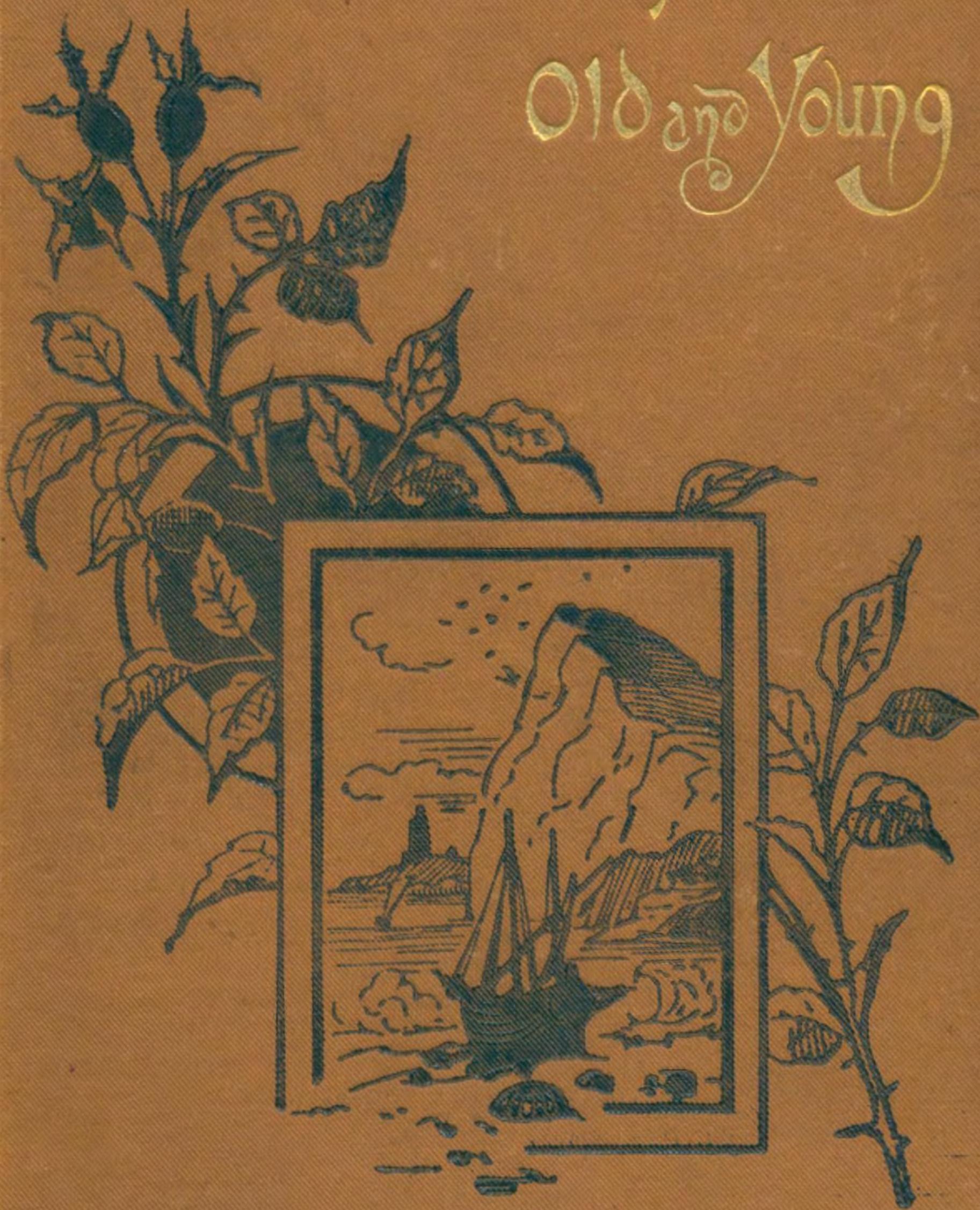


Seeds of Truth

for

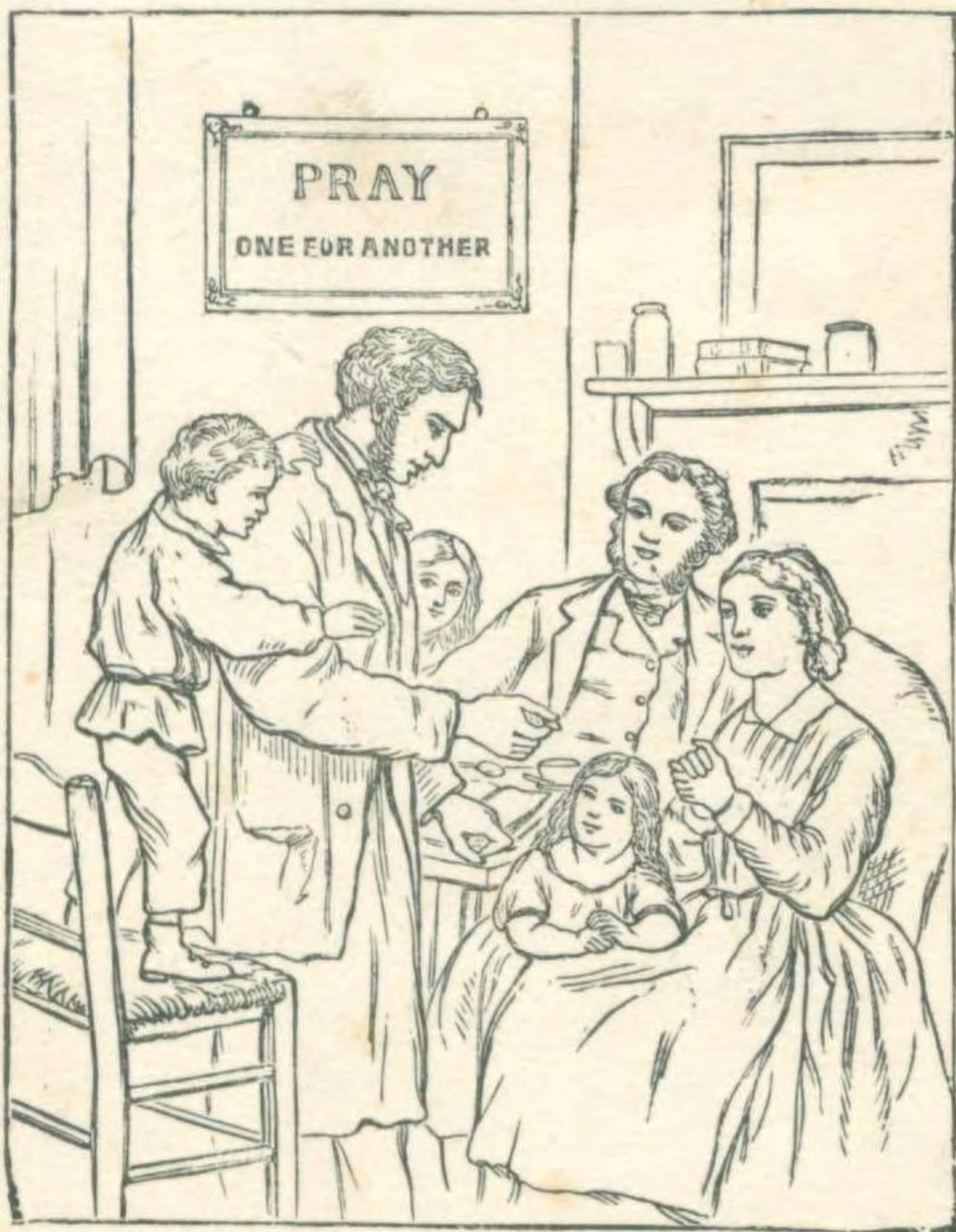
Old and Young



SEEDS OF TRUTH

FOR

OLD AND YOUNG.



LONDON:

ALFRED HOLNESS, 21 PATERNOSTER ROW.

GLASGOW:

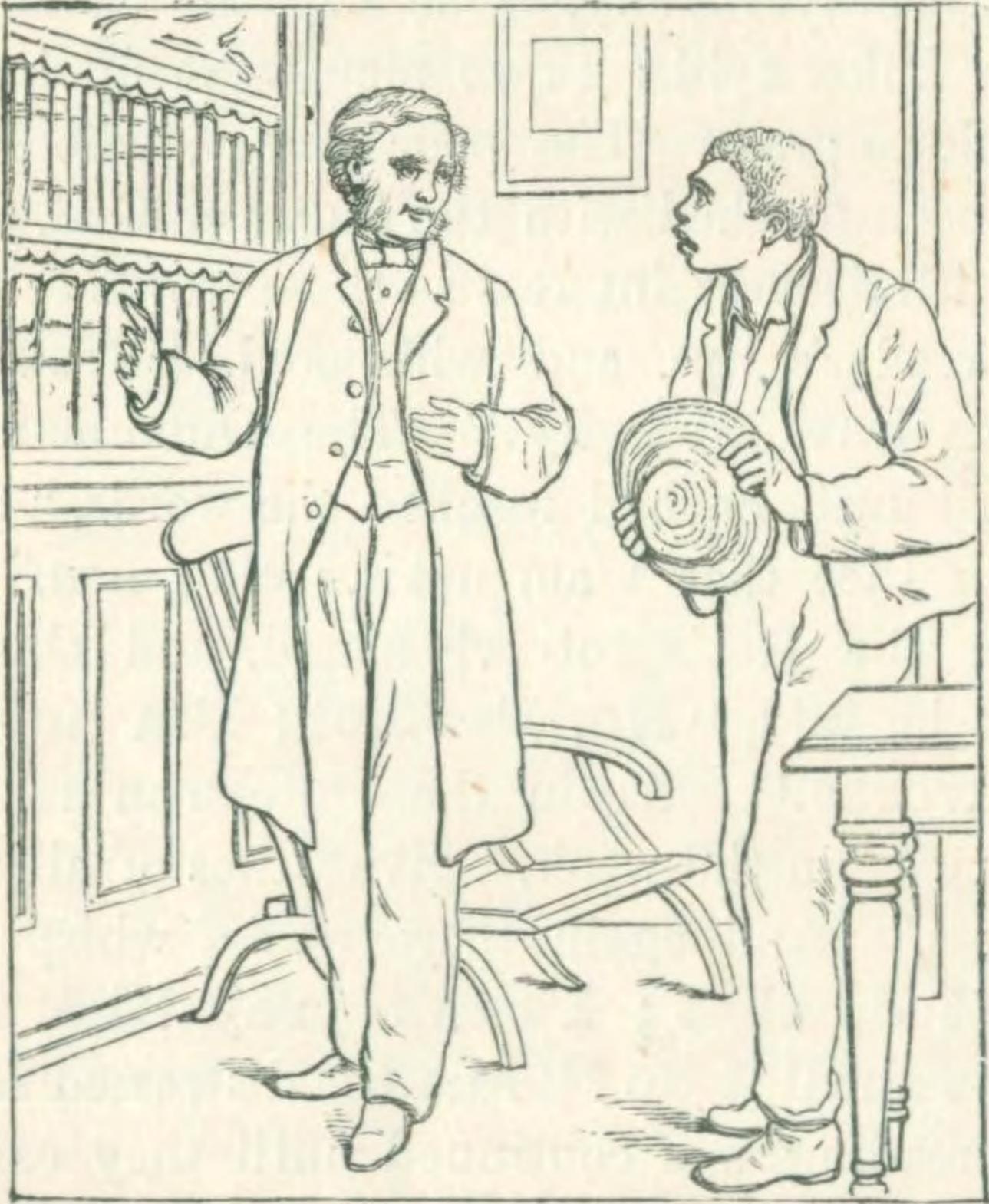
R. L. ALLAN, 143 SAUCHIEHALL STREET.

AND MAY BE ORDERED OF ANY BOOKSELLER.

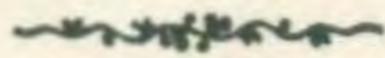
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“THAT’S ME; THAT’S MY PRAYER.”



A POOR Hottentot in South Africa lived with a God-fearing Dutchman, who kept up family prayer daily. One day the latter read from Luke xviii.: “Two men went up into the temple to pray.” The poor savage, whose heart had been touched with the finger of God, looked up with deepest interest as these words fell from the reader’s lips, and whispered, “**Now I’ll learn how to pray.**” The Dutchman continued until he had reached the words, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men,” when again the Hottentot whispered, and this was what he said, “**No, I’m not; I’m not; BUT I’M worse.**” Again the Dutchman read, “I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” And again there was a whisper, “**I don’t do that; I can’t pray like that; what shall I do?**” said the distressed savage. The reading was continued until they came to “the publican, standing afar off.”—“**That’s where I am!**” cried the poor African. “Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven,” read the other. “**No more can I,**” said the Hottentot. “But smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” “**That’s me; that’s my prayer!**” cried the poor creature

aloud now, being too deeply moved to confine himself to whispers, and smiting on his dark breast, he prayed, “**God be merciful to me a sinner,**” like the poor publican had done, and he at once became a saved and a happy man. The word was mixed with faith—how truly, how simply! He **appreciated** it, and thus it was he **appropriated** it, and he was saved by the blood of Christ. Dear reader, **are you?**

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by **the word of God.**”

NOT THE RIGHTEOUS.

IT is a serious thing for a man, be he young, old, or middle-aged, to have a good opinion of himself—to think that his conduct and character are good in the sight of God, and deserving of His approval. For if a man think well of himself, and fancy himself a righteous person, he can lay no claim to Christ as his Saviour, for Christ came not to call the righteous. Christ came not to call those who think well of themselves, and who trust that God will accept them for their good works; but He came to call those who are broken down under a sense of their sins—who feel they cannot make themselves better—who know that their case is so bad, that no man can give them relief; and who, therefore,

in the anguish of their souls, cry to the Lord to have mercy on them.

It is a right thing to pay one's debts, to be courteous to one's neighbours, and kind to the poor—to avoid evil-speaking and evil-doing, and to acknowledge God as the author of all good. This is all right in its place; but many flatter themselves that, by such a course, they have a good chance of acceptance with God in the day of judgment. Now this notion, however popular it be, is the great delusion of the enemy for man's eternal ruin. Those who cherish this notion are altogether deceived. A person may be blameless in his ways before men, and amiable and devout in his disposition, without having a particle of Christianity in his heart.

Morality, and the performance of the outward decencies of religion, give no title to heaven. There is not one in heaven who is there on the ground of what he is in himself, or of what he has done. All those who are there, are there as sinners saved by the sovereign grace of God.

Dear reader, have you thus come to the Saviour and claimed Him for your own? Have you come as a **sinner**, and said to Him in faith, "Thou camest to save sinners: I am one. Thou camest to seek the lost: I am lost. Therefore take me: let me be Thine, and be Thou mine for ever!"

"HOLD ME! HOLD ME!"

ONE bright summer morning two lads were on their way to the village school at F——. They had to pass a rapid stream, which was much flooded by recent rains.

The younger of the two, a thoughtless, giddy lad, amused himself by jumping on the banks overhanging the stream, much to the alarm of his companion, who kept warning him of his danger.

The lad, to show his vaunted courage and independence, took an extra run and a jump, which, however, proved one too many, for away went the sod, and the boy with it, into the rushing torrent below.

Helplessly he was carried down the stream, his courage all gone now, and his rescue depending solely on what another could do for him.

His companion was speechless with terror; but it suddenly struck him that a little way down the river was a footbridge, and hastening with all speed, he found, as he expected, that the water nearly touched the bridge. He accordingly laid himself flat upon it, waiting till the drowning boy should reach the place, when, with an energy of grasp and determination, he seized him by the collar of the coat, and held him fast.

"Hold me! hold me!" cried the frightened

boy, in trembling consciousness that he was powerless to help himself. "Hold me! hold me!" was all he could say, and only by giving himself over to the other's strength and ceasing to struggle was he rescued from a watery grave.

Just such is the state of a poor, helpless sinner; his rescue from the waves and billows of God's judgment depend entirely on what another—Christ Jesus—has done for him. It was not the lad's prayer, "Hold me!" that saved him; his prayer was only the outflow of his heart, realising his needed deliverance; but it was the work of the other boy who saved him, not because of his prayer, but because of his own ability and willingness to save one from death, who, but a few moments before, had scoffed at his warnings and despised his entreaties.

And, in like manner, it is not prayer that saves us, but "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that **not of yourselves**; it is the **gift of God!**" (Eph. ii. 8.)

THE SATISFYING PORTION.

A SWEET, golden-haired child was playing in a garden where was a fountain. It approached the margin of the basin; it looked up at the bright drops, and tried to catch them as they fell, expecting that they would prove

handfuls of jewels to twine into a crown; but, as each sparkling drop touched its hand, it found that the radiant forms were solid only in appearance, and it turned away in disappointment.

The child espied a rainbow. It saw its manifold hues, and graceful forms; it wished to reach the nearer end of the bow. It ran: vain hope! The bow vanished, and the child looked round in wonder, and realised a momentary blank.

It gathered flowers. It carried them home. It looked; the heat of the hand had withered them; and its heart grieved for their loss.

It entered its home; it took up its favourite dove; it caressed it; it fed it—superabundantly, in its love; it said, “This, at least, I have left; it cannot leave me; it *will* live to love me.” But its eager caresses killed it; and the boy was left to wonder if there were **any** joy which would last.

The child grew; he became a man; he sought the sparkling jewels of learning, wit, and talent, to make him a diadem. The jewels flashed, but they disappointed him; what he desired they brought not, and he sought yet again.

The many-hued bow of pleasure he saw; he culled the flowers of human delights; but, as he held them, they withered, and again he sought for happiness. He now sought, in the love of human hearts, what he had never found in the world, in lore, in wealth, and power, and pleasure:

he cherished the tender dove of affection, and now felt sure of happiness ; but death robbed him as he cherished it, and—**he was alone!**

He turned to God ; he confessed his wanderings, his sin in turning to broken cisterns, that could hold no water, that could give no satisfaction. God showed him His own unfathomable love in Christ, and the mourner felt that it was just what he wanted to make him happy ; so he drank of that river of God's goodness, and his soul revived within him. *He lived* ; he slept in peace ; but, ere he slept, he thought, "How much sorrow, how many pangs of disappointment, should I have been spared, had I learnt of those lessons which were taught me in childhood, **that earth cannot satisfy, that nought below can yield real peace**, and that nothing short of God Himself is the spirit's true portion!"

But I am a great sinner, you say—

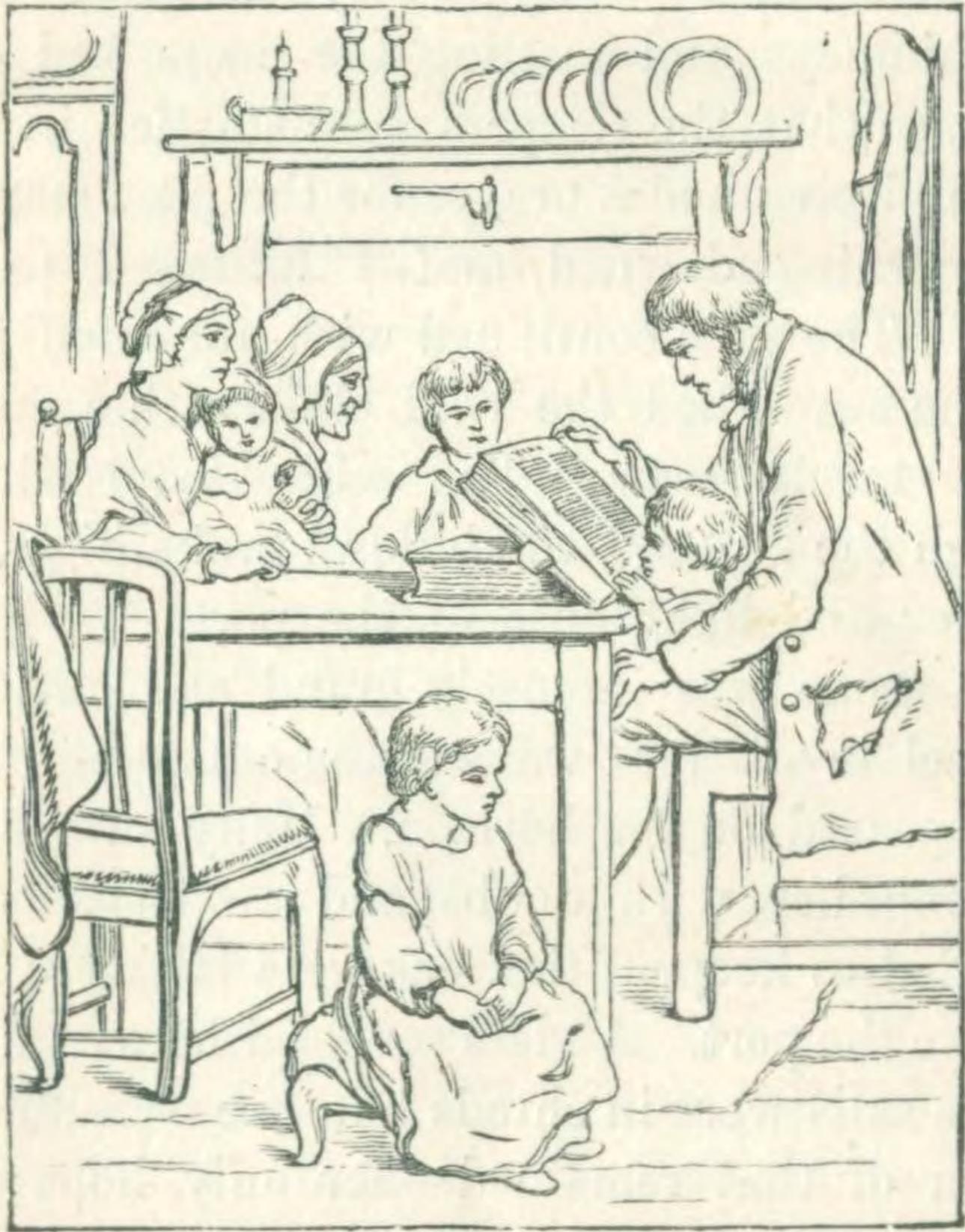
I will in **NO WISE CAST OUT** says Christ.

But I have sinned against mercy, you say—

I will in **NO WISE CAST OUT** says Christ.

But I have no good thing to bring, you say—

I will in **NO WISE CAST OUT** says Christ.



STRANDED.



IT was a fearful night off the coast of W——. The wind blew terrifically—howling down the chimneys and rattling the doors and casements, so that the sleepers were startled in their beds, and breathed a prayer for the poor mariner. The morning dawned, and I hastened to the beach. The gale continued with unabated fury, and the sea lashed the bold cliffs with a magnificence rarely seen. The white foam whirled through the air, and the billows broke high over the pier and lighthouse of the port.

The scene was intensely grand and exciting! A vessel in distress was off the coast—no other sail appeared on the horizon. Many an eye was watching her with doubt and anxiety, as she struggled to keep off the rocks and laboured hard to make the port. A glass revealed her condition. All the sails were in shreds but one—and only a portion of that remained—her only hope; her masts were splintered, and her spars dangled amongst the ropes. For some time we watched her dubious course, as she was beaten nearer and nearer shore. And now, on, on, she sped, driven by the wind and inward tide! It was a moment of exciting suspense. Will she—can she make the port? Now she stands fair—now—now—

she enters! Backward again! **Now!** There! **Just missed**—and in five minutes more she lay a stranded hulk upon the beach!

Oh, to be **so near** the port, and **just to miss** entering! What could be more melancholy and disappointing? But this was only a ship—a lifeless thing of timber! **What must a stranded soul be?** Alas! there are souls—precious souls—yea, thousands who are in a worse case. See how they work and toil for the port! No sail but is unfurled, and no rope is left untouched. How they strain and strain but 'tis no use. The pilot is not aboard—**Jesus is not there**; they will never enter, there is no alternative—they will be **stranded**.

The party-coloured sails of ordinances—the gay streamers and intricate cords of ceremonies—all, all, may do right well during the gala day of life's thoughtlessness, but they will never float the soul to heaven, nor outride the storm which is about to burst upon us.

Oh, man or woman, young and old, how is it with **your soul?** **Where** are you bound for? Who is your pilot? Is the Word of God your chart and compass? Are you trusting only in the precious blood of Christ? Ah, when it is **too late**, "many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able!" Thousands will gaze at the port and long to be safely there, when overtaken by

the last storm of life! Thousands will miss the port, as it were, by a hair's breadth! Will you, my friend, be among the **stranded**? Don't evade the question—it is of the utmost moment that you settle it **at once** in the negative.

Let me tell you that unless the Spirit of God be piloting you through the troubled deep, by faith in Christ crucified, you will never make the haven of rest. Unless Christ be in you, the hope of glory—poor soul, you must be stranded.

Reader, take heed, oh, take heed, that you do not share the fate of this poor ship—which weathered the storm throughout the night—saw the glorious sunlight breaking over the port—**almost** touched it, and yet was **stranded**.

JESUS SAYS—

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and **I** will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28).

LEARNING TO FLOAT.

THERE is a story told of a young man who was seeking after the knowledge of eternal life and peace with God.

The friend to whom he had confided his difficulties discerned very quickly that he was striving to obtain everlasting life by his own efforts. He spoke of “sincere prayers” and “heartfelt desires” after salvation, but continually

lamented that he did not "feel any different in spite of it all."

His friend did not answer him at first, but presently he interrupted him with the inquiry, "W——, did you ever learn to float?"

"Yes, I did!" was the surprised reply.

"And did you find it easy to learn?"

"Not at first!" he answered.

"What was the difficulty?" his friend pursued.

"Well, the fact was, I could not lie still; I could not believe or realise that the water could hold me up, without any effort of my own, so I always began to struggle, and of course down I went at once."

"And then?"

"Then I found out that I must give up all the struggle, and just rest on the strength of the water to bear me up. It was easy enough after that; I was able to lie back in the fullest confidence that I should never sink."

"And is not God's Word more worthy of your trust than the changeable sea? He does not bid you wait for feelings, He commands you just to rest in Him, to believe His Word and accept His gift. His message of life reaches down to you in your place of ruin and death, and His word to you now is, 'The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord'" (Rom. vi. 23).

FATHER NEVER PRAYS.

MR. L——, with his wife and young family, resides in one of our great cities. Mrs. L—— a few years since became the subject of divine grace, and is a humble and devoted follower of the Saviour.

For a long time her husband's heart remained untouched. Morning and evening the Christian mother gathered the members of her little household about her for prayer, but the husband and father of the family was never one of the happy group.

One morning, when Mrs. L—— was gathering her little flock about her for prayer, Willie, the youngest, a boy five years old, steadily resisted the call, and started to go downstairs with a very manly strut. "Come to prayers, Willie," said the mother gently. "No," said he, "I don't want to say prayers. I am not going to say my prayers any more!"

"But, Willie," said the mother, "I want you to be a good boy; and you cannot be a good boy if you don't yield the heart to Christ and pray to Him."

"Father never prays," answered the little fellow; "father is good, and father never prays."

"Oh, little Willie, don't say so," said the tearful mother; "you do not know about that;

father does not meet with us night and morning ; but I trust he prays."

The little boy yielded, and the thoughtful mother pondered the saying in her heart, "Father never prays."

That evening, after the little ones had laid them down to sleep, Mr. L—— and his wife sat quietly together, and the gentle wife told her husband the story of little Willie, and his argument, "Father never prays."

The strong man bowed his head, while the big tears dropped from his eyes. Unknown to his wife he had for some time been anxious about his soul, and the remark of his little boy was used by the Lord in leading him to decide for Christ, and he is now a consistent and happy believer.

May it never be said of any husband and father who reads this account, "Father never prays." Children are great observers, and ponder things in their little hearts. What a fearful responsibility for a father or mother to bring up a young family with no love or fear of God in their own hearts!

Reader, is it your case? If it is, "**What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God.**"

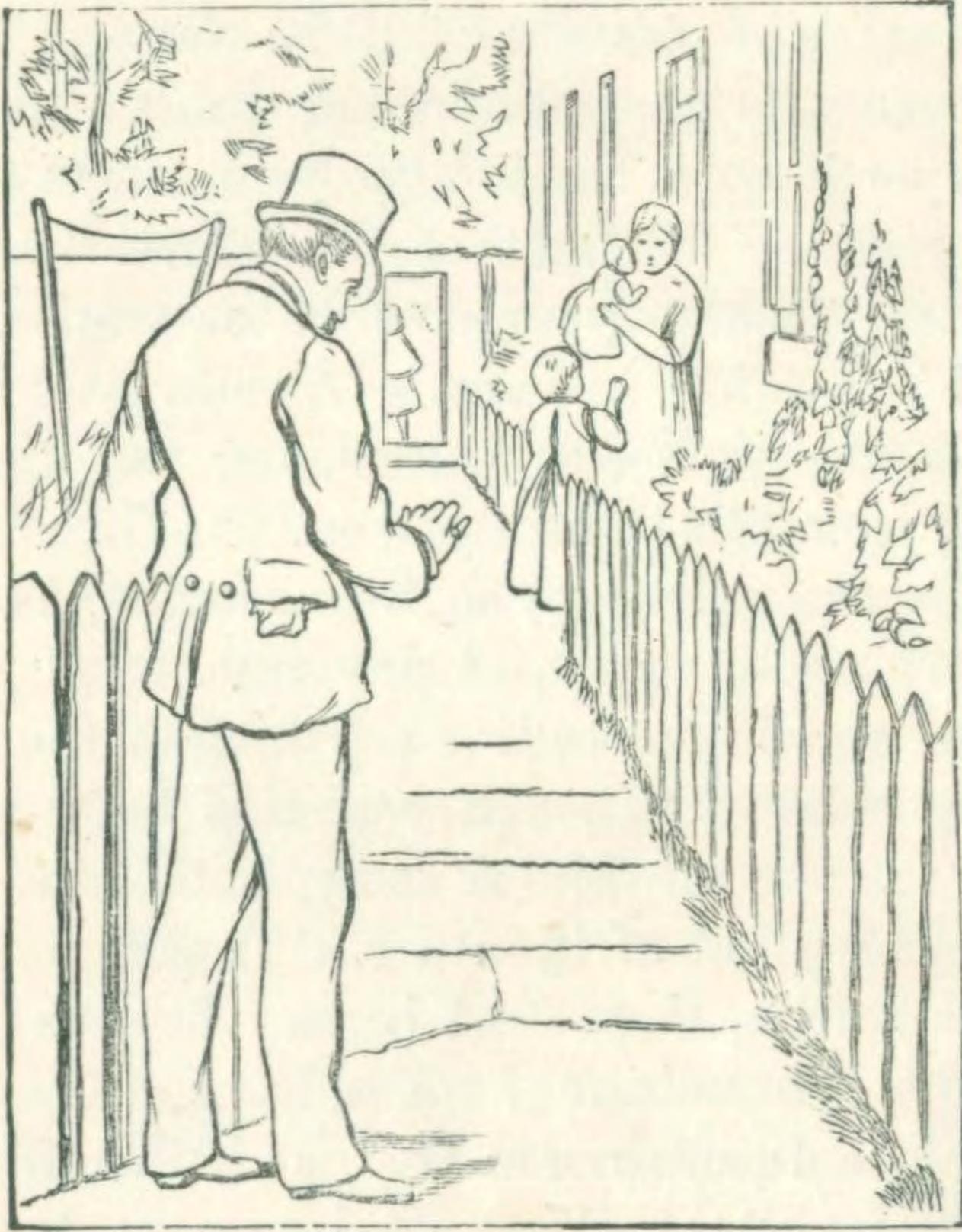
"The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. iii. 22).

WRONG THOUGHTS ABOUT GOD.

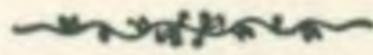
WHAT wrong views some have of God! Like the man with the one talent, they only know Him as an austere man, demanding every jot and tittle, a hard exacter of every farthing, a demander of His rights, and every letter of the law, one seeking to crush to the dust, having a stern frown, and a hidden face. Now this is not the aspect in which He presents Himself. No! it is "God is love," "God so loved the world," "God gave," God willeth not the death of a sinner, God full of grace, mercy, pity, compassion, having an eye of love, a heart of tenderness, a hand open to bestow, a voice of mercy.

Oh! that we realized this more, knew Him as our best friend, and that the way is open for access to Him! No mediator but **Christ**, no advocate but **Christ**, whose yearning heart of love longeth and seeketh for every lost one. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (2 Cor. vi. 2; Rom. v. 8, 9).



“THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS SCARLET.”



ONE Sunday evening a young man was walking along the streets of G—— on his way to some scene of pleasure, when he was accosted by a person who stopped him, and thrust a small bit of paper into his hand. The young man took it and read, by the light of the nearest lamp, the words, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” A sneer passed over his handsome face as he read, and throwing the paper from him he hastened on. “‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,’ doesn’t apply to me, at any rate, for I am an infidel and do not believe anything of the kind,” thought he. “‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,’ bother the thing, I can’t get rid of it. . . . ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ **Sins? Conscience?** Yes, but I acknowledge neither a future nor a God, and, therefore, am not responsible. What do I care to have my sins made white, to use the figure, seeing that I own no duties beyond those necessary to natural human existence? ‘Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.’ I **am** an infidel,” stamping his foot, “I don’t believe in the Bible, the God of the Bible,

the future, or anything beyond the still dark grave; so here's for a short life and a merry one. . . . 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Confound it! . . . 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Confound it! I wish I could get it out of my head. . . . 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' It is very forcible, very poetical. Certainly that Bible is a wonderful book. Given for the sake of argument that it is true, and that a God exists, I can easily understand religious people, who believe in a future either of joy or suffering, clinging to such sentences with a tenacity proportioned to their belief. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Admirable writing! Terse, forcible language! I wonder who wrote it. God, I suppose. God? why, there is no God, I forgot myself. If I could only remember my principles, and how logical and well founded the arguments are which support them, I should be all right. . . . 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Confound the thing! will nothing put a stop to this? Here is a meeting-house, I may as well turn in and see what they have to say." He entered, and was shown quietly into a seat by the door. A solemn silence reigned. The preacher had just read the text from the pulpit,

and paused a moment before repeating it. Then in a gentle voice he pronounced the words,—
"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." The ante-room of that meeting-house was always open for a short time after service for the reception of those whom the message of the Lord had touched. That evening, among the anxious inquirers, there was one who prayed with tears, "Jesus, though my sins be dyed deeper than the deepest scarlet, do Thou make them whiter than the purest snow." And before he left the meeting-house that evening he knew **his sins were forgiven** and his iniquities pardoned, through **the precious blood of Christ**.

"IF I KNEW HOW TO BELIEVE;"

OR,

FOUR STEPS TO JESUS.

FLORANCE felt that she must be a Christian. Her heart was heavy with the knowledge that it was sinful. For many days she had been carrying this burden alone. She did not think she **could** speak to anyone about it. She had been away in her bedroom alone, and prayed

many times, and still all was dark and heavy in her little heart. "Oh if I knew **how** to believe," she would say to herself. "And Mr. M—— says it is **easy**. If I could only **ask** him." At length a thought struck her. "If I cannot **talk** with him, I can write him a little note."

When Mr. M—— found an envelope directed to him, which some one had quietly laid on the large Bible in his study, he was surprised to find it a note from his little friend Florence. When he read it he was very glad too. "The dear child, what can I say to her?" he thought. Then he closed the door, and asked, as if **he** were a little child, going to a father, to be guided in answering that note. And I think he was. He began it with Florence's own question, and this is what he wrote:—

"'How shall I come to Jesus?' The desire to come now is the **first** step.

"Feeling my sinfulness and danger and need of His help is the **second** step.

"Feeling that He is both able and willing to help and save me is the **third**.

"And then asking Him to do for me what I cannot possibly do for myself is the **fourth**.

"Four steps to Jesus. That is all. Perhaps I should say there is but **one**, and that very

short. Out of the heart gushes the prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' and on the wings of the prayer the soul **flies** to the Saviour, in a moment, saying, 'Here, Lord; I give myself to Thee: 'tis all that I can do.'

"This seems to be the short, the simple, and only way to the Saviour. May my dear Florence find it so."

Florence read the note very carefully.

"I think it is the **third step** I need," she said. "I have tried the first and second, and **fourth**, and I do and **will** believe He is **able**, yes, and **willing** to save me." So taking the third step, and **then** trying the fourth, it was not very long before Florence felt that in her heart she had found the answer to her own earnest question, "How shall I come to Jesus?"

GOD LOVES YOU.

FOR God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." You may not be lovely, but you are one of that loved world; neither may you desire to be loved, and yet you are one of that "so loved" world. Nor do you deserve to be loved; yet still loved you are in spite of all; yes, loved by God, and you know it not, and have never yet believed it. But, dear

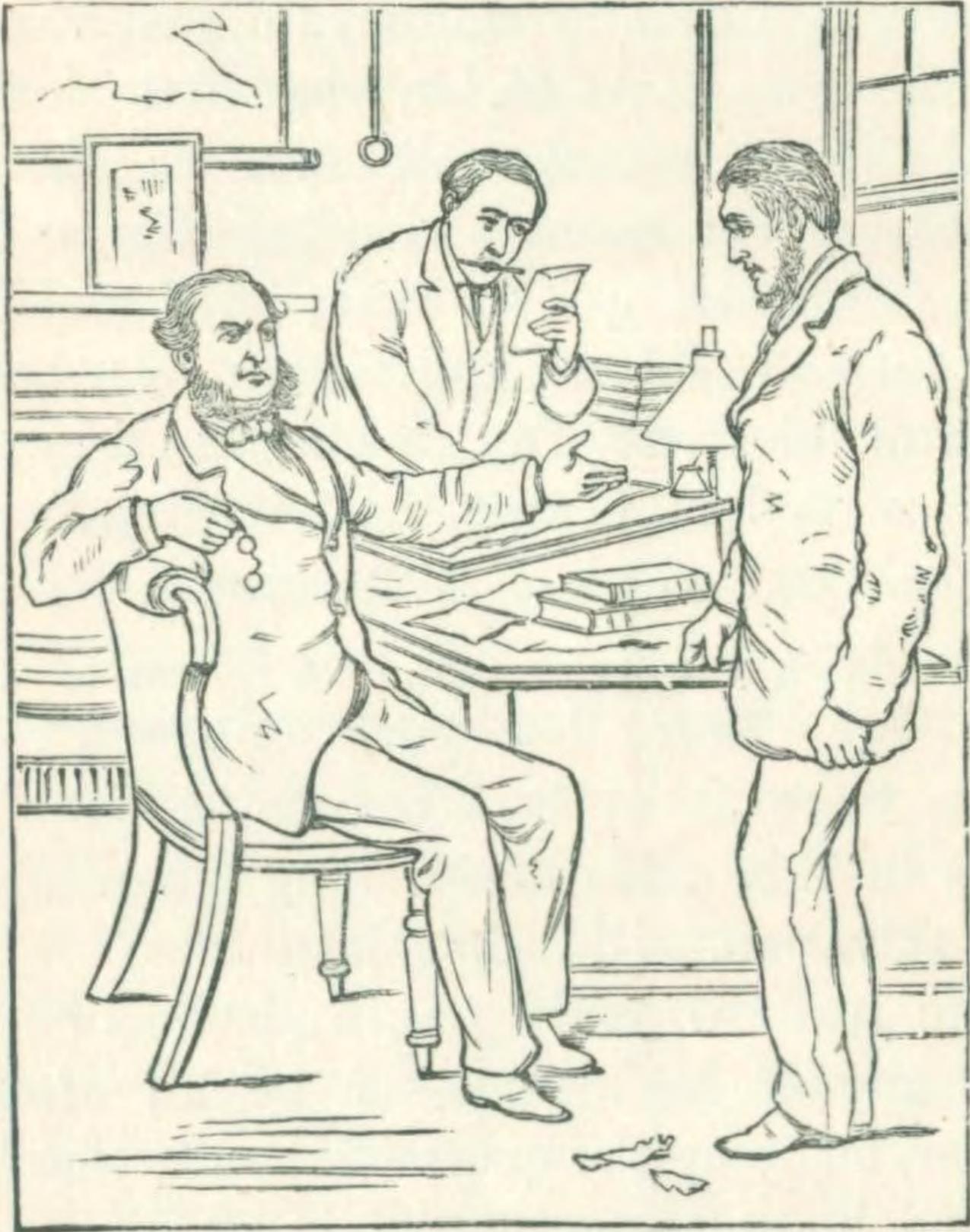
reader, you are not left without proof of it (John iii. 16). God gave His only begotten Son as a free gift unasked, undesired, and undeserved. Oh! the amazing love of God! Some say we get the gift of eternal life if we ask for it; but the truth is, dear reader, God has given the gift already — the gift of His Son. As I write these lines to you, unsaved one, I hold in my hand a gift, it was offered me six months ago by a child of God. I accepted it with thanks on the spot. I did not ask for it; nor did I offer to pay for it; nor did I reject it. No; I prize it much. It is to me a token of the giver's love. But, dear reader, God's priceless gift He offered and pressed me to accept for many years, and I all that time kept rejecting it until I saw without Him I **must** perish eternally.

But, dear reader, mark these words—“**Who-soever believeth** on Him shall **not** perish but have everlasting life.” “He that **believeth on Him** is **not** condemned.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that **believeth on Me** hath everlasting life.” Mark this, dear reader, for you may be saved as you read. It is not needful for you to weep one tear, to pray one prayer, do one good work, or take one step to the right or to the left; but **where** you are, and **as** you are, all you have to do is to accept

God's gift, Christ, and you are saved for ever. **Then** you will pray, and praise, and work for Him who died for you on Calvary's Cross, and tell other poor sinners that they, too, are loved of God.

THE SAVIOUR AND THE SINNER.

IT is the beginning of boundless blessedness in the soul, when one is brought by the Spirit of God to know that he is indeed a sinner—to feel the burden of his sins, and to cry for mercy—for then he hears with joy that there is a Saviour, he learns with delight that Jesus came to seek and to save such as he is: and he, by faith, claims that Saviour as his own. Thus the two meet who are exactly suited to each other. **The Saviour wants the sinner, and the sinner wants the Saviour.** Oh, what a meeting! The Saviour rejoicing that He has found one who was lost; the sinner rejoicing that he "was lost, but is found." The Holy Spirit confirms their union, and heaven celebrates it: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."



PEACE MADE.



IT is very common to hear people speak of having “**made their peace with God.**” One day, in a country churchyard, just after the dead whom we came to bury had been lowered into the grave, my eye fell on a neighbouring tombstone. The name, and occupation, and age of the deceased I quite forget; but I remember well the well-enclosed quiet churchyard, with the beautiful River Tay flowing close by; and yet more do I remember the following lines on that tombstone which drew my gaze—

“Mourn not, dear friends, for my decease,
For with my God I made my peace.”

Now, there is at best something very suspicious in this mode of speaking regarding the soul's salvation. Did that man intend to say that **he had himself pacified God?** Had he, by any of his doings, or by all of them together, made up the quarrel between the Holy God and himself the sinner? Did he mean to say—or when you, reader, use the same language, do **you** mean to imply—that you have repaired the wrongs, made up the breach, atoned for the insults which destroyed peace between you and God? There is deep self-righteousness here. In all such language there is the expression of

self-complacency; as if you had had the merit of being a Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 13), or an Abigail (1 Sam. xxv. 18), whose gifts and presents had cooled the resentment of the offended one, and won him over to your side.

The Word of God declares, on the other hand, that it is **God who makes peace** for us, God in Christ; we contribute nothing to the peace-making. "**Christ made peace by the blood of His cross,**" says Col. i. 20; and so He became "our peace" (Eph. i. 14). Before God could be at peace with us, there needed to be satisfaction rendered to His injured justice and holy law—there needed to be atonement made for the sins of the sinner. This satisfaction, this atonement, was given wholly by Christ, God-man; we gave no help whatsoever. "The chastisement of our peace **was upon Him**" (Isaiah liii. 5); all the punishment which must needs be suffered if our peace was to be made, was borne by Him; and so "**by His stripes we are healed.**" **Jesus only** is the procurer, the purchaser, the maker of peace.

"**Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,** through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). How clear it is that our peace is made by no doing, feeling, suffering of ours! The ground of it is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which God can

be just while justifying the ungodly, and we in believing this find, or **take**, the peace. "Suppose," said one, "I were to go to a provision shop, and buy for you all that would relieve and supply your wants, and should pay for it, and tell you to go and fetch it, would you need to take any money with you?" "No; it has been paid for." "Would you need to make any promise about paying back at some future time?" "No; I was sent to get it for nothing." It is even so with pardon of sin and our peace with God. Go for it to Christ; do not attempt to bribe or persuade God to be at peace with you. Speak and think of **taking** peace, but never more speak or think of **making** peace.

THE LOST PASSPORT.

IN my rambles in foreign lands, I once met with a party of young Englishmen, one of whom had lost his passport. By one means or another he continued to get on without it at the stations of secondary importance, but at length he came to the frontiers; the demand to see and examine the document was stern and imperative; his lack of it, as well as the artifices by which he had heretofore concealed it, was detected, and his further progress disgracefully arrested.

How many will come to the frontiers of that eternal world towards which we are all journeying, **without a passport!** We may evade all scrutinies at the way-stations. We may be admitted into reputable and virtuous society. We may enter the church. We may eat and drink in the presence of Christ. We may even preach the Gospel with the tongues of men and of angels, and do mighty works in His name, and give our goods to feed the poor; but all this does not constitute a passport into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. “Except a man be born again, he **cannot** see the kingdom of God. If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins. Dear reader, we pray you to learn wisdom from the children of this world, and do not delay to get your passport till you reach the very station where it will be demanded. It will then be too late. **Now** is the accepted time.

“THE BIBLE SAYS SO.”

A FEW days ago I met a little girl to whom I said, “Do you know that Jesus loves you?” Her face lighted up with a simple smile of confidence, and the ready answer came forth:

“Oh, yes, sir.”

“How do you know that?”

"Because the Bible says so."

"But as you speak about the Bible, my little girl, I must tell you what that holy book says, that we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that there is none righteous—no, not one."

"But Jesus said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,'" she replied.

"But you are a sinner. You have done many naughty things. What makes you think He would receive you?"

"Because the Bible says He died for sinners, and therefore He died for me."

"But this is a very great thing for you to say. How can you be so sure about it?"

"Because the Bible says so."

"The Bible also says that Jesus will come again and take His people up from the earth in a moment some day. What will become of you then? How would you feel if He were to come now, while you and I are talking?"

"I should be very happy."

"Why would you be happy?"

"Because He would take me up to be with Him for ever."

"And how long have you been able to say this, my child?"

"Some weeks, sir."

This was childlike faith, and I found that she

showed by her ways that the confession of her lips was the real working of the Spirit of God in her soul.

ALONE WITH THE SON OF GOD.

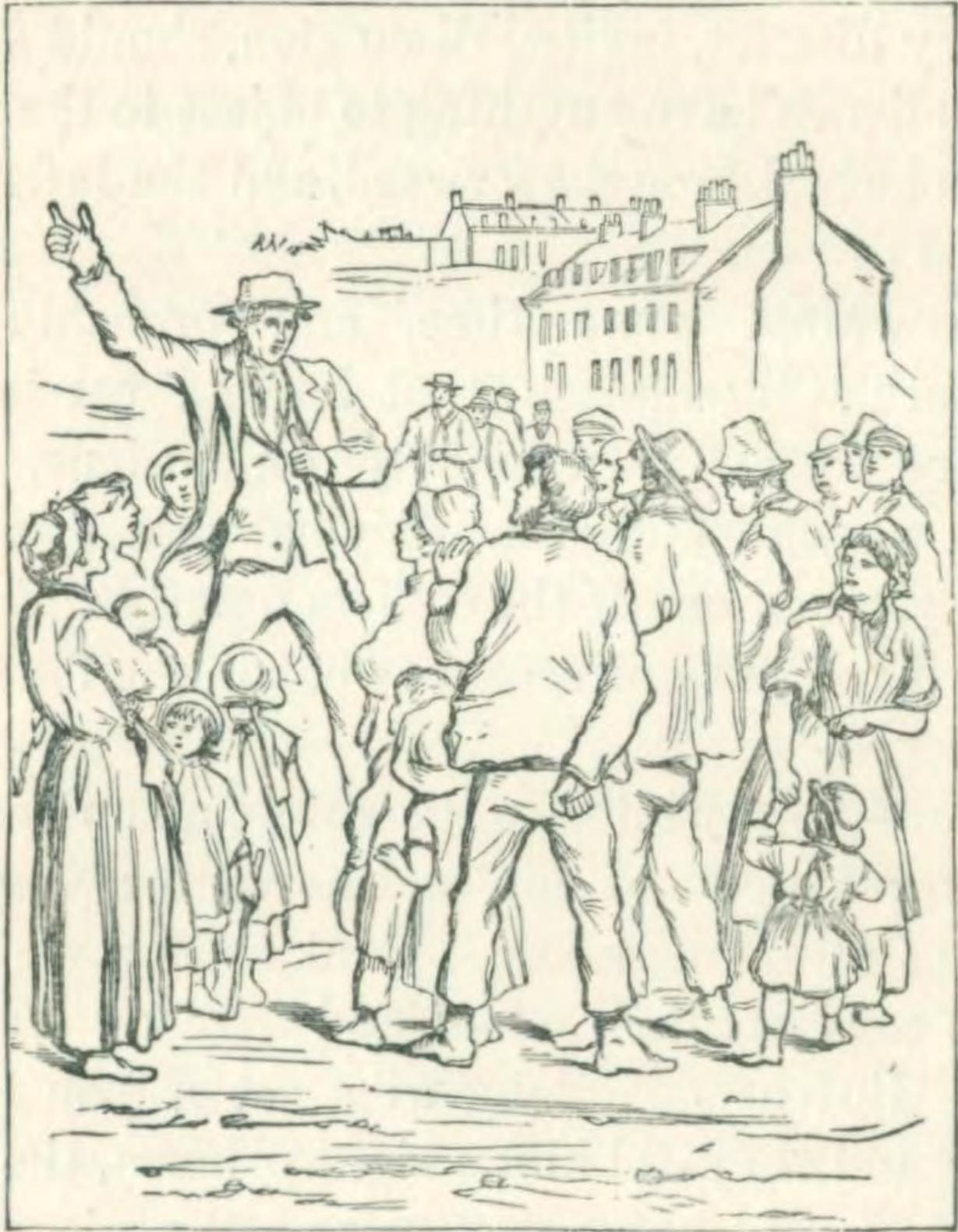
IN no Gospel is Jesus seen so near the sinner as in that of John. He is **alone** with the Samaritan, **alone** with the adulteress, **alone** with the outcast beggar. And this gives its highest interest to this precious portion of the Word of God. The joy and security of being alone with the Son of God, as is there exhibited, are beyond everything to the soul. The sinner thus learns his title to the Saviour, and discovers the blessed truth that they were made for one another. The moment we learn that we are sinners, we may look in the face of the Son of God, and claim Him as our own. He came to seek and to save sinners: and He walked as a solitary man on the earth, save when He met a poor sinner. Such alone had title, or even power, to interrupt the solitudes of this heavenly Stranger. The world knew Him not. His paths were lonely among us, save when He and the sinner found their way to each other. The leper outside the camp met Him, but none else.

And let me say, this being alone with Jesus is the sinner's **first** position. It is the beginning

of his joy; and no one has a right to meddle with it. That which has called itself the Church, in every age of Christendom, has sought to break in upon the privacy of the Saviour and the sinner, and to make itself a party in the settlement of the question that there is between them. But in this it has been an intruder. **Sin casts us upon God alone.**

We must not surrender to any the right of God to talk with us **alone** about our sins. Nor should our anxiety on a thousand questions which may arise, righteous as that anxiety may be, be allowed to lead us for a moment to forget, that as sinners we have been already alone with Jesus; and that He has once and for ever, in the riches of His grace, pardoned and accepted us.

This solitude of **Christ** and the **sinner** our Gospel most comfortingly presents to us. The Son of God had nothing to do **especially** with any place—the wide wilderness of the world, where **sinners** were to be found, was the only scene for Him.



THE GREAT BIG COAL.



SOME years ago a well-known infidel lecturer, after an address to pitmen and others in a colliery district, invited discussion, should any of his audience have anything to object to the arguments he had brought forward, and the inferences he had drawn.

He waited some time, and probably was congratulating himself that he had carried his hearers to his own unholy conclusions, while Satan was chuckling that they had scored another victory, when one of the colliers quietly addressed himself to the lecturer somewhat in the following manner:—

“Mr. ——, a while ago there were a man workin’ in yon pit along wi’ me, and he were a very bad man as all on us knowed; and arter a while he ’come converted, Mr. ——, and were a very good man. But he got along wi’ a set of you infidel chaps, and they did him a sight o’ harm, they did, Mr. ——; and he went on very bad again sum’ut like what he’d bin afore, when one day a great big coal fell atop on his head as he were a working i’ the pit, and what’n it do but knock him reet down on his knees, Mr. ——; and, Mr. ——, he begun again crying to the Lord wi’ all the strength he’d got, to ha’ mercy on him! Well, we got him

out as soon as no time, and Mr. ——, do you know that great big coal did his head a power o' good, for it just knock'n clean out o' it them there infidel notions o' yourn for good a'n all? And I just a bit think as how a great big coal, likes o' that, might do you a sight o' good, too, Mr. ——; it's all I've got to say o' your lectur."

We have no information as to what effect this striking address, so full of plain, homely truth, produced upon the lecturer or upon his audience; but we are thoroughly convinced that an incident like this, calculated to arouse the conscience by indicating the state of a soul when brought face to face with God, is worth more than a thousand arguments addressed to human reason, however ably presented or logically concluded. Oh, dear reader, in circumstance of like danger to that poor pitman, how would it be with you? **Can you say it is well, eternally well, with your soul?** Were your life trembling in the balance this moment (and who knows better than you that your breath is in your nostrils, and God could recall it at any instant, or smite you with fatal sickness, or visit you with what men call an "accident" this very day?) do you really think, with death staring you in the face, that the sophistries of the sceptic, or the flimsy arguments of the infidel, would afford a solid foundation for the rest and confidence of

your soul? Away with such idle fancies, which lure men on to eternal perdition! Flee for your life, listening no longer to the lie of Satan! Long enough have you tried the forbearance of God, and tempted His long-suffering goodness. He beseeches you to be reconciled, that you may be delivered through His grace from the impending wrath. He **must** bring judgment by-and-bye upon the despisers of the riches of His grace in the Son of His love. And then woe, unutterable, unmitigated woe, to those who have refused His proffered mercy. May He stamp these things in power upon your soul, dear reader. God is a reality; death is a reality; the coming of Christ a reality; eternity a reality; the lake of fire a reality—the worm that never dies, the fire that is never quenched! Do you not indeed **know** that these are **realities**—**Divine** realities, and realities for **eternity**? May God Himself grant unto you, dear reader, repentance unto Salvation.

"IF I COULD ONLY SEE MY MOTHER."

"IF I could only see my mother!"

Again and again was that yearning cry repeated—
"If I could only see my mother!"

The vessel rocked, and the waters, chased by a fresh wind, played musically against the side of the ship. The sailor, a second mate, quite youthful, lay in his

narrow bed, his eyes glazing, his limbs stiffening, his breath failing. It was not pleasant to die thus in this shaking, plunging ship, but he seemed not to mind his bodily comfort; his eyes looked far away, and ever and anon broke forth that grieving cry—

"If I could only see my mother!"

An old sailor sat by, the Bible in his hand, from which he had been reading. He bent above the young man, and asked him why he was so anxious to see the mother he had wilfully left.

"Oh! that's the reason," he cried, in anguish; "I've nearly broken her heart, and **I can't die in peace.** She was a good mother to me—oh! so good a mother; she bore everything from her wild boy, and once she said, 'My son, when you come to die **you will remember all this.**' Oh, if I could only see my mother!"

He never saw his mother. He died with the yearning cry upon his lips, as many a one has died who slighted the one who loved them. The waves roll over him, and his bones whiten at the bottom of the sea; and that dread cry has gone before God, there to be registered for ever.

Dear young reader, it was too late for the dying sailor to see his mother, but it is **not too late for you to be saved.** Jesus bids you "Come." He loved sinners, and died on Calvary: there He shed His precious blood, and now He bids you "**Come.**" Remember too, that **now** is the time to come; **now** is the accepted time; **now** is the day of salvation."

"I CANNOT LOVE GOD."

A GENTLEMAN who, in company with others, had lived many years a life of sinful pleasure, heard that the ringleader of the party had been converted, and wondered much that he should be such a fool as to give up his jovial, free, merry life, to become, as he thought, serious and melancholy. It led the gentleman to look into the Bible and read for himself; and he began to realize the unsatisfying nature of the pleasures of sin, and the hollowness there was in the life he had been leading.

Shortly after this he met his old friend, who said to him, "Do you ever read your Bible?"

"Yes," he replied, "but I can get no comfort out of it. However much I try, I cannot love God."

"No," said his friend, "nor could I; but the truth is **'that God loves me!'**" and then he wished him good morning.

"**'God loves me!'** **'God loves me!'** What can that mean?" Then came the thought of God having shown His love by giving His only begotten Son to die on the cross to save sinners. The reason of it flashed on his soul with divine power and light. "Now I see it! I see it! God loves me as a sinner. Yes! God loves and longs to save me. It is not that I must love God before I can be saved, but God loves me, a lost sinner!" "For while we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6).

WAITING.

A YOUNG man was once awakened to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" He went to a friend who was a professing Christian, and, unburdening his mind, eagerly and earnestly besought him to tell how salvation was to be obtained. His adviser declared that all his efforts were unavailing; that salvation was not to be had by works; and that if he patiently **waited**, in "God's own time" he would get what he was in quest of. "But **how long** am I to wait?" asked the seeking soul. "I cannot answer that question," was the reply. Months and months passed on. He "waited," and "waited" "God's time." His agony of soul increased and grew more intense.

At last he resolved to call on another friend, and seek his advice. This person told him that instead of "waiting," he ought to **pray** earnestly to God for pardon, and he would obtain it. "**How long** am I to pray?" asked the anxious inquirer. "You must just continue praying, and in due time you will receive it," was the reply. He prayed earnestly, and **besought** God to give him salvation. For years he continued "striving" and "agonizing in prayer" to God, entreating Him to be reconciled, and imploring Him to "have mercy" on his soul.

At the end of about three years he began to think that his friends had given him wrong advice, and resolved to seek counsel from an earnest Christian whom he had come in contact with, and see how he

had received the forgiveness of his sins. Having told what his friends had said, and how he had been "waiting" and "praying," this Christian pointed him to God's simple plan of salvation. He showed that all the time God had been **waiting**, and had been beseeching **him** to be reconciled. The mistake discovered, he immediately "took God at His word," and rejoiced in the liberty which the **truth** alone can give.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL BACKWARDS.

THEY preach the Gospel backwards who say, "Get better before you come;" or, "You must feel before you can believe;" or, "You must do, before it can be done;" who make works the way of salvation.

Some say men are saved by the deeds of the law, but Scripture says, "By the deeds of the law there shall be no flesh justified." There is only one way, and that "the new and living way," the Lord Jesus Christ, who says of Himself, "I am the way." Then, **after** taking Christ, and entering the way, come obedience and good deeds. But every happiness, arising from so-called good deeds before coming to Christ for salvation, is but a salve of Satan for the conscience, and a barrier to keep the soul from Christ.



“IT ALL GOES TOGETHER.”



I WAS walking one day on the high road in Devonshire, when a shower of rain compelled me to seek shelter. Looking round, I observed a cottage on a hill, near by. In a very few minutes I was at the door, and knocked. The good woman of the house asked me to come in out of the rain.

I asked her if she was a believer in the Lord Jesus? “Oh, yes.” “So you can say you are saved?” “No, I can’t say that.” “Then you don’t really believe?” “Oh, yes, I do, sir.” “But, my dear woman, God says, if you believe, you **are** saved. The two things are joined together, and, ‘what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’” “Well,” she replied, “I do believe, but I can’t say I’m saved.” I asked for her Bible, and read, from the fifth chapter of John, the following words:— “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment), but is passed from death unto life.” “God says to you, individually, as if you were the only person in the world— ‘**He that heareth, and believeth, hath everlasting life.**’ ”

“Now, that’s God’s word. You have heard it—

heard it now. Do you believe it?" "Oh, yes."
"Then are you saved? For He says—'**He that heareth and believeth, hath everlasting life.**' Can't you see that directly you hear God's word, and really believe—what? Why, that God so loved you, a hell-deserving sinner, as to give His only-begotten Son to die for you, so sure is it that you have everlasting life."

"I do believe He died for me. He died for all of us." "Well, never mind others for the present. Do you believe He died for you?" "Yes." "What did He die for? Was it not to save you from the just consequence of your sins?" "Yes." "Then why should you doubt? Perhaps you are waiting to feel you are saved?" "That's it, sir." "Well now, read for yourself. Does it say, 'He that heareth and feeleth'? No, but 'He that heareth and believeth.' **All the feeling believers ever get, comes after believing, not before.**

"Suppose you had offended me, and I came and told you that I forgave you. You would be forgiven, would you not?" "Oh, yes." "Why?" "Because you said so." "That is you would take me at my word. You don't think I would tell a lie. Then, why not take God at His word? You believe me—why should you doubt God? Let us get on our knees and ask God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to make it plain to you."

On rising, I said, "If Jesus came to you in person, and you heard Him audibly tell you that you were saved, would you believe it?" "Yes." "Well, then, here is God's Word: read this twenty-fourth verse of the fifth chapter of John. Do you believe it?" "Yes." "Every bit of it?" "Yes." "Now listen, 'He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me.' Do you believe so far?" "Yes." "Suppose I go no further; there would be no sense in what I have just read. It would be an incomplete sentence, would it not?" "Yes." "There is something wanting. What is it? Why, the best part of it—'**Hath everlasting life.**'"

At once the truth flashed upon her, and she cried out: "Oh, I see! **It all goes together,** doesn't it?" "Yes," I said. "Praise the Lord! It all goes together!" The joy of the saved woman was indescribable. "Oh, sir," said she, "I shall never forget this day. I shall never forget your coming." "I did not come here by chance," I said. "The shower of rain brought me here. I should have passed your house, had it not been for that; and who sent the shower of rain but God? Let us thank God for what **He** has done for you."

THE SOLDIER LADDIE.

WRITING from Cairo an American lady relates the following touching incident. She was allowed to visit the military hospital soon after some wounded men had been brought in from a skirmish.

The three hours we could stay were full of work for heart and hand. One young soldier from a Highland regiment especially excited my interest. He had lost a limb, and could not, the doctor said, live through the night. I stopped at his side to see if there was anything I could do for him. He lay with closed eyes, murmuring, "Mother, mother." I dipped my handkerchief in a basin of ice-water and bathed his forehead, where the fever flushes burned. "Oh, that is good!" he said, opening his eyes. Seeing me bending over him, he caught my hand and kissed it. "Thank you, lady," he said, and smiled; "it minds me o' my mother."

Can I write to your mother? I asked. No, he said, the surgeon promised to write; but could I, would I sing to him?

I hesitated a moment and looked around. The gleam of the sun on the yellow water of the Nile, as the western rays slanted down, caught my eye, and suggested the river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. I began to sing in a low voice the Gospel hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?" Eager heads were raised around us to listen more intently, while bass and tenor voices, weak and tremulous, came in on the chorus,—

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God.

When the song was ended, I looked into the face of the boy—for he was not over twenty—and said, “Shall you be there?”

“Yes I'll be there through what the Lord Jesus has done for me,” he answered, with his blue eyes shining, while the light that never was on land or sea irradiated his face.

The tears gathered in my eyes, as I thought of the mother, in her far-off Scottish home, watching and waiting for tidings of her soldier boy who was breathing away his life in an Egyptian hospital; and I sang—

In the sweet by-and-by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore,

then stooped and kissed his forehead.

“Come again, lady, come again,” I heard on all sides as we left the barracks. I shall go, but I shall not find my Scottish laddie, for by to-morrow's reveille he will have crossed the river. “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

MORE THAN A FRIEND.

I WAS deeply interested lately in hearing of an incident that took place at a soldier's grave in one of the Southern States of America. A person was seen decking it with flowers; and a stranger observing him,

asked, with a tone of sympathy, "If his son were buried there?" "No," was the reply. "A brother?" "No." "Some other relation?" "No." "Whose memory, then, may I venture to ask, do you thus so sacredly and tenderly cherish?" Pausing a moment from emotion, he replied—"When the war broke out, I was drafted for the army; and as I was unable to procure a substitute, I prepared to go. Just as I was leaving home to report myself for duty, a young man whom I knew came to me and said: 'You have a large family, whom your wife cannot support when you are gone. I am a single man, and have no one depending upon me—I will go for you.' He went. In the battle of Chickamauga the poor fellow was dangerously wounded, and was taken to the hospital. After a lingering illness he died, and was buried here. Ever since his death I have wished to visit this place, and having saved sufficient funds, I arrived yesterday, and to-day have found his grave."

The touching story concluded, he planted the rest of the flowers. Then taking a rude board, he inserted it at the foot of the grave. On it were written these simple words, and no more—

“HE DIED FOR ME.”

Dear reader, I know your heart will glow when you think of that noble fellow's generous, self-sacrificing love for his friend. Does it not glow when you think of One who died **for you**? Is that deed forgotten, and not one loving, grateful thought given to His dear memory? Yet, as truly as that generous soldier died to save his

friend, so truly did Jesus die for you—yes, far more so. The soldier might have returned safe, but Jesus **knew** He went forth to death for you—a sinner. **And** how have you treated Him?

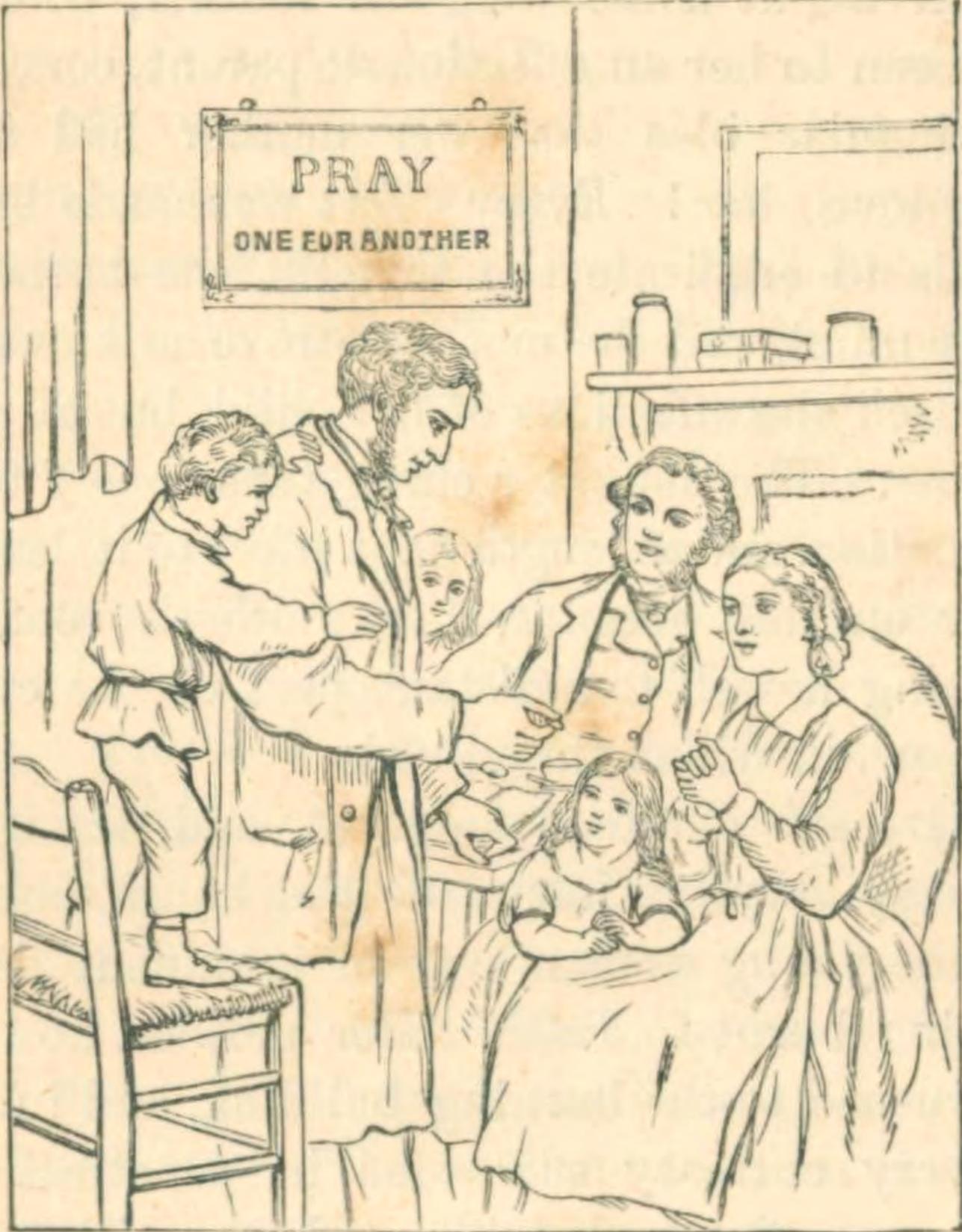
“He who knew no sin” was “made sin for us;” “He bare our sins in His own body on the tree:” and God hid His face from His own Son, when made a curse for us. It was this—not the tortures of crucifixion, but **this**—that wrung His heart, and drew from Him that cry of agony, “My God, My God, why hast **Thou** forsaken Me?”

It was thus He died, and died that **you** might be saved.

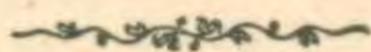
Reader, can you say, “I **know** whom I have believed,” or are you postponing the work of your personal salvation? Is this wise? Is it safe work? Beware of the **solemn** and **eternal** doom of every Christ-rejecter.

LORD JESUS! I have nought to plead
 In earth beneath, or heaven above;
 But just my own exceeding need,
 And Thy exceeding love.

The need will soon be past and gone,
 Exceeding great,—but quickly o'er;
 The love unbought is all Thine own,
 And lasts for evermore.



“NOW I KNOW SHE LOVED ME.”



A FEW years ago a young woman who was living at home with her mother, who had ever been to her an affectionate parent, conceived the singular idea that her mother had really never loved her! Every effort was made by her friends to eradicate the thought she harboured in her mind, and the mother strove anxiously to win back the affections of her child, but all to no purpose. The daughter clung tenaciously to her infatuation, and at length gave effect to it, leaving, solely on this account, her mother's roof, and betaking herself to a distant part of the city of Glasgow, in which they lived.

There she obtained lodgings, and, strange to say, very shortly afterwards the house took fire, and the young woman was in imminent danger of being burnt to death. Her mother, however, had rushed to the burning building, and in spite of every entreaty succeeded in penetrating to the room of her daughter, whom, with super-human strength, she actually carried down into the open air, safe and sound. But the shock and the exertion were too much for the devoted mother, and she sunk down dead at the feet of her child. This remarkable circumstance was a terrible lesson for the hitherto infatuated

daughter, dispelling for ever the wicked idea she had formed of her parent, and her first and thrilling exclamation was, "Now **I know** she loved me!" But it was too late. She had found out her lamentable mistake only when it was beyond its remedy. Willingly would she have given all she possessed to have had but a moment's opportunity of recalling the imputation cast upon her devoted mother. But she "found no place for repentance." The die was cast, and to retrace her steps was as impossible to her as to restrain or reverse the planets in their courses!

And now, dear reader, let me entreat you to consider whether you have not more grievously wronged an infinitely greater love. While your eye has followed my little narrative you have probably felt touched with the self-sacrificing affection of the mother, and grieved over the unfeeling heart of the daughter. Nay, it may also have occurred to you that this young woman would never have been in the burning house but for the perversity of her unbelief in a love that was stronger than death. It was she who occasioned the death of her mother, and the latter laid down her life in rescuing her daughter.

And does it not remind you—surely it must—how **One died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God?** We sinners caused the death of Christ on account of our sins. Our

hardness of heart, our forsaking of God, turning our back upon Him and denying His love—what a course was ours! In point of fact, when rightly seen, it was we who crucified Him, putting Him to open shame. It was my voice among others that cried, "Away with Him! away with Him! not this man, but Barabbas." It was I who for His love gave Him hatred. But He whose love was such that many waters could not quench it, nor the floods drown it, He endured to the uttermost what was due to you and me, **laying down His own life to give everlasting life to us.**

Again, it was indeed a grievous thing for this young person so long to doubt her mother's priceless love; but how intensified would have been our indignation had she continued in her unbelief after her mother's noble act of rescue. Yet, alas! this is what so many are doing every day, doubting, if not denying, the love that appeals to them, and notwithstanding the matchless proof of it furnished in the wondrous fact that God's own Son has given His life for us! And, be it remembered, a more terrible conflagration than the burning house awaits the rejecters of God's love; and when that crisis comes no loving heart with mighty impulse of affection will rush to your rescue, no brave arm, human or Divine, will be stretched forth for your deliver-

ance. He whose love has been refused shall then say, "I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh" (Prov. i. 26). And the issue shall be blackness and darkness, and the lake of fire for ever.

Not yet is it too late to learn the immeasurable heights and unfathomable depths of that infinite love which beseeches you to be reconciled to God. Not yet has it been said of you, "Found no room for repentance;" for He, who died to rescue us, lives again, and what joy would there be in the presence of the angels of God did but your heart exclaim, "Now **I know** that He loves me!" May He write this striking incident upon your souls, my readers, and above all so make His love known to you that, being no longer insensible to its precious reality, you may be able sincerely to say, "We love Him because He first loved us."

WHAT SMITH THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

SMITH was an intelligent man, not much past middle age, with bushy hair, and an eye that looked you straight in the face. He lived in a small country village; but for some months now had been confined to his house, and latterly to his arm-chair, with chest complaint, and one after another, had visited him, and spoken to him about his soul without

any apparent effect. One young lady who had been very anxious about him, and visited him very often, had that week gone back to her home in a distant town, and had sent the message by a friend, "Tell Smith to meet me in heaven," and it was delivering this message, and adding, "And Smith, how will you get there?" which drew forth the answer, showing the deep darkness within, "**Goodness**, I suppose." "But you **HAVE** no goodness, Smith." He did not deny the fact, though he seemed not pleased with the plain statement; and then, once more, the story of the cross was put before him, how the Lord Jesus took the sinner's place, and suffered "**In the stead of him.**" At last he received the truth, and found out it was not his **goodness** which took him to heaven, but the precious blood. The sinner has his **badness**, but not **goodness**, and one text from God's blessed Word settles the point: "There is none that doeth good, **no not one**" (Rom. iii. 12). Christ's finished work was for **sinner**s.

Reader, how is it with you? What are **YOU** trusting in? Is it "You are as good as other people?" "you do your best?" or one of those refuges of lies so constantly repeated; if so, take care, no doings of your own, no goodness of yours can save or help to save you. Or are you simply looking to the Lord Jesus Christ? and is your heart's language this—"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all; but Jesus Christ is my all in all?"

A DAUGHTER'S REQUEST.

NOT long ago, when passing down a certain street in the city of Glasgow, I stood for a few minutes at an open air meeting, and as I stood there I noticed a poorly-clad woman with a little child in her hand, hurriedly going through the crowd, inviting them into the meeting in a neighbouring hall. I watched the woman's movements as she went up to one after another, and said, "Won't you go into the meeting?" She did not go into the meeting herself, but left the crowd and walked up the street as if in great haste to get home. In a few moments I overtook her, and asked her reason for the interest she had taken in the meeting. She answered, "Some time ago my daughter, who is now at the point of death, was standing at a meeting just at that spot, when some one kindly invited her to go inside. She went, and when there she was led to give herself to the Saviour, and since then she has been so filled with gratitude for what the Lord had done for her that every night, as long as she was able, she went to the open-air meeting and urged people to go inside, that they too might share in this blessing which she had received. The Lord has seen fit to lay her on a bed of sickness, from which she never will recover, and since she has been laid aside she pressed upon me to go out to this open-air meeting and invite the people to enter. I have done so since her illness, and I earnestly pray that this part of the work may not be in vain, for it is a great trial to me, sir, to leave my dying girl alone." Is there not a lesson here for

some Christians who are satisfied by being saved themselves, and are not putting out a hand to save some perishing sinner from the fearful doom that is awaiting every unsaved soul.

THE MISSING LINK.

HOW many nice people there are in the world ; so kind, loving, generous, so upright and honest, goodness itself ; thinking nothing a trouble if they can in any way give others a helping hand, willing to spend and be spent, full of sympathy and practical philanthropy, loved and admired by all who know them, temper and temperament finely adjusted, perfect characters, charming in every way ; but there is a missing link, there is one thing wanting—the vital thing, and that is **Christ**.

It is morality without conversion, amiability of the flesh alone ; beauty of character, untouched by the beauty of holiness ; good citizens of the world, but not good soldiers of Jesus Christ ; excellent members of society, but not members of the One Body. What a picture of excellent people, who after all are living for self and not for Christ—all that without **Eternal Life** in the soul ! Reader, how is it with **YOU** ?



C O M E .



READER! stop a moment, and think how often you have heard this word of welcome to the Saviour.

Many, many times He has called you to come to Him, has He not?

I want you to ask yourself another question: What did it cost Jesus to say "Come?" Do you know it cost Him **His life**? Long, long ago, soon after man sinned, and was "sent forth," "driven out" (Gen. ii. 23, 24) from the light and the love of God's presence, the way back became impossible; utterly impossible, because angels kept that way with a flaming sword, so that none could pass by. But, although God was perfectly just in sending man out of His presence, yet He loved man and He longed to dwell with him again—God's love to man was so strong. I must tell you the greatest proof of it.

In His presence dwelt His Son, pure, holy, spotless, God's great delight (Prov. viii. 30). Should He send His Son to die for sinful man, to shed His blood for the remission of his sin? Would the Son stoop to this (2 Cor. viii. 9)?

You know the answer the Son of God gave: "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God." Whose will was that "all men" should "be saved." So the

Lord Jesus came. He made Himself of no reputation. . . . He humbled Himself, and became obedient to the death of the Cross (Phil. ii. 7, 8). While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. v. 8). He . . . obtained eternal redemption for us (Heb. ix. 12). Who loved me and gave Himself for me (Gal. ii. 20). Then He became the Way (John xiv. 6) and the Door (John x. 9) back to the light and the love of the Father's home. And nothing stands between us and God to-day but Jesus (1 Tim. ii. 5); and one word alone is spoken—that word is “**Come**” (Rev. xxii. 17).

Oh ! word of words the sweetest,
 Oh ! word in which there lies
 All promise, all fulfilment,
 And end of mystery.

Dear reader, Jesus says that word to **you**. Did you ever think what “the joy” was which was “set before Him” while He endured and suffered for us (Heb. xii. 2)? I think it must have been that He could “open the kingdom of God to all believers,” that He could invite us there.

Jesus wants **you** to come. It was for this He died. Will you come ?

Oh ! hear His tender pleading !
 Come, sinner, come !
 Come, and receive the blessing !
 Come, sinner, come !

While Jesus whispers to you,
Come, sinner, come!
While we are praying for you,
Come, sinner, come!

S. E. S.

"I WANT TO SEE THE MAN THAT SAVED
ME."

A FEW years ago a poor woman, one of a number who then earned a scanty living by washing at the river-side near Glasgow, and whose only possession was the tub in which her daily task was performed, had the misfortune to fall into the Clyde; and, as the river was deep and the current strong, her case was imminent, no help being apparently at hand. Suddenly a man who was a renowned swimmer, and had saved many lives, plunged into the stream; but only by extreme exertion, and well-nigh at the cost of his own life, did he succeed in rescuing the object of his solicitude. The old woman herself had been so long submerged that animation was suspended, and no little effort was requisite before consciousness returned. And now, dear reader, what do you think were the first words which, issuing from her lips, manifested to those around that she had really come back, as it were, from death to life? Some expression of anxiety as to her home, her family, her friends? Some disclosure of her feelings while in the jaws of death, or on her discovery that she had been rescued? No, nothing, nothing of this! But words that should be a touching lesson for us, who have been further

gone than she towards a far more terrible fatality, and who have been rescued, not at the almost, but at the actual, cost of another's life. Her words were those which head this paper, "**Oh, how I want to see the man that saved me!**" Beautiful exclamation in the mouth of one who had nearly perished, but whose unselfish gratitude led her to concern herself about him whose self-sacrificing work had brought her back from death. The man came at her word. Again she spoke, "Oh, sir," she said, "you've saved me, and I've nought in the world save yon tub; but, oh! if you'll take it, you're welcome, **with all my heart!**" The man, no less astonished than gratified, made no reply, but, doffing his hat, went round collecting from the assembled crowd, and, speedily coming back, poured all he had received into her lap, enriching her as she had never in her life either experienced or expected.

Is it not thus, though in an infinitely higher and more blessed way, that God, having given us eternal life in Christ, with Him also freely gives us all things? Have we, like the poor woman, experienced deep longings of heart to see the One who has saved us, and, when we have made His acquaintance, laid all we possess **with all our heart** at His feet? If so, surely we shall have found that, inasmuch as it is more blessed to give than to receive, He will be no man's debtor; but, taking to Himself the higher blessedness which is His due, He will pour into our lap all that He has received, to share with us the spoils of His own victory and the reward of His own work! And thus to us shall belong the double and lasting indebtedness

which our narrative illustrates. May we, who have been so wondrously blessed, and who sometimes sing of Him, "And gave us all that love could give," be led of the Holy Ghost into personal acquaintance with the Man in Glory whom grace has made our satisfying portion for ever. And may the taste we thus acquire for what we more and more find only in Himself intensify, as it surely will, the longing desire of our hearts to see Him face to face, when the day dawns and the shadows flee away!

TAKING OUT THE "IF."

A LITTLE boy was awakened to anxiety about his soul at a meeting where the story of the leper was told.

Leprosy is a dreadful disease which soon covers the whole body. When any one became leprous in Israel they were obliged to go outside the camp, and when any one came near them to cry, "Unclean! unclean!"

Leprosy is a marked emblem of sin. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

One day a poor leper came to Jesus and

worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, **I will**; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

Well, this dear little boy who was anxious, said, "I noticed that there was an 'if' in what the man said, but there was no 'if' in what Jesus said; so I went home and I took out the 'if' by my granny's fireside, and I knelt down and I said, 'Lord Jesus, Thou canst, Thou **wilt** make me clean; I give myself to Thee.'"

My beloved reader, have you thus come to Jesus? And, if not yet, will you come now? Oh! do come to Him. He can, He will make you clean; yes, whiter than snow. You are a sinner, and sin is a far worse disease than leprosy. Nothing can take it away but the blood of Jesus. Come to Him this very minute. For, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

A CHILD'S FAITH.

A GIRL, seven years old, was being taught that beautiful hymn—

If I come to Jesus,
He will make me glad, etc.

Presently she came to the verse—

If I come to Jesus,
He will hear my prayer ;
He will love me dearly,
He my sins did bear.

But the lady who was teaching her made a mistake in the last line. Instead of saying, "He my sins **did** bear," she told her, "He my sins **will** bear."

"Oh no," said the little one, "it cannot be **will** bear, when He has done it. Jesus did bear my sins, did He not, dear auntie? It **cannot** be '**will** bear.'"

Dear reader, this little child was right; and her answer reminds me of our Lord's words—"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes." That child did not reason as so many anxious souls do, "I don't **feel** that Jesus bore **my** sins, so I fear it can't be so." No; she just took God at His word; she believed Jesus bore her sins, because it is written, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah liii. 4, 5).

Dear reader, is your faith like that dear child's? for it is also written, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."



"I TRIED FOR A LONG TIME TO
SAVE MYSELF."

#



IT was a very severe night. The ground was covered with snow, and the wind was piercingly cold, when we entered the night train for the south at Newcastle. One of the passengers, after speaking of the severe weather, muttered in a low tone, "A day's march nearer home." I said, "Do you really mean that? I heard you repeat just now a line of a hymn that I know very well, found in this verse—

'Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam ;
And nightly pitch my moving tent,
A day's march nearer home,'

and it struck me much. Pray, sir, may I ask if you have peace with God?" To which he readily replied in the affirmative. On asking him if he had long enjoyed peace with God, he said, "I tried for a long time to save myself, but the more I tried the more darkness and misery I knew, till I saw that Christ had done it, that He had saved sinners by His death upon the cross." It was comforting to find a passenger in a railway carriage reply so clearly to such a personal and pointed interrogation, and our conversation went on to the consideration of such Scriptures as show that the true believer has the present possession of everlasting life.

But what struck me especially was his saying that **he had tried for a long time to save himself**, because it describes the state of thousands, if not millions, in the present day. They are working and praying, keeping days, sacraments, priding themselves on their benevolence and sincerity, hoping to merit heaven in this way; closing their days, as they say, with the happy reflection of a well-spent life, while, at the same time, they are dead in trespasses and in sins—without Christ as a Saviour, but **trying to save themselves**. How different is God's way of salvation. He cuts down all their self-righteous law-keeping pretensions by one sentence, that "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight," and that salvation is entirely by **grace**—the free love and favour of God to sinful men, and **not of works**, lest any man should **boast**.

Should these lines meet the eye of any dear souls who are thus blinded, may you be turned from darkness to light, from the darkness of **your own thoughts** to the light of **God's word**, and the **crucified Son of God**. Then **only** will you learn God's way of saving men, and you will find it done **only** by the death of the Son of God. Observe it is **done**. He said upon the cross, "It is finished," and bowed His head in death at once. **Redemption is what**

you need, and it has been accomplished. Hence the Apostle said, "In whom (Christ) we **have** redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7).

May you then, dear reader, give up **at once** every thought of your own goodness, of your getting better, of your making peace with God, or becoming by your own works in any degree fit for His presence. **Such religion is all false.** Look only to Christ's death upon the tree—see Him there made sin for you, made a curse for you, bearing your judgment, purging your sins, and now your life and righteousness at the right hand of God. This alone is God's way of peace; for **He has made peace by the blood of His Cross.** But you say, Must I do nothing in order to be saved? Nothing, absolutely nothing—it is finished. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Then, when you **have** peace with God, you cannot work too much to please and honour Him who saved you in such wondrous mercy, and at such a cost.

THE ONE ESCAPE.

GOD has but **one** escape, and how **can** we escape if we neglect that escape? Just as at sea, the cry

of fire is heard, and destruction is inevitable. The life-boat is lowered, and whoever fails to reach *it*, can find no other escape. And oh, how lamentable when the *one* escape proves to be inadequate, when the *one* escape is no escape, neglect, or no neglect, it is all the same. It will never be forgotten, the failure of the fire-escape one night in Dublin. Who that saw it can ever forget it? The scene of the fire was in Westmoreland Street—that fine, broad, open street, with its tall, spacious houses. It was on a calm summer evening, when the streets were thronged with those who had been released from business, just when the fire occurred. By daylight, therefore, the spectators gazed on that terrible scene. There were *seven* who were seen to be shut up in that prison-house of flame. The fire had been gradually gaining from the basement, and occasionally those seven were seen, until, as a last resort, they reached the front windows of the upper story. There they stood, imploring help. When they were told the escape was coming, despair gave way to hope; thankfully they awaited the ladder which they saw coming over the Carlisle Bridge. Thousands looked on with relief when they saw it on the spot! Shut up to the highest story were those seven living beings. When told the escape was at hand, they stood looking hopefully down on that which was to be their deliverance. They saw the ladder being elevated to where they stood. But oh! dreadful revulsion of feeling—dreadful even to describe it—when, on having *applied* the ladder, it fell short of those who needed it. Oh! the deep unutterable

agony which ensued, when those to whom the escape had promised life saw that it could not reach them. They were seen to give one heartrending look of despair, and then with agonizing shrieks fall back into flames, no more to be seen until their charred remains were found mingling with the ashes of the smouldering pile. Ah! never did hope and despair stand nearer together; never was hope more deceived or despair more sad. The escape proved to be **no** escape, the salvation was **no** salvation. But, beloved, it is not so with our God. God, indeed, has but **one** escape, and that escape **never** fails. Man was lost, sin **must** be atoned for; and once an atonement is made, an escape from God's wrath is made; for sin and wrath are indissolubly connected. He who took the **sin**, took the **wrath**, and that is **our** escape.

Dear reader, it is Jesus who has taken that wrath, and Jesus only as the righteousness of God we want to present before you. Alas, alas! some have not the knowledge of Him; you are yet in your sins. You are in presence of an escape, why not use it? Oh! what will you do without Christ? Oh! how **can** you escape if you **neglect** so great salvation?

ONE TO LOVE WHO WILL NEVER DIE.

FANNY and her brother loved as brother and sister ought to love one another. But Fanny's little brother fell sick and died. His body was put into a coffin, and buried in the cold dark tomb. How poor

Fanny missed him! Lonely and sad she wandered from place to place unsatisfied and weary. The object of her love was gone, and she felt there was no one to live for now. Going up to her mother, weeping bitterly, she said, "Mamma, can you tell me of one to love who will never die?" Dear child—what depths of meaning are in her question, and how aptly they express the longing desire of the unsatisfied heart of a sinner! **"One to love who will never die!"**

Dear reader, this is what your soul seeks after, whether you be young or old. You want an object upon which you can let your affections rest without a moment's hesitation, and without the shadow of a doubt. But there is no such object here on earth. Its fairest forms are subject to change, its brightest prospects wither and die—

"Death, like a shadow, rests on all below,
Its brightest landscape wears a tint of woe."

Earth's fondest friends depart and leave us. Death robs us of the objects of our earthly love, and snatches from us the dearest of our earthly treasures, leaving the heart-strings sore and bleeding, and, in despair, the longing soul cries out, "Can you tell me of one to love who will never die?" And such a one is Jesus. He only is the One who will never die, and whose love will never grow cold. Earthly loved ones die and leave us, but He abideth ever. What a portion for the human heart, what a portion for the soul's affection!

My dear friend, is this Jesus yours? Have you one

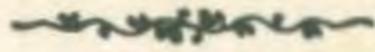
to love who will never die? Has your heart found an object on whom it can concentrate its warmest love without a shadow of fear? **Such a friend is Jesus.** He, the risen Christ of God, shall never die again. He is alive for evermore, the Prince of life: the Victor over death.

WHERE THE EVIL LIES.

MANY are willing to confess that they have *done* evil who have never considered that they *are* evil. Christ says, "*Ye being* evil." "*Ye are* of your father, the devil." "*Ye do* the deeds of *your* father." "*Ye are* a corrupt tree." Thus we see the secret source of all depravity is an evil heart, a fallen nature. Sinning because we are sinners, therefore **the remedy must be an internal cure**, one that will go to the root of the matter. Outward reformation will not do; reconstruction of externals will not meet the difficulty. You may cover the old man with the best of coats and the finest of ornaments, but he will be still the same, the old man which is corrupt, and his deeds, and nothing else. Dear reader, nothing but a new nature will do. "**Ye must be born again.**"



INSECURITY.



A KEEN easterly wind had been blowing all night, and the fishing-boats and other small craft had hastened into Torquay, that they there might find shelter from the coming storm. The little harbour was well-nigh filled, and the vessels, safely moored and anchored, rode quietly in the still waters. With one vessel, however, it had been different. Her four fishermen had anchored her securely, **as they supposed**, when in another place, and, little dreaming of danger, they slept that night. But the wind rose higher, and the storm beat upon their barque till she was driven from her moorings, and thus became an easy prey to give sport to the mad winds and waves. The men still slept whilst their boat was driven on, on past the very mouth of the harbour (that harbour built on purpose to receive all such in the time of distress); but on she went, and her men were only startled from what was well-nigh being their death-sleep by the crash as she struck on the rocks.

We watched the wild sea-birds as they swooped and dived, and ever and anon perched on the mast of the wrecked and deserted vessel, whilst it was swayed to and fro by the merciless breakers. It taught us a mournful lesson, of how many

persons rest sleeping at ease, feeling sure against the coming storm of eternity. They watch the dark clouds gathering already on the horizon; they know and acknowledge that that storm must come; they know and acknowledge also that a harbour of refuge has been opened for all in distress, even the Lord Jesus Christ; nevertheless they are contented with their own moorings, as the anchor of their trust holds on to the shifting sandbank of their feelings, or to the rotten rags of their righteousness, or perhaps these together combined with soul-destroying indifference. Alas! for all such, in that day of which the question is put, "**Who shall be able to stand?**" it will be found that neither they nor any others out of Christ will be able to stand against the blast of the Terrible. Then, most assuredly, shall every prop, stay, mooring, and foundation give way; for saith the apostle—"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

Reader, flee, oh! flee to Jesus, so that **trusting in Him and Him alone**, the anchor of the soul, you may be both sure and steadfast in Him who has for us entered within the veil.

THE FEAR OF DEATH.

I DO not fear death. Often I wake in the night and think of it, look forward to it, with a thrill of joyful expectation and anticipation, which would become impatience, were it not that Jesus is my Master, as well as my Saviour, and I feel I have work to do for Him that I would not shirk, and also that **His** time to call me home will be the **best** and **right** time; therefore I am content to wait.

“One night I was conscious of certain symptoms precluding an all but fatal attack (of erysipelas) I had had once before on the brain.

“I knew, if means failed, it was probably my last night on earth. I let my mother attend to me, but alarmed no one, and I was left alone in bed. Then, alone in the dark, I felt it might be my last conscious hour on earth, and that either sleep or fatal unconsciousness would set in. I never spent a calmer, sweeter hour than that. I had not one shadow of fear! only happy rest and confidence in Him ‘whom I have believed.’

“Was this delusion? Could it be so in the very face of death, that great **un**-masker of all uncertainties? I **knew** it was not delusion, for ‘I **know** whom I have believed.’

“God must keep His word and punish sin, and He **has** punished it in the person of Jesus, my **Substitute**, ‘who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree’ (1 Peter ii. 24).

If Jesus bore the punishment of **my** sins, I simply

accept this and believe Him, and it is all a true and real transaction. I did this—I believed it, and cast myself, utterly hopeless and helpless in myself, at the feet of Jesus, took Him at His word, and accepted what He had done for me.

“Joy, peace in believing, and a happy, **FULL** trust in Him, which death cannot touch, was the result.

“Now it is a reality of realities to me—it is so intertwined with my life that I know nothing could separate me from His love.

“I could not do without Jesus. I cannot and I do not live without Him. It is a new and different life; and the life and light which takes away all fear of death is what I want others to have and enjoy.

“‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Cor. xv. 54).”

“MIGHTY TO SAVE.”

THE following lines were written by a dear boy of sixteen. He had been converted in very early years, and his delight was to tell to others what a dear Saviour he had found. In feeble health, he went during the summer to a lovely part of Wales; and while there, living on the banks of the Clwyd, and his

spirit nearing the bright, eternal shore, he penned those sweetly solemn lines, to let loved ones left behind him know how peaceful was his spirit in view of entering the eternal world. **How it cheered the hearts of his mourning friends,** when they returned from laying his body in the tomb, to find these lines in his pocket-book, along with many others, telling of his joy in the Lord.

His beloved father told the story of this dear boy's conversion, and repeated the following verses at a large meeting of children, and many who heard were brought to Christ that night. Father and son have now met in the presence of Jesus, the "mighty to save."

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."

I have watch'd 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."

PEACE AT LAST.

A NOBLE-LOOKING soldier lay in the ward of an hospital. "I want to speak to you about religion," he said, as I stood by his bedside. "I have made up my mind," he continued, "with an earnest resolution, to serve God and do my duty—not with the feeble resolution of a boy, but with man's determined purpose, that henceforward I will do right." At some length he told me what he was going to do; he spoke about his vows, his purposes, his plans. All was about himself, not one word about Christ the Saviour.

Having listened to him quietly, I said at last, "Then you are at peace, my friend."

"Oh no," he said, "my agony of mind only increases."

"Why so? Have you not kept your vows?"

"No; I cannot," he answered despairingly.

"Had you not better then try again? or can you think of no way of making up the account?"

He shook his head hopelessly and said, "I know not what to do."

"My friend," I replied, "stop your vowing. Satan has enticed you on to one of his quicksands, where you are fast sinking down to hell. Your house is on the sand. You cannot be your own Saviour. Listen to God's way of saving sinners. Jesus Christ—God manifest in the flesh—came into the world to **save** sinners, not to **help** them to save themselves. His work was finished on the cross eighteen hundred

years ago, and He has left you nothing to do but to receive by faith the benefit of what He has done. "He that believeth on the Son **hath** everlasting life." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (John iii. 36, Acts xvi. 31).

It was evident to me during our conversation that the Spirit of God was dealing with my soldier friend, and at last he owned himself **a lost and helpless sinner** with no **power** in himself to keep his good resolutions. Then he was inclined to look to his own heart for "**happy feelings.**" This led to the close of our conversation.

"Do you believe the testimony of God concerning Christ? This is the question, and not the evidence of happy feelings. These are changeable as the wind. Take your thoughts completely off yourself, and look to Jesus. Do you believe in Him?"

He answered earnestly, "With all my heart I do."

"The Lord's name be praised—to Him alone be all the glory."

"'He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.' 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.' And observe, my friend, it is not **can** have, **may** have, or **shall** have, but **hath** everlasting life. What a salvation! Full pardon, everlasting life, peace with God, and only waiting for glory." On parting with the invalid soldier he said, "Now I **know** on God's testimony that I **have** eternal life."



A FATHER'S LOVE.



SOME time ago, while travelling in a railway carriage to Glasgow from the north, I found myself sitting opposite a father whose heart was very heavy. At first he didn't seem disposed to tell me the cause of his grief, but after exchanging a few kind words he did. Like myself he was on his way to Glasgow, but on a very different mission. It was to seek an erring son, who had a few days before, without any good reason, left his home, and whither he had gone he could not tell. Possibly he was in Glasgow, and so he determined to search for him along some of the streets, and then among the ships at the Broomielaw. To me it seemed a hopeless enterprise to search for a youthful wanderer in such a city as Glasgow, without any clue or trace of his whereabouts. But for the love he bore his son, he was willing to try anything, and suffer anything, to reclaim his boy. At last we reached the city, and after giving him what help I could, we parted with the promise that I would hear the result of the search.

A few days passed, and then a letter reached me, telling me the joyful news that the father, after searching hard for his boy, had discovered him, and with what a tumult of feelings I cannot here describe. Suffice it to say, that both

father and son returned home shedding copious tears all the way, the one tears of joy, and the other tears of sorrow—making it a day by them never to be forgotten.

Dear reader, this young person, in his restlessness, thought that he would be happier somewhere else than in his father's house, but his tears told how disappointed he was. And so are all disappointed who try to find satisfaction away from God. Perhaps you never listen to what God says to you in His Word, but simply follow the desires of your own heart, and the wishes of your companions! Then, you are this day "far from God," and the Bible says that such "shall perish."

But observe, just as this father lovingly sought after his erring son, so is **God seeking after you**. Many a time His footsteps have been close behind you, and you have heard His voice saying "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" "Incline your ear and come unto Me; hear and your soul shall live." And to prove the depth and sincerity of His love, He has sent His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that, through His death on the cross, He might be able, **righteously** as well as graciously, to forgive you and restore you. Now, will you this very day say, "Father, I have sinned?" Oh! He has searched for you and found you out, and now He speaks to you by this paper.

I assure you, dear reader, that if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you will be received and blessed with salvation **this very day!**

A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION.

FRIEND—Fellow-traveller, may I ask you this plain question, Do you believe on the Son of God?

Traveller—Of course, I do; does not everybody in this Christian land believe on Him? You might put that question to the heathen, but surely you should not put it to me.

Friend—Well, now, don't be offended; but in a calm and quiet spirit listen to me. If you believe on the Son of God, then you have everlasting life; for the Word of God says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come unto condemnation: but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). And again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 36). He "is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). He is "born of God" (1 John iii. 9).

Traveller—Well, all I can say, my friend, to what you have said, is this, if this is to be a believer I am not one; and who is one? Where can you find them? I don't know.

Friend—Listen. Christ says, His flock is a little flock (Luke xii. 32); and His road a narrow road (Matt.

vii. 13, 14). And Satan's servants are a great company, and their road is a broad one; but the narrow road leads to Heaven, and the broad one to Hell; and, forgive the plainness of the question, it is love to your soul that makes me ask it, Which road are you travelling?

Traveller—Well, that's a home question; but you do really seem to be my friend. If what you say is correct, then I know I am not a believer at all; and if not a believer, I must be on the broad road. To be sure, there are many others worse than I am; for I do not swear or drink. I go to my church regularly, and attend, as the time comes round, the sacrament. I read my Bible on Sabbath, and on week days if I happen to be unwell, but as to any happiness in religion, or delight in God's service, I have none. And as to being at peace with God, I have thought that a man could never know that in this world, and so I have rather dreaded God than loved Him; indeed, if religion is what you say, I know this, I have been deceiving myself.

Friend—That is very candid; and I do indeed feel deeply for you, and I tremble for you; for whilst it is said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," it is no less said, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

Traveller—Oh, my heart sinks down at that word, and the thought of ETERNITY makes me tremble. My conscience tells me all is not right. Oh! tell me, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30).

Friend—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” for He hath said, “Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

Traveller—But must not I wait until I get better before I go to Him?

Friend—No; go now. Salvation is an act of free, sovereign grace. “It is not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 9). “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ” (Rom. vi. 23). Death is **wages**; but life is a **gift**.

Traveller—But has not the believer anything to do with good works?

Friend—Yes, the believer has; but the thing that you want is pardon. Mark what the Scripture says, “To him that worketh **not**, but **believeth** on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5). Being thus accepted in Christ, he is then able to do good works by the power of the Holy Ghost, who wrought in his heart this precious faith; able to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. He delights in good works; he seeks to abound in them. But, you see, they are not the **cause** of his salvation, but the **effects** of it. He does not do good works to **be** pardoned; but, **being** pardoned, he does them. He does not work **for** life, but **from** life; so, instead of living to the world, or to please himself, he lives unto God, and seeks to glorify Him in his body and in his spirit, which are God’s (1 Cor. vi. 20).

Traveller—Well, all this is very new to me, but yet it seems so true, and so right, and indeed so good, that I cannot deny it—nay, I long to believe it.

Friend—I rejoice to hear you say so ; and if we meet again, may I find you at His feet, whom to know is Life Eternal. And oh, remember that **now** is God's day of salvation.

LETTER TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

A WORD TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

MY dear young friend, I would not say one word to grieve you or break in upon your youthful pleasures, but am I not your friend in telling you of One who would take away all your sins **now**? Surely you cannot be happy at home—at school—at play—with your sins unforgiven! Pause a little, dear boy or girl ; get into the presence of God, and ask your heart this question, Will I have to bear my own sins for ever away from God? I am quite sure that the question is not a very pleasant one to think about, but I charge you before God, give the question a little thought, say half-an-hour, and let it be considered by yourself all **alone** with God.

Now, what has Jesus done? What has He suffered that our sins might be pardoned, that our sins might be blotted out? Read, more than once, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and you will know something of what it cost Jesus to bear our sin :—

He was wounded ; He was bruised ; He was afflicted ;

He was oppressed ; He was stricken ; He was put to grief ; He was brought to the slaughter ; He was chastised ; He was scourged ; He was tormented ; He was rejected ; He was despised.

Why was the Holy One of God **so** treated ? Ah, my young friend, it was because He took the sinner's place in grace, in order to redeem him to God. Dear young friend, why not be saved **now** ! Do you really believe that Christ bore your sins in His own body on the tree—that His precious blood cleanseth from all sin ? Then you are one to whom I can say, "God will remember your sins and iniquities **no more.**"

GOOD NEWS !

DEAR friend, you may be saved as you read these lines :—

Why ?—Because Christ died for sinners (1 Peter ii. 24).

How ?—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xvi. 31).

When ?—Now, or it may be never (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Where ?—Just where you are (Luke xiv. 21-23).

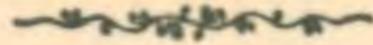
Who ?—The ungodly (Rom. v. 6).

From what ?—From the wrath of God (John iii. 36).

To what ?—To peace with God and glory to come (Rom. v. 1, 2).



GOD IS LOVE.



IT was a long time in my early life before I really believed or understood that "God is love."

And I am even now learning more and more of it every day. Do you know why some doubt the fact that God is love? It is because of ignorance, or fear, or prejudice, rooted deep down in the breast. Now the reason why we have not clear views of God is because the medium through which we see Him is not the true one. Thus, should an anxious soul look at God only through **his sin**, it would be hard to come to the conclusion that God is love. Again, some take up dark and perplexing providences, and as they brood over each one singly in all its heartfelt sorrow, they cannot see that God is love. And surely it is hard to see God is love through the medium of mere conscience. The philosopher may tell us we may see it in creation—in man—in human mind. But no! As to creation, you all feel the beautiful calm of a summer day, but if you were yonder among savage mountain gorges and saw the heavens roll together, and the lightning's fearful flash, and heard the thunder's awful roar, it would impress you with anything but the sense of God being love. And as to man,

if God were to be judged by man by what he is when forebodings and dread take possession of his soul, a melancholy being indeed would He appear to be. Not "my Father," should such say, but "my terror"—"my tormentor"—"my tyrant." Ah no! you will find but **one** medium through which truly to know God, and that is His own Word, which is the very expression of Himself as He is seen in **His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ**, and **that** medium tells us "**God is love.**"

But some man may say, "That's all for the saint; God does not love the **sinner**; He does not love **me.**" Nay, my friend, how readest thou "God so loved **the world.**" Yes, the love of God is plainly manifested towards **the sinner.** Oh yes! you say God loves the sinner when the sinner loves Him. A wretched doctrine that. What does the parable say which fell from the Lord's own lips?—one that might be called the parable of the Merciful Father rather than the "Prodigal Son." Where was that son as the father's heart yearned over him?—tell me, where was he? Yonder, amongst harlots eating the very husks of wickedness. He could scarcely have degraded himself more than he did, or have gone deeper into crime.

Oh, it was when the poor prodigal was in such condition that the father pitied and loved him,

fell upon his neck and kissed him, saying, not "this my prodigal," but "this **my son.**"

Do you understand **that**? Blessed picture of God?—loving **sinner**s, saving **sinner**s, blessed and happy in the enjoyment of saved and ransomed sinners. Oh! who that sees Him, through such a medium, but must see that **God is love.** Ponder 1 John iv. 9.

THE BELL IS RINGING.

PASSING along the main thoroughfare of a large seaport town, not long ago, I noticed that people were hurrying past me, hot and breathless, towards the end of the street. It was quite dark, and to the stranger it became a matter of surprise why such haste was manifested without any apparent cause or object.

I was making my way to the railway station, but there was plenty of time, and I had no cause to exert myself unnecessarily. But seeing the "eager, anxious throng" pushing onward, I quickly made my way over the footbridge which spans the lock-pit between two docks, and forms part of the main road.

The bell which had been ringing for some minutes then ceased, and all hurry and bustle amongst the foot-passengers as suddenly subsided.

On inquiry I found that in this great town, which is intersected by docks, vessels are at certain intervals passed through the dock-gates, during which times the draw-bridge is lifted, and all traffic is suspended—

sometimes for half-an-hour at a stretch. In order to give due notice of this obstruction, the gatekeeper rings a large bell as a note of warning, and those acquainted with the usages of the place are at once aware that unless they make haste they will be delayed.

A gentleman who, like myself, had "just saved the bridge," exclaimed breathlessly, "Thank God for that bell ringing! If I had not got over, I should have been lost, for the train in which I am going on a matter of vital importance leaves in so many minutes, and 'time and trains wait for no man.'"

Midst the flickering of the lamps on the quay side I could see the rapidly gathering crowd. Some had rushed up "just in time to be too late," others had been sauntering lazily along, heedless of the warning bell. And how many there might have been amongst that company to whom a few minutes were just then "of vital importance!"

To my mind a very striking analogy was suggested; and it is one of those lessons which anyone of us may profit by, if we keep our eyes open to the circumstances which surround us in our everyday life.

The bell of grace rings out an invitation to the sinner; the voice of the preacher echoes God's message, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." The glad tidings of a dying Saviour's love are told out by those who have been sought and found by the meek and lowly Jesus.

We see men hastening on in the race of life; and though the night is dark, and the object of their

pursuit is undiscerned by those around them, yet they press forward towards the mark for the prize of their high calling.

Others, again, linger by the way, disregarding the ringing of the bell, or the affectionate appeal of the preacher. They have "plenty of time." They want to get over the bridge, and they **mean** to do so, but there is no cause to hurry.

Presently the bell stops, and the bridge is raised. Those who have passed safely over are at once peaceful and calm in the certain knowledge that their onward course will be unimpeded. On the other side, there are expressions of vexation and disappointment, anxiety and regret.

Reader, the hour is coming—God only knows how soon—when the bell of grace will be hushed **for ever!** The preacher and those who have crossed over will be occupied in singing the song of the redeemed, in the presence of the King of Glory. And the door, which no man can open, will be shut **for ever!**

Are you striving to enter in at the strait gate, whilst the warning bell is yet ringing? It may be that the last of its shrill notes are now being wafted to your ears, and that presently there may be joy and peace on one side, and blank despair on the other.

The gate is still ajar—nay, **wide open**; and the message of God's love is ringing in your ears—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Millions have crossed the bridge; millions more are pressing along with fast hurrying feet, accepting

the Saviour's loving invitation, "Come." And all are welcome.

The gatekeeper refused no man, whether in fustian or broadcloth, while the bell was ringing, but both were equally refused when the time of warning had expired.

And so "God is no respecter of persons." The day of grace is lengthened out, dear reader, for **you**—whoever you are, or in whatever station of life you may be. And Jesus, the Lamb of God, who died for sin, is stretching forth His hands still, and bidding His servants ring the Gospel bell of invitation—"Come." And all you have to do is to **accept** of the gift of eternal life so freely offered—**will you?**

JESUS CAME TO SAVE.

A WORD TO OUR YOUNG READERS.

MY dear young friends, I once heard of a little outcast girl, whose father and mother had died, and left her all alone in the world. She had no home, no one to love her, and no one to care anything for her. She had to go about the streets and beg, and was often tired wandering about, and oftentimes very hungry. One day she came to a large farmhouse and pleaded for a piece of bread, being so hungry, and to be allowed to sit awhile at the warm kitchen fire, for it was bitterly cold, and she was but thinly clad—the torn, tattered garments scarcely sufficing to cover the shivering child. The little pleader's eyes filled with tears as she spoke to the lady of the house. "Tell me," said the lady, "where is your mother?" "Oh!"

said the little, cold, weary, hungry child, "I have no mother—no mother; I have no kind father or mother—no one cares for me—no one loves me at all. Oh! if some one would *only* love me, I would be so happy." And again the tears ran down the thin, wan cheeks of the child. Softly and gently the lady drew the little outcast to her, kissed her, wiped her tears away, and whispered in her ear—"Dear child, I will be a mother to you."

Sweet image this of a love that has sought, found, and saved little outcasts just like you. Ah! my dear young readers, the love of Jesus far surpasses a father or a mother's love; for to seek, save, and bless you He came from the bosom of His Father. He has died on the cross **because** He loved you. Now, won't you love Him? Your sins He died to put away; but, unlike the poor outcast little girl who sought a home and some one to love her, Jesus is seeking **your** love—**your** heart. **He came just to save.**

Will my young readers think on what Jesus is, and on what He has done, and look to Him and be saved?

Dear unsaved reader, **before** you is the judgment bar; **behind** you a life-time of sins; **above** you sits enthroned the Saviour—God; **beneath**, the sinner's awful doom. Your only hope of salvation is, "Repent ye and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 15).



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