

The Sower

A GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

VOL. IV.

In the morning sow thy seed,
And in the evening withhold not thy hand :
For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that
Or whether they both shall be alike good.

Eccl. xi 6.

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THE SOWER.



How can a sinner know
His sins on earth forgiven?
How can my gracious Saviour show
My name inscribed in heaven?
What we have known and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.

We who in Christ believe
That He for us hath died,
We all His unknown peace receive,
And know His blood applied;
Exults our rising soul,
Disburden'd of her load,
And swells unutterably full
Of glory and of God.

His love, surpassing far
The love of all beneath,
We find within our hearts, and dare
The pointless darts of death.
Stronger than death and hell,
The mystic power we prove;
And, conquerors of the world, we dwell,
In heaven, who dwell in Love.

MAN'S UPRIGHTNESS AND GOD'S SALVATION.

(JOB XXXIII).

IT is often a long time before a soul that has known something of the graciousness of God is brought, thoroughly and practically in conscience, to bow to the truth of its condition before Him as He reveals it, and so to be cast over, simply and entirely on grace. But to this, sooner or later, God does bring every soul that has to do with Him. This chapter reveals to us the way in which God brings about this blessed result for man, till then ignorant of Him and of himself. He speaks once and again, but man heeds it not. Then He makes His hand to be felt, as in Ps. xxxii., and for the same reason—because the soul is keeping silence and refusing to own sin. He lets the light of His holiness shine in and reach the conscience, and the life draws near the grave. But all this is God's own work in grace, to give man the consciousness of what he is before Him, and to put the truth into him; to bring him to be in the true knowledge and acknowledgement of what he, a sinner and a creature is, in the presence of a God of holiness and grace, whom he has despised and neglected. This is the first thing.

Then secondly, *a messenger* comes; not to speak of *grace* in this instance, but of *truth*. And O! how

rare is such an one—"One of a thousand"—to declare unto man his uprightness. And what is man's uprightness but confession?—The only *true* place a sinner can take before God. But there is uprightness for a sinner even before God; and that is self-judgment in the justifying of God's verdict against him—taking God's part against himself. This the interpreter of God's ways explains. He explains that the hand of God is on the sinner just in order to this; and that the moment the soul comes to this—the moment it says with David, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," there is forgiveness. So here, "He will be *gracious* to him;" for the controversy is at an end. The sinner leaves himself *self-condemned* at the *mercy of God*. And O, what wondrous mercy is now revealed. "I have found a *ransom*." "Save," says God. *He* becomes the soul's salvation: and this, too, through a ransom. *He finds* the ransom; and He says, "Save." He becomes the Redeemer Himself of the soul that repents—that owns His righteousness in the confession of its own utter want of it.

Now mark the blessed result of it all. "He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him; and he shall see His face with joy." He is brought to God—to God as his Saviour, his Friend. The whole state of his soul has been up in question before God in judgment. All has come out. He is in the truth—upright in the unpalliating confession of his utter want of uprightness. And, then, *God is active*. He it is who delivers. He says, "Save," for He

had found the *ransom*; and that, too, ere ever He began this process and exercise. He expected *nothing from the sinner* to give him a place with Himself. He had found all. But He must strip the sinner of himself. He must stain his fancied self-goodness, that He may fit him for the valuing and accepting—and of grace, too—that which is divine. God wants to have a man with Himself in righteousness, so as to enjoy Him in love. But only a divine righteousness can suffice. Creature—righteousness there is none: though man, alas! goes about to establish one of his own. But in God's presence it all turns into filthy rags: his comeliness turns in him to corruption; and he can only lay his hand on his mouth, and say, "Unclean, unclean!" Thus does God strip off what is of man, that He may clothe him with what is of Himself, even Christ, His righteousness for sinners.

But we must not forget another point—viz., that if the sinner needs a righteousness, if he needs to be clothed before God, he also, and first needs a *ransom*. He is an heir of *the pit*. He is drawing *nigh to the pit*. Ah! that is the deepest part. Here, again, Christ comes in. How possibly spare such a vessel of wrath? How let him escape? Here is the answer—"I have found a ransom." "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." "He appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." God now frees the man from all that he did and was, because of the ransom which He Himself provided, even Jesus, "The pro-

pitiation for our sins." The sinner is saved from death, because another passes under it in his stead. Herein is love. God provides the Lamb for the sacrifice. Oh! precious ransom! God's own provision for condemned and guilty man drawing nigh to the pit. But now He takes away the filthy garments and clothes him with change of raiment. Now all is changed, and *for ever*. He has come to God, and in His presence all has been out and judged in the conscience; and, oh, how welcome the pardon in the name of the Blessed One who gave Himself a ransom for our sins! Ah! *we* have but to own our deserving the judgment; *He* bore it for us on the tree. How sweet such a reprieve; the witness of such divine love, and based on divine holiness and justice. The soul is brought to God: it sees His face with joy, and this is forever. He is to be with Him. He gets a place in and with Jesus. "Being justified by faith we have *peace* with God *through* our Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom also* we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." God grant each of my readers to stand clean and clear in the consciousness by faith of having had the whole question of his everlasting condition all settled by God and before Him; and in the assurance that all his salvation is *Jesus*: nothing that ever will be in himself, or of himself; but that he starts with this divine settlement, which is the foundation of all progress, and which no progress ever can make more perfect; though we shall know its perfection and blessedness increasingly, and be grow-

ing in the knowledge of grace and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

First, a ransom—the real actual bearing of our sins on the tree; then, the true peace with God *in Christ*, as our righteousness and our beauty. O, how dear and lovely Christ becomes then! and,

“How our hearts delight to hear Him,
Bids us dwell in safety near Him.”

One more remark: The exercises are needful, but they do not deliver; they bring unto the truth; but nothing that goes on in us, or that comes out of us, can be a ground of deliverance. God delivers through Jesus Christ. He has found a ransom. Faith now welcomes salvation by *grace*; and says, “To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,” be all the praise for ever and ever. Amen.

—

God’s claim must be met either by judgment upon His own Son, or by judgment on the sinner. Oh, what a solemn thought that this world is ripening for judgment!

The testimony of God’s grace is going on. Dear reader, are you saved?

Grace will have its limits, and refuges of lies soon shall crumble into dust. Think of that “shout” that is to come; are you ready for it? “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout!” (I Thes. iv. 16).

Will it be to gather you out of the impending doom, or will it be but the signal for your destruction left behind for judgment! Shut out! What an awful portion!

WHY DO YOU NOT DO IT THEN?

SOME time ago J—— was led to feel that he had need of a Saviour. He was very unhappy and did not find peace although the gospel of the grace of God had been presented to him many times. They told him that Jesus had come for sinners, that it was “to seek and to save that which was lost,” (Luke xix. 10), that He had left the glory and became a man; but all that, did not bring any relief to poor J—— who continued to be completely miserable. At length in his distress, he spoke to his wife of what was troubling him and said to her :

“I greatly desire to go to Christ.”

“Why do you not do it then?” she replied.

God blessed the words. J—— understood that Christ had finished, upon the cross, the work by which the righteousness of God was satisfied; that God offered him now salvation as a gift entirely free, and that he had only to submit to the word of God which told him these good news. He came to Jesus as he was, and now for a long time has gone on his way rejoicing.

Dear reader, if you are not saved, why do you not come to Jesus? Are you troubled as J—— was? Then why do you not come to Jesus as you are. Bad as you know yourself to be, Jesus knows much better than you do the wickedness of your heart. He knows all, and yet He invites you. “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.” The word

which He speaks to you is : “ Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” (Jno. vi. 37); for “ As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” (Jno. i. 12); “ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” (Rom. viii. 17). Do not however deceive yourself, none of these precious promises are for you if you are far from Christ. It is only *by Him* that remission of sins is proclaimed. God wishes that there should be between Him and you an intimacy of communion without a cloud. This intimacy cannot exist until you have opened to Him the inmost recesses of your heart. O! do not delay to come; “ Now is the acceptable time.”

Unsaved reader, what are you waiting for? Why do you delay? Shall I tell you? You are waiting for damnation! You are delaying till the storm of eternal judgment overtakes you. Now, the mighty hand of God has stayed the tide of resistless judgment, swept it back while the sweet words of His grace are told out, while men are persuaded to accept salvation! Salvation is pressed on you, and there is nothing kept back from you but judgment!

The salvation is brought to you, and you are shut up to this, either to receive what God sends or to reject it. Which will you do? If you reject it there may meet you at the next step, God’s terrible judgment, and can there be wrath and indignation more terrible than will be poured out on those who have despised God’s salvation?

A CHART OF HEAVEN.

I WAS one day seated behind the counter, said a clerk in a book-store, when an old sailor entered, and regarding me with a serious air said :

“Young man, I want a chart.”

“Very well sir,” I replied, “what chart do you wish, the Gulf of Gascony or the Mediterranean ?”

“Stop, stop,” said he, “how ready young people are ! I want a chart, but these you have mentioned would be of no use to me. I want a chart which will guide me to heaven, for the one I have been using up to the present is out of date. Do you understand me young man ?”

(Ps. cxix. 9, 11, 105).

I understood at once that he wanted a bible, and taking down several I placed them before him. He selected one, evidently happy that I had so soon caught his thought. He asked the price, paid it, and before leaving turned to me, and said with earnestness of voice and manner :

“Do you understand this chart ?”

“I often read it,” I replied,

“That is well,” said the old man, “and I am glad to hear it, but remember young man, that is not enough.”

Reader, perhaps you are also one of those who often read the bible, but the question is this—Has it made you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus ? (II Tim. iii. 15).

“GOD LOVES YOU.”

“HYMN, ‘Jesus loves me this I know, For the bible tells me so,’” said the young clear voice. They sang it through.

And now I am going to give out my text. (John iii. 16). “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

It was given out something after the fashion of his father perhaps, but the little face was all aglow, and he evidently loved the word of God, and the love of Christ.

A few chairs arranged before him, on one of which sat his younger brother—and I think on another, the old nurse—comprised his audience.

“Now Harold, how do you know that God loves you?”

Harold shook his head, he could not tell.

“Weil,” said the earnest voice, “You are not in heaven, are you Harold?”

“No.” Harold knew certainly that he was not in heaven.

“And you are not in hell, are you, Harold?”

“Oh! no.” Harold was quite startled.

“Then you are in the *world* are’nt you? And God so loved the *world*. So you see how you know that God loves you,” triumphantly concluded the little fellow, and whether Harold saw it or not, the sermon was at an end.

Only a child's “pretend preaching.” But how quickly the young heart had learned the right to claim that wondrous love. Reader, do you know it?—God loves *you*. You, infidel perhaps, hating Christ's name, and spending all your intellect to prove His word a myth. You, drunkard, trying to deaden your sorrows by drink. You, half wild with despair, not knowing where to turn except to death, and afraid of that. Dear ones, it is not such as Joseph, Daniel, and David that God is thinking of when He tells us by the Holy Spirit, that “Christ died for the ungodly,” and “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Although we know all whom Scripture speaks of were sinners. But it does not say, “God loved those who were striving to follow Him”—but “the world.” The same world that closed around the cross, after crying, “Away with Him.” “Away with Him.”

The world that to-day denies and blasphemes His precious name. All day long while the heart, is a (perhaps, alas! willing) receptacle of Satan's thoughts and ways, God's love is brooding over you. He sent His blessed One to call “*sinners* to repentance.” Not “the righteous.” No! Thank God. For then none would have been saved. But sinners, He came “to seek, and to save.”

Oh! that every thing might echo this as you go along, and that you might be forced almost, to accept that love, and hide yourself under the precious blood once shed while still He “waits to be gracious,” to the world He died for.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

I.

MY dear friend: In thinking over our conversation of yesterday, I have been struck by certain expressions of yours which reveal more clearly than I had at first seen, the nature of the difficulty which troubles you. You said that "You cannot have peace, unless God speaks peace to your soul," that "Without Him you cannot believe in Christ," and you asked me, "If God was angry with you, since He did not speak peace to your soul." Will you give me your attention while I seek to put before you some thoughts in connection with these subjects.

It is quite true that God only can speak peace to the conscience. It is also true that our hearts are so little given to believe the witness of God, that it is only by His power and His grace that we all, such as we are, can be led to believe or made capable of believing. But do not by this imagine that God will speak to you by an audible voice, or by some new and special revelation other than that which you have already in His word. Do not suppose that a new revelation or an immediate impression upon your mind is necessary to make you capable of believing, or that this is the way God should use to put you in a state to come to Christ. God has already spoken, and very explicitly *in His word*, and "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by *the word of God*." Fix then your attention *upon what God has said in His word*, and while meditating thereon, trust Him fully to enable you to comprehend and receive it.

In the tenth of Acts—verse 36, God is spoken of as, “Preaching peace by Jesus Christ.” Is that not to “speak peace” by His word? And since He preaches (proclaims openly) can any doubt that He is speaking it? But what is understood by peace? I am not sure that we are of one mind as to that. When you say that you have not peace, that God has not yet spoken peace to you, you mean *the sentiment of peace in yourself*—the inward assurance of having been pardoned and reconciled to God, and at peace with Him. Now, however desirable and important this sentiment may be, it is only *the effect* of peace with God by our Saviour Jesus Christ, and not that peace itself, and it is important that you should understand what God has declared concerning it. May the Lord give me the ability to present it clearly before your soul, and that thus the effect which you so ardently desire may be produced, that is to say the inward sentiment of peace, and of reconciliation to God.

You and I have both sinned against God. By nature we *are* sinners, and during many years we have lived a life of sin and rebellion against God. You can accept that now although a little while ago you could not have done so. Perhaps you have always acknowledged that it was true; but now you know and feel that it is indeed the truth. Well then, God had sufficient cause to be angry with us on account of our sins; and, indeed *He is angry against sin*, and hates it with a perfect hatred. But while justly angry against *our sins*, He loved *us* and

regarded us with infinite compassion. His heart was moved with pity for *us*, and He did not wish that we should suffer the just consequences of our sin against Him. But how could these consequences be averted? How could He accept us or receive us into His favour, whilst we were in our sins? and what could we do, you or me, to deliver ourselves from sin, or to turn aside the righteous anger of God? Nothing, certainly. Everything we do is defiled by sin, and could only increase the evil. You have understood this since you have seriously begun to seek the Lord. When you read His word, your thoughts wander, and it is the same when you try to pray, and you told one yesterday how difficult you find it to put your mind upon what God says in His word.

It is evident that we can do nothing worthy to be presented to God, and even if we were able to do good for the future, that could never compensate for past sins. If we only regard ourselves, we are hopelessly lost, but God loved us and desired to see us reconciled to Himself, become the objects of His favour, and made happy under His kindness and care. And although He could not leave our sins unpunished, and we were unable to do anything to deliver ourselves from the burden of them, *He has sent His only-begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* That having been accomplished, God is free now, if I may express myself thus, to satisfy the love of His heart in receiving us to His bosom. What God sought was to have a righteous and holy motive for pardoning us, for saving us, and for receiving us to heaven in spite of

our sins, and He has found it in the death of Jesus, in the shedding of His blood for sin. It is thus that Jesus "has made peace by the blood of His cross." It is nothing that can yet be done, *it is already done*, and God tells us so in His holy word. "As God is true," the Lord Jesus Christ has "made peace through the blood of His cross." (Col. i. 20); and it is thus that God announces the good news of peace by Jesus Christ. Christ also announces it, see (Eph. ii. 17): "And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."

You have been all your life as to appearances much nearer than many others. Brought up by pious parents, accustomed to read the bible, to hear the gospel, to associate with Christians, you have been near, *outwardly*, while many people decidedly wicked, have been *outwardly* afar off. But you have now become conscious that whatever may have been the *outward* nearness in which you have lived, that *inwardly* and *really* you have been far from God. It is then to you that Christ announces peace; peace with God, which He has made by the shedding of His precious blood—God says, that He is satisfied with the blood of Christ, that the blood justifies Him in receiving us, you and me, into His favour. Read, (Rom. iii, 21-26). Why then should it be more difficult to satisfy us than God Himself? That which justifies God in justifying us, may well satisfy our hearts and put our consciences at rest before God. I know that the soul has need of a solid basis on which to stand, but what is there more solid than the word of God? "As God

is true," He hates sin, and must punish it. "As God is true," in place of leaving us to perish for ever in our sins, He has delivered Christ to death upon the cross, in order to have us for His friends, for His children, to dwell forever with Him. "As God is true," He is satisfied with what Christ has done and suffered on our account, and He makes you know it, in order that you also may be satisfied, that you may cast yourself into the arms of His mercy and that you may have eternal life. Go then to Him in all confidence, and tell Him that you can no longer put aside His word or doubt His love. However great a sinner, however worthy of hell you may be, it is God who has told you that He is satisfied with the work of Jesus—with the blood of Jesus—with the sacrifice of Jesus; thus then you cannot but be satisfied with the blessed means of reconciliation between Him and you.

In place of doubting, fearing, or reasoning longer, consider that God is satisfied with what Christ has suffered upon the cross, then go to God and confess to Him that it "is sufficient! "Lord! it is enough! I am a sinner, without doubt, but Christ has died!" And hold to that dear friend; although you may not feel an immediate change, remain upon that ground. May your soul rest before God wholly on this foundation. He will never tell you that you are wrong in believing His own word and the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ. "By Him, *all who believe* are justified from all things"; and to rest thus upon Jesus—to be thus satisfied with Jesus—*is to believe*. Your sincere friend.

THE SOWER.

THE GOLDEN WORD.

There is a word that melts my heart,
No other moves me so ;
For me no other can impart—
What this word doth bestow.

JESUS is my unrivalled word ;
A golden word to me ;
For in its sound all these I've heard,
Love, pardon, life for thee !

No mother's voice, grown soft to lull
Her weary, waking child,
Was e'er of tenderness so full,
So hushed, and deep and mild.

This word is with me in the dark ;
I hear it on the wild ;
It sheds a light upon my path,
And I am reconciled.

In the loud storms it soundeth clear ;
And oft I bless this word ;
It tells me that my help is near,
That my faint cry is heard.

Would I exchange this word for ought
Of gold or costly gems ?
Ah, no ! a world to it were nought,
Though piled with diadems.

THE DEATH OF A CHRIST REJECTOR.

SOME years ago I became acquainted with Mrs. M——, and as a natural character she had much about her that was attractive. She was bright and intelligent, had great conversational powers, and the art of pleasing others when she chose. Alas! however, she had not a thought as to the value of her soul, or the awful realities of an endless eternity. Well does that word "Having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12) describe her condition.

She seemed from the first of our acquaintance to take a fancy to me, and sought my society much more than I desired, and when I tried to speak of her state before God and the need of being "Born again" (John iii. 3) she answered me with a covert sneer, or else open indifference, declaring that such thoughts never troubled *her*, nor did she intend that they should as she meant to enjoy life.

Time passed on, and she seemed to become, if possible, more hardened and indifferent and I saw less of her. Going on a visit for a few weeks I heard on the evening of my return home that she had not been well, so, feeling rather timid as to my reception, and looking to the Lord for guidance I went to her house, asked to see her, and was admitted. When I enquired as to her health she assured me it was nothing but a "slight cold," and already she was better. We conversed on various subjects and she seemed very happy and cheerful; but when I ventured to inquire

if she thought of what purpose God had in sending her that touch of illness, her face changed instantly to a deep frown and rising she said with dignity : “Miss H—, *if* you and I are to be friends you must stop talking in that manner.” I too, arose, feeling it to be a solemn moment, and with earnestness pressed on her to consider her lost condition before God ; adding, that I must speak of Christ; that through His blood I had forgiveness of sins, and that I could form no friendship where I could not speak freely of Him. I forbear to write what she said in reply, suffice it to say that all the deep hatred of the natural heart towards God flowed freely from her lips ; and with an aching and saddened heart I took my departure.

We retired to bed as usual that night, but what words could depict my horror when that poor lady’s husband came in the middle of the night and implored my mother to come to his house at once, for, added he, “my wife is dead.” Yes, the sad news was but too true. That poor soul was suddenly summoned into God’s presence, there to answer for her rejection of His salvation. “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.” (Heb. ii. 3). She complained in the middle of the night of not feeling well, got out of bed, and without a word fell lifeless on the floor, where my mother found her when she hurried in.

Reader, this is a true story, not written to excite a passing emotion, and then be tossed aside and forgotten, but that it may through God’s mercy have a voice for YOUR heart and conscience. Do not let this little paper out of your hand I beseech you without

putting this question solemnly to yourself—if God called me suddenly am I prepared to meet Him?

You may not be openly indifferent as that poor lady was, but if unsaved your heart is in as bitter enmity towards God as hers, whether you acknowledge it or not, for His word declares that “The carnal mind is enmity against God.” (Rom. viii. 7). “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed because His compassions fail not,” (Lam. iii. 22) and Oh! while you are still spared, while time and opportunity are yours, be wise and consider the most important thing in this life—your soul’s eternal welfare. Did you ever think of the value the Lord Jesus has put on your soul? Listen then, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul.” (Mark viii. 36-37).

Earth’s joys are fast fading, your history on earth may soon be closed, and eternity fully faced, whether you like it or not; for “We all do fade as a leaf.” (Isa. lxiv. 6). Thank God you are not yet too late, God longs for your soul’s salvation; He seeks your eternal happiness, and if you just prove Him you will find that He *delights* to bless. Oh! then do not delay but accept now His own loving invitation, “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.” (Jno. vi. 37). “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I Jno. i. 7). May it never be said of you, reader: “But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.” (Zech. vii. 11).

SALVATION A QUESTION OF POSITION.

READER, a word with thee. It may be that you are one of that numerous class who think they have something to do or to pay before you can be saved, and I write to warn you of your error.

You have nothing to do, no not a bit,
Nothing to pay, no not a whit.

And the reason why is simply this that Jesus has "Glorified God upon the earth and finished the work that the Father gave Him to do." (John xvii). Salvation is not a matter of works but a question of position. "Consider what I say and the Lord give thee understanding."

It is written that before the flood "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.
And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord and so He told him to build an ark for the saving of his house; and the ark was built, and Noah and his family went into it, and the Lord shut him in, and then the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and lo the earth was destroyed by a deluge. In vain the terror-stricken inhabitants fled to the

tops of houses or to the summits of the hills, for the raging waters followed them and they were drowned. ALL of them were drowned. *All* excepting the little handful who were in the ark. And why did they escape the fate that overtook the many thousands that perished in the waters? **BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THE ARK.**

At a much later date the children of Israel crossed the Jordan and entered the promised land under the command of Joshua. But the strong city of Jericho, manned by the sons of Anak, and fortified by lofty walls reaching to heaven, seemed to bar their way. Spies were sent unto that city and the king of Jericho learning of this sent soldiers to take them, who came to the house of the harlot Rahab where they were hid and demanded them from her. But Rahab had faith in God, and believing that Israel was His people, she evaded the king's commands and entered into an agreement with the spies by which she bound herself to endeavor to save them on condition that the Israelites would spare her household when they took the city. And this was the agreement, that she was to bind a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house that it might be known and thus be sheltered from the judgment impending over the doomed city. And because it was thus placed under the shelter of the scarlet line all its tenants were saved from death, while all the other inhabitants of Jericho were slain with the sword. **THEIR SALVATION WAS OWING TO THEIR POSITION.**

Was it not the position of the Israelites that saved

them from destruction on that dread night when the first-born of Egypt fell beneath the stroke of the destroyer? Let every man of you, was the command of God, take a lamb, a lamb for every house, let him kill it, and sprinkle its blood upon the lintels and upon the door posts, "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." (Ex. xii. 13). It was because the household of Noah were in the sheltering ark that they were saved, not because they were better than their neighbours. It was not because Rahab the harlot, and her household were what men call good people that they were saved, it was because they were under the protection of the scarlet line. And why were the first-born of Israel saved from the stroke of the destroying angel? **BECAUSE THEY WERE SHELTERED BY THE BLOOD OF THE PASCHAL LAMB.** In every one of these cases salvation was a question, not of character but of position.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27). Such is the common lot of man, but all will not share it for the Son of God hath said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, (judgment), but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24). All such therefore will escape the judgment, for they have already been judged in the person of their substitute, Christ Jesus. They are therefore a redeemed people

and their redemption has been effected not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (I Peter i. 18-19). The paschal lamb was to be without blemish, for it was a type of Him, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, but after all it was only a shadow of good things to come; (Heb. x. 1); Christ was the substance. If the mere shadow saved Israel from the stroke of judgment how much more will the substance save us who believe, as most assuredly it will for it is Jesus that hath made peace through the blood of His cross.

Though hell and earth have so long, and in every variety of way, tried to extinguish the light of the gospel, it is still the power of God to every one that believes.

The cross of Christ was the scale of divine justice on which sin was weighed to the utmost. God there laid its utmost weight on Jesus.

The gospel finds man blind as to God's character of love, and morally dead in sin. It reveals God in the blessed Jesus. God is love. The cross, ah, there the sinner sees the goodness of God. The infinite love of God; what a sight! This and this alone leads to repentance. When Jesus, saving from the curse of sin by the death of the cross, is revealed to the soul, there is then, that knowing God which is eternal life.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

II.

MY dear friend: Your letter has been very welcome and I thank God from the bottom of my heart for the rays of consolation He has communicated to your disturbed and troubled soul. I believe I understand what you mean by "the hardness of heart" of which you complain, and by the state which you depict thus: "It seems to me sometimes that my heart will break." Only those who have had a similar experience can understand how painful a position such as yours is. There is a fountain opened from which you may draw freely, but I do not know what hinders you from doing it. Permit me to remind you that there is no merit in nourishing these sorrowful sentiments, on the contrary they are born of unbelief, and thus are not only bitter and painful, but really *culpable* in themselves. What God desires is that we may believe that He tells us the truth when He declares that we have been the objects of His love; that His love for us has been such that He has not spared His own Son, and that such is His complete satisfaction in what Jesus has done and suffered, that by His blood—the blood of Jesus—He grants us now a free pardon, eternal life, the happiness of calling Him "Father," and of casting ourselves into His arms of mercy and love. Your sentiments are like those of a child who having offended its father, knows that he has good cause to be angry with him—all that the father desires is, that

the child should be conscious of its fault, in order to be at once pardoned and reconciled ; and it is for this he waits that he may again take up and caress his child. But the child fails to comprehend the position. It *weeps* and *sobs*; its agitation and distress increasing while it continues at a distance from its father. Can the heart of the father rejoice to see the tears and the struggles of his child, and how can all that terminate? The child casts itself into the arms of its father, and sobbing on his bosom cries out : " Father, I have done wrong, I am much in fault ! " What rest then succeeds the previous trouble. It is not that the pardoned and reconciled child has less sorrow for having offended its father than when it wept and distressed itself, at a distance from him. No, it is now more deeply afflicted than before, but the struggle, the anguish, is over, and the wonderment now is that it could have remained for so long a time out of its father's arms. Dear friend, God is this father. He reveals Himself thus in Jesus, He says to you in His word that as soon as the prodigal son had turned his face and feet from the fathers house, " When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Is the father in the parable more *tender* and more *compassionate* than " the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ? " You know that the parable was given by Jesus Himself in order to show us that *it is His Father*, and with what kindness He receives every sinner that comes to Him. Do not then doubt an instant. Believe what God says of Himself.

Receive the blessing from above, while you wonder at His infinite love.

Let me tell you how the doubts and troubles of a lady in Scotland, who was in exercise of soul, were dispelled.

It was during the time of a "revival," when several people of this lady's acquaintance had been led to Christ, and among others, one of her best friends. Having, herself, some exercise as to her state, she went to one of the Lord's servants and told him she was unhappy. He replied that he was very thankful to hear it. Surprised and somewhat offended at this response she related to the minister all the efforts she had made to obtain salvation, how she had read and prayed, but without finding peace. He told her that her salvation did not depend on anything she was able to do, but upon what Jesus had long ago wrought on the cross. All that, was still obscure and mysterious to her. She took leave of the minister and went to see her recently converted friend. She asked her what she had done to obtain the peace of which she spoke. "What have I done! I have done nothing! It is by what Jesus has done that I have found peace with God." The lady replied that that was precisely what the minister had just been saying to her, but she could not understand it. She returned home in greater agony of soul than ever, and shutting herself up in her room, she fell on her knees, resolved not to rise, before her soul had found rest and peace. I do not know how many hours passed thus, but at length her strength failed and she fell asleep. Then

she dreamed that she was falling over a frightful precipice, when she caught hold of a little twig and hung thus suspended over the abyss. There she was crying and imploring help, when a voice came from below which she knew to be the voice of Jesus telling her to let go the twig and He would receive her and save her. "Lord, save me!" she cried, and the voice again responded: "Let go the twig." But she dared not let go and continued to cry: "Lord, save me!" At length He who was below, whose voice she had heard but whom she had not seen, said to her in the most tender and solemn tone, "I cannot save you unless you let go the twig." Then, almost in desperation, she let go, fell into the arms of Jesus, and the joy she experienced wakened her. The lesson which her dream taught her was not lost. She realized that Jesus was worthy of all her confidence, and that not only she had no need of any twig of self-righteousness, but that it was her determination in clinging to this twig that had kept her away from Christ. She gave up all and found Jesus wholly sufficient.

In the hope of soon hearing that you also have renounced every other trust, and that you have cast yourself into the arms of Him who extended them upon the cross for you.

I remain with prayers, Yours etc.

Our God in mercy lingers yet,
And wilt thou thus His love requite?
Poor sinner, harden not your heart,
You may be saved, why not to-night?

A DEATH BED.

SITTING by the death bed of Miss D—— a few hours before her departure to be with Christ, she spoke of her thankfulness to the Lord for having brought her to see her need of Him as a Saviour some time before she was taken sick, “For,” she said, “had I left it until now, the pain of body I am enduring, would prevent me giving the attention I should to the interests of my soul.” As I left the house, never again to see her alive, I could not help thinking how true her words were. When the body is racked with pain how little thought is given to eternal things.

Have you, dear reader, ever been at a death bed? Have you seen the life fast ebbing away from some loved one? If unsaved was there much time then to prepare? You answer, No. Then take warning. Your turn may come next. One lie of the enemy of your soul is, “There is plenty of time yet. Wait until you come to your death bed, there is time enough then to be saved.” But in many cases this has proved a fatal delusion. Dear friend, do take warning. The word of God is, “Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation. (II Cor. vi. 2). He beseeches you to come now. He offers you salvation now. He wants to pardon you now. Will you listen to His pleadings and accept His offer now? The word of God teaches that you have to spend eternity, either in the realms of everlasting glory with Christ, or in eternal darkness. Amid the joys of heaven, or the

sorrows of hell. Which will it be? Should you be brought to a death bed unsaved, think, dear friend, of what remorse would be yours. You would think of the many opportunities you have had of being saved. Of the repeated invitations to believe on Christ as your Saviour. Of the prayers of a mother, a father, a wife, a husband or a child. How you would wish from the depths of your heart that you were saved. Will your last hour find you saved or lost? This should be a question of great interest to you. Settle it now. Christ may come and take away those who are saved and then your doom would be fixed.

But perhaps my reader is one who has found out the truth of all I say and earnestly desires to be saved. Then hear what God says: In Romans v. 8, we read "God commendeth HIS LOVE toward us," and what were we when this love was told out? "In that while we were yet sinners," what was the expression of this love? "Christ died for us." Now put it together and read it, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Now, tell me dear friend, if God has told out His love to you, and that, when you were a vile sinner, and Christ has died for you does it not assure you of His willingness to save? His heart is full of love toward you. He longs to have you sharing the joys of Christ and His redeemed through eternity. No matter what your past life has been, if you come to Him as a needy penitent soul and believe on Him His word is, "Thou shalt be saved."

(Acts xvi. 31). Are you ready to believe on Him now? Then fear not to confess Him for He says: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 9. 10). May you, dear reader, settle the question at once. Where will you spend eternity?

But perchance thou sayest: "If I begin to follow Christ, I fear lest on account of my weakness I should fall away." How, over and over again, one must grieve and weep at the error of the sons of men! They fear not failure in following after those things which always do fail; rather they run after them with all their heart; and they venture not to follow after God who never fails.

Believe, I exhort thee, in the counsel of God, and commit thyself wholly to Him, and thou shall experience no failure. Last dear friend, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," and be assured, since the Holy Spirit so promises, that "He shall nourish thee." Delay not thy so great good, and fulfil my yearning for thee, that I may have thee for my companion in following Christ; and that we may strive together so that as thou seest me, so I may see thee, a companion in Christ's inheritance, which He gives. Be not ashamed of breaking the chains of vain intentions; since it is no shame, but an honour, to pass into the liberty of the truth.

“ FIG LEAVES.”

“ HOW long have you known the Lord ?” said a friend of mine in S—. “About three weeks, sir, but I have been for forty years sewing fig leaves together.”

There is a great deal expressed in these few words. Thousands are employed in the same profitless work as our poor old friend. Yes ; thousands are occupied in the useless business of sewing fig leaves together. The man who is trying to save his soul by means of rites and ceremonies, ordinances and sacraments, church-going and chapel-going, is just sewing fig leaves together.—So also, the man or woman who is building upon prayers, fastings, and almsdeeds, is sewing fig leaves together.

All these things may be, and many of them really are, very good in their right place. But as a ground for the soul to rest upon for pardon and peace—as a title wherewith to draw nigh to a holy and righteous God—as a foundation on which to build for eternity, they are, in very truth, but sewing fig leaves together ; and all who trust to them will find them to be so when alas ! it will be too late.

In order to possess true, solid, divine peace, the soul must be resting simply on that which is absolutely of God. We may rest assured that nothing will, nothing can avail—nothing can give peace but that which is of God. There is not beneath the canopy of heaven, a soul possessing true peace who is resting on, or looking to human efforts of any sort or description.

THE SOWER.

A VOICE FROM A PRISON CELL.

There is nothing within me that ever I might
Give as reason why Jesus should wash my soul white.
I had mocked at His mercy so often before,
He might have forsaken my soul evermore.
But still in His wonderful mercy so free,
He had room in His heart for a sinner like me.

I would not attend, though so often He cried,
“Son! look at My hands and the wound in My side;
Oh, think of the love that could bring thy Lord down
To buffeting, hate and a brow-piercing crown.
I bore all that anguish to set thy soul free.”
But Christ’s love and mercy were nothing to me.

He bore with me long, and He followed me far
O’er the way where allurements and lusts ever are :
He brought me to bay, and He led me to think,
With my feet slipping fast o’er the terrible brink
To destruction and death, put the devil to rout,
Then I came, and He never has since cast me out.

He is ever the same ; and His bible declares,
There’s rejoicing above o’er a penitent’s prayers ;
That sins, red as scarlet, can be white as the snow,
If o’er them the blood of the Saviour but flow.
He is pleading and calling, poor sinner, for thee :
He’ll not refuse you, since He saved one like me.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

III.

DEAR friend: I thank you for your good letter of yesterday, I am happy to see that the Lord continues to occupy you with a subject so important as the salvation of your soul, but at the same time I am distressed to learn that you are still a stranger to that peace which the gospel announces. However, it is of grace that you are kept from a false peace, by means of which Satan seeks, in a thousand ways, to deceive poor souls and drag them down to perdition. But avoid settling down or continuing a single moment in your present state. "Remember Lot's wife." She went out of Sodom with her husband in order to escape the terrible judgment which God was about to bring on this wicked city. But her heart was still there, her attachment for Sodom and all that was in it continued, and so, *looking behind her*, she was changed to a pillar of salt, and thus became a perpetual monument of the terrible consequences which result from a return of a state of awakening to one of indifference. Oh! that God Himself may engrave upon your heart the warning given to Lot and his family; "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." (Gen. xix. 17).

You say, "I believe I shall not die without knowing the Lord." I also seriously hope you may not. You are—as you read this letter—either a child of God, or a child of wrath. There is no middle

place, be assured of that. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Now you have either the Son of God, or you have not. Where are you, dear friend?—If believing in Him, you have the Son of God, *you have* life. In this case, it is not a question of hoping that you will not die without the Lord; you have the Son, and you have life. But if you have not the Son—if your heart is not attached to Jesus as your only hope, your only refuge, *you have not life*; and if you continue in this state, there is not anywhere a single promise that would warrant you in believing that you will receive it before you die. All the promises have their centre in Christ and a present application. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation." "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

How uncertain is human life! when I left home some weeks ago, a lady of our acquaintance was confined to her room through indisposition although not to her bed. I heard frequently of her during my absence, and on my return, her sister came with joy to tell me that the invalid was much better. This was at four o'clock. At eight o'clock the same evening her sister read to her a chapter from the New Testament. At nine o'clock she was dead. What a solemn and sudden change! We have every reason to believe that for a number of years our deceased friend believed from her heart in Christ, and that now she is happy with Him. But suppose this had not been the case, how could she have been able to go to Christ

when she was thus suddenly stricken by death. Do not rest, my friend, a day or an hour longer without Christ—God presents Him to you with all the value of His precious and expiatory blood. You will be welcomed in coming to Him *now*. “He that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” But it is: “*Him that cometh.*” Go then to Christ, and go at once. Do not put it off a day or an hour.

I enclose you a tract—I beg you to read it seriously and prayerfully. Look up all the passages referred to, meditate on them carefully. In reading it, ask yourself often. “Do I believe that?” “Does my soul find rest in that truth?” May the Lord be with you in the reading, and may it help to enlighten you and conduct you to Christ, so that, happy in Him and in the assurance of the love of God, you may be able to follow Him and to serve Him joyfully all the days of your life.

I am always glad to get your letters, but you must not lean upon any one, nor upon what your friends are able to tell you, or do for you. Look only to the Lord Jesus and to the blood which was shed at Calvary. It is that which cleanses from all sin—all that any man can do is to point you to Jesus and His blood and to pray God to lead you by the means of what has been said to you, to look to Jesus; to confide in Jesus; to cling to Jesus; and to rejoice in Jesus.

May the Lord grant you this grace, and may I soon learn from you that Jesus has become truly precious to you. Yours etc.

THE CONDITION OF MAN BY NATURE.

I.

IF we do not understand the nature of man we cannot adequately comprehend the aim and meaning of God's process in leading us unto Himself ; therefore it is a subject of the highest importance. Many there are who know and acknowledge that only Christ can be their sufficiency before God, who, nevertheless, are by no means convinced of the practical and utter ruin of their nature.

The normal state of man, as first created, was that of innocence—he had done no unrighteousness ; and this consisted in his doing God's will, and not his own ; therefore, he was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ; for if he did, he would substitute his own will for God's. Satan in his enmity to God, assails man and beguiles the woman by representing the great benefits that would flow from the act—that is from disobeying God and following his own will. Satan engendered in the woman the thought, that God would not do for her as well as she could do for herself, and Adam, listening to his wife fell into the snare. What God had refused, the serpent assured them, would greatly serve them ; and what God would not give, to that they could help themselves. Thus God was disbelieved and Satan, listened to ; and *herein* was sin instilled into man's nature, which thence underwent a change, not only in intelligence but in feeling. It was poisoned with an untrue idea of God, and imbued

with self-dependence. It now trusted itself and its own powers more than God's, and implied in its line of action, that God would refuse what would benefit, though abundantly in His power to give! What a delusion! What an estrangement from happy trust in God and full obedience, delighting in the mercies of His hand, to be now so filled with distrust, that not only is His word disbelieved, but He is accused of limiting man's blessing, who must therefore secure for himself what God has denied! What more painful feeling could be entertained toward a once esteemed benefactor, than that He has power to advance me but interdicts it, and that I can help myself to it in defiance of Him! *Satan gained his point*, and instilled the poison into man's nature, which must henceforth rankle with distrust of God and self-dependence, which was only increased and helped on by an enlarged intelligence or power of judging between good and evil, though the standard of such intelligence must be a low one, for it must be with relation to man, and not with relation to God, of whom man had now no right idea.

What then, we may next inquire, was man's course in this fallen condition? Having been made upright he was not without some knowledge of God, though he had sought out and pursued his many inventions; he had conscience, too, which, while it had no power to debar him from his inventions, could always tell him that he was not up to the mark. No man, however hardened, could say that he had entirely answered to his conscience. He might not listen to it, but i

he consulted it at all, he must allow that he could not do everything, even according to his *own* standard. But the more man's nature, thus poisoned, developed itself, the further it got from God ; and not liking to retain God in his knowledge, God gave him over to a reprobate mind, and the result was, all the immorality of paganism—an immorality which as we see in heathen mythology was sought to be excused by assigning a special divinity to each class of it, which profane doing evinced, that the conscience, degraded as it was, sought some relief from the evil by assuming that it was divinely sanctioned, and therefore all that system elucidates most clearly the religious corruption which fallen nature is in itself capable of ; for we need to study nature as a whole in order to understand its tendencies and fruits.

The system of heathenism, showing what fallen nature following its corruptions, will do, in order to satisfy its conscience and at the same time follow its own will and lust, gives us a great clue to its spirit and will. It illustrates man trying to combine the lust of his corruption with conscience, and to satisfy conscience, while acting according to his own will and lust ; so that in the end it became too monstrous and absurd even for man's reprobate mind. Then a new system sprung up, a reformation which was introduced and promoted by men called philosophers, which system in principle proposed that man should attain to divine favour, not through any intervention of God and divine instrumentality, but by discipline of himself. This doctrine, supported by two opposite schools,

became attractive to any one who felt the degradation into which mere paganism had plunged him ; and the more so as it was addressed to him as having in himself an inherent power to improve and advance himself, which to man, in any degree conscious of his demoralization, was the most pleasing and delusive idea. The spirit and aim of all this philosophy was that man by his own unaided efforts could attain to virtue, and that such attainment would be bliss. This being a mere human reformation, and having to encounter the licentious system of paganism, could not stand its ground, and in the end had to succumb; so that we find at Athens (Acts xvii.) an altar, in addition to all other altars, inscribed "To the unknown God;" thus distinctly intimating that their knowledge had only reached this point even to know their ignorance—to *know that they knew nothing*, and to verify the word of God that "The world by wisdom knew not God." Thus if in the system of paganism we get *one* principle in man's nature, even the endeavour to combine the satisfaction of his natural conscience with his own will and lust, we find in that of philosophy *another*, equally leading and distinct, and no doubt allowed of God to be tested and developed to the utmost by the Greeks and their followers, even that man's effort to repair himself eventually in the acknowledgement that his greatest attainment is only to disclose to him his ignorance of God.

Thus we have seen what man's nature is as left to itself, in the developement of its own mind and will ;

but there is another phase and circumstance in which we must consider it, even that as placed in the light of revelation from God. And what does *that* reveal? We have only to read the old Testament in order to ascertain how man in his own nature responds to the revealed will of God.

Early enough Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord; the beginning of his kingdom was Babel. He would enjoy himself independently of God, just as the tower of Babel was conceived and erected in sheer independence of God.

Then, what a commentary on man's nature in the most favoured circumstances in Israel's history: exhibiting to us the antagonism and enmity of its will toward God in so many varied and painful forms, that any one who knows anything of his own heart must be convicted and humbled by the resemblance to it, which he reads in that history of weakness and sin. To Israel were committed the oracles of God, and yet they caused His name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles, and wandered into even greater excesses than the nations, and, as we learn by the parable of the vineyard, they increased in bitterness and opposition to God as times grew on—and were only the more aggravated in antagonism by the presence of the Son of God among them. In the gospel narrative man's nature is distinctly and painfully exposed, and finally condemned too, as irretrievably incompetent in every respect, proved as such by its reception, converse with, and treatment

of "God manifest in the flesh." It was found to be either so wicked and abandoned as to contemplate and contrive His death; or so weak, that in the most desired moment it cannot maintain the semblance of allegiance to Him—but so grossly the contrary, that it can deny Him. It is impossible for any one to read the history of man's reception of the Lord from heaven—He who, as born of a woman, was one of the human family on earth—and not be struck with the utter depravity of man as regarded God, though He had all the light of God's revelation to assist him. The secrets of many hearts were revealed by the manner and measure of the rejection which each levelled against the only one who ever appeared on earth in human perfection—the one Man who came up to the perfect standard of God's mind and will. The Scribes and Pharisees, the chief priests, and all the teachers while boasting of being the repositories of God's mind, were the loudest and fiercest in demanding the death of the Son of God! Where was the goodness of nature or the gain from revelation *there*? They instigated the multitude to cry out, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" If nature had a single particle of true power, ought it not to have had some apprehension of the sacredness of the person of the Son of God on earth and the divinity of His mission, especially when educated and assisted by the revelation of God? Was it not tried then, and found—oh how sadly!—wanting? What greater or better opportunity could it ever have again of expressing its ability to understand the ways and manner of God,

than when God's only-begotten Son was in all the nearness and intimacy of flesh among men?

But if the teachers and guides under the law of God could be so led away by their natural mind, as not only to refuse and reject the Son of God, but to hate Him so much, that nothing but His death would satisfy them: if, I repeat, the natural mind were proved so utterly insensible to the divine mind, and at issue with it, notwithstanding all the opportunities offered to it, how could any one again assume, much less maintain, that there was power, or principle, or perceptiveness in it to desire or attain to what was divinely perfect? As the Lord said, "Now they have no cloak for their sin." He had "done among them the works which none other man did." The perfection of humanity often lauded, and by the Pharisees grossly imitated, was displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet the chosen people of God, educated in His law; disowned, rejected, and consigned Him to an ignominious death. He that cannot appreciate a superior, proves himself an inferior. To what a depth of degradation then, did man's nature sink in the crucifixion of Christ!

But this was not all. Not only do we find its irretrievable wickedness, as evinced in the Jews' treatment of Christ, but in His very disciples, in those who loved Him in the secret depths of their hearts, we find that the nature of man is so feeble and inconstant, that it cannot support and vindicate impressions and feelings of which it has been assured. Nay, in its pitiable weakness, it does violence to the

approved sentiments of the soul. They all forsook Him in the hour of His distress, not from want of love or faith, but from the simple infirmity of a nature which could not support the good emotions working in it and approved of.

The beloved disciple slept when asked to watch; and Peter, who had hardihood enough to smite off the high priests servant's ear; when unsupported, cursed and swore that he did not know his own loved Lord and Master.

Thus the gospel narrative details to us how man's nature has been subjected to the last trial, when, if it had a particle of goodness or power, it must have appeared; but instead of this, it exposed itself at every point, both in wickedness and weakness.

I have thus endeavoured briefly to set forth the history of man's nature, and how it has been proved, step by step, to be utterly profitless, and its enormity so sealed, that God's fiat—now pronounced by the Holy Ghost, who is at once the witness of man's sin and of God's righteousness—is "The natural mind is at enmity against God."

Is it a fact that by-and-by, in eternity, you must cast your eye back over your history, and, as the long dark night of eternity rolls on, you must remember you refused to let God save you?

I ask you do you accept or decline God's invitation? Either you must accept it on the ground of being a lost, ruined sinner, or you must refuse and be lost for ever and ever?

“ A GREAT WAY OFF.”

“GRANNY, hearing of your great age, I have come to see you.”

“Granny” grunted. She was evidently in no genial mood. Notorious in the village for her great age, and her hard, almost ferocious heart, the new-comer, a stranger in the place, had ventured in the hope of reaching her soul for the sake of Him “Who cutteth out rivers in the rocks,” and whose “Eye seeth every precious thing.”

“Granny” sat on her stool in the chimney corner smoking her short black pipe. She offered no chair to her visitor, and as the mud hut was not inviting with such a reception, after a few more remarks, saying she would call again and just catching the surly, “You can if you like,” her friend departed.

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 “Granny,” I have such good news for you !”

There was her visitor again. Granny looked surprised. It was not often “good news” came to her. She offered her visitor a stool this time, and sat on, puffing at the ugly, black pipe. Her friend sat down and without comment read the 15th of Luke’s gospel. She read on, and bye-and-bye looking up she saw the large tears falling down the dark, not over clean, time-wrinkled cheeks. Still she read on. “But when he was a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” “*Hang it,*” and Granny’s great, hard

fist came down upon her knee with a heavy thud, "I never heerd the likes o' that afore." Reader, have you? We read and hear of wise parents, and just parents, and loving, almost foolish ones. But have you ever heard of *such* love, *such* wisdom?

"While he was a great way off."

That watching father knew at once, in spite of the rags and the "hang-dog" step, that it was him. Aye! God knows you dear one, whether starting off with the gay, quick step of independence to the "far country," or returning, weary and wretched, having "spent all." Do you think the elder brother would have known him? I don't.

"And had compassion and ran."

He did not sit still to see if he was really penitent or not—to prove him. No. "He ran." Be sure no sin-burdened soul crying out for salvation, has ever run as swiftly to Him as He runs Himself. If you are going towards Him, even slowly, lingeringly, with the "Buts" and "Ifs" of doubt and fear within your heart, you will soon meet Him for He is ever "*Seeking to save.*"

"And fell on his neck."

He did not give him time to say his say. Love shuts his mouth. God knows our worst. He sees the heart with eyes that miss nothing, sees the soul black with the sin that cost the blood of His precious Son, and He knows what that sin will bring; "The wages of sin is death."

If the Father had waited for him to speak, he

would only have shown how little he knew of the Father's heart.

"And kissed him."

With those arms about his neck, and those kisses on his cheek do you think any "buts" and "ifs" remained? When the soul has no plea, but "I have sinned," then God's love can flow out. No matter the rags and the plight, it was the *returning heart* the Father wanted. No matter what, or who you are, dear reader, it is *yourself* God wants, just as you are.

"Granny" was saved and changed. She saw Christ in His beauty, revealing the love of God, and had the joy of sitting at His feet; and then went in to be with Him whom she had kept out of her life so long.

Dear reader have you been acting against God all your life and have never found peace? Are you tormented with a guilty conscience, and still rejecting and refusing salvation? I would earnestly beseech you to consider the danger you are in, and I would ask you to look before you, and see where you are going and what you are doing. You are wandering in a world of which it is written "vanity and vexation of spirit, all is vanity," and if persisted in, you will ere long sink into the sleep of death, to wake in eternal misery, the horror of a night that shall have no dawn.

Will you, oh, unsaved one, take salvation? Now is the accepted time.

ETERNALLY SAVED.

GRANT me but this, that God has revealed Himself as a Saviour, and I argue, with unclouded confidence and holy boldness, that I am, and must be, perfectly saved. It does not rest upon aught in me, but simply and entirely upon God's revelation of Himself. I know He is perfect in everything; and, therefore perfect as my Saviour. Hence I am perfectly saved, inasmuch as the glory of God is involved in my salvation. "There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside Me."—What then? "LOOK UNTO ME, and be ye saved, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. xlv. 21, 22. One believing LOOK from a lost sinner to a just God and a Saviour, secures eternal salvation. "LOOK!" How simple! It is not "Work!"—"Do!"—"Pray!"—"Feel!"—no; it is simply "Look." And what then? Salvation—everlasting life. It must be so, because God is a Saviour: and the precious little mono-syllable "look," fully implies all this, inasmuch as it expresses the fact that the salvation which I want is found in the One to whom I look. It is all there, ready for me, and one look secures it—secures it for ever—secures it for ME. It is not a thing of to-day or to-morrow; it is an eternal reality. The bulwarks of salvation behind which the believer retreats have been erected by God Himself—the Saviour-God, on the sure foundation of Christ's atoning work; and no power of earth or hell can ever shake them.

THE SOWER.

“TURN YE, TURN YE FROM YOUR EVIL WAYS; FOR WHY
WILL YE DIE?”—(Ezek. xxxiii. 11).

Oh! why will ye die? What a wonderful word,
Addressed to vile sinners by heavens great Lord;
'Tis loving remonstrance unmingled with wrath,
Kind warning to flee from a ruinous path.

Why turn a deaf ear? cans't thou think it is well,
To follow the path which leads downward to hell;
When God, thy Creator, from yonder bright sky,
Calls urgently, Turn ye for why will ye die?

Let me plead with thee; think of the worth of thy
soul.

Go search the green earth to the uttermost pole,
Go climb the high mountain, pass valley and plain
Sail the bright shining river, the wide bounding main.

Search the depths of the ocean, the bowels of earth,
Lay bare all the treasures that there have their birth,
Then tell, if thou cans't, the vast worth of the whole,
'Tis as nothing compared to the worth of thy soul.

The earth, and all things we can see, must decay,
Like a dream of the night they will all pass away ;
Will thy soul like a vapor vanish? Ah! no,
That soul is immortal for weal or for woe.

Yet you peril your soul, a sorrowful tale,
For trifles as light as the air you inhale,
When God tells thee plainly the way thou should'st go,
Why tread the dark path that leads downward to woe?

Should you die in your sins will the fault lie with Him
Who gave his loved Son thy lost soul to redeem?
It cannot; God ever desires to forgive—
His wish is that all should leave evil and live.

Will it lie with the Saviour who died on the tree,
That thou from dread judgment should ever be free?
Ah, no! His own word places that beyond doubt,
Who e'er comes to Me I'll in nowise cast out.

Christ's wondrous affection what darkness can dim,
He wept o'er the city that crucified Him,
And such was His love, that when sinking in death,
He prayed for His foes ere He gave up His breath.

No! poor wretched sinner the fault lies with **THEE**,
God woos thee in love and from Him thou dost flee,
Yet all will be well if you heed his bless'd cry,
Oh! turn you from evil, for why will ye die?

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

IV.

MY DEAR friend:—Time passes quickly and soon it will have passed forever. The thought is suggested by the remark you made that more than a month has passed since your conscience has been awakened, and that next Monday will be the anniversary of your birthday. I can reckon more than double the number of years that you can, but I cannot express to you how much more rapidly the last half of these years seems to have passed than the former. When one possesses a life in Christ which never ends, and has before him the coming of the Lord, when death will be swallowed up in life, the flight of time will not be a matter of regret. God grant, dear friend, that your coming anniversary may find you in the *conscious enjoyment* of this new life. It will then be, I am sure, the happiest you have ever passed.

In the meantime I cannot conceal from you the anxiety I feel to see you remaining so long in the same spiritual state. As long as a soul does not really know Christ, it does not confide in Him, rejoice in Him, or confess Him openly, and one cannot be sure how this state of anxiety and distress may end. I have known people, who, after passing through the most heart rending anguish, have finished by returning to indifference and sin. How very sad if this were to be your case. Do not then have a

thought of remaining in your present condition. To-day, as in my previous letter, I address you seriously in the words of the angel to Lot, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." You reason, instead of simply accepting what God presents to you.

"Is it not useless," you say, "to try and believe by myself?" It is certain that if you only make an effort to believe you will hardly succeed. But if it were the case of a relative or a friend, in whom you have confidence, would you merely make an effort to believe them? No; it is only necessary that they tell you a thing, for you to have faith in it. But, alas! when it is God, who—so often repeated—gives you the same assurance, addresses the same invitations to you, you speak of trying to believe—Him, the God of truth, who cannot lie. What a sad state to be in!

You add, "Ought I not rather to ask God to open my heart to receive the gospel, and to hope that He who has shown me a little of my culpability will make His word living and efficacious for my soul?" Be the thought far from me to turn you aside from asking God anything you feel the need of. The merciful ways of God are diverse, and I understand how one may be attracted, little by little, until the light, in its full brilliancy, makes Christ appear so attractive and His blood so precious that the heart can no longer doubt. As to myself, I was praying when my soul received the truth and was set free.

But I dare not advise any one to follow the same course or wait for the same effect, and for these reasons:—

Firstly—I do not find such counsel in any place in the scripture.

Secondly—A person may pray, as you say, and not receive salvation. Now, this single thought makes me tremble—that anyone might be able to say, “I have done what you advised, and I am not saved.”

And lastly—The commandment of scripture is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and *thou shalt be saved.*” Now, no one can say, “I have obeyed this commandment, and am still lost.”

You, my friend, have only *tried to believe*, and that is not at all the exhortation which scripture addresses to you, and which it presents in different forms. We are told to look to Jesus, to go to Him, to seek in Him our refuge, to eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink His blood. But all these expressions come back to this: *Believe in him.* He explains it Himself when He says, “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”—(John vi. 35).

But mark it well, it is *Christ* who saves, and not the fact of going, looking, or even believing, in so much as these may be considered apart from Himself. Bread appeases hunger and nourishes; it is not merely the act of eating, however indispensable that may be. A man really hungry does not stop to consider whether he can eat or not. He seizes with

avidity the bread which has been placed before him and eats it. Receive Christ then—the bread of life—who only can satisfy the needs of the soul. God assures you, that “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.”—(John vi. 51). Believe, unhesitatingly, His word.

You ask again, “Is it possible for me to believe by myself?” and you quote this phrase from a tract, ‘It is by means of the Spirit that the truth is received.’ As to the last it is undoubtedly true. Without the Spirit the knowledge of the truth would profit nothing. It is by Him that the word of God, which is the truth, communicates to the soul a new life, and it is thus that it is said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”—(John iii. 5).

But along side of that let me remind you that it is *you and me* who believe; the Spirit does not believe *for us* or in *our place*. He leads us to believe in placing Christ before us in the glory of His person, the tenderness of His love, the value of His blood, the power of His resurrection. Christ, in fact, as we find Him *in the written word*. But if on one hand it is for us the Son of God descended from heaven, for us that He suffered and died, for us that He rose again; on the other hand it is we who ought to receive Him, confide in Him, rest upon Him.

Now we come to your question, “Is it possible for me to believe by myself?” No; you cannot do it. Christ says, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.”—(John vi. 44).

It is, however, written, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—(Rom. x. 17). If it is true that by nature we are not only wicked, but "without strength," (Rom. v. 6), it is also true that God has communicated to us a living and effectual word, which has power to save our souls. (Heb. iv. 12; Jas. i. 21). Where then is the difficulty that hinders you from believing? In order to reply let us consider the subject a little further.

Firstly—The bible is full of the most positive assurances, in attestation of the fact that God does not hinder the salvation of any, but that on the contrary He is full of kindness toward all.

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"—(Ezek. xxxiii. 11).

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."—Is. xlv. 22.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—(Is. lv. 1).

"John came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe."—(John i. 7).

"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."—(John iii. 17).

“But these things I say, that ye might be saved,”
—(John v. 34).

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

“The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”—(John vi. 51).

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”—(Mark xvi. 15).

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.”—(2 Cor. v. 19).

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”—(1 Tim. ii. 4).

“The Lord is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”—(2 Peter iii. 9).

“The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—(Rev. xxii. 17).

Can anyone read these passages, and many more like them, and doubt that God truly desires the salvation of men? The obstacle which hinders you from going to Christ, my friend, *is not God*. He invites you, urges you, supplicates you to come to Christ and be saved. If you respond to His appeal, He will certainly save you.

Secondly—But the difficulty is in yourself. You show it in this passage of your letter, “It seems to me that I cannot sufficiently confide in Him, that He should receive me.”

If you were to say of your father, I feel that I cannot fully trust him, would not that show that you had a bad opinion of his character? Now that is the language of your heart, and of the natural heart of every man as to God. We are also just as far from loving Him, for we are in such ignorance of His character that we are not able to trust Him, and we do not care to go to Him.

“Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life,” said the Lord. Ah! that is the secret of the evil, at the very bottom of our sinful state; we do not will to go. And are you not yourself the proof of it? For more than a month you have groaned under the weight of your sins, and the misery of condemnation, and you say, “I have tried to cast myself into the arms of Jesus, but I do not seem to be able to trust Him sufficiently to believe that He will receive me.” You have not willed to come to Him; if you had you might have done so, and might have enjoyed peace.

Thirdly—It is true that God only can overcome this lack of confidence, bend this rebellious will, and that as a result of His grace. Scripture no place teaches that in order to be received by God, we have to find in ourselves a previous confidence in Him. It tells us, on the contrary, that the thought of the natural heart is “enmity against God.”—(Rom. viii. 7).

Will God wait to find something good when He has declared that there is no desire to seek Him, no fear of Him, no knowledge of the way of peace? (Read the whole of the passage, Rom. iii. 9-26).

Has not God manifested His righteousness because He has not found among men either righteousness, rectitude, or hope of healing. "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor."—(Is. lix. 14-16).

It is just on that account that Jesus tells you to come to Him. Why, then, do you not respond to His appeal? Why are you so slow in seeking in your heart that which is right? Instead of complaining of what you have not yet realized, look at what God has done in sending His only Son and in giving Him up to death that we might be saved. God freely justifies the sinner "through *the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*."—(Rom. iii. 24). God is not at all obliged to save us; He has willed to do it, because He is love.

Fourthly—Do not wait to be led to Christ, as you have perhaps pictured to yourself, by some new revelation, by some distinct and powerful impression. The moment you believe in Christ, it will be the same Christ, of whom you have read and heard so many things; the same Christ who now waits with open arms to receive you. We are sinners, ungodly, and without strength; but "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—(Rom. v. 6). Dare you not believe that? Can you be worse than *ungodly*, or in a more desperate condition than *without strength*? *It is for such creatures that Christ died.* "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."—(1 Peter iii. 18).

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”—(1 Tim. i. 15). Is not this good news for a lost sinner?

You will never have a better title to assurance in Christ than the very excess of misery and helplessness you have, for it is on this very account that He came down from heaven; it is for that He was nailed to the cross. It is not for the just, for those who feel as they ought to feel, for those who are able to believe of themselves that Christ came to the earth. No; but for those who are lost; for sinners; for those, who, left to themselves, would reject Christ and continue to the end in their course of sin. It is for them that He came, for them He suffered, for them He died. Reading that, can you believe it? Believe it, not because it is my word, or the word of any man, but because it is God Himself who says it? But for that turn your eyes away altogether from yourself and look to Jesus. Turn your eyes away from this ungrateful, sinful *me*, and place them upon Jesus, who came from heaven to earth, who wept and groaned, suffered and shed His blood for miserable, unbelieving sinners. Look to Jesus. God commands you to do so. Jesus Himself also invites you, and the Holy Spirit presses you to do it. Oh! could you not obey without a moment's delay?

All that God or man can desire is found abundantly in Jesus. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood; that He

might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—(Rom. iii. 25-26). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—(Rom. iv. 5).

Time fails me; my paper is nearly filled. May God lead you, my dear friend, to find the full satisfaction of your soul in Christ, in whom God also has declared Himself fully satisfied.

I remain, faithfully yours, in the love of Christ.

Thank God, now there is pardon, yet there is room, now there is a welcome in the Father's house for you, poor lost one; now God's invitation is to you to His great supper of salvation.

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

Oh, unsaved sinner, can you bear to think of that place to which you are hastening, all your friends gone, your joys gone, and wake up to find yourself a sinner in your sins.

Jesus died to save the never-dying soul; and unbeliever you reject Him. How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation? Flee for thy life. Jesus still waits to save. He saves the ungodly, those without strength, nothing to pay.

A JEWESS.

THE following true narrative is given in brief, from memory, as illustrative of the order of divine work in the soul according to scripture. Overhearing a conversation with a patient in the same ward in a hospital, upon whom the gospel of God's grace was being pressed for faith, this one declared with emphasis that she "did not believe a word of it;" but with the request to the speaker to come nearer, as it was an effort for her to talk. She said she had been a Jewess, and was now a Christian; but that she did not believe what she had just heard. Her grounds for claiming to be a Christian were that she had been baptized and confirmed as a member of the Episcopal Church, having given up Judaism, and thought there was nothing more required; but admitted that she was not justified before God; nor had she peace with Him. She believed the New Testament was a revelation from God, and believed that "Jesus is the Christ," and was therefore "born of God," and had eternal life.—(1 John v. 1. 9-13). But she was a stranger to the blessings of the gospel, and the troubled expression of her face proved it, notwithstanding the effort to hide her anxiety as to her soul, for she had no hopes of recovery from her illness.

Judaism had been formally renounced for Christianity, outwardly, but she was still making Israel's old mistake of seeking to establish a righteousness

of her own for God, in order to please and satisfy Him, by adding church ordinances to law-keeping ; but had not submitted herself unto the righteousness of God by faith. (See Rom. iii. 19-23 ; ix. 30-33 ; x. 1-13).

As proof that justification and peace with God were obtained upon the principle of FAITH only, faith without the works of the law, the testimony in Rom. iv. as to Abraham and David was read, laying stress upon the fact that it is *now* a question of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, who is seated on high, and that nothing else could meet her need, as shown in the end of chapter iv. and first verse of chapter v.

Peters testimony also in Acts ii. was pointed out, that the Jews had crucified Christ their Messiah, but that God had raised Him from the dead and made Him both Lord and Christ on high.

Her eyes closed in silence, but the face told a tale. She had been baptised,* and now repentance was being wrought through faith in the truth. Presently, with tears of joy, she said, "I never saw these things before," and with measured words she spoke of her new-found joy in a risen and glorified Christ. The troubled expression was gone ; she was pardoned, and in possession of the Spirit, and was

*Human religion insists upon baptism, but neglects the divine requirement of repentance in the soul ; hence the scriptural order of repentance and baptism FOR THE JEW was reversed in this case.

filled by the God of hope with all joy and peace in believing, that she might abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.—(Acts. ii. 38; Rom. xv. 13). Shortly after this she departed to be with Christ, which is far better.—(Phil. i. 23).

There was the new birth and life through faith in the person of Christ; repentance and faith in a risen and glorified Christ for pardon, and she received the “promise of the Father,” the “gift of the Holy Ghost.”—(Acts i. 4; ii. 33).

If you come to God as a sinner, owning and confessing your guilt, and that you are lost and ruined, and plead only the name of Jesus, and accept Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as your only and all sufficient Saviour, that very moment God will blot out all your sins for His Son's sake. He will wash your soul of every stain, however black, and make it whiter than snow; He will give you eternal life which you can never lose; He will give you an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all who put their trust in Christ. Is it not inexpressibly glorious to have such a Saviour and such a salvation.

Oh! come, unsaved one, come TO-DAY,
 Christ is the Life, the Truth, the Way,
 Trust not your heart, trust not your mind,
 In Him eternal life you'll find.

I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM.

IT is utterly impossible that true, solid, eternal peace can be enjoyed, or true spiritual worship presented, until the conscience is purged by the blood of the cross. I must know not only that all the claims of my conscience, but that all the claims of God's throne have been perfectly answered by One who died in my stead, ere I can breathe freely, walk at ease, or worship within the veil. There is no IF, no BUT, no condition. The door is thrown open, as wide as the sinner's heart could desire. His nature, his condition, and all his heavy liabilities have been divinely met in the cross. God can say, "Deliver him from going down into the pit," not because he has kept all my commandments, nor even because he has earnestly tried but reluctantly failed to keep them, nor yet because he has sincerely repented and purposes to lead a new life; no; but because "I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM." Here is true peace. God knew the exact amount of ransom required, and He has Himself found it—found it all—found it for ME.

Reader, rest here? See the full amount of ransom told out beneath the eye of infinite holiness in the life-blood of Jesus! See it! hear it! believe it! rest in it.

May God the Holy Ghost open your eyes to see and your heart to understand and believe the things that make for your eternal peace.

THE SOWER.

ETERNITY.

Eternity, Eternity,
How long art thou, Eternity.

Count the gold and silver blossoms
Spring has scattered o'er the lea ;
Count the softly sounding ripples
Sparkling in the summer sea.
Count the lightly flickering shadows
In the autumn forest glade ;
Count pale nature's scattered teardrops,
Icy gems by winter made.

Count the tiny blades that glitter
Early in the morning dew ;
Count the desert sand that stretches
Under noontide's vault of blue.
Count the notes that woodbirds warble
In the evening's fading light ;
Count the stars that gleam and twinkle
O'er the firmament of night.

When thy counting all is done,
Scarce eternity's begun.
Reader pause—where wilt thou be
During thine eternity ?

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

v.

DEAR Friend.—In considering your letter of ——— I ask myself if the points which have especially struck me are actually those which express your state of soul. There are other things in what you have written, and I will now have a few words with you as to these.

“I had hoped,” you say, “to be able to tell you that I had found peace in my soul, through the blood of Christ; but it is more than a month since my conscience was awakened, and I am still in the same state.” You express anxiety, even fear, as to this. Whence proceeds this anxiety, my dear friend; this desire for peace and the consciousness that it is only by the blood of Christ that it can be found? Is not all this an indication of the work of the Spirit in you? Instead of being discouraged by these words, “It is by the Spirit that the truth is received,” be assured that it is by the Spirit you have already been taught and encouraged to hope for further light. Your desire to know Christ, to have peace by His blood is not a natural desire; God Himself has produced it and will certainly satisfy it.

In referring to the long years you have passed in sin, you draw some consolation and hope from the history of the woman in Luke xiii, who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and who at last was cured by Jesus. “Oh! if I was only able to put my

trust in Him," you say. Why, dear friend, do you not put your trust in Him at once, and with all your heart! It is always the same Jesus, full of tenderness and compassion; the same Saviour whose power healed this poor woman. Of a truth it is concealed from our eyes, but what caused the power to go out of Him? It was faith, not sight; and faith can still take hold of Him, although He is invisible.

But do you not already confide in Him? Have you any confidence in His love, and in the efficacy of His precious blood? Why should you have this ardent desire to find peace by His blood if you were not convinced it had some value, some efficacy, some virtue which gives peace? This assurance that the blood of Christ purifies the soul is already a commencement of confidence in Him. You may only have it in a very small degree; your trust may be very feeble; but it is confidence. Now scripture does not make our salvation depend upon any particular degree of confidence or faith, but upon the measure, whatever it may be, that the Spirit of God has wrought in our soul. What did the poor woman say in the gospel? "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.—(Matt. ix. 21).

Again, I find in your letter these words, "Latterly, in reading or in hearing the gospel, I have come many times to think; Oh! now I see clearly that I have only to surrender myself to Jesus; but soon all becomes dark and my trouble and distraction return." Have you not then proved at such times

that it is only confidence in Jesus? If, subsequently, obscurity and trouble reappear, it is because you do not lay hold of what faith in Jesus is. Instead of sitting at His feet, and tranquilly seeing in His word what your happiness is in trusting Him, you begin again to examine your own heart, to find there some evidence of the reality of your faith. Look to Jesus, and to Him only. He will not reject any who come to Him. His blood has been shed for the ungodly, and cleanses from all sin.

You will find enclosed an extract from a letter recently written me by a beloved brother, who is engaged in the Lord's work. May these lines, by God's blessing, be of some help to your soul.

Yours, etc. _____

[EXTRACT]

.

We have had here recently a touching instance of the grace of God. A poor woman, addicted to drink, died, and until the last few weeks would not receive any visitors. I saw her however about a month ago, and it was apparent that the Word had touched her conscience. From that time I visited her frequently; her heart softened little by little, and latterly she manifested a desire to hear of the grace of Jesus. I then had hope. A week before her end the light penetrated her heart and the shadow of death was quickly changed to a morning without clouds. In the intervals of quietness from her acute sufferings, after having read to her the last

of the seventh chapter of the Revelation, I had her learn the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, so that she might think of them during the long and painful night watches. I hoped that the Lord would show her why the multitude in white robes were before "the throne of God." When I came again to see her I perceived that she also had been washed in this precious blood. "Oh!" she cried, "Is it not a wonderful thing? As white as snow, by the blood of the Lamb!" I sought then to direct her thoughts to the love of Him who had caused this fountain of living water to spring up in her, and I read to her the fourth chapter of John's gospel. Afterwards she told me that she had seen the Saviour so near her, that she could look in His face.

The next time I saw her I was struck by the change which had been wrought in her. An expression of heavenly intelligence illuminated her poor attenuated face; and her words and appearance indicated a gentleness which was the result of communion with Christ. From that time until her departure, on Sunday afternoon, one word was continually on her lips, it was asking for the living water. Even during her sleep the words "living water" were repeated. "Oh!" said she, to the nurse who attended her, "All last night I had such thirst for the living water. How gladly would I have drank it" The nurse, thinking she was speaking of ordinary water, said, "You cannot drink any water, my dear friend, the doctor has prohibited it." "Ah!" she replied, "it is the living water I

desire." The nurse had, up to that time, thought that all religion was only hypocrisy, but "I see very well now," said she, "that the religion of Christ is a reality." She had never seen anything like the two last nights of the life of this poor woman. Whenever any respite from her pain permitted, she did not cease speaking of the Saviour. She said she saw Him, and when she could not speak she made signs that He was coming for her. She wished to take her young son up in her arms and show him the glory that filled the room. "Look! Look!" she would say to those who were about her; but what God gave her to see was for herself and not for others.

I was with her an hour before her death. A heavenly smile overspread her face. One of her nieces, who was present, asked her if she was happy. "Yes, my dear, I am very happy," she replied. These were her last words. I had to leave her, and half an hour after, she fell asleep in the Lord.

If you know Christ, His light will show you what you are. You will be horrified at yourself, you will detest yourself; but in the knowledge of Christ you will rejoice in a conscience purified by the blood of the slain Lamb. God gives effect to His grace towards you by virtue of the shed blood, and He only who is able to estimate its value as Christ, who has given Himself to give effect to that grace, can estimate the extent of the riches of it.

BELIEVING YE REJOICE.

ONLY twenty-one years of age and the race was run. Yesterday one was sitting by his side reading the word he loved, and watching the joy shining out of the dying eyes. To-day they were closed forever. He had no need of the precious word of God; he had gone in to be with Him, "whom having not seen" he loved.

"Yes, mum," said his mother, as we arose from our knees together, "he *was* bright. He was only ill a year. Took ill with a chill, and came home so irritable and cross like, there was no doing anything with him. He could not bear anyone to speak to him even, and there was some did come and try to put it before him like. And before he was ill he was always such a cheerful lad. Never a cross word. Well, mum, this went on and he wasn't getting any better, and seemed so shut in to himself, that it made your heart ache to see him. And one day, about a month ago, I was in the back garden there, picking vegetables, and his little brother came running out to me, "Oh! mother, mother, come to Charlie; I don't know what's the matter with him."

"So I went in, quick like; cause ye see mum, I thought it might be the bleeding again. And there he was, sitting up in bed singing, almost shouting at the top of his voice, and when I came in he says, 'I've got it, mother, I've got it. The Lord Jesus

died for *me.*' And ever since then he was like you seen him. Always singing when he could, and the poor face just shining like." And the mother wiped away her tears, which were falling fast, as she covered again the face which had been so bright in life. "And when he could not sing no more, he'd get the neighbors and his little brother to come and sing to him. All night it was just the same, spite of his cough and pain." He had been full of the joy of sins forgiven; the joy of seeing a living Christ as the substitute for sinners.

Can you picture the strong young frame, glorying in its strength, suddenly smitten; the heart having, without warning; to look death in the face at that early age? Can you fancy him watching the rapid footsteps of disease, knowing himself unprepared? What wonder he was irritable. Unable to do anything but think. He did not know God's thought towards him. "Thoughts of peace and not of evil." "Peace to him that is afar off." When we know Him we can say with David, "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them! If I should count them,—they are more in number than the sand."—(Psalm cxxxix. 17-18).

He was brooding over that sore heart, and in that little cottage room, in the narrow street, *He revealed Himself*, by the Holy Spirit. Well might he sing and shout. What was disease and death now?

What do you think Mary thought of death when she saw the risen Lord before her, and heard His

voice calling her by name? Charley saw Him, by faith, as clearly almost as Mary did, and by the Holy Spirit accepted Him as the substitute for sin; the conqueror of death. The Holy Spirit gave him life and united him to Christ; and as I sat with him the last day of his life, and heard his joyous words, and saw the light on his sunken face, I realized in a measure what the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" meant. Not joy in believing in a *creed*, but in a Person; the loving Saviour who wept over the city of Jerusalem, knowing what they were rejecting; the One who took the little ones up in His arms and blessed them; the One who bore the spitting and the shame, for you and me, dear readers; who was forsaken by God because He took the sinners place. God's holy eyes cannot look upon sin without judging it. But now He looks on Christ and sees Him, the Lamb, who bore the sins of believers. "In whom, though now ye see Him not, yet *believing*, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."—(1 Peter i. 8.)

Dear reader, can you rejoice? Can you go singing all the day in the face of everything? There is no true song for the heart until we are redeemed, only groaning and sighing, like the children of Israel in Egypt. But God heard their groans; and the soul that really groans under the burden and bondage of sin, will ever be the singing heart, when by the Holy Spirit it sees Christ in all His beauty, and can say, "The Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

NEW BIRTH AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS.

II.

THE terms quickened, and being born again, are used in scripture to express that change or new existence which is originated in a child of Adam when he is vitally, or from the heart, turned to God. We have seen in the paper on "Man's condition by nature," that man in the spirit of his mind is alienated from God, at enmity with Him; and still more, that he is unable, in the most convincing circumstances, to recognize or appreciate what is divinely good. All this being proved and admitted, it now becomes us to enquire and note, what is that change commonly called conversion, and which the scriptures designate as new birth; how it occurs, and by what it is characterized.

The new birth must be the introduction of a new principle into the soul of man, at once so distinct and effective that it maintains for itself not only its unique existence, but also its supremacy in spirit and intent over the old nature; often influencing it silently, where it does not control. The influence being a silent one, simply for this reason, that the new, on account of man's wilfulness and self-satisfaction, does not assert its superiority until the old is convinced of its necessity. But, notwithstanding, the new is there all the time, a positive reality, and a positive rein and awe to the conscience, though often for the moment there may be little or no

evidence of it in the walk. If the change be not of this distinct and effective order, how could it be termed, as the Lord said to Nicodemus, "being born again?" We all know that in order to dislodge or master any power in actual possession, it requires a power greater than that by which the possession is maintained. Consequently, if man, by nature, alienated from God, and at enmity with Him, be vitally turned to Him, it must be by a power not only greater than the will of man, but also one proportionate to the service required, which service is nothing less than to establish happy relations with God in a soul hitherto in the terrible distance of ignorance and enmity. This is accomplished in the new birth by the first principle of its existence, even faith; a principle which is always propagated by the Spirit of God blowing where He listeth. Called into being by the Holy Ghost, the way in which it reaches man, is (as we read) "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The word of God is deposited in the soul. The intelligence of that word is not so much the question as the effect of it; which effect is to convince the soul, in the first place that God *is*; and next, as to what His *nature* is, according as it has been revealed; though often a long period may intervene between these two, which *should* not be disunited; and in the end, and for peace and happiness of the soul, are not.

The first principle, then, of this new existence and its first utterance is *faith*. Faith is the first

characteristic of new birth. The old man is an unbeliever in every degree; the new is a believer in every degree. Adam's fall was in consequence of disobedience of God's word, the offspring of unbelief and distrust of God Himself. His nature thus became a prey to this adverse sentiment, which acting and re-acting on his fellow-men, has produced all the contumacy toward God of which man is guilty. The grace of God in every age has been above man's guilt, and therefore He has *compelled* many to come in; in one way or another awakening the soul to the sense of the existence of God, either as a relief or a correction to its ignorance; in a word, giving it faith in God, through the word of God.

The Spirit of God has always been the propagator of this new principle, so that where the smallest germ of it exists, there, blessed be God, the Holy Ghost has worked. The old man is utterly incapable of faith in God; therefore, wherever faith works, however feebly, new birth has taken place. And mark, it has been thus in *all* dispensations. The difference between the old testament times and the new, or the present, consists not in the principle of existence, for that is the same in both; and, moreover, it is begotten by the same Holy Spirit; but now eternal life is assured to us as God's gift, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel.

New birth then is a new existence. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," of which faith in God is its very principle, its first and simplest

characteristic, and eternal life its portion. How evident, then, is it that they who judge of, or describe it as an improvement in morals and tastes, wholly misapprehend the simple quality and radical nature of the new birth. Man in the old nature was characterized by unbelief; the new man is characterized by exactly the opposite, which it declares as just and compensatory; and thus faith is its peculiar mark, and the proof of its existence. New birth exists wherever faith exists, and *vice versa*. If I be ever so changed or improved and have no faith in God, there can be no conscious new birth for the first utterance of the newly born soul is that of faith. It knows that God is to be trusted, and let its trust be ever so feeble, the response returned to it from God, is *eternal life*—he that believes hath eternal life. And this eternal life is the second characteristic, the inalienable possession of new birth. In all times, as I have remarked, faith in God was the first expression and utterance of the quickened soul, and this single fact clears away much of the confusion and uncertainty with which the subject has been surrounded. Both teachers and souls have been diverted from the plain and true ground by looking for an improvement in feelings and manners, instead of first insisting on the necessity of the existence of faith, from which in true power the other would follow. A remarkable change and improvement may be wrought in me from many other causes; but faith in God in my soul is proof positive that it is newly born; for nothing but His Spirit

could have produced it, and this entitles me to nothing less than eternal life.

Now I may find many a newly-born soul, who, though he believes in God, does not apprehend that, as born of God, he has received eternal life. I do not question his being born again, because he is not sensibly enjoying the highest privileges of it; but it is evident that such an one is inadvertently ignoring the legitimate portion of his new existence, without which new birth must be unsatisfactory to himself, and defective in expression toward God.

In all dispensations there has been an enlightenment corresponding to the revelation made of God to the soul. That which is conferred *now* is eternal life; and if I am not assured of that which God has assured *to me*, I am not apprehending His revelation in its range and scope—nay, in its very essence.

Life, the sense of living by Christ and with Him, belongs *now* to new birth. Christ died for our sins; but having risen from among the dead, and the power of death being destroyed, He is head of the new creation in everlasting life; and we who were dead in trespasses and sins are quickened together with Him, being by grace, through faith, made partakers of His life; and that on the ground of righteousness, inasmuch as He has borne death for us, and made us thereby, the righteousness of God in Him. It is most important that we should see that eternal life is *now* co-existent with new birth. However, God in past ages accepted the sinner, and linked his soul to Himself by faith in a new existence—eternal life

was not manifested until Christ came. "The life was manifested," says the Apostle John, "and we have seen it, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." The Son was the manifestation of the eternal life that was with the Father, and "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." He came here to do the will of God, in a body prepared for Him, and in that body to bear our sins on the accursed tree; God laying on Him the iniquity of us all; made sin for us who knew no sin, in order that God might be just and the justifier of everyone who believeth in Jesus. What would any gift from God be to me if I did not believe in the source of it, even in His Son? God can now do what He never could do before. He can give His love full scope; and therefore the moment faith in Him is engendered in any soul, (the action of which faith is to look at God's revelation of His grace in Christ), the blessing—the portion—the gift of God to that soul is eternal life. Nothing less would answer to the love of God, now at liberty to indulge itself (if I may so say) through the righteousness established for the sinner by His own Son, and to express the full range and purpose of itself. Therefore it meets the sinner at the very start and threshold with this wondrous truth.—(See John iii). "He that believeth hath everlasting life." Other blessings and great glories follow; but God meets the condemned lost sinner at the point at which He had met the serpent-bitten Israelite afore-

time; and He says to him, "I have so loved you that I gave my Son to bear the judgment of sin; and in Him is manifested the eternal life which He has with Me, so everyone that believes in Him shall share it with Him."

In fine, I would lay stress on this important point of our subject, that the essence of the old nature being unbelief, the soul that has a particle of faith in God has entered on a new existence. That existence is re-generation; the characteristics and essential properties of which are faith and eternal life.



"ALL HAVE SINNED."—(Rom. iii. 23).

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH."—(Rom. vi. 23).

"CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS."—(1 Tim. i. 15).

"*What must I do to be saved?*"

"BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED, AND THY HOUSE.—(Acts xvi. 31).

"WHOSOEVER LIVETH AND BELIEVETH IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE.—(John xi. 26).

"*Believest thou this?*"

"YEA, LORD: I BELIEVE THAT THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.—(John xi. 27).

CHRIST SAID, "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 JUDGMENT; BUT IS PASSED FROM DEATH INTO LIFE.

"*DO ye now believe?*"

THE SOWER.

“The Woman of Canaan.”—(Matt. xv. 22-28).

“The Blind Beggar.”—(Luke xviii. 35-43).

’Tis the woman of Canaan of whom I would speak,
Who came to the Saviour a favor to seek,
And earnestly cried, “Lord have mercy on me,
Son of David have mercy to whom I now flee,
My daughter is vexed with a devil; Oh! give
Relief, and the thanks of my heart Thou’lt receive.”
But Jesus was deaf to her earnest request,
He spoke not but left her downcast and depressed.
His followers asked Him to send her away—
His answer to her could no comfort convey,
“I am sent to the lost sheep of Israel alone.”
Poor Syrophenician! how sad was thy moan,
It would seem that thou now must submit to the evil,
And thy daughter remain in the power of the devil.
But she did not despair, for she loudly ’gan cry,
“Lord, help me; Oh! help me,” as one doomed to die.
But the Saviour unmoved gave as yet no relief,
But left her bowed down ’neath the weight of her grief.
For though His kind heart was with love all aglow,
He was outwardly cold as an image of snow.
“Tis not meet,” were His words, “to take children’s bread
And cast it to dogs”—then she answered and said,
“Oh! Lord that is true, but then it’s not all,
For the dogs eat the crumbs ’neath the table that fall”;
Thus taking the place of a dog, then He saith,
Filled with wonder divine, “Woman, great is thy faith,
Be it to thee as thou wilt”; ’twas a word of great power,
For her daughter was healed in that very same hour.

Now, what may we learn from this narrative? Why

Did the loving Lord seem; earnest prayer to deny?
 List!—a blind beggar sat by the side of the road,
 A crowd came surrounding the bless'd Son of God,
 The man, being blind, was unable to see,
 But he cried, "Son of David, have mercy on me."
 (The very same words that the woman employed
 When she prayed that the demon's dread power be destroyed.)
 And Jesus stood still at the poor beggars cry,
 Saying, "What shall I do for you, lo here am I?"
 As quick as he could to the Saviour he ran,
 "Lord give me my sight," cried the blind beggar man.
 "It is thine," answered Jesus, "faith maketh thee whole."
 And the beggar rejoiced from the depths of his soul.

Thus suppliants twain came and urged the same plea
 In the very same words, as you plainly may see,
 "Son of David, have mercy," loud shouted the two,
 The Canaanite woman, the blind beggared Jew.
 But the Canaanite seemed to have shouted in vain,
 He apparently heard all her cries with disdain,
 While the Jew in a moment obtained his request,
 As if, of the two, he was greatest and best,
 Which he was not—then what was the reason I pray,
 Why the Canaanite suffered so long a delay.
 'Twas because she was out of her place—had she come
 Like the heathen she was, she had soon found a home,
 But she came like a Jew which she should not have done,
 Calling loud on Messiah, great David's great Son.
 The man did the same, but the man was a Jew,
 And was right in so doing, a lesson for you
 And for me, gentle reader, whoever should dare
 To come before God in the state that we are.
 Are we sinners unsaved? then as such let us come,
 Feeling sure of a welcome, a welcome to home.
 Are we saints? let us come as saints, owning His name,
 And making His glory and honor our aim;
 We cannot deceive Him, nor should we desire
 E'er to do so, whose eyes are like bright flaming fire.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

VI.

MY DEAR friend:—In your last letter you tell me that you “are not yet able to say that you have peace with God,” and that it often seems to you that all is “confused in your soul.” There is nothing surprising in that. Until the love of God in Christ is clearly known, and the heart established in grace, it is natural to experience this trouble and confusion. More than one Christian has had the same when the eyes have been turned away from Jesus.

“I do not doubt,” you say, “the purifying efficacy of the blood of Christ; but has my soul been sprinkled with this blood.” The word of God, my dear friend gives you an answer to this question; and if you can see it there, your soul will rejoice in perfect peace. Read in the Book of Acts, 13th chapter and verses 38 and 39.

You cannot doubt the purifying efficacy of the blood of Christ; now, is not that to believe in Jesus? And what says the passage I have just referred you to? “Whosoever believes is justified by Him.” You wish to have peace, you know that it is only to be found in Christ, and this same word of God tells you, “Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.” (verse 38). The pardon and peace which accompany it are announced by Jesus. “And by Him all that believe are justified.”

You add, "I do not feel that I have part in His precious blood." Our thoughts have nothing to do in deciding this solemn question. You do not doubt, you say, the efficacy of this blood; you then believe in it; and without any word of sentiment, God says, *whosoever believes* is justified. How do you know, and why do you believe, that there is any virtue in the blood which Christ has shed? You are not sensible of it, since you complain of the contrary, but it is because God says it. Now, is not His word worthy of being received when it declares that believers are justified; when it makes us know the Christ in whom you have the assurance that you believe? You say, "I believe, but I would like to feel that I have part in this salvation." God says all who believe have part therein. It is thus that He Himself disposes of your question.

It seems to me that, like many others, you seek to make a Saviour of your faith; you search yourself to know whether you have quite the right sort of faith, the true faith. It is in that you seek the foundation of your confidence, and in this way you lose sight of Jesus, who is the blessed object of it.

I recently said to a friend, who, exercised like yourself, had been in great distress of soul, that you were passing through the same agony. He has just written me, and sends this message to you:—

"Tell your friend to give up all striving, and to confide entirely in Jesus. All power is in Him; and in His hands we are in safety. God, in His infinite mercy, has shown me that was all I had

to do ; to go to Christ, to commit myself to Him only. One look to Him dispelled all my anguish ; without Him, trouble resumed possession of my soul."

Behold, my dear friend, the language of confidence in Jesus, and love for Him, although it is quite likely that the one who wrote the lines was not conscious of it. You do not feel that you love Jesus ; but why do you go to the trouble to discover that He does not occupy the place in your heart that you know He is worthy of ? Be careful, however, lest you suppose that it can be in our love for Jesus, or our faith in Him, that we can, in the least degree, rest ; it is upon Himself, supremely lovely, and alone worthy of our confidence and our love.

You ask me again, "Is it possible that a soul can come to Christ, confide only in Him for salvation, desire to feed upon Him, and yet be not immediately satisfied."

This is my reply. You have been invited to a feast, and trusting in your host, you seat yourself at his table ; but, if instead of enjoying the dishes which are before you, and rejoicing in the reception which has been given you ; you begin to ask yourself if you have really a right to be there, if you have a good appetite, if your intentions are right, if you can rightly take part in the banquet. Can you in this way become reassured ? Take simply that which is presented to you ; your hunger will be appeased, and you will have part in the joy of the feast.

Even so, a single look to Jesus has, by the grace

of God, wrought in your soul, for you tell me, "It seems to me that God has given me progress; my thoughts are certainly very different from what they were a month or two ago."

May the Lord give you to cast aside all your doubts, all the questions which embarrass and hinder your soul. May your heart feed upon Jesus, upon His person, His love, His expiatory work, His blood which cleanses from all sin.

In commending you anew to Jesus, the only and sufficient Saviour, whose love never repels any who come to Him,

I remain, yours, etc. _____

Let not the example of thy friends and relations, nor any confidence in the superiority of their wisdom, influence thee to defer the case of thy salvation to a future time; for all men, even thy friends and relations, will forget thee much sooner than thou supposest. It is better to "provide oil for thy lamp" now, than to depend upon receiving it from others, "when the bridegroom cometh," for if thou art not careful of thyself now, who can be careful of thee hereafter, when time and opportunity are forever lost? This instant—now—is exceeding precious; now is "the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." How deplorable, therefore, is it, not to improve this invaluable moment, in which we may lay hold of eternal life? A time will come when thou shalt wish for one day, nay, one hour, to repent in; and who can tell if thou wilt be able to obtain it?

"THEY WOULD NOT."

IT was a lovely morning in spring some years ago. One of those mornings when nature seemed telling out, in bursts of praise, the joy of resurrection life, when I knocked at the door of a cottage in which lived a sick woman and her husband. The husband was an infidel. One who would have cried with them of old, "We will not have this *Man* to reign over us."

Two days before, I had been visiting his wife, and seen him working in the little garden, and as I stood looking at the few flowers and thought of the few words we had exchanged, the joy of knowing Christ in all His grace seemed almost to overwhelm the heart.

A strange woman, one of the neighbors, opened the door, and led me into the little parlour-kitchen. Her manner was so silent and strange that I began to think something was wrong, and was about to ask whether the sick woman upstairs was worse, when she suddenly stopped beside a trestle bedstead, and without a word of warning uncovered the face of a form lying upon it.

It was the body of the infidel whom I had seen two short days before in the full vigor of health and strength.

"He fell down dead yesterday," she explained, "with never a word, mum, to God nor man."

What a face lay before me, dear reader. Cold,

hard, stern, hopeless. It was not a face set in death alone, but a face set in hopelessness. "Having no hope, and without God in the world,"—(Ephes. ii. 12). seemed written on every stern, set feature. It was the face of one who had been cut down in a moment, *just as he was*. Not even five minutes to think whether there was hope for him or not. Not a moment to test his belief, or rather want of it. Gone like a flash of lightning. No time to cry, not even a half cry, with the "If thou be" of dying need. I have looked on many faces after death, but never, before or since, on one like that; and one longed to bring everyone who was rejecting Christ to stand for a few minutes beside that trestle-bedside.

Years ago, when watching Mount Blanc from behind Geneva as the sun was setting and the pink light alone remained upon the snow-covered height, while all the foreground was steeped in blue haze, one with me exclaimed, "That is a judgment seat." It was one who did not know Christ as a Saviour, but the scene spoke of *power*—the *power* of *God*. And this still, hard face, spoke of power—the power of Satan, power of death, power of God. He had had power to resist the Saviour's pleadings and the Holy Spirit's strivings, all his days—and he was not a young man—but he had no power to stay the hand which ushered him into eternity unsaved. Man has power to question God's word and God's dealings. The power to use his brains, spending the best part of a lifetime in trying to prove some discrepancy

in God's word. Power to bring man's thoughts and inventions to perfection; and Satan takes up the outcomes of science and uses them to destroy and terrify human beings, until even the godless and lawless cry out in fear for the remedy they have refused. Good is knowledge when Christ is known, but without Him all is only power for evil, forging fresh weapons for Satan's hand.

“The *fool* hath said in his *heart* there is no God,” and with all his power he cannot keep the life within the body, he cannot bid the heart beat on, when God has laid his finger upon it. No power to *give life* and no power to *stay death*. God's power without His love is a terrible thing, dear reader.

God said to Moses “Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live.”—(Exodus xxxiii. 20).

When the Lord came down to Mount Sinai “There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. * * * And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”—(Exodus xix. 16-18).

No wonder “the people trembled.” The Lord of heaven and earth in His power alone is indeed a “consuming fire”; and we see that His power will “spoil the strong man” bye-and-bye, and Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit. And to those who

worship "the beast," "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."—(Rev. xiv. 10).

This is God's power, dear ones, however slighted and set aside it may be. God's grace lies at your feet, but the judgment is behind it if you reject Him. What would those rigid lips have told us could that poor fellow have come back to life for one hour. No more daring to set himself against God. Would he not have intreated all to "flee from the wrath to come?"

We read of the "wrath of the Lamb." When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He took the little ones up in His arms. He said to the widowed mother, "weep not." He "loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus." Can *He* have wrath? He had no where to lay His head, no pence to pay the tribute money, no sword when they came to take Him in the garden. Can *He* have power? Listen.—"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" The power was stayed. "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us," was the taunt of the thieves on the cross. And if *He* had, there would have been nothing for you and me but the power of God and the "wrath to come." "*They would not,*" and all they had to do was to come.

“Tell them, Behold, I *have prepared* my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings *are killed*, and *all things are ready*.”—(Matt. xxii. 5). “But they made light of it.”—It was not worth considering.—“And went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.” Many things we can go our way to, dear reader.

But, oh! what bubbles will have been chosen instead of Christ; what false mirages followed instead of “drawing water with joy out of the wells of salvation”; what straws and rotten reeds will have been leaned upon, instead of the loving heart of a living Christ, and the soul will awake, like this poor man, in eternity, to find Him who prepared the feast, no more a pleading Saviour, but the just, stern judge, who will give out the words, “Depart from Me, I never knew you.



THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE; FOR ALL HAVE SIN-
 NED, AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF
 GOD.—(Rom. iii. 22-23).

FOR WHOSOEVER SHALL KEEP THE WHOLE
 LAW, AND YET OFFEND IN ONE POINT, HE
 IS GUILTY OF ALL.—(James ii. 10).

IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NOT SIN-
 NED, WE MAKE HIM A LIAR, AND HIS WORD IS NOT
 IN US.—(1 John i. 10).

THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE GIFT
 OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE, THROUGH JESUS
 CHRIST OUR LORD.—(Rom. vi. 23).

THE SCRIPTURE HAS CONCLUDED ALL UNDER
 SIN, THAT THE PROMISE BY FAITH OF
 JESUS CHRIST MIGHT BE GIVEN TO THEM
 THAT BELIEVE.—(Gal. iii. 22).

THE PROFESSOR.

MANY years ago she professed conversion and joined a church ; but upon being questioned, she was without assurance of life, and found to be an utter stranger to pardon, salvation, or peace with God. She still professed to be a Christian, of course, for who does not these days ; but when pressed as to the grounds of her profession, or upon what she was resting for salvation, she was silent, and gave evident signs that it was an unpleasant subject to her. Only speak of her church, or anything else of the world, and she was quite free in conversation. This is a very bad sign ; for when one knows salvation through Christ, redemption through His precious blood, (see 1 Peter i. 18-25), there is no backwardness in speaking of Him, and of what He has accomplished on the cross ; but it is not so with a professor who is not also a possessor. This impressed the writer as very sad, because if she were not really converted to God, she was deceiving herself, and cheating her own soul for the lake of fire.

Rom. iii. was pressed upon her, laying stress on the words, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," . . . "For there is no difference ; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

This was pressed over and over again, till showing evident signs of weariness of the subject, she said her head had troubled her so since she was ill with

the grippe, that she really could not understand what was being said to her. The reply was that it was not a question of the head, but of the heart, and if her conscience were alive as to her danger of eternal punishment, she would soon come to an understanding before God as to her guilty soul, which might perish forever, if the question were delayed.

She was somewhat awakened, and Acts xiii. 38-39 was put before her, "Be it known unto you therefore, (now God has raised His Son again from the dead), men and brethren, that through this Man is preached (or proclaimed) unto you (what?) the forgiveness of sins; and by Him (the risen One) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

She asked, "Who is this man?" This was an intensely important question, and it was gratifying to hear it. Verses 29, 30-37 of the same chapter, and also the incident of Phillip and the man of Ehtiopia, in Acts viii. 26-35, when a similar question was asked, were referred to as a reply. Christ, who died for all, has been raised again from the dead, and it is therefore *now* to be KNOWN; not merely hoped for, which so many seem to be satisfied with; but known, that pardon is to be had by faith in the risen and glorified Christ, and that by Him all that believe, every one that believes is justified from all things; and the law of Moses, or the works of law, never could do this—never was intended to; but rather to "give knowledge of sin,"

for "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight." Works were of no use in this important matter, but Christ's work on the cross was all-sufficient, for it had satisfied, yea, glorified God, as to the whole question of sin and sins, and there was therefore justification from sins, or guilt, through Him, for He was raised again for our (the believer's) justification; therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—(Rom. iv. 25; v. 1). Verse 39 was repeated at her request.

Let every anxious soul ponder and believe these scriptures, for they reveal what has forever satisfied God, and His perfect remedy for the troubled conscience, and rest for the wearied heart. (See Matt. xi. 28-30). Trust no longer upon a religion without Christ, and have done with resolutions, and good works for salvation—after you are saved, good works are in order—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."—(Acts xvi. 31); and trust nothing else, nor all things else, for His is the only "name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."—(Acts iv. 12).

Receive His message, and be at peace with God.

Oh! poor, unsaved reader, will you, oh! will you not put your trust in that blessed One who died on the cross, and thus obtain everlasting life and blessing. If you reject or neglect Him, you must sink into endless perdition. Oh! trust Him.

THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.

IT would be startling to some who may read these lines to be told that a religious and exceedingly zealous man, who had been brought up from childhood at the feet of a pious and learned teacher, and had been taught according to the accuracy of the law; who, notwithstanding the fact that he knew its accuracy, could say that he had fulfilled its righteousness blamelessly and had lived in all good conscience before God all his life. I say that, to many, the statement that such a man was the chief of sinners would be startling indeed. Why, they might enquire, what more could be desired than that a man should be well taught, and pious from his youth, that he should blamelessly fulfil the righteousness of the law, always acting according to the dictates of a conscience not left to the light of nature, but governed by the law accurately known, and that withal he should be very religious and exceedingly zealous? Yet the one man who was all this, and more, was distinctively without any looseness of expression, the chief of sinners, and his religion was the moving spring that made him such. All the enmity of that strong nature, which made him excel in the points just rehearsed, was roused by his religion against the One who was God's beloved. "The *carnal mind* is enmity against God," and never was there a more striking example of this than in the case of Saul of Tarsus.

UNQUENCHABLE THIRST.

THE theatre at I——, was in a state of great excitement, a renowned actress was to perform, and the old scenery and rubbish of the stage was replaced by new, and everything was done to please the STAR, and make the new play a success. The night came—the hand-bills and placards had done their work—and the house was crowded. While carrying beer to the orchestra I was called to carry some wine to one of the boxes. I did so, and there found Miss D. (the star); she was chatting familiarly with one of the actors about the crowded condition of the house and made the remark, “Oh! suppose the gallery should give way.” “There would be a great many more souls in hell, I am sure, if it should,” he said. The words seemed to touch a hidden chord in the heart of the actress, for she turned to me instantly and said, “Oh! leave this place—leave it—you are too young to be here—there is something better than this, leave NOW, before it is too late.” And oh! the look that was in her eyes, it told of the THIRST in her soul that had never been quenched. She had been at the well, oh! so often, and had drank, and drank, and *drank*, but had never been filled. She had never got her fill from the pleasures of the world, and she knew it. “Who-soever drinketh of *this water shall thirst again*,” are Christ’s own words, and they were so true of her. Her words cut me to the heart, and I left; ’twas the last night I ever drank of those waters.

THE SOWER.

SATISFIED.

Sweet was the hour, O Lord, to Thee,
At Sychar's lonely well,
When a poor outcast heard Thee there
Thy great salvation tell.

Thither she came; but, oh, her heart,
All fill'd with earthly care,
Dream'd not of Thee, nor thought to find
The Hope of Israel there.

Lord! 'twas Thy power unseen that drew
The stray one to that place,
In solitude to learn from Thee
The secrets of Thy grace.

And, Lord, to us, as vile as she,
Thy gracious lips have told
That mystery of love, reveal'd
At Jacob's well of old.

In spirit, Lord, we've sat with Thee
Beside the springing well
Of life and peace, and heard Thee there
Its healing virtues tell.

No hope of rest in aught beside,
No beauty, Lord, we see;
And, like Samaria's daughter, seek
And find our all in Thee.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

VII.

DEAR friend:—You will find enclosed a letter which the friend of whom I have recently spoken has written. May the Lord bless the reading of it to you. May you be encouraged to put *all* your confidence in Jesus—He has certainly done enough and suffered enough to wholly win every heart.

I am glad to hear that your sister has found peace. In the letter which tells me this you ask me various questions. I will take them up and answer them in the order presented—as far as possible in the very words of God, as the Lord may enable me.

1st question: Does God love us whether we believe or not? Or rather does He love us only when we believe?

Reply: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”—(1 Jno. iv, 10.)

“But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”—(Rom. v, 8.)

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, *even when we were dead in sins*, hath quickened us together with Christ.”—(Eph. ii. 4. 5.)

2nd question: Can I say that I have faith in the blood of Jesus while I am not able to assert that I have been washed from my sins in His blood?

Reply: Had not the dying thief faith in Jesus

when he said: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into thy kingdom?" But was he then able to say: "I am washed in the blood of Christ?" When we have confidence in a medical doctor, we consult him and take his remedies before we are able to say that he has cured us of our ailment.

To say in sincerity, that the blood of Christ has washed me from my sins, is *assurance*. To trust in His blood as an infallible remedy, mercifully provided by God to blot them out, is *faith*. The relation between these two positions is—and it is God that says it—that if we have the one, we have a right to the other. If I am truly attached to Christ as my only hope, my only refuge, and believe that His blood has efficacy to take away my sins, God says that the blood has taken them away, and it is my happy privilege to say it also.

3rd question: It is not faith that saves us is it? It is Jesus; and all we have to do is to receive it.

Reply: Doubtless. Faith in itself has no efficacy. If what you believed was not true, what value would it be to believe it? It is in the object of faith, it is in Him in whom we believe; it is in Jesus that all saving virtue dwells. To believe, is only to receive Jesus, and is it not a strange thing that so much pains has to be taken to induce us to receive Him? "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—(1 Tim. i. 15.)

4th question: Is not Jesus always before the throne of God?

Reply : He is seated there. “When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”—(Heb. i. 3.)

5th question : Is not His blood there as a sacrifice for sin?

Reply : “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.”—(Heb. ix. 12.)

“Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.”—(Rom. iii, 25).

6th question : If I go to God as a poor sinner, trusting upon this sacrifice, will not God receive me?

Reply : “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost *that come unto God by Him*, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—(Heb. vii. 25.)

“Will God receive me?” you ask. Has not God besought you, and is He not still beseeching you to believe in His love—to take Jesus as your Saviour, and to rejoice, and to have complete rest of soul? “We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”—(2. Cor. v. 20.) Can any doubts remain as to His willingness when He thus sends an ambassage of peace, to ask immediate reconciliation?

You say again: “I cannot present a single merit, for the more I know, the more I see of evil in myself.”

If then you have not in yourself a single merit, you will surely be satisfied with the full and perfect sal-

vation which is found in Jesus and His expiatory work. *God offers this salvation as free as Jesus Himself, the richest gift and the most signal proof of His love. Do not consider yourself at all. Put completely to one side all that there is of good or evil in you in order that the excellency of Jesus may arrest you, the one in whom God has so completely found His delight that He can accept the vilest and most sinful who comes to Him—trusting in His name, in His blood, in the work accomplished by this perfect and only Saviour.*

But I must close. Do not imagine that your numerous questions upon a subject so vital and so important could possibly weary or trouble me. May God only bless the replies He has enabled me to give for peace to your soul. Then, indeed, I would not find that they had given me too much trouble.

Remember me to your sister with whom we sincerely rejoice. May the Lord grant her the grace to continue to rest simply upon Jesus and to follow Him conscientiously, drawn thither by His love. And when you receive these lines may you also be a partaker of her joy.

Yours, &c.,

The ground of settled peace, in the midst of a world of sin and sorrow, is to assure my soul that God is true when He says, that He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

— —

“**T**HE salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it.”—(Acts xxviii.) What a fact that is, that it is “the salvation of God;” nothing less than that great and blessed thing that has been now sent of God into this wide, wide world! God will satisfy Himself, when He speaks in *law*, to speak in a sequestered nook of the earth, and in the hearing of the smallest of all the nations; but when He comes to speak of grace or of salvation, at the end of law, He must let the whole earth hear.

And of salvation He had been speaking from the first, “It shall bruise thy head,” told of it. Patriarchal stories, Mosaic ordinances, prophetic voices, evangelic records, all had witnessed it, and now that God was leaving Israel and going abroad, would He go as bearing with Him less or other than this same glorious and precious thing, His own salvation, counselled and accomplished by Himself?

The close of the book of Acts tells us this; and then all the Epistles, in different ways, unfold the excellencies and the glories of this salvation; and then again in the Apocalypse we find this same thing the salvation of God, celebrated in the heavens and on the earth of the millennial world, in the nations of the blest, and in the ages of eternity.

Salvation is too great a thought for the heart of man to suggest. God must provide us with it. The

religious mind of man resents it as inconsistent with the obligations he owes to God, and with the relationship and responsibility under which he stands to Him. The natural mind resents it as being no security for practical life and righteousness. How deeply at fault they both are! How unequal is the best human thing to reach the divine! While neither man's religion, nor man's morality gives toleration to the idea of salvation, God, as we see, is occupied with it from first to last. The mention of it, the history of it, the gradual display of it, the exercise of it, illustrations of it in one sinner after another, stretch along the whole volume. He dispenses it now, and calls on us to enjoy it; He will perfect it by and by, and will call on us to celebrate it.

The salvation of God comprehends a wondrous system of high and glorious privileges, which are all ours, through the faith of Jesus. But while it comprehends all this and more of like excellency, that on which it rests is simple as it can be. It is *satisfaction*—the satisfaction which God has found in the sacrifice on Calvary. This sustains everything. All rests on the simple fact that Christ has satisfied God, in that which He has done for us sinners. The rent veil and the resurrection, His seat in the highest heavens, on the right hand of the throne, there in the character of the Purger of sins, and the presence here of the Holy Ghost, are the blessed witnesses of this satisfaction. We are to accept salvation from God because He has accepted satisfaction

from Christ. We have to receive it with all thankful, worshipful assurance. Confiding faith is the due answer to abounding grace. If God has rent the veil, it is obedience in the sinner to enter. If God is satisfied, we ought to be reconciled—consciously saved. Satisfaction sustains everything as we have said. When I lay my burdens and load on God's foundations, knowing that they will be sustained there, I am *glorifying* as well as *using* the foundations.

And further, the salvation of God is a *present* salvation. We wait not for a judgment day to accredit the cross. The rent veil has already accredited it, and so has the resurrection, and so has the mission of the Holy Ghost; and so likewise faith in the cross waits not to know its rights and privileges and possessions; it is entitled to know them *now*—"receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." The judgment day will have its own business to do, but it is not committed to it to accredit either the cross, or faith in the cross. The cross has already led Jesus to His glory; faith in the cross leads the sinner at once to peace and favour, to the things that accompany salvation, and that witness a present salvation of the soul.

"Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour," is the language which conveys the sense of a present salvation. Mary's song and Zacharias' prophecy, are breathings of the soul over like blessings. "He hath visited and redeemed," is the burden of each. Simeon too, when holding the child in his arms, spoke as one who knew that he was, at that

moment, in possession of salvation ; and Anna spoke of Jesus to all those in Jerusalem, who were then looking for redemption. In her esteem that child was the end of their expectations, set for the purpose of turning hope into enjoyment.

And surely, I may say, the joy that fills all this most precious scenery, which itself fills the opening chapters of St. Luke, is not the joy of hope, but of fruition ; not the joy of a probable, but of a certain salvation. Heaven there is seen announcing such a blessing, faith on earth is seen accepting it. And then the passage in Isaiah, with which the Lord opens His ministry, as we get into the fourth chapter of the same evangelist, tells of a present salvation in the same way. The Spirit that filled the prophet of old was the Spirit which was now uttering Himself through anointed vessels such as Mary, Zacharias, and Elizabeth, and was of one mind with the glory, and the angelic hosts, touching God's salvation. For that prophet, like these vessels, like the glory and the angels, told of a *present* healing, quickening, cleansing, reconciling work, "an acceptable year ;" a season or ministry of acceptance for sinners with God, as now really and actually arrived.

All this is in concord. And shortly afterwards, in this same gospel, Peter illustrates present engagement of this present salvation—salvation *on the spot*. He discovered himself in the light of the glory. There convicted, he takes his place and character as "a sinful man." But quickly Jesus told this convicted sinner not to fear—His language to all such—and Peter re-

ceiving this word walked forth, or rose up, in the liberty of a present salvation. He feared not, he doubted not. He no longer judged that distance from the Lord became him, but he left all else in the distance, that he might then and there, at that moment and on that spot, in nearness to Christ, begin the long and bright and happy future of his eternity. (Luke 4.)

And a little further still, a little onward in the same chapter, as though to bring this matter to the simplest, surest conclusion, we get the case of the palsied man. There, the Lord says, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." And when this offends the religious human mind which instinctively thinks of forgiveness as a future thing, a thing to be reserved for another and a higher court, for the day of judgment rather than for the cross of Christ to decide and pronounce, Jesus has but to repeat the thought, and say, "The Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins;" and seals it by healing the man of his palsy. He insists on a *present* salvation. If the prophecy of Isaiah, as we lately observed, was in company with the angels, and the glory, and the anointed vessels of the Spirit, so are the works and the words of the Son of man now.

It is indeed salvation that has come down from heaven to earth, a present salvation, and all join in uttering and celebrating this great mystery. But how, I ask, has this been communicated? What style has accompanied the gift?

The opening of St. Luke, already referred to, is full of character in connection with this. All is sal-

vation there, and all is joy in heaven. The angels speak of salvation, and so do the vessels, anointed, and filled by the Spirit; and rapture of no common measure animates them all in this their service. The glory itself, angelic hosts, and anointed vessels, shepherds, priests, old men, babes, and maidens, and long-waiting, patient saints, are alike summoned to share the joy of that moment, when* salvation was coming down from heaven to earth. And I now ask has heaven repented of this joy, or changed its tone in the sight or thought of the salvation of God? Let the 15th chapter of that same gospel give its answer to this. It will tell us that this joy is as fresh this moment as it was in the day of Luke, i, 11. If it accompanied the announcement of it at the first, it has ever since, and still does, celebrate the acceptance of it by a poor sinner.

Excellent surely these secrets are! ; Can we get our welcome to God's salvation sealed by more blessed witnesses? And the title of a believing sinner to the salvation of God is written out in the same language, and may be enjoyed with the same liberty and assurance of heart.

Following the thought of God's salvation still for a little longer, I may put another question. To whom does this salvation address itself?

Poverty and powerlessness marked the scene that was visited by it at the first, and when it comes to be ministered by the Lord Himself, it is only the needy that get it, yea, they who have discovered their need as *sinner*s.

Blessed thought! Sinners are welcome to Christ, but none other.

This we see in the same Peter, the fisherman of St. Luke. In him conscience and faith did their several needed work. He discovered *himself*, in the light of the glory which filled his boat, and then he discovered *the Stranger* who could set him at ease in the presence of that overwhelming moment. He was a sinner, and conscience had now discovered that; the divine Stranger was a Saviour, and faith had now discovered that. The poor fisherman's boat became holy ground, a sanctuary.

And now let me ask, has the "Salvation of God," promised, and sent forth into whatever scene of judgment it might have been; has it, I ask, ever disappointed the poor, wretched, exposed or guilty sinner that committed himself to it?

Has it ever disappointed you?

At the beginning it was sent after guilty Adam, as he hid himself behind the trees of the garden; he trusted it, and came forth; and the Lord God responded to his faith and covered Adam with a robe of His own making.

It was sent to Noah, who was then in the midst of a world that had been already judged of God, and was soon to have that judgment executed upon it. Noah trusted it like Adam. According to the word he prepared an ark; and the Lord God put him into it and shut the door upon him, and he was safe in the midst of the waters of death.

It was sent to Israel in the heart of judged Egypt

—it was sent to Rahab in the heart of judged Canaan. But to both, all its undertakings were fully verified. Israel was saved, and Rahab was saved; though the sword was there both in Egypt and Jericho, to do its work of death and judgment.

And now, after these patterns, and others like them, it has come forth into this wide world of sinners; and no sinner will it ever disappoint, no sinner can it ever disappoint. It is God's—the salvation of Him who cannot lie. The present evil world is as deeply under judgment as the world before the flood was, as Egypt or as Canaan. The salvation of God is near to us as it was then to Noah, to Israel or to Rahab.

It was then, and is still, to be enjoyed by faith. As we read, “the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will *hear* it.” Faith comes by hearing. It did so with Adam, Noah, Israel, and Rahab. We have, like them, to *hear* it, to receive by faith these tidings of it. We cannot get it by working. We dare not count on it by deserving. It is God's salvation, “prepared,” as we read, by Him. (Luke ii. 28-32.) It is counselled, wrought out, revealed by Himself. We have but to gaze and to listen; to be debtors to the provisions of divine grace for the most ruined and wretched condition in which creature sin and misery can find themselves. And as salvation has thus been *provided* by God, so is it sent forth by Him. It has been prepared by Him in the face of all people, and now is it published there. (See Luke ii, 31; Acts xxviii, 28.)

Unsaved reader, will you have it?

“AND THEN?”

AN EXTRACT.

A YOUNG man came to an aged professor of a distinguished Continental University, with a face beaming with delight, and informed him that the long and fondly cherished desire of his heart was at length fulfilled—his parents having given their consent to his studying the profession of the law. As the University presided over by his friend was a distinguished one, he had repaired to its law school, and was resolved to spare no labour or expense in getting through his studies as quickly and ably as possible. In this strain he continued for some time; and when he paused, the old man, who had been listening to him with great patience and kindness, gently said, “Well, and when you have finished your career of study, what do you mean to do then?” “Then I shall take my degree,” answered the young man. “And then?” asked his venerable friend, “And then,” continued the youth, “I shall have a number of difficult and knotty cases to manage; shall attract notice by my eloquence, and wit, and acuteness, and win a great reputation.” “And then?” repeated the holy man. “And then!” replied the youth, “why then there cannot be a question, I shall be promoted to some high office in the state, and I shall become rich.” “And then?” “And then,” pursued the young lawyer, “then I shall live comfortably and

honourably in wealth and respect, and look forward to a quiet and happy old age.” “And then?” repeated the old man. “And then,” said the youth, “and then—and then—and then I shall die.” Here his venerable listener lifted up his voice and again asked with solemnity and emphasis, “And *then?*” Whereupon the aspiring student made no answer, but cast down his head, and in silence and thoughtfulness retired. The last “*And then,*” had pierced his heart like a sword—had darted like a flash of lightning into his soul, and he could not dislodge the impression. The result was, the entire change of his mind and course of his life. Abandoning the study of law, he expended the remainder of his days in the labours of a minister of Christ.

The spectres of long buried hours
 Throng round me—thick and fast ;
 The “might have been” of life is lost
 In the unreturning past.

How surely do these lines apply to a waster of life! Insupportably melancholy would they be if there were not the great Redeemer to look to. But humbled in his retrospect as the spendthrift of life must be,—if he come to Christ all will be well; well for him in eternity, well for ever and ever. Well, according to God; and well according to the thoughts of the renewed hearts of saints. Himself, too, shall be able to say, even in time, “It is well!”

DEATH.

“All they that hate me love death.”—(Prov. 8, 36.)

“The wages of sin is death.”—(Rom. 6, 23.)

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—(Rom. v. 12.)

“By man came death.” (1 Cor. xv. 21.)

“Haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things. Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”—(Rom. 1, 30-32.)

“I am the resurrection and the life.”—(John 11, 25.)

LIFE.

“Thus saith the Lord; behold, I set before you the way of life.”—(Jer. 21, 8.)

“The gift of God is eternal life.”—(Rom. 6, 23.)

“This life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”—(1 John 5-11-12.)

“In Him was life.”—(John 1, 4.)

“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; but is passed from death unto life.” (John 5, 24.)

THE SOWER.

GOSPEL INVITATION.

(ISAIAH LV.)

Ye sons of men, who seek, and seek in vain
For that which satisfies the craving heart ;
Ye who for wisdom rack the laboring brain,
Ye that for riches crowd the busy mart,
Ye sons of pleasure, who excitement crave,
Drinking those draughts that make you thirst the
more,
Ye who for glory, death and dangers brave ;
Ye full, yet empty ; wealthy, and yet poor,—
Ye labor hard, but bread ye cannot gain,
Ye spend your money earned by feverish toil,
Nought that endures can all your wit obtain,
Nought that of death is not the certain spoil.
Come unto Me, ye weary ones, for rest ;
Ye hungry, thirsty, helpless, come to Me ;
There is a home of safety in My breast,
Peace in the blood I shed on Calvary ;
Come unto Me, your souls shall then be fed ;
Come unto Me, all other springs are dry ;
Come, for I am the living, heavenly bread,
Drink from My side the streams that satisfy,
The fatness of God's house, the milk, the wine,
All, all are yours, if you will but be mine."

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

VIII.

DEAR Sir,—I know that you will rejoice with me in that the one who has been so long a time dead in trespasses and sins is now able to say that I have passed from death to life in Jesus—God has given me to take hold of Jesus as my Saviour and although it is as yet only with fear and trembling yet I am able to say: What joy and what happiness to know Him as my redeemer and God as my father!

It would be difficult to tell you how the light at length penetrated my soul. As I read your letter with Mr. ———, he said to me: “Well, that is very clear, can you doubt any more? You have the assurance that Christ only can save; you believe in the efficacy of His sacrifice; now do you think that Jesus wants you to be saved?” *I could not doubt it*, and thus I put all in His hands.

I was not, however, altogether happy; but the Lord used your last letter and especially the one from your friend to dissipate my doubts and open my eyes to the contemplation of the riches of the fulness of His free salvation.

I was able then in some measure to confide in Jesus, and I thought I had reached the end of all my troubles; but O, dear sir! what a sad state I was in all last week: tossed here and there by doubts, fears and uncertainties, and by sin until I began to think it was all a delusion. But I see that your friend, who has had the kindness, to write to me, and whose

letter has been such a help, has passed through the same troubles—with him I can now say: “It is only when I can—in spite of my doubts—look to Jesus that I find rest.” Even now I feel myself hardly saved, but when I look to Jesus I *cannot* doubt. Pray for me, in order that I may rest upon what God says, because He says it and not because I feel it. Ask that my eyes may be unchangeably fixed upon Jesus. My faith is very feeble and my unbelief very great.

Since my deliverance I have read and re-read your first letter, and I am astonished that I did not see and understand, as I do now, what you said.

My sister is always very happy. She does not appear to be troubled by a single doubt. In thanking you for your letter she wishes to be remembered to you.

I remain yours, &c.,

Oh, how many a poor professor's candle is blown out and never lighted again! I see that ordinary profession, and to be ranked amongst the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought good enough to carry professors to heaven but certainly a name is but a name, and will never bide a blast of God's storm. I counsel you not to give your soul rest, nor your eyes sleep, till ye have gotten something that will bide the fire, and stand out the storm.

HE HAD NO SONG.

SEVERAL years ago, while passing out of meeting one evening, a lady asked me to go with her and see her husband, who was quite sick. On the way, she told me he was anxious about his soul, knowing he would soon have to die. When I entered the room, I found him seated in an easy chair, as he could not lie down without coughing. After a few words about his bodily sufferings, I asked him about his soul—did he think his sufferings would end when his body yielded and death came.

“Well,” he said, “I think my chances for getting to heaven are pretty good.”

“Do you believe heaven is a reality?” I asked.

He said, “Yes.”

“Is it true there is a hell?”

He replied, “Yes, I believe it.”

“And you have an immortal soul that will soon be in one or the other of these places forever.”

“Yes,” he said, earnestly.

“You just now said you thought your chances for heaven were pretty good; you believe heaven is a reality, and hell is a reality, and your precious immortal soul will soon be happy in heaven for ever. You must have some reason for it. Would you tell me what it is?”

His voice was weak, and I waited for his answer as it came slowly: “Well, I’ve always been kind to my wife and children, and I have not intentionally wronged my fellow-men.”

“That is all very good,” I said, “and it is nice to be able to say that; but now tell me, what kind of a place do you think heaven is, and what do they do there?”

“Well,” he said, “I think there is no sin or sorrow there. It must be a happy place, and I think they sing there a good deal.”

Turning to Revelation i. 5, I said, “Yes they do sing there, and I’ll just read you a song they sing. It is this: ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.’ You see, they are praising their Saviour, the One who loved them and died for them. I’ll read it again: ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.’ I want you to take notice; they have not a word to say about what *they* have done; it is all about what He has done. He loved them, and died for them. Now suppose you were up there, and had got there in the way you say—because you had been good to your family, and so on; there would be one sinner in heaven that had never been washed from his sins in the blood of Jesus. You could not join in the song they sing, could you?”

I waited for an answer. His head had dropped, and his eyes were turned to the floor. I shall never forget his look as he raised his head and turned to answer me. It was as one waking out of a life dream. He was now coming face to face with eternal realities, and his only reply was,—

“Well!—I—nev—er—thought—of—that—before!”

“But,” I said, “God has; and He has written a

verse for persons just like you—who are willing to take their chances, as you said, on their good works, and are deceiving themselves by the false hope of getting to heaven in that way. I'll read the verse. It is the fourth verse of the fourth chapter of Romans: '*Now to Him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.*' Let me explain this. When you were well and could work, you received your wages because you had earned them. You were under no special obligations to the man that paid you. You would come home to your wife and say, 'Here is what I made to-day.' You could talk about what *you* had done, and what *you* had got, and you would not have a word to say about the man that paid you. That is just what God means by that verse. If you could get to heaven by what you have done, there would be no grace about it. You would know nothing of God's love as shown in Jesus. You could not sing, '*Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood;*' for you would be there without a Saviour, and you would have no song. Do you think you could be happy."

He was now ready to give up his ground, and for the first time frankly owned, what his wife had said, that he was anxious about his soul, and wanted to have the question settled. He fully confessed that in spite of all the good he claimed, he was a sinner, and needed a Saviour. It was with joy I read to him this scripture (1 Tim. i, 15): "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus*

came into the world to save sinners." He repeated, "To—save—sinners!—to—save—sinners."

"Yes," I said, "to *save*, sinners—not to *HELP* sinners to be saved, but to *SAVE* sinners. He is not a helper, but a Saviour, and God's word is, '*To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*' And again, '*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*'" He did believe, I left him that night, after reading other scriptures to him, with a new hope—not based on what he had done, but believing what God says about what *Christ had done*.

I called the next morning to see him. As I entered, he looked up with joy in his face, and said, "Oh, I'll have a song now! It will be "*Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.*"

He was with us about a week more, and fell asleep happy in the Lord.

Reader, will you be able to sing that song? or will you have to say, "I am tormented in this flame?" It will be one or the other. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.) Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (Jno. iii. 36) And again, "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 judgment, but is passed from death unto life." (Jno. v. 24.)

THE GATES OF GAZA.

IT was midnight, (Judges xvi) and in the town of Gaza was silence, save for companies of its citizens who laid in wait in the gate of the city. Around one dwelling place too was a cordon drawn, for the Gazites (who were Philistines) had heard that Samson, God's man, had come thither, and in the morning they counted on taking his life. Great deliverances had been wrought for the people by the hand of God's servant, and Satan and all his legions were now in league against him. At midnight Samson arose; of the Gazites we hear no more, but the doors of the gate of the city with the two posts, bar and all, Samson carried away upon his shoulders to the top of a hill before Hebron! The devil was defeated. Gates and bars could not detain God's man, and watchful hosts were vanquished without a blow. Strong men armed had been keeping the house, but a stronger came upon them and overcame them and spoiled their house.

Again it was night:

"The darkest night this world has known." God's Son, God's Man was in the grave, the citadel of Satan, and against Him were arrayed all his demons. He was in the place of weakness and death. The Pharisees and chief priests had taken every precaution at the bidding of Pilate; they rolled a great stone to the door, they sealed it and they set a watch. Through the long hours of darkness and light they

watched, they made the grave *as sure as they could* (Matt. xxvii), and the Devil who had hitherto wielded the "power of death" does not want to relinquish it. Heb. ii, 14. "Who shall roll us away the stone?" (Mark xvi), say the trembling followers of the One whom Satan seemed to hold so securely. Ah, none apprehended *who* He was, and that "*it was not possible* that He should be holden" of death! Acts ii, 24.

"He hell in hell laid low,
 Made sin, He sin o'er threw,
 Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
 And death by dying slew.

So the morning of the resurrection came, they who had been watching became as dead men, and there was an earthquake, and an angel descended (Matt. xxviii) and rolled away the great stone and *sat upon it*. The gates of Gaza were upon the top of the hill! The Pharisees, chief priests, Herod and Pilate with Satan at their head were conquered, for the Lord was risen!

"By weakness and defeat
 He won the meed and crown,
 Trod all our foes beneath His feet
 By being trodden down."

The fearful women, the unbelieving disciples, who all their lifetime, through fear of death, had been in bondage were free now, for the devil's power was broken. "*God* raised Him from the dead." Acts xiii, 30.

The gates of Gaza could not confine Samson, far less could the great stone, or watching soldiers be any impediment to the Son of God.

Do you know what this means for you, trembling believer? "He was raised for our justification." Rom. iv. He bore your sins on the cross, He endured the penalty of death for you, and He rose triumphant over all, having left behind Him your sins, death, the grave and judgment. Your sins are gone, for Jesus has risen without them and He is in God's presence in proof of it. You may look up and see Him there, a man in the glory of God. Satan's power is no more to be feared in death, for Jesus came out from among the dead. When the disciples saw the empty grave, *they saw and believed, so may you.* John xx, 8, 31.

Oh, poor fools, who are beguiled with painted things, and this world's fair weather and smooth promises, and rotten worm-eaten hopes! May not the Devil laugh to see you give out your souls, and get in but corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin? Oh, for a sight of eternity's glory, and a little tasting of the Lamb's marriage supper! Half a draught, or a drop of the wine of consolation, that is up at our banqueting house, out of Christ's own hand, would make your stomachs loath the brown bread, and the sour drink of a miserable life. Oh, how far are you bereaved of wit, to chase, and hunt, and run, till your souls be out of breath after a condemned happiness of your own making.

LIFE AND SALVATION.

A LADY recently said that she believed in Jesus, that He died for all, that every word of the Bible was true—would be afraid to disbelieve it—but, she added, “your faith and assurance that you have eternal life, and are saved, must be a most comforting belief.”

“Indeed it is, but my faith goes further than yours in this respect, I believe that because Christ died for all,” as the Bible says (2 Cor. v, 15), He therefore died for *me*. But more, that what He died to accomplish was accomplished, for He rose again from the dead, and is seated on high at God’s right hand. See Acts ii, 33. I therefore ‘live,’ and am not henceforth to live unto myself, but unto Him who died for me and rose again. Doubts or questions as to my safety forever, I have none, because I believe the Bible is true. It says, ‘Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life’ (John vi, 47); for by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it (faith) is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast’ Eph, ii, 9). Faith is God’s gift, and it comes by hearing His word. See Rom. x, 17. These scriptures are written for the one who believes God’s word, and to give him assurance of having life and salvation through a dead, risen, and exalted Christ.”

“Yes, but it seems so wonderful. How can such a sinner as I am be saved in that simple way? It seems to me that something more than mere faith in Christ is required from the sinner.”

“But you are now looking at yourself and your sins, and not to Christ on the cross as a sacrifice for sinners. Was he there because atonement was required of God? Was He a sufficient sacrifice for sins? Did He satisfy God, and answer to all His claims against the believer in Jesus? Surely He must have done so, or He would not have been raised from the dead, and accepted into full favor upon God’s throne as having fully satisfied His justice in respect of sin! Certainly, His exaltation of the One who died on the cross, and His session upon the very throne of justice, are evidences of the full satisfaction of God for the sins for which He suffered, and that was for the sins of *every* believer, and now God is just in justifying the believer in Jesus (Rom. iii, 25, 26). ‘Without the shedding of blood there is no remission,’ but the blood of atonement has been shed once for all, and remission belongs to every true believer. His assurance is through faith in the word that testifies of the fact, and these are divine facts. Therefore, with the eye of faith upon Christ on high, who was upon the cross, I understand how it is that He can save me through faith in the Lord Jesus only; and that there can be nothing whatever left for the sinner to do but to believe God’s record of His Son for life, and His testimony of the value and effect of what Christ has accomplished for my salvation in His death and resurrection—it is a finished work, a finished and perfect salvation, and there is nothing more to be done, but to believe it. See John xix, 30.

“Yes, that makes it all clear; I see now that all

I have to do is to believe what God says, in order to know that I have life in his Son, and am saved through the blood of the crucified One ; that nothing can be added to what Christ has finished, and God has approved. I now understand how it is by faith alone, it could not be otherwise, without detracting from Christ who finished the work, and I now understand the force of the verse (1 John v, 13), 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye *may know* that ye have eternal life;' and also of 1 Cor. xv, 1-4, 'Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.' But what does that mean, 'unless ye have believed in vain'? It means that if Christ is not risen, your faith is vain, and you are yet in your sins. See verses 12-20 of same chapter. Some were denying the resurrection of the dead. But notice it says (v. 17), 'And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.' Therefore, if Christ has been raised, our faith is *not* vain, and we are *not* in our sins."

"Ah! I see it all now, and your faith and assurance I have and know, and it is most comforting indeed. How very precious is the word of God."

But it may be asked, is it possible to lose this great blessing? Certainly not, if Christ be risen, and if you keep in memory what the Apostle preached. But how can you forget such glad tidings? If you become self-occupied, with your eyes off Christ, listen to false teachers who are without scriptural assurance for themselves; or become worldly, or careless in your walk, neglecting the word of God and prayer, you will lose the joy of salvation (and so you ought, and it is a mercy that it is so); but God never takes back His gifts (see Rom. xi, 29), nor can the believer ever perish, "Because I live," says Christ, "ye shall live also" (John xiv, 19, also Rom. v, 9, 10); and no one is able to pluck the believer out of the hands of the Son and of the Father, for both the Father and the Son are pledged for their safety. See John x, 27-30. Remember David said, "Restore unto me the *joy* of Thy salvation" (Ps. li, 12). He did not say restore to me Thy salvation, it was the joy of it only that he had lost. But having lost the joy of salvation, which is likely to be the case, if you are not watchful and holy (see 1 Peter i, 13 to end), you must confess your sins as David did (xxxii, 5), and "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We are not to sin, we need not, if there is watchfulness and care, but if we should sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins." See 1 John ii, 1-2. The erring child knows of the Advocate, returns to the Father in confession, and is restored to happy fellowship

“with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” If we do wrong He, being holy, causes us to realize our failure, and confess it to Him. This is brought about through our Advocate, and the application of the Word by the Holy Spirit to our conscience. It is the Father’s governmental dealings with His children for their present enjoyment while on their way to their abode in the Father’s house. See John xiii and xiv. His governmental dealings are the proof of His love and faithfulness to His children, and the Son’s perfect service through the Spirit and the Word, and give the lie to Satan’s false teaching that a child of God may after all be lost! We are not to listen to his false teachers (see 2 Cor. xi, 14, 15). He always lied, remember the garden of Eden; and he always will till the end, for he is the father of lies (John viii, 44). The Father deals with us in love because He loves us, and is pledged to keep us for His Son’s sake and for His glory, and the Son chastens us His members “that we should not be condemned with the world” 1 Cor. xi, 31, 32).

The simple conclusion is, if we believe the gospel that Christ died for our sins, was buried and was raised again the third day, according to scripture which says so, then our sins are gone forever, for He died for them, and rose again without them, a proof that they were put away, blotted out by His precious blood, and are to be found no more.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

KNOWLEDGE.

“For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.”—(Job, 8, 9.)

“Be still, and know that I am God.”—(Psa. 46, 10.)

Canst thou by searching find out God?—(Job, 11, 7.)

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He *hath declared* Him.—John 1, 18.

We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of *grace* and *truth*.—John 1, 14.

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.—(John, 14, 9.)

“Who art Thou, Lord?” “*I am Jesus.*”—(Acts, 9, 5.)

“Through *this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”—(Acts, 13, 38.)

“*In* whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”—(Ephes. 1, 7.)

THE SOWER.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

Oh, listen, sinner, while we tell,
The love of God, unsearchable ;
So deep, so high, no mind can trace,
No heart explore the depths of grace.

Yet here in God's most blessed word,
His love is seen, His voice is heard ;
He speaks to you, He speaks to me
With such sublime simplicity.

He loved the world, His Son He gave,
The guilty and the lost to save ;
To save them from the woes of hell,
Oh! this is love unspeakable.

Not by our works, but by the blood,
Of Him who once our surety stood ;
Nothing but this could e'er atone—
The blood of Jesus Christ alone.

Oh! come, unsaved one, come TO-DAY,
Christ is the Light, the Truth, the Way,
Trust not your heart, trust not your mind,
In Him eternal life you'll find.

Receive this message from above—
These words of truth, and grace, and love,
Believe, and you shall surely know
Salvation from eternal woe.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

I T was the day for visiting the workhouse infirmary at R—. I felt strangely disinclined to go, and after putting on my things I took them off again, then again put them on. It was a hot summer's day, and Satan kept whispering that there was no one needing a visit that special afternoon. Aye, he is ever the father of lies, and well for us who know the Shepherd's voice and can discern that of the destroyer of lives and the enemy of Him who came as He said "Not to destroy men's lives but to save them." (Luke 9, 56.)

I went. The old man at the entrance as usual looked at my basket and said in his gruff, kind way, "Don't show me what's in it," and as usual I went through the wards I generally visited; but there seemed no special need, no special one for whom the Shepherd would leave the ninety and nine that day, when suddenly, passing the door of a ward I had never entered, seized with an impulse as direct and swift as a flash of lightning, I turned the handle and stood in the doorway. On a small, narrow bed, opposite the door, lay a woman, whose matted hair lay around the dark, parched face, the great black eyes looked into mine. But oh! dear friends, have you ever seen a dying face saturated with despair? Have you ever looked

into eyes which say "No hope! no hope!"? If you have you know what I read as I walked up to her bedside, and said "I am afraid you are very ill." "I am dying," she answered.

Speaking a few words to her I found one great burden lay on her heart. She had a sister living in R——, and the dying woman's children—children of a drunkard parent—deceived her and on that account for years she had not taken any notice of the poor thing before me.

I promised to go and see her and tell her of the sufferer's state, and then I spoke of Christ. "I don't know," she said, "I have been very wicked, but I believe God sent you."

"But how do you know that I will go and see your sister? How do you know that I will keep my word, I am a perfect stranger to you."

"I know you will," she returned, "I know God sent you."

"Then if you can trust a perfect stranger, cannot you trust the Son of God who spent so many years on earth, healing the sick, cleansing even the leper, and raising the dead, and at last offering Himself upon the cruel cross, 'the just for the unjust,' a propitiation for sinners. 'The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' Is it hard to trust Him, isn't He worthy of it?"

She listened, but no gleam of hope shone in the great black eyes, she only repeated that God had sent me, and that she could trust me.

I went to the sister and finding her out left a

message telling her where and how I had found the dying one.

The next time I went she received me gladly. "She has been," she exclaimed, "and all is right between us—I knew God sent you."

Her heart seemed open now to listen to the love of God, and the "peace made" by the blood of the cross. She seemed to have a sense of His watching, and His care, in having brought about a reconciliation between the two estranged hearts. He could do the rest. After repeating some scriptures to her, I took out my Testament to read them over to her, when the nurse came quickly up to me saying, "We don't allow any reading here. If you want to read to them there are plenty of books about, Dickens and other stories,"

"Ah! nurse," I said, "my twenty minutes are too precious, it is the Saviour of sinners we want to read about, and if that is forbidden so would other reading be. But I will do nothing against the rules."

I knew this was untrue, as I read freely in the other wards, but I contented myself with repeating the verses over again to the dying one and then asked permission to pray with her, which was refused. I saw the time was up.

"Oh," pleaded the sick woman "you will come again. You wont mind her. She is so cruel to me, and is so constantly the worse for drink. My husband comes here every other day and seems disappointed to find me alive each time."

Cruelty, sin, and unkindness,—hard pillows for a

dying bed. But the Lord was seeking to lay that poor despairing heart upon His breast; seeking to blot out all her transgressions like a thick cloud; seeking to shelter the soul beneath the precious blood of Christ. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you. (Exodus, xii, 13.) Not when I see your fair deeds, and spotless lives, your works, and your alms, and your prayers. No, the blood of a Lamb "without blemish." Can you find one like Jesus, the spotless One, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"? (1 Pet. ii, 22.) "The Lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. i, 19.) I left her to ponder over Him. Dear reader, have you ever considered Him? Studied Him well, as the word means? Seen Him in that rude manger cradle and in the little village of Nazareth? Seen Him spending long nights in prayer; long days healing, teaching, comforting, blessing? Seen Him mocked and spit upon, buffeted by coarse hands, and hated by coarser hearts? Seen Him lifted up on that cross, a thief on either side? Heard Him cry to God the cry of the forsaken One? For what, for whom? For you, dear reader, for you and me. And I warrant that if ever you have seen Him thus, you have cried out like Peter of old "I am a sinful man, O Lord," and like the thief, "Remember me."

The nurse escorted me to the door of the ward, telling me that she "prayed for all the churches and chapels every day of her life," and I returned home to find that I must at once go to the seaside with a sick relative for a few days. Almost every hour of

the day that face of despair seemed before me; those great black eyes seemed yearning all their cry of need; but the heart of God was open. "He willeth not the death of a sinner." The Saviour who said, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life," was gazing down upon that narrow bed, and I strove to leave her with Him, although no one might read His precious word to her, or plead with her for the peace of sins forgiven.

A week passed, and I returned, and went again to the Infirmary. The narrow bed was empty. No long black hair, dark and matted, lay upon the pillow, no great black eyes met mine. She was gone. But when? How? Dear ones, don't leave your peace till a death bed. There is no limit to God's love, and no limit to His grace; but there is joy and rejoicing in a life spent for Him. Crowns, and sheaves, and glad harvest songs, and His rewards, His, "Well done."

The nurse came up to me and apologized for what she had done and said. "She was sorry to have hindered me." "But she was very happy," she said, pointing to the empty bed. "She said she knew the blood of Christ cleansed her from her sins, and kept talking of you." The nurse, I found, was unconverted, and I felt thankful for her softened manner, and above all for what she told me. The Lord had sought, the Lord had found. She had entered in, covered and cleansed by the blood of the atonement, and He was victorious in another trophy of His grace; another proof of the "travail of His soul."

Reader, does He see the "fruit of the travail of His

soul" in you? Does His eye look down upon you as you read this simple story of a soul "plucked from the burning" at the eleventh hour, and rejoice in you as one of His redeemed ones, dear to God's heart as Himself, for "The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and believed that I came out from God?" (John 16, 27.) Or does he see a soul covered only by sin, which might pass at any moment into the abyss of eternal misery, away from Him and His glories? Will you face death with despair or joy? With the wailing cry of "No hope! no hope!" or with the new song in your mouth "Even praise unto our God"? The praise of being in that blessed hand from which no one—not Satan in all his strength and rage—can pluck you, nor all the host of hell, for, "No man (no one) shall pluck them out of My Father's hand—My Father which gave them Me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." (John 10, 28, 29.) Locked, as it were, in the hands of God and Christ, your soul will be as safe as Christ Himself, as safe as God's great heart, and Christ's unfathomed love can make it, and has made thousands and thousands of those who trust in Him.

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Ephes 1, 7.)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii, 16.)

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

IX.

MY dear friend:—The Lord be praised that He has given you, however feebly and timidly it may be, to cling to Jesus and trust in His precious blood. I understand all that you say of the doubts and perplexities which have assailed you, even since you have come to Jesus; but none who have trusted in Him have been confounded. It is not the feeling which we have of being in safety that contributes the least in the world to our being so. The doubts and fears of the shipwrecked when in the lifeboat do not make them less safe or prevent them from being at the mercy of the waves. The rock upon which you are is not less firm because that some times when your head turns it seems to tremble beneath your feet. The *perfect* appreciation which God has of the *perfect* sacrifice of Christ, is what constitutes the *perfect* security of all who put their trust in it, however feebly it may be. “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” (Ex. xii, 13.) The foundation of our faith is *perfect* although we may only be able to appreciate it very *imperfectly*.

I thank you for all the details you have given me, they have deeply interested me.

After having passed through so much of doubts and perplexities you may be used of the Lord to the service, and to the relief of those who are under the weight of like distresses.

The Lord be praised for the uninterrupted peace

and joy which your sister has. She has good cause, as well as all of us, to rejoice in Jesus who has taken away our sins and in whom we are accepted by God as being one with His beloved Son. But do not allow the tempter to trouble you by placing before your eyes your sister's constant joy. Far from being cast down by the difference which you see between your state and hers, let it even encourage you to trust firmly in Christ. This difference may be the result of different causes, but in Christ there is always for His people abundant reasons for rejoicing. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." (Phil. iv, 4.)

I remain,

Affectionately yours in the Lord,



EPITAPH

ON A TOMB IN ST. IVES' CHURCHYARD.



Bold Infidelity! turn pale and die!

Beneath this stone three infants' ashes lie.

Say! Are they lost or saved?

If death's by sin; they sinned, because they're here;

If heaven's by works; in heaven they can't appear.

Reason—Ah! how depraved!

Review the Bible's sacred page—the knot's untied,

They died, for Adam sinned; they live, for Jesus died.

PURGED WITH BLOOD.

(HEBREWS IX.)

“**A**ND almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Hebrews ix, 22.)

In the latter part of this text we find an exclusive and distinct proposition—that without shedding of blood there is no remission.

In the flaming sword placed in the garden of Eden, after man's disobedience, we find his positive exclusion from the presence of God; in our being out of paradise, we see the existing fact, that we are in a state of exclusion from God. And the question now is, have we any access to God—to that which is far above paradise?

It is not only that we are out of paradise, but that we stand in all the accumulation of our transgressions. In the first act of sin we find that the will of man is disobedience to God; and every act of his since has been the treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

When our conscience is awakened, we learn how productive of fruit our evil nature is, and whenever we see that all is gone (for innocency once lost is lost for ever), then we find there is no competency in us to enter into association with God. That which was man's privilege in paradise has been lost, and we find ourselves not only evil, but daily accumulating transgressions. And can we then enter into the place of

God's holiness? This is the only true question. Let me ask you—is there nothing your consciences own as needing remission? Murder and theft &c., which are the consequences of the condition man is in, through transgression, are owned by all as evil. The natural man may see the blessing of moral conduct as giving happiness on earth, but can discern nothing beyond. But when we look within the veil, it is altogether another thing. Our not wronging our neighbors may produce temporal happiness; but the revelation of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ awakens the mind to a new enquiry—its fitness for the presence of such holiness; and this question is soon settled; we find it impossible. It is not fitting us for happiness in the world as it is (that is not the question); but making us competent to be associated with Christ in the glory He is in when he appears. Does the world know anything about it? Is this what they look for? Do they not rather say it is presumption to think they can have association and fellowship with God? The world is a witness to itself that it presumes no such thing.

God's testimony is, There are none righteous, none understand, and none seek after God. (Rom. iii 11-12.) But suppose we have received an understanding to know Him that is true, then still the question is, how are we to stand in the presence of the glory? Can one in a sinful condition abide in His presence? Can we say that we are fit to be partakers of the glory? There is nothing in the world fit for this. It is in vain to plead the highest morality, or the

most refined amiability; they are not the things to qualify us for heaven. We may find the character of evil all around; all are guilty, for all come short of the glory of God. The evil of the root from which it springs may be easily discerned in the fruits.

Now there must not only be a renewing, but a complete purging of the conscience. And I plead this, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission; all other ways are the efforts of man to depreciate the righteousness of God—the substitution of something instead of God's way of salvation, which is most presumptuous and subversive of the great testimony of God, that without shedding of blood there is no remission. The accumulated sins of our evil nature must be put away. The Spirit of God can have no part but bringing us to the knowledge of the hatefulness of sin, and the necessity of the blood shed; and whenever the soul is awakened to what sin is in God's sight, there cannot be peace until the Spirit which shows the necessity of holiness, and reveals that of God, thus teaches us that nothing but God's own efficient act can put away, by the shedding of the blood of Jesus, that which God testifies against.

The shedding of the blood brings it to the actual power of death—the taking away of the life of Him whose life is given. And why? Because there is the forfeiture of life, and therefore the necessity of the life being given, the blood shed, to blot out the sin, and here we find Christ stepping in, and all the believer has, entirely shut up in Christ, in whom we

have a new nature whereby we can delight in God, and not forgiveness only; and this is the consequence of the work of Christ alone, 'shedding His blood before God, offering His life as a ransom to God, presenting that which was adequate for the purpose, but without which there is no escaping the consequences of sin. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." (Isa. liii, 10.) The blood was shed, but it is manifested as His own voluntary act. At the same time His side is pierced that we might know the act complete. This is presented to our faith as a thing requisite, and which could be done in no other way. Christ had no associate, no companion; but once alone and for ever the thing was done, and the revelation of it by God to the soul is salvation. This is a transaction between God and the Son; the thing done is the ground of remission of sins to every one that believes.

I have not peace in anything in which I take a part, but peace in that in which Christ acted alone. Man's part in it was only stretching out the sinful hands which crucified Him, and this is all he had to do with it. Is it, I ask, by any act to be done now that peace is obtained? No; it is simply by the blood which has been shed, the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of His death, which can give peace through faith.

If we once see ourselves morally dead in trespasses and sins, and that without the full forfeit of life there is no remission, we shall see, as regards the cleansing of the conscience, there is nothing but the blood for us. But who did this? It is the act of

God to provide Himself a Lamb, by the shedding of whose blood the conscience of those admitted into the holy presence of God is effectually purged.

Can you say paradise is lost, and disobedience and sin are here, and yet I shall force my way back to God? What hope can those have who are not washed in the blood, taking a worse ground than that which excluded them from paradise (with this accumulated sin upon them), treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and despising that blood which cleanses from all sin, counting it an unholy thing? He who seeks God's holiness and passes by Jesus, going to God in his sins, passes by the blood, rejects the testimony of God, and despises Jesus.

How often you have resisted God's holy Spirit, how many motives to goodness you have disregarded, how many particular blessings you have sinned against, how many good resolutions you have broken, how many checks and admonitions of conscience you have stifled, you very well know; but how often this has been the case of other sinners you know not. And therefore the greatest sinner that you know must be yourself.

JESUS.

"Just as I am without one plea,
 Eager from sin and death to flee,
 Seeking no man, no God save Thee,
 Unto Thy blood to shelter me,
 Saviour I come; and I am free.

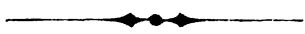
“TO-MORROW.”

“GO thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” So said Felix to Paul the prisoner, and Felix trembled, for his conscience told him he could not face the judgment to come. Dear reader are you like Felix? Have you trembled as he did, and, like him, banished your fears for a more convenient season? Let me tell you of a man I knew who was very much like Felix. His fond wife was like Paul; she often besought him to turn now to Jesus the Saviour, but there was always something in the way—business to-day, pleasure to-morrow; it was always, “I pray thee have me excused.” Years passed by, and at length the wife was called away by death. Before his wife departed she laid upon her sister a most solemn charge that she would take up the cause of her husband and plead with him to enter in at the narrow gate. Faithful to her charge, the sister of the departed wife oftentimes besought him to come to Jesus. She reminded him of her who was gone, and her words of exhortation. “Oh,” said he, “I will come to Jesus, but not to-day—to-day I am very busy; there are certain things which really must be attended to, after those are done I will come.” “Boast not thyself of to-morrow.” To-morrow he was laid on his sick-bed—the bed of death. The doctor was speedily called, and when he reached the bed-side his grave countenance told the solemn fact.

“Sir,” he said, “I will not trifle with you, you have but a few hours at most to live.” “What!” cried the dying man, “I dare not die—I cannot die!” “Sir,” replied the Christian doctor, “I pray you do not spend the short period of your life that remains in useless remorse; turn now to Jesus; believe in Him now; come now just as you are with all your delays, and you shall be saved now.” “No, no,” said the wretched man in agony, “No, I cannot die—I am not ready to die to-day.” “I beseech you,” said the doctor, “to look away from yourself, forget the past, turn to God now—you have but a moment left, Oh, do not waste the last opportunity which God in His mercy gives you. All was vain; every effort, every entreaty to lead this man to look to Jesus and live was fruitless. His voice grew fainter, and feebler; the burning fever that had so suddenly laid him low overcame him; the trifle with God’s love and with his own precious soul was dead. He died saying, “Too late—not ready.” Unserved reader take warning from this sad story. Come just as you are to Jesus. Do not trifle with your precious soul.

Oh, most wretched and foolish sinner, thou who tremblest before the face of an angry man that is ignorant in all things! What wilt thou be able to answer unto God, who knoweth all thy sins, and searcheth the lowest depths of the evil that is in thee? Why lookest thou not forward, and prepare thyself for the day of His righteous judgment, in which one man cannot possibly be excused or defended by another, but every one will have to answer for himself.

THE SOWER.



“HO! EVERY ONE THAT THIRSTETH.”

ISAIAH LV-I.

A VOICE is heard, a voice of love,—
To each, to all, it cries,—
From One who came from joys above :
He calls, He weeps, He dies ;
The Son of God has man become
The prodigal to win ;
And bring him to his father's home
From vanity and sin.

Ye wearied ones, ye desolate,
Ye mourning souls, attend ;
Be sins or sorrows e'er so great,
Come to the sinner's friend,
Seek not your guilt, or woes to hide,
Ye need not from His eyes !
The Holy One will not in pride
A broken heart despise.

The smitten Rock, thou thirsty soul
Gives forth its living streams ;
Thou sick one He can make thee whole,
Dark one, behold His beams !
No more, ye starving, labor spend
For that which is not bread ;
To Jesus' gracious call attend,
And ye shall all be fed.

COME TO JESUS.

I WAS standing on the footway of a crowded thoroughfare; the passers-by were hurrying along, each intent on his own business, while I paused, looking out for a hansom cab. I had an important business appointment to keep, and there was no time to be lost. As I thus stood I was startled by a voice in my ear; some one was speaking to me, and distinctly came the words, "Come to Jesus, there's no time to be lost!" I heard them, but e'er I could reply the speaker had vanished in the crowd.

What effect would these words have produced on you, reader? What echo would they have awakened in your heart? To me they had a sweet sound, and I would have gladly grasped the hand of him who uttered them, and said that I too was journeying toward the city where the name of Jesus will be chanted in heavenly songs. But another thought came as I jumped into my hansom and drove off; if there is no time to be lost in the keeping of an urgent appointment in this world, do we think with the same earnestness about the Lord's invitation to meet Him in the next? "Come to Jesus, there's no time to be lost." Think of this, reader. Jesus said "Come unto me" (Matt. xi. 28), have you come? And had those words been addressed to you in the street, what answer could you have given?"

Many hesitate and plead difficulties in the way. When Jesus was in this world He said to Peter,

“Come,” when it was far harder to obey than it can be to you. The Lord was on the water, and Peter was in the boat, yet at the word “Come,” Peter descended from the boat, and “he walked on the water to go to Jesus.” (Matt. xiv.) Indeed “there’s no time to be lost.” None can say when the door of mercy will be closed, and that blessed “Come to Jesus” uttered for the last time, and certainly you do not wish to be left outside. Oh, no. As a fisherman said a few days ago when conversing of sudden deaths, “Every one wants to be in heaven, but they forget that in order to be with God by and by, they must make acquaintance with Him now.” Yes, now, for “there’s no time to be lost.”

Come to the Saviour, make no delay ;
 Here in His word He bids you obey ;
 Here in our midst He is standing to-day,
 Tenderly saying come !

Is there a soul reading this who cannot rejoice in Christ, who knows Him not as his portion ? Is there one who is saying my sin is too great to be pardoned ? To feel about your sin is right, but to be in despair about it is quite wrong. You are virtually saying my sin is greater than the grace of God. You will not dare to say so if you are looking at Christ. Is Christ come short ? Is grace beneath your need or above it ? Christ is the portion of every poor soul who believes on Him. The atoning work is done. The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth from all sin.

THE CORDS OF LOVE.

A WEEK at Folkestone ! The weather was rough and wet, but we could not stay indoors as the sea air was necessary for the one for whom we had gone. The only thing was to have a tent, and a tent we had. We were sitting in it, enjoying the shelter and cosiness the first day of our arrival, when suddenly we heard a voice saying : " Do you ladies know anything about the Master ? " And there stood our friend who let out the tents, at the door of our canvas room, strong, sturdy, bronze ; his weather-beaten face fairly shining with happiness and goodness. In answer I put the book I was reading into his hands, and after that he often came to have a chat about the love of God and the preciousness of Christ. " Yes," he said one day, " I often wish I could write down what the Lord has done for me. I was a sailor, and until I was five-and-twenty years of age I could not read a word. Then a mate and I determined to learn together, and so we got a spelling book when in port and began. At first we used to pick out short words in the newspaper for practice. We could always get hold of one of those. But one day I hunted out of my box an old bible my mother had given me, and I found in the psalms short words that I could read. I said to my mate : Look here, Bill, here's just as easy words as in the newspaper. I shall read this.

" Well, the more I read, the more I began to feel my need of something ; that I was not right. And one night some time after this, I dreamt such a dream.

I can't tell it all to you, Miss, it was too much, but I dreamt that I was there standing over the brink of hell, and oh ! the terrors and agonies I went through—

“I was just going to fall in, and there was nothing and no one to save me, when suddenly a hand, stretched out from behind, pulled me back with a strong pull. Then I woke, and the next morning we got into port, and one of them from the shore came aboard and asked us to go to a mission preaching that evening. Well, full of my dream, I went, for you may be sure I had a sort of horror all day thinking about it, and after the prayer and the singing, the gentleman gave out the text, ‘As in a dream when one waketh.’

“I felt as though I must leap off the seat, and rush back to see if it was really in the bible or not, but I managed to sit through it, and sure enough, I saw the Lord as the Saviour of sinners, and right glad I was to accept Him. Bless His name.

“I go about the beach and talks to one and another, and finds out those who know He is precious, and many of those who don't. But once there was a little missy whose parents had been down some time, and she seemed to like to come and talk to ‘old Cooky,’ as they call me, and one day she said, “Mr. Cook, I want very much to ask you a question.”

“Ask away Missy,” I said.

“Are you sure you won't be offended? We are going away to-morrow, and, oh ! I do so want to ask you before we go.”

“I won't be offended, you be sure, Missy.”

Then, she says, looking right into my face, “do you

love the Lord Jesus ?" Aye ! And I thought how faithful she was to the Lord. Could not I be faithful too."

And he was faithful. Day by day he went in and out, speaking here and there a word of Christ and His love. I found he and his wife had quite a large work amongst the children in the town. Love seemed to characterize his every action. Love to Christ, and the love of Christ flowing through him to other souls.

Dear reader, can you see the love of God watching over that young sailor all those years ? Can you see his mother's gift lying unused in the little box, while he went on year after year doing "business in great waters ;" often, doubtless, in danger and peril on the wintry sea ; often in just as much danger, if he only knew it, in the summer sunshine, for all the time there was no helmet of salvation on his head, no anchor for his soul. Can you see the love of God constraining him to draw out the little book put there so long before, doubtless with many loving prayers from the mother's heart. The love showing him, through a dream, the brink on which he stood ; the hell that is no fancy, no picture of dreams, but a reality for all who are out of Christ. The love preparing him for that message of Christ's finished work ; the love revealing a crucified and risen Christ, drawing him from that brink to the gladness and the sunshine, not only of sins forgiven, but of being able to point other mariners on the ocean of life, to the haven he had found, the safety and the shelter he had been brought into.

That love is over you just as strong, just as patient, just as great. Will you resist and pass on towards that terrible future, away from God, or will you yield to the words of love and be drawn to the Saviour's feet, to know and follow Him.

Years passed away. Each time I passed through Folkestone I enquired about dear C——, but could learn nothing, as it was only in passing to and from the boats that I had opportunity. But about two autumns ago the answer came; "Oh! yes, C——. He died last summer, and you never saw such a sight as the funeral with the children. And there's never a day but they don't go and put fresh flowers on his grave. He did love the children, to be sure." And, doubtless, in that day when he gladly lays his crown at the Master's feet, many of its gems will be the souls of little children sought and won by his faithful heart.

"THE TIME IS SHORT."

1 COR. VII. 29.

"The time is short"! If thou art not prepared

To hear thy summons from this earth away,
Awake, arouse thee from thy deadly sleep;

This is no time for dreaming or delay:

Haste to the Refuge. Look not back. The door
Stands open now. To-morrow, all may here be o'er!

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

X.

Joy comes in the morning.

DEAR ——— I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for your letter, which by the blessing of God has so powerfully succoured and consoled me.

I had never seen, in so clear a way, the unity of Christ and the believer. I always thought I ought to find something in myself which would make me happy. I see now that it is altogether otherwise. It is Jesus, and Jesus only, who has given me joy. It is very true what you say, that the love of Christ for us is our joy. How is it that we can so long refuse to put our confidence in this perfect Saviour, who has not waited until we have done something ourselves, but who, when we were wholly lost and ruined, without strength and without hope, came to deliver us? Is not that marvellous? We have God for our Father; He sees us as being one with Christ, and loves us with the same love with which He loves Christ. How much I can now rejoice in all this; sometimes I can say nothing but "Father," but that alone fills me with joy.

If you see Mr. ———, tell him that the Lord has mercifully taught me to rest upon the love of Christ, and to dwell in this love, which passes knowledge. I forget all my doubts and all my fears in looking to Jesus. Pray for me, that nothing may take the place of Jesus in my heart, but that I may be always filled with Himself. Affectionately yours in Him.

SATAN'S DIPLOMACY.

“**T**HERE is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”—Prov. xvi. 22.

A way which seemeth right. Such is the way of the unsaved. Providing his business is prospering, himself well and happy, what folly it seems to tell the man of the world that at the end of his way lie “the ways of death.” Awful calamity! awaiting those of whom it is written: “Ye have set at nought all MY COUNSEL and would none of MY REPROOF. . . . They would none of MY counsel: they despised all MY reproof. Therefore shall they eat the fruit of THEIR OWN way.” What folly to speak of “annihilation” in the face of such scriptures! At the end of man’s way there still remain “the ways of death,” in which are eaten the fruits of their way. If we had no other authority for such startling statements than man’s word; yea, if they rested upon any other ground than that they are the words of God, all might disregard them. But since it is God’s warning to us, how can we disregard it with impunity? Indeed, we cannot! If God speaks we do well to heed the language He uses. Our ideas, theories, opinions, etc., must be let go, or we must expect to suffer the consequences of such daring contempt of Divine Majesty. Appearances are often illusory, and to depend upon them is dangerous, as is illustrated by the following :—

It is about four years ago that a New York firm originated and carried into practice a scheme which, as showing the desperate wickedness native to the human heart in its present sin-degraded state (what dreadful things have originated and proceeded from thence), might well humble every thoughtful man who will consider where his connections exist as God sees him.

“A remedy” was invented and then advertised in a most extensive manner as a boon to suffering humanity; as destined to wipe out of existence for those who would but use it, the sad results of the entrance of sin into this world. Pain and sickness were to give place to joy and healthful vigor; depression, discontent, etc., were no longer to be realized by its users. Its indications were almost innumerable, though especially lauded as a specific for nervous troubles, such as sleeplessness. How many there are who would esteem such a remedy as priceless to them, and grasp it with that avidity peculiar to this class of sufferers, who are ever ready to try anything which promises them relief from their distress. This preparation, however, consisted of little else than the most dreadful of narcotics, but so cleverly dispensed as to conceal their presence. And such was the peculiarity of its action, that while the patient was in reality having his system shattered by these pernicious opiates the immediate results seemed most favorable and encouraging. Under its action sleep was speedily restored, gloom and evil forebodings gave way to the most pleasing sensations of

rest and tranquility. All would seem well at last, and fond hopes would be cherished that the long-looked-for remedy was found. But alas, how delusive! How like the effect of Satan's "remedies" for the needs of sinners! For it will not be long ere the true results of these oft-repeated draughts will become apparent. Larger doses are soon required to produce former effects; reactions occur when the "remedy" is discontinued though for ever so short a time, and the poor victim (for such he has become), at last finds himself enslaved to his fell destroyer. He has become a sure source of revenue to the originators of this diabolical scheme (their anticipated reward), but at what a cost to himself!!

Such, poor deceived unsaved one, is your condition whatever appearances may suggest. And here we have the character of all Satan's ways—**DECEPTION; FRAUD.** O, will you be one of his dupes? Do not longer rest on appearances, but seek God's testimony concerning your present state. That, and that only, is able to make you "wise unto salvation."

And let me remind you that if God warns you, it is because He Himself has provided a way of escape for you, guilty and all as you are. Jesus is God's way of escape for guilty perishing sinners. God's love for sinners brought Jesus into this world; and, (O, do consider it), He died the "just for the unjust to bring us to God." He died for our sins according to the scriptures, and was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. And now

God says, "That through His (Jesus') name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Yes! Jesus having taken the sinner's place in death, God can now in justice come out with a full pardon to every guilty sinner, who, renouncing every other "saviour," simply believes in Jesus.

Oh, that heaven and hell should more work upon men! Oh, that everlastingness should work more! Oh, how can you forbear when you are alone, to think with yourself, what is it to be everlastingly in joy or in torment? I wonder that such thoughts do not break your sleep, and that they come not into your mind when you are about your labor; I wonder how you can almost do anything else; how you can have any quietness in your minds; how you can eat, or drink, or rest, till you have got some ground of everlasting consolation. Is that a man or a corpse that is not affected with matters of this moment? that can be readier to sleep than to trouble when he heareth how he must stand at the bar of God? Is that a man or a clod of clay that can rise or lie down without being deeply affected with his everlasting estate? that can follow his worldly business and make nothing of the great business of salvation or damnation, and that when they know it is hard at hand.

A LETTER FROM A SERVANT OF CHRIST,
NOW DEPARTED.

DEAR MR. GOVERNOR.*—You will, perhaps, recollect one who went up with you in the train from E. to D., now about a year ago, or not far from it, and be surprised, perhaps, to receive a letter from him from Canada. But though I have been much occupied—as you may suppose I did not cross the Atlantic for nothing—I have not forgotten our conversation in the train, and I crave to hear how you are getting on. We have had here the governor of the gaol fully brought to the knowledge of salvation, and to walk with the saints of God, as he still does. He would much like another employment, but awaits the Lord's leading to find him something. His dear wife—already a believer—was also led to see she ought to be more entirely separate from the world, and live more devotedly, and so she did thoroughly, and the Lord has taken her. She expected it, and was longing to go. No cloud came over her peace and joy. She suffered dreadfully and long, but no impatience was shown; all was bright, and all peace. She left four little children, charming little ones; we had them in the house where I was, to spare the nurse while she was ill. She saw them, gave them her blessing, and bid farewell, but it raised no lingering look behind. Another dear old man, only six months converted, died just after, rejoicing with all his heart. We buried both, not far apart,

*["I was speaking to him about his soul, and he asked me to write to him. He was governor of a gaol."]

under the deep, deep snow, which indeed kept the earth soft enough to be opened (for sometimes they cannot bury), committing them to Christ till the resurrection.

And, now, how would it be with you if thus called? Is all peace, and right with God? You know yourself that you need it; you know that Christ is the only way to have it. Let me add a few words as to the fullness of it. He appeared *once* in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That work is finished—it can never be added to, nor taken away from; its value does not change. But the Spirit of God works in us, to shew us our need of it, makes us to see that we are sinners, that we are *lost* in ourselves; leads us (perhaps by deep and painful convictions) to the sense that there is *no* good in us, that when even to will is present with us, how to perform that which is good we find not. We find not only that we have sinned, but that there is a law of sin in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin in our members. But when really humbled about this, and convicted in our own hearts—removing all pretensions of righteousness in ourselves—we turn to Christ, we find that He has died for this, that He has been a sacrifice for the sin, as for the sins, that burdened us—has been made sin for us, has *put it away* for us by the sacrifice of Himself.

Thus we get peace and liberty of heart before God, because the sin is put away between us and Him—

Christ has made a full expiation. Sin does not exist as between God and us. When *He* looks on the blood of Christ, He cannot see sin in the believer, because, when Christ shed that blood He put it away. Thus we get liberty and power, too, because submitting thus to the righteousness of God ; having Christ for our righteousness, we are sealed with the Spirit, which gives us power and shews us Christ, so that we get strength and joy, and are able to glorify Him.

How is it, then, with you ? Are you still a worse prisoner than those you are watching over, or freed by the redemption that is in Christ ? Have you been brought to see that, if you refuse life through His name, you must perish ? Do you seek that you should know Him, or are you joining with His enemies—hail-fellow-well met with the world, that, to its judgment and ruin, crucified Him ? If we have His Spirit, we know that we are in Him, and all is peace, and joy, too, because we know the Son of God, and abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. I shall be glad to hear from you. May the blessed Lord, in His grace, direct your eye fixedly on Christ.

Every truly yours in Christ,

1863.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—Jno. iii. 16.

MAN'S FOLLY.

MOST men listen more attentively to the world than to God. The world promiseth only impure and transitory joy, and men engage with ardour in its unholy service, but to that which is supreme and everlasting their hearts are insensible and unmoved. Even the sea exclaimeth, "Be thou ashamed, O Zidon!" because for a trifling acquisition of wealth or honor a tedious and fatiguing journey is cheerfully undertaken; but to obtain eternal life not a foot is lifted from the earth. The sordid gain of perishing riches engages the pursuit and employs the industry of all; and the most inconsiderable share of this imaginary property is obstinately and bitterly contested. For the vain expectation of a vainer possession, men dread not the fatigue of sleepless nights and restless days; but, deplorable insensibility, for unchangeable good, for an inestimable recompense for unsullied glory and endless happiness, the least solicitude and the least labor is thought too dear a purchase.

I am not told to labor,
To put away my sin;
So foolish, weak and helpless,
I never could begin.
But blessed truth—I know it!
Though ruined by the fall,
Christ for my soul hath suffered,
Yes, Christ hath done it all.

THE SOWER.

THE Father sent the Son
A ruined world to save ;
Man meted to the sinless One
The cross, the grave.
Blest substitute from God,
Wrath's awful cup He drained ;
Laid down His life and e'en the tomb's
Reproach sustained.

Earth trembled as He died :—
God's well-beloved Son :
The darkness sought His woes to hide :
His work is DONE.
He lives to die no more ;
Joy dwells upon His brow ;
His agonies untold are o'er ;
He triumphs now !

The new and living way
Stands open now to heaven ;
Thence, where the blood is seen alway,
God's gift is given.
The river of His grace,
Thro' righteousness supplied,
Is flowing o'er the barren place
Where Jesus died !

The Lord shall come again !
The conqueror must reign !
No tongue but shall confess Him then
The Lamb once slain.
JESUS is worthy NOW
All homage to receive ;
O sinner ! to the Saviour bow,
The truth believe.

THE VALUE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

IF we examine the value of the death of Christ, what do we find attached to it in scripture?

Do I need **REDEMPTION**? We have redemption through His blood, an eternal redemption; for “neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” (Heb. ix. 12, 14, 15.)

Do I need **FORGIVENESS**? That redemption which I have through His blood is the forgiveness of sins; yea, without shedding of blood is no remission. (Eph. i. 7.)

Do I need **PEACE**? He has made peace through the blood of His cross. (Eph. ii. 14; Col. i. 20.)

Do I need **RECONCILIATION** with God? Though we were sinners, yet now hath He reconciled us by the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy and unblameable and unproveable in God’s sight. When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. (Col. i. 21, 22.)

Do I desire to be **DEAD TO SIN**, and have the flesh crucified with its affections and lusts? I am crucified with Christ. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; for in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. This is my deliverance also from the charge and

burthen of the law, which has dominion over a man as long as he lives. (Rom. vi. 6 ; Col. iii. 3.)

Do I feel the need of PROPITIATION ? Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood. The need of JUSTIFICATION ? I am justified by His blood. (Rom. v. 9 ; 1 John iv. 10.)

Would I have a PART WITH CHRIST ? He must die ; for "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John xii. 24 ; Eph. ii. 4, 5.

How have we boldness to enter into the holiest ? By the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh ; for till that was rent the Holy Ghost signified by it that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest. (Heb. x. 19.)

Hence it was a lifted-up Christ that was the attractive point for all. "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." (John xii. 32.)

In the power of what, was the great Shepherd of the sheep brought again from the dead ? Through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

How was the CURSE OF THE LAW taken away from those who were under it ? By Christ's being made curse for them ; as it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.)

How are we washed from our sins ? He has loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood ; for His blood cleanseth from all sin. (Acts xiii. 38, 39 ; 1 John i. 7.)

If I would be delivered from the world, it is by the

cross, by which the world is crucified to me and I unto the world. (Gal. vi. 14.)

If the love of Christ constrains us towards men in the thought of the terror of the Lord, how is it so? Because I thus judge, if One died for all then were all dead, and they that live should live not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again. Hence the apostle knew no man after the flesh—no, not even Christ. All was a new creation. If I would live in divine power, it is always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in my mortal body. If He would institute a special remembrance to call Him to mind, it was a broken body and a shed blood. It is not less, a Lamb as it were slain, that is found on the throne. (2 Cor. iv. 10.)

All was love, no doubt; but do I want to learn it! Hereby we know it, that He laid down His life for us, and that even of God, in that He loved us, and gave His Son as a propitiation for our sins. It is to the sprinkling of that precious blood of Christ that we are sanctified, and to obedience; and through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once (contrasted with the many Jewish sacrifices) sanctified and perfected for ever, so that there is no more offering for sin; for having offered one sacrifice for sins, He is set down for ever at the right hand of God. For He should not offer Himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place once every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in

the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself ; for as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment ; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Read Heb. ix. x.)

THE CHRISTIAN'S POSITION.

“ FULL ASSURANCE ” BELONGS TO IT.

FAITH is my thinking God's thoughts instead of my own. God says, “ Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more ” ; I think so too. God says, “ children of God through faith in Christ Jesus ; ” I think so too. God says, we stand in favor, I think so too. I do not know how God could prove His favor more than by sending His Son. He says, an “ heir of glory,” “ joint-heir with Christ.” I have everything Christ has, as a child with my Father. Now comes conflict ; but I have the experience of a free man with God. One dead, quickened, and raised up together with Christ is the experience of a Christian, into all which he enters by virtue of divine righteousness in Christ. In the “ fullness of time ” He came. They were servants before He came ; but now we are sons, and the Spirit of God is in us the Spirit of adoption. This is my place. I do not always act rightly in it ; the Holy Ghost reproves and humbles me ; but that is my place.

“MOVE YOUR FINGER.”

IT was at the close of a meeting in a town-hall in the midland counties that I saw a respectable woman dressed in deep mourning ; she was the wife of a farmer in the neighborhood of the town-hall. I was standing at the door of the hall speaking to one and another as they passed out, when, as she was passing out, I spoke a few words to her about her soul's eternal welfare. For some time she was too much overcome with emotion to reply, and when she did speak, it was to ask me if she could see me alone on the morrow. The morrow arrived, and we met, when I soon discovered that she was a soul with whom the Spirit of God had long been dealing. I found that He whom God had exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, had graciously given her repentance ; but as yet she was a stranger to the gift of forgiveness. She assured me that she was a lost and guilty sinner, deserving nothing less than death, judgment, and the lake of fire ; but I found that she was waiting to know she was forgiven, until she felt it.

Opening my bible at the seventh chapter of Luke's gospel, I read that lovely story of grace, beginning at the thirty-sixth verse, and finishing at the fiftieth verse. When it was read through, I drew the dear woman's attention to the forty-seventh verse, “ I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.”

I asked her to place her finger upon the two words "are many," and tell me if she could look up into the face of the blessed Jesus, who uttered those two words, and honestly say that they were true of her sins ?

Placing her finger upon the two words "are many," she said they were too true of her sins. I then asked her if she believed her sins were many because she felt they were many, or because Jesus said that they were many. She replied that she knew that they were many ; that she felt that they were many ; but that she believed that they were many because Jesus said so. I then asked her to move her finger to the next two words, "are forgiven," and to tell me that if she believed the first two words, "are many," spoken by Jesus, were true about her sins, why should she not believe the second two words, "are forgiven," spoken by the same precious lips about her forgiveness, were equally true and worthy of being believed ? She moved her finger on to the second two words, "are forgiven," and looking up by faith into the face of Jesus, told Him she believed Him, and thanked Him for the good news.

It is some years since the blessed Saviour-God gave this dear woman the knowledge of the forgiveness of all her sins, since which time she has gone on her way rejoicing, having taken her place at the Lord's table as a forgiven, saved, happy, and worshipping child of God, and member of Christ's body. And if you met her to-day, and were to ask her how she knew that her sins were forgiven, she would reply, "I knew

they were many, not because I felt it, but because Jesus told me they were ; and I know that they are all forgiven, not because I feel it, but because Jesus says so."

And now, dear, anxious, troubled soul, you have had your finger long enough on the two words "are many," but look at the two following words, "are forgiven," and at once believingly and adoringly "move your finger."

Ah, foolish man ! why dost thou still flatter thyself with the expectation of a long life, when thou canst not be secure of a single day ? How many unhappy souls, deluded by this hope, are in some unexpected moment separated from the body ! How often dost thou hear that one is slain, another is drowned, another has dropped down dead in the exercise of some favorite diversion ; and that thousands, indeed, are daily perishing by fire, by sword, by disease, or by the violence of robbers ! Thus is death common to every age, and man suddenly passeth away as a vision of the night.

Who will remember thee after death ? Who will then pray for thee, and whose prayer can then avail thee ? Turn now to God, for thou knowest not the hour in which death will seize thee, nor canst thou conceive the consequences of his seizing thee unprepared. Now, while the time of gathering riches is in much mercy continued, lay up for thyself the substantial and unperishing treasures of heaven. Think of nothing but the business of thy redemption ; be careful for nothing but it.

“THE FIRST RESURRECTION AND THE SECOND DEATH.”

OUR Lord Jesus Christ has spoken to us of two resurrections which He calls respectively the “resurrection of life” and the “resurrection of judgment,” saying: “For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment” (Jno. v. 26-29).

Every one then will be either quickened by the Son of God, or judged by Him. Many passages of scripture tell us that they who believe in Jesus Christ have eternal life, and shall not come into judgment (Jno. v. 24); but, as the Lord Himself tells us: “They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection” (Luke xx. 35, 36).

The prophet's word says, moreover, that those who have been faithful to the testimony of Jesus, will be raised up by Jesus, and will live and reign with Him a thousand years: “This is the first resurrection.”

“The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. * * * * *

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. xx. 5, 6).

There will be, then, between the two resurrections an interval of at least a thousand years. During the millennium, Satan will be bound, in order that he may not seduce the nations; then he will be loosed for a little season in order that the last purposes of God may be accomplished, and that the hearts may be exposed of those who have not been touched by the glory of God which has been manifested to all the world under the reign of God and of His Christ. Satan will come forth from his prison to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the world; and to assemble them together to battle against God and against His saints. But fire will descend from heaven and devour them; and the devil who has deceived them will be cast into hell, “the lake of fire,” where he will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Then will take place the last judgment which is thus spoken of in the word of God: “And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,

according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire " (Rev. xx. 11-15).

Whoever you are, dear reader, you have only one alternative : either to continue under the power of him who is a liar and a murderer from the beginning, because you fill up your sinful state by despising the free grace of God ; or, on the other hand, this grace has broken your will, and touched your heart, and thus you are His who is the " resurrection and the life," because you have done that which is right in believing in Him.

Oh ! think of this while it is said : to-day is the day of salvation. Reflect seriously upon it. God Himself beseeches you by us. The results of each of these resurrections is eternal and unchangeable. The resurrection of judgment will unquestionably lead you to eternal ruin far from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power, in the lake of fire, into the company of " him who had the power of death, that is the devil," and with his angels. " This is the second death, even the lake of fire."

While it is said, " to-day," harden not your heart. " Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." Believe now in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, now, for the ages of ages ; you

will have the first resurrection, that "from among the dead," "the resurrection of life." In coming to Jesus, in believing in Him, in casting yourself upon Him, you will possess eternal life, a perfect and eternal good—Jesus Himself will introduce you into the glory of God—where you will ever be with Him, the Lord, your Saviour, rejoicing with Him in the eternal inheritance of the saints in light.

Choose while this alternative is still offered you. Believe in the Lord Jesus if you wish to flee from the wrath to come. Believe now, and you will be saved. This Jesus who has been crucified by the world and in the world will come again with clouds, "and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. i. 7). Bend now your knees before Him, with joy and gratitude, before you are obliged to do it in terror and despair; for every knee will be compelled to bend before Him, every tongue will be obliged to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

EPIGRAM.

The ungodly man but once is born,
But when he feels the life-strings sever,
Then twice he dies, and angels mourn,
A spirit lost, that dies for ever.

Twice born, the godly die but once,
The second death enduring never;
His life through endless ages runs,
He dies to live, and lives for ever.

A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

YOU, my hearers, many of you, have often been impressed under the ministry. I know what you have said on the Monday morning, after deep searchings of heart on the previous day, you have said, "I must attend to business, I must see after the things of this world." Ah! you will say that one day, when hell shall laugh you in the face for your folly. Think of men that are dying every day saying, "We must live," and forgetting that they must die! O poor soul! to be caring about that house, thy body, and neglecting the tenant within! Another replies, "I must have a little more pleasure." Pleasure dost thou call it? What! can there possibly be pleasure in turning suicide to thine own soul—pleasure in defying thy Maker, trampling on His laws, despising His grace? If this be pleasure, 'tis a pleasure over which angels might weep. What, man, wilt thou count this pleasure when thou comest to die? Above all, wilt thou count this pleasure when thou dost stand before thy Maker's bar at last? It is a strange delusion that causes thee to believe a lie. There is no pleasure in that which brings wrath upon thy soul, even to the uttermost.

But the usual reply is, "There is time enough yet." The young man says, "Let me alone till I grow old." And you old men, what do you say? I can suppose that the youth looks forward to life, and expects to find a future time more convenient, but there are

some of you o'er whose heads seventy winters have blown. When do you hope to find a convenient season? You are within a few days' march of the tomb; if you do but open your eyes, you may see death but a slight distance in advance.

To sleep in youth is to sleep in a siege; to sleep in old age is to slumber during the attack. What! friend, wilt thou, that art so near thy Maker's bar, still put Him off with a "Go Thy way?" What! procrastinate now, when the knife is at thy throat—when the worm is at the heart of the tree, and the branches have begun to wither—when the grinders cease even now, because they are few, and they that look out of the windows are darkened? The sere and yellow leaf has come upon thee, and thou art still unready for thy doom! O my hearer! of all fools, a fool with a grey head is the worst fool anywhere. With one foot in the grave, and another foot on a sandy foundation, how shall I depict you, but by saying to you, as God said to the rich man, Thou fool! a few more nights and thy soul shall be required of thee; and then where art thou?

Come, come! thou shalt not go away till my whole soul hath poured itself out over thee, not until I have cast mine arms around thee, and tried to stop thee this time from turning from the face of Him that bids thee live.

Thou sayest, "Another time," how knowest thou that thou wilt ever feel again as thou feelest now! This morning, perhaps, a voice is saying in thy heart, "Prepare to meet thy God." To-morrow that

voice will be hushed. The gaieties of the ball-room and the theatre will put out that voice that warns thee now, and perhaps thou wilt never hear it again. Men all have their warnings, and all men who perish have had a last warning. Perhaps this is your last warning. You are told to-day that except ye repent, ye must perish, except ye put your trust in Christ, ye must be cast away for ever. Perhaps no honest lip will again warn you; perhaps no tearful eye will ever look on you affectionately again; God to-day is pulling the reins tight to check you from your lust; perhaps, if to-day you spurn the bit, and rush madly on, He will throw the reins upon your back, saying, "Let him alone;" and then it is a dark steeplechase between earth and hell, and you will run it in mad confusion, never thinking of a hell till you find yourself past warning, repentance, and hope.

How do you know that you will live till convenience comes? A little too much heat or too much cold within the brain—a little too fast flowing of the blood, or a little too slow circulation thereof—some little turning of the fluids of the body in a wrong direction, and you are dead!

Oh! why will you then dare to procrastinate, and say, "Time enough yet?" Will your soul ever be saved by your saying "Time enough yet?"

Archbishop Tillotson well says, "A man might say I resolve to eat, but the resolve to eat would never feed his body. A man might say, I am resolved to drink, but the resolve to drink would never slake his thirst." And you may say, "I am resolved by-and-bye to seek God," but your resolve will not save you.

It is not preaching, but the sighing over your souls that is hard work. I could preach for ever; I could stand here day and night to tell my Master's love, and warn poor souls; but 'tis the afterthought that will follow me when I descend these pulpit steps, that many of you, my hearers, will neglect this warning. My Master says, "Son of man, hast thou heard what the children of Israel say concerning thee? Behold, thou art as one that playeth a tune upon an instrument; they make merry with thee, and they go their ways." Yes, but that were little. To be laughed at is no very great hardship to me.

Spit on me, but oh! repent! Laugh at me, but oh! believe in my Master! Make my body as the dirt of the streets, if you will, but damn not your own souls! Oh! do not despise your own mercies. Put not away from you the gospel of Christ. There are many other ways of playing fool beside that. Carry coals in your bosom; knock your head against a wall, but do not damn your souls for the mere sake of being a fool, for fools to laugh at. Christ waits to accept thee. Trust Him now, and be saved. Amen.

And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.—Rev. xx.

THE SOWER.

AFTER the joys of earth,
After its songs of mirth,
After its hours of light,
After its dreams so bright,
What then ?

Only an empty name,
Only a weary frame,
Only a conscious smart,
Only an aching heart.

After this empty name,
After this weary frame,
After this conscious smart,
After this aching heart—
What then ?

Only a sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
Only a silent bed
With the forgotten dead.

After this sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
After this silent bed
With the forgotten dead—
What then ?

Oh ! then—the judgment throne !
Oh ! then—the last hope gone ?
Then, all the woes that dwell
In an eternal HELL !

"I GO TO MEET GOD."

A MAN guilty of many crimes, and hardened in iniquity had been arrested, tried and sentenced to death. Having learned that this wretched being had refused to listen to the exhortations of the many who had besought him to think of his soul, a servant of God, Mr. R———, requested permission from the authorities to pass the last night with him which he was to live, hoping to be an instrument in the hands of God to lead the condemned to Christ before he should be cut off from the earth.

The permission having been granted, Mr. R.——— was locked in the cell with him.

For several hours Mr. R.——— remained seated trying in vain to attract the attention of his companion, that he might enter into conversation with him. The prisoner, although he was evidently in a state of extreme agitation, retained a lowering and defiant reserve, walking up and down in his cell like a caged lion, rattling the chain which connected his hands and groaning loudly. Hour after hour he continued this without stopping, except to heave from time to time a deep sigh, seeming to wholly ignore the presence of another.

At length, Mr. R.——— fixing upon him a supplicating look, he suddenly stopped, shook his chain and fell heavily to the ground with fearful groans, which seemed to come from the depths of his being. Then raising himself and turning to Mr. R.———, he said,

with a frightful accent, “ Mr. R———, do not think I am afraid to die ! ”

“ What ! ” said Mr. R———, “ not afraid to die ! What mean then this agitation, these groans, and these looks of terror ? ”

“ No,” replied the condemned man, “ I am not afraid to die. I do not care for death more than that,” said he, snapping his fingers. “ But, Mr. R———, the fearful thought which torments me is, that to-morrow morning, at eight o’clock, I GO TO MEET GOD ! TO MEET GOD ! ”

Eternity only can reveal what the result was of Mr. R———’s visit.

Dear reader, stop a moment, you have also to meet God ; yes, you must one day be face to face with Him. How shall you endure His looks, the brightness of those eyes, too pure to behold iniquity, and which will search you through and through ?

You may say, “ But I am not at all like this criminal, I have never broken the laws of my country.” Granted, but it is no question here of human laws, it is a question of holiness and the rights of God ; and as to this listen to the sentence : “ There is no difference for all have sinned ” ; and remember that a single sin makes a man a sinner, and brings him under the righteous judgment of God. You have not to compare yourself with this or that one ; the question is : “ ARE YOU READY TO MEET GOD ? ” if you were called, not at eight o’clock to-morrow, but now.

A LETTER

FROM AN AGED SERVANT OF THE LORD, NOW WITH HIM,
TO A YOUNG LADY IN FRANCE.

I understand that you feel you are farther from conversion than ever. I do not say that you are, but that this is your thought. I know, and you know, that you have a very restless spirit, which you have much difficulty in controlling. That is an evil; an evil before God; and an evil which will often make you unhappy, but you have already experienced the difficulty of resisting evil when it assails you. The irritation is within, in your nature, although the occasion may be outside of you—your will is unbroken, and you have plenty of it—you see I am not flattering you; but our faults and our falls even, may be made a source of profit to us—we learn that we have no strength. I do not doubt you would like to be gentle (“Let your gentleness be known to all men,” you remember the passage), but you do not succeed in being so. It is a humiliating proof that sin has deprived us of power as well as of righteousness—we may have the wish to do good, but we have not the power to do it. Sorrowful position! and what is the consequence of it? In place of making fruitless efforts when we have already proven that we are unable to overcome our evil nature, if we truly desire holiness and, to be with God, we are forced to humble ourselves and confess that we can do nothing, and that we must submit to the grace which loved us when we were nothing but sinners.

Do you believe the Lord could love you when you were wicked? If He could not, then would you never be loved by Him. What a consolation, when we are truly humbled on account of our faults and the wickedness of our hearts, to know that God loves us tenderly in spite of it all. That is grace, and it is that which makes us hate the evil, that which gives us by grace new strength against it. But it is necessary that we should realize that we are wicked, without strength, that all is grace, that we need this grace and that we are wholly cast upon God, who did not spare His Son for us when we were sinners.

Let me ask you again, do you believe that the good and tender Saviour could love you when you were a sinner? That is grace, that is the gospel; the law demands that we should as men be righteous and perfect, grace comes to us when we are not so, and when we are lost. Think of that, even for power, that the love of God is for those who need it, who have neither righteousness, nor power to acquire it. That is your case, you are already lost and far from God; you have no power in yourself to change your evil nature—you must look to Jesus who loves us, when we have nothing good in ourselves. Read the life of Jesus and see if it was anything but love, even for those who were unworthy and sinners.

It is of this that you should think, to know the love of God for you, such as you are. Go, then, to the gracious Saviour and do so. It may be you may not apparently find all at the moment just as you might wish, but the Lord gives us to know what we are.

He shows us that we have need of Him, and attracts us by His love until we comprehend that we are perfectly saved. Then, and not before, we find power against sin which is in us. Go to Him, you will find that He is love.

* * *

Oh, I pray you, as you will have to give an account at the last day, remember this ; that if you have not sided with Christ here He will not side with you there. If you will not accept the atonement He has made, what other provision can be made ? There is a fearful looking for of judgment; an awful indignation for those that refuse to accept the one sacrifice for sin. Flee, I pray you from the wrath to come. Flee to the open arms of Jesus, to the open side of the Son of God. Find in His wounds your salvation. Seek Him who will cleanse from all iniquity, look to the loving Saviour for power that will enable you to live to His glory. May God, by His Spirit, lead you to the Lamb of God who will take away your sin. For His name's sake, Amen.

My chains are snapt,
The bonds of sin are broken,
And I am free.
Oh ! let the triumphs
Of His grace be spoken,
Who died for me.

I PRAY the Lord that you may find mercy in the day of Christ, and I entreat you to consider the times in which we live, and that your soul is more worth to you than the whole world, and remember that judgment and eternity are before you.

Let me entreat you in Christ's name, and by the salvation of your soul, and by your compearance before the sin-revenging Judge of the world, to make your accounts ready. Read them ere you come to the waterside; for your afternoon will wear short, and your sun fall low and go down! and you know that this long time your Lord hath waited on you. Oh, how comfortable a thing it would be for you, when time shall be no more, and your soul shall depart out of the house of clay, to vast and endless eternity, to have your soul dressed up and prepared for the Bridegroom! No loss is comparable to the loss of the soul; there is no hope of regaining that loss. Oh, how joyful would I be to hear that you had left all vanities and made Christ your garland! Let your soul put away your old lovers, and let Christ have your whole love. May-flowers and morning vapor, and summer mist posteth not so fast away, as these worm-eaten pleasures which you follow. You build castles in the air, and night-dreams are the daily idols that you dote on, but salvation, salvation is the only thing necessary. Call home your thoughts to this work, and enquire for God's well-beloved. Seek the Son's inheritance and let Christ's truth be dear to you. O, betake you to Christ without further delay.

GOOD NEWS.

“ **A**S cold water, to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country” (Pro. xxv. 25). And it has been the privilege of men from time to time to realize this and to thank God for it. It was at the burning but inconsumable bush that on one occasion Moses, while tending his flock, heard such tidings and they filled his heart with joy. “I am come down,” said the Lord of heaven and earth to him, “to deliver them (His people) out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. iii. 8). Such were the glad tidings of God delivered in person. Upwards of 1,500 years passed away, and again good news was sent to other shepherds as they watched their flocks by night, “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people (N.T.), for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” By “the people” is meant the Jews, for it was to them that the Christ or Messiah, was born (Isa. ix. 6), but no sooner was this blessed intelligence delivered than “suddenly (as if impatient of a moment’s delay) there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men” (N.T.).

This goes far beyond the narrow limits of Judaism and enables us to understand that heaven and earth are called upon to see and rejoice in all the blessings enunciated by the host of heaven.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (Isa. lii. 7). Twice we have now seen and heard a message of mercy from God to His people on earth—good news from a far country. The first time He spoke it was to deliver them from a cruel bondage, and for that end He said, “I have come down.” The second time He addressed them (and He had spoken to them many a time and oft between), was to tell them of the fulfilment of His promise in the birth of a Saviour whom He had sent to put away their sins. But at neither time does He say one word about requiring them to do anything in the way of aiding Him to perform the work He had voluntarily undertaken. He had come down to deliver His people out of Egypt and He did it alone and unaided. He had sent His well-loved Son as a Saviour to put away sin and He finished the work which the Father gave Him to do, saying, “It is finished,” when it was completed. But He asked no aid from anyone.

Now this will help us to understand what the good news of God is. It is not what man has to do for God. That is law. Man ought to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and with all his mind. But that, however right it be,

is not grace, it is not the gospel of God. What is that gospel? It is the thoughts of God towards man, that is to say, His thoughts in goodness; to which may be added the acts of God in virtue of these thoughts. In the old Testament we have one remarkable passage in the book of Jeremiah which furnishes an illustration on the point. "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. xxix. 11). These are the kind of thoughts which have their natural and abiding dwelling-place in the heart of God. What an amazing difference there is between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of man. "Out of the heart (of man) proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts." (Matt. xv. 19). But the thoughts of God, as we have seen, are thoughts of peace and not of evil. Such are His thoughts toward man—peace, not war; good, not evil. And it could not be otherwise, for God is love. The good news is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God loved the world, a world of sinners, a world lying in the wicked one, a world in which no good could be found. Why did He love it? Because He is love. There in these few words we have the heart of God laid open to us, and make the discovery that His thoughts to usward are thoughts of goodness, for He is love. This is the good news of God. But what did this love lead Him to do? To give His only begotten Son to an ignominious death

for sinners, that they might be redeemed. Here is some more good news of God. Anything else? That all believers in Him, the wide world over, no matter how great their sins may be, should not perish, but should have everlasting life. A third piece of good news of God.

YOU HAVE SINNED.

There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.—Rom. iii. 23.

YET GOD LOVES YOU.

God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.—Rom. v. 8.

YOU MAY BE SAVED.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.—John iii. 17.

NOW.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.—2 Cor. vi. 2.

BELIEVE AND LIVE.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.—John iii. 36.

NEGLECT AND YOU PERISH.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?—Heb. ii. 3.

BELIEF IN CHRIST.

TO believe in Christ is to believe that He died for sinners according to the scriptures. (1 Cor. xv. 1—4). But true faith in Christ is not satisfied with the mere general belief of this blessed truth. Taking the ground of a sinner, it says, "Yes, but Jesus died for me—He died for my sins, and through His death I am saved. He was delivered for my offences, and where are they? They are all put away. He was raised again for my justification. Hence, if He be a risen Christ, I am a justified sinner. The only proof, or evidence, that I have of pardon, justification, and peace in the presence of God, is a risen Christ." Faith's question is not, how, or what I feel, but is Christ risen? If He who died for my offences, be indeed risen from the dead, I am perfectly and for ever justified before God. (Rom. iv. 5). No sinner can have settled peace, save on the ground of the DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. He who is seated at God's right hand above the heavens, is the living, eternal witness of the believer's full and everlasting salvation.

There are many other passages that plainly teach the same blessed, soul-saving, peace-giving truth. Indeed, all scripture does. The Holy Spirit never suggests a doubt as to the believer's perfect security. Doubts and fears are the prolific offspring of the wicked insinuations of the beguiling serpent. Faith's

stronghold is the word of God, in which it securely rests. But should the enemy seek to invade its peaceful repose, it can triumphantly reply, "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8). The love of God to me while in my sins, as manifested in the death, and resurrection of Christ, satisfies my soul, and settles all for me a sinner. God says it—I believe it—who may question it? Listen to God only. Such is the character of true faith. It is most personal. At the same time, while maintaining its individual place and communion, it rejoices in the common joy of all believers, and glories in the words, "we" and "us."

To believe in Christ is to believe in the cleansing power of His blood, according to the testimony of scripture, and for my own need as a guilty sinner. Although this truth is implied in what has been said about His death for us, still, it gives great relief to the conscience to have the plain direct word of scripture on this special point. Such as, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (I John i. 7). Faith takes its place amongst the "us," and knows for certain that all its sins are cleansed away. Hence the following strong language of unquestioning faith, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. i. 7). A personal application of the blood of Christ is peace to the conscience in the presence of God. Had the Israelite neglected to apply the blood of the lamb to

the lintel and doorposts of his own house in the land of Egypt, he would not have been safe. (Ex. xii.) It was not enough that he had a lamb, or that he had killed it, and had the blood in a basin. No; it had to be applied to his own individual door, or the destroying angel would have entered and killed the firstborn. The blood alone on the lintel and doorposts was the safeguard for all that were in the house. So is it now. There must be a personal application of the blood of Christ to our own need. The mere general belief that Christ loves sinners, that He died for them, and that His blood cleanseth from sin is not enough. There must be a definite, individual application of these blessed realities to our own souls. The language of faith is, "He loves me, He died for me, and His precious blood hath washed all my sins away." But though this is the language of simple faith, it is not, alas, the language of all who believe in Jesus. Many, of whose faith in Christ we can have no doubt, would be afraid to say so much. Through looking to themselves this fearfulness has great power over them, and keeps them from rejoicing in the Lord, and from enjoying His word. Faith never looks to self, but always to the Saviour.

To believe in Christ is to believe that He receives all that come to Him—and, further, true faith in Christ will say, "He has received me." Sometimes the young believer who is not well established in the truth will get into bondage on this point. He thinks that he sees and believes the truth about the love of Jesus to sinners, His dying for them, and the efficacy

of His precious blood ; but he looks to himself and sees so many things that are contrary to Christ, and he begins to doubt if he has been or can be received. He will say plainly, " I doubt nothing you say about Christ, what I doubt is myself." This is a delusion. It is a snare of Satan. For how can you know by looking to yourself whether you can be received or not ? You must allow Christ to say whether He will receive you or not, and believe what He says without questioning. " Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out " (John vi. 37), are His words of gracious assurance to the coming one. The believing heart is satisfied with this assurance, and finds rest in Jesus. Now its every need is met. All fulness dwells in Jesus. He has received me and fitted me for His presence. Thus faith rejoices in Christ Himself, and in all His wondrous love, His complete salvation, and His coming glory.

In conclusion, allow me to ask, in plain terms, is my reader a believer in Christ Jesus ? Without faith in Christ there is no salvation. The soul that lives and dies in unbelief is lost for ever. Oh ! if thou art yet a stranger to Jesus, and living in unbelief, how awfully dangerous thy state is. Eternal danger is treading on thy heels. Another step and all may be over—and all may be lost for ever. Oh ! then, at once, as thou art, and without a moment's delay, flee to Jesus the Saviour of sinners. Believe in His love—His love for thee a sinner. Believe in His death—His death for thee a sinner. Trust in His precious blood to wash all thy sins away. Rest assured that

He is ready and waiting to receive thee. Oh! then, believe in Jesus—receive the truth into thy heart. Come to Himself. Trust in Him. Oh! with what joy and delight He welcomes home the poor lost sinner whom He loves—the one for whom He bled and died—the one whom He has besought many times by His gospel to return—the one whom the Father's hand of love has guided to His everlasting embrace, that He might “breathe on him,” quicken his dead soul, fill and overflow it with life and love divine. “Come unto me,” are His own words, “all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And “whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,” says Paul, “for it is the power of God unto salvation to EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.” Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xxii. 17; Rom. i. 16.

LINES FOUND IN AN INFIDEL'S BIBLE.

The proudest heart that ever beat
 Has been subdued in me;
 The wildest will that rose to scorn Thy friends, to
 aid Thy foes,
 Is quelled, my God, by Thee:
 Thy will and not my will be done;
 I would be ever Thine;
 To sing Thy praise, incarnate Word, my Saviour,
 Christ, my God, my Lord,
 Thy cross shall be my sign.