

A View of Malta.



THE

STOLEN REASURE.



LONDON: G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

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THE STOLEN TREASURE.

SUPPOSE we shall all agree that it is a good thing to have a treasure, especially if it is of great value; and if it has been gained at a great cost how we should set store by it. Some men value health, some wealth, some honour, and others estimate very lightly the things which are enduring, even the things which are eternal. The scriptures say, "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!" (Prov. xvi. 16.) I am sure, too, that boys and girls have things that they value, while others look forward to the time when they will be the happy possessors of something they wish to have, and often their restless hearts long for that which belongs to another, and in the eager desire of covetousness, or discontent, some have been tempted to get gain by evil means. As we are still in this world where sin rules and reigns, I trust by the help of God to be able to put a few things before my young readers to warn them from the path of the destroyer, and lead them into the strait and narrow way of light and life. There is a text I should like you to look at, which I shall have to speak about; try and find where it is for yourselves, it reads thus: "Be sure your sin will find you out."

These words are found only once, I think, in the word of God, and it is such a strange one—it is only one short sentence, yet it seems to have four distinct sounds: "Be sure," "your sin," "will find," "you out." My dear young readers, let us together look at this, and I trust we shall leave it with different thoughts from when we first

took it up.

If I were to ask my little girl, of seven years, if she understands what I mean, when I say, "Be sure," she would say, "To be sure I do." Then the next two words, "your sin," no one reading them can mistake to whom they apply, for it means me, my sin; the others also are quite simple—there is no doubt but it is, "will FIND." Oh, then, it is me again, "YOU out." Oh, what words they are!—"Be sure your sin will find you out."

I should like you to notice that it does not say, your sin will get found out—that mother will find out that you pushed the baby down; or that, when she was not looking, you stole the sugar. It does not mean that the boy who began to steal by taking a penny from the till, will get found out by his master; but it means that YOUR SIN will FIND YOU out.

Let me try and give you an illustration, but it is from memory. It happened about twenty years ago. I was quite a lad, and

at the time was doing duty as a signal-boy on board H.M. Despatch Vessel, P——. We were lying in the beautiful harbour of Selima, in the island of Malta. Things were going on in an every-day kind of way, and we had not the slightest idea of being disturbed from our quiet retreat.

As I was pacing the deck, on the look-out toward the Admiral's palace, where the tall flagstaff reared itself above the tops of the surrounding buildings, I saw a signal run up to the masthead, and at the same time our ship's number was flying, which I instantly answered, and read off the message, which ran thus:—

"Prepare for sea with all despatch."

Quickly reporting these orders to my superior officer, we were all soon in commotion, making preparation for our cruise, whatever it might be. We were not long kept in suspense as to the kind of errand on which we were to go, for the orders came on board that some runaways—three soldiers

and two sailors—had stolen a boat, a box of money with other valuables from the officers' quarters, and had decamped to sea.

These were the particulars, and we were to go after them, toward the island of Sicily, which it was supposed they would try to reach with their ill-gotten gain, and bring them back to justice. In about an hour we were ready; our buoy was let go, and round went the paddle-wheels. We quickly cleared the harbour, and stood out to sea. How my heart beat at the thoughts of the chase after those miserable creatures—thieves and runaways!

I think every one on board wished that we might find them, for most sailors despise a thief, and consider flogging quite good enough for him; and so on we went. Our captain was hailing the masthead man, time after time, telling him in which direction to look out. At last the shout is heard, "Something like a boat on the starboard bow, sir," and the glass is soon pointed

in that direction, the vessel also steering towards the object. We could hardly make out what it was, for they had no sail set; yet there was a nice breeze, and they seemed to be just drifting about anywhere. When we came up to them, we found this was so. Ah, their sin had found them out; yes, before we found them out, they had dearly proved this (as we heard after they were got on board). I will tell you how this was done, for I wish to warn my readers against sin, and to prove to them, that the way of transgressors is hard.

Arrangements having been made on board for their capture as soon as they came in sight, six marines were placed on the opposite side of the deck, standing with loaded rifles at the ready position, while five men were stationed at the top of the gangway ladder, with a piece of rope each, to secure the men as they came on deck one by one. Their arms were securely lashed behind their backs, and with very downcast

looks they walked aft in silence. The boat and its contents being secured, we made for

the shore again.

Being allowed to speak to them, we soon found they were very thirsty, so we gave them some weak tea, and then they began to talk of their misdoings, bewailing their fate. The soldiers had agreed to get possession of the money, &c., from the officers, if the sailors would be ready with a boat, which they could steal from the merchant ship to which they belonged, and in the darkness they would get quite out of sight of the island, and they hoped to get to Sicily and live a life of indolence, sharing the money between them. They had taken some food, and a small cask of water with them, also they thought they could not do without a keg of rum.

All seemed to go smoothly as they sailed past the lighthouse and got clear out to sea. The young seaman who told us the story was to steer the boat, for he knew he could take them to Sicily safe; but as soon as they were quite out of sight of land they grew bold and said, "Let us have a song," and the rum keg was passed round again and again, until each thought he knew everything much better than the others. Meanwhile the breeze had freshened, and the water began to come into the boat, the water cask also got upset in a scuffle, but no one thought of water to drink, as the rum had got into their heads; and the sail had to be lowered, or they would have been capsized. So the morning broke upon them, out of sight of land, and their reckoning lost. Yes, their sin had found them out, for they each awoke parched with thirst, and sought the water cask, which was lying empty. The sun was now risen, and its rays beat down upon them, adding torment to their sufferings, but there was no help, they could only look at each other; as the day wore on they did not know which way to go, and they had but little energy to

manage their boat. Look at them—there they were, both GUILTY AND LOST, and even our arrival on the scene was hailed with delight, as we could relieve them from present trouble by quenching their thirst. We speedily handed them over to the police, who put them in irons and conveyed them to the cells, and thence before the magistrate where all were found guilty, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

But now, my dear young readers, as I have no wish to leave you just here, we will have a little further talk. I know there are cases where there is peculiar trial. I myself have passed through such, and can bear witness to the horrible way in which some masters think fit to try those in their employ. My master often put a half-sovereign under the mat in the cabin or near the dressing-table; silver, too, was carelessly laid about on purpose to see if I would touch it, which caused me much grief, and I used to hunt all around every

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morning to find the coins which I knew would be deposited about, and put them in a drawer to give up to my master when he came in; I could not refrain from tears once, when I shewed him what I had found.

Another boy near me had broken open a box of his master's and taken some money, he went on shore with other boys, and on the box being found open, suspicion rested on him, for he was found spending money freely with all the lads in the town. Being charged with the theft, he at once admitted it, and was tried and flogged a few mornings after; such a terrible punishment, I think I shall never forget it; such a slight boy of fourteen years, how he cried for his mother, how he begged for mercy, how he groaned out, "I will never do it again." Again and again he begged and pleaded, screaming for mercy, but he was far away from his mother, he had just broken one of her loving counsels, and now there is no pity; he receives the thirty-six lashes with

the thief's cat o' nine tails, every one, and now burdened with pain, and racked with strong crying and entreaties, which brought no succour, he is untied from the gun to which he was lashed and allowed to crawl to a retired spot, to mourn and moan over that awful punishment he had undergone. When he took the money from the box he thought it would never be found out, such is the delusion of Satan and the wicked human heart; so let me draw your attention once more to our text, for if you continue in sin, you may "Be sure"—remember those two words, "BE SURE"—your sin will find you out. And I trust this word of warning will ring in your ears, until you are constrained to come to Jesus, who suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Some of my readers may say, "Oh, but I am not a thief." True, but you are a sinner, for God says all have sinned; therefore let me again press the text, "Be sure your sin will find

you out." Do you bow your heart to God's word, and is your answer, "Yes, I know I am a sinner," then God speaks again by His word, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Will you allow Jesus Christ, the blessed Son of God, the joy of saving you? If so, then stay no longer in your dangerous position, but let the knowledge of its very danger cause you to flee to Jesus in whom is safety. God has pledged Himself to receive all who come to Him by Jesus, and Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." But if you slight, refuse, or "neglect this great salvation," "BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT."

London: G. MORRISH, 20, Paternoster Square, E.C.





ÇOD'S ÇARE;

OR

ARE YOU READY?

By J. D.



LONDON:

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







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Cod's Gure; on, Are You Rendy?

N writing these few lines, I hope to keep in view the title of this little book, not for a moment expecting that I shall be able to shew you "how much" God cares for those who love Him; but I do trust that you will be led to exclaim, "Am I ready to meet Him?"

But you may say, How can I get into this place of favour? How may I know He loves me? I do not understand this love of God.

Let me try to illustrate, or rather, let a little child teach us. There were once two little girls living in the same house; one was the only daughter of the lady, and the other, a little black child, with crisp, curly hair—an adopted child. Both had fine clothes, and were carefully and religiously trained; and verses from the word of God, to be learned, were constantly given. One day the fair child soon learned her verse, being John iii. 16—that lovely verse, so well known to many of us. She sat on her mamma's knee, and soon prattled it off sweetly, and got a kiss, and was sent out to play.

Afterwards, some such words as these were heard: "Come, you dull child, have

you not yet learnt your lesson?"

With eyes wide open, the little black girl stammered out, "Me tan't un'stand it" (I cannot understand it); and, with a sharp reproof, the book was given back to her, and she was called a stupid child.

Now comes our beautiful lesson. The fair child soon missed her companion, sought her out, and inquired the reason why she

had not said her verse. "Me tan't st, st, st 'stand it," she cried.

As soon as they had both dried their eyes, the fair little teacher thus tried to explain the meaning, both looking at the words, "God so loved the world;" then, clasping her arms around little blackie's neck, and kissing her, she said, "That's what that means."

With eyes wider open than before, blackie exclaims, "Oo, oo, is that it?" "Yes," said the teacher; and they read on: "that he gave his only-begotten Son." Then another embrace, and passionate kisses. "That's what it means," she said: "Oo, oo; I see, I see," says the little blackie. "That who soever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then, with a long, loving caress, while the tears ran down their faces, that sweet little teacher said, "That's what it means."

"I tann 'stand it now," said blackie, as

they read it again and again together, till she could repeat every word. Oh, may God bless such teaching to us all, for Jesus' name's sake!

I remember, shortly after I learned this verse, I was summoned, with a number of other men, to prepare to go on board a large, new pattern, iron-clad ship, named the C—, I being in Her Majesty's service, at Portsmouth. The ship was not looked upon with favour by many seamen, but a skilful captain had designed her, and it was said he was to go to sea in her, to try the rate of steaming, sailing, &c. &c.; also to test her buoyancy in the water under press of canvas, in a good breeze, with a swell of sea rolling.

We were nearly ready to embark, when the order came to cancel our going, and we were sent to another vessel in the same squadron, the captain wishing for all Plymouth men to have charge of the guns, there being already some on board the C—. I was not sorry to lose her, and tried to see God's hand in it all.

We were soon fitted out for our cruise, bound to Vigo and Lisbon.

Passing over the trip, we arrive at the Tagus, and the squadron forms in line, to go over the bar at the mouth of the river. As we approached Lisbon, all was ready to fire a royal salute, in honour of the king. I was one of the saluting party, and my duty was to load the gun at which I was stationed; but as I stepped toward the muzzle of it, after our first round, some one cautioned me to be careful in sponging, as the last man who loaded this gun was blown out of the port-hole, and not a vestige of him was found, only a bit of burnt serge, blown back by the wind on to the rigging.

Do you think, at such a moment, I heeded the advice? Yes, I was very particular to sponge out carefully, that not a spark should be left in the chamber; then, after the salute was over, I thought, if that had been me, in a moment, in a twinkling, called away, should I be ready? Oh yes; that verse again—"God so loved, that he gave," &c.—came to my mind; I could trust here, and not be afraid.

Reader, are you ready? I ask you earnestly, if you had been that man, where would your soul be now?.... "God cares," whoever else is indifferent. Do you doubt it? Read our verse (John iii. 16); I do love that verse! I could rest in the love of God, in the gift of Jesus, and life in Him, if there was no other in the book. We did not remain in port long after taking in coal, but sought an opportunity to try the rolling powers of the ship C—, so, the evening of September 6th, 1870, found us under easy canvas, in apparent safety. I remember looking out of the bow port, while some of us remarked the steadiness of her sailing,

as we watched the sea, playing, as if in frolic, up her iron sides, as she passed.

It was my watch on deck, from 6 till 8, and then down below, to turn into my hammock till 12, when the watch had to be relieved again. When I awoke, I was startled by hearing some one sobbing beneath my hammock, a strange thing to hear at sea. Then I heard thumping on deck overhead, and orders being given, and I inquired what time it was, and if anything was the matter. "The hands are on deck," was the reply; and then, still more frightened, he exclaimed, "and the ship's going down."

By this time I got into my clothes, and a few steps took me to the ladder, and, in as many moments, I was on deck. The night was as black as pitch! I heard at once, by his voice, who was in charge—for it was heard above the storm—giving orders, in a thorough seamanlike manner. He stumbled against me, and inquired who I was, and

stationed me at one of the braces, with orders to see it kept fast.

My eyes were getting used to the darkness now, and I could faintly discern the hands aloft taking in the torn sails, for the breeze had caught us on a sudden, and carried many of our sails away, leaving the remnants flapping about in a very uncomfortable fashion, flogging any one near them in real earnest. Meanwhile the steam had been got up, and the engines were moving ahead, and, as soon as there was time to think of any one but ourselves, inquiries were made, and signals to speak to all the squadron, but the C—— did not answer. How was that? Had she been blown farther away by the squall? None of the ships had seen her since about 12 p.m., there was nothing to do but wait for the morning—which reminds me of that beautiful morning which every believer in Jesus is waiting for.

The moon's bright beams shot forth about 3.30, shewing us our own crippled state, and volunteers were called for, to take in the remaining ribbons flying in the wind. I was enabled to get below soon after 4 a.m., the watch being called. After a tumble into my hammock (about the sailor's only comfort), and having a nap till 6.30, the boatswain's mate piped all hands to lash up and stow hammocks. This was soon done, when inquiries were made if anything had been seen of the C—. No, there is no more news than we had on going below.

With what eagerness the men speak one to another; and the grave anxiety depicted on each countenance betokens sad news—but it is terrible suspense, every one is in earnest now. Those who had spoken against her unseaworthiness shook their heads, and said, "She's gone to the bottom, sure enough."

But our officer in command did not give

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her up yet—she may have had to run before the wind, and lost us for the time, but now it is getting late, and she has not returned to the rendezvous named the previous evening; so we are ordered to make a circuit of one hundred miles, and search for anything which may give us tidings of her. How eager the look-out man is on every ship, to see if any boat or spar can be seen floating about! Some are rewarded, as we find, when we assemble about an hour after the search. One ship had picked up some hats, and a sailor's small ditty box, a hatchway, and some spars; while another, which had called into Finistére brought the fatal news, that some seventeen seamen had landed there that morning in a boat, and reported that the ship C— was struck in a squall, and capsized, about midnight, these few being the only survivors. Oh! but what about the others, cut off, like this, in a moment? No time to consider then;

no eleventh hour then, as people foolishly say; engulfed in the surging waves, and carried to the bottom, to await the resurrection of small and great, when the sea shall give up her dead. Oh, were they ready? If you had been there, would you have been ready? God cares for you, you know, for He is holding out pardon to you now. Just read John iii. 16; do not tire of this verse—hang it about your neck, bind it around your heart, set it as a seal upon your brow, live in the light and love of it; let its rays shine out to others, and prove that God loves us. Let me shew, by my walk and conversation, that Jesus loved me, and gave Himself for me, and He has made me to know it.

I feel the utter feebleness of my pen to tell out how God cares for us; the occasion led me to dwell on His wondrous love to me, how He had spared me a little longer, a vessel of mercy to shew forth His praises. Oh, how careful we should be, with such a charge, ready—yes, made ready—to be called away at any moment, yet left here a little while, to tell of His love, and point others to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Are you ready now? If not, for what are you waiting? Read again John iii. 16, and there you will find words spoken by Him who spake as never man spake, and they are words fraught with eternal consequences—words, never to be changed, never to be lost, but, like the blessing and the Blesser, abiding for ever. Oh then, hang on THESE WORDS of the ever-gracious Lord, until they become light and life to your inmost being, and until God thus reveal His love to your heart by His Holy Spirit, for Christ's sake. Amen.

J. D.

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THE

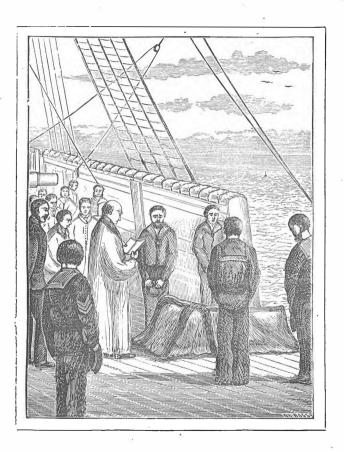
SAILOR'S GRAVE AT SEA.

By J. D.



LONDON: G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

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THE

SAILOR'S GRAVE AT SEA.

OST of my readers have passed through a cemetery, with its numberless tombstones and graves, in long rows—some long, and some short, and some just the size for my little reader! I remember once reading about a little boy, who lay down by the side of a small grave, and found that it was just about his size (some little boy or girl had been buried there, nearly his own age), and the thought came into his mind—If

I were to die now, where should I spend eternity?

He had often been to Sunday-School, and had heard the story of God's love and grace to guilty man; and he was often troubled, too, about himself, because it was not all right with him; he had not that peace which Jesus gives to those who trust in Him, of which he had heard others speak, and now this little grave aroused his conscience again to give earnest heed to the things he had heard.

Oh! what joy it gives to see one in earnest about his soul; what heartfelt thanks go up to God for such. I charge you, then, be in earnest while you are young, while the happy influences of Sunday-school and of home are still powerful for good; because, if your soul is

neglected Now, your heart will get hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and you will learn, not only to dishonour, but perhaps to blaspheme, the precious name of Jesus. Oh, listen, then, for there is no time like the present; for God has said, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." If you will only hearken Now to the voice of Jesus, the Son of God, you will be sorry you did not listen before. (Read John iii. 16.)

I will just give you an instance, in my own experience, when a boy. Henry (we will call him) and I were both on board one of the first of old England's iron-clad ships, which was commanded by officers who sought the welfare of all the ship's company, and who soon won the esteem of all the crew.

Those were good times, all working together with a will, a good understanding between officers and men; she was what was called "a happy ship," and truly MY very happiest days were spent in her. It was there I first found the light of life; on that ship the load of sin was removed from me, and peace flowed into my soul like a river, and thus cleared my troubled conscience. It was there I learned that God is love.

How sweet and precious the remembrance, even now! My first thought on knowing my sins forgiven, was deep thankfulness of heart to Him who paid my debt, or delivered me—Jesus, the Saviour; and, in the circumstances.

I could not get any private place of resort, no bed-room, nor secret place, but

the eyes of my companions everywhere taking notice of any change which had taken place; neither did I wish to keep such good news to myself, but I at once earnestly told it to others, that I might bring them to the same Saviour, Jesus, who loved me so.

Well, Henry was in the same mess where I was, he was a quiet lad too, and I was attracted to him. I spoke to him of the beauty and loveliness of Jesus, and of the love of God to sinners, warning and entreating him at once, while there was time, to give his earnest thoughts to it, cautioning him, too, against the danger of delay.

He sat with me, and listened, and knew it was all true. He had been a Sundayscholar, and passed through the school unsaved, and came to sea, like the young man in the far country, who would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat; and Henry was satisfied with the husks, and the poor, fleeting pleasures that came between made up his portions of happiness, and he said—

"I don't want to hear any more of what you have to say, I mean to enjoy myself as much as I can; I am only young, and the world is wide;" and, with many other excuses, he refused God's offered mercy.

There had been some deaths from accidents on board the ship, and we were drilling with a smart fleet of ships, and often a man or boy would fall from aloft, either on deck, smashed, or overboard, to sink to the bottom, which would cast a

gloom about the ship for a little while, but it was soon forgotten in the constant routine of life on board a man-of-war.

Henry was a smart lad, and belonged to the mizen-tops, and, quite in the ordinary way, he was sent aloft, to assist in furling one of the after-sails, which he had often done before; but this time, he had not nearly secured the sail, when he missed his hold, and came tumbling on to the deck with a crash. The men who were near ran to pick him up, but stood, overawed, as they viewed the lifeless body of Henry, his brains being scattered about the deck.

A grating was brought, the body laid upon it, and then taken forward to the sick bay, for the doctor's examination; but, oh! his soul had gone—but where? Do not lay aside this book, without asking yourself,

"If this had been my case, where would my soul be now?"

As our ship was not going into harbour for some little time, the burial was to take place at sea, and I am sure you would like to know how this is done.

The hammock in which Henry had slept is got ready, and the body, dressed in a white summer dress, is laid upon it, with two shots at the feet, to sink the body in the water, and the whole is sewn up by the sail-maker. The Union Jack is used as a pall over the grating.

On the morning of the funeral, the ship was hove to, or stopped. The bell is tolled, as on shore, the deceased's messmates being the mourners and bearers.

The grating on which the body was laid is generally carried under-hand, while the Burial Service is being read by the chaplain, until they arrive at the gangway (the place of entry). The grating is then laid on the deck, with the feet pointing towards the water, the service going on, until those solemn words occur, "Ashes to ashes." (The service at sea reads, "We commit his body to the deep.") Then the grating is lifted up to a slanting position, and the body slides off into the water, there to await till the sea give up the dead.

The service being concluded, and the bell stopped tolling, the flags and grating are put away, and the shrill pipe calls the watch to its usual duty; the yards are braced to the wind, and then on she speeds again through the water, and there are only his empty place, and his effects, to remind us of the departed.

The clothes, and all that belonged to him, are soon gathered together, and in the evening, when work is done, an auction is held, and if the boy or man be generally liked in the ship, or if he had helped to keep his mother, the bids run very high for even a very trifling article, because the money is sent to the bereaved mother with the sad news of the death.

I have often thought what a comfort it would have been to his dear mother, if some one could have sent her a cheering line, telling of the bright and happy prospect of her son, if he had only confessed the name of Jesus.

Such was the case of one young man whom I knew, and the happy response was sent by his mother to the seaman who wrote to her, for her joy was full, having heard that her boy was saved ere called away. She could but look forward to that happy meeting, when Jesus shall come, and call all His loved ones, both the dead and the living, to meet Him in the air; the dead raised, the living changed, all are caught up to meet Jesus, face to face, whom they had never seen before; to be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; and now thrice happy prospect!—to go no more out from His presence. Oh, what do you think of this? Jesus is going to have His full joy, when He shall see of the travail of His soul. He can, and will, joy in this great salvation. Here I repeat what is written to all believers:—

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless

before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 24.)

J. D.



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