joy.

Reader, have you faced what eternity without Christ will be—eternity with the devil and his angels—and that it is only your own pride and unbelief that will make you share Satan’s portion for eternity? “*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” This moment is the only time that belongs to you; to-morrow your doom

may be irrevocably fixed. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time ; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

"Faith is a very simple thing,  
Though little understood ;  
It frees the soul from death's dread sting,  
By resting on the blood.

It looks not on the things around,  
Nor on the things within ;  
It takes its flight to scenes above,  
Beyond the spheres of sin.

It sees upon the throne of God  
A Victim that was slain ;  
It rests its all on His shed blood,  
And says, ' I'm born again.'

Faith is not what we see or feel ;  
It is a simple trust  
In what the God of love has said  
Of Jesus as the Just.

The perfect One who died for me,  
Now on His Father's throne,  
Presents our names before our God,  
And pleads His blood alone."

## “Fled for Refuge.”

---

“THEY tell me I have nothing to fear, but I know better. I am a dying man, and after death there is God to meet, and I am afraid to meet Him. I have lived without Him till now, and now I am dying, and I do not know Him, and I cannot find Him. I am not ashamed to tell you that I am afraid to die without Him!”

The speaker was a man between fifty and sixty, an upright, moral man. He held a responsible post, and had been valued by his superiors, for he carried out his duties faithfully, while his kindness had endeared him to hundreds who worked under him, whose respect he had first won.

Now he was stricken with an incurable malady, and the doctors had told him that three or four months of life were all that remained to him.

He had known for himself that his case was hopeless the moment he heard the nature of his

disease, and with its dread name an arrow had pierced his soul, for he knew that he must meet God. It was not the agony of body, it was not the fact of dying, that he feared, but always before him there seemed to stand out the words—

"AFTER DEATH THE JUDGMENT."

His friends had tried to comfort him by speaking of his correct life, but his answer was, "God is holy ; my life has not been fit to meet His holy eyes." They urged his church-going, his sacrament-taking, his family prayers. "All the worse for me," he groaned in misery ; "I was praying to a Being I did not know, I was professing to remember One I had never met, and had never wanted to meet till I knew I was dying, and must meet Him. Do not speak to me if you cannot give me anything better to rest upon than what I have been, for my life has been unfit for God from first to last."

It was while suffering thus, agonies of body, and still greater agony of soul, that he was visited one bright autumn morning, by one who had tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The sufferer welcomed his visitor most heartily, and after a very few words about his bodily pain, which was great, he burst out with the great subject which was filling his whole being. “I could bear it all easily, I believe, if I only knew that I were safe for eternity,” he said.

“But,” said his friend, “does not the scripture say, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved,’ and does not another scripture say, ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out’? Are you the first that He has refused to receive?”

“I cannot come; I am afraid to come; it is my sin that keeps me from coming.”

“God says, in 1 John i. 7, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ Does not His *all* take in yours too?”

“But my life has been lived without God up till now, it has been a wicked life.”

Here his wife interposed. “Oh, Robert,” she said, “that is not true; you have been a good husband, and a good father, and a good friend. There is not a man who knows you who does not call you a good man, and I know I do,” added the weeping woman.

"Wife, you do not know me. I have just been a hypocrite all my days, fair outside—and a wicked man all the time."

"Well," said his visitor, "listen to what the Apostle Paul said to a wicked man: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' The man to whom this was said had been ill-treating God's servants, and had almost committed suicide, when God's grace stopped him."

"Yes, he had been a wicked man, it is true, but he had not sinned as I have; he had not heard the gospel, over and over again, and gone on just the same. He believed when he first heard, and he had his life still before him to give to God; but my life is over, it is too late for me."

"But Scripture gives us another story of a man, the sands of whose life had more nearly run out than yours have, when he turned round to the Lord. The dying robber, in Luke xxiii., had only a few short hours to live when he repented, and turned to the Saviour, and He did not say to him, 'You are too late!' but, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise!' He had no life left to give to God."

"The thief on the cross—oh! if I were only like

him—why he gave the very grandest testimony to the Lord Jesus that ever was given. He owned Jesus as Lord and Christ when he saw Him dying on a cross by his side, dying seemingly the same death that he was dying. The thief's was great faith, for the very disciples had run away, and his was the only voice raised to confess Him in that awful moment. I would rather have been that dying robber than even the Apostle Paul, for the Apostle Paul confessed Him after he had seen Him in the glory, but the thief confessed Him, not even when He was walking through the land doing miracles, but when He was dying on a cross, alone and forsaken. I should have had no fear if I could have owned Him thus.”

“Well, my friend, leaving the amount of your faith out of the question, can you not trust the saving power of the blood that the Lord Jesus shed there as enough to cleanse even your sins? You say you have found out you are a great sinner, but is not Jesus a great enough Saviour to save you? His blood is enough to satisfy God, is it not enough to satisfy you? You say it is too late, but the Master of the house has not yet risen and shut to

the door. Still the Saviour is saying, 'Come unto me!' not 'Depart from me!' Still the word is, 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!'"

But nothing as yet seemed to suit his case, or meet his soul's need. Silently his friend looked to the Lord to come in, in His power and grace, and to speak peace to this troubled, anxious one, for it was evident there was no cavilling, no gainsaying here, but a heart that had been probed to its depths, and could not be lightly healed.

The three occupants of that room, the dying husband, the sorrow-stricken wife, and the anxious visitor, sat in silence for some minutes. The suffering man broke the silence. "I know every word you have read is true, all true for some one else," he said; "but this is my great trouble, I never turned round to the Lord till I knew I had only a few months, at longest, to live—and—yes, the truth may as well come out, I want Him now because I am afraid to die without Him. If I had been well and strong, I believe I should still be going on in the old way. Do you know what I mean? It is a shelter I want, and it is a

poor mean thing only to go to Him for shelter. How could He take me? If I had only come to Him before I knew I was going to die, I do not think my sins would have kept Him from taking me; but only to come for a shelter,—oh! He would not, could not have me;” and the big man, who had once been so strong, bowed his head on his hands on the table, and his whole frame shook with emotion.

The secret of his soul was all out now, there were no reserves.

“The Lord Jesus will not have you, because you are coming to Him for shelter? Is that the trouble?”

“Yes, that is it, that is it!”

“Oh, then, I have a magnificent message for you out of His own Word—His words, not mine. He promises, and confirms His word by an oath, that those who have ‘fled for refuge,’ just as you have done, or want to do, may have ‘strong consolation.’”

The sufferer raised his head, and gazed earnestly at the speaker.

Opening the Bible at Hebrews vi., his friend said: “Here is God’s very message for you, out

of His own Word. Listen: 'God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have *fled for refuge* to lay hold upon the hope set before us' (Heb. vi. 17, 18). There you see that is like you—'Fled for refuge:' and God's word and His oath are pledged that you might have 'strong consolation.' Do you not remember, in the Old Testament, the man-slayer was safe who fled to the city of refuge?"

Bewilderment and hope struggled together on his face as he gasped out, "That is not in the Bible, I never read that, though I know all about the man-slayer, and the cities of refuge."

"Well, it is in my Bible, at any rate, and if you open yours at Hebrews vi. 17, I think you will find it in yours too."

His hand trembled as he grasped the large Bible by his side, and turned its pages eagerly, but incredulity gave place to hope, and hope to deep peace and joy, as he read for himself the words that had just been read to him. "Yes, yes, that

exactly fits me—‘Fled for refuge, fled for refuge ;’ and there is ‘strong consolation’ for such, and ‘a sure and steadfast anchor’ for the soul. God’s word and God’s oath pledged. I never knew that was in the Bible till this moment, and I thought I knew the Bible. Wife, give me pen, and ink, and paper ; let me write it out for myself, and feast on the words, and mark the day in my Bible when I first saw them. Oh, to think He would receive the ones who only fly for refuge to Him.”

His wife passed him the pen, and ink, and paper, and he wrote out the verses that had brought peace and rest to his troubled soul. He wrote the day of the month in his Bible, on the margin of the page Hebrew vi., and then he said, “Will you kneel down and thank Him with me?”

By the help of the table and chair he got down on his knees, in spite of the pain he was enduring, and after his friend had thanked the Lord for His grace to him, he burst forth with such a note of praise and thanksgiving as must have given joy in heaven—joy to the heart of the Good Shepherd, who had found this wandering sheep, and put him on His shoulders, and was carrying him home.

From this day he never had a doubt. "How could I doubt?" he used to say; "I have God's word and God's oath to rest upon, that is a sure enough foundation."

He had read the Bible all his life, so he knew the letter of it wonderfully well, and now the Spirit of God opened up to him its meaning, and when too ill to read, or even to be read to, passages long known in his head, were now a comfort and joy to his heart, and were constantly coming from his lips. One very favourite verse with him was, "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxxii. 2).

"That is what the Lord Jesus has been, and is to me," he said one day, when his friend went in to sit for a while with him. "He was a hiding place and a covert when I needed the shelter so badly, and now He is always refreshing my soul with the rivers of His grace, and I rest under His shadow, when else the burden and heat of the day would be too much for me."

He could not hold his tongue about the One who

had saved him, and all He had done for him, and he was earnest and faithful in his warnings and pleadings with those who were unsaved. Specially was he anxious about those who were trusting to any doings of their own, telling them his own experience, and pressing upon them to see to it, ere they came to a death-bed, that they were possessors of Christ, and not merely professors of His name. He told out so simply all his own trouble of soul, his unfitness for God, and how he had fled as a guilty sinner to the God-man, who is a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm.

His words were used by the Spirit of God to carry conviction to more than one heart, for many of those who visited him constantly, said, “If Robert’s life was not good enough for God, what about ours?” and some never rested again till their burden of sin dropped at the feet of Jesus.

He lived more than three months after the morning when he took shelter under the blood of the Lamb slain, and knew that judgment could not overtake him. During those months he learnt to know that he was not merely sheltered from judgment, but was “made nigh” to God “by the blood

of Christ"; was not merely a pardoned sinner, but a child of God, an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ.

His bodily sufferings increased greatly, but his patience was a wonder to all, and was a testimony to the sustaining power of the knowledge of the love of Christ. His one great desire for himself seemed to be to know as much as possible of the One to whom he was going, before He went to Him.

One day towards the end of his earthly history his friend quoted these lines to him :—

" There no stranger-God shall meet thee,  
Stranger thou in courts above,  
He who to His rest shall greet thee,  
Greets thee with a well-known love."

" No stranger-God," he repeated, " and yet He was a stranger to me four months ago, but now His is a well-known love."

Almost his last words, to the friend who had seen him three or four times a week for these months, were—" I shall see Him soon now, and be with

Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me—  
even for me. In His presence is fulness of joy.”

Reader, could you enter His presence with the  
same calm confidence, or are these words still true  
for you?—

“AFTER DEATH THE JUDGMENT.”

“When first I heard of Jesus’ name,  
I only then for refuge came ;  
I heard that He for sinners died,  
And from His heart and wounded side  
Had shed the water and the blood  
To wash and make me fit for God.

I’ve found Him meet my every need,  
That He a Saviour is indeed ;  
Each rising want has been supplied  
Whene’er to Him I have applied ;  
He is of grace the treasury,  
All fulness dwells in Him for me.”

These lines by the late J. G. Deck well describe  
the joyful experience of the aged believer, who for  
many years had proved the blessedness of the  
knowledge of Christ. They are the mature retro-  
spect of a veteran in Christ, while those that

follow—the weighty utterances of a young believer cut off in the prime of his youth—tell the same sweet tale of quiet confidence in Christ as eternity was in prospect.

“ Oh ! I have been at the brink of the grave,  
And stood on the edge of its deep, dark wave ;  
And I thought in the still, calm hours of night,  
Of those regions where all is ever bright ;  
    And I feared not the wave  
    Of the gloomy grave,  
For I knew that Jehovah was mighty to save.

And I have watched the solemn ebb and flow  
Of life's tide which was fleeting sure tho' slow ;  
I've stood on the shore of Eternity,  
And heard the deep roar of its rushing sea ;  
    Yet I feared not the wave  
    Of the gloomy grave,  
For I knew that Jehovah was mighty to save.

And I found that my only rest could be  
In the death of the One who died for me ;  
For my rest is bought with the price of blood,  
Which gushed from the veins of the Son of God :  
    So I fear not the wave  
    Of the gloomy grave,  
For I know that Jehovah is mighty to save.”

## Two Spring-Times.

---

“ I CANNOT bear this life any longer. Mother would never have made me promise her, if she had known how bad it was all to be.”

The words were spoken aloud, but no human ears heard them, for the speaker was alone.

“ Yes,” she continued, reading once more an open letter, “ I will answer it to-night, and say I will go ; whatever comes, it cannot be worse misery than this life is.”

I said no human ears heard the outspoken words, but surely they were heard by unseen watchers. Satan, seeking that soul to destroy it, heard them with triumph, for it seemed as though his temptations were to prevail, and a fatal downward step were to be taken by this one, which he well knew would leave her more than ever in his power, in the power of the “ strong man armed.”

But the words of despair and misery were heard

too by the "stronger than he"—even by the Good Shepherd—who was seeking that soul, not to destroy, but to save it; who not only had heard the words, but who had read every previous thought of the troubled, tempted heart; and whose high commission had gone forth, "Deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom."

It was a wild March afternoon; a cold east wind blew strongly, and heavy rain beat drearily against the window panes.

Within, all was well nigh as dreary as without—a room, clean indeed, but almost bare of furniture, a few dying embers on the hearth, and nothing with which to rekindle them; a piece of dry bread, and a little cold tea, the sole provisions in the cupboard; and a woman's form, whose clothing, though well mended, and neat, was not warm enough to keep her from shivering, as every fresh blast howled round the dwelling; and within that form a heart, restless, and miserable, and fast becoming reckless, but which thought not as yet of turning to the One who was waiting to receive her, to bear all her burdens for her, and to give her rest, both of conscience and of heart, instead.

It was a young woman who sat in that cheerless room. Not more than twenty-one years had passed over her head. Her mother had died three years before, her dying words to her only daughter being, "Promise me you will meet me with Jesus, Jenny, and that you will not leave your father and brother, but try to bring them too."

During her last illness, which had been a long one, the mother "had tasted that the Lord is gracious," and she coveted for those she loved, and was leaving, that they should taste it too.

Husband and son had made but poor return for her tender faithful love, but the daughter clung to her, as to her only friend, and, in her agony at losing her, promised everything she asked.

For a time after her mother's death Jenny had no difficulty in keeping the last part of her promise. Shocked and sobered by the solemn event, her father and brother spent less of their time and money in the public-house, and brought home enough to Jenny to provide for their needs.

But as time went on this was all changed. Little by little they went deeper and deeper into sin and folly, till one thing after another, that would bring

in money, had been taken from the cottage, and cold and hunger were often enough the poor girl's portion ; and as she had never seriously thought of the first part of her promise to her mother, now, in her misery, she felt as though she must break the last part, which hitherto she had faithfully kept.

Strong temptation had come to her once and again ; now, it seemed as though it would overcome the soul that had no strength beyond its own to support it.

But a messenger, bearing a message from God—the God of love—to this poor weary, tried, and tempted one, was even at that moment approaching the cottage door.

A knock startled Jenny just after she had spoken out her decision. Hastily she rose from the wooden stool on which she had long sat crouching over the fast dying-out fire, and opened the door.

The one who had knocked was a missionary whom Jenny knew well, and who had been the means of leading her mother to the feet of Jesus.

Thankful to see a kindly face, Jenny begged him to come in.

“I cannot to-day, my lassie,” he answered, “and

I will not keep you standing at the door either, for this is a terrible rain ; but I've come a mile or more out of my way to leave you these two little books, and to ask you to promise me to read them before you go to bed to-night, and I shall ask the Lord to bless them to your soul. I do not know why I have been sent here with them to-day, for it seemed to me as if I ought to be in quite another direction ; but the Master knows why, though I do not, and I am quite sure He sent me, so I could not do anything else but come ; it was like a direct command to me to come *at once*, and I could not put it away from me, and that is why I am asking you to read them before you sleep."

"And now," he added, "I must hurry on, and I shall not mind my extra walk and wetting, if the Master has sent me with a message to you, lassie, and you listen to it."

Saying this, the kind old man shook Jenny heartily by the hand, and went his way.

Quite awed by his manner, Jenny closed the door and went back into the room.

"He was mother's friend," she murmured ; "it was strange he should come to-day. Well, I cannot

do less than read the books since he came so far to bring them, but I do not see what good they will do me.”

She sat down again on her low stool, and opened one of them, and by the dim light began to read, and as she read, the arrow of conviction entered her soul. God spoke to her, and she was “sore afraid.” She saw herself, in His sight, a sinner in her sins, every thought of her heart laid bare before Him. Verse after verse of Scripture stood out in plain letters, only to condemn her, so she felt.

Father and brother had gone to a neighbouring village, to look for work, and had not returned. She was alone, and alone with God, yet she could not go to a neighbour, as she had often done before, when left alone for the night.

She flung herself upon her bed, but not to sleep, only to hide her face. The eye of God seemed to her to rest on her in the darkness, and she feared to meet it. She had been reading of one who had listened to the voice of Jesus, and had come to Him as a lost sinner, and had got from Him the forgiveness of her sins.

“But” she said aloud, “she was not a sinner like

I am. He could save her. O God! I am *such* a sinner," she cried, "how shall I escape?"

Morning broke, and still her agony of soul went on. She felt on the brink of hell. As the daylight streamed in she got up and paced the room. There was no Bible in the house, her mother's beautiful Bible even had been pawned.

She tried to remember verses that she had learned in days gone by at the Sunday school. The only ones that would come to her were such as "The wicked shall be turned into hell," and "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"I have neglected, and I've broken my promise to mother; and oh! I'm such a sinner, how shall I escape?" the poor girl once more cried out.

Suddenly she remembered the other little book the missionary had left; she had forgotten it in her soul trouble.

She took it up, half fearing it would only make her more miserable; but the first words she read were, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners.*"

Hope leaped up in her soul. "To save sinners!"

that just suited her. No longer fearfully, but eagerly, though tremblingly, she devoured every word from cover to cover. It all seemed to suit her case ; she wanted to be saved, and she learned how willing the Lord was to save her. She wanted to get rid of her sins, and she learned that He had taken them all on Himself, and had borne the punishment due to her for them—that “ Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” To this word specially she clung, “ Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.”

In that early March morning this sinner and the Saviour met, and the sinner got the forgiveness of her sins, and the Saviour saw “ of the travail of his soul ” and was “ satisfied.”

. . . . .

March had come round once again ; not a dreary day of wind and rain this day, for a brilliant sun was making its presence felt everywhere, shining cheerily on the busy city streets, streaming into the abodes of the sick and poor, brightening up too the wards of a large hospital, hailed, alike by patients and nurses, as a common blessing.

Into one of these wards a visitor entered. Most

of the patients in the ward were known to her ; but having been absent for a week or two, there were two or three strangers ; and one in the middle of the ward she specially noticed, as being quite young, and looking very, very ill. Her eyes were closed, and her breathing was difficult ; but the face was calm and restful, strikingly so.

She opened her eyes, as a little later on the visitor stood a moment by her bed, and the latter said sympathisingly :

“ You are suffering much ? ”

“ Yes, more than usual to-day, but it will not be for long,” and she smiled.

“ Then you know Jesus ? ”

Her face literally beamed at the sound of that name, as she answered so simply, “ He saved me . . . just a year ago . . . it was a March day too . . . but not like this, it . . . ”—a fit of coughing cut short what she was evidently going to say, and her new friend whispered gently :

“ Saved *by* Him, satisfied *with* Him, going *to* Him, is not that it ? ” And as a sweet smile answered, she added, “ You must not try to talk any more to-day, it is too much for you ; when I

come in next, it may be one of your better days." And turning to a young woman who sat by the side of the bed, and who had been for some time "almost persuaded," she spoke of how the knowledge of Jesus, the Son of God, could lighten the darkest day, and brighten the brightest, and besought her no longer to let one cloud of unbelief come between her soul and Him. The lips of the dying girl in the bed—for dying she plainly was—moved constantly, as though she were praying during this time, and this was a sweet encouragement to the speaker.

Next day was one of the sick girl's better days, and she said to the one who once more sat in her favourite place by the side of her friend's bed :

"You might read to me, Katie."

Katie read one or two chapters from the Bible, and then said, "Maybe you would like to hear one of the little books the lady left yesterday?"

"Yes, I should so much."

Katie began, but she had not got very far before her friend stopped her quite excitedly, saying, "Katie, do you know the name of the lady who left those?"

“ No, I am not very sure of it ; but I know there is a woman at the top of the ward who does know it, and knows where she lives too.”

“ Then do go and find out for me before you go on reading ; I feel as if I must know.”

Very much wondering at what could so suddenly have excited her usually quiet friend, Katie went up the ward and soon returned with the desired information. The dying girl burst into tears. “ I felt sure it must be,” she said. Then, after a little, she explained that it was two little books written by this one, that the Lord had blessed to her soul a year before ; and that, ever since she had known who the writer was, she had asked the Lord that, if it were His will, she might meet her on earth. “ And to think,” she added, “ that she was standing by me yesterday, and then sitting so long talking with you and close to me, and I did not know.”

“ She will be sure to be here next week, but maybe I could write and ask her to come before ; I am certain she would, when you want to see her so much,” rejoined Katie.

For a moment or two the sick girl was silent, then she said gently, “ No, Katie dear, do not write,

I will wait. My Father knows, and He will give me just what is best, and when it is best for me."

Two days after, the same visitor had a message to deliver to the woman at the end of the ward, and went in again. She had scarcely taken one step inside the door, when Katie met her saying, "Please, will you come the very first thing and speak to Jenny, she does so want to see you. She is the girl in the middle, on the left, who is so ill, you remember."

It was a touching meeting, very precious to both. For this was the Jenny to whom the missionary had been constrained to take the books in that far-off village a year before, and to whom the Lord, in His sovereignty, had spoken through them.

Little by little she told her friend the simple facts here recorded, and much more too of the Lord's ways with her.

Her illness had come on her gradually. Through a very hard winter she had not been able to earn enough by her needle for food and clothes and fire, and even part of what she could earn her father demanded and spent in drink. Early in the year the disease from which her mother had died had

attacked her, and, without proper care and nourishment, its inroads advanced steadily, and now promised ere long to prove fatal.

This was the human side of the story ; but it was sweeter to think that the Good Shepherd saw how very rough the road was, and, in His tender pity, having found His sheep, had taken it on His shoulders, and was carrying it quickly, as well as safely, home.

Her missionary friend had once more come, this time in her hour of bodily need, and had found means to convey her to the hospital in the distant city, and there she found the care and nursing she so much needed, and kindness ; nay, more—love such as she had not known since her mother died, for the gentle patient girl won the hearts of all who had to do with her, and she left a savour of Christ in the ward, when she departed, that was not soon forgotten.

But, as she said, it was “not for long.” Before the first week in April had ended, the Master she loved had taken her to be with Him.

Conscious to the very last, and joyful in the hope of soon being “with Christ, which is far better,” He Himself put her to sleep.

And that moment of Jenny's departure, which was "not death, but victory," was the deciding moment for Katie.

The touch of the same hand that put the one friend to sleep, awoke in the other the movements of life, and she fell at His feet, and owned Him henceforth *her* Lord and her God.

Reader, is He *your* Lord and *your* God? Do you know that you personally are delivered from going down to the pit because He has found a ransom,—is Himself the ransom? If not, let this solemn verse press on your soul:—

"Because there is wrath, beware lest he take *thee* away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

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