



The Message

(An Australian Monthly Gospel Magazine).



I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

—ISAIAH lxi. 10.



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Vol. VIII.

The Message.

Aspirations.



A YOUTH, with flashing eye and haughty mien, gazed upon the battle scene. He listened not to the groans of the dying, but, catching the sound of victory, he held his sword above his head, and said, "May mine be a career of military glory—may my name be inscribed on history's page, among those who have conquered; and with no 'shroud' or 'useless coffin,' but with 'a martial cloak' around me, may I at last lie down in the soldier's grave!"

"The glory of the warrior shines dimly when compared with the statesman's," said a young aspirant. "Let me be versed in the affairs of state—let me revel in the halls of nations, and be my voice heard when lords shall listen."

A student, with pale brow and sunken cheek, raised his eye, glowing with ambition's fire, and said, "Though the hill of science is steep and rugged, and thorns and briars are in the way—though pain and weariness he shall find who ascends it, yet I can endure the toil with ease, yea, with pleasure, so I but stand at last in the Temple of Fame."

With eager eyes a young fellow and a gay maiden viewed life's opening path, and forth they went, on pleasure bent, one to the saloon and the racecourse; the other to the opera-house and the ball.

A humble cottager, attired in simple dress, raised his eyes to heaven, and whispered—

“ Father, whate’er of earthly good
 Thy sovereign will denies,
 Accepted at Thy throne of grace
 Let this petition rise :
 Give me a calm, a trustful heart,
 Thine may I henceforth be ;
 Thy love and peace to me impart,
 And make me live to Thee.”

* * * * *

Years had passed. *The youth who asked for war-like honours* had lived threescore years and ten. Fame had blown for him her martial trump; and echo, catching the sound, bore it with swiftest wing through the whole earth. But now his form was bent beneath the weight of years—age had snowed his locks with the almond tree’s bloom; and, weary of life, he laid him down to die. “ In early life,” he said, “ I asked to have my name inscribed on the page of history, and thought, could it be granted, that I should die in peace. Oh, had I asked to see my name written in the book of life, then should I have rested in peace when the days of my pilgrimage had passed away.”

Youth had long faded from the brow of him who sought to be *a statesman*. Consumption’s fire burned on his cheek, and he was fast passing away, as he said:—“ In life’s morn, when hope was bright, I asked to sit in the hall of state, and to speak when learned men listened. Often have those halls echoed my voice, and my willing ear has caught the whispered praise. But it avails naught now. Oh! if I had but asked to learn the ways of Him Who governs all, and at His feet learnt His love and truth, I now should be blest indeed.”

The pale-browed student raised his hand, palsied by age, and said:—"Through patient toil I reached the temple on the hill. 'Twas well to ask this boon; but far better, had I asked also, that, while ascending science's rugged hill, I might not forget Mount Zion; for then at last might I have reached that temple not made with hands."

Time, too, had breathed on the *pleasure seekers*. The roseate hue had fled from their cheeks, and their eyes, now dim and lustreless, were closed in death. And what did *they* each say in death's sad hour?—"I sought for pleasure and I got it, but it left behind an aching void and a dreary future. Oh that I had sought the pleasures which are for evermore—the joy of God's salvation—then everything would now be bright with hope, and not dark with remorse and despair.

O World! O Life! O Time!
 On whose last steps I climb,
 Trembling at that where I had stood before
 When will return the glory of your prime?
 No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
 A joy has taken flight:
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
 No more—Oh, never more!

Fast gathered the dew of death on the brow of the *cottager*, and the light of life burned dimly, as he said:—"My Father, my God, in early life I trusted Thy Son as my Saviour and Guide, and He has kept and led me all the journey through. Dark and weary has the road often been, but Thy joy and peace have filled my heart, and not one word of all Thy good promises has failed. And now I long to depart and be forever with my Lord."

My thirsty spirit faints
 To reach the Home I love;
 The bright inheritance of saints,
 Jerusalem above.

Anon.

The Perilous March ;

Or, "What kind of faces will the people make?"



A STORY is told of the only son and heir of a king in India, whose father had been slain in battle, the capital taken, and the country devastated by a rival monarch. The prince, a lad of sixteen, had been imprisoned in Benares, the victor's capital; but, through the intercession of friends, the king consented to his liberation, and sent word to the prison that on a certain day the prince was to be taken out of the jail, and after a public procession through the city, was to obtain his freedom.

"What kind of faces will the people make?" said the prince, as he thought of the crowds who would congregate to witness the march. Little did he know the peril to which he exposed himself through the utterance of these words.

At noon on the day appointed, the king's messenger placed in his hands a crystal dish filled to the brim with milk. He was told that it was the king's command that he should carry it through the streets of the city, and that if he spilled a single drop of it, he would forfeit his life. Taking the bowl in his hand, the prince slowly and cautiously headed the procession along. Following at his heels, was the king's representative with drawn sword, ready to obey the royal mandate.

The streets, windows, and balconies were crowded with people who watched with breathless interest the procession as it wended its way throughout the crowded thoroughfares. The march was at last successfully accomplished, and the prince was liberated.

"Well, what kind of faces have the people made?" asked the king of the lad.

"Oh, king," was the reply, "I have not seen one of them. I saw only my life in my hand, and death behind me."

Many, when warned of their danger, and urged to flee for safety to Christ, ask, "What would so and so say if I became a Christian?" They move in a circle of worldly friends, whose good graces they covet; and they think that if they were saved, they would be the butt of their ridicule, and have hard things said about them. And they could not "stand" that. They therefore prefer risking eternal damnation to encountering the scorn of a few poor fellow worms of the dust. When the prince thought of his life being in his hands, and death behind him, he had no time to think of the "faces" of the people. Is there not instruction for every unsaved one in this story? A proclamation of pardon is made to you. "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii.).

If, like the young prince, you saw death behind you, you would care little for the faces of the poor empty-headed and empty-hearted companions. The messenger of death is on your track. God's long suffering will come to an end. Don't allow the laugh or jeer, the scoff or curl of the lip of unsaved sinners to stand between you and Christ. Count no one your friend who is an enemy of your soul.

If, through shame, you neglect God's great salvation, and go to hell, you will be eternally ashamed of yourself when "many of them that sleep in dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt"

(Dan. xii.) Then the burning blush of eternal shame will be indelibly stamped upon your brow.

Why should you be ashamed of the Lord Jesus? Is there anything about Him that should cause one to blush? Has He not been your best and dearest Friend? And has He not died upon the cross that He might deliver you from the guilt and slavery of sin? What more proof is necessary to convince you? Is He not worthy of all your confidence, of your true and glad confession? Oh, be ashamed of yourself, of your cowardice, ingratitude, obstinacy, and rebellion. Be ashamed that you have so long spurned His grace, and turned a deaf ear to His call. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of Him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels" (Luke ix. 26).

A. M.

The Cup of Sin.

"Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup."—Psa. xi. 6.

SINNER, be not deceived. The tale of the goblet, which the genius of a heathen fashioned, was true; and taught a moral of which many a death-bed furnishes the melancholy illustration. Having made the model of a serpent, he fixed it in the bottom of the cup. Coiled for the spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, and in its open mouth fangs raised to strike, it lay beneath the ruby wine. Nor did he who raised that golden cup to quench his thirst, and quaff the delicious draught, suspect what lay below, till as he reached the dregs, that dread-

ful head rose up and glistened before his eyes. So, when life's cup is nearly emptied, and sin's last pleasure quaffed, and unwilling lips are draining the bitter dregs, shall rise the ghastly terrors of remorse, and death, and judgement, upon the despairing soul. Be assured, a serpent lurks at the bottom of guilt's sweetest pleasure. To this awful truth may God, by His Word and Holy Spirit, open your eyes.

“Flee for Refuge.”



AN offender had committed a crime for which he must die, but it was in the olden time, when churches were considered to be sanctuaries in which criminals might hide themselves, and so escape from death. See the transgressor! He rushes towards the church, the guards pursue him with their drawn swords, athirst for his blood! They follow him even to the church door. He rushes up the steps, and just as they are about to overtake him, and hew him in pieces, forth comes the bishop, and holding up the cross, he cries—

“Back, back! Stain not the precincts of God's house with blood! Stand back!”

The fierce soldiers at once respect the emblem and retire, while the poor fugitive hides himself behind the robes of the bishop.

It is even so with Christ. The guilty sinner flies straight away to Jesus; and though Justice pursues him, Christ lifts up His wounded hands, and cries to Justice, “Stand back! I shelter this sinner; in the secret place of My tabernacle do I hide him; I will not suffer him to perish.” “Him that cometh unto Me I will in nowise cast out.”

Law and Grace.

"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. . . . And Moses said unto the people, Fear not : for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."—Ex. xx. 18, 20, 21.

IN the twentieth chapter of Exodus, the law came with thunderings and lightnings, and great noises, and we read, "when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off." But the fact of the people not being able to meet the law's demands does not mitigate its claim. The claim was just; God had a right to make the claim, just as a landlord has a right to the rent from his tenant; and if the landlord insists upon his right, supposing the tenant to be poor, he makes a bankrupt of him; at least he has a *right* to do so.

If your landlord insists upon his right, and you find your incompetency to pay your rent, it brings you simply to this point, that you must sue (in legal phrase) in the form of a pauper—that is, you must sue for mercy. The law makes you sensible that if you are unable to meet the claim, but still admit the claim, you are a fit subject for *grace*. I am only sketching out to you what I will now proceed to prove.

What is the effect of the Law as God's claim upon man when man is unable to meet that claim? It makes him feel that he is at a distance from God; then the whole point is to effect a reconciliation. If the landlord says, "You must meet such and such a claim," and the tenant answers, "What is the good of insisting on it when I have not a farthing," what will he do? Well, suppose there is goodness

in the landlord, and he says, "I do not want to ruin you, so I will make you one of my children." Would the landlord ask his own children to pay rent? So the tenants under the law are made children of God by grace. God says, "I will forgive you all, and I will change you from tenants to children:" that is Grace.

Now, which will you stand upon? Will you be tenants or children? You are, at this present hour, either the one or the other. All whom I address are either tenants or children. You are all owing God something, or you have had it all cleared away. Every one who goes home from hearing me must either go a tenant, or (as I hope will be the case), go home a child. When you know that all is cleared away by the blood of God's own Son, then you are children by grace, and children do not pay rent like tenants. "But," you will say, "what is the use of God having a claim?" The good of God having a claim is to prove that you must be saved by grace.

"Therefore, the children of Israel removed and stood afar off." I hope every one now hearing me has had the fear of God before him. I remember, my beloved friends, what fear I was in once. I was very young at the time: I think about seventeen or eighteen. I was reading in the newspapers that the cholera was only about six miles away from the place where I was living. I was very religious. I read the Bible four times a day, yet I was in such a state, that at last I was on the floor. Now, I said to myself, "What are you afraid of?" And I answered, "I am afraid to die; I am afraid to meet the Holy God." Yet I was religious. I used to go to church regularly. But I was a tenant, you see, and I knew that I had not the rent. I knew that if the day of judgment came I could not meet God's

requirements.

Thus you will find that when the Lord came to the children of Israel on pay-day, there were thunders and lightnings; and "the people removed and stood afar off," because they could not face the Lord. Thus the distance was made wider.

Did you ever notice a tenant, who had not the rent when it was due, seeing his landlord coming down one side of the street? I am sure you would see that tenant cross to the other side. That is not reconciliation—for he is trying to avoid him. That is what the Law does. You know that you are owing God the rent, and you are afraid to face Him. Now, the wonderful thing is this, that when you are converted, where you feared most, you are now most at home. The place you feared most is that which is filled with the love and righteousness of God for you. That is the very place for you. Why does a child like to sit next to its mother? Because that is the safest spot for the child. You are full of fear of God—are you? Why? Because He has a demand upon you, and you know He has a right to that claim. If He had not a right, it would not trouble you at all. You would say, "He has no claim upon me." Thus, like Israel, the righteousness of the claim does not effect a reconciliation; but, on the contrary, it causes a greater distance between you and God. "Therefore, the people removed and stood afar off." That was the effect of the Law.

Now let me read to you what Grace is:—

"An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of

hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon" (verses 24-26).

That is grace! But I want to say one word about the conditions connected with God's altar. There are two conditions: one is, that you must not "lift your hand" to take any part in it, or you will pollute it; and the other is, that you must not "raise your foot"—neither your hands (your work), nor your feet (your walk)—can help matters. When the tenant is unable to pay the rent, and when grace is about to be extended to him by the landlord, the landlord says to him, "Now you must stop all efforts of your own. You must do nothing but take what I give you. If you stir hand or foot you spoil everything; you must just let me have the credit of doing it all."

You say, "Must I do nothing?"

"No."

"Must I do no works for it?"

"No."

"Must I not try and walk holily for it?"

"No; you must not stir hand nor foot to get salvation." Your questions show that you do not believe in grace. Christ comes so near to you with it, that you need not go a step for it, and He has done the work so completely that you need not do a jot.

Now, mark these conditions, because when I come to the two things—law and grace—you will find the grand thing that I have to maintain: that the man who is saved is simply a recipient.

Now look at the New Testament, and you will see the results of grace. In Luke xxiii. we have read:—

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save

thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing that thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly: for we receive the due rewards of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

The Lamb of God is suffering; and two thieves are crucified along with Him. They are now in the grip of the law, and they are suffering its vengeance. They have broken the law; each is nailed on the cross, and they are dying without mercy. One of them repents. It is not merely a death-bed repentance, but it shows us that when the law takes its course to the utmost, grace comes in, and Christ says, "I accept the punishment: the just for the unjust." That is grace; therefore law and grace come together.

The great principles of the twentieth chapter of Exodus are brought out in the twenty-third of Luke. There is no mercy in the law itself. He who breaks the law must die without mercy. When the law finds you out, it condemns you. If I go to a tenant and say, "You owe me the rent, and I claim it at once;" if that man cannot pay me, it is all over with him so far as the law is concerned. There is no hope for him. Now these two thieves are in the grip of the law. In a very little moment they will be launched by the law into a fearful, endless eternity of condign punishment, to bear the judgment of God for ever. I want you to look at what the law brings men to.

You say, "Oh! we are not thieves."

I would like to see the man who would stand up

and say that he never broke the law. Can you? "No," you say. Well, the Scripture says that if you offend in one point, you are guilty of all. If you take the position of a tenant, you are in a bad position, and I grieve for you. You hear people constantly saying that they are in a miserable condition.

Don't talk in such a way; for you have been told the remedy, but won't take it. Suppose a man has got some disease, and I say, "Here is an infallible cure for it." Do you pity that man if he does not take the cure? Not a bit.

An infidel comes to me and says, "I don't believe in that book."

"Don't you?" I answer. "Very well. I am under the judgment of death, and I find in this blessed Book what is the matter with me, and I also find what will cure me, and the cure is mentioned in the most distinct manner."

The infidel says, "I don't believe a word of it." I ask him, "If you deny this cure, what better cure do you give me in its place?"

"I have not got any," he says. "Very well," I retort, "you may walk off. Here is a Book that actually describes, in the most penetrating manner, my soul's state, and, in as distinct a manner, gives me a remedy for that state, and you will not believe it even as you would believe in the cure one gives you for a bodily disease. Ah, if you had a pill for the cure of a bodily disease, and had millions of people who would testify to the efficacy of it, you would use it to prove it.

Turn again, friends, to this wonderful scene. I find the two thieves on the Cross, one on either side of the blessed Lord; yet they did not know Him. One of them says, "If thou be Christ, save thyself

and us." "If!" There is not a tenant among us who does not say "If!" That little word is what keeps the terrible darkness in your souls, that makes you unable to see grace. You know of Jesus, and so did this thief, but he did not know Christ, because he had an "If." That little word "If" was his ruin. What a sad thing, my beloved friends, to think that hereafter you should say, "That word 'If' has been my ruin." Now drop the "If" and say, "I am a poor wretched creature—I will only look for grace."

Suppose a man owes an unpayable debt—an overdraft at his bank. Well, another man comes and says, "I will pay it all." The debtor believes, yet he is, first, in an *anxious* state. But when he sees his friend go into the bank, he is in a *hopeful* state; but when he sees him come out of the bank with the receipt in his hand, he is in an *assured* state. Now that is an illustration of grace and reconciliation.

God is so well pleased at the way in which the debt has been paid by the Son, that He has been raised from the dead, by the glory of the Father. It is not only that I see Him risen, with the receipt in His hand, but He has done it in such a way that God is glorified for it. Suppose—referring to my illustration again—suppose I were the man who owed the debt, and that now, the debt being paid, the bank determines that from henceforth they will have an illumination day and night, to commemorate the way in which the debt has been discharged. Well, before my debt was paid, every time I saw the bank I was in bitter trouble about the debt I owed to it, but now every time I look at it, I see the light—the wonderful continued light—and I do not feel troubled any more, because I see the expression of the perfect satisfaction with regard to the way in

which my debt has been paid.

It is not only how *we* feel, but how *God* feels. Before you were saved you were afraid to go into the bank, in fact you dared not go in. But now if you go into the bank, you are the most welcome man there. They say, "Here is the man who owed such a large debt, and Christ came and paid it all."

Ah, yes, angels say, "Here is the man who dared not show his face in heaven, but God's Son has discharged his liabilities, and now he is welcome to all heaven." You no longer dread the bank—God's righteousness—nor do you stand "afar off;" You draw near! Language fails me to express the beauty of all this.

Now, the thief on the cross knew the law, but he did not know Christ. He is in the hands of the law, and his companion turns round to him and says, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" One of old, of whom you have all heard, John Bunyan, says that "God never begins to play upon an instrument but that He begins upon the base note."

The thief says to his comrade, "Dost not thou fear God?" "We receive the due reward of our deeds." That is law. But he adds, "*This man hath done nothing amiss.*" What a wonderful thing! The poor thief, a sinner, dying under the law without mercy, gets light, and can read the life of that Man, and declares it to have been spotless from the hour He came into this world. You say, "Was it with the natural eye he saw Him?" No, it was with the spiritual eye. Otherwise, how could he tell Christ's whole history? Nothing but the Spirit of God could make such a wonderful disclosure to the thief; the disclosure that the Just was suffering for the unjust, to bring him to God. Have you ever

seen Him? (I must come to close quarters.) Have you ever seen Christ with faith's eye? Here is a thief who is so wicked that the world cannot put up with him. The law has put him in such a position that he could not stir hand nor foot. Now grace comes in, and saves him just as he is. We ought to be thankful for what the law does, for it puts us in a position to receive grace. That man was pinioned by the law, so that he could not move hand nor foot. Hand means *work*, and foot means *walk*. What could he do? Nothing! But he could say, "He that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, hath everlasting life."

The thief prays, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." This thief not only received grace, but the effect of grace comes out in him. The man has got a *new taste*! It is a wrong statement to say that thieves are in heaven. There is no such thing as a thief in heaven. Those who were thieves are in heaven; but that is an entirely different thing. How does that bear upon us? I do not believe that any person who has really got the new taste can put up with his old ways. The poor thief got a new taste, but what did he say? He says, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." The Lord says, I will do more for you than that, for "to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," where you will be in the perfect enjoyment of Myself, and everything that is morally beautiful and perfect. There are two things which mark a converted man. He prays to God, putting his trust and dependence upon Him; and he has a new taste—he would like to be under the rule of Christ—in His kingdom—and with Himself for ever.

(An address by the late J. B. S.)

“Not as Men Pleasers.”

“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”—Eph. vi. 6

PASSING through the chambers of the factory at Sevres, we observed an artist drawing a picture upon a vase. We watched him for several minutes, but he appeared to be quite unconscious of our observation. Parties of visitors passed through the room, glanced at his work more or less hurriedly, and made remarks; but he, as a deaf man, heard not, and, as a dead man, regarded not.

Why should he? Had he not royal work on hand? What mattered to him the approbation or the criticism of passers-by? They did not get between him and the light, and therefore they were no hindrance, though they certainly were no help.

“Well,” thought we, “after this fashion should we devote our heart and soul to the ministry which we have received of the Lord.” Bowing over our work, scanning earnestly our copy, and laying on each line and tint with careful, prayerful hand, we should finish the work which the Lord has given us to do, without regard to friend or foe. The Sevres vase retained no impress of the onlooker’s gaze; the result of the worker’s skill would have been the same if he had been altogether unseen and unknown.

Human criticism can help us but little, and human approbation, if listened to, is dangerous indeed. Let us forget that we are judged of men, and henceforth live only as under the Master’s eye, absorbed in doing His will, and seeking to accomplish His work for His glory alone.

The Ten Tribes.



LET us give five reasons to prove that the ten tribes are not the Anglo-Saxon race:—

1st. The people shall dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations. This is true of the Jews, but not true of the Anglo-Saxons. (Num. xxiii. 9.)

2nd. Israel is to remain many days without king or prince, and without a true knowledge of God. The Anglo-Saxons are not in these circumstances. (Hosea iii. 4, 5.)

3rd. The twelve tribes, out of Palestine, are to be *few* in number, under national curse, and multiplied and no longer *few* when restored. But the Anglo-Saxons, though out of Palestine, are enjoying national blessing, and are not a *few* in number. (Deut. iv. 26, 27; chap. xxviii. 62-66; Jer. xxx. 3, 4, 19; Zech. viii. 13.)

4th. The penalty of uncircumcision is excision. The Anglo-Saxons are uncircumcised. (Gen. xvii. 10-14.)

5th. Anglo Saxons are either saints or sinners; if saints, then detached (though Israelites) from the nation, and incorporated with the Church; if sinners, then "under the curse of law" (Gal. iii.). So that it will not do to urge the plea, that because the Anglo-Saxons are nominally Christian, therefore they have escaped the curse of the law; for they can only escape that curse by true conversion, which detaches them from the nation and secures to them a heavenly calling and a heavenly inheritance. (Eph. ii.)

But what harm, it is asked, can come out of the

theory of our Israelitish origin? We answer, it diverts attention from the elect nation destined in the revealed purpose of God to be the channel of blessing to the world. When our blessed Lord answered Satan's temptations by "It is written," and "It is written again," we do not find Satan inquiring anything about the nature and authority of the documents referred to; it is implied that he admitted they were authentic and from God, and that he knew all about them, and that he reads and studies the Scriptures in order to use his skill in thwarting the Lord's revealed purpose. Surely Satan must know that all the families of the earth are to be blessed in Abraham's seed; and that God has declared, "This people have I formed for Myself, they shall show forth My praise." Thus Satan succeeded in persuading the professing Gentile Church, in early times, that she was a spiritual Israel, to whom all *blessings* promised to the national Israel exclusively belonged; and that to the literal and national Israel belonged only the *curses* literally understood.

This doctrine has been embodied in commentaries, and proclaimed from most of the pulpits of Christendom, and is still largely held and preached at this day. What has been the result of this doctrine? *The "Dark Ages" for the Church; and cruelty at worst, and indifference at best towards the Jew.* The promises given to the Church, and the curses given to the Jew, any kind of conduct on the part of Christendom, however cruel, was considered as rather pleasing than otherwise to God. This was a great masterstroke of Satan, by which he at once secured a corrupt, ignorant, persecuting, dead Church; intensified unbelief amongst Israel; and a world asleep in the arms of the Wicked One.

Within the last 70 years, however, an intelligent and devout body of Christians, distinguished for piety and learning, have taught the Church of Christ a lesson she is slow to learn:—

1st. That the Book we call the Bible most certainly means *something*, which can be taught us by the Spirit; and

2nd. The Bible probably *means* what it *says*.

“Ah!” says Satan, “but this will never do. This will land the Church in the doctrine and hope of the pre-millennial advent, and tend to produce unworldliness; this won't do.”

Again, with unworldliness and increased spiritual power will come an earnest desire to know and do the revealed will of God. The natural and national Israel will then take a prominent place in the Church's prayer and effort, in order that through Israel the original and unchanged purpose of Jehovah may be realised in the world's blessing.

So now we have another masterstroke of Satan; a determined struggle to get the Anglo-Saxon to believe, without the slightest evidence, and, indeed, against the clearest Scripture testimony, that they are the natural Israel to whom all the promises are made, the promises *only*; and then by a hard and arbitrary line drawn between Judah and Israel, as though Jews were not Israelites, to hand over all the curses, and curses *only*, to the Jews. This we believe to be the nature of the mischief of this modern theory, and it is one of the leading latter-day errors of these “perilous times.” Cost what it may, we faithfully, solemnly, yet affectionately, warn the Christian against this latter-day error, as mischievous and dangerous as it is flattering, fascinating, and unscriptural.

(From “*The ten tribes: Where are they?*”)

Where the "If" is.



ONCE there came one with some doubt; with a word of hesitancy, as if not sure that Jesus could help him. It was the case of the man who went to the disciples before he found Jesus, and who got his heart chilled and his faith dimmed by their failure. He spoke with a faltering, "*If Thou canst do anything.*"

At once Jesus took his "if" and put it where only it can ever be—in us, not in Him:—" *If thou canst believe.*"

There is no "if" in Christ, the "if"—the unbelieving "if"—is in your faithless heart. Oh, doubting one, pluck it out, cast it off, and then you will not cry: "Lord, *if* Thou canst do anything," but:

"Lord, Thou canst do all things, there is nothing impossible to Thee."



Selfish use of Divine Blessings.



OUR brother G. J. S. points out the readiness of man to receive blessing from God, but also his selfishness in hurrying away to enjoy it. He gives as examples of these:—

Adam, who cared for enjoyment and self-gratification more than for subjection to the Divine will.

The *Prodigal Son* also took the patrimony, but slighted his father, turning his back upon love and home to plunge into sensual pleasure in the far country.

The *elder brother* showed the same spirit: "Thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends"—for the abundance of his father's house did not content him unless he could enjoy himself with his friends.

The *woman cured of the issue* would have stolen off with the mercy and never have acknowledged it, but Christ knew that He would lose the best half of the blessing if there was no thankful confession, so he gently won it from her.

The *nine lepers* who were cured and did not return to give thanks exhibit the same selfishness.

How all this reverses true relations, making God the mere minister to man's pleasure, instead of making man to be for the praise of God.

J. N. B.

Eph. iii. 19.

"**T**HAT ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," is a prayer at which we falter. Is it not too much to ask? Is it not a sublime flight after the impossible?

No, for let us remember it is not, "That ye might contain all the fulness of God." That *would* be more impossible than that your chamber should contain all the light of the sun. But it can be *filled with* the light of the sun—so filled that not a particle of unilluminated air shall remain within it.

A child's vessel cannot contain the ocean, but it can be *filled with* (or "out of") the ocean.

So, dear brethren, let us go on praying to be filled with heavenly light, and with the ocean love of the fulness of God.

W. A.

Weights and Corks.

(Isa. xlii. 2.)



TWO things are essential to a fishing-net if it is to catch fish: one is *weights*, and the other, *corks*. Not weights alone, or else the net will sink out of sight, and lie useless at the bottom of the sea: nor corks alone, else it will toss about like a mass of sea-weed on the ocean's surface till it is stranded on the rocks or the beach. To accomplish the end for which it is made, the net must have both weights and corks—*weights*, so that it shall touch the bottom, and thus the fish will not slip away under it; *corks*, so that it shall float on the face of the deep, and thus the fish cannot escape over it.

The net is a symbol of the ways and methods adopted by those whom Christ has made "fishers of men," to reach and rescue men from the turbid sea of this evil world—from the sphere and power of Satan (Isa. lvii. 20, 21). The mending (Mark i. 19), the washing (Luke v. 2), and the casting (Mark i. 16) of the net have been often dwelt upon; but what about its weights and corks? Well, every gospel fisherman knows what they are, though he may call them by other names.

We all have *weights*! I do not refer to weights of the devil's making (Heb. xii. 1), "which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. vi. 9); but, rather, to the various trials, small and great, with which the Lord, in wisdom and love, often weights us. We know there *are* things which, as we say, "drag us down;" things which make us sigh; things from which we appeal to God to be

released. Ill-health; natural timidity (1 Cor. xvi. 10); nervous apprehensions before giving an address, or undertaking some work, and a humiliating sense afterwards that we fell far short of our ideal; lack of funds; bereavement of friends (or, what is worse, disappointment in their friendship); fault-finding on the part of idle critics; and, worst of all, the painful lifelong learning of the hidden evils of our own hearts:—these and other things, more or less, weigh our spirits down till sometimes we cry *de profundis*—out of the depths (Psa. cxxx.).

But, thank God, we have the counterpoise to the weights in the corks, so that we swim even as we sink! The gracious ministry of the word, personal communion with God, fresh power from on high, brotherly help and cheer, “consolation in Christ, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, bowels and compassions—all lift us out of the turgid waters, till we breathe and bask in the peaceful atmosphere and sunshine of God.

Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord Who rises
With healing in His wings.

So sang Cowper after one of his terrible fits of despondency, and well he knew the meaning of his words. Happy, indeed, are the “surprises” which our God sometimes springs upon us—surprises which act like corks, bearing us up till we top the waves of adversity, and float peacefully, if not passively, on the surface of the stormy billows of tribulation, unalarmed by the conflicting elements below, above, and around.

How evenly balanced were the weights and the corks in the gospel service of Paul—how perfect was the equipoise.

Says he, in the Epistle of Christian service:—

We are pressed on every side, but not hemmed in;
Perplexed, but not without a way of escape;
Persecuted, but not forsaken;
Cast down, but not destroyed (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9).

What are these but the weights and the corks attached to the gospel fisher's net?

But listen again:

In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (2 Cor. vi. 4-10).

Here, surely, are weights and corks in abundance; and notice again how nicely they balance one another.

If more is needed, let us look at 2 Cor. xi. 23-33. Ah! what a long catalogue of weights are here. How came it they did not sink the beloved apostle never to rise again? The next chapter gives the answer: "A man in Christ"—"unspeakable words"—"abundance of revelations"—"the third heaven"—"grace sufficient." Yes, it was the realization and remembrance of all this, and much more, which it was not possible for Paul to put into words, which acted like corks in sustaining his devoted heart amidst his otherwise soul-sinking weights of affliction.

Beloved fellow-fishermen—both ye who toil in the shoals, and ye who “do business in great waters”—in facing another year let us be mindful of the relative, yea, and the absolute value of the weights and the corks which perfect our nets. The Lord knows how and when to keep us down, by making us feel our dependence, “lest we be exalted above measure;” and He knows how and when to sustain us, lest we “lose heart in well doing,” and sink in despair. Blessed be His name for the weights, which, like moral ballast, save us from getting top-heavy in the day of gladness and success. Blessed be His name for the corks, which, like succouring grace, keep us from fainting in the day of adversity, and, lifting us up out of the depths, nerve and hearten us for His work.

S. J. B. C.

The Old Year.



“AND what didst thou see, Old Year,” said I,
 “In thy flight adown Time’s wintry sky?
 Thy work is done for Eternity;
 Hast thou not something to say to me?”

“O, many’s the sight that I have seen,
 Some wondrous fair, some sad, I ween,
 As I sped on my course—but ’tis nought to me,
 For I stand on the shore of Eternity’s sea.

I’ve seen the light-hearted, the joyous, the gay,
 Cut down in the bloom of life’s earliest day;
 And many a little one fondly caress’d,
 I’ve borne on my wings to the home of the blest:
 Sweet flowers of the valley, I plucked them away,
 To bloom in the bowers of Eden for aye.

And many I saw in life's morning serene,
 In the pride of their glory—when fast o'er the scene
 Came the gloom of the grave; and o'er death's rolling wave
 They hear nevermore, on that desolate shore,
 The voice of the One who is mighty to save.

Ah! once they had heard of that wonderful story—
 Of how from his home in the far distant glory,
 The Son of the Blessed—O love past degree!
 Stoop'd down e'en to death upon Calvary's tree.
 They heard the sweet story—for many were telling
 Of Him who had died, and of love so excelling;
 And how He had risen a Prince and a Saviour,
 To give full remission, all of His free favour.

But it seem'd unto them as a tale that was told:
 One went to his merchandise—one to his gold;
 And one to the world with its glittering throng;
 And one to its dance, and one to its song;
 And one to the wine-cup that sparkles so bright,
 While they cry as they haste to earth's fleeting delight—
 'The time's not convenient—a season have we:
 We are far from the shore of Eternity's sea.'

But swift—ah! how swift!—as on pinions of light;
 Ere thought they of danger—ere dreamed they of flight
 Death swept down the sky, and the cup from their hand,
 The fond cup of pleasure, he dash'd on the sand.

From all that they counted so joyous and bright,
 He dragged them away to the regions of night,
 Where the blackness of darkness for ever shall reign,
 And the Christ they rejected they'll search for in vain.

Yes, many's the sight I beheld in my flight,
 As I sped on my course to Eternity's sea;
 And, now at its close, ere in death I repose,
 A question I have, and I'll ask it of *thee*.

I ask thee: "O where, if in depths of despair,
 Or regions of glory and bliss shalt thou be,
 When in life's latest hour, and in death's dreaded pow'r,
 Thou shalt stand on the shore of Eternity's sea?"

Who held the Rope?

"In Damascus the governor kept the city, with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down." (2 Cor. xi.)

GOD can always find a way of escape for His servants. God has His window and basket for men now who put their trust in Him—one that will just fit them. He knows where to find it and when to bring it out. Trust Him. An old basket and a half-worn rope becomes the salvation of an apostle.

Unrecognised service. Who are those people holding that rope? Who tied it to the basket? Who steadied the apostle as he stepped in? Their names have not come to us, and yet the work they did eclipses all that was done that day in Damascus and round the world over.

Perhaps in heaven we shall meet one who in answer to our enquiry, "And what were you helped to do on earth?" will reply,—“In time of bitter persecution I owned a house in Damascus, and the balcony reached over the wall, and a gospel preacher was pursued, and I hid him away from the assassins, and when I could no more seclude him I told him to fly for his life, and in a basket this maltreated one was let down over the wall, and *I was one who helped to hold the rope.*”

On what a small tenure great results hang. The ropemaker had no idea how much depended on the strength of his workmanship. If you make a rope, make it stout, for you do not know how much may depend upon your workmanship. Whatever you do, do “as to the Lord.” Remember “you serve the Lord Christ.” God gives to each of us something to do for Him—some rope to make or to hold.

His Mother's Bible.



IT is said that the Steamer "Scotia" once picked up a dozen shipwrecked sailors in mid-ocean. Among them was a boy of twelve years.

"Who are you?" said the captain.

The answer was: "I'm a Scotch boy. My father and mother are both dead, and I am on my way to America."

"What have you here?" said the captain, as he opened the boy's jacket and took hold of a rope around the boy's body.

"It's a rope," said the boy.

"But what is that tied by this rope under your arm?"

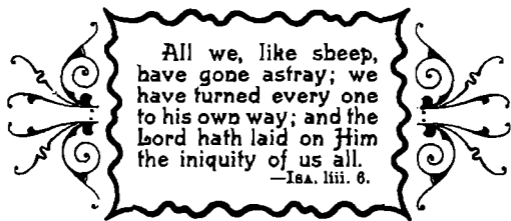
"That, sir, is my mother's Bible. She told me never to lose that."

"Could you not have saved something else?"

"Yes, sir, but I could not have saved anything else and my Bible as well."

"Did you expect to drown?"

"I thought it very possible, sir, but I meant to take my mother's Bible down with me."



The Christian Pilgrim's Home-call.



“**T**READ softly—bow the head—
In reverent silence bow ;
No passing bell doth toll—
Yet an immortal soul
Is passing now.

Stranger ! however great,
With lowly reverence bow ;
There's one in that poor shed—
One on that paltry bed—
Greater than thou.

Beneath that humble roof,
Lo ! Death doth keep his state ;
Enter—no crowds attend ;
Enter—no guards defend,
No servants wait.

That garret, damp and cold,
No smiling courtiers tread ;
One silent woman stands—
Lifting with trembling hands
A dying head.

Yet is no terror there,
But confidence and peace :
The soul rests in the Saviour's love
Till He sends sweetly from above
The glad release.

Oh, change !—oh, wondrous change !
Burst are the prison bars ;
One moment *there*, so low,
So agonized ; and *now*—
Beyond the stars.

Oh, change !—stupendous change !
There lies the soulless clod.
The sun eternal breaks—
The new immortal wakes—
Wakes with his God.”

Seven W's.



WHO' quaint may be the theme we choose,
 We speak not simply to amuse,
 Do not the lessons, then, refuse
 Taught by these seven "W's."

YOUR WORDS :

Both good and bad, they rise, they slip,
First from the heart, *next* from the lip,
Then forthwith on their mission trip,
 To heal and help, or wound and nip.

YOUR WILL :

Oft stubborn, restless, wayward too,
 So rash to plan, to say, to do ;
 Grace only can "stiff will" subdue ;
 Ask God to give that grace to you.

YOUR WISHES :

Heed them ! or you may pout and fret
 For what will fill you with regret.
 'Tis better sometimes *not* to "get"
 The thing on which your heart is set.

YOUR WRONGS :

Forgive ! Nor dark resentment nurse ;
To brood o'er wrong but makes it worse.
A timely text, both true and terse,
Is Romans xii. : the nineteenth verse.

YOUR WORK :

Look up, and God will shew you it ;
And give you strength, and moral grit,
And daily school and make you fit
To do it well—yes, every bit.

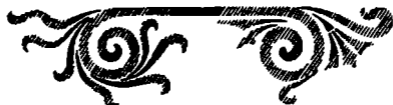
YOUR WAY :

The Lamp of Truth is shining bright,
It gracious beams around unite
To flood your earthly path with light,
And guide your little steps aright,

YOUR WANTS :

Spread them before the Throne above,
And leave them there—nor one remove ;
But fold your heart-wings like the dove,
And rest, assured that "God is Love."

S. J. B. C.



The Message.

“Lost! Lost! Lost!”



THE old man with the bell again! He has been pacing the town streets this last hour or more, ringing his bell at intervals, and uttering the same words at each place to those who stand still to listen. “Lost! lost! lost!” He is at the street corner now. What is lost? A child strayed from the house of its careless mother; a purse heavy with gold dropped from the pocket of a merchant; a book of papers “of no value to anybody but the owner?” “Lost! lost! lost!” The old man is crying still the same words, in the same monotonous key. His voice dies away now in the distance, and I can only hear the sharp ring of his bell. “Lost! lost! lost!” What has been lost, I wonder, and will the lost property find its way back to its owner?

I, too, have a loss to proclaim. Let me sound the bell to call attention. “Lost! lost! lost!” A golden opportunity of doing good. It was last heard of in the Sunday-school, a few Sundays ago. The children in the class were all present, and seemed unusually serious, for they had heard of the death of one of their companions during the week. One in the class was much affected. The repeated instructions of her teacher had started up in her remembrance. Her heart had not been so softened for a long time. Longing to find relief from her burden, in this mind she came to school that after-

noon. But the teacher was not there! She had a visitor, or a headache, or felt otherwise indisposed, and thought herself justified in remaining at home. Her place was supplied by another, but the girls, disappointed at the absence of their own teacher, did not attend to her words. The opportunity for which the teacher had watched for months was gone. Will it ever be found again? Who can tell?

"Lost!" lost!" lost!" The zeal and first love of a once earnest young convert. It was a pearl of great price, and its loss, therefore, is much to be deplored. No sooner was its possessor converted, than the shining of this jewel was seen. He had not a great store of knowledge, nor profound depth of mind; but he had much personal love for the Lord. His talents were not many: certainly not ten, perhaps hardly five; but he had *one*, and this one treasure constituted him rich. He kept it not locked up in his heart, nor left it in the meeting-room on the seat, nor in his Bible or hymn-book. He carried it ever with him. But he has lost it! We can scarcely tell how, for it seems he himself was unaware of his loss till some time after his jewel was gone.

Some think it was stolen from his person, for he was seen arguing very dogmatically, followed closely by one called "*Spiritual Pride*," a noted pickpocket. But he may have let it fall into a worn-out mine called "*Slothfulness*," for he was known to have walked near the edge of it. It was likewise whispered that the jewel was not lost at all, but that, like one of old, he had himself buried it in the earth of business or family cares; or that it ceased to shine because all his spare time was now spent in "vain jangling" over doctrinal points of differences, and "striving about words to no profit," and in being

occupied with what goes on in the fields of high, calvinistic, doctrinal polemics. His friends sorrow for him, for since the misfortune his face has not shone with the love of God to all. Any person able to restore the lost treasure will be handsomely rewarded by God's smile of approval, and will likewise confer a benefit upon the church.

"Lost! lost! lost!" A convicted and tender conscience from the breast of one in our last Sunday's gospel meeting. When last heard of, it was fixed in the heart of a young man in the gallery. The proof that he possessed it was his remarkable attention to the address, and a seriousness not often seen upon his face. The Holy Spirit of God Himself fixed it in the young man's breast. How long it rested there is not exactly known. He is thought to have retained it after the address ended. The proof of this is, that he remained behind, with several others, to the prayer-meeting. He is known to have had it in possession as he left the place; and the Saviour, looking from heaven when all were bowed low in prayer, saw a tear in the eye of his soul, and heard an inward sigh, which not even those who knelt near him heard.

"Lost! lost? lost!" Can anyone tell how or where? Did those young men who waited for him at the street corner that evening steal it from him? Did he, in an unguarded moment, let it slip from him as he sat trying to smile and make merry with his brothers that night? Or did some thievish spirit rob him of it as he took up that pleasant book, and, contrary to the voice within, began to read? Or was it lost on Monday in the shop, or elsewhere in business pursuits? Where now is that precious thing, that good impression he possessed on Sunday night? Proclaim the loss! Hark to

the bell of the crier, "Lost! lost! lost!"

But I have another loss to proclaim; one more melancholy than any of these,—a loss attended with consequences so tremendous, that the bell which announces it must be muffled with heavy mournfulness, and made to toll the intelligence in notes of deep solemnity.

"Lost! lost! lost!" An immortal soul! It matters not where, at what time, or under what circumstances. Nor is the announcement made with any hope of its recovery. It is proclaimed in warning.

"Lost! lost! lost!" A soul for whom the blood of God's own Son was shed, and which might, like a bright jewel, have adorned His crown. A soul gifted with high powers and noble capabilities; a soul that had opportunities of obtaining salvation, that had the way of life plainly marked before it; a soul that possessed the promise of everlasting life, and was created to inherit it.

"Lost! lost! lost!" Such a soul is lost! It was not that it had no light, not that it was shut out from the promise of life, not that it was never warned. It had all these things, and despised them. God the Father loved, and gave His Son for it: Christ shed His blood for it: the Spirit in a thousand ways, and for many years, strove with it; but it refused to hearken. It chose death. It refused the offered life. When God called in invitation, it turned from Him: when He stretched out His hands, it regarded not. Then sudden affliction came, and the sorrows of death encompassed that soul, the pains of hell gat hold upon it, there was trouble and sorrow. Then came dark despair; and while the body writhed in its last pains, the soul sank down into an abyss of utter hopelessness, and its last cry

was, "Lost! lost! lost!" O, it was sad! After all the mercy of the Father, after the sufferings and death of the Son, after all the striving of the Holy Spirit to save that soul, it was sad that it should be lost! To offer a reward for its recovery is useless, for it is too late. Its day of grace is past.

Reader, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The Father waits to utter the cry, "This my son was lost, and he is found." The Spirit in the Church still seeks, and yearns to send forth the joyful news: "Rejoice with Me, for I have found the piece which I had lost."

"Behold, now is the accepted time!" To-morrow may be too late, and you may be forever "Lost! lost! lost!"

I. E. P.

"WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, YE LOVE."



WE saw Thee not when Thou did'st come
 To this poor world of sin and death,
 Nor e'er beheld Thy cottage home
 In poor neglected Nazareth;
 But we believe Thy footsteps trod
 Its streets and ways, Thou Son of God!

We stood not by the empty tomb
 Where once Thy sacred body lay,
 Nor sat within the upper room,
 Nor met Thee at the open way;
 But we believe that angels said,
 "Why seek the living 'mid the dead?"

And now that Thou art throned on high,
 And thence Thy waiting saints dost bless,
 No ray is seen by mortal eye
 Bright shining on our wilderness;
 But we believe Thy parting word,
 And wait to see our coming Lord.

A Prior Question.



“CAN I do anything for you?” said a Christian visitor to a dying youth.

“O Sir,” was the response, “it’s not *doing*, it’s *undoing* that I need. If only you could undo my past for me!”

It would be well if the truth discovered by this dying lad were better understood. We hear plenty of talk to-day about turning over a new leaf, and trying to lead a better life; walking in Christ’s footsteps, and following His example. But it is largely lost sight of, that, before anything of this kind can be rightly attempted, there is a *prior question* which demands settlement.

We must not close our eyes to the stern fact that we are sinners in God’s sight, deserving eternal condemnation, and that before we can serve Him, the great question of our *sins* must be faced. The past history of each one of us has been full of blots and blemishes, and before we talk of *doing* for the future, something is needed to *undo* the past!

When the astronomer, Herschel, discovered the planet Uranus, tidings of his great achievement reached the ears of King George III., and he directed him to be summoned to Windsor, in order that the Royal family might receive an account of the wonderful discovery from the astronomer’s own lips. Herschel, of course, obeyed, and went to Windsor at once, taking with him his famous telescope, and a chart of the solar system to exhibit.

When he was ushered into the King’s presence, he was kindly received, but was rather surprised when His Majesty handed him a paper, saying that

there was a certain matter of business to be disposed of before science could be discussed. Opening the paper, Herschel found it to be a pardon written out in full by the King himself.

It appears that at the early age of fourteen he had joined the band of the Hanoverian Guards, duly enlisting as a soldier. Soon afterwards, war had broken out between England and France, and as Hanover was then under the English crown, the French invaded it, and a battle was fought in which the Guards lost heavily. Young Herschel spent the night after the battle in a ditch, and soon came to the conclusion that soldiering was not in his line, and resolved to change his profession.

Accordingly he deserted, and after much difficulty succeeded in reaching England, where he commenced a career as a teacher of music. Then he began to study the stars, and after a time made the discovery which has rendered his name famous.

It was *the prior question* of his desertion that had to be settled before he could entertain, or be entertained by, the King. Settled, as it was, by His Majesty's grace in offering the free pardon, Herschel could proceed to display his telescope, and describe his discovery.

In just the same way, before we can serve God or enjoy His favour, we must receive at His hands a free pardon for our many sins. But here a question arises which did not arise in the case of the astronomer. It is this: How can a free pardon be *righteously* offered to sinners such as we?

The question finds its full answer in the atoning work of Christ. On the Cross of Calvary, the great sin-question was dealt with by our blessed Saviour, Jesus, in such a way that infinite glory has been thereby secured for God, and infinite blessing made

possible for guilty men. The work which was done there is a work which has power to *undo*, and cancel our life-story of sin, and which entitles God to freely pardon us and take us into His favour.

This wonderful work of Christ upon the tree is the keystone of the whole gospel edifice; it is the foundation of all God's gracious purposes of blessing. It enables God to gratify to the full His own heart of love, while heaping favour after favour upon the heads of unworthy sinners. It shuts the door for ever upon the believer's sins, while it opens to him another door, through which he enters into blessing upon blessing in endless range.

Reader, have you through faith in Christ and His atoning work, got the great question of your *sins* divinely and eternally settled? If so, lift up your head in holy joy and praise the Lord!

H. P. B.



A Personal Interest.

ONCE I was looking carelessly down a list of heirs to unclaimed property, when I suddenly saw my own name. What an electric shock! How deeply interesting that document all at once became!

So it is when we recognise our personal interest in the Gospel. Then we find that "whosoever" means *me*. Have you made the discovery that, to be saved, you need a personal interest in the Gospel?

"To you is the word of this salvation sent." Have you claimed it?

about Jesus Christ! No, it can't be a bad book. It must come from God. Therefore I took it, and said, 'Thank you, kindly. I'm right glad to have it.'"

When the soldier was gone, Father Jacob went into his little room with his book, all alone. But a terrible fear came over him. The priest had said it was a dangerous, wicked book. And yet it was about Jesus. Was it a sin to read it? "But if it comes from God, will He not tell me," thought Father Jacob, "if I ought to read it or not? Will not the book tell me?"

And Father Jacob knelt down, with the book in his hand, and said: "Oh, my God, if this book comes from Thee, and I ought to read it, show me in the book that I should do so."

Then Father Jacob opened the book, and saw these words before his eyes: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of His Son." . . . "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

Father Jacob needed no more at that moment. He had the witness of God, how much greater than that of the priest! And then he read John iii. 16, and said to himself, "God says *I* have everlasting life. For I believe on the Son of God: '*hath*' is the word—'*hath* everlasting life.'" And Father Jacob praised God, saying, "Praise God for the Book! the Book! the Book!"

And very soon after that happy day, he was seen continually with a radiant face, and the book in his hand, going from house to house to tell his friends and neighbours that God had given His Son, and that He gives eternal life, and full, free forgiveness to all who believe in Him.

In vain did the priest rebuke Father Jacob for his mad ways. He only thought, "The priest may say what he likes, but the witness of God is greater, and this—this" (and Father Jacob clasped the book lovingly and reverently) "is the witness of God, which he hath testified of His Son."

Soon the news spread from village to village that Father Jacob had wonderful tidings to tell out of a book that came from God. And people came from far and near, over the mountains and torrents, to hear the witness of God. And sometimes a messenger would come to Father Jacob from some distant place to ask him to come and tell the good news and read the book.

As years went on, many of these men and women of the mountains believed and were saved; and they would meet together to pray and to thank God; and Father Jacob found means of getting Bibles and New Testaments for them also. For a colporteur met him once on his journey, and sold him a whole Bible, and Father Jacob said, "Now I have a double treasure, the Old Testament and the New." And these poor men and women began to take the Lord's supper together in some of the mountain cottages, in remembrance of the death of Jesus. And thus they do still.

Now, it came to pass last winter that a message was sent to Father Jacob from a mountain village a long way off.

The people there, for some reason, hated the priest, and determined to become Protestants. But what is it to be a Protestant? they asked one another. They had heard of such people, but had never seen them. All they knew was this, that Protestants did not go to "mass," and that the priests warned everyone against them. How could they find out

the way of becoming Protestants ?

"I know," said one ; "there is Father Jacob. The priests hate him, and say he's mad. No doubt he's a Protestant. Let us send for him."

Accordingly Father Jacob lost no time, but started on his journey, despite the wind and snow of December. When he came to the deep mountain torrent that had to be crossed, behold, the wooden bridge had been swept away by the wintry storms. And in place of the bridge three lengths of telegraph wire were stretched across the ravine, the foaming waters dashing wildly from the mountains far below. The three wires were placed one above the other. You were supposed to grasp the top with your hands, pass the second under your armpits, and plant your feet on the lowest.

"Surely, Father Jacob," said a friend, who had come thus far, "you will never risk yourself, at the age of sixty-three, on those bits of wire! I wouldn't trust myself to them for a thousand francs."

"I am going over for the Lord," said Father Jacob, "and if I go to heaven instead of the other side, what then?" And, singing a cheerful hymn, Father Jacob went on his way, and safely reached the other side.

When he came to the village he was welcomed by everyone, great and small, except the unhappy priest.

"And now you will teach us how to be Protestants," they said.

"I will teach you how to be *Christians*," said Father Jacob, "but I don't know much about Protestants. Anyhow, I would have you know that to make a din beneath the priest's windows, and to insult and ill-use him is not Christianity. But if you want to be that which God would have you be,

I have a Book that will tell you all."

Then Father Jacob opened his Book, and preached Christ to them. How little had they imagined what it was they were to hear! But they heard eagerly, and one after another was saved.

Amongst these people who believed to the saving of their souls, was a poor woman, the wife of a man who was known far and wide as a "drunken brute." He had been the terror of his village, and of the villages around, and when all his neighbours went to hear Father Jacob, he stormed at them and threatened them. He was not going to be such a fool as they were—not he!

But after a while his good and patient wife began to astonish him by her loving words and ways, and when he had many times asked her how Father Jacob had managed to bewitch her with his sorceries, she said, "Come and see." And against his will he came.

A power stronger than his will was leading him by a way he knew not.

Father Jacob opened his Book and read out of it a short story. It was the story of Nathanael. "He was a man," said Father Jacob, "who was very unwilling to come to Jesus, but he had a kind friend who entreated him to come; and when he said he thought there was no good thing to be found in Jesus, his friend said, 'Come and see.'"

Then the angry man started up, shook his fist, and shouted, "Who told you about me?"

And Father Jacob explained to him that he knew nothing whatever about him, but that the Lord Jesus, who saw Nathanael under a fig tree when he was far away, had seen him also, and was waiting to welcome him, for He loved him, and was calling to him.

Then the man fell on his knees, and said, "It is no use, I am too wicked; I am far, far too great a sinner!"

And when he went home with his wife he could not go to bed, but he threw himself on the ground, and cried and groaned, and said he was lost, lost, lost for ever! Thus the Holy Spirit applied the Word.

But Father Jacob knelt beside him, and told him of the blood of Jesus, and of the shepherd who went after the sheep that was lost until he found it. And at last the poor man believed the blessed news, and he, too, was saved.

And now, if you were to go to his village, and ask for his little cottage, you would hear no longer drunken shouts, and the terrified shrieks of wife and children, but you would find the "terror of the village" sitting with his children around him and on his knee, teaching them to sing hymns, and to read the Book! the Book! the BOOK!—Father Jacob's precious Book—the Book of God.

Now in that village from fifty to one hundred meet together on the Lord's Day to pray, and read the Word, and to remember the Lord's death, and to comfort themselves together, and to edify one another. And when they have a visit from Father Jacob, it is a high day and a festival, and it is in vain that the priest warns them that he is but a lunatic. They have received the witness of God, and they have believed the record that He has given of His Son. Shall we not pray that Father Jacob may yet win many souls for Christ? And shall we not thank God for Father Jacob, and also for the lady at Marseilles? And, most of all, shall we not praise Him for the Book?

The Mortar Mixer.

A LADY standing in front of the noble cathedral of Cologne heard someone behind her say, "Didn't we do a fine piece of work here?" Turning, she saw a man in the plainest working clothes, and said to him,

"Pray, what did you do?"

"I mixed mortar across the street for two years," was the cheerful reply.

God's work to day needs cheerful, patient, and diligent mortar-mixers. Mixing mortar is one of the hardest and most disagreeable things to do in rearing a building. But what sort of a building could be made without mortar? Then, thank God and take courage if your lot is cast among the mortar-mixers. Never mind how lowly your work is. Tract distributing, Sunday School teaching, the keeping of the door, or giving out of hymn-books to the gospel meeting: all will get its reward hereafter. Learn what your work is, and then learn to do it well; even though you be but a gospel mortar-mixer.

"A Tale that is told."

FEW people live their lives as "a tale that is told," knowing that every chapter has a bearing on the whole, and that a continuous thread runs through all. Most, alas, pass their days as if they thought them a volume of short stories, which have not necessarily any connection with each other. The *whole* story of each life will come out at the judgment seat!

My Place and My Work.

(NUM. iii. 14-26; iv. 21-23; x. 17-21).

GERSHON had nothing to do with the boards and pins of the Tabernacle; and Merari had nothing to do with the curtains or the coverings. And yet they were very intimately connected, as they were mutually dependent. "The boards and sockets" would not do without "the curtains"; and the curtains would not do without the boards and sockets. And as to "the pins," though apparently so insignificant, who could estimate their importance in keeping things together, and maintaining the visible unity of the whole? Thus all worked together to one common end, and that end was gained by each attending to his own special line. If a Gershonite had taken it into his head to abandon "the curtains" and address himself to "the pins," he would have left his own work undone and interfered with the work of the Merarite. This would never do. It would have thrown everything into hopeless confusion; whereas by adhering to the divine rule, all was maintained in the most exquisite order.

It must have been perfectly beautiful to mark God's workers in the wilderness. Each one was at his post, and each moved in his divinely appointed sphere. Hence, the moment the cloud was lifted up, and the order issued to strike, every man knew what he had to do, and he addressed himself to that and to nothing else. No man had any right to think for himself. Jehovah thought for all. The Levites had declared themselves "on the Lord's side"; they had yielded themselves to His authority; and this fact lay at the very base of all their

wilderness work and service. Looked at in this light, it would be deemed a matter of total indifference whether a man had to carry a pin, a curtain, or a golden candlestick. The grand question for each and for all was simply, "Is this my work? Is this what the Lord has given me to do?"

This settled everything. Had it been left to human thinking or human choosing, one man might like this; another might like that; and a third might like something else. How then could the tabernacle ever be borne along through the wilderness, or set up in its place? Impossible! There could be but one supreme authority, namely, Jehovah Himself. He arranged for all, and all had to submit to Him. There was no room at all for the exercise of the human will. This was a signal mercy. It prevented a world of strife and confusion. There must be subjection—there must be a broken will—there must be a cordial yielding to divine authority, otherwise it will turn out to be like the book of Judges, "Every man doing that which is right in his own eyes." A Merarite might say, or think, if he did not say it: "What! am I to spend the very best portion of my life upon earth—the days of my prime and vigour—in looking after a few pins? Was this the end for which I was born? Am I to have nothing higher before me as an object in life? Is this to be my occupation from the age of thirty to fifty?"

To such questions there was a twofold reply. In the first place, it was enough for the Merarite to know that Jehovah had assigned him his work. This was sufficient to impart dignity to what nature might esteem the smallest and meanest matter. It does not matter what we are doing, provided always we are doing our divinely-appointed work. A man

may pursue what his fellows would deem a most brilliant career; he may spend his energies, his time, his talents, his fortune, in pursuits which the men of this world esteem grand and glorious, and, all the while, his life may prove to be but a splendid bubble. But, on the other hand, the man who simply does the will of God, whatever that may be—the man who executes his Lord's commands, whatever such commands may enjoin—that is the man whose path is illuminated by the beams of divine approbation, and whose work shall be remembered when the most splendid schemes of the children of this world have sunk in eternal oblivion.

But, besides the moral worth attaching always to the act of doing what we are told to do, there was also a special dignity belonging to the work of a Merarite, even though that work was merely attending to a few "pins" or "sockets." Everything connected with the tabernacle was of the very deepest interest and highest value. There was not, in the whole world, anything to be compared with that boarded tent with all its mystic belongings. It was a holy dignity and privilege to be allowed to touch the smallest pin that formed a part of that wonderful tabernacle in the wilderness. It was more glorious, by far, to be a Merarite looking after the pins of the tabernacle, than to wield the sceptre of Egypt or Assyria. True, that Merarite, according to the import of his name, might seem a poor "sorrowful" labouring man; but oh! his labour stood connected with the dwelling place of the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. His hands handled the things which were the "pattern of things in the heavens." Every pin, every socket, every curtain, and every covering was a shadow of good things to come—a foreshadowing of Christ. "Whatsoever

ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. iv. 23, 24). C. H. M.

“Watching.”

LUKE xii. 36.

IT is told of a poor peasant on the Welsh mountains, that month after month, year after year, through a long period of declining life, he used every morning, as soon as he awoke, to open his casement window towards the east, and look out to see if Jesus were coming.

He was no calculator, or he would not have looked so long. He was no mere student of prophecy, or he might not have looked at all. He was ready, or he would not have been in so much haste. He was willing, or he would rather have looked another way. He loved, or it would not have been the first thought of the morning.

His Master did not come, but a messenger did, to fetch the ready one home. The same preparation sufficed for both; the longing soul was blest with either. “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

FAITH.

1. “*Faith*” (Rom. v. 1): the divine principle and germ from which all true life and progress spring.
2. “*The Faith*” (Titus i. 1): the totality of that which is believed—the whole truth of God.
3. “*Your Faith*” (1 Thess. iii., five times): when the reality of the truth becomes *your* own.

A Witness and a Warning.



DIFFERENT days demand their own special testimony. The watchman who would be faithful to his Lord and the city of his God has need to carefully note the signs of the times and emphasize his witness accordingly. Concerning the testimony needed now, there can be little, if any, doubt. An evil is in the professed camp of the Lord. *The world* has swamped the professing Church.

During the past few years it has developed at an abnormal rate. It has worked like leaven, until now the whole lump ferments. There is little, if anything, to choose between Church, Chapel, or Mission Hall. However these may differ in some respects, they bear a striking likeness in the posters that figure upon and disfigure their notice boards. Amusement for the people is the leading article advertised by each. If any doubt my statement, or think my utterance too sweeping, let them take a tour of inspection and study "the announcements for the week" at the doors of the sanctuaries of their neighbourhood; or let them read the religious advertisements in the local papers. I have done this again and again, until the hideous fact has been proved up to the hilt, that "amusement" is ousting "the preaching of the Gospel" as the great attraction. "Concerts," "Entertainments," "Fancy Fairs," "Smoking Conferences," "Dramatic Performances," are the words honoured with biggest type and most startling colours. The Concert is fast becoming as much a recognised part of church life as the Prayer Meeting, and is already, in most places, far better attended.

“Providing recreation for the people” will soon be looked upon as a necessary part of Christian work, and as binding upon the Church of God as though it were a Divine command. A strong voice should be raised against it. I do not presume to possess such a voice, but I do entertain the hope that I may awaken some louder echoes. Anyway, the burden of the Lord is upon me in this matter, and I leave it with Him to give my testimony ringing tone, or to let it die away in silence. I shall have delivered my soul in either case. Yet the conviction fills my mind that in all parts of the country there are faithful men and women who see the danger and deplore it, and will endorse my witness and my warning.

It is only during the past few years that “amusement” has become a recognised weapon of our warfare and developed into a mission. There has been a steady “down grade” in this respect. From “speaking out,” as the Puritans did, the Christian servant has gradually toned down his testimony; then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. The Church has tolerated them in her borders, and now she has adopted them, and provided a home for them under the plea of “reaching the masses, and getting the ear of the people.” The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church of Christ that part of her mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them into her ranks. The human nature that lies in every heart has risen to the bait. Here, now, is an opportunity to gratify the flesh and yet retain a comfortable conscience. We can now please ourselves in order to do good to others. The rough old cross can be exchanged for a “costume,” and the exchange can be made with the benevolent

purpose of elevating the people.

All this is terribly sad, and the more so because truly gracious souls are being led away by the specious pretext that it is a form of Christian work. They forget that a seemingly beautiful angel may be the devil himself, as it is written: "for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. xi. 14).

Providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in Holy Scripture as one of the functions of the servant of God. If our Lord had intended His people to be the caterer of entertainment, and so counteract the god of this world, He would hardly have left so important a branch of service unmentioned. If it is Christian work, why did not Christ at least hint it? No such addendum, however, is to be found, nor even an equivalent for such, in any one of our Lord's utterances. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Where do the "public entertainers" come in? The Holy Ghost is silent concerning them, and His silence is eloquence.

If "providing recreation" be a part of the Church's work, surely we may look for some promise to encourage her in the toilsome task. Where is it? There is a promise for "My word:" it "shall not return unto Me void." There is the heart-rejoicing declaration concerning the Gospel: "It is the power of God." There is the sweet assurance for the preacher of Christ that, whether he be successful or no—as the world judges success—he is a "sweet savour unto God." There is the glorious benediction for those whose testimony, so far from amusing

the world, rouses its wrath. The Gospel of amusement has no martyrology. In vain does one look for a promise from God for providing recreation for a godless world. That which has no authority from Christ, no provision made for it by the Spirit, no promise attached to it by God, can only be a lying hypocrite when it lays claim to be "a branch of the work of the Lord."

What is to be the attitude of the Christian towards the world? Strict separation. While no hint ever passed Christ's lips of winning the world by pleasing it, or accommodating methods to its taste, His demand for unworldliness was constant and emphatic. He sets forth in one short sentence what, morally, and for all time, He would have His disciples to be: "Ye are the salt of the earth." Yes, the salt: not the sugar-candy nor a "lump of delight." Something the world will be more inclined to spit out than swallow with a smile. Something more calculated to bring water to the eye than laughter to the lip. Short and sharp is the utterance, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John xvii. *passim*).

When many of Christ's disciples went back, because of the searching nature of His preaching, I do not find there was any attempt to increase a diminished congregation by resorting to something more pleasant to the flesh. I do not hear Him saying, "We must keep up the gatherings anyway: so run after those friends, Peter, and tell them we will have a different style of service to-morrow.

Something very short and attractive, with little, if any, preaching. To-day was a service for God, but to-morrow we will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it, and have a happy hour. Be quick, Peter; we must get the people somehow; if not by Gospel, then by something else." No, this was not how He argued. Gazing in sorrow on those who would not hear the Word, He simply turns to the twelve, and asks, "Will ye also go away?"

In vain will the epistles be searched to discover any trace of a gospel of amusement. The same call for separation from the world rings in every one. "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed," is the word of command in the Romans. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch no unclean thing," is the trumpet call in the Corinthians. In other words it is, Come out—keep out—keep clean out—for "what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Here is the true relationship between the Church and the world according to the Epistle to the Galatians. "Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," is the attitude enjoined in Ephesians. "Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world: holding forth the Word of life," is the Word in Philippians. "Dead with Christ from the elements of the world," says the Epistle to the Colossians. "Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him without the camp, bear-

ing His reproach," is the heroic summons of the Hebrews. James, with holy severity, declares that "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Peter writes: "Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living" (R.V.). And John writes: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

The early evangelists had boundless confidence in the Gospel, and employed no other weapon. Pentecost followed plain preaching. When Peter and John had been locked up for the night for preaching the resurrection, the early Church had a prayer-meeting directly they returned, and the petition offered for the two was, "And now, Lord, grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word." They had no thought of praying, "Grant unto thy servants more policy, that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation they may avoid the offence of the Cross, and sweetly show this people how happy and merry a lot we are."

The charge brought against the apostles by the members of the Council was, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Not much chance of this charge being brought against modern methods. The description of their work is, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." "Men of Cyrene spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus; and the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord." Here you have their *method*—they preached. Their *matter*—the Lord Jesus. Their *power*—the hand of the Lord was with them. Their *success*—many

believed.

When Paul and Barnabas worked together, the record is "The Lord gave testimony unto the word of His grace." When Paul, in a vision, hears a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over and help us," he assuredly gathers that the Lord had called him to preach the Gospel unto them. Why so? How did he know but that the help needed was the brightening of their lives by a little amusement, or the refining of their manners by a collection of paintings? He never thought of such things. "Come and help us!" meant to him, "Preach the Gospel." "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures"—not about the Scriptures, mark, but out of them—"opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead." That was the "manner" of evangelistic work in those days, and it seems to have been wonderfully powerful; for the verdict of the people is, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."

When God told Paul that he had much people in Corinth, I read, "And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." Evidently, then, he judged that the only way to bring them out was by the Word. A year and a half, and only one method adopted. Wonderful! We should have had a dozen in that time!

The mission of amusement utterly fails to effect the desired end among the unsaved; but it works havoc among the young converts. Were it a success it would be none the less wrong. Success belongs to God; faithfulness to His instructions, to me. But it is not. Test it even by this, and it is a contemptible failure. Let that be the method which is

answered by fire, and the verdict will be, "The preaching of the Word, that is, the power."

Let us see the converts who have been first won by amusement. Let the harlots and the drunkards to whom a dramatic entertainment has been God's first link in the chain of their conversion stand forth. Let the careless and the scoffers who have cause to thank God that the Church has relaxed her spirit of separation, and met them half-way in their worldliness, speak and testify. Let the husbands; wives, and children, who rejoice in a new and holy home through "Sunday Evening Lectures on Social Questions," or "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Entertainments," tell out their joy. Let the weary, heavy-laden souls who have found peace through a concert, no longer keep silence. Let the men and women who have found Christ through the reversal of apostolic methods declare the same, and show the greatness of Paul's blunder when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." There is neither voice nor any to answer. The failure is on a par with the folly, and as huge as the sin. Out of thousands with whom I have personally conversed, the mission of amusement has claimed no convert.

Now let the appeal be made to those who, repudiating every other method, have staked everything on the Book and the Holy Ghost. Let them be challenged to produce results. There is no need. Blazing sacrifices on every hand attest the answer by fire. Ten thousand times ten thousand voices are ready to declare that the plain preaching of the Word was, first and last, the cause of their salvation.

But how about the other side of this matter—what are the baneful effects? Are they also *nil*? I will here solemnly as before the Lord give my

personal testimony. Though I have never seen a sinner saved, I have seen any number of backsliders manufactured by this new departure. Over and over again have young Christians, and sometimes Christians who are not young, come to me in tears, and asked what they were to do, as they had lost all their peace and fallen into evil. Over and over again has the confession been made, "I began to go wrong by attending worldly amusements that Christians patronized." It is not very long since that a young man, in an agony of soul, said to me, "I never thought of going to the theatre until my minister put it into my head by preaching that there was no harm in it. I went, and it has led me from bad to worse, and now I am a miserable backslider; and he is responsible for it."

When young converts begin to "damp off," forsake the gatherings for prayer, and grow worldly, I almost always find that worldly Christianity is responsible for the first downward step. The mission of amusement is the devil's half-way house to the world. It is because of what I have seen that I feel deeply, and would fain write strongly. Professing to win the world, professing Christians are turning the garden of the Lord into a public recreation ground. To fill the temple with those who see no beauty in Christ, a grinning Dragon is put over the doorway.

"Come out!" is the call for to-day. Sanctify yourselves. Put away the evil from among you. Cast down the world's altars and cut down her groves. Spurn her offered assistance. Decline her help, as your Master did the testimony of devils, for "He suffered them not to speak, because they knew Him." Renounce all the policy of the age. Trample upon Saul's armour. Grasp the Book of

God. Trust the Spirit who wrote its pages. Fight with this weapon only and always. Cease to amuse, and seek to arouse. Shun the clap of a delighted audience, and listen for the sobs of a convicted one. Give up trying to "please" men who have only the thickness of their ribs between their souls and hell; and warn, and plead, and intreat, as those who feel the waters of Eternity creeping upon them.

Let the Lord's servant again confront the world; testify against it; meet it only behind the Cross; and, like his Lord, he shall overcome, and with Him share the victory.

O Lord, my God, bless my witness and my warning!

A. G. B.



"I am Thine."

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LORD, I am Thine! O joy surpassing sweet
 By night, by day, my happy lips repeat,
 Casting me lowly at Thy blessed feet.
 Lord, Thou art mine, and I am Thine!

Lord, I am Thine! E'er time's clock had struck one,
 Before creation's work was e'en begun
 The Father chose and gave me to His Son;
 His free design, I should be Thine.

Lord, I am Thine! the purchase of the blood
 That from Thy side for my transgressions flowed,
 And paid the countless debt Thy captive owed;
 Oh price divine that made me Thine.

Lord, I am Thine! My choice and Thine agree;
 My heart was drawn with golden cords to Thee,
 And since I saw Thee on the glorious tree.

Lord, I am Thine, and Thou art mine.

More Rose Pillows Wanted.

IN some parts of Italy, as soon as a peasant girl is married, she makes a fine muslin bag. In this bag she gathers rose leaves; and year after year other rose leaves are added. Then when she dies, that bag of rose leaves is the most fragrant pillow for her head in the coffin.

Dear, little reader, you have another bag—another year, given to you: then crowd in the rose leaves of love and kind deeds, and you will, year by year, add to the comfort of your last pillow, and if you die before Jesus comes, you will lay your head upon the Saviour's breast, and He will close your eyes here, and open them in heaven.



"TURN YOUR FACE TO THE LIGHT."

A WEARY and discouraged woman, after struggling all day, cried:

"Everything looks dark, dark."

"Why don't you turn your face to the light, aunty dear?" said her little niece.

Sweet child! Sweet lesson! Christian, old or young, turn your face to the light, and you will be always bright—"They looked unto Him and were brightened and their faces were not ashamed" (Psa. xxxiv., R.V.).

The Message.

“A Vision of the Night.”

(A TRUE NARRATIVE RE-TOLD.)

OVER one hundred years ago, there was in Glasgow a club of gentlemen of the first rank in that city. They met professedly for card playing, but the members were distinguished by such a fearless excess of profligacy, as to obtain for it the name of “THE HELL CLUB.”

Besides their nightly or weekly meetings, they held a grand annual festival, at which each member endeavoured to “outdo all his former outdoings,” in drunkenness, blasphemy, and licentiousness.

Of all who shone on these occasions, none shone half so brightly as Archibald Boyle. But, alas! the light that dazzled in him was not “light from heaven,” but from that dread abode which gave name to the vile association which was to prove his ruin—ruin for time and eternity!

Archibald Boyle had been at one time a youth of the richest promise, being possessed of dazzling talents and fascinating manners. No acquirement was too high for his ability; but unfortunately, there was none too low for his ambition. Educated by a fond and foolishly indulgent mother, he early met in society with members of “The Hell Club.” His elegance, wit, gaiety, and versatility of talent, united to the gifts of fortune, made him a most desirable victim for them; and a victim and a slave,

glorying in his bondage, he quickly became. Long ere he was five and twenty he was one of the most accomplished blackguards it could number on its lists. To him what were heaven, hell, or eternity? Words, mere words, that served no purpose but to point his blasphemous wit, or nerve his execrations! To him what glory was there equal to that of hearing himself pronounced "The very life of the Club?" Alas! there was none; for as soon as man forgets God Who alone can keep him, his understanding becomes darkened, and he glories in that which is his shame.

Yet, while all within that heart was festering in corruption, he retained all his remarkable beauty of face and person, all his external elegance of manner, and continued an acknowledged favourite in the fairest female society of the day.

One night, on retiring to sleep, after returning from one of the annual meetings of the club, Boyle dreamed that he was still riding, as usual, upon his famous black horse, towards his own house—then a country seat embowered in ancient trees, and situated upon a hill now built over by the most fashionable part of Glasgow—and that he was suddenly accosted by someone whose personal appearance he could not, in the gloom of the night discern, but who, seizing the reins, said in a voice apparently accustomed to command, "You must go with me."

"And who are you?" exclaimed Boyle, with a volley of blasphemous execrations, while he struggled to disengage his reins from the intruder's grasp.

"That you will see by and by," replied the same voice, in a cold tone that thrilled through his heart.

Boyle plunged his spurs into the panting sides of his steed. The noble animal reared, and then suddenly darted forward with a speed that nearly deprived the rider of his breath; but in vain, in

vain!—fleet, like the wind, the mysterious, half-seen guide flew still before him! Boyle again furiously spurred the gallant horse. It fiercely reared and plunged—he lost his seat, and expected at the moment to feel himself dashed to the earth. But not so, for he continued to fall—fall—fall—it appeared to himself with an ever increasing velocity. At length this terrific rapidity of motion abated, and to his amazement and horror he perceived that his mysterious attendant was close by his side.

“Where,” he exclaimed in the frantic energy of despair, “where am I going?”

“To HELL,” replied the same iron voice, and from the depths below, the sound so familiar to his lips was suddenly echoed.

Onward, onward they hurried in darkness, rendered more terrible still by the conscious presence of his spectral conductor. At length a glimmering light appeared in the distance, and soon increased to a blaze.

They soon reached an arched entrance, of such stupendous magnificence that all the grandeur of this world seemed in comparison but as the frail and dingy labours of the poor mole. Within it, what a scene!—too awful to be described. Multitudes there still pictured to themselves the young and lovely, moving up and down in the giddy mazes of the midnight dance—the bounding steed bearing his senseless rider through the excitement of the goaded race—the intemperate still drawling over the midnight bowl, the wanton song, or maudlin blasphemy. There the slave of mammon bemoaned his folly in bartering his soul for useless gold, while the gambler bewailed, alas too late, the madness of his choice; and, strangest of all, there the Christless, religious church-goer was exposed in all his hollow hypocrisy

and sin.

Boyle at length perceived that he was surrounded by those whom he had known on earth, and observing that his unearthly conductor had disappeared, he felt so relieved by his absence, that he ventured to address his former friend, Mrs. D——, whom he saw sitting with eyes fixed in intense earnestness, as she was wont on earth, apparently absorbed at her favorite game of loo.

“Ha, Mrs. D——, delighted to see you; d’ye know a fellow told me to-night he was bringing me to hell!—ha, ha! My good Mrs. D——, for auld langsyne, do just stop for a moment. Rest, and”—he was going with reckless profanity to add—“show me through the pleasures of hell.”

But with a shriek that seemed to cleave through his very soul, she exclaimed, “*REST? There is no rest in hell;*” and from interminable vaults, voices, as loud as thunder, repeated the awful heart-withering sound, “There is no rest in hell!” Then unclasping the vest of her robe, she displayed to his affrighted and shuddering eye, a coil of fiery living snakes, “the worm that never dies,” the worm of accusing conscience, remorse, despair—wreathing, darting, stinging in her bosom; others followed her example, and in every bosom there was a self-inflicted punishment.

In every bosom he saw that which we have no language to describe—no ideas could even conceive; for in all he saw the full-grown fruit of the fiend-sown seed of evil passions, voluntarily nourished in the human soul during its mortal pilgrimage here; and in all he saw them lashed and maddened by the serpent-armed hand of despair.

“These are the pleasures of hell,” again assailed his ear, in the same terrific and interminable roll of

unearthly sound. He rushed away, but as he fled he saw those whom he knew must have been dead for thousands of years, still absorbed in the recollections of their sinful pleasures on earth, and toiling on through their eternity of woe. The vivid reminiscences of their godlessness on earth inflicted on them the bitterest pang of their doom in hell!

He saw Maxwell, the former companion of his boyish profligacy, borne along in incessant movement, mocked by the creations of his frenzied chase.

“Stop, Harry! stop. Speak to me! Oh, rest one moment!” Scarce had the words been spoken by his faltering lips, when again his terror-stricken ear was stunned by the same wild cry, re-echoed by ten thousand voices, “There is no rest in hell!”

Boyle tried to shut his eyes. He found he could not. He threw himself down, livid with fear. And this was hell!—the scoffer’s jest—the by-word of the profligate!

All at once he perceived that his unearthly conductor was once more by his side.

“Take me,” shrieked Boyle, “take me from this place. By the living God, I adjure thee, take me from this place.”

“Canst thou still name His name?” said the fiend, “Go, then; but—in a year and a day we meet to part no more!”

Boyle awoke, feeling as if the words of the fiend were traced in letters of living fire upon his heart and brain. Unable from actual sickness to leave his bed for several days, the horrid vision had full time to take effect upon his mind, and many were the pangs of tardy remorse and ill-defined terror that beset his vice-stained soul, as he lay in darkness and seclusion, to him so unusual.

He resolved utterly and forever to forsake “the

Club." Above all, he determined that nothing should tempt him to join the next annual festival.

The companions of his licentiousness flocked around him, and finding that his deep dejection of mind did not disappear with his sickness, and that it arose from some cause which disinclined him from seeking or enjoying their accustomed orgies, they became alarmed at the idea of losing "the life of the Club," especially when one of them stated that unexpectedly entering Boyle's room, he saw him hastily hide a book he thought was a Bible.

After a time, one of his friends, more cunning than the rest, thought of assuming an air of disgust with the Club, and the mode of life they had been living. He affected to seek Boyle's company in a mood of congenial melancholy, and to sympathize in his feelings. Thus he succeeded in betraying him into a misplaced confidence as to his dream, and the effect it had produced upon his mind. The result may easily be known. His confidence was betrayed—his feelings of repentance ridiculed; and it will easily be believed that he who "hid the Bible" had not nerve to stand the ribald jests of his companions.

We would not trace the year through if we could. Suffice it to say that he sunk deeper than ever into sin, though from the annual meeting he shrunk with horror. Ah, but how active is the spirit of evil! How feeble is unassisted, Christless, unprayerful man! Boyle found himself, he could not tell how, seated at that table on that very night, where he had sworn to himself a thousand times nothing on earth would make him sit.

His ears tingled, his head swam as he listened to the opening sentence of the president's address, "Gentlemen, this is leap year; therefore it is a year and a day since our last annual meeting."

Every nerve in Boyle's body twinged in agony at the ominous, well remembered words. His first impulse was to rise and fly, but then the sneers—the sneers. How many in this world, as well as poor Boyle, have sold their souls to the dread of a sneer, and dared the wrath of a righteous and an Eternal God rather than encounter the sarcastic curl of a fellow creature's lips!

He was more than ever plied with wine, applause, and every other species of excitement. His mirth, his wit, were like the lurid flashes from the bosom of a brooding thunder-cloud that pass and leave it darker than before; and his laugh sounded wild even to the evil ears that heard it.

The night was gloomy, with fitful gusts of chill and howling wind, as Boyle, with feverish nerves and reeling brain, mounted his horse to return home.

The next morning the well-known black steed was found, with saddle and bridle on, grazing on the road-side about half-way to Boyle's country house, and a few yards from it lay the stiffened corpse of his master.

“God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men and seal-eth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers. If

there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: then he is gracious unto Him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living" (Job. xxxiii.).

Reader, "God has found a ransom." Will you accept that Ransom, or disregard God's warnings and go on to your doom?



The Power of Sin.—Keep a spiral spring pressed down, it resists. It is by resisting the flesh that we learn its power experimentally, and that in our own strength we are unable to subdue it. Such was the experience of the wretched man of Rom. vii. But Christ says: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."



A New Leaf.—A merchant finds that he is in difficulties. He takes his cash-book and begins a "new leaf," forgetting that there is a "carried over" and a "brought forward" column. *New figures* on the "new leaf" won't pay the *old debts*. Neither will "turning over a new leaf" in the book of our life's history do for God.

LOV'ES ANSWER.



WHERE was an infidel soldier of the Middle Ages who hated all sacred things. He grew so fierce and mad in his defiance that he determined to test the power of the Christians' God. So he went out into a field, armed as if for battle. He threw his glove down on the ground as a challenge. Then he looked up into the heavens, and angrily cried: "God, if there be a God, I defy Thee here and now to mortal combat. If Thou indeed art, put forth Thy power." As he spoke he saw a piece of paper fluttering in the air just above his head. It fell at his feet. He took it up, and on it read these words: "God is love." Overcome by this strange response to his mad challenge, he broke his sword in token of surrender, and kneeling upon the fragments, gave his life thenceforth to the service of that God whom he had just before defied.

So it was that this world hated God and defied Him; and so it was that the answer came from heaven to all this defiance and rebellion, "God is love." Cold was the world. Shut were men's hearts against God. The infidel knight hurling his wild defiance in the face of heaven is scarcely too awful a picture to use to illustrate the attitude of the sinner toward God. Yet, to all this disobedience, this rejection, this defiance, the answer is, not judgment swift and terrible, but the wonderful message, "God is love."

"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).

Let me pause a moment and ask, "Is there anything akin between the one who reads these lines and Cain, Judas, or Pilate?" Alas, there is, if you fear the presence of God; and, moreover, if you continue to shun it, their doom will be yours.

"They went out!"

When?

Let us look at the scene, and we shall see. A poor, fallen, trembling woman is brought to Christ, and He is asked to pronounce her sentence. But will He? Nay; how can He? He has not come to condemn, but to save, as it is written: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Hence, He answers them not a word, but stoops down and silently He writes in the dust. What was it He wrote? Possibly her sentence as pronounced by the law, for the same finger which wrote on the ground, wrote the ten commandments long before on the tables of stone! But, apart from this, how significant was His action fortelling, as it did, the work which He would effect when He stooped down even to the death of the Cross. There He was "brought into the dust of death" (Psa. xxii.); there He bore the curse of a broken law; there He laid the basis whereon God could righteously deal in grace with man. He, the Lord of life and glory, "stooped down!" Ah, what a tremendous stoop it was.

The woman's accusers, however, become fiercely urgent, and press Him to give them an answer; but seemingly deaf to their questions, He continues to write. Then, suddenly lifting up Himself, He faces them, dumbfounds them, scatters them with the cutting reply: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her." There is a

sweep and an edge in His word, which, like the keen blade of a sword, smites them to the quick, and convicts their consciences. The trembling woman, though convicted, remains and obtains mercy and forgiveness; her accusers, convicted too, go out, burdened, condemned, and lost.

Ah! they understood not the grace of God—the natural man never does; and that is why, from the second century down, the inspiration of this touching narrative has been questioned. The latter part of Jno. viii., however, hangs on its introductory portion, of which it is the explanation, and without which it is an enigma. In the beginning of the chapter, men want the Lord to command that *the woman shall be stoned*, and then, at the close, because He refuses, they take up stones to *stone Him*. Alas! for the perversity of men's hearts—perversity which first refuses grace for themselves, and then resents that grace being bestowed on others.

“They went out!”

Why?

Because, had they remained in, they must needs have accused themselves rather than the woman. The “Light of the world” was there; the Glory, the Shekinah, the Revelation of God was there; the Sun and Centre of the moral universe was there: and men's consciences could not bear the searching power of His rays. They were opaque, that is, they were dark—impervious to the light of God; but Christ's presence, for the moment, made them transparent. As the light He shewed them up, but they could not, would not stand it; so they went out. How different is God's light, which manifests us as we are, from man's dim, religious light, which casts a false halo around us. St. Augustine, when

he was converted, declared that his very best deeds done in his unrenewed days appeared to him as so many "splendid sins." Such is the witness of all who have seen themselves in the light of God's presence.

Is it so with *you*, or do you shrink from the light? You may say, What else can I do?

I reply, Do what those Scribes and Pharisees refused to do—in spirit go down on your knees beside the woman of our subject, and own that, like her—if not in degree, yet in fact—you are *a sinner*.

"They went out!"

How?

All together? No. How then? "One by one." The going out was an individual matter: each had to do with his own conscience, and each acted for himself. When a man is saved, he is saved individually; and when a man is condemned, he is condemned individually. "Ho! *everyone* that thirsteth" is the gospel appeal. God does not say, "Ho! every company, every crowd," but "*every one*." So, "at the last day," men will "be judged *every man* according to his works" (Rev. xx.). No sinner will slip either into heaven or into hell with the crowd: each will have to do with God personally.

"They went out one by one beginning at the eldest even unto the last." Why did the eldest go out first? Because he had committed the most sins. But the youngest soon followed. The woman who remained in was the worst, but she was *no worse* than a sinner; the youngest who went out might have been the best; but he, too, was a sinner, and hence *no better* than a sinner.

"They went out!"

Whither ?

Into the night and the darkness—the gloom of sin and alienation from God. Observe, “they *went* out,” they were not driven out; they deliberately chose the darkness and refused the light because their deeds were evil.

“But,” you say, “the woman’s deeds were evil too.”

So they were, but she got alone with Jesus, and He gave her peace and pardon! “Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.” What a sight! The Saviour alone with the sinner: the sinner alone with the Saviour. Have you ever been alone with Jesus? Tell me, Is it not better to face the light now than it is to face it anon in judgment? It surely is; for the light, though it may now *search*, does not *scathe*, as it will do hereafter. The Christ who reveals to you what you are—a sinner; discovers also to you what God is—a Saviour.

The sinner that is convicted by conscience and law is like a rebel fleeing red-handed from justice; but suddenly he sees a notice announcing a free pardon to all rebels who will give themselves up. This he does, and then he learns that Another has suffered in his stead so that God can righteously absolve him.

Thank God, the One who “stooped down” and died has “lifted up” Himself out of the dust of death, and now, refusing to hear the accuser’s voice, He waits to whisper into the contrite sinner’s ear the grateful news: “Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more.”

Shun not, then, the presence of a Saviour God, but come and receive of His grace. Come, and you will have a purged conscience (Heb. x.), for the light

which reveals to you your sins will likewise manifest the blood which has atoned for them. Thus you will be able to cry: "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? And instead of shrinking from the light, you will make it your joy and home, because you will know that the circle of God's light is the circle of God's love!

S. J. B. C.

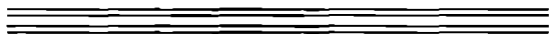
Changing Masters.

AWAY yonder in Delagoa Bay there was a slave mart, where men and women were bought and sold. The slave often changed hands. He had one master to-day, and another master to-morrow. But a change of masters made no change in his bondage. He was still a slave. Thus it is with the slave of sin. He may change masters; but, if out of Christ, he is still a slave. Many a one who has been a slave to the drink demon, has thrown off that master; only, however, to be as really the slave of covetousness, or to come under the dominion of a blinding self-righteousness. You may, by some means, have gained an outward victory over a besetting sin, and be flattering yourself that you are no longer a slave. But you have only *changed masters*—that is all. You are still a slave. You must have Christ. You must be set free by the Son of God, by Whom alone is true liberty.

Sharp Things.



THE Christian life is made up, for the most part, of sharp things. As no robe can be made without pins and needles, so the moral guise of Christian character cannot be perfected apart from the daily prick of petty trials. It is the little things which help to make those "garments of needle work" (Psa. xlv.)—"the fine linen garments of the righteousness of saints" (Rev. xix.), in which the saints shall be displayed in glory hereafter.



The Servant's Responsibility.



LAST year I crossed the Atlantic with one of the most skilful and faithful captains of the great liners. We had a terrific storm, during which for thirty-eight hours he remained on the bridge, striving to save his passengers. When the danger was over I said to him, "It must be a terrible thought at such a time that you are responsible for the lives of over a thousand human beings."

"No," he said solemnly, "I am not responsible for the life of one man on this ship."

My responsibility is to run the ship with all the skill and faithfulness possible to a man who, with good seamanship and courage, puts his trust in God. God Himself is responsible for all the rest."

This is the secret of rest and confidence in service, whether that service be great or insignificant. Let us do what God gives us to do with all the care, wisdom, and strength He imparts, and just leave the issues of our work with Him.

The Passing Away.

LIFE wanes: we are passing away. On every hand we see weeping parents, brothers, sisters. Love's tie is sundered. The smiling infant and the venerable guardian, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free, the oppressed and the oppressor, all are laid side by side, all are passing away. Like the daffodil, "which decays so soon," as Herrick says:

"We have short time to stay as you;
 We have as short a spring,
 As quick a growth to meet decay,
 As you or any thing.
 We die,
 As your hours do; and dry
 Away,
 Like to the summer's rain,
 Or as the pearls of morning dew,
 Ne'er to be found again."

Anon.

“The Judgment Seat of Christ.”

(2 COR. V.)



THE sins and iniquities of the Christian can never be brought into judgment. Christ has already borne their judgment on the cross.

There will be no second judgment of the believer's sins. A full end has been made of all sins, confessed by us, and borne by Jesus. (Heb. ix.; 1 John i. 9; 1 Peter ii. 24).

So complete—so perfect, was the blessed work of Christ on the cross, as the substitute of His people, that not the least question as to sin was left unsettled. Every question was for ever closed when He exclaimed, “It is finished.” On the ground of this gloriously finished work, divine love meets the chief of sinners in all the riches of the grace of God.

And so great is this love towards the sinner, who pleads, before God, the name of Jesus, and trusts only to His precious blood, that not only are his sins and iniquities all forgiven, but they are said to be forgotten. “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. x.). Such is the power, the potency of love, over all our sins, that they are gone from the recollection of Him who loves us, and can never come into judgment.

But although neither the person, nor the sins and iniquities of the believer, are the subjects of the Lord's judgment at that day, his works, as the Lord's servant, must all be brought up before the tribunal of Christ. Hence the faithful word of warning by the Apostle: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that

your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58). He had been dwelling at great length on the resurrection of the body, now he touches on what may be called the resurrection of works. "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor. iii.). But this trial of the quality of our works should not be thought of with fear and dread, but as one of our greatest privileges; because then shall be fulfilled that precious word, "But then shall I know even as also I am known."

God is light, and God is love. He is all love—all light for His children. But His love will have them in the light as He is Himself. This will be perfect blessedness; because we shall then be in the perfect light as well as the perfect love of God. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Our new, our divine nature loves the light—delights in it. The least darkness would be an insupportable burden. To be in the light is to be manifested, for light makes manifest. Nothing can be concealed there. And we would not, blessed be His name, have one moment of our history with His tender, gracious dealings towards us, left in the dark. The heart shrinks from the very thought, notwithstanding all our weakness and naughtiness. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10). When the whole course of my life is manifested in the perfect light of God—of God in Christ, "Then shall I know even as also I am known." My judgment of all that was good and bad in that life, will be according to the perfect judgment of God.

All that has been done for Christ, as the fruit of His grace in us, shall be approved and rewarded by Him. That which has been done merely in the energy of nature cannot be owned, but must now be consumed as "wood, hay, stubble." All that has been produced by the Spirit of Christ in us shall abide for ever, as "gold, silver, precious stones" (1 Cor. iii. 10-13; iv. 1-5). Never till that moment shall we know how much we owe the blessed Lord. Then, but not till then, shall we know what He has been for us, and what He has had to bear from us. Then will be seen, in the true light of His presence, the love of that heart which ever rose above all our unworthiness, and manifested itself in patient grace, tender love, and unwearied goodness. And then, too, will be seen the ten thousand times ten thousand instances in which we sought, in the pride of our hearts, to please ourselves, exalt ourselves, make something of ourselves, in place of serving the Lord Jesus, exalting Him, and making Him our all in all.

The long-suffering, patient, tender love of Jesus in thus bearing with us for so many years will be known and understood in all its perfection. And the sweet recollections of a love, far surpassing all others in tenderness, shall then fill our souls with the most perfect admiration, fervent adoration, and enraptured praises for ever.

And not unknown, or forgotten in that day, will be His many—His miraculous interpositions on our behalf, and wondrous deliverances during our unconverted days. Many a time when Satan had beguiled us to the very brink of hell, and thought that another push would send us in, the mighty, loving, adorable Jesus, threw the arm we were despising around us—saved us—and gently led us back from its slippery edge. Oh! with what over-

flowing hearts shall we retire from this privileged scene—the tribunal of Christ! Oh! what material it will have supplied for the praises of heaven! How we shall know the use of our golden harps! And the spring of joy which has been opened there shall flow on with ever deepening fulness and freshness, throughout a long, bright, and happy eternity.

The threefold effect of this truth on the mind of the apostle is worthy of our special attention.

1. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;"

2. "But we are made manifest unto God;"

3. "And I trust also are made manifest in your consciences" (2 Cor. v. 11).

1. Knowing what a terrible thing it must be for a sinner to appear before God in his sins, and under a responsibility entirely his own, the apostle is stirred up to preach the gospel with great earnestness.—"We persuade men." He seeks to warn—to impress others, with the immediate and unspeakable importance of salvation. What an awful thing it must be for an unbeliever to answer personally for his rejection of Christ and salvation. Who would not be aroused to deep soul-stirring earnestness in the preaching of the gospel by such a consideration?

2. The apostle was already in the light—already manifest unto God. Says he: "We are made manifest unto God." The judgment-seat bore no terror for the apostle. It only stirred him up to greater zeal for the salvation of others.

3. Thus, walking in the light, the man of God—the servant of Christ, goes on with his work; his conscience, meantime, reflecting the light and the love of God. Thus he commends himself to the consciences of those amongst whom he labours.

(*The late Andrew Miller.*)

Godliness.

“ALL that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy iii. 12). Observe that godliness or piety *now* must be “*in Christ Jesus.*” Abraham, Moses, David, and other Old Testament saints were pious men, but, if we live as they lived, we are not pious, for they did many things which were then right enough, but which we now ought not to do. Piety now must be practised in the light of Christian revelation: it must be “*in Christ Jesus.*”

G. W. Gy.

The Foundations.

IT is well to be strong as to the foundation truths of the gospel. If you want to put a third storey on a two-storey house, the first question is, Will the foundations bear it? If not, there must be the *underpinning*. You strengthen the foundations, and then you build. Souls who do not grow, and are not prepared to receive further truth, are weak somewhere in the gospel according to Romans. Every acquisition of truth is built on gospel truth. Strengthen, then, the foundations in young and weak souls, and then you can build them up, for they will be ready to receive more truth.

G. W. Gy.

The Dried Away Soul.

"But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes."—NUM. xi. 6.

HERE the poor human heart lets itself thoroughly out. Its tastes and its tendencies are made manifest. The people sigh after the land of Egypt, and cast back wistful looks after its fruits and its flesh-pots. They do not say aught about the lash of the taskmaster, and the toil of the brick-kilns. There is total silence as to these things. Nothing is remembered now, save those resources by which Egypt had ministered to the lusts of nature.

How often is this the case with us! When once the heart loses its freshness in the divine life—when heavenly things begin to lose their savour—when first love declines—when Christ ceases to be a satisfying and altogether precious portion for the soul—when the Word of God and prayer lose their charm and become heavy, dull, and mechanical; then the eye wanders back toward the world, the heart follows the eye, and the feet follow the heart. We forget, at such moments, what the world was to us when we were in it and of it. We forget what toil and slavery, what misery and degradation, we found in the service of sin and of Satan, and think only of the gratification and ease, the freedom from those painful exercises, conflicts, and anxieties which attend upon the wilderness path of God's people.

All this is most sad, and should lead the soul into the most profound self-judgment. It is terrible when those who have set out to follow the Lord begin to grow weary of the way and of God's provision. How dreadful must those words have sounded in the ear of Jehovah, "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." Ah! Israel, what more didst thou need? Was not that heavenly food enough for thee? Couldst thou not live upon that which the hand of thy God had provided for thee?

Do we count ourselves free to ask such questions? Do we always find *our* heavenly manna sufficient for us? What means the frequent inquiry raised by professing Christians as to the right or wrong of such and such worldly pursuits and pleasures? Have we not even heard from the lips of persons making the very highest profession such words as these, "How are we to fill up the day? We cannot be always thinking about Christ and heavenly things. We must have some little recreation."

And alas! as is the language, so is the acting. We prove, alas! that Christ is not enough for the heart, by the palpable fact of our betaking ourselves to other things. How often, for example, does the Bible lie neglected for hours, while the light and worthless literature of the world is greedily devoured. What mean the well-thumbed newspaper and the dust-covered Bible? Do not these things tell a tale? Is not this despising the manna, and sighing after, nay, devouring the leeks and onions?

We specially call the attention of young Christians to that which is now before us. We are deeply impressed with a sense of their danger of falling into this very sin. No doubt we are all in danger; but the young amongst us are peculiarly so. Those of us who are advanced in life are not so likely to be drawn away by the frivolous pursuits of the world—by its concerts, its flower shows, its pleasure parties, its vain songs and light literature. But the young *will* have a dash of the world. They long to taste it for themselves. They do not find Christ an all-sufficient portion for the heart. They want recreation.

Alas! alas! what a thought! How sad to hear a Christian say, "I want some recreation. How can I fill up the day? I cannot be always thinking of Jesus." We should like to ask all who speak thus, How will you fill up Eternity? Shall not Christ be sufficient to fill up its countless ages? Shall you want recreation there? Will you sigh for light literature, vain songs, and frivolous pursuits there?

It will, perhaps, be said, "We shall be different then."

In what respect? We have the divine nature—we have the Holy Ghost—we have Christ for our portion—we belong to heaven—we are brought to God.

“But we have an evil nature in us.” Well, are we to cater for that? Is it for that we crave recreation? Must we try to help our wretched flesh—our corrupt nature—to fill up the day? Nay, we are called to deny it, to mortify it, to reckon it dead. This is Christian recreation. This is the mode in which the saint is called to fill up his day. How is it possible for us to grow in the divine life if we are only making provision for the flesh? Egypt’s food cannot nourish the new nature; and the great question for us is this: which do we really mean to nourish and cherish—the new or the old? It must be obvious that the divine nature cannot possibly feed upon newspapers, vain songs, and light literature; and hence, if we give ourselves, in any measure, to these latter, our souls must wither and droop.

May we have grace to think of these things—to think seriously. May we so walk in the Spirit that Christ may ever be the satisfying portion for our hearts. Had Israel, in the wilderness, walked with God, they never could have said, “Our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.” That manna would have been quite enough for them. And so with us. If we really walk with God in this wilderness world, our souls shall be satisfied with the portion he gives, and that portion is a heavenly Christ. Can He ever fail to satisfy? Does He not satisfy the heart of God? Does He not fill all heaven with His glory? Is He not the theme of angels’ song, and the object of their adoring homage and wondering worship? Is He not the one grand subject of everlasting counsels and purposes? Doth not the history of His ways overlap Eternity?

What answer have we to give to all these queries? What but a hearty, unreserved, unhesitating, **Yes**? Well, then, is not this blessed One, in the deep mystery of His Person, in the moral glory of His ways, in the brightness and blessedness of His character—is not He

enough for our hearts? Do we want aught beside? Must we get the newspaper or some light magazine to fill up the vacuum in our souls? Must we turn from Christ to a flower show or a concert?

Alas! that we should have to write thus. It is most sad; but it is most needful; and we here put this question most pointedly to each other: Dost thou really find Christ insufficient to satisfy thy heart? Hast thou cravings which He does not fully meet? If so, thou art in a very alarming condition of soul, and it behoves thee to look at once, and to look closely, into this solemn matter. Get down on thy face before God, in honest self-judgment. Pour out thy heart to Him. Tell Him all. Own to Him how thou hast fallen and wandered—as surely thou must have done when God's Christ is not enough for thee. Have it all out in secret with thy God, and take no rest until thou art fully and blessedly restored to communion with Himself—to heart fellowship with Him about the Son of His love.

C. H. M.



Self's Dark Shadow.



MICHAEL ANGELO, when at work, wore on his artist's cap a lighted candle, so that the shadow of himself should not fall on his work. Thus the Christian worker should have the light of the sanctuary so illuminating his face, and shining forth, that no dark shadow of self can cloud his service for God. If the light of God shines *from* us, self's dark shadow will be cast behind.

Share your Blessings.

"As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack."—2 Cor. viii. 15.

BRETHREN! Fresh around us lies
Sparkling in the silver dawning
Of the sweet and dewy morning,
Daily Manna from the skies.

Rise, and let us early feed;
And, sufficed, we shall be able,
From our Father's desert table,
Bread to give to those who need.

Many sigh to be relieved:
Poor, and hungry, and afflicted;
Let us give them, unrestricted,
All our baskets have received.

Nothing "over" should remain:
We should gather, this confessing—
We are blest to be a blessing,
We but get to give again!

Oh, for strength to gather "much"
For the weak who gather "little";
Or, who gather not a tittle—
Grace will share with even such.

May our sympathies expand
With the love which has provided—
Equally to be divided—
Food for all our pilgrim band.

Then we shall not count and hoard,
But with kindly fellow feeling,
Help and cheer and sunny healing
With a free hand cast abroad.

And our God will give us more
When, with emptied hands, dear brothers,
We *again* seek grace for others,
Not for selfish stint, or store.

And our praise with theirs we'll give
To the One Who ne'er forsakes us,
For the love which daily makes us
Share our blessings while we live.

Present Power.

Q RAILWAY train may continue to move over a considerable space after the steam has been shut off. Such motion, however, is not due to *present power*, but is simply the effect of past propulsion. It is merely the question of a little time, and the train will come to a complete standstill.

The same thing is taking place in the lives of many of the people of God to-day. Once upon a time they "ran well." Permeated with divine power, and aglow with spiritual heat, they went onward in their Christian course, rejoicing; but *now*?—well, they may be still moving, but it is pretty evident that they are living on past experiences and blessings. There is no present unction and power in them. It is a sure precursor to a breakdown when we attempt to live on the past. Even Paul dared not do so (2 Cor. xii.; Phil. iii).

Contentment.—A poor old Christian woman, who was breaking her fast upon a crust and a cup of water, exclaimed, "What! all this and Christ too!"

ERRATA.—Page 82, line 27, for Dragon read *Dagon*. Meraite, page 52, lines 26 and 28, should have been *Meraite*. There were several other typographical errors in last month's issue, owing to some of the proof sheets, revised by the Editor, going astray.

Saying His "A B C" to God.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."
—ROMANS viii. 26.

THE bells were ringing for people to go to church, while the little shepherd boy was obliged to keep watch over the sheep. But in his heart there grew up a longing to pray to God, as they were doing in church.

He had, however, never been taught any prayer, and so, kneeling down, he began, with closed eyes and folded hands, saying the alphabet "A B C D," and on to the end.

"What are you doing, my little man?" said a gentleman, passing on the other side of the hedge.

"Please, sir, I was praying," replied the boy.

"But why were you saying your letters?"

"Why," said the little fellow, "I didn't know any prayer, only I felt I wanted God to take care of me and help me to take care of my sheep. So I thought if I said all I knew He would put it together and spell all I wanted."

"God bless you, my little man! He will; for when the heart speaks right God understands what the lips say."

"He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 27).

The Evangelist.



HE held the lamp of truth at night
So low that none could miss the light,
And yet so high that men could trace
That vision fair—the Saviour's face ;
Thus though the lamp was held between,
The hand that held it ne'er was seen.

He held the pitcher, stooping low,
To thirsty, dying souls below :
Then raised it to the weary saint,
And bade him drink, when sick and faint !
They drank—the pitcher thus between—
The hand that held it ne'er was seen.

He blew the trumpet soft and clear,
That trembling sinners need not fear ;
And then with louder note and bold,
To raze the walls of Satan's hold !
The trumpet coming thus between,
The hand that held it ne'er was seen.

But when the Master says, " ' Well done,
Thou good and faithful servant '—Come !
Lay down the pitcher and the lamp,
Lay down the trumpet—leave the camp,"
The servant's hand will then between
The Master's welcome hand be seen.

The Message.

“It is finished.”

“Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”—*HEB. x. 11, 12, 14.*

A WEARY worker among the slums of London, passing the open door of a ritualistic church, slipped in when he heard voices, and, getting nearer, without intending it, got his first insight into the methods and effects of auricular confession. They were as follows:—

“I’ve been and broke out agin, Father,” said a man’s voice in a tone of sullen dejection.

“Oh, John”—the young priest’s voice was full of weary impatience—“did I not tell you what the consequences of these continual lapses into sin, after absolution, would be?”

“I know yer did, and I have tried. I did all the penances and said all the prayers yer told me to, and I went out directly afterwards and got as drunk as a lord.”

“Man, are you so lost to shame that you must use such language even in the confessional, and in God’s House?”

“Beg pardon, Father, but it seems like second natur’.”

“Go on,” said Neville, the priest, in the tone of one bracing himself up for what would follow, and

Arthur, the listener, shuddered at the shameful list poured out with seeming coolness and indifference. Frequent confession had made it as easy for him to speak of his sins, as lifelong habits did to indulge in them.

"They are worse than ever before, John. Do you not know what will be the end of all this?"

"If I don't, 'taint 'cause you ain't told me often enuff," was the sullen reply. "Oh, I know I shall be damned, sure as fate, if I keep on sinnin'; but I tell yer what, Father, *knowin' ain't enuff to keep me from sinnin'*. The damning don't seem real, and the sin is. An' the fact is, Father, though I be a strong feller one way, I'm as weak as water when what yer call temptation comes in my way; I can't nohow resist it. I jest think, 'Well, I'd rather do a few penances than not sin, and if I go to confession the Father will give me absolution'; and so you see that ain't the way to make me leave off, and it seems like that what I want is someone who can just make me floor and hate the sins I love now."

"That is impossible," said the priest, coldly, "you must fight against and overcome the temptation to sin: in that way only can you win salvation through the help of the blessed St. Peter."

"Oh, he was the man who denied his Master, and told lies, warn't he?" asked the penitent. "I don't see how he can help me when he went and did the very thing hisself."

"Having known what temptation was, he is better able to aid the tempted."

"Well I'd rather go to someone who overcame the tempter; seems like that 'ud be the safer way."

"Well," said the vicar," wearily dropping the unequal and unprofitable discussion, "one thing I will alter: if absolution has been the innocent means

of encouraging you in sin, I will no longer absolve you."

"You don't mean *that*, Father!" The man was thoroughly roused now. Evidently, despite his callous hardness, he clung with all the tenacity of ignorance and superstition to the rites and ceremonies of the Church.

"I *do* mean it," the priest answered. "You are not sincerely penitent, as you have pretended. Go your own way now to that doom awaiting the impenitent, and never dare to insult God or His priest in this way again."

"So you throw me over, do you?" said the man in a strange, stunned voice. "Well, I'll see if I *don't* try some other way now;" and so saying he quitted the chapel. Arthur looked up as he passed close by him, and recognized the man who had been pointed out to him as the worst character in White-chapel, and yet it was not the face of an utter reprobate. He bowed his head in fervent prayer for the man whom priest and Church, but not God, had cast off. When he raised his head he saw Neville's slight figure, clad in cassock and surplice, kneeling before the high altar, and a sudden revulsion of pity for the deluded priest came, as a few mumbling words of prayer reached his ears. "Oh God, hear me," murmured the priest."

"Your prayers and works are worse than vain while you dare to put yourself in the place of the One Atoning Priest, Christ Jesus," a distant voice cried with thrilling emphasis.

Neville sprang to his feet and looked around, but Arthur was gone.

As he mounted the platform at the gospel hall a Sunday or two later, the first face upon which his eyes rested was that of John Woods, Neville's erst-

while penitent. The man looked troubled and unhappy, and, watching him closely, Arthur noted with pleasure the almost painful interest he displayed, and the look of hope that sprang into the haggard face when they sang—

“The vilest sinner out of hell,
Who feels and owns his need,
Is welcome to the throne of grace,
The Saviour's blood to plead.”

He gave an earnest address on the perfections of Christ's sacrifice in the Gospel, telling simply and solemnly the story of the Cross, and how Christ had finished the work of redemption which God gave Him to do—finished it so thoroughly that God had raised Him again from the dead, and thereby shew^{ing} His satisfaction with what His Son had done. “And now,” said the preacher, “the sinner has nothing to do but just go straight to Christ, apart from priest or penance, and receive forgiveness as a free gift.”

John Woods was waiting for him at the foot of the platform.

“Were all that true, sir?” he questioned breathlessly.

“Was what true, my friend?” Arthur asked kindly.

“Why, that a sinner may go right straight to Christ, without a priest or anybody between.”

“It is indeed true; He invites sinners to go direct to Him, for He is the only Mediator between man and God.”

“But don't He want them to make themselves a bit better afore they go to Him?”

“No, indeed, for they cannot do it; ‘if you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all.’ You must come *just as you are* to obtain forgiveness from Him.”

“But don't it make no difference to Him what size sinner you be?”

“No, for He is a greater Saviour than the greatest sinner that ever lived requires, and is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. The greatest of all sinners, who comes confessing his sins, and trusting in His precious blood, will obtain pardon through his blood.”

“Confession and trusting the blood, is that all?” the man asked musingly. “Why, it's all ‘do’ with Father Sinclair. But I begin to think he's all in the wrong; I know lots of folks who think they've got all the doing to do, I used to myself, but when I see what a lot there was to be done I kinder got out of heart, and looked around to find someone who could do it better; you've showed me that One to-night, sir, but I do want to make sure that He *will* do it.”

“He has already done it,” said Arthur. “‘It is finished,’ He said on the cross, and if you will believe Him, He will save you and keep you from falling into sin. Let us ask Him.”

They knelt together, and when Arthur had prayed, Woods, without bidding or suggestion, tremblingly did the same, and the last lingering doubt of the sincerity of his repentance vanished from Arthur's heart as he listened to the fervent, child-like confession of sin and trust in the Saviour's atoning blood.

Thus the “worst character in Whitechapel” came to Christ, and was saved, and lived as a testimony of God's saving grace.

(Anon.)



“The Way of Cain.”



THE doors of a Unitarian Chapel were opened early one Sunday evening in autumn, revealing in the porch a large mass of golden flowers, surmounted by several fine sprays of scarlet gladiolus, arranged, it almost seemed, in the form of a cross, while a poster on the notice-board announced a “Harvest Thanksgiving Service” to be held that night. The unwonted burst of bright colouring attracted the eyes of the passers by, among them a lady and a gentleman, who might have been heard remarking to each other, as they passed, the words which form the above title. “The way of Cain.”

Were they correct? Was there anything in that modern chapel with its twentieth century teaching, in common with that man, the first ever born into the world, some six millenniums ago? To answer this, let us enquire, What was the way of Cain? It is written, “Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord” (Gen. iv. 3).

“Well, and what of that?” does someone exclaim? “Quite right, too; should not he acknowledge the goodness of the Creator in giving Him these splendid fruits? Ought not we to be thankful for fine harvests and all these things?”

Doubtless we ought to be thankful for these His mercies, but let us see what God Himself thought of Cain’s offering. “*Unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect*” (Gen. iv. 5). These are solemn words, and I ask you to ponder them.

An offering not accepted: an offerer not respected. A man coming to God, and not answered; a worshipper, and his worship unwelcome. Ah, why is

this? Look on that goodly pile of corn, of fruit, of flowers: fragrant scents, delicious flavours, beautiful forms,—the fairest in all the vegetable creation, all telling of careful culture, untiring pains, and unsparing devotedness in bringing the best that skill could provide. Could anything be more acceptable to the Lord? What more could a man do? Why is he then shut out, his prayer unheard, his gift unaccepted?

I see a fairer scene: a garden unmarred by a single thistle, or bearing a single thorn; trees, goodly in appearance, which have never known the blast of the scorching wind, or the blight of the noonday heat; all laden with the choicest fruits, decked with the fairest flowers, exhaling the sweetest odours;—and over that fair scene sound the ominous words, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Gen. iii. 17). And I see the fruit of that curse in the degenerated form of Cain's toilsome pile, as I see it in the faded leaves, the withered flowers, the blighted fruits found oft and again in this country of ours to-day. A curse, yea, the curse of sin rests on it: and shall He accept a cursed thing? Cain learnt, to his cost, He would not. So will you, if you come in Cain's way, with nothing but *your* efforts, *your* works, *your* nature to offer.

But I see another sight, another offering. I see One crowned with the proof of that curse—crowned with thorns; and I see Him, too, nailed to the tree, and made a curse—for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13): and I see Him then offer Himself without spot to God. A curse, yet the Blessor; a man, yet the Lord from heaven; an Offering, yet a God-appointed and a God-accepted one.

I see the heavens clothed in blackness, and from the midst of that strange darkness I hear the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Ah, the sacrifice is accepted; that is why—"the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the sin offering;" and as those awful billows of wrath roll over Him, they wring from His holy lips that anguished cry.

But I see another sight. I turn to the throne of the Majesty on high and I behold Him there—the Lamb as it had been slain. An empty cross; an empty tomb; a filled and glorious throne.

And I see yet another sight. I see myself, a poor, lost, guilty sinner, in danger of the lake of fire, my deserved portion,—I see myself approaching a holy God, and presenting to Him as my only plea, the sacrifice, the work, the worth of His beloved Son. I plead His merits: by faith I bring Him for my acceptance, and I find—I find *respect*. God has respect to Jesus: He has respect to His finished work; His precious blood; and I stand in His sight accepted, justified, forgiven: I have come by "a new and living way . . . into the holiest . . . by the blood of Jesus."

Which way does my reader take?

T.

Men judge of the heart by words and works, but God judgeth of words and works by the heart. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" If the heart is not purified by faith, and the conscience purged, nothing that man can say or do is acceptable to God.



A Christian is what he is between God and his own soul.



The way to possess unlimited treasure is to receive Christ, then all things are yours.

The Separating Power of the Cross of Christ.

“And one shall burn the heifer in his sight. . . . And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer. . . . And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.”—NUM. xix.

IT is the purpose of God that His children should be purified from all iniquity, and that they should walk in separation from this present evil world, where all is death and defilement. This separation is effected by the action of the word on the heart, by the power of the Holy Ghost (Gal. i. 4; Titus ii. 13, 14).

It is remarkable how constantly the Spirit of God presents, in intimate connection, the full relief of the conscience from all sense of guilt, and the deliverance of the heart from the moral influence of this present evil world. Now, it should be our care to maintain the integrity of this connection. Of course it is only by the gracious energy of the Holy Ghost that we can do so; but we ought to seek earnestly to understand and practically carry out the blessed link of connection between the death of Christ as an atonement for sin, and as the moral power of separation from this world. Many of the people of God never get beyond the former, if they even get that length. Many seem to be quite satisfied with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins through the atoning work of Christ, while, at the same time, they fail to realize deadness to the world in virtue of the death of Christ, and their identification with Him therein.

Now, when we stand and gaze upon the burning

of the red heifer—when we examine that mystic heap of ashes, what do we find? It may be said in reply, "We find our sins there." True, thanks be to God, and to the Son of His love, we do indeed find our sins, our iniquities, our trespasses, our deep crimson guilt, all reduced to ashes. But is there nothing more? Can we not, by a careful analysis, discover more? Unquestionably. We find nature there, in every stage of its existence—from the highest to the lowest point in its history. Moreover, we find all the glory of this world there. The cedar and the hyssop represent nature in its widest extremes; and in giving its extremes, they take in all that lies between. "Solomon spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."

"Scarlet" is viewed, by those who have carefully examined Scripture on the point, as the type or expression of human splendour, worldly grandeur, the glory of this world, the glory of man. Hence, therefore, we see in the burning of the heifer, the end of all worldly greatness, human glory, and the complete setting aside of the flesh, with all its belongings. This renders the burning of the heifer deeply significant. It shadows forth a truth too little known, and, when known, too readily forgotten—a truth embodied in these memorable words of the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

We are all far too prone to accept the cross as the ground of escape from all the consequences of our sins, and of full acceptance with God, and, at the same time, refuse it as the ground of our complete separation from the world. True it is, thanks and praise be to our God, the solid ground of our deliver-

ance from guilt and consequent condemnation ; but it is more than this. It has severed us, for ever, from all that pertains to this world, through which we are passing.

Are my sins put away? Yes ; blessed be the God of all grace ! According to what ? According to the perfection of Christ's atoning sacrifice as estimated by God Himself. Well then, such, precisely, is the measure of our deliverance from this present evil world—from its fashions, its maxims, its habits, its principles. The believer has absolutely nothing in common with this world, in so far as he enters into the spirit and power of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. That cross has dislodged him from everything here below, and made him a pilgrim and a stranger in this world. The truly devoted heart sees the dark shadow of the cross looming over all the glitter and glare, the pomp and fashion of this world. Paul saw this, and the sight of it caused him to esteem the world, in its very highest aspect, in its most attractive forms, in its brightest glories, as dross.

Such was the estimate formed of this world by one who had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. "The world is crucified unto me," said he, "and I unto the world." Such was Paul, and such should every Christian be—a stranger on earth, a citizen of heaven, and this, not merely in sentiment or theory, but in downright fact and reality ; for, as surely as our deliverance from hell is more than a mere sentiment or theory, so surely is our separation from this present evil age. The one is as positive and as real as the other.

But here let us ask, Why is not this great practical truth more pressed home upon the hearts of evangelical Christians at the present moment ? Why

are we so slow to urge upon one another the separating power of the cross of Christ? If my heart loves Jesus, I shall not seek a place, a portion, or a name where He found only a malefactor's cross.

This is the simple way to look at the matter. Do you really love Christ? Has your heart been touched and attracted by His wondrous love to you? If so, remember that He was cast out by this world. Yes, Jesus was, and still is, an outcast from this world. There is no change. The world is the world still; and be it remembered, that one of Satan's special devices is to lead people to accept salvation from Christ, while, at the same time, they refuse to be identified with Him in His rejection—to avail themselves of the atoning work of the cross, while abiding comfortably in the world that is stained with the guilt of nailing Christ thereto. In other words, he leads people to think and to say that "the offence of the cross" has ceased; that the world of the nineteenth century is totally different from the world of the first; that if the Lord Jesus were on earth now, He would meet with very different treatment from that which He received then; that it is not now a pagan world, but a Christian one, and this makes a material and a fundamental difference; that now it is quite right for a Christian to accept of citizenship in this world, to have a name, a place, and a portion here, seeing it is not the same world at all as that which nailed the Son of God to Calvary's cursed tree.

Now we feel it incumbent on us to press upon all who read these lines that this is, in very deed, a lie of the arch-enemy of souls. The world is not changed. It may have changed its dress, but it has not changed its nature, its spirit, its principles. It hates Jesus as cordially as when the cry went forth,

"Away with him! Crucify him!" There is really no change. If only we try the world with the same grand test, we shall find it to be the same evil, God-hating, Christ-rejecting world as ever.

And what is that test? *Christ crucified!* May this solemn truth be engraved on our hearts! May we realize and manifest its formative power! May it detach us more completely from all that belongs to the world! May we be enabled to understand more fully the truth presented in the ashes of the red heifer! Then shall our separation from the world, and our dedication to Christ, be more intense and real. The Lord, in His exceeding goodness, grant that thus it may be, with all His people, in this day of hollow, worldly, half-and-half profession!

C. H. M.



In . . . By . . . As.

(2 Cor. vi. 4-10.)



BELIEVERS suffer but to gain,
 And sweetest virtues spring from pain,
 As aromatic plants bestow
 No spicy odours as they grow,
 But crushed and trodden to the ground,
 Diffuse their balmy sweets around.

The heavy cross oft prompts to prayer,
 The bruised reeds most fragrant are;
 If sky and wind were always fair,
 The sailor would not watch the star;
 And David's Psalms he ne'er had sung
 If grief his heart had never wrung.

The Withered Hand.

“And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught; and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. . . . And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the men, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.”—LUKE vi. 6-10.

WHOSE hand was it?

We are not told, but evidently it belonged to a man whose presence was tolerated within the sacred enclosure of the synagogue, and tolerated there, too, on the Sabbath day. Hence he was not ceremonially defiled, and thus religiously shunned or proscribed as an alien or a leper. He was apparently fit for the assembly of God's people, with the exception that he could not use his right hand.

Had he ever used it?

Probably he had. Once it might have been a strong, ready, nimble hand. But at the time Christ met with him its vigour had gone, and it hung limp and helpless by his side.

Was he able to use his left hand?

It is more than likely that he could; and, moreover, the other organs of his mind and body were seemingly healthy, or the fact would doubtless have been noted. His case, in the eyes of men, was far from being a desperate one. He was simply regarded as a man with a withered hand.

Can we see in him the prototype of any around us to-day?

Yes, indeed!

Whom did he represent or foreshadow—the infidel and the evil-doer?

No, for, as we have shown, he was not a bad man, and so he cannot prefigure bad men. Bad men are *dead*—"dead in trespasses and sins." The right hand of such can never wither, for it never lived. A withered hand is the bane of the true believer who has divine life, and who partakes of the privileges of God's house, and is inside the Christian circle. A Christian whose hand is thus withered is a spiritual drone! His gospel sympathies and ardour having dried up, he has ceased to give away tracts, or to visit, or to minister with power, and otherwise to be instant "in season, out of season." He may do a little work with his left hand, but it is always for himself, for his own soul's good—he has no strength to serve his fellows. A left-handed Christian with a withered right hand, God does not, will not, cannot use in blessing to others.

He may not be a deaf man, or a blind man, or a man who cannot speak for God, nor yet a man who cannot walk uprightly. He may appear to possess all his spiritual faculties, and even the palsied member of his soul may not seem to him, and to others like him, such a very great defect. But, withal, the defect is too grave to make light of, affecting, as it does, his present happiness and usefulness, and his future reward. Alas! his withered hand is no mere local trouble, whatever he may think, but it arises from some deep-seated and organic mischief in his spiritual system, which God only can discover and heal.

Poor man! Heaven pities thee, earth despises thee, hell gloats over thee. The other apparently strong members of thy moral being do but make the strange ineptitude of thy once profitable hand the more noticeable and sad. Cast thine eye on it, if only for a moment, and as thou dost look, "call

to remembrance the former days," when in the beautiful flush and spring of thy first love and joy thou wast always abounding in the work of Him Who ransomed thy soul from the bondage and degradation of sin.

Once thy hand was a *prayerful* hand. Lifted up in the day, and, like David's hand "stretched out in the night," it ceased not to supplicate and to intercede.

Once thy hand was an *appropriating* hand, reaching up to and laying hold of heavenly blessings, and making them its own, and bringing them down to earth.

Once thy hand was a *priestly* hand. Overflowing with precious fruit, matured in heart and life by divine grace, it offered spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

Once thy hand was a *ministering* hand. It gave as freely as it had received, and as often as it was emptied it was replenished again.

Once thy hand was a *solicitous* hand. Held out all the day long to a gainsaying and rebellious world, it confirmed the ministry of reconciliation, beseeching men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.

Once thy hand was an *obedient* hand; ready to be passive when God whispered "Be still," and swift to move when the divine commission and command said, "Go."

Once thy hand was a *victorious* hand, smiting the enemy hip and thigh, and cleaving so firmly to "the sword of the Spirit," that the hand and the sword became as one (1 Sam. xxiii. 10).

But now all is changed. Ah! how changed! "How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of warfare perished." There by thy side hangs thy once powerful right hand—shrunken, crooked, nerveless, marking thee out, O man, before heaven, earth,

and hell as a man with a withered hand.

A man with a withered hand! Say, art thou the man? If so, attempt no excuse, for excuse thou hast none.

Thou mayest talk smoothly about Mary and Martha, approving the quiescence of the one, and reproving the bustle of the other. Thou mayest talk glibly, too, about God's counsels, and of how He will most surely effect His purposes of grace whether we work or not. Thou mayest likewise expatiate on the danger of too much Christian activity (a danger we fully admit). Yes, thou mayest talk thus, and talk well, making various excuses, and quoting Scripture fluently and copiously, but not a single verse in the Bible from cover to cover will justify thy withered right hand.

Thank God, He *can* do his work without our aid, for "the hand of the Lord" (Acts xi. 21) can never wither or fail. Yet, what an eternal loss is ours if His hand performs His will without the use of our hand (1 Cor. iii. 6-9)!

Christian, Christian, Is thy right hand strong for God? If so, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii.), and let thy prayer be that thou mayest never become a selfish, not to say a self-righteous, speculative mystic, or a slumbering servant in the vineyard of the Lord.

But is thy right hand already inert, withered and worthless? If so, then that same Voice which rang out in the Jewish synagogue of old now speaks to thee from above:—

"Rise up!" 'Tis the Lord who bids thee. Shake off sloth, lethargy, and every hindrance. Too long hast thou been "at ease in Zion"—a stumbling-block and an encumbrance. Rise up! Bestir thee! Rise up!

“Stand forth in the midst” is the next command of the Master. However painful it may be, be not slow to publicly expose thy condition; confess thy shame, thy guilt, thy need. Neither be in haste to quit the place of humiliation and self-judgment. Stay there as the man in the text had to stay there, while Christ makes thee an object lesson as He made him, drawing instruction from thy state, and showing to thee and to others that true recovery is not the work of a moment. Yet let thine ear be attentive to His Word when He bids thee—

“Stretch forth thy hand.” Reason not then, tarry not, doubt not. His Word was with power of old, and it is so still. “Stretch forth thy hand” when He tells thee, and it shall be restored whole again, and fitted and filled for His service, and used in accomplishing His will.

Then instead of thy right hand being a withered hand, it shall be as “the hand of the diligent,” which, according to Scripture, “maketh rich” now, and shall “bear rule” hereafter (Prov. x. 4; xii. 24; Matt. xxv. 21).

S. J. B. C.



The monument I want, as the result of my ministry, after I am dead and gone, is a monument with two legs going about the world—a saved sinner telling of the salvation of Jesus Christ and what great things God has done for him—a monument of God's grace!—*D. L. Moody.*



is drawing Christendom to its doom, because she knows not the day of her visitation.

There stood the temple with its splendour and its glory even while the Lord of the temple yet lived in the land, but He passed forth from it, pronouncing its terrible doom; and yet it stood fair and glorious in that land for many years after. The veil was rent, and the glory went out, as well as the type. It stood a fair and lovely corpse, and nothing more. Those disciples called forth this exclamation from the Lord, as they pointed out to Him the glories of that house, its beautiful walls, its beautiful steps, its graven doors, that were the glory of the whole earth. And a few years after the time came when these words were fulfilled to the letter, and those brazen doors rolled down those steps of marble in molten fire.

They knew not the day of their visitation. This speaks to us. Do we know the day of our visitation? I want to press these things home because they have a practical bearing on the life of every Christian who is a child of God, but who is a servant of Jesus Christ too, and who is bound to take his laws from Him, whatever they may be, and bound to take his place in His house according to what He gives him. "Occupy," He says, "till I come." Well, now we have heard there are peculiar characteristics of this dispensation as compared with past dispensations; that there are peculiar responsibilities to God and Christ in this dispensation. Have these things touched you?

Not far distant I saw a remarkable picture. It represents a novice sitting in the chapel of a monastery; he has been there perhaps for some days. But one morning, as he sits with all the monks around him at his devotions, a flash of light as to the position he occupies seems to suddenly strike his soul; and the painter has shown it in the wild look of his eye and distant stare. Has that been the position of some of us as these outlines of dispensation have flashed upon us, and the peculiar characteristics of this age in which we

live, and the contradictions of the position in which we stand, have revealed themselves?

Have any of you been struck by seeing that the course of Christendom is not according to the model that Jesus Christ left, not according to the will of God? Has this come home to you? for if it has not, there has been no advantage in what has been said. It is for this that God has brought us together—to learn something that may have power on our lives when we go forth; something that may have a practical effect. Well, I ask again that question; I must return to it.

Do you know the day of your visitation? As that temple stood an empty house, so will Christendom stand, with its multitudinous temples, and churches, and altars, an empty house, a painted corpse. Do any present see that things now are just drifting on towards that terrible state? Does the awful present condition of Christendom strike any of us?

Just look abroad upon it, and see what it is. Is it according to God's own mind? Are all the associations called by its name to the glory of God? If you do not see that condition of things, Satan sees it, and Satan knows the power that these dispensational truths should have, and the strength that they should give your position if you knew them, and acted according to them. I say, if you do not know this power, Satan does; and there is nothing that he so delights to do as to write the name of Christ over an abomination; and he is writing that name over a thousand abominations of Christendom, and he will leave that name of Christ there until he replaces it with the name of antichrist. Do we take these things home? Do we know the day of our visitation? Do we understand the dispensation in which we live?

I remember a short time ago a man who was an apostate, if ever there was an apostate. I don't mean an apostate from life, but an apostate from profession. He was brought up in one of the most Scriptural denominations in our land; and, as all the apostates are, he was bitter

against the faith in which he was brought up. I was reading in his study one day (he was a physician) waiting for him; and I took up some books by a famous infidel writer containing popular arguments on infidelity, and cutting straight through the evangelicalism of the day. I want not to hurt your feelings, but to arm your minds; but I say that the evangelicalism (by that you know what I mean) is attacked in a manner I believe to be unanswerable. For instance, in the book I took up I read a chapter, and this gentleman found me reading it, and said, "You cannot answer that."

The line of argument was this: "You Christians are nothing more than followers of a certain sect of philosophy, just as we are. You take from your Teacher the instructions of His school of ethics just as much as suits you, and we do the same. We acknowledge Him, but we do not acknowledge Him as the sole Teacher. We are not so narrow-minded as you in that. We acknowledge Him to be a great Teacher, and that He brought in a grand system of morals and ethics. But so did Confucius, and so did Buddha, and so did a great many other old philosophers, even Mahomet himself. But we take out of yours very nearly as much as you take out yourselves. Here we will turn to Matt. v." This gentleman then read me a little from the sermon on the mount; and after reading the first part of it, when he came to certain particular directions concerning that time, as for instance, "If one sues you at law, you were not to resist; if he took away your coat, you were to give him your cloak also; if one compelled you to go a mile, you were to go with him twain," he turned to me and said, "You Christians don't do that. You go a certain distance, and stop short."

I do not know how anyone could have answered him who did not know dispensational truths. The answer I made was this: "Supposing I go into your consulting-room, and find you busily engaged in prescribing for a gentleman seated there before you, and I overhear what you say. You examine his case, and prescribe for him, and

I hear distinctly the prescription. I am satisfied, and go away and order the medicines you ordered for your other patient, and take them. Well, I come back to you in about a fortnight very ill indeed, and manifestly suffering severely from some cause, and you begin to examine me. And presently I say, "I took the medicines that you ordered." "What medicines?" you ask. "Oh, such and such medicines." "Why, I did not order you any medicines." "Oh, no; but you ordered them to a gentleman I saw here, and I concluded they were good for me too!"

Well, the physician seemed utterly astonished. It was an entirely new view to him; he could not answer it.

The principles of God are always the same; but in different dispensations they are wrought out in different ways. They come under different aspects, and they have special meanings for the special time and circumstances under which they were given. Remember how our Lord at the close of His ministry speaks of the time when He sent forth His disciples without scrip or shoes. He asks, "Did ye lack anything?" "No," they say. "But now," says He, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Have we all to go and buy swords on that account, and defend ourselves? What was the meaning of that? It means that He was just about to leave them (representatives as they were of the faithful remnant in Israel)—He who had been their stay, their trust, their power, their Lord, their Head, their shield, wheresoever they went.

Now there was a change coming upon them; they were to be left without Him. He had been their shield, their protector, up to that time. And again, when that time is resumed after the present dispensational interval of which we have been hearing, you will see that the Jews will take the sword again to defend themselves; but that is not now for us. Ours is a different warfare. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," and the Lord still says, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight."

Satan is coming in like a flood, denying the truth, denying all those things that are in this Book, and that we hold most sacred—not only those special dispensational truths, but all the great revelations of God's truth to man. I need not tell you that on every side these things are coming in like a flood, and you will have to meet them. They are organized, well disciplined, well considered. They are prepared to search out every weak point in the armoury of evangelicalism; and do you think that a mere mob of principles, taken at random out of God's truth, will meet them? Is it that we are to take this blessed Book of God, and shake the pages up as we would shake lots in a bag, and take them forth at random—exhortation, or doctrine, or principle, or prophecy, or whatever it may be—as it comes forth,* and think that this will stand against the drilled, organized, embattled hosts of Satan as you see them in the current literature of the day? Never. Piety alone cannot do it.

Four hundred years ago, out in the west of Ireland, there was a great battle fought at Athunree. A Norman-Anglo host went forth to war against the wild western clans, headed by their chiefs. For a long summer's day undisciplined valour flung itself naked upon the serried spears of its unyielding foe, and at night there was a breastwork of bodies high in front of that host. But discipline won the day.

And it will be so still in the moral conflict. Do you think that God will have His people less prepared? Do you think that He would have you treat His honour and His interest with less consideration and preparation than men do where other interests are at stake? If so, blot the fourth chapter of Ephesians out of your Bibles; for there the Lord Jesus Christ left to His people a trust, whereby He would have them march in perfect organization against the foe.

He alone is Head. He is autocrat; and He alone gives strength. And for what purpose? That they may arm, equip His hosts for the foe. That word which is

rendered "perfecting of the saints" is a military term. It signifies equipment, military equipment, preparation against the foe. Are the saints ready to be equipped? Are they ready to be prepared by the officers whom God would give them? Are the officers whom God gives ready to teach them, and to hold back nothing of the truth of God? Will it be so? God grant we may present a more embattled and organized front against those principles of Satan that are coming in upon us by understanding more fully the day in which we live.

The Christian.

- As to faith—A believer (Acts v. 14).
 As to birth—A heavenly citizen (Phil. iii. 20).
 As to salvation—A saved sinner (1 Tim. i. 15).
 As to character—A saint (Rom. i. 7).
 As to influence—A light (Phil. ii. 15).
 As to communion—A friend (Jno. xv. 5).
 As to knowledge—A disciple (Jno. viii. 31, 32).
 As to conflict—A soldier (2 Tim. ii. 3).
 As to dependence—A supplicant (Eph. vi. 18).
 As to patience—A sufferer (1 Pet. iii. & iv.)
 As to experience—A pilgrim (Heb. xi. 12-16).
 As to progress—An imitator (Eph. v. 1, 2).
 As to testimony—A voice (Jno. i. 23).
 As to example—A model (1 Thess, i. 7).
 As to responsibility—A servant (1 Cor. ix.).
 As to relationship—A child (1 Jno. ii. & iii.)
 As to standing—A son (Rom. viii.)
 As to prospect—A king (Rev. v. 10).
 As to security—An overcomer (Rom. viii. 33-39).
 As to affection—A worshipper (Rev. v. 8).
 As to humility—nothing (1 Cor. iii. 7).

The Heavenly Company.

“Ye shine as lights in the world.”—PHIL. ii.

WE may be able to tell little or nothing about those bright luminaries sparkling every night in the blue vault of heaven.

Their movements may be watched by us with curiosity and wonderment, or they may have no interest or attraction for us; but there they nightly appear with the gathering gloom, and as long as the darkness continues, maintain their lonely, silent vigil, unaffected by man's unthankfulness or gratitude.

They are there for the benefit of all—evil and good, just and unjust. We had no hand in placing them there, neither are they there by our request. They are not accountable to us for their service, neither would the least one of them alter his orbit the breadth of a hair to please earth's millions. They keep the path marked out for them by their Maker.

They are silent spectators of that which transpires upon earth, and whatever influence they may exercise upon it, it is secret and unostentatious, and with its politics and pollutions they do not meddle, neither with the principles by which society is consolidated or convulsed do they interfere. They take no part nor interest in things with which men engross themselves in forgetfulness of God.

They are a heavenly company, and they

walk in their several spheres in rigid separation from this world. Their business is to give light upon the earth, and this they do, each according to his measure.

J. B—D.

No Love Like His.

"Being seen of them forty days." — ACTS i. 3.



THIS lingering on earth for forty days is the crowning proof of Christ's tender regard for His little flock. He who had laid down His life for them is loath to leave them. Though they had forsaken Him, and doubted Him, they had not wearied, much less had they worn out, His love. He stays to look again, and yet again, and yet again, upon them, as if turning back and lingering to bless them. It is all of a piece with His life of love. Everywhere He meets them without a touch of upbraiding, revealing Himself to the disciples with a tenderness and a blessedness indescribably beautiful.

How can He go till He has healed the Magdalene's broken heart? He must linger till poor Peter can venture near to have his forgiveness assured. He must stay to strengthen Thomas' faith. He must tarry with them till He has made them feel that His love is just the same as before He died! He cares for them in their work, watches them with a yearning pity, stoops to kindle a fire for their warmth, provides fish for their meal, and bids them come and dine. Blessed Jesus, what a heart is Thine!

M. G. P.

Upheld.

“Hold thou me up and I shall be safe.”



A CHRISTIAN Monk lived in olden days—
 In faith and humility ;
 Much did he pray, and much did he praise,
 For he feared the Lord, did he.

This monk he drank from a broken cup,
 A cup without foot or stem ;
 Till the brothers all began to see,
 'Twas a sign for each of them.

At last one spake in his simple way :
 “ We cannot thy thought divine ;
 We give thee another cup to-day,
 We like not this whim of thine.”

“ Good brother,” he gravely made reply :
 “ This cup is a sign for thee,
 It never can stand, tho' oft it try,
 Unless it is held by me.

“ In the Holy Book, God tells us all—
 God help us to understand—
 We are only safe from slip and fall,
 As held by His gracious hand.”

S. T. F.

"No More Sorrow."

—o—

A MAN, well nigh crushed with sorrow, and who was a stranger to God, was hurrying into a railway station through a street where the gospel preaching had been greatly blessed.

A poor boy, who had lately been made happy by coming to Christ, was sitting on a doorstep, singing to himself the words of the little hymn,—

"There'll be no more sorrow there,
There'll be no more sorrow there."

The man was startled. *He* knew of no place where there would be no more sorrow, but if there were such a place, oh that he might find it. "Where is it there'll be no more sorrow?" said he to the boy. The child smiled, and sang on—

"In heaven above, where all is love,
There'll be no more sorrow there."

The man passed, and took his place in the railway carriage. But the words of the hymn rang in his ears, and would not leave him. A world where there will be no sorrow! He pondered it over. It was the message by which the Holy Spirit created in his soul desires after God, and led him to the Saviour, Who will bring all who trust Him to "Heaven above"—the Father's House, where a Father's hand shall wipe away every tear from every eye. "There'll be no more sorrow there."

The Power of Little Things.



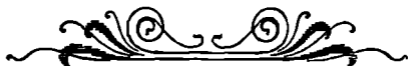
A CURIOUS experiment was witnessed in a gun factory. A great bar of steel, weighing five hundred pounds, and eight feet in length, was suspended vertically by a very delicate chain.

Near by was also suspended a common bottle-cork by a silk thread.

The purpose was to show that the cork could set the steel bar in motion. It seemed impossible.

The cork, however, was swung gently against the steel bar and the steel bar remained motionless. But it was done again and again for ten minutes, and lo! at the end of that time the bar gave evidence of feeling uncomfortable; a sort of nervous chill ran over it. Ten minutes later, and the chill was followed by vibrations. At the end of half an hour the great bar was swinging like the pendulum of a clock.

No one is mighty enough in his own energy of will to feel secure, if he is exposed to a constantly repeated influence for evil. The constant beating of a raindrop has often worn a hole in a stone; and the constant hearing of low views of honesty, of virtue, of truth, of spirituality, though at first offensive and opposed, has in the end taken away many a Christian's vigour and sapped his strength.



“What think ye of Christ?”



Youth.

Too happy to think—there's time enough, sure.

Manhood.

Too busy too think—of gold I want more.

Prime.

Too anxious to think—toil, worry, and fret.

Declining years.

Too aged to think—old hearts harder get.

Dying bed.

Too ill now to think—weak, suffering, and lone.

Death.

'Tis too late to think—the spirit has flown.

Eternity.

Forever to think—God's mercy is past,
And I into hell am righteously cast
To weep o'er my doom which for ever must last.



The Message.

“God have mercy upon
my soul.”



EIGHT men were travelling in company through one of the huge canyons of Colorado. On each side of the waggon-track towered the mighty rocks, seeming almost to pierce the heavens with their jagged summits, their rugged sides seamed still with the convulsions that had given them birth, worn here and there by the downward rush of some mountain torrent, and in other places clothed with the thick, dark foliage of giant trees. An awe-inspiring scene, and one fitted to impress the traveller with a sense of his own littleness and the power and majesty of the great Creator. These eight men, however, gave little thought to the wonders around them; perhaps they had journeyed that way before, and the time was passed in light conversation and jest.

At length the driver, feeling heated by the oppressive atmosphere of the deep, rock-girt valley, took off his coat, and threw it down beside him, forgetting that there was a loaded pistol in the pocket. The pistol exploded, wounding the unhappy man fatally. His seven companions did all they could for him, but they soon saw that it was beyond their power to save his life.

“All we can do,” said one of them, “is to stay

with you until you die," and, hushed and solemnised by the approach of death, they watched by the side of their wounded comrade, conscious of their inability to help him.

All at once, the dying man raised himself, and expending all his remaining strength in the effort, he cried aloud: "*God have mercy upon my soul!*" and immediately expired.

The huge rocks that towered thousands of feet above them on every side, took up the agonised cry with awful solemnity—"God have mercy upon my soul—upon my soul—my soul—soul—soul!" until the air around them reverberated with the thrilling intensity of the last cry of their now dead companion, thus actually echoed with terrible distinctness in the ears of the seven survivors. Gradually the echoes died away into silence, deep, solemn, impressive, and the awe-struck listeners could not but ponder upon what they had heard. Was it the despairing cry of a lost soul? Was it even so that the echoes of Eternity might take up the agonised wail of those who, too late, are awakened to consider their eternal interests, repeating it for ever in their ears?

One by one, those seven men threw themselves upon their knees, and then and there cried: "God have mercy upon my soul!" and yielded themselves as lost and helpless sinners to the God Who alone could save them, and the one who afterwards related the story testified that he had indeed entered upon a new life that day in the canyon in Colorado. To those seven men it was as if the veil had for a moment been lifted, and they had had a glimpse of the immense importance of eternal things. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark viii. 36).

Reader, have you been awakened to see things as

they shall stand clearly revealed to you in the light of Eternity? Or, are your eyes still blinded, is your prospect bounded by the things of time? Remember, it is written that "everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 12).

The Cross of Christ presents a marvellous exhibition of God's saving mercy, but for those who persist in rejecting it, what further mercy can there be? God's mercy is linked to the sacrifice of Christ. If you will not accept the one, you cannot have the other; but if you receive the one, the other is yours.

M. E. M.



Belshazzar's Feast.—There was one Guest not invited, but He came, and the work of His finger glowed upon the wall.



Secret Sin in the life is like Jonah in the ship. It turns the smoothest water into a tempestuous sea.



Our Actions are the only title deeds of which we cannot be disinherited.



Every Act done is a seed that will bear fruit, each after its kind.



Hell trembles at a heaven-directed eye.



You are truly humble only when you are truly despised in your own eyes.

Prayers for the Dead.



WHEN the late Pope was seized with his last illness, one of the crowd of Cardinals and Monseignors who were praying in the ante-room, approached his bedside and whispered: "*Fear not, our prayers will save you!*"

The dying Pontiff shook his head and faintly replied: "*No, I am going into Eternity.*"

Of course, the Cardinal simply meant, Our prayers will save your life; and the Pope only meant that he felt he was going to die. Albeit, how solemn and pathetic were the words of both when put side by side with the teaching of a false and corrupt system, which grows fat on prayers and masses, not for the living and dying merely, but also for the repose of the souls of the dead.

"Fear not, our prayers will save you!" So say the false prophets, "crying peace, peace, and there is no peace" to their poor, deluded followers! But what saith the Scriptures?—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" And, again: "If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins," And yet again: "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Ah; when a soul goes forth into Eternity, as the Pope went, prayer cannot reach it. Never yet was a prayer heard except for those in time, though that prayer were supported by all the priests of the Papacy, or were countenanced even by the Protestant bishops, the clergy, and the prayer-book. Divine righteousness is inexorable when grace has been finally rejected. Read Jeremiah's tear-stained prayer for guilty Judah (ch. xiv.), and Jehovah's

stern, unbending answer: "Then said the Lord unto me, Though *Moses* (the representative of the law—Acts iii. 22), and *Samuel* (the representative of the prophets—Acts iii. 23) stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people, cast them out of my sight." If God spake like that of those who never heard the gospel, how much more so concerning those of our privileged day who "have made Him out a liar" (1 Jno. v. 10), trodden under foot the blood of His Son (Heb. x. 28, 29), and rejected the witness of His Holy Spirit (Acts viii. 51) ?

Saints in heaven need not the supplications of those on earth, and whatever men may say about "the prayers of the saints above" they do not pray, though in a future day the heavenly saints will present the prayers of certain earthly suffering ones (Rev. iv.).

Those in hell are beyond the aid of prayer. Their day of grace is gone, the fatal die has been cast, their doom is fixed. They may pray, but the only answer vouchsafed is the awful reminder of past and slighted opportunities:—"Son, remember" (Luke xvi.).

Only one Man's prayers prevail before the throne of God, the prayers of "the man Christ Jesus." But for whom does He pray—the world? Nay, He prays only for "His own," given to Him out of the world (Jno. xvii.).

Prayer, as regards the creature, is limited to time and for time. Once beyond the bourne of time no prayer can avail. The parent's cry for the child, the passionate pleading of the wife for the husband, and the supplications of the gospel preacher for his hearers—all cease in Eternity. Be he pope, prince, or pauper, as death finds him so justice seals him forever.

"Fear not, our prayers will save you!"

"No, I am going into Eternity."

Such is the devil's poisonous opiate for a convicted conscience, and the true answer of that conscience when it refuses the drug because it is fully awakened to the reality of the truth.

Man, woman, child—"Behold, *now* is the accepted time" in which God will hear thee. Avail thyself of it whilst thou hast it, for time, not to mention the accepted time, *does not exist in Eternity.*

"Death comes down with noiseless footsteps
To the hall and hut :
Think you death will tarry, waiting
When the door is shut ?
Jesus waiteth, pleadeth, knocketh,
But the door is fast :
Grieved, away the Saviour goeth,
Death breaks in at last."

S. J. B. C.

The Pining Eagle.

RECENTLY saw a great bald eagle kept in a cage on the outside of a tall building. The sun had got high enough so that its beams fell across the first three or four feet of the top of the great iron cage in which the eagle was a captive. There was a great pole which stood in the cage reaching up close to the top.

I watched the eagle as he became interested in the sunshine at the top of the cage.

He had been standing drowsy and uninterested on the ground, but suddenly stretched

himself up at the sight of the sunshine. After looking at it for a moment, he spread his wings and flew up to the top of the post, where the sunshine bathed him. From that vantage-ground he was able to see the sun as it looked over the building.

Suddenly the bird seemed transformed. He stood erect; his wings came into position as trim as a soldier at attention. A fierce gleam came into his eye, and again and again his wild scream, such as I have heard it over and over again in the Oregon mountains, rang forth. He was looking at the sun; he thought of the upper sky where he belonged, and he pined for it. But alas, he was not free!

How many times we see a man like that! He has vision hours when he beholds the Sun of Righteousness, and catches a glimpse of the upper spiritual sky and yearns for purity, warmth, light and God. He pines and he longs, but the cage of his evil habits shuts him in, and he soon sinks back again into his old lethargy. Yet there is One who can set him free, if only he would trust Him.

L. A. B.



Each Day is divine. It comes and goes like a muffled and veiled figure sent from a distant friendly party; but it says nothing, and if we do not use the gifts it brings, it carries them as silently away.

The Christian's Pedigree.

"And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers."—NUM. i. 18.

CAN you declare your pedigree? It is greatly to be feared there are hundreds, if not thousands, of professing Christians who are wholly incompetent to do so. They cannot say with clearness and decision, "*Now are we the sons of God*" (1 Jno. iii. 2). The Christian has a "pedigree," and it is his privilege to be able to "declare" it. He is born from above—born again—born of water and the Spirit, *i.e.*, by the Word and by the Holy Ghost. (Compare, diligently, John iii. 5; James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23; Eph. v. 26.)

The believer traces his pedigree directly up to a risen Christ in glory. This is Christian genealogy. So far as our natural pedigree is concerned, if we trace it up to its *source*, and then declare it honestly, we must see and admit that we are sprung from a ruined stock. Ours is a fallen family. Our fortunes are gone; our very blood attainted; we are irrecoverably ruined; we can never regain our original position; our former *status* and the inheritance which belonged to it are irretrievably lost. A man may be able to trace his genealogical line through a race of nobles, of princes, or of kings; but if he is fully to "declare his pedigree," he cannot stop short of a fallen, ruined, outcast head. We must get to the *source* of a thing to know what it really is. It is thus God looks at and judges of things, and we must think with Him if we would think aright. His judgment of men and things must be dominant for ever.

But how different with the Christian! His pedi-

gree is heavenly. His genealogical tree strikes its roots into the soil of the new creation. Death can never break the line, inasmuch as it is formed in resurrection. We cannot be too simple as to this. It is of the utmost importance that the reader should be thoroughly clear on this foundation point. We can easily see how essential it was that every member of the congregation of Israel should be able to declare his pedigree. Uncertainty, on this point, would have proved disastrous; it would have produced hopeless confusion. We can hardly imagine an Israelite, when called to declare his pedigree, expressing himself in the doubtful manner adopted by many Christians now-a-days. We cannot conceive his saying, "Well, I am not quite sure. Sometimes I cherish the hope that I am of the stock of Israel; but at other times, I am full of fear that I do not belong to the congregation of the Lord at all. I am all in uncertainty and darkness." Can we conceive such language? Assuredly not. Much less could we imagine any one maintaining the monstrous notion that no one could possibly be sure as to whether he was a true Israelite or not until the day of judgment.

Now, may we not legitimately ask, "If a Jew could be certain as to his pedigree, why may not a Christian be certain as to his?" Not one of that mighty host that mustered "over against the tabernacle of the congregation" would have understood such a thing as a single doubt, or shadow of a doubt as to *his own very pedigree*. Doubtless, he would have smiled, had any one raised a question on the subject. Each one of the six hundred thousand knew well whence he had sprung, and, therefore, where he was to take his stand. And just so with God's militant host now. Each member thereof will need to possess the

most unclouded confidence as to his relationship, else he will not be able to stand in the battle.

It is impossible for any one to recognise and rally round the proper "standard" unless he can declare his "pedigree." In short, it is impossible to take up a true position in the wilderness so long as there is any uncertainty as to this great question. How could an Israelite of old have taken his place in the assembly—how could he have stood in the ranks—how could he expect to make any progress through the wilderness, if he could not distinctly declare his pedigree? Impossible. Just so is it with Christians now. Progress in wilderness life—success in spiritual warfare, is out of the question if there be any uncertainty as to the spiritual pedigree. We must be able to say, "*We know that we have passed from death unto life*"—"We know that we are of God"—"*We believe and are sure,*" ere there can be any real advance in the life and walk of a Christian.

Say, can you declare your pedigree? Is this a thoroughly settled point with you? Are you clear as to this in the very depths of your soul? When you are all alone with God, is it a perfectly settled question between you and Him? Search and see. Make sure work of it. Do not slur the matter over. Build not upon mere profession. Say not "I am a member of such a church; I receive the Lord's supper; I hold such and such doctrines; I have been religiously brought up; I live a moral life; I have done nobody any harm; I read the Bible and say my prayers; I have family worship in my house; I give largely in the cause of philanthropy and religion." All this may be perfectly true of you, and yet you may not have a single pulse of divine life, a single ray of divine light. Not one of these things, not all of them put together, could.

be accepted as a declaration of spiritual pedigree.

It is not, by any means, a question of looking into your own heart for evidences. It is not a building upon frames, feelings, and experiences. Nothing of the sort. It is a childlike faith in Christ. It is having eternal life in the Son of God. It is the imperishable record of the Holy Ghost. It is taking God at His word. "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 (*krisin*), but *is passed* from death unto life" (John v. 24).

Dear Friend Art thou clear and settled as to thy "pedigree?" Is it a settled thing that thou art on the Lord's side?

Do not, we beseech thee, leave this grand question unsettled. We have asked it before, and we ask it again. Dost thou know—canst thou declare thy spiritual pedigree? It is the first thing for God's warrior. It is of no use to think of entering the militant host so long as you are unsettled as to this point.

We say not that a man cannot be saved without this. No, far be the thought. But he cannot take rank as a man-of-war. He cannot do battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, so long as he is filled with doubts and fears as to whether he belongs to the true spiritual stock. If there is to be any progress, if there is to be that decision, so essential to a spiritual warrior, we must be able to say:—

"*We know that we have passed from death unto life.*"

Do you know this?

Can you declare your pedigree?

"Thy Brother's Blood."

(A Missionary's Dream.)



THE tom-toms thumped straight on all night, and the darkness shuddered round me as a living, feeling thing. As I lay half-asleep, half-awake, I looked, and I saw, as it seemed, this:

That I stood on a grassy sward, and at my feet a precipice broke sheer down into infinite space. I looked, but saw no bottom; only cloud shapes, black and furiously coiled, and great shadow-shrouded hollows and unfathomable depths. Back I drew, dizzy at the depth.

Then I saw forms of people moving single file along the grass. They were making for the edge. There was a woman with a baby in her arms and another little child holding on to her dress. She was on the very verge. Then I saw that she was blind. She lifted her foot for the next step—it trod air. She was over, and the children over with her. Oh, the cry as they went over!

Then I saw more streams of people flowing from all quarters. All were blind, stone blind; all made straight for the precipice edge.

Then I wondered, with a wonder that was simply agony, why no one stopped them at the edge. Then I saw that along the edge there were sentries set at intervals. But the intervals were far too great; there were wide, unguarded gaps between. And over these gaps the people fell in their blindness, quite unwarned; and the green grass seemed blood-red, and the gulf yawned like the mouth of hell.

Then I saw, like a little picture of peace, a group of people under some trees, with their backs turned towards the gulf. They were making daisy chains! Sometimes, when a piercing shriek cut the quiet air

and reached them, it disturbed them, and they thought it rather a vulgar noise. And if one of their number started up and wanted to go and do something to help, then all the others would pull that one down. "Why should you get so excited about it? You must wait for God's time to go! You haven't finished your daisy chain yet. The time has not come to evangelise the heathen."

Then came another sound like the pain of a million broken hearts wrung out in one full drop, one sob. And a horror of great darkness was upon me, for I knew what it was—the cry of Blood.

Then thundered a Voice, the Voice of the Lord: "AND HE SAID: THE VOICE OF THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH UNTO ME FROM THE GROUND."

* * * * *

I awoke. The tom-toms still beat heavily, the darkness still shuddered and shivered about me; I heard the yells of the devil-possession outside the gate, and I knew the deeds of blood being done.

God forgive us! God arouse us! Shame us out of our callousness! Shame us out of our sin!

(Adapted.)

"Such as I have."

(Acts iii. 6.)

SUCH as I have I give; it is not much,
 Said one who loved the Master of the field;
 Only a quiet word, a gentle touch
 Upon the hidden harp-strings, which may yield
 No quick response. I tremble, yet I speak
 For Him who knows my heart—so loving, yet so weak!

Our Sinful Self.



A CERTAIN man clings to us; go where we will he follows us; and he is continually tripping us up. If we could only run away and leave him, what a relief it would be!

I have heard of a man who made up his mind to go out of the way of temptation that he might lead a perfectly holy life. So he built a hut in the middle of a wood, took a supply of bread and a large jug of water, and sought to shut himself up where no evil could follow him. He shut the door with great delight, rejoicing to think that he had left the world and sin outside, and he was so happy that he fell on his knees to thank God that he was delivered at last. Alas! in the act of kneeling down he kicked his water jug over, and something came out of his lips which was neither thanksgiving nor prayer! With a sad and disappointed heart he got up and went home, having made the discovery that his greatest enemy was a man from whom he could not run away.

As soon as one is born again there is a desire to be holy and to live to God, and there are more or less earnest efforts to live up to the light. It may be that the soul sets itself to keep the ten commandments; or tries to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and walk as He walked; or attempts to carry out the divine instructions given in the Christian epistles. The more intelligence of divine things one has got, the higher the standard will be to which he will seek to attain. But however sincere the desire, and however perfect and exalted the standard, the result is a total failure. The soul has to learn four things, which are found in Rom vii.

1. "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (ver. 14.)

2. "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (ver. 16, 17.)

3. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." (ver. 18.)

4. "Who shall deliver me? . . . I thank God through Jesus Christ." (ver. 25.)

C. A. C.



The Shadow of His Brightness.

ONCE saw a dark shadow resting on the bare side of a hill. Seeking its cause, I saw a little cloud, bright as the light, floating in the clear blue above. Thus it is with our sorrow. It may be dark and cheerless here on earth; yet look above and you shall see it to be but the shadow of His brightness whose name is Love. A.

For Their Sakes.

"For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."—JOHN xvii. 19.

DO you remember, when Jesus was sitting with His disciples at the last supper, how He lifted up His voice and prayed, and in the midst of His prayer there came these wondrous words: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified"? Is there anything in all the teachings that we have had from the lips of God that is nobler, that is more far-reaching than that—to be separate, not only for mine own sake, but for the sake of others. You can help your fellow-believers, but the only way you can help them is by being a heavenly man on earth—set apart from the world and to God.

P. B.

Stillness in Service.

— ✦ —
 "My soul is silent unto God." — Psa. lxii. 1, R. V. margin.
 — ✦ —

IF we would be Christ-like Christian workers, one of the first things necessary for us to possess is a soul silent towards God, so that He may speak to us, and work in and through us. One who was much used of God traced the blessing that accompanied his labour to the fact of *letting God speak to him*, rather than his speaking to God.

As we commence any undertaking in God's service, as we go to a fresh place, one of our most earnest prayers to God should be for stillness of soul. A five-fold silence is necessary in Christian service.

THE SILENCE OF OUR OWN DESIRES.

The clamour of our own desires not only hinders God speaking to us and using us, but also is frequently a source of trouble to ourselves. Someone has truly said: "There is a danger of our wanting to see the results *we* desire, instead of the results *God* desires us to see." *God* may send us to a certain place for the sake of the salvation of one soul, as He sent Philip long ago to the desert to speak words of peace to the Ethiopian; but, if our desires are not in harmony with God's, *we* may expect hundreds to be saved there through our labour; and, because *our* desires are not fulfilled, *our* expectations not realised, we become fretful and discouraged. *We* may set our hearts on the salvation of the adults, while *God's* thought is that our words should bring life to the children; and so we are disappointed and cast down. Our ambition in working for God should not so much be to see mighty results as to do "according to all that is in

His heart" (2 Kings x. 30), and to fulfil all His will (Acts xiii. 22). "There is something better than seeing results," it has been said, "and that is knowing we are doing God's will."

THE SILENCE OF OUR OWN PLANS.

We need continually to remember that God's thoughts and ways are not as ours: that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts higher than ours; and before God can use us mightily, our thoughts must be "brought into captivity to Christ," and we must let go our own plans and purposes and receive His instead. *He* is "Captain of the Lord's host;" and through getting down low at His feet, and by constant and close intercourse with Him, we may learn His "thoughts" and "ways" of carrying on the war against sin and Satan. Then, and then only, can we expect real victory.

THE SILENCE OF OUR OWN WORKING.

Perhaps in no way do we hinder the Holy Ghost more than by trying to help Him, and by seeking to do the work which He alone can do. "God must do all, or all is nothing." All work which we do in the energy of the flesh for God is fruitless: the only work that is really fruitful, is what *God does through us*. The best Christian workers are not those who do most for God, but those who let God do most for them—those who know the silence from self and restless effort.

THE SILENCE OF OUR OWN PRAYERS.

Probably every Christian worker is sooner or later brought to face the question: "Why does God not answer prayer? For days, and weeks, and months, I have pleaded for showers of blessing on my work.

Why are they not granted? Why is the ground as barren and fruitless as ever? Why are my prayers of no avail?"

May not one reason of unanswered prayers be that, even though we are Christian workers, we do not know how to "pray in the Holy Ghost"? We have never learnt the all-important lesson that "*we know not how to pray*" (Rom. viii. 28). We have never yet seen, perhaps, that it is the prayers which God Himself inspires that God answers; that, as has been well said: "In all effectual prayer God is as much in the asking as in the giving."

It is a fatal mistake to try to work up the Spirit of prayer in our hearts, or to "*make ourselves believe*" for great things. How suggestive are these words on this subject: "True prayer is getting into sympathy with God. In your prayers, be less eager to impress certain things on God than to let Him impress things on you. Instead of going to God with a certain programme, let God inculcate upon you His programme. If in your daily prayer you would quietly wait and stay your fever, your passion, your vehemence, till the Holy Spirit moulds you, you would find yourself more vehement, more intense, more ardent, not with thoughts and desires generated in your own heart, but with thoughts and desires that have descended to you from God."

THE SILENCE OF OUR OWN JOY.

There is a holy and a mere natural joy in Christian service—"Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you" (Luke x. 20). "Rejoice with Me, for I have found My sheep that was lost" (Luke xvi. 6). The first springs from self—it may be a rejoicing in the applause of man, or a mere carnal joy in success, or a secret congratulation of ourselves that we have

been more used than others. And all such selfish joy must be silenced by the Holy Spirit before we can know the purer, deeper delight of holy joy. Paul experienced it when he wrote: "For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes *before our God*" (1 Thess. iii. 9). With the Good Shepherd (Luke xv. 6), we are glad because there is joy in heaven over a sinner repenting. Of such holy joy we cannot have too much.

H. G.



"Judge Not."



WHERE have you been, my brother,
For I missed you from the street?—
I have been away
All night and all day,
On the Lord God's Judgment Seat.

And what did you find, my brother,
When your judging there was done?
Thick dust on my floor,
And dearth in my store,
And my roses dead in the sun:—

And the lesson brought back with me,
Like Silence, from above,
Was that on God's throne
There is room alone
For the Lord, Whose heart is love.

E. L.



SYMPATHY.—Christian, if you would have the priestly gift of sympathy, you must be content to pay the price. Like Christ—you must suffer.

The Dispensations of Scripture.

(Continued.)*



THE greater part of Scripture consists of prophecy. There is scarcely a page that does not contain prophetic truth in some form. Yet few Christians make prophecy their study, while the doctrinal and hortatory parts of Scripture form the subject of their earnest daily consideration. There is not space here to enquire into the causes of this serious oversight on the part of many devoted servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it may be observed that they will not have cause to complain of time lost, or attention distracted from other service, by giving themselves more to the study of prophetic truth; on the contrary, they will find much light thrown on their present path, much practical encouragement given to their ministry, while their faith will rest on a broader, deeper comprehension of God's character and ways, and their spiritual horizon will take a far wider sweep, and stand out in clearer outlines than before. The development of God's purposes will become more manifest, and the true history of this world will be rescued from the confusion in which it lies to so many, and will reveal itself in an ordered succession of ages and dispensations distinct in their character, but inseparably connected in their sequence.

THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

The study of prophetic truth does not merely imply a forecasting of future events. This indeed is the effort and the scope of human soothsaying sagacity, whose highest science does not rise above happy conjecture, and whose most profound philosophy is expressed in the proverb that "nothing is certain except the unforeseen."

But the history of God's dealing with the race of man, as told in Scripture, exhibits a divine philosophy of cause

*Culled from various sources.

and effect—like a chain of golden links let down from heaven to earth, in its course through time often lost to sight, but never broken, and finally passing up into Eternity again to rivet this world for ever to the throne of God.

But to perceive and understand all this requires much more than a surface-study of Scripture. It must be read in its profounder teachings, in those wonderful depths of meaning that underlie its illustrations, its metaphors, its history, as well as sparkle up to the sunlight in its bright prophetic announcement of coming glory.

Such a study of God's Word will be found of more avail to meet the scepticism of the day than all the aids to faith and books of evidences that have been written by men; for it furnishes us out of God's own armoury, and trains us in His school of warfare.

THE DIVINE CHALLENGE.

Thus in the book of Isaiah He appears challenging the philosophers and sceptics of this world to the test of prophetic proof: "Produce your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forth your strong reasons. . . . Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isa. xli. 21-23).

Again Jehovah points to the plain accomplishments of events which he had foretold by the mouth of His servants the prophets, and announces fresh predictions: "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them" (Isa. xlii. 9). And yet again He proclaims Israel to be His witnesses to all the nations of the world (ch. xliii. 9); and such they are to this day. This weapon alone out of God's armoury can cut through all the sophistries and opposition of men.

Prophecy is their history. Who but God could write beforehand the records of a people coeval with the earth itself? What hand but His could preserve a people of unmingled race through two thousand years of exile, and that exile not a migration to take national possession of another land, but a dispersion of scattered atoms over the face of the earth?

Without a king, without a priest, without a constitution, without the constituent elements of a people, they exist, unabsorbed in countries that have assimilated far more stubborn races, more naturally opposed idiosyncracies. For two thousand years they have been fulfilling in every line the picture drawn by the Master's hand in Hosea iii. 4. They survive to fulfil as literally the picture drawn in the next verse.

ISRAEL—GOD'S WITNESS.

Frederick the Great of Prussia, though he prided himself on his sceptical philosophy, is said to have had a chaplain attached to his household who was a faithful man of God. The king was accustomed to amuse himself and his court sometimes at this good man's expense; and on one occasion, coming to dinner in high spirits, he turned to his chaplain, and said, "Doctor, if your religion is a true one, it ought to be capable of very brief and simple proof. Will you give me an evidence of its truth in *one word*?" The good man thought for a few moments, and then answered gravely, "It is capable even of such proof. I accept your Majesty's challenge, and will give you in one word an unanswerable evidence of the faith I hold; that word is—*Israel*." The king was silenced if not convinced by this use of the divine argument.

Scripture teaches us that the true prosperity of this earth is dependent upon the happiness of Israel. Had Israel been faithful to the trust committed to her in times past, she would have brought blessing to the whole world. The forty glorious years of Solomon's reign should have been only the commencement of an era of

peace and prosperity that would have continued to increase and diffuse itself till its unruffled splendour filled and gladdened the whole earth. Israel failed utterly and miserably in this trust; but the gifts and callings of God are without repentance.

When a privilege is bestowed by Him, it confers a dignity which cannot be resigned—a dignity which adorns with illustrious glory where it is worthily borne, or brands with conspicuous shame where it is dishonoured by unfaithfulness.

Cain illustrated the latter doom when he went forth stained with the blood of one whom birthright entitled him to rule and bound him to protect.

So Israel, driven forth a vagabond and a stranger into the world which he should have ruled and blessed, bears still from generation to generation the indestructible lineaments of the firstborn of the nations; and shall yet regain the dignity through the Kinsman who has redeemed the firstborn's rights.

THE FOUR GREAT EMPIRES.

Israel having lost his royal place, rule passed to the Gentiles, first to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the head of gold of the great image that prefigures the times of the Gentiles. (Daniel ii.)

This head of gold represented absolute sovereignty. Such is God's rule, and He would delegate nothing less; for in every modification of it lie the seeds of weakness. But he to whom it was entrusted was to use it as God uses it, righteously, benevolently, wisely, and entirely for the happiness of all committed to his charge.

The dignity was too great for Nebuchadnezzar. He broke down immediately, and he broke down utterly. The trust, however, was not revoked; it was left in men's hands, and men dealt with it according to their own wisdom. In the breast and arms of silver of the same image we have before us a kingdom which God calls inferior, because it was a departure from His model. But men had found it necessary to limit the ruler's

power for evil, and in so doing they restrained his action for good also. Darius found himself unable to keep alive a faithful subject and a worthy man. (Dan. vi.) And it was proved that justice could not be ensured by an expedient which did not touch the source of unrighteous government in the evil heart of man.

Another form of sovereignty followed, typified by the brazen haunches and thighs of the image, and realized in the Macedonian empire. It was founded on the uncertain basis of military prowess and conquest, and was broken up, before it could be consolidated, into four jealous antagonistic kingdoms. (Daniel viii. 21, 22.)

In the meantime another power was slowly growing up in the world, destined to surpass all competitors, and to reproduce many of the characteristics of its predecessors. This was Rome, typified by the iron limbs of the image (Daniel ii.), and by the fourth wild beast of Daniel vii. This nation passed through various phases of government, from the broadest form of republicanism to an imperialism as absolute as that of Nebuchadnezzar, and far more calculatingly ferocious. Scripture speaks of this power as the last to whom authority on earth is delegated. During this present interval it is in abeyance, or survives only in the kingdoms which have grown up out of its fragmentary provinces, and which have preserved much of its language and jurisprudence. But we learn from prophecy that it shall reappear in its last and most powerful phase, to be destroyed by the Lord Himself when He comes to set up a kingdom which shall not pass away. (Daniel vii. 14, 26, 27.) This last and terrible aspect of the Roman empire is described by the Holy Spirit in Rev. xiii., in which, under its dark and cruel ruler, it is seen persecuting to the death all who remain faithful to Jehovah.

In the end of the 19th chapter of the Revelation his overthrow is described, and he himself being taken alive, together with his false prophet (the hierarch of his great ecclesiastical system), is with him cast alive into the lake of fire.

Many students of prophecy have considered *the religious system* of Papal Rome to be described in Rev. xiii. as the beast who makes war on the saints, and is cast *alive* into the lake of fire in chap. xix. It would ill become us to set aside as unworthy of consideration the opinions of many who in past and present times have taken this view. It certainly consoled many saints of God who suffered for the faith under the pitiless hand of Rome in ages past. And a remarkable application to her deeds may be traced in the relentless cruelties of the wild beast of Daniel and Revelation. But Romish corruption, arrogance, and cruelty, though they may well be shadowed forth, are far from exhausting or even fulfilling all the characteristics of the wild beast's reign. Corrupt Christianity is false profession of truth, the wolf in sheep's clothing. In the name of God she murdered the saints of God. All this is brought out in "Babylon the great" of Rev. xvii.

It is well to distinguish between Jewish apostasy and Christian apostasy. Both are supported by the revived Roman empire, but they are distinct, as distinct as—

ANTICHRIST AND BABYLON.

Thus the wild beast—the antichrist, supported by imperial Rome—in his fully developed character, sets himself up against the profession of any belief in God. He does not declare Himself to be God's vicar. He establishes his own worship, as did the emperors of Pagan Rome, and all his worshippers are branded with his mark, and doomed to irrecoverable apostasy. None will assert this to be true of all who have held or hold the profession of Romanism. Neither will any affirm that the names of all who are not Romanists are written in the book of life. (See Rev. xiii. 7.) Therefore we conclude that whatever may be the secondary and shadowy application of Daniel vii. and viii., and of Rev. xiii., to Papal Rome, yet these scriptures still wait their full and accurate accomplishment in a more developed and unreserved usurpation of divine prerogative, and

unqualified apostasy from the acknowledgment of Jehovah's name.

The mystery of Babylon in Rev. xvii. is not the mystery of lawlessness spoken of in 2 Thess. ii., though, doubtless, the spirit of both are at work in Christendom to-day. But in 2 Thess. ii. the mystery is headed up in *a person*—the antichrist, whereas Babylon is *a system*. The one is Jewish apostasy, the other, Christendom's apostasy. The seat of the one is "the holy city"—Jerusalem. The seat of the other is "the great city"—Rome. The one is destroyed at Christ's appearing (Rev. xix.); the other by the 10 kings and the beast which she rides (Rev. xviii.). Babylon is destroyed *by* the beast—imperial Rome—and his confederates; antichrist is destroyed *with* them. The beast—the imperial power of Rome; and the woman—the ecclesiastical power of Rome, cannot be the same, else when the beast destroys the woman he would destroy himself.

All the Days.

"Lo, I am with you all the days."—MATT. xxviii. 20. (B. V., margin.)

"ALL THE DAYS"—in winter days, when joys are fled; in sunless days, when the clouds return again and again after rain; in days of sickness and pain; in days of temptation and perplexity, as much as in days when the heart is as full of joy as the woodlands in spring are full of song. That day never comes when the Lord Jesus is not at the side of His saints. Lover and friend may stand afar, but He walks with them through the fires; He fords with them the rivers; He stands by them when face to face with the lion. We can never be alone. We must always add His resources to our own when making our calculations.

F. B. M.

The Morning.

"In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."—PSA. v. 3.

THE morning is the gate of the day, and should be well guarded with prayer. It is one end of the thread on which the day's actions are strung, and should be well knotted with devotion. If we felt more the majesty of life we should be more careful of its moorings. He who rushes from his bed to his business and waiteth not to worship is as foolish as though he had not put on his clothes, or cleansed his face, and as unwise as though he dashed into battle without arms or armour. Be it ours to bathe in the softly flowing river of communion with God, before the heat of the wilderness and the burden of the way begin to oppress us. S.

Much Fruit.

"Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit."—JOHN xv. 8.

WHAT a possibility, what an inspiration, that we can enhance the glory of the Father! Our hearts leap at the thought.

How can this be done? By bearing "leaves"—a *profession* of love for Him? No. By bearing *some* fruit? No. "That ye bear *much* fruit." In the abundance of the yield is the joy, the glory of the husbandman. We should, therefore, aim to be "hundred-fold" Christians, satisfied with none but the largest yield. How is it to be brought about? There is only one way, only one—abiding in Christ.

W. J.

The Aged Pilgrim.

CLOSED is the pilgrim's path,
 Jordan is near ;
 Yet, leaning on his staff,
 Knows he no fear :
 Faith calmly reigns supreme,
 Hope sees the glory beam,
 Love lingers on one theme—
 Jesus so dear.

Would he be young once more ?
 Why should he—why ?
 Over fond memory's store
 Why should he sigh ?
 Would he begin anew
 The desert to go through,
 Now Canaan is in view
 And Home is nigh ?

Would he again retrace
 Earth's checkered way ?—
 Arm him again to face
 Satan's array ?
 Nay, for the foe is gone,
 With all that made him mourn ;
 Fair breaks the smiling dawn—
 Heaven's glad day.

On high his Saviour waits,
 Who loves him so ;
 Dear ones within yon gates
 Well does he know :
 Bright gleams Jerusalem,
 City of light and gem,—
 Song, harp, and diadem ;
 There would he go.



How to be Saved.

THE sea was calm and quiet; and the sailors were practising with the life-saving apparatus when two young people came running up eagerly.

"Shew us how to be saved, do!" they cried both at once.

The sailors agreed, and very soon an object lesson was given of the way lives are saved in stormy weather.

First the rope has to be fixed, and this is done by firing a rocket with a line attached to the wreck; then a stout rope is drawn from the land to the ship, and then a sort of cage is made in which those who are to be rescued are drawn along the rope to land.

Going over it on a sunny day with laughter and fun was but a poor picture of what takes place when life hangs in the balance, when high waves threaten to dash the ship to pieces, when not a moment must be lost, and when the journey is undertaken in the teeth of an awful storm and often through mighty waters, but it is to be "saved," and

that means so much to the perishing that no trouble is too great to face.

From many a sin-wrecked heart goes the cry, "Shew me how to be saved."

First there had to be the line fixed, and this in figure means that first One must come from God to our sin-smitten earth. He has been, He has died, and He has returned to the Father. The line from earth to Heaven is fixed and ready.

And the Lord Jesus is Himself the Way. The sinner must believe on Him to be saved. Just as those who wish to be saved from a wreck must get into the cage and there rest while they are drawn to land, so the sinner casting himself upon Christ rests in Him, unable to save himself. He is saved by another.

"Jesus Only."

→ ←

IF thy soul would be distressed,
 Look around;
 Care and trouble, strife, unrest
 There abound.

If thy soul would sorrow know,
 Look within;
 How unlike thy Lord art thou—
 Prone to sin.

But if thou would'st joy in love,
 Restful be;
 Turn the eye of faith above,
 Jesus see.

ALBERT MIDLANE.

The Message.

Darkening Days.

(From a Gospel Address.)

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"—Luke xiii. 34.

WHEN the darkening days of the year are come, the autumn winds blow keenly, and the dead leaves flutter on every breeze. The storm sweeps across the landscape, and the wild clouds fly before it on the shadowy sky. Out at sea the heaving billows seethe beneath the footsteps of the storm, and leave a foaming pathway in its track. Night comes on early. We love to get home out of the cold and wet, and shut the doors, and fasten the windows, and draw the curtains, and sit with our faces to the red glow of the fire, and feel the comfort of home, while the bleak night moans outside. And as we sit in comfort, we think with pity of the homeless and the wanderers without. "God pity the homeless," is our cry, "the storms are out, and the cutting wind, and the driving sleet; God pity those without a home to-night." Yes, they need our pity. God alone knows the sorrows and the sufferings of the poor.

But

THE SHADOWS OF A DARKER NIGHT

are coming; we live in darkening days. The clouds

are gathering in awful gloom across the skies of time. I see the darkness of the clouds of worldly pleasure throwing their shadows on this world. And there is the darkness of blasphemy, and drunkenness, and immorality and scepticism, and worldly religion, and self-righteousness, creeping on. Darkening days for this world are coming. The tempest is gathering, and the portents of the storm are manifest. And those of us here who are saved, who have fled as doves to their windows, who are in Christ, and thus outside the world,—we look back, and we see what is coming. We feel the comfort of Home, the home of the love of God. We know the shelter of the blood of Christ; and we cry in prayer over you, "God pity the sinners when the storm does break! God make them flee from the wild night of sin to to the bright palace of Thy presence."

These slaughtered Galileans, and the falling tower of Siloam that we read about in the early verses of this chapter, shew the insecurity of life and property in this world in which we live. It speaks of the instability of all things here. For as we gaze upon the world around us, we see empires tottering and falling; men, kings one day, and uncrowned the next; statesmen, high in office to-day, and to-morrow fallen and execrated, nothing stable; but all speaking of the sandy foundation upon which man builds all he does. And amid the darkening days of which our chapter tells, I hear a solemn voice speaking through the darkness, which says, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Yes, Israel must learn the lesson from it all.

REPENT OR PERISH.

And so for you: you live in darkening days; you are surrounded with the shadows of a world's sin, and your own. And amid the darkness I hear the

Voice say to you this moment, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

You must repent, or you will perish.

Think now of what you have to repent. Let God's light in over your life. They say that to put prisoners into solitary confinement is the worst punishment you can give them, because they are left alone with their own thoughts. And the devil knows that as soon as a man begins to think he begins to be uncomfortable, and so he will not give him time to think. He hurries men from sin to sin; as soon as one pursuit of sin is over he starts a fresh one, and keeps poor hard-worked sinners upon the treadmill of their sins as long as he is able.

Hark! what are those people crying in the darkness? I cannot see them, it is all dark, but I hear a crying, and a wailing, and what! A KNOCKING! yes, a knocking. Hush! do you not hear it? A crying and a knocking. Listen! "Lord, Lord, open to us." Hark! "Lord, Lord, open to us." Is there any answer? Wait! It comes.

"I know you not whence ye are," and the door is shut, and they cannot get in. Will they go away now they have had the answer? We will wait and see.

Hush! I hear them speak again. Be still!—"We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets." Friends, they have taken the sacrament, and the gospel has been brought to their very doors. Will the gate open now? Will He let them in? "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Oh how dreadful! They will never get in, they are lost for ever. Is it

not a fearful cry,

THEIR CRY IN THE DARKNESS RINGING?

You may have heard out in the midnight before now, the cry of the lonely night-bird, and it has sounded solemn as it echoed along the quiet skies. Or you may have heard, as I have, the voice of the storm amid the mountain peaks at night. When hill has answered hill, hurling back the challenge of the thunder and the storm, while the lightning has flashed its coronet of flame around the mountain's brow. Or out at sea you may have heard the moaning of the restless winds, as they wandered over the deep, passing spectre-like amid the shadows that fell like shrouds upon the water.

These are solemn sounds. And so is the voice of breakers on a distant shore when all is still and night is reigning. And more solemn is a sharp cry of pain and agony, appealing from a lonely place in the darkness for help. But what are these sounds and voices, solemn though they be, to be compared to the concentrated agony of the cry of this chapter, "Lord, Lord, open unto us."

Sinner, I want you to stand in imagination before that shut door; come into this darkness, and let it rest upon your soul. Now, as you stand there, think that you are outside heaven for ever—that you can never get in, but must go to hell for ever. What will you do? Knock? Well, knock. Cry? Well, cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Will the door open? Will the answer come? The door will not be opened, but the answer will come, "I know you not—depart." God does not know you. Christ does not know you. The Holy Ghost does not know you. Who does? Satan! and you are his for ever. Do you feel the burning hand of God's justice upon your shoulder? Do you feel the awful sorrow of being outside?

The overwhelming, and hopeless sorrow, of the damned? This is the warning.

But the darkness has not come yet; the light still shines! What is this blessed beam? It is Christ's presence here. It comes from the opened door. Sinner, look! the door is open, and Christ says, Come. Will you come? This is the gospel.

I hear a pleading voice, the voice of Christ amid

THE DARKENING SHADOWS.

The tender voice of the rejected Messiah, as He gazes upon Jerusalem. He sees the shadows of the night fall upon the city—the shadow of His rejection—the shadow of the people's unbelief; and deeper than all, He sees with tender eyes the shadow of His cross. He sees it loom higher than the pinnacles of the Temple. There it hangs, with arms outstretched, a shadow of coming judgment. And the Lord speaks: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wing, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And then the Lord goes onward to the shadows waiting to receive Him; goes on to suffer and to die, at the hands of those over whom He wept and whom He came to save.

And in these darkening days the Saviour cries to you here, "O sinner, sinner, who refuseth My love, and rejectest My invitation, how often would I have saved thee with My great salvation, but thou would'st not." He will now. Jesus will save you now. He will chase the shadows from your soul away. Believe now; share not the doom of the

unbeliever.

Oh! how the world's darkness spreads! It was dark when Christ was on earth; but it is darker now, for if there is a form of godliness, the power is denied. And Eternity is creeping on—Eternity, with all its deep and overwhelming realities. Do you see it? Do you feel it? Oh! dread its doom, and believe in Christ. I seem to see its shadowing arms outstretched towards you people here. You are going on to its embrace, and you cannot stop yourselves. The rivers flow silently and surely to the sea; and the river of your life is flowing onward, onward to the ocean of Eternity. Yes, it is close. And I see the old men, standing with eyes fixed, gazing on the future. They shake their grey heads saying, as they feel the shadows round them, "We are going, we are going." And the echo comes as an answer from Eternity,

"GOING, GOING, GOING."

And I watch the strong and the resolute; and as they grasp the realities of the present with a man's purpose to do and dare, they try and face the darkness in the light of the present, crying, "We are here." And the echo comes as a voice from beyond, "Here, here." And hark! I hear the trip of little feet, and the children come pressing on upon the paths of time. They come laughing with the sunshine on their foreheads. They cry as they bound onward, with radiant eyes and expectant hearts, "We are coming," and the future echoes back solemnly, "Coming, coming."

Yes, the world is moving on in darkness and in light. The saved and the lost mingle on the fields of life. But to the eyes of heaven the children of God are manifest. It is known in heaven to-night to whom you belong, and where you are going.

Oh hear the voice that bids you repent to-night. Harden not your heart against the love of God.

Unbeliever, there is nothing but darkness in front of you. Do you not dread it? If I were not saved I should tremble to take another step in the shadows of sin. You love darkness rather than light. But why? Because your deeds are evil; you are under the power of the prince of darkness. Christ is his conqueror, and will receive you if you come now. Christ will make your life bright, and your heart happy, with a purged conscience before a God of love and holiness.

A sailor lay dying, and a mate asked him one day, "What cheer?"

The answer was, "All's light. Heaven heaves in sight; I see the headland."

Next day the question was asked again, "What cheer?"

"Rounding the cape, almost in," was the blissful answer.

The third day the question was once more asked, "What cheer?"

With soft voice he breathed, "In port," and then his quivering lips said, "Let go the anchor"; and so he passed away from these scenes of darkness into the eternal light of life.

H. W.

How to preach.—Of a certain preacher it is said: "He preaches as if Jesus Christ were at his side. Don't you see how every now and then he turns around as if he were saying: 'Lord Jesus, what shall I say next?'"

A Profitable Mixture.



“**T**HE word preached did not *profit* them, not being *mixed* with *faith* in them that heard” (Heb. iv. 2).

We feel it very needful just now to press upon the attention of our readers the authority and value of the Word of God, together with the efficacy of faith in that Word, apart from, and above all human thoughts and feelings, reasonings and speculations, traditions and dogmas. We do not know that we could more effectually serve the souls of men than by seeking to raise in their estimation the pure Word of God, as that which alone can give divine fixedness to all their convictions, and stability to their character and course.

There is not, in all the world, a more precious and profitable mixture than that which is made up of faith and the Word of God. Very many seem to put feeling in the place of faith. This is a mistake. The Apostle does not speak of mixing the Word of God with feeling, but with faith. The Word of God is sufficient of itself, if simply believed, to give peace to the heart. If I must add feeling to that Word in order to make it efficacious, then, instead of making it efficacious, I make it null and void.

Take an example. God has declared (Gen. ix.) that He will not again destroy the earth by a flood. Do I need to add feeling to this in order to assure me of its truth? Is not the Divine statement quite sufficient, when believed, to set the heart at rest with respect to another deluge. Assuredly, it is; and hence, were it to rain in torrents for months together, the heart would never be troubled with a

single anxious thought on the subject. Well, "the same word" that assures me that the world will never again be overflowed with water declares that it is "reserved unto fire"; the one is as true as the other. Human feelings have nothing whatever to do with the one or the other. The Word of God is the authority for both, and that Word only needs to be "mixed with faith" in order that it may "profit" the soul.

Thus it is in reference to "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." It only needs to be "mixed with faith." It does not need our feelings in order to make it true: it is true in itself. Every word of God is true, and faith receives it as such. Feeling is not the foundation of faith. The Word of God is the foundation, and feeling is merely a fruit. God tells me I am a lost sinner; I believe. God tells me that Christ came to save such; I believe. God tells me Christ died and rose again the third day; I believe. God tells me that all who believe that Christ died and rose again "have eternal life," and are justified from all things (Jno. v. 24; Acts xiii. 39); I believe. God tells me that being justified by faith I have peace (Rom. v. 1); I believe. God tells me that "if any man be in Christ he is a new creation" (2 Cor. v. 17); I believe. God tells me that I am crucified, dead, buried, and risen with Christ (Eph. ii. 5, 6; Col. ii. 11-13; iii. 1-3); I believe. What more do I want? Shall I look in upon my poor faltering heart and fluctuating feelings in order to find something that will confirm, substantiate, and render efficacious the Word of the living and true God? Alas! this is precisely what thousands are doing, and herein lies the secret of the sickly Christianity so prevalent on all hands. The precious mixture

of Heb. iv. 2 has been tampered with. One of the ingredients has been removed, and spurious material put in its place. "The word preached" is mixed with feeling instead of faith, and hence it *cannot* "profit."

C. H. M.

Tempted of the Devil.

(A word to the "weak in the faith.")



IF a footpad were on the road, and knew something about the travellers, he would not stop beggars, for he would know that they had nothing to lose.

Would he try to rob the rich, or the poor? Those that have money, of course.

Just so Satan assaults those who have grace, and leaves alone those who have none.

When a sportsman is engaged in duck shooting, he does not hurry himself to pick up the dead ducks that fall around him; he pays all his attention to those which are only wounded and may perhaps get away. He can pick up the dead ones at any time. Even so, when Satan sees that a man's soul is wounded, and yet it has a measure of spiritual life, he bends his strength in that direction in the hope of securing that poor bleeding soul. It is grace that attracts his malicious eye and his diabolical arrows. He would not sift if there was no wheat, nor break into the house if there were no treasures within. It is no ill proof therefore when you find yourself tempted of Satan. His assaults are not a sign of a want of grace, but rather a token of the presence and possession of it.

“All this I did for Thee.”

YEARS ago, a painter stood in his studio, speaking to his visitor, Father Hugo, the Vicar of the rich church of St. Jerome. The artist had not yet reached middle age. He was famous in Düsseldorf, yet he had as yet never satisfied himself, nor reached his own ideal. Thus Stenburg was not a satisfied man. There was a restlessness in his dark eyes, and a sharp tone in his voice, which, to a closer observer, proclaimed a spirit not at peace. He was speaking now.

“The crucifixion is not an easy subject, and it has been so often taken, that it would be difficult to compose a picture different—as I should wish it to be—from others.”

“I will not limit you to the price.”

“So! That makes a difference. Return, sir, please, a month from to-day, and studies for the work shall be ready. So they parted, both well pleased, and during the following week Stenburg studied the composition of the picture, and penetrated into the Jewish Strasse for models for his figures.

The Vicar was satisfied. He desired the central point of the picture to be the Cross of the Redeemer, and left the grouping of the accessories to the artist.

With the bursting of the young green leaves, and the upspringing of the first flowers, a hunger had seized upon the artist's soul to leave Düsseldorf, and with his sketch-book wander over the surrounding country. On the borders of the forest he came one day upon a beautiful gipsy girl plaiting straw baskets.

“What a capital picture she would make!” thought Stenburg; “but then who would buy a gipsy girl? No one!” The gipsies were looked upon in Düsseldorf with hatred.

The girl noticed the artist, and flinging her straw down, sprang up, raising her hands above her head, and snapping her fingers to keep time, danced lightly and gracefully before him, showing her white teeth, and her glance sparkling with merriment.

"She is not only beautiful, she is better—a capital model. I will paint her as a Spanish dancing girl." So the bargain was struck. Pepita was to come thrice a week to Stenburg's house to sit as a model. Duly at the appointed hour she arrived. She was full of wonder. Her great eyes roved round the studio, glancing on the pieces of armour, pottery, and carving. Presently she began examining the pictures, and soon the great picture, now nearing its completion, caught her attention. She gazed at it intently. In an awed voice, she asked,—

"Who is that?" pointing to the most prominent figure, that of the Redeemer on the Cross.

"The Christ," answered Stenburg carelessly.

"What is being done to Him?"

"Being crucified," ejaculated the artist. "Turn a little to the right. There! that will do." Stenburg, with his brush in his fingers, was a man of few words.

"Who are those people about Him—those with the bad faces?"

"Now, look here," said the artist, "I cannot talk to you. You have nothing to do but stand as I tell you."

The girl dared not speak again, but she continued to gaze and speculate. Every time she came to the studio the fascination of the picture grew upon her. Sometimes she ventured an inquiry, for her curiosity consumed her.

"Why did they crucify Him? Was He bad, very bad?"

"No; very good."

That was all she learnt at one interview, but she treasured each word, and every sentence was so much more known of the mystery.

"Then if He was good, why did they do so? Was it for a short time only? Did they let Him go?"

"It was because——" The artist paused, with his

head on one side, stepped forward, and arranged her sash.

"Because?" repeated Pepita breathlessly. The artist went back to his easel; then, looking at her, the eager, questioning face moved his pity.

"Listen. I will tell you once for all, and then ask no further questions;" and he told her the story of the Cross—new to Pepita, though so old to the artist that it had ceased to touch him. He could paint that dying agony, and not a nerve of his quivered; but the thought of it wrung her heart. Her great black eyes swam in tears, which the fiery gipsy-pride forbade to fall.

The picture and the Spanish dancing girl were finished simultaneously. Pepita's last visit to the studio had come. She looked upon the beautiful representation of herself without emotion, but turned, and stood before the picture, unable to leave it.

"Come," said the artist, "here is your money, and a gold piece over and above, for you have brought me good luck, the 'Dancing-girl' is already sold: I shall want you some time perhaps again, but not just yet." The girl turned slowly.

"Thanks, Signor!" but her eyes, full of emotion, were solemn, as she said, pointing to the picture, "You must love Him *very* much, Signor, when He has done all that for you, do you not?"

The face into which she looked flushed crimson. The artist was ashamed. The girl, in her poor faded dress passed from his studio, but her plaintive words rang in his heart. He tried to forget them, but impossible. He hastened to send the picture to its destination. Still he could not forget, "*All that for you.*"

At last the pain was not to be borne. He would face it and conquer it. But he went to confession in vain to get the peace he longed for, and which can only be found by faith in Christ alone. A liberal discount on his picture gave ease of mind for a week or two. But then up rose the old question, "You must love him very much, do you not?" and would be answered. He grew restless, and could not settle to his work. So, wandering about,

he heard of things which had not come under his notice before. One day he saw a group of persons hastening to a house near the walls, a poor place, and then he noticed others coming in the opposite direction, and they, too, passed in by a low doorway. He asked what was happening there, but the man he questioned either would not or could not satisfy him. This roused his curiosity. A few days later he learned that a stranger, one of the "Reformed," lived there—one of those despised men who appealed on every occasion to the Word of God. It was hardly respectable, hardly safe even to know them. Yet perhaps here he might find that which he sought. The artist had heard how these Reformers risked and frequently parted with their all for the truth they held. They might possess the secret of peace. So Stenburg went to observe; and he saw a man who might have lived in ease, enduring hardship; who might have been honoured, despised; an outcast; and yet serene, even happy. Stenburg's new friend lent him for a time a precious copy of the New Testament, but, hunted from Düsseldorf after a few weeks, he left, and had to take the book with him; but its truth was left in Stenburg's heart, and the love of God, too.

Ah! no need to question now. He had found Christ as his Saviour, and Christ was his Object. "Did all that for me! How can I ever tell men of that love, that boundless love, which can brighten their lives, as it has mine? It burns in my heart, but I cannot express it—the *love of Christ!*" So thinking, the artist idly drew with a piece of charcoal in his fingers a rough sketch of a thorn-crowned head. His eyes grew moist as he did so. Suddenly the thought flashed through his soul, "I can paint! My brush must proclaim it. Ah! in my picture His face was all agony. But that was not the truth. Love unutterable, infinite compassion, willing sacrifice,——!"

The artist fell on his knees, and prayed to paint worthily, and *thus to speak*.

And then he wrought. The fire of genius blazed up—

up to the highest fibre of his power; nay, beyond it. The picture of the crucifixion was a wonder.

He would not sell it. He gave it as a freewill offering to his native city. It was hung in the public gallery, and there the citizens flocked to see it, and voices were hushed and hearts melted as they stood before it, and the burghers returned to their homes thinking of the love of God, and repeating to themselves the words written so distinctly beneath—

"All this I did for thee;
What hast thou done for Me?"

We must remember that in those dark times the Gospel was not preached as it is now; the Bible was not then circulated by the million as it is to-day. Hence God in His sovereign grace used means in those days that he might not employ now. Stenburg's picture might lead souls to Christ, and it did!

Stenburg used sometimes to visit the gallery, and pray to God to bless his painted sermon. One day he observed, when the rest of the visitors had left, a poor girl standing weeping bitterly before it. The artist approached her. "What grieves thee, child?" he asked.

The girl turned; she was Pepita. "Oh! Signor, *if He had but loved me so,*" she said, pointing to the face of yearning love, bending above them. "I am only a poor gipsy. For *you* is the love, but not for such as *I*;" and her despairing tears fell unrestrained.

"Pepita, *it was all for thee.*" And then the artist told her all. The painter did not weary now of answering her questions, for the subject was the one he loved best. He told the girl the story of that wondrous life, blessed death, and crowning glory of resurrection, and also explained to her the Gospel. She heard, received, and believed, and left rejoicing in her Saviour.

* * * * *

Two years had passed since the picture had been ordered. Winter had come again. The cold was intense, and the wind moaned down the narrow streets of Düsseldorf, and shook the casements of the artist's dwelling.

His day's work was done, and by the blazing pine logs he was seated, reading a copy he had with difficulty obtained of his beloved Gospel. A knock sounded at the door, and a man was admitted. He wore an old sheepskin jacket, on which the snow had frozen; his hair hung in dark locks about his face. He glanced ravenously towards the bread and meat upon the table, even as he gave his message.

"Would the gentleman come with him on urgent business?"

"Where?" said the painter.

That he must not tell, or the agents of the law might get to know, and drive them out. It had often so happened before.

"Wherefore do you wish me to come?"

"I cannot say," replied the man; "but one who is dying wants to see you."

"Eat," said the artist. "I will accompany you." The man murmured his thanks as he devoured the food.

"You are hungry?"

"Sire, we all are famished with hunger."

Stenburg brought a bag of provisions. "Can you carry this?"

"Ah! gladly, gladly. But come, there is no time to lose."

The artist followed. His guide led him quickly through the streets and out into the country beyond. The moon rose, and showed they were nearing the forest. They passed into it. The branches were laden with snow, and the great crowded trunks confusing. No path, but the man never hesitated. He silently and swiftly kept ahead of Stenburg. At last they came to a glade belted round with trees. Here a few tents were erected.

"Go in there," said the man, pointing to one of the tents, and then turned to a group of men, women and children, who thronged about him. He spoke to them in a wild tongue, and lifted his bag from his shoulder.

The artist, crouching, crept into the tent. A brilliant ray of moonlight illuminated the poor interior. On a

mass of dried leaves was the form of a young woman. Her face was pinched and hollow. "Why, Pepita!"

At the sound of the artist's voice the eyes opened. Those wonderful dark eyes still were brilliant. A smile trembled to her lips, and she raised herself on her elbow.

"Yes," she said, "HE—my Saviour—has come for me! He holds out His hands! They are pierced—for me! '*All this I did for thee.*'" And she bade him farewell.

* * * * *

Long years after both the painter and the gipsy girl had met in another land, a gay young nobleman drove in his splendid equipage into Düsseldorf, and while his horses were baited, wandered into that famous gallery. He was rich, young, intelligent—the world bright, and its treasures within his grasp. He stood before Stenburg's picture, arrested. He read and re-read the legend on the frame. He could not tear himself away—it grew into his heart. The love of Christ laid its powerful grasp on his soul. Hours passed; the light faded; the curator touched the nobleman, and told him that it was time to close the gallery. Night had come,—nay! rather for that young man, the dawn of Eternal Life. He was Zinzendorf. He returned to the inn and re-entered his carriage, but to turn his back on Paris, and seek again his home. That Christ should have died for him, finishing on the Cross the work of his salvation, leaving nothing for him to do, only to believe. It was this that broke his heart. From that moment he felt that although he had *nothing to do for his salvation*, he must do everything for his Saviour—the One who had saved him; and so he threw life, fortune, fame, at the feet of Him who had whispered to his heart,

"All this I did for thee;
What hast thou done for Me?"

Zinzendorf, the father of the Moravian Missions, answered that question by his devoted life and his triumphant death.

Stenburg's picture no longer hangs in the gallery of Düsseldorf, for when years ago the gallery was destroyed

by fire, it perished. But it preached, and God used it to tell of His gift—His own dear Son—of Whom Paul said, "Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

'Twas love that sought Gethsemane,
Or Judas ne'er had found Thee;

'Twas love that led Thee to the tree,
Or iron ne'er had bound Thee.

'Twas love that lived, 'twas love that died,
With endless life to bless me,
Well hast Thou won Thy Church—Thy Bride,
Lord Jesus, Thou art worthy.

Breathings in Afflictions.

(2 COR. iv. 7-10.)



LOVE, that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze, its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy, that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain—
That morn shall tearless be.

O Lord, Thou liftest up my head;
I dare not, would not fly from Thee;
I lie in dust, earth's glory dead,
And from Thy cross there springs instead
Life that shall endless be.

G. M.

“Words in Season.”



YOU enter your room, and find the fire all but out, there seems scarcely a trace of vitality. The fire-irons are there, all polished and laid in order; but what could they do? Nothing! A thousand sets of the most splendid fire-irons could not produce a single spark. There must be a *living hand* to move them, or they will lie there motionless and powerless.

What is to be done? You seize the poker, rake out the ashes, and introduce a current of air; then you *stir up* the almost dead lumps of coal; and, in a few moments, you have a brilliant and beautiful fire. Who thinks of praising the poker? Who would say, “Dear, what a marvellous poker!” It is not the lifeless poker, but the living hand that does the work. True, the hand uses the poker, but the poker is useless without the hand.

Now, there is a fine moral lesson here for all those who are, in any little way, used in the Lord’s blessed work. We have ever to bear in mind of the works done upon the earth, that God is the doer of them. If He deigns to use us, let us never forget that we are but mere instruments, just as helpless and powerless as the poker. No doubt, we have enjoyment in the work; but we are not now dealing with the question of enjoyment, but ability. If any real work is done, God is the doer of it. To Him be *all* the glory. “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (1 Cor. iii. 5-7).

It is a very serious thing to attach undue importance, or give an undue place to men, how much soever they may be used in the Lord’s work. We have seen the work marred, and workmen morally ruined by this very thing. It is a fatal mistake. Men are taken out of the

place in which God has put them; they are lauded, lionized, and gazed at as a sort of phenomenon; their lives written and published before their death. In this way they are lifted into an entirely false position, like a person walking on stilts; and then some terrible fall comes to bring them to their senses, and recall them to their true place.

The Lord's servants should carefully guard against this terrible evil. See how the blessed Master ever retired from human applause and human excitement. When men wondered at his teaching, He said, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." When they would have come and taken Him by force to make Him a king, He retired into a mountain to pray. When they wanted Him to shew Himself to the world, He said, "My time is not yet come." We ever find Him hiding Himself; blessed for ever be His precious, peerless name. Oh, to drink more into His spirit, and walk in His footsteps! To be well content to be a nothing and a nobody, so that Christ may be magnified! May God grant us this immense favour.

C. H. M.

Peace.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 6-7
 "The peace of God."—PHIL. iv.

YEARS ago a fleet was terribly shattered by a violent gale, but it was found that some of the ships were unaffected by its violence. They were in what sailors call "the eye of the storm." While all around was desolation, they were safe. So it is with him who has the peace of God keeping his heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

the whole. *Lógos* includes the thoughts as well as the utterance. Compare the use of the French *mot* with *parole*.

The words have been thus distinguished: *Lógos* is the deeper, fuller word; it is the revelation of what is in God, in His nature and character—His love, His ways—in short, all that He communicates: *rheema* is the *actual communication*. *Lógos* (from *lego*, 'to speak') is that which is known in the mind, and also that which expresses it. I cannot think without having a thought, and *lógos* is used for that, and for the expression of it: it is the matter and form of thought and expression, as well as the expression of it. It is a word so large in sense as to be very hard to express. *Rheema* is the actual utterance.

If this distinction be borne in mind, the following passages will be the better apprehended. For *lógos*, Mat. xiii. 19; Mark xiv. 39 ('word' not 'words,' compared with Mat. xxvi. 44); Mark vii. 13; xvi. 20; Luke i. 2; Acts iv. 31; vi. 4; Rom. ix. 6; Heb. iv. 12; vi. 1; Jas. i. 18; 1 Pe. i. 23. How characteristic *lógos* is of John's writings: chap. i. 1, 14; v. 24, 38; viii. 31, 37, 43; and also in verses 51, 52, and 55 (where it is the same—'word,' instead of 'saying' as in the A. V.); x. 35; xiv. 23, 24 ('word' and 'words,' not 'words' and 'sayings' as the A. V.); xv. 3, 20; xvii. 6, 14, 17; 1 John i. 1.

Yet the apostle also uses *rheema*: John iii. 34; vi. 63, 68; viii. 47; xii. 47, 48; xiv. 10; xvii. 8. Compare also Mat. iv. 4; Eph. vi. 17 (not the book merely, but *the text*); Mat. xxvi. 75; Luke v. 5; Rom. x. 8, 17; Heb. i. 3; vi. 5; xi. 3; 1 Pe. i. 25. These will suffice to illustrate the use of the word *rheema*, which has the force more of *individual utterances*, divine communications. (Page 857.)

Observe, from the above, that *lógos* is both the thought expressed, and also the expression of the thought—the uttered word. Hence "the only be-

gotten Son" is declared to be "the *Lógos*" as fully telling out what God is.

But *rheema* is not the thought expressed, but only the expression of the thought—the simple word. Hence He who is the *Living Word* is never called the *rheema* of God, whereas the *spoken Word* of God as given to us in "Holy Writings" (or Scriptures*) is constantly thus described (Rom. i. 2).

"Every *scripture* is God-breathed" (2 Tim. iii.). Observe, Paul does not say that every thing *spoken* by God is God-breathed (though that must be true), but he says that "every *writing* is God-breathed." Now, if that means anything, it means that every *scripture* is the verbal utterance of God, the *rheema* of God, the word of God. The fact that inspired men *spoke* (*laléo*) God's Word did not alter its character, neither was its character altered because they *wrote* it! Committing it to paper and ink was God's way of preserving and perpetuating His Word. And whilst it is most true that only the Spirit can make it effectual as the Word of God in the soul of man, yet His using it thus does not make it anything more than it essentially is. A sword does not cease to be a sword because it lies dormant in its scabbard, neither does it become a sword by being unsheathed and wielded. So a *scripture*—a *text*—is as surely God's word, which He has breathed, when it lies as a passive record within the sacred volume, as it was when first uttered and as it still is when taken out and used by human lips, and felt and owned as the Spirit's sword (Eph. vi.).

It may seem superfluous to some to combat such arguments as we are confuting, yet they are samples of the arguments used by those who deny the plenary

*The English reader must understand that the terms "scripture" and "writing" are one and the same word in the original. No revelation from God to man at any time became Scripture until it was written.

inspiration of Scripture, and lessen its authority and power over the heart and conscience as the Word of God.

Timothy, even as a babe, learnt "the sacred letters" (*tà hierà grámmata*). The Book of God is the best of spelling books for any *child*, and "the man of God" needs nothing more to "fully equip" him. Its very *letters* are sacred; its *words* are "pure" (Ps. xii.); its *dots* and *strokes*—Hebrew tittle and Greek iota—are *imperishable* (Matt. v. 18); its *writings* are God-breathed; its *doctrine* is complete (Col. i. 25); its *canon*, as "a measuring rod," is perfect (Rev. xxii. 18, 19); and its *authority* is final and supreme (Isa. viii. 20).

The term "God-breathed" as applied to a scripture is not too strong to convey the force of the original text, which is derived from a noun and a verb—viz., *Theòs*—God, and *pnéo*—to breathe, or to inspire. Thus whether we take "the sacred letters" separately (Matt. iv. 4), or as a concrete whole (1 Pet. i. 25), and whether we understand the thought expressed (the *lógos*) or simply read the expression of the thought (the *rheema*), yet the "holy writings" still remain what they ever have been, are now, and ever will be—"God-breathed," and thus God's Word.

"I have seen an end of all perfection, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." There is but one perfect thing below, and that is "the Word of the Lord" (Ps. xix.). But where is that Word to be heard? Only from God's mouth-piece. And what is that? The God-breathed Scriptures, which are "the living Oracles" (Acts vii. 38), and which all must consult who would "speak as the Oracles of God" (1 Pet. iv. 11). My only safeguard against licentiousness on the one hand, and monasticism and all the chimerical notions of human piety on the

other, is "What *saith* the Scripture?" for it forms the only infallible test wherewith to "prove the spirits whether they be of God" (1 Jno. iv. 6).

I cannot trust the voice of the Church, she has so many voices. I cannot trust the voice of my brethren, it changes too often. I cannot trust the voice of my own heart, it is so often fanciful and false. But when I open the Bible I hear a Voice which I can trust. It is my Father's voice, the Good Shepherd's voice, the Spirit's voice; and I reverently bow to it as to the voice of God, and believe and confess what it says as the Word of God.

S. J. B. C.



The Dispensations of Scripture.

(Continued.)*



A STUDY of the question in greater detail reveals to us a series of dispensations in the history of the world, each beginning with blessing and ending with judgment. First we see man in Paradise. His fall is soon recorded. Then followed the continual increase of evil, until the whole earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted God's way upon the earth. For one hundred and twenty years direct testimony is given to the special nature of the impending judgment. The warning is unheeded, and the flood comes and sweeps away the world of the ungodly.

Secondly, a few generations later Abraham is called out, and his descendants selected for special blessing on the earth. The remainder of the Old Testament is full of the history of God's long-suffering, and Israel's rebellions

*Culled from various sources.

and idolatries, till at last, when the Son of God comes, they fill up the measure of their iniquities in rejecting and crucifying Him. And judgment comes on their city and land.

Then succeeds the present dispensation in which we live, beginning with the blessings of Pentecost and the gathering out from Jew and Gentile of those who were called Christians. In a short time the name was assumed by mere outward professors of the faith as well as by true believers. So grew up the mixed multitude of the present day. It is unnecessary to refer to the corruptions of Christendom, its heresies, its hypocrisy, its pride. But Scripture teaches us that, at a certain period in its history, it will be given over to strong delusion to believe Satan's great last lie. (2 Thess. ii. 10-12.)

That the immense majority of Christendom will receive this delusion is manifest from Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 7, 8, where all the (Roman) world appears worshipping the beast.

But from all this

THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD IS DELIVERED,

being kept by the power of God through faith unto the salvation ready to be revealed—kept waiting for the Son of God from heaven, who shall change them into His likeness at His coming. With Him in His glorious train they shall come to execute judgment on antichrist and his hosts, in the terrible day of God's wrath that brings the end of this dispensation. But the close of that awful day of the Lord will not be as its opening. When that mighty army of murderers, red with the blood of His saints, have felt His vengeance in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel iii.), where blood has flowed even to the horse bridles (Rev. xiv.); when the darkened sun and shuddering earth, and "roaring waves of the sea," have confessed the righteous wrath of their Creator; after all this has passed away, the sun shall set in the fair millennial splendour of a new age (Zech. xiv.). "At evening time it shall be light;" and the fourth and last dispensation in this world's history opens the scene of

Israel's glory in Israel's measurement of time.*

Then Israel shall be the royal nation upon earth (Isa. xlix. 22, 23). Her people shall be all righteous (Isa. iv. 3; liv. 13; lx. 21; lxii. 12); unfaithfulness shall never again be found in her. Her people shall go forth to the heathen, and outlying nations (who had not been involved in the special rebellion and judgment of antichristendom), preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Ps. lxxviii. 10, 11). Wheresoever they go, "their feet shall be beautiful upon the mountains" (Rom. x.). The length of human life shall be restored to the measure of patriarchal days (Isa. lxv. 20). Wars shall cease on earth, and the splendours of Solomon's reign shall be multiplied a thousandfold. Satan is bound (Rev. xx.), and the evil of man's heart is restricted in its outward working. Who can measure the material development and prosperity of earth under that long benignant sway of the Prince of Peace?

And yet that blessed period closes in

A DARKER APOSTASY,

and a more terrible judgment, than those which ended any of the previous ages. (See Rev. xx. 7-10.) And thus shall it be shown that the presence of evil in any form cannot be tolerated, and that the time has at last arrived for separating evil from good, light from darkness, for evermore. The dead of all the ages past who died in sin are raised to stand before the great white throne to hear their sentence, and to depart to their own place. Dispensations have ended. God needs no more to reveal Himself darkly and partially by reason of the hardness of men's hearts, and imperfection of their capacities. The dwellers in the new heaven and new earth are wholly righteous. No spot of evil stains the world, which becomes God's presence chamber for evermore (Rev. xxi. 3, 4), and His glory shines not only upon, but into and out through every living being upon it. "They are His people, and He is their God."

*The Jews count their day of twenty-four hours from sunset to sunset.

“His Way is in the Sea.”

“Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship.”—Matt. xiv. 22.

“JESUS *constrained* them” to go!

One would think that if ever there was a certain promise of success in a mission, it was here. Surely, here, if anywhere, a triumphant issue might have been confidently predicted; and yet here, more than anywhere, there was seeming failure. He sent them out on a voyage, and they met such a storm as they had never yet experienced.

Let me ponder this, for it has been so with me, too. I have sometimes felt myself impelled to act by an influence which seemed above me—constrained by the Lord Himself to put to sea. The belief that I was constrained gave me confidence, and I was sure of a successful voyage.

But the result was outward failure. The calm became a storm; the sea raged, the winds roared, the ship tossed in the midst of the waves, and my faith well nigh failed.

Was, then, my divine command a delusion?

Nay; nor was my mission a failure. He *did* send me on that mission, but He did *not* send me to do it in my way. He had one way and I had another. My thought was the outward calm; His was my meeting with the storm. My end was to do the thing well and quickly; His end was to teach me dependence on Himself, and the blessedness of leaving all earthly resources to walk on the waves supported by His hand, and to shew me, when brought safe to land, that He does His work in His own way, not in mine. “Thanks be to God Who always leadeth us in triumph.”

The Message.

“One was out on the hills away.”

IT was a miserable night; a thick, drizzling rain was falling, and the passers-by all seemed hurrying to the shelter of their homes.

The shops were closed, and the whole streets looked cheerless and dark, except in one spot where the windows of the “Spread Eagle” sent forth a brilliant glare of light.

Ten or twelve young men, in ones and twos, came from various directions, and avoiding the bright space in front of the public-house, turned down a by-street and entered by a side door. They were well connected young men, for the most part engaged in business houses, and were in the habit of meeting together in the evenings at their club—held in a room of the large hotel.

The room was warm and light, newspapers and cards were lying about, and the young men were noisy and merry; but there were some amongst them whose faces told of uneasy minds—for the fact was, they had lost heavily in their play the night before.

One of their number, Harold Cummings, who had a good voice, and a talent for making himself popular, was generally the life of the party. Long ago, in the old home of his childhood, he had delighted his father and mother by singing their favourite hymns. But all that had passed away;

the parents died, and their boys went to live with an uncle who cared nothing for hymn singing or Bible reading, and Harold and his brothers grew up in his ways.

When old enough to go to work he was sent to a town at some distance, and had to board. He was eager for life and excitement, and went into all kinds of foolish amusements. But he was unsatisfied.

On that particular night the company assembled in the club room seemed hard to please. They laughed at every proposal, and the time was slipping away in useless discussion when one suggested that each should sing a song.

This idea was received with enthusiasm. They made a circle, and first one and then another gave forth a noisy, merry song.

The applause that followed grew louder after each song. When it came to Tom Rivers' turn he was puzzled to know what to choose, for someone else had sung the song he knew best, and he was at a loss for one. They cheered and shouted, "Go on." "'Tis no use. They're all gone from me," he said.

One cried, "I heard you whistling one of Sankey's hymns the other day. Give us that. Anything to keep the game going."

Putting on a serious look for the occasion, Tom Rivers sang with his rich-toned voice—

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold,
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold."

No one made the least disturbance during the singing of the hymn, though it seemed a strange diversion after the meaningless words that had echoed through the room.

A strange thrill passed through Harold Cummings

as he listened.

Feelings long hushed into the silence of forgetfulness rose up within him, and carried him back to the happy days in his old home, when his sweet childish voice had sung that very hymn, and won a smile and kiss from his mother, and a "Well done, my boy!" from his father. Why had that hymn been selected in such a company? And why was such special emphasis laid on the line—

"This of Mine has wandered away from Me"?

He joined in the cheers when the singing ceased, but his usual bantering remarks on any serious subject were missing, and he kept quiet during the noisy talk that followed.

When the gathering dispersed, Harold walked away silently, and, closing the door of the house where he lodged, went straight to his bedroom.

Going to his large clothes-chest, he dived down to the bottom, and from underneath a pile of books and papers he drew out a small soiled hymn-book.

"I had quite forgotten that hymn," he said,—
"quite forgotten all about it."

He found the place in the book, and sat down and read it through.

As he closed the hymn-book a voice seemed to re-echo through his heart,

"I go to the desert to find My sheep."

His head sank lower and lower. None but the Good Shepherd ever knew how many were the burning tears that trickled through his fingers as he sat there. The landing clock struck out the hours, and Harold was passing through an experience which was to alter his whole life.

He remembered his past foolish life, his neglect of the Bible, his forgetfulness of God, and, as he

thought of the words,

“How dark was the night that the Lord passed through,”

it seemed to him to mean that Jesus had come through all the dark night of his sinful life to fetch him back again. There was none to speak to, but he did not feel alone as he knelt down for the first time in that room and earnestly prayed for forgiveness.

Four days passed, and to Harold there had come the joy of being forgiven, and the safety of being in the care of the true Shepherd; and the world was a different place, his work lighter, his outlook beautiful and bright.

So thorough was the change, he could not hide it; so full of gladness was his heart, he could not keep it to himself; and so it was that on the fifth evening after he made his way once more to the place where his old comrades would be meeting. As he halted by the door, he heard the empty laughter of those seeking for pleasure, and he shuddered to think how lately he was one of them. A quick prayer went up for courage as he entered.

“Hallo!” shouted one “here he is at last. What has happened?”

“That hymn did it all, Tom,” said Harold; “thank God for making you sing that.”

Some looked interested at his earnestness, others laughed, but Tom said: “I have wondered ever since what made me sing it.”

“This is my last visit here, fellows; henceforth I’ve grander pleasures in store, so grant me my wish this once—let Tom Rivers sing my old forgotten hymn again now.”

Without much demurring, silence was gained, and Tom yielded. All through the verses Harold was secretly praying, and when the last words, “Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His own,” had ended, he

said, "God grant this may be true of all here"—and they did not resent it, but shook hands with him, and let him go out quietly, though not alone, for Tom followed quickly, and overtook him.

"Harold, there's something in all this that makes me feel wretched; tell me all about it."

And putting his arm in Tom's, he told the story of the forgotten hymn as they walked along together. That night another lost sheep was found, and the rejoicing among the angels goes on still, for Harold and Tom cannot be selfish in their happiness, but must work and pray for the others who are being sought by the Good Shepherd.

S. H. J.

Service.

"The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."—ACTS xiii. 2.

WE have such a nice little quiet, shady corner in the vineyard, down among the tender grapes, with such easy little weeding and waterings to attend to. And then the master comes and draws us out into the thick of the work, and puts us in a part of the field where we never should have thought of going, and puts larger tools into our hands, that we may do more at a stroke. And we know we are not sufficient for these things, and the very tools seem too heavy for us, and the glare too dazzling, and the vines too tall. Ah! but would we dally, go back? He would not be in the shady corner with us now; for when he put us forth He went before us, and it is only by closer following that we can abide with Him.

F. R. H.

An Old Preacher's Sermon.



AS I daresay many of you know, I have now comparatively few opportunities of speaking the gospel in public, and in the nature of things these few opportunities must very soon come to an end. It is wonderful how one gets one's sight cleared up of what are the most important things when one gets into such circumstances as these, and how a great many things that one used to preach upon with considerable interest scarcely seem worth talking about. Perhaps you will not wonder if I tell you that my text is the verse that the children learn, and the old men come back to:—

“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).

I venture to say that my text shows us a lake, a river, a pitcher, and a draught. “God so loved the world”—that is the lake. A lake makes a river for itself—“God so loved the world that He gave His Son.” But the river does not quench anybody's thirst unless he has something to lift the water with: “God so loved the world that He gave His Son, that whosoever believeth on Him,” and then comes the draught: “should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

THE GREAT LAKE.

Before Christ came into this world nobody ever dreamed of saying “God loves.” Some of the Old Testament psalmists got glimpses of that truth and came pretty near expressing it. And among all the gods many and lords many in the heathen world—lustful gods and beautiful gods, and idle gods, and

fighting gods, and peaceful gods—there was not one of whom worshippers could say, "He is love." Once God's love was a new and almost incredible message. But we have got accustomed to it, and it is not strange any more to us. But if we would try to think of what it means, the old truth would flash up into fresh newness, and, trusting in that love, all the miseries and sorrows and perplexities of our lives would drift away down the wind, and we should be no more troubled with them.

"God . . . loved the world." Now when we speak of loving a number of individuals—the broader the stream the shallower it is, is it not? The most intense patriot in England does not love her one ten-thousandth part as well as he loves his own little girl. When we think or feel anything about a great multitude of people, it is like looking at a forest. We do not see the trees, we see the whole wood. But that is not how God loves the world. Suppose I said that I loved the people in India, I should not mean by that that I had any feeling about any individual soul of all those dusky millions, but only that I massed them all together; or made what people call a generalisation of them.

But that is not the way in which God loves. He loves all because He loves each. And when we say, "God so loved the world," we have to break up the mass into its atoms, and to think of each atom as being an object of His love. We all stand out in God's love just as we should do to one another's eyes if we were on the top of a mountain-ridge with a clear sunset sky behind us. Each little black dot of the long procession would be separately visible. And we all stand out like that, every man of us isolated, and getting as much of the love of God as if there was not another creature in the whole universe

but God and us. Have you ever realised that when we say "He loved the world," it just means, as far as each of us is concerned, He loves me? And just as the whole beams of the sun come pouring down into every eye of the crowd that is looking up to it, so the whole love of God pours down, not upon a multitude, an abstraction, a community, but upon every single soul that makes up that community. He loves us all because He loves us each. We shall never get all the good of that thought until we translate it, and lay it upon our hearts. It is all very well to say, "Ah! Yes! God is love," and it is all very well to say He loves "the world." But I will tell you what is a great deal better: to say in simple faith what Paul said—"Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Can *you* say that? If not, you are still a stranger to God's love, though you are the object of it.

THE RIVER.

Now, to go back to my metaphor, the lake makes a river. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

So then it was not Christ's death that turned God from hating and being angry, but it was God's love that appointed Christ's death. If you will only remember that, a great many of the shallow and popular objections to the great doctrine of the Atonement disappear at once. "God so loved . . . that He gave." But some people say that when we preach that Jesus Christ died for our sins, that God's wrath might not fall upon men, our teaching is immoral, because it means "Christ came, and so God loved." It is the other way about, friends: "God so loved . . . that He gave."

Let me carry you back into the Old Testament. Do you remember the story of the father taking his

boy, who carried the bundle of wood and the fire, and tramping over the mountains till they reached the place where the sacrifice was to be? Do you remember the boy's question that brings tears quickly to the eyes: "Here is the wood, and here is the fire, where is the lamb?" Do you not think it was hard for the father to steady his voice and say, "My son, God will provide the lamb?" And do you remember the end of that story? "The Angel of the Lord said unto Abraham, Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me, therefore blessing I will bless thee." Remember that one of the Apostles said, using the very same word that is used in Genesis about Abraham's giving up his son to God, "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." Does not that point to a mysterious parallel? Somehow or other—we have no right to attempt to say how—somehow or other, God not only sent His Son, as it is said in the next verse to my text, but far more tenderly, wonderfully, pathetically, God gave—gave up His Son, and the sacrifice was enhanced, because it was His only begotten Son.

Ah! do not let us be afraid of following out all that is included in that great word "God . . . loved the world." For there is no love that does not delight in giving, and there is no love that does not delight in depriving itself, in some fashion, of what it gives. And I, for my part, believe that Paul's words are to be taken in all their blessed depth and wonderfulness of meaning, when he says, "He gave up"—as well as He *gave*—"He gave Him up for us all."

And now, do you not think that we are able in some measure to estimate the greatness of that little

word "so"? "God so loved"—so deeply, so holily, so perfectly—that He "gave His only begotten Son;" and the gift of that Son is, as it were, the river by which the love of God comes to every soul in the world.

Now, there are a great many people who would like to put the middle part of this great text of ours into a parenthesis. They say that we can put the first words and the last words of this text together, and never mind all that comes in between. People that do not like the doctrine of the Cross would say, "God so loved the world that He gave . . . everlasting life;" and there end. "If there is a God, and if He loves the world, why cannot He save the world without more ado? There is no need for these interposed clauses." "God so loved the world that everybody will go to heaven"—that is the Gospel of a great many of you; and it is the Gospel of a great many wise and learned people. But it is not the Gospel of God.

The beginning and the end of the text cannot be buckled up together in a rough-and-ready fashion. They have to be linked by a chain; and there are two links in the chain; God forges the one, and we have to forge the other. "God so loved the world that He gave"—then He has done His work. "That whosoever believeth"—that is your work. And it is in vain that God forges His link, unless you will make yours and link it up to His. "God so loved the world;" that is step number one in the process. "That He gave;" that is step number two. And then there comes another "that"—"that whosoever believeth;" that is step number three. And they are all needed before you come to number four, which is the landing-place, and not a step—"should not perish, but have everlasting life."

THE PITCHER AND THE DRAUGHT.

I come to what I called the pitcher, and also to the draught.

“That whosoever believeth” —you, perhaps, say, “Yes, I believe. I accept every word of the Gospel. I quite believe that Jesus died, as a matter of history; and I quite believe that He died for men’s sins.”

And what then? Is that what the Lord meant by believing? To believe *about* Him is not to believe *on* Him; and unless you believe on Him you will get no good out of Him. There is the lake, and the river must flow past the shanties in the clearing in the forest if the men there are to drink. But it may flow past their doors as broad as the Mississippi and as deep as the ocean, but they will perish with thirst unless they dip their hands, like Gideon’s men, and carry the water to their own lips.

Dear friend, what you have to do—and your soul’s salvation, and your peace and joy and nobleness in this life, and in the next, depend absolutely upon it—is simply to trust Christ and His death for your sins.

I sometimes wish we had never heard that word “faith.” For as soon as we begin to talk about “faith,” people begin to think that we are away up in some theological region far above everyday life. Suppose we try to bring it down a bit nearer to our businesses and bosoms, and instead of using the word that is kept sacred for use in religious matters, and saying “faith,” we say “trust.” That is what you give to your wives and your husbands, is it not? And that is exactly what you have to give to Jesus, simply to lay hold of Him as a man lays hold of the heart that loves him, and leans his whole weight upon it.

Finally, we have here the draught of living water.

Did you ever think why our text puts "should not perish" first? Is it not because unless we put our trust in Him we shall certainly perish, and because, therefore, that certainty of perishing must be averted before we can have "everlasting life"?

Now, I am not going to enlarge on these two solemn expressions, "perishing" and "everlasting life." I only say this: there are men and women in this hall who are dead—dead while they live, and when they come to die, the perishing, which is condemnation and ruin, will be the making visible in another condition of what is the fact to-day. Blessed be God, you can have everlasting life now. And there is only one way to have it, and that is to lay hold of Him Who is the life. And when you have Christ, Whom you will be sure to have if you trust Him, then you will have life—life eternal, here and now.

Now, I daresay I have never spoken to the great majority of you before; it is quite possible I may never speak to any of you again. I have asked God to help me to speak so as that souls should be drawn to the Saviour. And I beseech you now, as my last word, that you would listen, not to me, but to Him. For it is He Who says to us, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever"—"whosoever," a blank cheque, like the A.B. of a schedule; you can put your own name in it—"that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have"—here, now—"everlasting life."

(Adapted.)

You do not kill the tree of sin by picking all its fruits. If you would be free, you must see it judged root and branch at the Cross of Christ.

“Workers Together.”

THE Levites were “given as a gift” to Aaron, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. They were to serve under Aaron, the head of the priestly house. This teaches us a fine lesson, and one much needed by Christians at the present moment. We all want to bear in mind that service, to be intelligent and acceptable, must be rendered in subjection to priestly authority and guidance. All Christian service must be rendered in fellowship with our great High Priest, and in holy subjection to His authority. It is of no value otherwise.

But, on the other hand, the smallest act of service, the meanest work done under the eye of Christ, done with direct reference to Him, has its value in God’s estimation, and shall, most assuredly, receive its due reward. This is truly encouraging, and consolatory to the heart of every earnest worker. The Levites had to work under Aaron. Christians have to work under Christ. We are responsible to Him. It is very well and very beautiful to walk in fellowship with our dear fellow-workmen, and to be subject one to another, in the fear of the Lord. Nothing is further from our thoughts than to foster or countenance a spirit of haughty independence, or that temper of soul which would hinder our genial and hearty co-operation with our brethren in every good work. All the Levites were “joined unto Aaron,” in their work, and therefore they were joined one to another. Hence they had to work together. If a Levite had turned his back upon his brethren, he would have turned his back upon Aaron.

We may imagine a Levite taking offence at something or other in the conduct of his fellows, and saying to himself, "I cannot get on with my brethren. I must walk alone. I can serve God, and work under Aaron; but I must keep aloof from my brethren inasmuch as I find it impossible to agree with them as to the mode of working." But we can easily see through the fallacy of all this. For a Levite to adopt such a line of action would have produced nothing but confusion. All were called to work together, how varied soever their work might be.

Still, be it ever borne in mind, their work did vary; and, moreover, each was called to work under Aaron. There was individual responsibility with the most harmonious corporate action. We certainly desire, in every possible way, to promote unity in action; but this must never be suffered to trench upon the domain of personal service, or to interfere with the direct reference of the individual workman to his Lord. The Church of God affords a very extensive platform to the Lord's workers. There is ample space thereon for all sorts of labourers. We must not attempt to reduce all to a dead level, or cramp the varied energies of Christ's servants by confining them to certain old ruts of our own formation. This will never do. We must, all of us, diligently seek to combine the most cordial unanimity with the greatest possible variety in action. Both will be healthfully promoted by each and all remembering that we are called to serve together under Christ.

Here lies the grand secret—*Together, under Christ!* May we bear this in mind. It will help us to recognize and appreciate another's line of work, though it may differ from our own; and, on the other hand,

it will preserve us from an overweening sense of our own department of service, inasmuch as we shall see that we are, one and all, but co-workers in the one wide field; and that the great object before the Master's heart can only be attained by each worker pursuing his own special line, and pursuing it in happy fellowship with all.

There is a pernicious tendency in some minds to depreciate every line of work save their own. This must be carefully guarded against. If all were to pursue the same line, where were that lovely variety which characterizes the Lord's work and workmen in the world? Nor is it merely a question of the line of work, but actually of the peculiar style of each workman. You may find two evangelists, each marked by an intense desire for the salvation of souls, each preaching, substantially, the same truth; and yet there may be the greatest possible variety in the mode in which each one seeks to gain the self-same object. We should be prepared for this. Indeed we should fully expect it. And the same holds good in reference to every other branch of Christian service. We should strongly suspect the ground occupied by a Christian Assembly if there were not ample space allowed for every branch and style of Christian service—for every line of work capable of being taken up in individual responsibility to the great Head of the priestly house. We ought to do nothing which we cannot do under Christ, and in fellowship with Him. And all that can be done in fellowship with Christ can surely be done in fellowship with those who are walking with Him.

C. H. M.

1 Sam. ii. 3.—God does not *measure* what we bring to Him: He *weighs* it.

The Person of Jesus.



NO words can express the gratitude we owe to Him Who loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins: the *love* of Jesus is unutterably precious and worthy of daily praise. No songs can ever fitly celebrate the triumphs of that salvation which He wrought single handed on our behalf: the *work* of Jesus is glorious beyond compare, and all the harps of heaven fall short of its worthy honour. Yet I do believe, and my heart prompts me to say so, that the highest praise of every ransomed soul, and of the entire Church of God, should be offered to our adorable Lord for *Himself*—His own blessed *Person*. The love of His heart is excelled by the heart which gave forth that love, and the wonders of His hand are outdone by the hand itself, which wrought those miracles of grace. True, we bless Him for what He has done for us in the place of humble service, and for what He suffered for us as Substitute on the altar of sacrifice, and for what he is doing for us as Advocate in the place of highest honour at the right hand of God: but still, the best thing about Christ is Christ Himself. We prize *His*, but we worship *Him*. His gifts are valued, but He Himself is adored.

While we contemplate, with mingled feelings of awe, admiration, and thankfulness, His atonement, His resurrection, His glory in heaven, and His second coming, His regal honours as Israel's Messiah in the world to come, still it is *Christ Himself*, stupendous in His dignity as the Son of God, and superbly beautiful as the Son of Man, Who sheds an incomparable charm on all those wonderful achievements,

wherein His might and His merit, His goodness and His love and grace appear so conspicuous. For *Him* let our choicest spices be reserved, and to *Him* let our sweetest anthems be raised. Our choicest ointments must be poured upon His head, and for His own self alone our most costly alabaster boxes must be broken.

“He is altogether lovely.” I suppose at first we always begin to love Him because of what He has done for us, and even to the last His love to us in His gifts will always be the strongest motive of our affection towards Him; still there ought to be added to this another reason less connected with ourselves, and more entirely arising out of His own superlative excellency: we ought to love Him because He is lovely and deserves to be loved. The time should come, and with some of us it has come, when we can heartily say, “We love Him because we cannot help it, for His all-conquering loveliness has ravished our hearts.” Surely it is but an unripe fruit to love Him merely for the benefits which we have received at His hands. It is a fruit of grace, but it is not of the ripest flavour; at least, there are other fruits, both new and old, which we have laid up for Him, and some of them have a daintier taste.

There is a sweet and mellow fruit which can only be brought forth by the summer sun of fellowship—it is love to Him because of His intrinsic goodness and personal sweetness. Oh, that we might love our Lord for His own sake, love Him because He is so supremely beautiful, because a glimpse of Him has won our hearts, because He is dearer to our eyes than light. Jesus *Himself* is better than all He has done or given: and as *from Himself* all blessings flow, so back to *Himself* should all love return.

The Children.

ENTERING a tram the other day, my eye was instantly attracted to a lovely child, standing on the carriage seat, and enjoying the changeful view from the window as we passed rapidly along the street, while he entertained us all by his innocent prattle.

Soon my ear was attracted by the conversation of the parents. They had evidently been to a Gospel meeting. My heart was gladdened as I listened, while the details of a most soul-stirring meeting were discussed. The tones were low, but I could not avoid becoming a party to the interest of those parents for the conversion of three children, who had been made the subject of special intercession that day. Here, I thought, is indeed rest and refreshment by the way. My mind dwelt pleasantly on the future of that dear boy, who was to receive his training from the hands of a pair whose hearts were glowing with the love of Jesus.

Presently a fresh accession of passengers entered, and the father gently took the child in his lap to make room for the new-comers. In an instant, how changed the aspect of things! The boy, disturbed in his pleasant employment, and resisting the will of his father, began to kick and scream as if he had received a terrible injury. At first, I believed he was seriously hurt, but such was not the case. The mother caressed and offered candy to the angry boy, the father alternately coaxed and threatened, the child continued his outcry, and the contest was ended by the father, who arose and stood, while the boy knelt on the vacant seat to look

at the passers-by! In an instant all was calm. The little face was wreathed in smiles, the candy was eagerly devoured, the child was happy.

But how changed was the aspect of my thought! How was the child ever to learn submission to the will of his Maker if suffered thus to rebel successively against those that stood to him in the stead of God?

Christian parent, answer this question prayerfully—Are you thus allowing the exercise of an un-governed will in that darling boy who is the pride of your house? or in that fair-haired girl, who is as the sunlight of your house?

I do not believe in governing a child year after year. By the help of a covenant-keeping God, he can early be taught to govern himself, always making the will of his parents the guide of his life. Thus will he be prepared to submit fully to the claims of God when they shall be brought home to his conscience.

“HOW?”



THE weary ones had rest, the sad were blest
 That day, and wondered “How?”
 A ploughman, singing at his work, had prayed:
 “Lord, bless them even now.”
 Away in foreign lands they wondered “How”
 Their simple word had power?
 At home some dear ones, “two or three” had met
 To pray that very hour!
 Yes, often are we blest, and wonder “How?”
 Because we do not see
 Someone, unknown, perhaps, and far away,
 Upon the bended knee.
 Oh! let the debt we owe to unknown prayer
 Move us to often bow
 For others, that they, too, with us may share
 And breathe a grateful “How?”

“We may not be here long.”



WE may not be here long,” said the wife gently to her husband.

He had just been suggesting that they might venture to purchase certain little requisites for their humble abode; but, then, had they not been considering the advisability of leaving the place and of living in a distant city?

It was this which called forth her reply. There seemed small wisdom in buying new household goods if such might have to be sold off at half price very shortly. Their stay in the town was uncertain, and this made them hesitate to lay out money on things which soon they might have to leave behind them.

“We may not be here long!” How my wife’s words to me kept ringing through my soul all that day, lifting up my thoughts to a far higher plane than that whereon the most serious of mundane affairs are considered, and causing my heart to burn and beat with expectant desire to take part in that glorious transformation scene, when things mutable and temporary below shall give place to things changeless and eternal above.

“The Lord is near.” How near! Even now the quickened and anointed ear can

almost hear His hastening and long looked for footfall. In patience, then, let us possess our souls, and increasingly feel the uncertainty of our tenure of occupation down here. Thus we shall not be eager to feather our nest and add to our stock of earthly belongings, knowing that "We may not be here long."

Lord, whether we be here for a day, a month, or a year, may we be here for Thee: looking for Thee, living for Thee, and ready in the twinkling of an eye to strike the tent and to roll up the cord, and enter the Father's House, our fair and long-loved Home.

S. J. B. C.



Is It So?

THE *service* of Christ is the *business* of my life.
 The *will* of Christ is the *law* of my life.
 The *presence* of Christ is the *joy* of my life.
 The *glory* of Christ is the *crown* of my life.

Giants.

NUM. xiii. 27, 28.

IT is when we are in the way of *progress* that we meet with *giants*. It was when Israel was going *forward* that the giants appeared. When they turned back into the wilderness they found none.

The Dispensations of Scripture.

(Continued.)



BUT it is necessary again to retrace our course, and examine more closely the special characteristics of *our* dispensation; and in order to this we must cast our minds into God's mould, and learn His method of instruction; so shall we be able to use His key of interpretation.

Coming then to the study of the Old Testament Scriptures in this spirit, we shall find that prophecy always leaps this present interval, which we call the Christian era, as if it had no existence. All those prophecies relate to events connected with Israel, and God's direct dealings with her; but the peculiar heavenly and spiritual blessings of the Church in this dispensation never form the theme of prophetic Scripture.*

This interval is brought before us by the Lord Himself, when in Luke iv. He opens His great commission from the book of Isaiah. He reads a description minutely realized in His own life and acts in Judæa; but after the clause, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," He closed the book, and delivered it to the attendant; thus deliberately specifying the character and limit of His commission. That proclamation was not accepted. The Great Commissioner was rejected and murdered; but the remaining clause of the sentence has not yet been taken up. Eighteen hundred years are

REPRESENTED BY A SINGLE COMMA

in our translation, and "the day of vengeance of our God" has not yet arrived. But that interval has not been a blank. It has given occasion for a more amazing revelation of God's love than was ever before conceived by human heart. Jewish unbelief rose like a dark rock

*The predictions of Isaiah, which are so often applied to the Church, are distinctly declared by the Holy Spirit to refer to Judah and Jerusalem (Isa. l. 1).

to bar its own blessings, but it only served to turn the current which it could not stop. Its bright waters clove a deeper channel, and bore on their broad bosom to other regions richer treasures than those Israel forfeited.

Yet how many children of God are ignorant of the characteristic blessings which pertain to their standing in this dispensation. They seem to think that it is a sort of development of Jewish times, whereas it is in truth, in almost all things, a great contrast. It is not only that sacrifices and symbolic ceremonies have ceased. The spirit of sonship has taken the place of fear. The Holiest in the Heavens ever open to the believer has replaced the temple made with hands. The dread of death that held each saint of old in bondage has yielded to the glorious hope of his returning Lord set before every Christian. A new, close, and mysterious relationship of the redeemed to their Lord, and to one another, has been revealed; and this, the most wonderful of all the characteristics of this age, is the one perhaps least known, and least appreciated among Christians. They generally look on themselves as units, called to great blessings indeed, but as separate and individual existences. Now the New Testament teaches that, without losing this individual identity, believers in this dispensation are gathered into union with each other, a mystic union which means something transcendently beyond mere association; and thus, united to one another, are as closely and inseparably joined to their living Head in heaven. (See Col. and Eph.) Ignorance of this truth has withered the power of the Church, as disuse enervates and weakens the muscles of a limb. Outwardly indeed it may be rich and increased in goods, and imagine that it has need of nothing; but spiritual weakness and blindness fill in the void left by the fading knowledge, love and hope of such dispensational truth.

The loss that has come upon the Church and upon the world outside by reason of ignoring this line of divine teaching is incalculable.

If the recovery of these truths within the present

generation has brought deep and mighty blessings to those who accept them, what would have been the result of eighteen hundred years' acquaintance with and exercise of them on the part of the whole Church of God?

These dispensational distinctions form great landmarks for the interpretation of Scripture, and deliver those who perceive them from much perplexity and confusion. They can understand how an act which in one dispensation is a matter of faithful obedience to God would in another be the grossest outrage upon Him. For example, Saul lost his throne because he spared a captive's life when he was commanded to destroy a whole nation. Yet the Christian who should propose such an act of vengeance in these days would be denying the faith which he professes.

The same God who gave the command to Saul concerning Amalek has said to us, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves."

No one has been wronged on this earth like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and now "all power" and "all judgment is committed by God into His hands." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." It is entirely taken out of any hand but His own. But He has chosen grace to be the principle on which He acts (during this present interval) towards this world. This principle, therefore, should rule in His people's hearts, and express itself in their service for Him, and in all their acts and bearing towards those around them.

Had Cromwell understood these distinctions, he would not have shed so freely the blood of his fellow-men, even though he considered them God's enemies and his own; and he would have planted on a firmer basis the religion which he desired to advance. Had Calvin felt the force of these truths, he would rather have died at the stake than burn Servetus there. Had Zwingli known them, he would not have taken the sword and perished by it on the field of battle.

This was exactly the course forbidden by the Lord in

the parable of the wheat and the tares. The servants were commanded not to root the tares out of the field (the world, see Matt. xiii. 38); *i.e.* they were not to take away the *lives* of heretics, or of false professors of Christianity. It is conceivable that such an error could have characterised a time when men were struggling into the knowledge of the truth through opposition and violence. But what shall be said of the strange misapplication of this parable by Christians in these enlightened days, when in direct contradiction of the words of the Holy Spirit they declare the field to be the *Church*? By this they affirm that the Lord Himself provided for the undisturbed admission of unbelievers to His table and His worship. Thus they make God the author of confusion, and they break the Scripture (2 Cor. vi. 14-18), while they aid Satan in blinding unbelieving professors of Christianity to the perception of their own danger.

There are many psalms inspired by the same divine Spirit who inspired the epistles, which breathe the expression of unqualified vengeance on the enemies of God's people. How can the reading of such passages produce anything but bewilderment in the minds of those who apply their meaning to this age of "the patience and kingdom of Jesus Christ?"

But let it be understood that they speak of the day when the faithful of Israel shall be found maintaining the cause of Jehovah on earth against the overwhelming power of antichrist, and they become not only comprehensible, but full of interest.



Looking up to heaven, He sighed (Mark vii. 34).—Too often we sigh and look *in*; Jesus sighed and looked *up*.



Jude 21.—Fruit ripened in the sun is sweetest.



2 Tim. ii. 3—Life is not victory, but battle. Be patient a little longer. By and by, each in his turn, we shall hear the sunset gun.

Thou art Coming.



THOU art coming, O my Saviour!
 Thou art coming, O my King!

In Thy beauty all resplendent,
 In Thy glory all-transcendent;

Well may we rejoice and sing.

Coming! In the opening east,

Herald brightness slowly swells;

Coming! Yes, as King and Priest,

Hear we not Thy Golden bells?

Thou art coming, Thou art coming!

We shall meet Thee on Thy way,

We shall see Thee, we shall know Thee,

We shall bless Thee, we shall shew Thee,

All our hearts could never say!

What an anthem that will be,

Ringiug out our love to Thee,

Pouring out our rapture sweet

At Thine Own all-glorious feet.

Thou art coming! Rays of glory

Through the veil Thy death has rent,

Touch the mountain and the river

With a golden glowing quiver,

Thrill of light and music blent.

Earth is brightened when this gleam

Falls on flower, rock, and stream;

Life is brightened when this ray

Falls upon its darkest day.

Not a cloud and not a shadow,

Not a mist and not a tear,

Not a sin and not a sorrow,

Not a dim and veiled to-morrow,

For that sunrise grand and clear.

Jesus, Saviour, once with Thee,
Nothing else seems worth a thought ;
O how marvellous will be
All the bliss Thy pain hath bought.

Thou art coming ! At Thy table
We are witnesses for this,
While remembering hearts Thou meetest
In communion clearest, sweetest,
Earnest of our coming bliss.
Shewing not Thy death alone,
And Thy love exceeding great,
But Thy coming and Thy throne,
All for which we long and wait.

Thou art coming ! We are waiting
With a hope that cannot fail ;
Asking not the day or hour,
Resting on Thy word of power,
Anchored safe within the veil.
Time appointed may be long,
But the vision must be sure ;
Certainty shall make us strong,
Joyful patience can endure.

O the joy to see Thee reigning,
Thee, our own beloved Lord !
Every tongue Thy name confessing,
Worship, honour, glory, blessing,
Brought to Thee with glad accord !
All to Thee the knee shall bend,
Vindicated and enthroned !
Unto earth's remotest end
Thou shalt be adored and owned

F. R. H.



“Write.”

IT is very sweet to note that a voice from heaven said to John, “Write” (Rev. i.).

Does not that voice come to us? Are there not those who would taste the joys of heaven if we wrote them words of forgiveness and affection? Are there not others who would dry their tears if we would remind them of how they were comforted when we were afflicted as they are now? Nay, could not some, who read these plain words, place inside the envelope something bearing their signature which would make the widow’s heart sing for joy?

What is our pen doing? Is it adding joy and instruction and help to other lives? If so, then all heaven may tune their harps when we sit at our desk, and be glad to look upon our pen as writing music for them to sing.

T. C.

“We Know in Part.”

A GENTLEMAN who was walking near an unoccupied building, one day, saw a stone-cutter chiselling patiently at a block of stone in front of him. The gentleman went up to him. “Still chiselling?” he remarked, pleasantly.

“Yes, still chiselling,” replied the workman.

“In what part of the building does this stone belong?” asked the gentleman.

“I don’t know; I haven’t seen the plans.” And then he went on chiselling, chiselling, chiselling.

And that is what we Christians should do. We may not be able to seize fully the great plans of the Master Architect above, but each of us has his work to do, and we should chisel away until it is done.

The Message.

“Making Them an Ensample.”

(A Gospel Address.)

THE LATTER DAY SAINTS' MESSIAH

“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an *ensample* unto those that after should live ungodly.”—2 P^{er}. ii. 6.

THE LATTER DAY SAINTS' MESSIAH

EVERY age has had its popular heresy. For a while it has run like wildfire, and then gradually died out to give place to another. Any casual reader of so-called Christian literature must know the distinctive feature of this nineteenth century. There has arisen in the midst of the Church an anti-Christ, which is known by the name of “modern thought,” at whose altars tens of thousands are bowing the knee and offering their devotion. There is a horrid malaria abroad—a malaria breeding doubt and scepticism, and giving birth to wholesale practical infidelity. Surely the gospel of the present day might be rendered: “He that doubteth shall be saved, and he that believeth shall be counted a fool.” All things are now being called into question, and the work of the modern critic is either to destroy, or tone down, or annotate the Word of God, until, were our fathers to rise from the grave, they would find it difficult to recognize it as the same old Book on which they lived, and on whose truths they dared to die. The eternal

covenant of God is torn up with a glib remark and a smile of contempt by some boy-censor. The threatenings of God are having all the thunder taken out of them; and now let any one venture to say that he believes in such doctrines as the sovereign grace of God, an atoning sacrifice, and a doom of unspeakable horror awaiting the man who dies unconverted, and if he is not derided he will at least be looked upon with contemptuous pity.

Now, the fiercest onslaught has been made upon the doctrine of God's severity against sin. I do not marvel that the doctrine of eternal punishment has been the subject of fiercest attack. It is only natural that man should desire to believe that he can live in sin with comparative impunity. I wonder not that the natural man says, "Only prove to us that there is no perdition, and you shall be the preacher of our choice." Such teaching is sure to be popular. But, O sirs, if it be no mistake that hell has all the horrors that God declares, I beseech you, fall not into such incredible folly as to be damned in order to find out its truth.

You will see that in our text we have shown us, first, that God's severity on sin is an awful fact; and then, secondly, that this particular act of severity—namely, the destruction of the cities of the plain—is to be *an ensample* for all ages unto those who live ungodly.

God's severity on sin is an awful fact—mark that! I would seek to force this thought home because I am persuaded that, unless I can make you realize it, all the invitations of the gospel will be of little worth to you. Unless a man believes that there is something to flee from, it is wasted time to tell him to flee. Unless a man believes there is a doom to escape, it is folly, if not impertinence,

to keep saying to him, "Escape for thy life."

I venture to say that the God I read about in the Old Testament is no more like the god of modern thought than He is like the heathen deities of mythology. Peter brings forward three facts in order to show that God has severity on sin and sinners. The first is the vengeance which He executed on the sinning angels. You have this in the fourth verse: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell." I have often marvelled that those who are so ready to accuse God of want of love when the perdition of men is mentioned, have not seen that they have greater cause to arraign Him at their bar for having cast the angels headlong into hell. If it be unjust and unkind to deal out eternal punishment to fallen men, how is it that they are silent about the doom of the fallen angels? God made bright spirits, capable of standing, yet free to fall; and some did fall; and God "delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

Can you not see that every argument which can be employed against the ultimate punishment of men applies with equal force against the punishment of the sinful angels? Am I told, as we are repeatedly, that there is such a nobility about man, such a natural grandeur, that it is almost impossible to imagine that God can ever consign so glorious and intellectual a being to perdition? I reply, Noble in being were those sons of the morning, pure spirits who stood before the eternal throne of God and sang His praises, and mighty in intellect. Yet when they sinned, did the nobility of their nature save them from the hell that awaited them? Am I told, "Oh, but surely there cannot be eternal punishment, because it would disarrange God's beautiful

universe—it would be a discordant note in the great realm?" I reply, The angels lived nearer God than man; and yet, when they sinned, though heaven itself shall be put into confusion, they shall be turned out. When I see the sinning angels falling over heaven's brink into hell, I see something before which my spirit stands appalled, but something which makes me say, "The God of the angels, and the God I worship, is an awful God when His anger is aroused."

Peter then passes on, you will see, to the second illustration, which is in the fifth verse: "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah." Now, here the destruction was more complete. In the former case a glorious company of untold legions remained to sing their Sovereign's praises, but now God speaks the word, and the foundations of the great deep are broken up. How many are saved? "A few—that is, eight souls." Come, Mr. Modern Thinker, you who are so shocked at the idea of God pouring out His wrath on any, how do you account for this? Does this look like "universal fatherhood"? Does this look like an indulgent father who knows nothing of righteous indignation against sin? It has been computed that the population of the world at that time was as great as now, owing to the longevity of the race, and yet the waters rose until the few—the eight—who rode in that ark were the sole remnant of a world that God had made. Come, open your ears and hear the shrieks of the drowning; hear the cries of the strong swimmer in his last agony; and account for it, if you can, on any other ground than that God is a hater of sin,—that when the accursed thing reaches a climax He pours His wrath upon it—aye, though doing so He destroys a world He fashioned.

Then we come to the third illustration, and I think you will see that they become stronger and yet more fearful. There were eight saved from the flood; but in the case of the cities of the plain only four were rescued, and out of the four one of them was turned into a pillar of salt because she dared to look back. I wish I had the power to paint in words the scene which this text presents. When going lately among some of the loveliest villages and towns that lie round about Naples, under the shadow of Vesuvius, I thought I had an idea what these cities of the plain must have looked like—exquisite for their beauty, charming for situation. But the sin of the cities of the plain had waxed to such an extent that God's indignation burned, and He rained down a fire from heaven.

Now, you who are so shocked at anything that is dreadful, how do you account for this? Does this look like "universal fatherhood"? Behold yon black cloud gathering over the city. Listen to the hissing of that hail of fire. Mark that pitiless sleet sweeping down across the plain. Come, sir, it may be that some of the flashes that devour the city may open your eyes to an awful fact. Do you hear the crackling of the timbers? Hark to those cries and shrieks. It is fearful! Aye, and, mark you, even to this hour it remains the witness of God's hatred of sin, for those plains were blasted with a barrenness. Walk by the shores of the Dead Sea, where once those cities stood. Death reigns! No fish glide in its deep, no flowers bloom upon the shore. And the silent voice of that Dead Sea is this: "Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."

These are the three instances Peter brings forward;

but do you suppose that they are the only three? Far from it. I will, however, but mention a few others, as time presses. How about the death of the first-born in Egypt? Why do not those who are so ready to charge God with being cruel accuse Him of harshness in relation to Egypt? I suppose that in Egypt there were more people than there are in London to-night, and yet in every house the first-born was found dead, and from end to end of Egypt's land a great wail of grief went up. Does that look like "universal fatherhood"?

Look yet again, farther on in history. Do you see Sennacherib's host covering all the land? Need I tell you how—

"The angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their breasts but once heaved, and for ever grew still."

Go, look into those silent tents; lift up those trumpets that have never been blown; handle those spears that have never been placed in rest; twang the bow that has never sent the arrow; and then account for the scene of death, if you can, on any other ground than that our God has a hatred against sin, and will, when it pleases Him, strike the sinner to the dust.

But you turn round and say, "Aye, but you forget that all these examples are in the Old Testament. We are not living in Old Testament days." Then come with me to the New. It is now customary to describe the views of future punishment held by most of us as "mediæval," and to declare that our ideas are mainly gleaned from what monks wrote and said, and from pictures to be found in old galleries. I suppose I have seen about as many of the old masters in the galleries of Europe as most, but I must acknowledge I have never yet seen any

picture from the hand of mediæval artist half so dreadful as some of the descriptions that fell from our Lord's lips. "Mediæval" is it, to speak about weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth? These words came not from the lips of any mortal man. They fell from the same lips that said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Neither Paul, nor Peter, nor any of the apostles, ever uttered such words as leaped from the lips of the Man of Sorrows. Christ's descriptions of hell are the most fearful that we have. It is the lips of infinite love that speak of being cut asunder, and about burning with the fire that is never quenched.

One other thought. To my mind, at least, the most awful proof of the divine severity against sin is to be found in the fact of the atonement. Find those who most deride the idea of an awful doom awaiting the sinner, and you will find those who rob the death of Christ of its sacrificial element. It is the logical sequence. If there was nothing much to save me from, it was almost superfluous for the Lord of glory to die upon the tree. But, O brethren, if you want to gauge the deep horrors of the lost, you must gauge them by the cross of Christ. It is His groans, His tears, His cries, that tell best what hell means. Thy breaking heart, Lord Jesus; Thy flowing blood; Thy death-cry of "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—these are the things that say to me; more than all the cities of the plain, There is an awful judgment to come upon the sinner for his sins. But notice our text again, and you will see that this particular act of severity mentioned by Peter is to be an ensample for all ages. If those of you who have Bibles will look at them, you will see that it says, "*Making them*":—

that is, the cities of the plain—"an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." Then, this is not to be shelved as a bit of past history. We are not to put the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrhah on one side, and say, "Oh, that will keep as an interesting relic of the past." It is not to be treated as something with which we have nothing to do. "No," says Peter; "you look at it, for God intended it throughout all ages to be an ensample unto the ungodly."

Three weeks ago I was staying in that most beautiful, but most depraved of cities, Naples; and, looking across its charming bay, I could see, just in front of our window, Mount Vesuvius. As I gazed upon that mountain, it seemed to me as if it were painted on ivory. Everything about it was so softened. The smoke that came from the mountain was pearly white. It rose in slow folds, fold over fold, fold over fold, and before the gentle breeze it stretched away for miles, until lost in the dim distance. It really seemed more like the white pennon of peace flying from the crater's mouth than anything else. And there, all up the sides of Vesuvius, were the little white cottages of the peasants. And under its shadow were smiling villages; and it seemed almost impossible to believe that Vesuvius could do any harm. I was almost inclined to think of Vesuvius, as modern thinkers dream of God—that surely all the old fire had burned out. Still, there was some smoke rising, which showed me that, though at that time no burning lava was pouring out of its iron-bound flanks, yet *it could do it again.*

Three weeks ago to-morrow I took a drive out, and I thought I would go and see this innocent-looking mountain. Still the smoke came away in white folds, and, as we neared it, the driver, pointing

to the foundations of some houses, and speaking in Italian, made us understand that those houses were built on *lava*. Then, after all, this mountain cannot be so harmless as it looks. And, by-and-by, we found that the road on either side was lined with lava, and now our carriage-wheels rattled over the lava which had poured down from the mountain-side. There, a little to the right, was Herculaneum once buried; and a little farther on we reached Pompeii. I wish I could make you see it as I beheld it. I think you would understand the text better then.

I suppose most of you are aware that it was in the year 79 that this strange city of the dead was covered, and that for eighteen centuries it was buried. Only one-third of it is at the present time excavated. We walked along its silent streets, and there we could see the rut which the wheels of the chariots had made as they rattled on their noisy way. We went into the silent houses on either side of the streets. Where were the owners? There were none there to refuse us entrance. We walked into the houses; we looked at the frescoes on the walls, some of them as fresh as if painted only yesterday. You must remember that it was not covered with burning lava, as is popularly supposed—that would have destroyed the city; but the cinders fell until the whole city was covered over. Then over the cinders there flowed a torrent of boiling mud which cooled and caked, and then over that there went the burning lava; and this again became like iron, so that there was the city hermetically sealed up, and for 1,700 years the world forgot that there was such a place as Pompeii. But we not only saw streets covered with the marks of chariot wheels, and houses with their frescoes; there

were other sights sadder far. There were the relics of the past. There I saw the marble table, still standing in the garden as it was left that afternoon ; and there was a bottle with the oil still in it ; and there was the loaf half eaten. Yes ; but what is that lying there ? It is the body of a woman with her face in her hands, seeking to avoid the cinders that were falling. And you can stand there and look upon her, still lying as she cast herself down centuries back.

I walked in and out of those empty houses in this city of the dead, and I thought of the text : "Turning the cities of Sodom and Gommorra into ashes, He condemned them with an overthrow." Sudden was the destruction. There was the bread in the oven which was never taken out by the baker, and the wine was still in the bottle, on which the date of the vintage was clearly written. In the house of Diomed, which you enter almost first, there, down in the cellar, were discovered seventeen skeletons, all of women, and we saw the marks of their bodies where they had huddled on the ground amongst the wine-flasks that were yet down there. In a backroom in a house in the street of Abundance, there was found, lying on a heap of rubbish, a man with outstretched hands and clutched fingers ; and there, close by, the diggers brought up four hundred pieces of silver, and jewels and brooches. The miser was caught as he counted his hoard ; the harlot was arrested in her house of shame ; the prisoner was suffocated in his cell, and the sentry as he stood at the gateway.

As I stood in lonely Pompeii, looking at Vesuvius, the mountain did not appear quite so powerless. It seemed to me, as I stood there, that I heard Vesuvius speak. And the mountain muttered these words : "*I can do it again ! I can do it again !*"

O sirs, believe me, there is a day coming compared with which all we have described is devoid of terror. I mean this world's *last* day. And then will men be caught careless, as they were then. O sinner, I want you to look at the actions of God in the past, just in the same way as I looked at what Vesuvius *had* done. If any modern thinker had come to me at the time, and said, "You know, it is all a delusion. It is a mediæval idea that Vesuvius can destroy," I think I should have taken him by the arm, and said, "Look, sir; do you count me a born fool? How about Pompeii? If there be no destructive power in Vesuvius, how about Herculaneum? What mean these ruins? And Vesuvius can do it yet again."

Sinner, go back and see what God has done. He Who hurled the angels from heaven to hell, and drowned the world, and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha, has power still to smite. Oh, do not rouse my God to anger. Will you count His long-suffering to be slackness? And because He still lengthens out the time of grace, will you presume on it? "Escape for thy life."

I have finished, and, as an old preacher once said, "now may God begin." I feel that, though we have tried to preach to you earnestly, our language has been but cold and faint. There is a day coming in which you will find every word we have uttered to be true. There is a day coming in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the earth shall melt with fervent heat, and the trumpet of stern judgment shall wax louder and louder; and if you die rejecting Christ, you will find yourself doomed to eternal perdition. Fly, then, to Christ, I beseech you. Trust Him, and He will save you. Rest on His atoning sacrifice, and all sin shall be forgiven you.

A. G. B.

The Kiss of Divine Affection.

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.”—S. S. i. 2.

WHAT unsuspecting, pure, and impassioned affection breathes in this remarkable address. It is like the artless, yet ardent kindling of affection between the nearest kindred when they meet after a long absence. So engrossed is the heart with its object, that forms, ceremonies, and all surrounding circumstances are entirely lost sight of. The happy consciousness of the place which she has in His heart carries her away. How few there are in this world that one could so informally and affectionately address.

Dost thou, O my soul, understand this? No doubts, no fears are in the heart that can thus address the divine Bridegroom—the glorified Jesus in heaven. Many now-a-days think it presumption to have full, perfect, unmisgiving confidence in His grace and love, and if they dare venture to trust Him, it is with many doubts and fears; and that, too, after He has written His love to lost sinners in characters of blood, and engraven it as on the face of the rock for ever.

What must such think of the boldness of the bride? That she has forgotten herself, her place? Ah! no. The secret is this: the conscience, having been cleared of all sin by the one sacrifice of the once lowly Jesus, the heart is now free and happy in the presence of the risen and glorified Christ. And this is all that any guilty sinner needs to make him feel at home and happy in the chamber of the King, namely, the blood of Christ for the conscience, and the Person of Christ for the heart. Every

blessing will be found folded up in these two. Every Christian has both. Lord, help them to believe it!

Mark well, my soul, there is no mention of sin, pardon, or justification. Why is this? These questions had been previously settled, and now the heart is enjoying full and perfect liberty in the Lord's presence. All such questions, in every case, are settled when the sinner is first brought to the feet of Jesus—settled on the solid ground of the Saviour's finished work—never, no never again to be raised, so far as God and faith are concerned. Satan, and the unbelief of our own hearts, may seek to disturb the eternally settled question; but all such thoughts should be treated as coming from such sources. The heart that knows these things is free, happy, and at home in the immediate presence of the Lord, and that, too, in the highest sense. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."

Here, the heart is breathing after, not the sense of forgiveness, but a more direct demonstration of His love. She is occupied with Himself. Not so much with any of His qualities, or with any particular kindness she has received from Him, as with Himself personally. Having Him she has all His qualities and all His kindness; as she says, "Let Him kiss me."

In Holy Scripture we find a kiss is the token of reconciliation, the pledge of peace, and the expression of affection. Is it too much then for the bride in the Canticles—for the believer in Jesus—to desire such an expression of the Lord's love? Certain we are that she desired it, not because she had any doubt of its being there, but because she delighted in its manifestation. Love can only be satisfied with love.

(ANDREW MILLER.)

The Bedroom Floor,

And why it was never scrubbed.

(BY HAROLD P. BARKER.)



DURING a recent visit to a rather remote part of the Transvaal, I was lodging at a small house on the veldt.

On retiring to rest at night, I could not help noticing the extremely dirty state of the bedroom floor. It looked as if it had not been cleaned for months. I determined that the following day I would call the landlady's attention to it, and ask her to have it scrubbed.

The next morning, however, when I rose to dress, I saw what had escaped my notice the evening before. The floor was of such a nature that no scrubbing could possibly make it any cleaner. It was made, not of wood, or bricks, but of big clods of dirt, dried and hardened in the sun and trodden down till a solid surface was formed, as level and smooth as any ordinary floor.

Of course, I gave up my idea of asking the landlady to scrub it. The more such a floor were scrubbed the worse it would become. No amount of soap and water would do it any good.

Will you be surprised, reader, if I tell you that that bedroom floor aptly sets forth your spiritual condition in the sight of God?

Do not frown and throw the book aside. I am telling you the truth. Hear what the Bible says of the whole race of mankind: "Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy." (Rom. iii.)

Even those who try to do good are just the same.

God does not call their actions good. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Ps. liii. 3; Is. lxiv. 6.)

This is what many cannot understand.

I wonder if *you* are prepared to acknowledge that in God's sight you are so bad, so unclean, so corrupt, that you can no more improve yourself, or do anything to amend your condition than the bedroom floor in the house on the veldt could be made clean by scrubbing it.

Multitudes of men and women are engaged in a hopeless task of this sort, and many are the various kinds of scrubbing-brushes that they use.

There is, for instance, the scrubbing-brush of *Self-Restraint*. Have you not sometimes used this brush? You have tried to control your temper and put a curb upon your unruly tongue. You have kept a strict watch over your actions, and have endeavoured to restrain your passions. In this way you have been scrubbing away at the dirty floor, but you have utterly failed to effect any real improvement. You are as far from God as ever. Your heart is just as bad as it was when you began.

Perhaps it is the scrubbing-brush of *Moral Living* that you are trying. You do not swear, or cheat, or get drunk. No impure speech ever soils your lips. You never do anything that men would call wicked. But all this makes no difference in your condition before God. Your moral living has not changed the evil character of your heart.

Some try the scrubbing-brush of *Education*. But education never yet changed a sinner into a child of God. A man may have passed through all the standards of the elementary schools; he may go successfully through a college course, and may learn

all that the leading Universities of Europe can teach him; but he is still a guilty, unclean sinner. In his heart of hearts he hates God and loves sin just as much as the most illiterate man on earth.

Many fancy that where other scrubbing-brushes fail, the brush of *Religion* will succeed. So they read their Bibles and say their prayers. They are regular attendants at church, and take the sacrament at every opportunity. Perhaps they sing in the choir: They may become district visitors or Sunday-school teachers. But all this leaves their carnal nature unchanged. Their religious garb only serves to cover up the uncleanness within.

If the scrubbing-brush of religion could make anyone clean, it should have made Saul of Tarsus so. Zealous beyond all his contemporaries, rigid in his observance of ceremonies and ordinances; devoted in his obedience to the priests, he might well have claimed to be the most religious man of his day.

But all the while there raged in his heart a bitter hatred against Christ. When at last his eyes were opened, and he found how terribly mistaken he had been, he confessed that he was the chief of sinners. In spite of all his religiousness he had to acknowledge "In me dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii.).

Do not, then, make a scrubbing-brush of religion. Not that I would say a word against real religion. It is a grand thing. I am sorry for the man who has none of it. But religion, of itself, can never make the sinner clean. It can never wash away his sin. Yet it is a thing greatly to be desired.

But if neither self-restraint, nor moral living, nor education, nor religion, nor any other scrubbing-brush of a similar kind can make you clean, there is something that can. *Christ is the God-provided*

remedy. There is power in His precious blood to wash all your foul stains away.

"Ye must be born again" are the words that confront every Christian soul. They were addressed to a most religious man. And they are as true to-day as ever. What *you* need, reader, is to be born again. Nothing short of that will do.

But *you* cannot bring about this new birth. What, then, must you do?

First of all, lay aside every scrubbing-brush! Give up all hope of improving the state of the dirty bedroom floor. In other words, own your exceeding sinfulness. Bow in self-loathing at the Saviour's feet. Pass sentence upon yourself, sternly and unsparingly.

Then look away from yourself altogether. Christ stands ready to save. His love is infinite. His blood can cleanse from all sin.

Put your whole trust in Him. Let your plea be the merits of His blood. If you want something to say, say:—

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

So great in God's sight is the value of the blood which Jesus shed, that He counts clear of every charge the sinner who trusts in Him. The dirty floor is condemned, and a new one is made.

The corrupt state of fallen man received its condemnation in the cross of Christ. A new state, a new life, a new position belongs to the believer. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.

No scrubbing-brush is needed. Trust in the Saviour, and you will be pardoned, washed, justified, saved.

Muthania—The Saviour.



“To illumine the scroll of creation,
One swift, sudden vision sufficed!
Every riddle of life worth the reading
Has found its Interpreter—*Christ.*”

“**N**ICHAN,” said an inquisitive young fellow, pointing at something as we reached Ukamba land. We concluded that meant “What is it?” and so said “Nichan” and pointed at his bow. He answered “Uta,” and we jot down our first words of Kikamba. And so, day after day, we fling out “Nichan” until we have mastered several thousand words. How we longed to preach to them!

For two years and a half I was baffled in my effort to obtain one word—*Saviour*. Never had it seemed so sweet and beautiful! All those weary months I had tried to give out the glad message in labored sentences for want of this single word. Hour after hour I have sat with Kikubi and others trying in vain to get it. One day I had five persons in my room explaining, but to no avail. At last it came. With the master passion tugging at my heart, I went to the men’s fire and listened as they recited the day’s incidents.

A brother, Kreiger, had been badly torn by a lion, and Kikubi was the means of his rescue, and he told the story of it. He went through it all eloquently, but without using the word I sought after. Finally he remarked, “Bwana nukuthaniwa na Kikubi”—the master was saved by Kikubi. I could have leaped for joy, but being afraid of losing my precious possession, I changed the verb to the active form and said, “Ukuthania Bwana—You saved the master. This proving correct, I said, “Why, Kikubi, this is the word I’ve been trying to

get you to tell me many days, because I wanted to tell you that Jesus, the Son of God, came——”

“Oh, yes,” he said, and the black face lit up, “I see it now, I understand, Jesus came to kuthania (to save) us from our sins and to deliver us from the hand of Muimu (Satan).”

Never did sweeter words fall from mortal lips. The treasure was discovered at last, and weary prospector, lighting suddenly on a rich gold reef, never felt keener emotions than did I, the lonely missionary, when for the first time I was able to frame that matchless word “Saviour” in a new tongue. And, besides, it was the first real evidence I had in all those months that the message spoken in such conscious weakness was understood.

Next day, Lord’s Day, I was singing a hymn I had just made, when Kikuvu came to say a crowd wanted to hear me. I went out with all the joy bells in my soul ringing, and sang for them. But I wanted to preach, to set before them my new discovery. Muthania: Saviour—it rang through my being like sweet music. When I began to speak, Kikuvu asked about the resurrection, which was encouraging. His question answered, he surprised me still further, saying, “Master, let *me* talk a little.” I gave him leave, and in a truly marvellous way he told out the old, old story. I listened in amazement.

It brought to me a revelation as well. In the light of that experience it seemed as though I had never before known the meaning of the word “Saviour.”

I had spoken of it from childhood; had preached it for years, but somehow it became luminous with meaning that night. Over against the frightful need which settled down around me, there flashed a light unutterable and a scarred hand traced in letters of glory “MUTHANIA.”

(Anon.)

The Tract Depot.

THE Bible and Tract Depôt is a modern invention, the immense value and reach of which have been abundantly proved. Yet it does not always run as smoothly as its well-wishers desire, owing to lack of support on the part of those whom it serves. Thus a most useful vehicle in the Lord's service sometimes grows creaky and rusty, and if repairs are not wisely effected it may come to a dead stand, and even be abandoned as worn out and unprofitable.

With a view, then, of furthering its interests, we venture to give a few hints as to its methods and aims.

First and foremost, to be consistent with its profession, it must be *unsectarian* in the full sense of the term. If this be so, it will rid itself of all personal whims, fads, and crotchets, and thus, free from the spirit of the partisan, it will seek to distribute the whole of the truth of God. Persons in every phase of Christian life and character visit it, and therefore, so far as godly fidelity will admit and finances will allow, provision should be made for all. The enthusiastic soul-winner goes there to get awakening truth for the careless and the profane. The more staid worker asks for an establishing gospel for the uninstructed and the weak. The shepherd enters its doors to get help and food for the lambs and the sheep. The Sunday School teacher draws his varied supplies from thence. Those also who years since were brought into the light by the writings of men who have gone hence, seek for that which once helped them so much, and which can help others still. And finally those go to the Depôt who desire to obtain the most recent and approved publication.

Now, again we say that all should be readily served. But if this is to be so, those behind the counter must not be biased, or bias others, by their likes and dislikes of ministry and ministers, but allow their customers to

judge for themselves what they shall order or buy. The demand must control the supply so long as the demand, both as to its matter and its source, is according to sound doctrine. The Depot which confines its sympathies within the narrow limitations of some special line of teaching loses very much, and shows what a cramped estimate it has of the greatness of its mission, and of the marvellous diversity and scope of divine ministry.

The Lord when addressing the seven churches presents Himself to each one in quite a different character. It does not follow that because a ministry of Christ in one aspect is what a certain Christian needs, or a certain class of Christians needs, that therefore it is the need of all. The need of all is most surely Christ, but it is Christ presented in a form suitable to the state and circumstances of the soul. We read: "He appeared unto them in *another* form." There was always a gracious suitability in *the way* in which He adapted and manifested Himself to one and another after He rose from the dead, and there is so still. A tract full of Christ to the advanced is often an enigma to the babe; and a tract full of Christ to the simple believer *may* appear as child's talk to the matured. But Christ is in both, and so both have their mission, and neither must be despised.

The Tract Depot should also be ever, increasingly, and fervently *evangelical*.

It is the man who carries tracts in his pocket, and with burning desire and beseeching prayer scatters the seed broadcast, who is the mainstay of this institution. May God multiply the number of such workers, and warm our hearts with the love which fires theirs, so that though we may not be able to do their work, we may at least throw no damper on their zeal, but encourage them.

Souls are dying all around for need of the Gospel. Thousands, too, who are "born again" have never really received or even heard the full tale of God's glad tidings. The world's greatest need has always been the Gospel, and its need is as great now as when the early Apostles and servants of Christ (who, by-the-by, knew

quite as much as we do about God's purpose and counsels) preached the good news night and day, straining every fibre and nerve to bring it within the range of all.

Good management and practical support of the Tract Depôt are also essential requisites.

The one who is "in charge" is very responsible, especially if such be a brother in Christ (rather than a sister, as is advisedly often now the case in many places). A brother outside the Depôt may have little or no weight and power, but when installed within it he must often speak and write *ex officio*. His position necessarily makes him a man of affairs, and vests him with a quiet and recognised authority arising from his being brought into touch with so many who seek from him information and help. He has a decided influence, the responsibility of which he cannot shirk, and which has often been productive of either strife and sorrow, or peace and blessing among God's beloved people.

If he feels this he will cry to God for special grace to cope with the many difficulties of his place and duties, and, as God gives him strength, he will seek to display "the spirit of power, and of love, and of wise discretion." He will also possess a free and catholic mind; "the tongue of the just, which is as choice silver;" business tact and habits; and a measure of ability to help a soul in trouble, combined with a happy knack of keeping clear of ecclesiastical strife and all petty and personal feuds.

The Lord's servants, however, must do their part by giving all the practical fellowship and support they can to the man and his work. They should learn that they are partners with him in a most blessed service, and thus bear him up in prayer, and encourage him in fulfilling his arduous and, often, anxious labours.

Thus the Tract Depôt should prosper, not as a mere money-making concern, nor as the organ of a party, nor as a sleepy resort for idleness and gossip, but rather as a storehouse and a stronghold of Christian thought, enterprise, and cheer for the furtherance of every good word and work.

“Let us not sleep.”

(1 THESS. v.)



NO physician ever investigated all the symptoms of a patient's case with half the care that Satan has expended in the searching of you and me. He knows us well, our vanity, our pride, our worldliness, our everything, and he will spare no pains to make his knowledge of our weak points ruinously available. Our earthly comforts he will use to ensnare us into fleshly ease; and how many there are who, so long as they were poor, were in measure active, but since they increased their comforts have gone to sleep in the devil's arms! He will try to use even our spiritual comforts to seduce us. He can make a lullaby song out of the believer's unbounded privileges, and keep chanting to him of his place with Christ already in the heavenlies, while all the time he holds back the view of present duties and responsibilities, till the ease-loving heart drops over, lulled to sleep by Satan's siren singing about "Grace! Grace!" He can use the love of the brethren to our ruin. As Ignatius said to the Romans, "I fear your love, lest it do me an injury." He can use worldly company to do it. Says Henry Martyn, "I no longer hesitate to ascribe my stupor and formality to its right cause: unwatchfulness in worldly company. I thought that any temptation arising from the society of the people of the world, at least, such as we have had, was not worthy of notice; but I find I was mistaken." Satan can also use solitude quite as effectively as company. In truth, he works through *everything*, and works *everywhere*, and works on *every one*.

And if once he gets a soul under his influence,

who can tell how far he may go? The heat of spiritual love he cools down rapidly, till from Ephesus, losing its first love, it comes down, down as low as Laodicea, far worse than cold, for it is lukewarm, and ready to be spewed out as a loathsome thing. And just in proportion as it loses the fervour of love, so, too, does it lose the fervour of true prayer, which alone can bring it help. The empty form may indeed be carefully retained, for there are many asleep in Satan's arms who yet would not dare to abate a single unit of their full tale of the daily prayers. And as it is with love and prayer, so, too, is it with all the manifestations of spiritual life—the soul passes rapidly down through growing langour towards utter ruin. To man's eyes, indeed, the branch may still retain some of its green leaves upon it; but it seldom now strikes a blossom, and never, never beares a grape.

Meanwhile, as spiritual joy declines, the love of fleshy ease and worldly comfort increases, for there is nothing else to fill the empty heart. The cross, felt to be a burden, is quietly laid down, and the pilgrim spirit of self-denial is completely abandoned. The earthly aims, once rolled into the sepulchre of Jesus along with the load of old habits and thoughts, are now one by one resumed; for the poor heart cannot possibly be empty, and if Jesus does not make it happy, then it will turn to the world to feed its hunger. There is now nothing whatever to distinguish the professor from a decent man of the world, except only his profession; and yet, so far from suspecting his danger or mourning his declension, he is likely enough to be quite self-satisfied. He may be much troubled with the sins of his neighbours, but very little anxious about his own. Alas, poor sapless professor! Who shall wake thee?

Ah, beloved, this is not our time for slumber. We are not children of the night, but children of the Day. Why, then, should we sleep? We are Christ's watchmen, with His earnest and oft-repeated call to "watch" still ringing in our ears. Why, then, should we sleep? There is a rest remaining for us—a sweet repose prepared for the warriors of the Cross when our day of battle is over and the victory is won. Then why should we think of sleeping *now*? Sleep in the midst of battle! Sleep when he who plots our ruin never sleeps! Sleep when the *whole world is sleeping round us!* Nay, nay, let us rouse each other by our earnest exhortations, and press on to fight the good fight of faith, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

(Communicated by G. W. G., N. Z.)

"One cried to another."

(ISA. vi.)

"ONE cried to another."

I like to think of that. It was as if one of them cried, "Your strains are not lifted high enough; higher, brothers, higher!" And he cried across the intervening space to the seraphim opposite, and bade them rise to a higher note, till the chorus swelled and rose and broke. I have heard a bird in the spring morning cry to all the songsters of the glade till the whole woodland has rung again. Sometimes in a prayer meeting an earnest brother has shaken the very gates of heaven, and has stirred the whole meeting. That is what we want. "Exhorting one another" (Heb. x. 25).

He can respond.

Some day in the dim future I may be deprived altogether of reading, and then what riches I shall have in the store of Bible truth hid in my heart. Indeed, already, at twilight or in the helpless hours of sickness I have proved the blessedness of repeating the sweet words of God, with a sense of comfort and companionship which otherwise I should have missed. One of the great joys of heaven will surely be the remembrance of the precious words of Revelation, and the tracing out of their fulfilment.

For these reasons I believe that I cannot be too familiar with the Bible.

(Adapted).



The Welcome.



LOVE bade me welcome ! Yet my soul drew back,
Conscious of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lack'd anything ?

" A guest," said I, " unworthy to be here."
Love said, " Here you shall be."

" I, the unkind, ungrateful ? Saviour dear,
I cannot look on Thee."

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
" Who made the eyes but I ?"

" Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them : let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."

" And know you not," says Love, " Who bore the blame ?"
" My Lord, then I will serve ;"

" You must sit down," said Love, " and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

—George Herbert.

CONTRASTS.

UPON the placid waters of a lake, everything which is highest in reality is lowest in reflection. The higher the trees, the lower their shadow. That is a picture of the world to come: what is highest in this world is lowest in the other, and what is highest in that world is lowest in this.

PATTERN, PLACE, AND PATHWAY.

THE blessed Lord is the pattern of our place before the Father, and of our pathway through the world.

Luke iii. supplies the first:—The opened heavens. The sealing of the Spirit. The Father's voice owning Him a Son.

These things are ours through grace—and His redemption work. Enjoying them we are prepared for Luke iv:—Temptation. Wilderness. Satan.

On His part the victory was gained every time. First—by *dependence* upon God. . Second—by *devotedness* to God. Third—by *confidence* in God.

May we follow in His steps.

ALFRED MACE.

HIS LOVE.

THE oceans of His love are wide—
They touch the bounds of all the world;
And, round the farthest islands curled,
They bear His word on every tide.

But what hath greater joy for me
Is that my lesser harbour knows
The fulness of the tide that flows
In from His love's unfathomed sea.

F. W. H.

The Message.

The Double Honeycomb.

(By HAROLD P. BARKER.)



A FARMER in South Africa, whose bees had produced a honeycomb of enormous size, wished to find out, if possible, whether any of still larger dimensions had ever been known.

After making various inquiries, he wrote to the editor of a well-known American weekly paper, asking if he could give any information on the subject.

The editor replied as follows:—

“Among the odd questions which reached us this week is one from a correspondent in South Africa, who wants to know the size of the largest honeycomb that has ever been found in America.

“The largest of which we can find any authentic record is one which measured thirty feet in length. It was taken from a hollow tree in the southern part of Georgia.

“Two swarms of bees had a hand at making it. One worked from the top of the hollow and the other from the bottom, until they met in the middle.”

Many people have a notion that *salvation* is to be arrived at in much the same way as that honeycomb was produced, by some of the work being done from the top and the rest from the bottom.

“Christ has done His part,” they say, “and we have to do ours.”

Now, this sounds right and plausible enough. Thousands who would denounce the doctrine of "salvation by works," will nevertheless endorse the idea as stated above.

"Yes," they say, "we must do our part, and where we fail we must trust to Christ's merits to make up for our shortcomings."

Now, this is as different from the true gospel way of salvation as a dose of arsenic is from a draught of milk.

A cup of poison is no less deadly because it may look like clear water, and a false statement is no less dangerous and deceptive because it may bear the semblance of truth.

The object of this little paper is to show you that salvation cannot be obtained in the way that the double honeycomb was produced, but that *all the work must be done from the top.*

The fact is, that as sinners we are powerless to do *anything* towards our salvation. If Christ had done 999 parts, and left us just one out of a thousand to perform, it would be all up with us, for we should not be able to do even that. "*Without strength*" are the inspired words that describe our condition (Rom. v. 6). Sin has such a paralysing effect upon us that it leaves us "as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again" (2 Sam. xiv. 14).

Now, while the Bible teaches us that it is *impossible* for us to contribute anything in the shape of "doing" in the matter of our salvation, it also shows us that it is *unnecessary*.

The work upon which our eternal blessing depends is a *finished* work. Everything that had to be done has been completely done already.

It was for this that Jesus suffered on the cross. He saw our helpless and ruined condition. The

claims of justice forbade all hope of salvation except through the doing of a work which no mortal could ever accomplish. This work, the work of atonement, Jesus undertook. Before He yielded up His breath, He cried: "It is finished."

Reader, if the work is finished, what is there left for *you* to do but to enjoy the blessed result of it?

The result of it is this: God will freely pardon and eternally save every sinner who abandons all pretence of "doing," and stakes his confidence upon the work that has been done.

What keeps so many from salvation is their persistence in trying to "do their part," as they term it.

Perhaps someone exclaims, "Surely you are forgetting that we are bidden to *work out* our own salvation!"

No, I am not forgetting it. But, tell me, if you found a letter addressed to somebody else, would you feel justified in opening it and appropriating its contents? Would you consider that it lay with *you* to fulfil any demands which the letter made? Of course you would not.

Now, at Philippi there lived certain people who had believed the gospel. The once hard-hearted prison-warder was one, Lydia; a saleswoman from Asia Minor, was another. These, and many more, had been converted during the brief visit of Paul and Silas to their city.

Driven from their midst by persecution, the apostle wrote an affectionate letter to the sorrowing company of believers that he had left behind. In it he exhorts them to work out *their own salvation*, and reminds them that God was working in them with this end in view.

By what claim or title do *you*, an unsaved sinner, appropriate to yourself an exhortation to a company

of people who were saved, and who were rejoicing in the knowledge of it? How dare an unconverted person say, "*We* are told to work out our salvation" when the words were addressed to *saints*? How can we work out *our own* salvation until salvation is indeed our own? How can anybody *work out* unless *God works in*? Read the whole passage in Phil. ii., and you will see that it has nothing to do with the way a sinner obtains salvation.

The only work necessary for our salvation is a work that is infinitely too great for us to have any part in the doing of it.

On a certain line of railway a long freight train was found to be too heavy for the engine to draw up a steep gradient. A wire was sent to the nearest station for an additional engine. After a brief delay it arrived, and was attached to the train in the rear.

Puff! puff! went the engine in front; puff! puff! went the engine behind; but the long line of heavily-laden cars refused to move up the slope.

A little boy among the knot of people that were looking on from the window of a house near by looked up at his father.

"Papa," said he, "don't you think I should lend them my toy horse?"

You smile at the lad's childish folly. But not one whit less foolish are they who bring their vows and their resolutions, their prayers and their efforts, their sacrament-taking and their alms-giving as contributions to the work of their salvation. Such things can no more help in the matter than the boy's wooden horse could assist the engines in moving the train.

The sweet honeycomb of salvation is the result of the work of Christ alone. At Calvary He accomplished "by Himself" our salvation. Our sins were there.

Death was there. God's holy judgment was there. Christ endured all. The sting was His that the honey might be ours. We had no part in enduring the sting, and no part in producing the honey; no part in bearing the bitter pangs of judgment, and no part in purchasing the sweet joys of salvation. The work was Christ's from beginning to end.

Have you got down low before God, realizing and owning your exceeding helplessness and sinfulness? Have you looked at yourself with loathing? Have you exclaimed, with Job, "I am vile"?

If not, it is of little use to speak to you of the finished work of Christ. But if you have discovered your desperate need, if you feel full of sin within, and helpless to rid yourself of your burden, no news will be so sweet to you as the tidings of *the finished work of Christ*.

The honeycomb of salvation is the result of that finished work; and it is for you to taste and enjoy its sweetness.

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

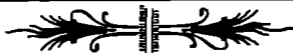


QUERY.

"Who will show us any Good."
(PSA. iv. 6).

ANSWER.

"Come and See."
(JHO. i. 39.)



the papers had a leading article upon it, but I observed that the word "if" was conspicuous by its absence. I did not find that any one of the papers said, "It is stated that there will be an eclipse, and if it comes off the public will have an opportunity of seeing an interesting phenomenon." No, the audacity with which the papers spoke was almost sublime. They told us to the very minute when it would begin and when it would leave off. The whole thing was taken for granted, and I will guarantee that not one of you said on that Saturday, "I wonder whether there will be an eclipse to-night." When it occurred no unbelief was removed from your mind, for none had existed; and, though I have no doubt that if some of you had been asked to explain the phenomenon you would have been rather perplexed, yet you had no scepticism concerning its certainty. You thoroughly believed the testimony of the astronomers. My text, slightly altered, would describe your experience: "By faith, being moved with curiosity concerning a thing not seen as yet, you prepared to witness it." You took your child to the back door, and said, "Now, if you look at the moon in five minutes' time you will see that something will appear to begin to eat it away." You did not say, "I should not be surprised if such a thing happened." Not at all; you were sure about the matter, although, perhaps, you could not explain the reason. The thing "not seen as yet" was visible to your faith.

Now, the whole of this chapter is a splendid argument concerning faith being the eye of the soul. Faith does for a man precisely what sight does: it makes things plain, palpable, real, indisputable. Faith does for reason just what the telescope does for the bodily eye. You look up to night at one of

the stars, and all that you can see is just a point of light, seemingly infinitely removed from you. But let the astronomer look through his telescope. That instrument does not add anything to the star, but it reveals what is already there. It brings close to hand that which is far off. It may be interesting to some of you to know that, positively, at the present time there is a published map of the planet Mars, in which you can see that there are seas and islands, and mountains covered with snow. A wondrous power is that of the telescope; it makes apparent that which is "not seen as yet." Here is our subject. Faith brings the distant near, for, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark."

Let us note *Noah's telescope*. He saw a hundred and twenty years ahead. What was it that he saw? "Things not seen as yet." "Behold," says God, "I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die." God said it; Noah believed it, and his faith became to him the equivalent of sight. Let us carry out the idea. He puts up his telescope to his eye, and he looks one hundred and twenty years ahead; and what a sight meets his view! He can see the black clouds rolling up, and they pass not away before the breeze. He can see the blackness constantly intensifying. He sees now the commencement of that awful downpour. He gazes through that telescope, and he sees a sight that chills the very marrow of his bones. He beholds the waves of the ocean tossing to and fro, and now they burst their bounds. As he watches, he sees the waters roaring over the earth, and death and desolation reigning everywhere. Looking through

the telescope of faith, he was moved with fear because he beheld "things not seen as yet."

Now, observe that Noah could see these things *only* by faith. Let him put the telescope down, and he sees no more than any other man. Apart from the simple words of God he had no ground whatever for anticipating a deluge. Morning after morning the sun rose as it only can rise in an eastern clime. And year after year passed on, and Noah had nothing but the word of God on which to ground his conviction. It might be said that he had a great deal to make it easy for him to doubt. Such a thing had never happened before. The world was not as grey-headed then as it is to-night; but in Noah's day seventeen hundred years had rolled by, and there had never been a deluge or any sign of one; and he might have said, "Is it not preposterous to think that what never has happened will occur?" The very regularity in the operations of Nature might have suggested a doubt. Spring, summer, autumn, winter, followed one another then with just the same beautiful regularity that they succeed one another now. The tides rose and fell, just as they are doing upon our shores to-day; and it must have been a difficult thing to grasp the idea that a day would come when all this regularity would be broken up.

Methinks that if a doubt ever came into Noah's mind, he just took up the telescope and looked again at the "things not seen as yet." Yes, there they were. To the eye of faith the heavens were black, and the downpour had commenced, and the floods were rising. Faith was his telescope; and if any one had said to him, "Do you not think that, after all, you are mistaken?" he would have replied, "Do you think that I can doubt my own eyes?"

Now, what was the action produced in him by his looking through the telescope? You read it in my text. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, was *moved with fear.*" This proved the reality of the whole thing. Supposing Noah had not been moved with fear, and had pooh-poohed the idea of building an ark, and yet had said, "Oh, I believe everything that God says," I think, if I had been alive in those days, I should have said, "Now, Noah, I do not believe you." But Noah proved the reality of his faith by his actions.

When Noah looked through his telescope and saw the deluge coming, he did not hesitate; he did not cavil; he did not suggest to God some other method of deliverance. What did he do? Oh, I wish that I could lead some of you to do the same. He did just what God told him. He fell in with the divine plan, and accepted God's method of salvation.

And then Noah became a preacher of righteousness. Why? Because, believing the reality of what he had seen, he would have been something less than a man if he had not warned others. I know that the general idea is that men who preach do so because they could not get on at anything else. Now, as the Lord liveth, there are hundreds of men who can say before God that they only preach for the same reason that Noah preached. They have looked through the telescope, and they have seen that there is an impending judgment; they have seen that there is a doom hanging over a guilty world. And I put this to you, dear men: granted that you believed what I believe, would you not do what I am doing? If you honestly believed in your soul that there was a day of divine wrath coming, in which men who are out of Christ will be

condemned, would you not, out of love for your fellows, do precisely the same as Noah did ages back, and as many of us are attempting to do at the present time? Of course you would.

Noah was not very successful. He preached for one hundred and twenty years, and he was the means of the salvation of only seven people. He rang the bell of warning for a century, and only a handful of persons received his testimony. But O that God would give us such a handful! He was the means of the salvation of all his own family. If he did not win anybody else, he won those who were nearest and dearest to him. Have you ever noticed the order? The Lord said to him, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." And I read, "And Noah went in." Then the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth went in with him. Then Noah's wife followed him into the ark. And then I can imagine what an expression of gladness overspread Noah's face as his three daughters-in-law entered next; for mark, these women must have left their own relations in order to cast in their lot with their husbands in the ark.

It must have been a tremendous trial to the faith of Noah when the Lord said, "Come in," for at that moment there was no sign of the deluge. The day was, perhaps, as fine a day as ever God made. But Noah enters the ark, and his family go with him; the Lord shuts the door: and then what happens? They stopped a whole week in that ark before the deluge came. It does not require a very imaginative mind to conceive what a roar of laughter there must have been. I think I can hear the mob saying, "Look at the old fellow cooped up there. Does he see any deluge coming? What is the old man doing in that great ship built on dry land?"

I can imagine their calling out, "I say, Noah, do you feel your boat rocking much? Are you beginning to feel sea-sick yet?"

The man who takes God at His word looks very ridiculous in the eyes of worldlings. But ah, the seventh day passes by, then comes to pass that which Noah had seen by faith. The heavens are black; the sea forgets its bounds; the waters rise; the ark begins to move, and at last it floats upon the breast of the deep ocean. God has kept His word, but Noah, by faith, having been moved with fear of things not seen as yet, is a saved man.

Now, I want to *try to put the telescope to your eyes* for a few moments. "Things not seen as yet." There are a good many things not seen as yet, but you would see them directly if you would only use this telescope.

How many of you can see yourselves *as old men*? There is not a man among all who read this who can see himself as an old man without this telescope. Old age is a thing "not seen as yet"; but it is predicted in God's Word. Now you know no sickness and no pain. But put your eye to the glass. Do you see that man lying there on that bed? Do you hear how hard his breathing is? Do you see what big drops stand on his brow? You take him by the hand, and he tries to speak to you, but he cannot. And there in the corner of the room you hear the suppressed sobbing of the wife as she folds her little child to her breast. The dying man's breath gets heavier, and the doctor says, "There is nothing more that I can do." Do you know that man? Why, it is yourself, man! You are only looking through the telescope at one of the things not seen as yet.

Put the telescope to your eye and see the day

coming when the Lord in power will come to judge a guilty world, and the heavens shall be on a blaze, and the sign of the Son of Man shall be in the firmament. You say, "Well, I do not realize that." No, nor did the men and women in the days of Noah. Sinner, in all love I say that I should be less than a man, and utterly unworthy of a gathering like this, if I were not honest about this matter. Before God, I believe that there is a judgment coming upon a guilty world; and it is because I believe it that, like Noah, I want to warn you. Look through the telescope, man. Do you not see the rocks rending and the heavens melting? Can you not see the judgment of God being poured out?

Do you say, "What must I do to be saved?" I will tell you. There is one respect in which you are not to do what Noah did. Noah had to prepare an ark. You have not to do that. Thank God, that is all done. The ark was prepared in the great navy yard of God's sovereign grace. He has left the door wide open, and God says to each of you dear fellows to-night, "Come thou into the ark." It would not have been any good for Noah to walk all round the ark. No, he must come in. Suppose that Noah had said, as some of you may be saying, "Well, I will stand close by the door, with one foot in the ark and the other on the ground. I do not want to be pronounced on either side. I will wait until I see the deluge coming, and then I will just step in." He would have found that he was too late. No, God told Noah that he was to enter the ark a whole week before the deluge came. If any of you are found standing just outside, you will be as much lost as if you were a hundred miles off. The word is, "Come in." Ah, then, God is inside. It is not, "Go in." God Himself is in the ark, and

He says, "Come in unto Me." And what is faith? Faith is just taking God at His word, and stepping into the ark, Jesus Christ. As a poor guilty sinner—for that is what thou art—thou must accept God's plan of salvation. Do not hesitate, or cavil, or disbelieve.

Put the telescope to your eye once more. Turn it towards *Calvary*. Now look through it. How near is the distant cross! Dost thou see, hanging on that tree, in shame and woe, the Man, the God-Man? Gaze on Him. Behold Him marred and heart-broken. Look and look again. The sight ought to fill your eyes with tears, and make you say, "Lord, didst Thou bear all this for me? Didst thou die on Golgotha's cross for me? Art Thou my ark of safety? Then, Lord Jesus, as a sinner I come to Thee."

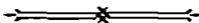
Oh, do not go and lose your own souls when you may be saved. Do not go out of this building and say, "Well, I do not believe a word of it." Do you want me to doubt my own eyes? I have looked through the telescope, and I have seen that which I have tried to tell you. I have seen a certain doom coming for the sinner. I have seen God's ark of salvation—a Christ Who died and a Christ Who lives.

A. G. B.

Gal. ii. 20—Christianity is a life beyond the jurisdiction of the law. The law is neither the ground of life for the sinner, nor the rule of life for the believer—Christ is both!



Lovely but Worthless.



Q RUSSIAN Empress, one severe winter, caused a wondrous building to be erected. It was a palace built of pure ice. It was a charming sight, glistening in the sun like pure silver and cut crystal and precious stones of every colour. Nevertheless, it was not of the slightest value, for the building, with all the labour expended upon it, would disappear in the next thaw. So perhaps thy pious work is also just such a cold, frozen water-work, which glitters in the eye of man, but has no continuance and no value for Eternity, and will melt into nothing because it is all made up of "dead works"—efforts after that life and joy which can alone be found in Christ, Whom God offers you as a free gift.

Acts. ix. 10.—The first impulse of a converted man is to do the will of God.



1 Pet. i. 5.—Christian assurance is not as men say, "the perseverance of the saints—saints *are kept.*"



All error is founded on a misuse of a truth against *the truth.*



Acts. i. 4.—Tarry at a promise till God meets you there. He always returns by way of His promises.



If our circumstances find us in God, we shall find God in our circumstances.



Attachment to Christ is the only secret of detachment from the world.

“Holden.”—“Open.”

(LUKE xxiv. 16-31).



HERE is much precious significance in these two words. The Lord is often present in our lives in things that we do not dream possess any significance. We are asking God about something which needs His mighty working, and the very instrument by which He is to work is by our side, perhaps for weeks and months and years all unrecognised, until suddenly, some day it grows luminous and glorious with the very presence of the Lord, and becomes the mighty instrument of His victorious working.

He loves to show His hand through the unexpected. Often He keeps us from seeing His way until just before He opens it, and then, immediately that it is unfolded, we find that He was walking by our side in the very thing, long before we even suspected its meaning.

A. B. S.



The Morning.

“Come up in the morning . . . and present thyself unto me in the top of the mount.”—Ex. xxxiv. 2.

HE *morning* is the time fixed for my meeting the Lord. This very word *morning* is as a cluster of rich grapes. Let me crush them and drink the sacred wine.

In the morning I am at my best in strength and hope; I have not to climb in my weakness. In the night I have buried yesterday's fatigue; but in the morning I take a new lease of energy.

Sweet morning! There is hope in its music.

Blessed is the day whose morning is sanctified! Successful is the day whose first victory was won in prayer! Holy is the day whose dawn finds thee on the top of the mount! Health is established in the morning. Wealth is won in the morning. The light is brightest in the morning. "Wake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early."

Oh ye who sigh and languish, and mourn your lack of power,
Commune ye with your Saviour in the still morning hour.
To fruitfulness and blessing there is no "royal road":
The power for holy living is intercourse with God.

Broken Communion.

TELL me where you lost the company of Christ, and I will tell you the most likely place to find Him. Have you lost Christ in the closet by restraining prayer? Then it is there you must seek and find Him. Did you lose Christ by sin? You will find Him in no other way than by the giving up of the sin, and seeking by the Holy Spirit to mortify the member in which the lust doth dwell. Did you lose Christ by neglecting the Scriptures? You must find Him in the Scriptures. It is a true proverb, "Look for a thing where you dropped it; it is there." So look for Christ where you lost Him, for He has not gone away. S.

1 Cor. iv. 3, 4—Neither the censures nor the praise of man need move us. We report to head-quarters, and subordinates' estimate need be nothing to us.



Silently and imperceptibly as we wake or sleep, we grow and wax strong, we grow and wax weak, and at last some crisis shows what we have become.

The Old Penknife of Unbelief.



THE following bit of blatant infidelity and destructive criticism, uttered within the pale of the Christian profession, we cull from a well-known London newspaper—*The Daily Mail*:—

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Canon Cheyne, the distinguished author of the "Encyclopædia Biblica," addressed the Churchmen's Union at Westminster yesterday on the "discovery of new facts and justification of a more searching Biblical criticism."

Contending for a free and untrammelled criticism in the cause of progress, Canon Cheyne held that the national Church was not merely a hospital for the morally sick, but a union of men devoted to the highest ideals, and to historic truth. He said it could be easily shown that some of the narratives in the Old Testament were coloured by Oriental mythology. The earlier chapters of Genesis containing the cosmogony and the deluge, and such stories as Jonah in the big fish, were semi-mythical and Oriental in origin, showing the influence of Babylonia. Certain elements in the Bible were borrowed from a culture older and richer than the Jewish.

"I have no intention of giving any shock," said Canon Cheyne, in touching upon the virgin birth of the Redeemer. But he claimed that the new facts brought to light showed that the Jewish narrator had derived it from a non-Jewish source, and that was the mythology of Babylonia and Egypt. The use of the word "Virgin" arose out of a misunderstanding of the meaning of the original word, which referred to the Divine generation of certain favoured persons. As a historian, he could not refuse to recognise the possibility of this origin of the story.

After showing how many names of people and places in the Old Testament were wrong, he said there were two great works remaining to be done. One was to find out what meanings the last editors of the Old Testament put upon the books when they had suffered much corruption; the other was to complete an improved textual criticism.

The above extract, to which might be added many others, will serve to show the terrible down-grade trend of the theological teaching of these last days,

and also how the old penknife of unbelief still works (Jer. xxxvi. 23). The words with which we have most reluctantly defiled our pages are not those of an avowed blasphemer, but the words of a profound Biblical scholar, an eminent Churchman, and a recognised moral and doctrinal guide and teacher. Moreover, he is the editor of one of the most popular religious works of the present generation, which has done more than all the infidel writings to sap the basis of "the faith of God's elect"—the Bible.

Yet this man, and scores of others like him who would fain discover the origin of the Holy Scriptures in Babylonish mythology,* are tolerated within the precincts of the so-called National Church, and thus the leaven works. Yes, and it will work—heaving and heaving until, after the true Church of God has gone, nothing of the Christian religion remains on earth except its profession—a fermenting mass of corruption, a satanic counterfeit of the truth, a cage of every unclean bird (see Revelation *passim*.)

But we want to impress upon the thoughtful Christian reader that the spirit of Higher Criticism is not now confined to the lecture halls of the academy, but, like its author, "the prince of the power of the air," it permeates and pollutes the very atmosphere of Christendom. It is the united witness of all who ought to know, that the Bible is not revered now as it was in the days of our forefathers. Satan did not assail it seventy years ago as he does at this moment, because it was not circulated anything like so widely then as it is now. There is not a doubt but that the special, present day attack of the arch-fiend is upon this eternal and uncompromising witness for God, and, also, that he assails it through

*For a trenchant answer to this theory see *Bible or Babylon?*, by E. L. Bevir. (Geo. Morrish, London.)

its professed but traitorous friends who try to destroy it with their puny penknives, and thus get rid of it. When Christ was here, Satan aimed at *Him*: now He has gone the enemy strikes at and seeks to destroy *the Book* which contains the only perfect transcript of the Divine Logos. He appraises and cries up "the historic Christ," but the only reliable expression of what Christ was and is he hates, and tries to cut it to pieces. A "Christo-piety" he commends, but a "Biblio-piety" he discounts, well knowing that if the one is not learnt from the other it is false. Ah, yes, and it is a false Christ which he will eventually get man to accept (2 Thess. ii.).

Satan would fain turn us from what is divine to what is human, and induce us to look for the Word of God in the Church rather than in the Scriptures. That the mind of God, as set forth in Christ, *should* be livingly exemplified in the Church is most true: that it *is not* thus exemplified is equally evident! The Church at large is apostate, as, indeed, God declared it would become. Alas! it is a blurred and blotted epistle of the great Original, and woe betide any who turn to it for sound doctrine.

That every company of saints and every individual believer should seek to live Christ according to the grace given to them, we heartily insist on. A saintly life is a Bible which the world cannot gainsay, yet, being human, it must be faulty; and, further, only the whole Church can set forth the Christ, and this cannot be till she is perfected in glory! Hence, till then it is evident that from the "living oracles" alone the divine mind can be perfectly communicated by the Spirit. To separate the teaching of the Spirit from the teaching of the Scriptures, or to make the latter bend and twist to what is supposed to be the former, is to open the door

to "Swedenborgism," "Theosophy," "Dowieism," and all the imaginations of "mysticism." The mystic evolves something out of his own inner consciousness, which he supposes is taught to him by the Spirit. Then making the Bible a mere check, he proves his theory from it. Every bit of wrong doctrine can be proved in this fashion. God forbid that we should depreciate "divine intuition," or those sweet heart whispers of His love which give us light and cheer in our little every-day circumstances. All we press is that when it comes to a question of intelligently apprehending the mind of God as given in the inspired Word, we must get it *from* the Book which contains it. J. N. D. once said: "Scripture should not be simply a *check* upon our thoughts, but the *source* of them."

"But," objects unbelief, still hacking away with his old but freshly-ground penknife, "our faith must rest on the living Person of Christ, not on a mere statement of Scripture."* I reply, "How can I have faith in the former apart from the latter, and *vice versa*?" In Revelation, the Person and the Word of Christ are one—they go together, and my soul rests on both, or on neither! If Scripture which reveals Christ is untrustworthy, how can I know that Christ Whom it reveals is trustworthy? Alas, there may be a mere head belief in a statement of Scripture, as there may be a mere head belief in the person of Christ, but our wisdom in both cases is to remedy the belief, not to belittle its object. "Give me a bit

*Vide, The Bross Lectures for 1904 on "The Canon and Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures," by Marcus Dods, D.D., New Testament exegetic of the United Free Church of Scotland, and Professor of New Testament Theology, New College, Edinburgh. The purport of his argument is that our faith does not rest on "fallible Scripture," but on an "infallible Christ!" Dr. Dods assures us "that our Salvation rests upon a living Person, Whom we can know and trust if the Gospels are no more trustworthy than Plutarch or Tacitus, or any ordinary history or biography."

of the naked Word to die on," said the dying Dr. Chalmers. Thank God for every bit of the naked Word which forms the sure foothold of faith both in life and death.

"Every scripture is God-breathed." If a person breathes a word into my ear, that word must be the word of the one who breathes it! Thus every scripture is God's word because "every scripture is God-breathed!" (*Theopneustos*.) This explains the hidden and mysterious power of the Book which through the changing centuries, and often apart from human teaching, has crept into countries and homes, and, though hated and proscribed, has made its voice heard in the conscience—renewing hearts and transfiguring lives.

Verbal and some few textual errors of copyists and translators may be found in our English Bible, as they are found in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament from which the Lord and His Apostles quoted; but this does not disprove the inspiration of the original terms; it only shows how necessary it is to have a correct translation of them. However, in very few instances is the meaning of a passage at all doubtful as far as its words are concerned, and even then its true meaning can be gathered from other scriptures, for God's Word is not, as some think, a bag of shavings, but a divine mosaic, the various parts of which exactly fit one another. Scripture expounds scripture, and so a defective translation or interpretation of a Bible-text soon betrays itself to the Spirit-taught man (1 Cor. ii. 15), by showing that it is out of gear with the whole plan of God's truth.

S. J. B. C.



“Living Water.”



BE not like sacred wells—green mossed and deep
 As ever summer saw,
 Whose cooling waters are both free and sweet,
 Yet men must come to draw :
 Rest not in selfish ease ; be not content
 When others ask, to give,
 Keep not thy wealth of blessings thus unspent,
 Nor self-contained thus live.

But be like those springs which bubbling burst
 To follow dusty ways,
 Which run with offered cup to quench his thirst
 Where the tired traveller strays ;
 That never ask the meadows if they want
 What is their joy to give :
 Unasked, their life to other lives they grant ;
 So self-bestowed they live !

For God supplies all like the ocean wide,
 Wherein all waters fall,
 Which girdles the broad earth, and draws the tide,
 Feeding and bearing all,
 Which broods the mists which sends the clouds,
 Which takes again to give. [abroad,
 Give, thus, as gives the loving heart of God,
 And thus for others live.

(Adapted by the Editor.)



Gospel Missions with and without the Bible.

The following is abridged from an interesting French pamphlet just issued :—*

WITHOUT THE BIBLE—CHINA.

IN the seventh century, the Nestorians founded a successful and flourishing work in China. Favoured by the Emperor, many Christian churches were founded, some of which still existed when Marco Polo visited China in the thirteenth century. But although we are told that "they brought with them, in Syriac, the true Scriptures, the Sacred Books, and that they were translated into Chinese under the roof of the Imperial Library," they cannot have taken pains to spread the translation, of which nothing more is known. The Nestorian churches in China, Dr. Martin tells us, "disappeared like a river in the desert, leaving nothing but a stone to tell of their existence"—the famous Nestorian tablet. Again, in the thirteenth century, "missionaries from Rome came by land to Peking, and met with some success; but their mission was discontinued, and left no trace behind."

JAPAN.

In 1549, Francis Xavier arrived in Japan, burning with zeal to spread the Gospel as he understood it. At one time the Jesuit Mission founded by him numbered 600,000 converts. Yet when persecution came in 1635, it was annihilated, except for a few thousand Japanese in the neighbourhood of Nagasaki, who claimed to be Catholics when toleration was again proclaimed, less than forty years ago.

*"La Bible dans le Monde, et le Principal Instrument de sa Diffusion"
(Bible Society Depot, 58 Rue de Clichy, Paris. 2fr. 50c., post free).

THE CONGO.

The Portuguese founded a mission on the Congo in 1491, which was attended with great apparent success. A native Christian monarchy was founded, of which we read that "great cathedrals lifted their spires towards heaven, the African sun shone on sumptuous episcopal ornaments in the processions which marched through the streets of the capital, and above their ranks floated standards of white and gold, blessed by the Pope." One of these standards, still treasured by the present titular king of the Congo, "a few crucifixes, some pictures of saints regarded as fetishes, and an empty title—that is all which remains of the Congo Mission so loudly vaunted by the Portuguese Dominicans and the Italian Franciscans of the sixteenth century." They had not given the people the Bible!

FORMOSA.

It has been the same with Protestant missions when they have neglected to give the people the Scriptures in their own tongue. The Dutch founded a mission in Formosa more than two centuries ago, and a few books of the New Testament were translated, but they do not seem to have been put into the hands of the people. When Dutch rule came to an end, and their missionaries had to leave, all traces of Christianity disappeared.

In British Columbia the work begun by a pious and devoted missionary appeared for some years to be remarkably successful. But he had neglected to translate the Scriptures, and the Church crumbled away, until restored by work based upon the rendering of the Scriptures into the various Indian dialects.

A CONTRAST—MADAGASCAR.

It is only needful to set against these Scriptureless missions, which disappeared under the storm of

persecution, the memorable example of the martyr church in Madagascar. The missionaries of the L.M.S., just before their banishment in 1835, had succeeded in printing the complete Bible—they had gained some precious months through the knowledge of soap-making possessed by an artisan missionary, and Queen Ranavolona's desire that this art should be taught to her people. When, twenty-six years afterwards, they were able to return, on the death of this cruel persecutor, they found that the few hundreds of native Christians whom they left had grown, notwithstanding many martyrdoms, to several thousands. The precious words of the Bible had been the secret oil cast upon the fire of Christian faith and love, to keep it burning brightly, in spite of the floods of persecution by which it had been sought to be extinguished.



Weak, yet Strong.

“When I am weak, then am I strong.”—2 Cor. xii.

HERE was a blacksmith, one blow of whose hand would fell the strongest antagonist in his neighbourhood—a strong, broad-shouldered, glorious man. He came home where his little child was ill. She held out her trembling, thin hands to him, and drew down his strong frame to her low level as she lay on the cot. What strength could not do, weakness did; what the strongest man in the neighbourhood could not do, the little child did. So your weakness can draw the strength of Christ down upon you to your very utmost need.

The Influence of True Ministry.

(From the French.)



THE principle of Hebrews xiii. 17, to which I would add 1 Thessalonians v. 12, 13, and 1 Corinthians xvi. 15, 16, is more important in our day than ever, because regular authority, established by the apostle and armed with his sanction, no longer exists. . . .

When the influence of true ministry is in exercise (and it is of great price), it is "gentle" as the relations of "a nurse with her child," as Paul said. And this is the more true now that spiritual power, acting in personal devotedness, is but little manifested as it was in the cases indicated by the apostle. This influence also supposes a workman made "manifest to God," and consequently to the consciences of those in the midst of whom he acts. I have never seen, when such a person acts, and his action flows from much communion with God, that this influence, this moral authority, has not been recognised. Moreover, such a workman is not, in this case, carried beyond what he has received from God, so that his ministry finds its sanction in hearts without any pressure.

There are, however, cases where things go on badly, and the workman is put to the test. In such a case he must keep before God, and act solely for Him; he must be at the service of Christ, and commit the result to Him alone. The Lord will always keep the upper hand, and in the end, if patience has her perfect work, the wisdom and justness of the judgment of the person who has acted will be made plain. Without having sought it, his authority will even be much increased, though perhaps he may, in appearance, have entirely lost it. But for this, one must know how to act with God. I speak of what happens, and of the principles which are connected with this question.

I find that in these times the principle of the above passages renders them of great price, because it is a

question of a kind of authority that no condition of the church can weaken. All other authority might be lost, this will but shine the more. It is exercised by the direct action of the Spirit of God in service. Besides, he who seeks this authority will not have it, while he who, in heart and by the love of Christ acting in him, makes himself servant of all, as Christ has done, will obtain it. To be servant of all is what Christ is essentially in grace, and it is what love is at all times.

In the present state of ruin and scattering of the church, this latter authority, which is acquired by service in love, is of great price; but it is evident that it is exercised in conditions of devoted service, of humility, and of a nearness to Christ, such as excludes all other influences, and makes us act solely from Him. J. N. D.



Self-Denial.

BEGIN by denying yourself, and by-and-by you forget yourself. The kindness which was at first just a duty becomes a pleasure and a joy. Self-denial becomes glorified into self-forgetfulness.

Rev. xiii. 8.—Carefully bear in mind that “from the foundation of the world” belongs not to “slain,” but to the writing of the names. John does not mean that the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world, but that “the names were not written” from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain (Rev. xvii. 8).



Heb. xiii.—Access to the holiest involves the place of ashes outside the camp. Christendom takes the middle ground of Judaism, seeking to deny the former and to escape the latter.

The Message.

Eternity.

(ISAIAH lvii. 15.)



HIGH and tremendous is my theme. I asked the question of my God; yea, I cried unto Him with tears, "Lord, what shall I preach about?" The answer that came back thrilled my soul: it was, "ETERNITY."

Yes, God commands you to listen to eternity as for eternity. There is something so majestic in the very word that it needs no apology for being introduced, and drowns all opposition. *Eternity!* Before that word let all minor subjects bow and for a season disappear. *Eternity!* Let its never-ending cycles absorb our every thought and banish things of time. But how shall I speak to you upon such a subject? Where shall I begin? It has no commencement. Where shall I leave off? It has no end. How shall I encircle it in language? It has no frontiers. *Eternity!* It is a mountain that has neither base nor summit; it is a chain that hath no ends. *Eternity!* Launched upon this subject I feel as one in a tiny skiff, without a sail, an oar, a rudder, floating upon an ocean that has no shore, no bottom, no wave, and no tide. Vast though the subject is, its importance is vaster far. Let the solitary note of this warning bell arrest intense attention.

What is ETERNITY ?

Perhaps the best definition or description is that given by the mighty Puritan, Charnock, in his work on the attributes of God. "Eternity," saith he, "is a perpetual duration which has neither beginning nor end. Time hath both. Those things, we say, are in time that have beginning, grow up by degrees, have succession of parts. Eternity is contrary to time, and is therefore a permanent and immutable state, without any variation. It comprehends itself all years, all ages, all periods of ages. It never begins ! It endures after every duration of time, and never ceaseth. It doth as much outrun time as it went before the beginning of it." Oh, stupendous thought, Eternity is vast enough for God to live in ! Like Him, it ever was, is, and ever shall be. In trying to realize and define this one word, the mind reels, imagination travels hopelessly with weary wing, all comparisons fall infinitely short, all illustrations break down upon the threshold. Heap metaphor upon metaphor, and you find yourself yet within time and Eternity untouched.

Yet it is a strange but sad fact that no subject is less thought about and more ignored than the boundless one of Eternity. To the many Eternity is still more the dream than the reality. This may be accounted for by the fact that the things of time surround us, press upon us, trouble us, and force themselves in a thousand ways upon our notice, while the things of Eternity, though not less real, have fewer earthly reminders, and more quietly wait for recognition. It is only great grace that can make the future as real to man as the present. A small thing near appears larger than a great thing at a remote distance. A shilling held close to the eye is sufficient to more than cover the circum-

ference of the sun. But although we may thus account for the existence of the fact, its marvel is in no way diminished.

By the masses

Eternity is a tabooed subject,

and polite society refrains from mentioning it. It is as harsh and discordant a note to them as Jonah's cry of "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," must have been to the gay revellers who that night were making merry. It accorded ill with the clatter of their goblets, and was a jarring note in their songs. Eternity! Shut the door in its face. It makes a bad match with footlights and ballet dancers and ball-dresses.

See the man in his office, intent on making money. When a youth, he always said he would die rich, and he bids fair to keep his word. For years he has never allowed feelings to cross his path, and now they seldom trouble him at all. £ s. d. has been the trinity he has worshipped for half a lifetime, particularly the £, and such worship soon makes the soul as cold and hard as the coin he handles. The world calls him a good business man, a few widows term him "next door to a robber," and about a score of orphans curse his name. But what does that matter to him? The law was on his side if justice was on the other. Go into that office, put your hand upon his shoulder, and, if you dare, say, "Friend, I have come to speak to you about Eternity." Slam goes the ledger, open is thrown the office door, and he tells you to take Eternity to another market, for he has enough to do to think about time. This is no overdrawn picture; the original is to be found in plenty of houses of business in every great city.

Do you see yon gay-looking young man? He abhors with all his heart the close-fisted, hard-hearted character I have described. His character is the very reverse. "Gaiety, gaiety," is his god. "The world was made for enjoyment" is his creed. Go to him as he stands laughing under the lights of that music-hall. Just

whisper in his ear, "Eternity."

Ah, how he starts, as if an adder had stung him! Eternity! Away with it! It makes the gilding look paltry; the lamps seem to burn less brightly. For a moment, under the magic power of that word, the dancers seem dancing "the dance of death" upon the edge of hell. "Eternity!" says he, "What could have put that nightmare into my head? It is all nonsense." And he turns upon his heel and drowns the thought in deeper dissipation.

Whether it be ignored or not, its importance remains the same. You and I must deal with it, whether we will or no. After all cavilling and shirking, the stupendous fact remains the same. There is an eternity, and we have to live it. Oh, if banishing it from the thoughts removed it as a fact, there might be some wisdom in the world's action; but what words can describe the worse than Bedlam madness to ignore that which only quietly waits to prove itself?

Methinks I see a young man dying who all his life "has left Eternity to look after itself," as he used to say. Time with him is ebbing fast. Death stands by the hour-glass with outstretched hand, watching the few last grains of sand as they run away. The last comes. It falls through. With it goes the soul. Time to him is over—a simple thing of the past to be remembered. Eternity silently

receives the spirit. Hark! did you hear that cry, "O Eternity, release me! I never believed in thee, never thought of thee, banished thee from all my reckonings and conversation. Let me go this once, and all shall be changed"? Then from the vast abyss comes the answer: "Thou shouldst have thought of this before; 'tis now too late: thou art mine." O friends, he of all fools is the greatest fool who ignores a fact he must at last acknowledge. Laugh at Eternity, but you laugh not away its reality. Turn your face from it, and it will but leap upon your back. Say it is an unpleasant subject to think about—it will be a more unpleasant thing to endure. Let this thought be branded upon the minds of all:

We must meet Eternity.

In Eternity there will be some marvellous revelations. Hidden things will there be disclosed and secret things made known. To the ungodly, how terrifying the thought! Ah, sirs, there shall be some revelations made that shall burn like molten brass! What will the smooth-tongued religionist do when the secrets of his *true* life are disclosed? Where shall he hide his head as before the open scoffers it is proved he was as vile as they, only veneered over with a profession of godliness? Eternity will soon rip the veneer off, and "Hast thou become as one of us?" ring in his ears.

What revelations will be in store for the licentious debauchee as those crowd around him, who, although unknown to him on earth, were ruined by his example, and curse him for it in Eternity! What will be the feelings of the gay libertine as he meets those who were started on a path of shame and sin through his seduction and who hiss in his ear that they trace

their damnation to the threshold of his house. The theme is too sad to be pursued.

But remember that the nature of your Eternity will be decided in the light and love of the Cross. It is not the number or the heinousness of your sins that will condemn to hell, nor the beauty or strictness of your morality that will bring to heaven. Eternity will be decided by your relation to a crucified Jesus. Reject Him, and you are lost, let your morality be ever so high. Accept Him, and you are saved, though your sins have been black as sin itself.

"What have we to do with Thee, Jesus?" said the demoniacs. Ah, poor maniacs, they had more to do with Him than ever they imagined. He was their only hope, although they knew it not. The language of the sinner is ever the same.

"What have I to do with a crucified Christ?" he boldly asks. I answer, "Everything."

Eternity depends on what you do with Christ.

Heaven if you trust Him, hell for ever if you die rejecting Him. Oh, what tremendous importance does this give to the story of the Cross! Mark the man as he listens to it. Alas! how unmoved does he appear! Would to God he could but see the interest displayed by others who know the awful issue at stake! Heaven watches him with anxious eye. Did but a tear roll down his cheek; did but the publican's prayer break forth from his lips; did but his heart whisper, "Blessed Jesus, I take Thee as *my* Saviour";—all the angelic hosts would be jubilant with song. Hell watches him also, prompts pride, unbelief, and scorn. See, he turns upon his heel, and mutters, "What have I to do with Thee?" Ah! listen to that fiendish shout as hell prepares itself to receive the soul. "Lost! Lost! Lost!"

peals through the pit.

Friends, as it is a solemn fact that your eternity will be decided by your acceptance or rejection of Calvary's atonement, I ask you—Which shall it be? There are separations at the Cross, and divergence of paths from this moment. The history of the two dying thieves is repeated. Ah, if you forget every other word, if you make the words I have written the subject of your pleasantry and laughter, remember this—you are playing with your Eternity when you trifle with the love of God.

Eternity still weighs upon my spirit, and says, "Have you no more arguments to plead, no more invites and entreaties? Try once more, and for the sake of my never-ending ages let them not go just yet." But what can I say? If Eternity arouse you not, how can I hope to say anything about it that can arrest you? Yet stay! I have one more arrow left in the quiver. God guide its flight. What would not the lost give if they had *your opportunity*?

If it be not too bold a flight of imagination, conceive for a moment of one more opportunity of hearing the gospel being granted to the lost in hell. The bolts of the prison-house are drawn, and swift they fly to hear the message. Eternity I need not speak about; they have already begun to know its meaning. The hope of salvation is what, with an anxiety intensified by a knowledge of hell, they long to hear. But this can never be. The lost have heard the last invite and warning they ever will. Opportunities of grace are for ever over.

The invitation is yours, the warning is yours, the opportunity is yours. What will you do with it—despise it? Then may God have mercy on you, for surely one drop of gall in the cup of perdition

will be the remembrance of this neglected opportunity. I can say nothing more.

O Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!

thou palace of the saved, thou prison-house of the lost! I have spoken to them about thee, now speak unto them thyself. Let thy voice be heard after mine is silenced. When night falls and sleep steals over the eyelids of the sinner, even then speak to him in his dreams. Wake him with a start, and make him in the midnight hour hear thy solemn voice. Speak to every heart until ticking clock and chiming hour shall only seem to say, "Eternity—Eternity." Toll, toll thy solemn bell until each one has fled to Christ and found salvation there. Amen.

A. G. B.

"We Believe and are Sure."



A MAN of subtle reasoning asked
A peasant if he knew,—

"Where is the internal evidence
That proves the Bible true?"

The terms of disputative art

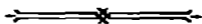
Had never reached his ear;

He laid his hand upon his heart,

And simply answered, "HERE."

John v. 27.—God's vindication of the outraged rights of the Son of Man is, that He has "committed all judgment" to Him in that very character.

The Catacombs.



THE first general persecution of the Church took place in the year A. D. 52, when the monster, Nero, accused of the burning of Rome, laid the blame upon the Christians, who were given up to indescribable tortures. They were sewn up in the skins of beasts and worried to death by dogs; were placed in sacks soaked in tar and set to burn in the parks, to give light by night; many had to fight with wild beasts to amuse the populace; some were crucified, and others burnt. From that time for the following two hundred and fifty years, the fires of persecution were always smouldering, but from time to time they broke out in terrible episodes of fire and blood. If the Tiber overflowed its banks, or the Nile did not rise, whenever there was plague, pestilence, or famine, at once the hue and cry was raised, especially by the Jews, who hated the Christians and desired to disassociate themselves from them, "Christians to the lions"—and at once they were arrested and brought before the justices that they might be done to death.

After Nero's death, there was a little cessation, and the second persecution under Domitian did not occur until the close of the first century, beneath which St. John was banished to Patmos. At the beginning of the second century Trajan assumed the imperial purple, and began to persecute the Church so violently that, Pliny tells us, the idol temples again became filled with worshippers. From Trajan, for nearly a hundred years, persecution was only sporadic, but it never entirely ceased. Under Antoninus Pius, Polycarp was burnt at the stake. Under

the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Justin Martyr was put to death in Rome (A.D. 168). Ten years after, the persecution at Lyons occurred, in which the aged Bishop Pothinus, the boy Ponticus, and the slave girl Blandina perished. The reigns of Severus Maximin, Decius, and Valerian were marked with sanguinary edicts and their terrible results, but the persecution of Diocletian exceeded all that had preceded. It seemed as though the devil, knowing that his time was short, had come down determined to make one supreme effort to stamp out the cause of Christ. From Gaul to Asia Minor, the sword of persecution swept to and fro. For many a long year, Rome ran red with blood. Bishop after bishop, elder after elder of the Church of Rome was arrested, exposed to cruel torture and killed, the mangled remains being borne down these crumbling stairs and deposited in some now forgotten niche. Diocletian raged like a wild beast. He razed to the ground the Christian buildings, destroyed every Bible he could lay his hands upon, and ruthlessly massacred not only the leaders, but immense numbers of the rank and file. Men whose only crime was their religion were scourged until the flesh hung in shreds: they were bound in chains of red-hot iron, and roasted over fires so slow that they lingered for hours, and even days, in mortal agony; in some cases the flesh was scraped from the bones with jagged shells, or lacerated with burning pincers; in others, molten metal was applied to the naked body till it became one terrible wound. Such were the sufferings that spread through the whole world, but were specially concentrated at Rome.

These sufferings, however, failed of their object. They were all endured with uncomplaining patience and exultant joy. Indeed, such crowds pressed

forward to suffer that the leaders of the Church were obliged to protest against the voluntary sacrifice of life. Young boys and girls, old men and women, members of the highest classes of society, as well as the poor, were eager to follow in the steps of the martyrs of Christ; and that Christianity might not be extirpated by this voluntary surrender of Christians to martyrdom, the bishops and elders were obliged to entreat their flocks not to expose themselves wantonly to the persecutor. In these heroic days, when they "overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony," the disciples of Jesus, precluded from worshipping Him in the eye of the day, crept to the catacombs, the walls of which rang with Christian hymns, and participated in the administration of the Holy Supper—the hope and comfort of families that had been decimated, the inspiration of churches which had been bereaved.

What must it have been to be there, to have heard the voice of some teacher describing the risen Lord as the Resurrection and the Life, and reciting His words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." With what strange triumph they reminded each other that He had said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Me peace; be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." When we read of the innumerable multitudes which came out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, we respond with but a vague and vapid interest. But how such words must have thrilled the hearts of those who gathered around the reader as the torchlight cast its uncertain glimmer in those cryptic chambers.

Sometimes, especially after the days of Valerian, they were invaded by Roman soldiers led by traitors,

who, like Judas, had been bribed to betray the hiding places of the saints, arresting them, and carrying them off to trial. At other times, the soldiers, not daring to enter the vaults of death, blocked up the entrances and kept guard, so that hundreds perished from hunger, cold, and the need of everything. But those days were the best that the church has ever known. If it had not been for the constant pressure of these sufferings, the seed of God would never have been winnowed of its chaff, and prepared to be scattered in all furrows of the world. Satan obtained his desire to sift the Church like wheat, and the result was the elimination of many of those elements which showed themselves in days of prosperity as rank weeds do when the winter is passed and the warm sunshine revisits the earth. In this connection it is interesting to quote these words of Tertullian, the great Christian apologist (A.D. 200), who wrote during a respite from persecution. From his treatises we learn that some who professed Christ had so far forgotten their vows as to frequent the circus and theatre; the women and girls had apparently begun to vie with their heathen acquaintances in the costliness and splendour of their dress; an increasing laxity of morals was shown also in the tolerance of trades and occupations which would not have been suffered in earlier days; members were admitted to the Church who practised astrology, or worked in heathen temples and made idols. He reminds the Christians of his time that the hand of persecution was ready at any moment to seize them in its iron grip; and asks them how the ankles which have stepped so proudly will fare when they are squeezed into the gyve, and how the neck encircled with chains of pearls and emeralds will care to part to make room for the broad sword. These were very sugges-

tive questions, occurring as we have seen, in a time of comparative repose, and they reveal the insidious evils which would have impaired the witness of the Church unless the fires of persecution had kept it pure.

As to the inscriptions themselves. It need hardly be said that they are a striking contrast to those at Pompeii, which reveal the abominations of Roman society, and recall the charges of the great apostle (Romans i.). It is impossible to exaggerate the contrast between the purity, the white-robed chastity, and simplicity of the Christian Church of those centuries with the moral degradation to which the foremost races of that age had fallen through their godless superstitions. It is the contrast between light and darkness, between the river that makes glad the City of God, and some dismal, stagnant bog.

One of the most frequent symbols is that of the ship which stands for the Church, or human life, tossed on the waves, and being borne to its harbour. Very often we meet with the anchor, which grapples with the heavenly coast, and resists the drift of the tide. There are many representations of the vine, indicating the festive joy of the new life, or recalling the disciples' union with the Lord; and of the sheep, which is the natural emblem of the disciple. In this connection, it is interesting to notice that the Good Shepherd is depicted as carrying, not a lamb, but a kid, on His shoulder.

The hart panting for waterbrooks; the olive branch, the palm of victory; the cock, as emblem of watchfulness; the peacock and phoenix, as emblems of the resurrection, are frequent, but nowhere is there any portraiture attempted of the Saviour. The leaders of the Church, indeed, bade their Christian followers not to paint Christ, but to carry His eter-

nal image in their hearts. There are no representations of the dead Christ in the catacombs. To the early Christians He was always the living Christ, risen, triumphant, and most blessed forever. They loved to think of Him as having passed into the heavens, and standing before God as their living Representative Head. It seemed as though they never wearied in pondering His assurance, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

In the inscriptions of the catacombs there is nothing to support the Roman Catholic dogmas, of which there are indeed no traces during the early centuries. The first crucifix of which we can find any trace is due to the sixth century, and the realistic pictures of the crucifixion, to the ninth. There are no prayers to the saints, nor to the Virgin Mary, nor for the dead. There is no purgatory, no dull intermission between death and the glory, but the immediate transmission of the soul into the presence of God. The survivors speak of those who have departed from this world as having migrated, been called away by angels, borne into Eternity, broken the bonds of the body, rejoicing in the stars.

On every side, the doctrine of the resurrection is set forth by Jonah being brought from the depths of the ocean, and by Lazarus emerging from the depths of the earth. One of the favourite emblems is that of the three children walking in the fiery furnace in company with the Son of Man.

"We find in the catacombs," says Dean Stanley, "neither the cross of the fifth and sixth centuries, nor the crucifixion and cruxifixes of the twelfth, nor the tortures and martyrdoms of the fourteenth, nor the skeletons of the fifteenth, nor the cypresses and

death's heads of the eighteenth. Instead of these, we find symbols of beauty, hope, and peace."

Let those who have been inclined to suppose that the type of Christianity presented in the reproduction of medievalism, which meets us in High Anglican and Romish churches to-day, is the original form of Christian worship, come to these subterranean passages, and there behold the simplicity of the faith and worship of those who lived nearest to the times of our Lord and His apostles. Surely the evidence of the catacombs is even more conclusive than learned argument and dissertations. Could those whose dust lies in these humble vaults have beheld, in anticipation, the regal state of him who professed to sit upon the seat of the apostles, if they could have seen his tiara, his retinue, and his palaces, and witness the idolatrous homage given to him, as kings and peers, cardinals and priests come to kiss his foot, what would have been their thoughts?

In the catacombs there are no symptoms that such superstitions would ever find foothold in the Church of God; and though persecution would be a fearful price to pay, yet it were to be ardently desired if at such cost the whole Church of the present day might be emancipated into the purity and simplicity of its first days.

F. B. M.

"The mystery of God" (Rev. x. 7) is not Christ and the Church, but God allowing evil to go on in its present course with apparent impunity.

* * * * *

John xvi. 23.—Prayer must be based upon promise, but, thank God, His promises are always broader than our prayers! No fear of building inverted pyramids here, for Jesus Christ is the foundation.

Love Realised.

† SAY to you, I love my mother, I revere her memory. That love I had for her never started with me, it started with her. Let God love you into loving Him back again. Let the Cross be the lesson book from which you learn it. "The love of God shed abroad in our hearts," that is love *realised*. Our hearts are made responsive. Do not look into your heart, you will not see it there.

A man once said to me, "I am waiting for the blessing."

I said, "What is the blessing you are waiting for?"

"I am waiting for the love of God to be shed abroad in my heart," he replied.

I asked him for the passage, but he did not know. I took my Bible and showed him Rom. v. 5. He stopped reading at the end of the verse. I said, "Read on." "For when we were yet without strength God commendeth *His love toward us*." "That," said I, "is where you see it, not in yourself." When God speaks of His love, He points to Christ where the love can be seen, that it may be realised in us. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us" (1 John iv. 9). Look there and see it. If we are exhorted to love one another, we are shown where the love was manifested, that there may be a realization of it, and then there will be the exhibition of it.

That is as simple as daylight. Love was manifested *toward* us in order that it might be realised *in* us. And realised in us to be exhibited *by* us. We love up to God, and out to the brethren. We love the begotten ones, because we love Him Who begat them.

W. J.

Compass and Weathercock.



THE compass always points to the north. It is under the influence of a mysterious force, constant and unvarying in its operation. There is, however, an affinity between the needle and the magnetic current. The needle has been magnetised, and thus rendered susceptible to its mysterious power. An ordinary needle would not obey it.

Very different is the shifting fickle weathercock. This, too, is moved by external influences, but influences that are inconstant to a proverb. The magnetic force moving along the earth thrills the compass needle through all its being, and the needle is as constant as the everlasting impulse that controls it. The weathercock is only acted upon superficially, and records every change in the shifting winds.

The spiritual believer is like the needle, specially endowed, and under the power of a divine influence which turns him in one direction—to Christ. The worldling is a weathercock in the veering winds of changing opinion and circumstance. The man of the world can tell you how the wind blows; only the spiritual man can point to Christ. J. N. B.



If you would effectually help others in failure, you must be above the motives which sway them.



The Spirit and the Bride (the Church) say, "Come;" and so may the simplest believer: "let him that *heareth* say, 'Come.'"



Love always precedes holiness, which is the fruit of the love to which the heart has surrendered.

“To open their Eyes.”

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”—ACTS xxvi. 18.

THIS was the first thing which Paul in his life-work was commissioned to do, and it is also the *primary* thing which every rightly instructed gospel worker aims at doing. True, it is only God Who can open blind eyes, but in accomplishing His marvels of grace He deigns to use instruments. So, in enlightening those who are still blinded by “the god of this age” (2 Cor. iv.), the blessed God may use you and me—yes, though we be as worthless as a bit of clay (Jno. ix.), He may use us “to open their eyes.”

“The natural man”—man in his natural condition—is blind; and what makes his condition more hopeless is: he was “born blind.” He not only does not see, but he never saw! His state now is even more deplorable than was Israel's when the Lord came. Messiah's commission was “to give *recovery* of sight to the blind” (Luke iv.), which implies that the Jews had at one time spiritual eyesight. With the Gentiles, however, to whom Paul was sent, it was not a question of “recovery,” but of giving them something which they never before possessed! His work was “To *open* their eyes.”

Every sinner among men is born blind. He may have sight to the eyes of his head, but he has none to the eyes of his heart. Material things he can see, but as to spiritual realities, he is as blind as a mole. The mole can see well enough in its native darkness, underground, where it burrows and lives,

and where all its interests are found, but when it is brought out into the light of day it is unable to discern a thing! It can see in the dark, but not in the light. How like "the natural man!" If it be a question of temporal things connected with this lower sphere, he can cutely detect the "in" and "out," the "pro" and "con," the "why" and "wherefore" of a question; but as to heavenly and eternal verities, he is like a blind mole (1 Cor. i., ii.). Little use is it to present the gospel, which is "spiritually discerned," to one who is spiritually blind. Light cannot be seen by him who has no sight. He must first get his eyes open. Perhaps he thinks he can see: thousands do who are stone blind. Like some of old, they say: "We see," which only evidences how dark they are. Every true evangelist knows that often most of his time in preaching is spent in endeavouring to undeceive people by showing them that they are not what they think themselves to be—Christians. Hence he expounds, he expostulates, he entreats: labouring hard "to open their eyes." To do this he presses the utter ruin of man, the need of being "born anew," the righteousness of God, the perfection of Christ's work, the unimpeachable witness of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, and the terrors of death and judgment. Yea, he may use the law, and "use it lawfully" too, to show people how completely undone they are. In fine, he will leave no stone unturned to discover to them and to make them see and feel their deep, dark, dire need.

It has been said that preaching judgment to come is not preaching the gospel. Yet the gospel preacher who refrains from warning his hearers of the terrible end of all who reject the gospel is an unfaithful man, and very far from being clear of the

blood of the souls of his hearers (Acts xviii. 6 ; xx. 26).

To those who affect to be so full of grace that they cannot speak of judgment, I would ask : How many sinners from the time Christ and His apostles preached till now have had their eyes opened to see their need of the gospel by a glint of the glare of the everlasting burnings? That the soul-winner has something to do prior to unfolding the story of God's love, let Scripture prove. How much gospel did Peter preach when sheeting home to the Jew his crime in having slain his Messiah? Just a few words. How much gospel is found in Paul's memorable discourses in the Antiochian Synagogue (Acts xiii.) ; on Mar's Hill (Acts xvii.) ; and before the tribunal of the trembling profligate—Felix ; the learned rationalist—Porcius Festus ; and the religious professor—Agrippa (Acts xxiv., xxv., xxvi.) ? It can be all put in a nutshell. His words are mostly preparatory to the gospel, or else of an alarming, conscience-awakening character. Did he not know how to deliver his message? Verily he did. He knew how and where to begin, and how useless it was to reveal the remedy for man's need till man's eyes were opened to the fact of his need. He was profoundly convinced that the work of conviction must be effected in the soul ere it can discern its need of Christ, and accept the grace of a Saviour God ; and, further, that this work of conviction God often does by means of His testimony from human lips ! We learn the same thing, too, in the great gospel Epistle to the Romans. From chap. i. 16 to iii. 20 the apostle prepares the way for the reception of the gospel by setting himself to do the work which must take precedence of everything else—the work of opening men's eyes to their

lost condition, and to the fast-approaching "judgment of God" against all who "despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering."

We are living in a day of grace—a day when the sunshine of heaven's favor beams benignantly on all. Thus man often sins with a high hand, regarding the Supreme Being as a weak and indulgent parent, and scouting the idea of the great white throne, and the lake of fire. But some of us have had our eyes opened to *see beyond*, and, lo! upon the horizon of this present evil age, stained with the blood of God's Son, we detect heavy banks of ominous-looking clouds which betoken the coming storm. If, therefore, we are faithful to the poor, blinded, perishing souls around, we shall allow no false and sentimental delicacy to hinder us from warning men of the world's impending fate. The testimony of God tells of man's ruin, and also warns of a future judgment, and Paul affirms that this testimony is "*in harmony with*" the gospel (1 Tim. i. 9-11; Rom. ii. 16). Thus neither the preaching of man's need nor the declaration of coming wrath beclouds God's present attitude of grace toward men, but it rather enhances its glory by shewing how great is that grace which patiently waits to save sinners who are deserving of such a doom!

Friend, art thou one of that honored band of workers who "labour in the gospel"? If so, be wise to win souls, and to read thy heavenly commission in its divinely-given order. Thus, before thou dost attempt to "turn men from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins" and every blessing—thou wilt seek to be an instrument in the hands of the Great Oculist "to open their eyes."

S. J. B. C.

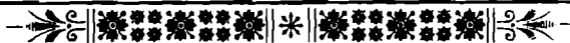
Stay upon God.

“Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.”—ISA. 1. 10.



“**Y**N fierce storms,” said an old seaman, we can do but one thing, there is only one way; we must put the ship in a certain position and keep her there.”

This, Christian, is what you must do. Sometimes, like Paul, you can see neither sun nor stars, and no small tempest lies on you; and then you can do but one thing; there is only one way. Reason cannot help you. Past experiences give you no light. Even prayer fetches no consolation. Only a single course is left. You must put your soul in one position and keep it there. You must stay upon the Lord; and, come what may—winds, waves, cross seas, thunder, lightning, frowning rocks, roaring breakers—no matter what, you must lash yourself to the helm, and hold fast your confidence in God’s faithfulness, and His everlasting love. R. F.



“The Great Unwashed.”



“**T**HE great unwashed!” Ugh! we know them from afar, and we are glad to increase the distance. But they are the counterpart of a still larger class who never spiritually wash to be clean—a generation that is not cleansed from their filthiness, and yet are pure in their own eyes. How repulsive such are to those made white by God’s ablutions! And yet, as the cleanly housewife will

stoop to the unpleasant work of removing defilement, or the surgeon will undertake a distasteful duty in order to relieve pain and promote cure, so the child of God will seek out the morally unclean in order that they may be washed from their foulness.

But the saint himself may be among the unwashed. Then he is not fit company for those who make regular use of God's means of daily cleansing, and if he himself is unconscious of this, they are not. Let the defiled one hasten to wash and be clean, so that he may not affect the rest injuriously by his presence. Then, when purified again, let him keep himself clean by constant recourse to the sprinkling (Num. xix.) and the laver.

J. N. B.



“As Unknown.”



† IN thy small nook still toil unknown,
 † Thy simple work unnoticed do—
 Unnoticed do it even though
 Some deeds less brave than thine have flown
 Where fame's proud trump is loudly blown.
 Work—still work on for Jesus' sake,
 Do what thou canst for hearts which ache,
 And He some day thy work will own.
 And when He counts His treasures o'er
 Upon Eternity's bright shore,
 It may be He will value more
 The fragrance of thy lily's bell,
 Shed richly in its hidden dell,
 Than stars whose praise the ages tell.

A Cup of Cold Water.

“Whosoever shall give one of these little ones a cup of cold water only . . . shall in no wise lose his reward.”

THERE could not well be a simpler act, a smaller service, than that; not one you would sooner do for those whom you do not like, or sooner ask from those who do not like you. Many a time as the disciples of the Lord walked the roads they must have stopped at the door of a stone hut, or rested by a village spring, and asked for a drink of water. And some mother turned at the words, caught the look in their earnest eyes, and set down her child to bring the cup; or some man, hailed at his plough across the field, pointed to the kid-skin bottle under the bush and bid them help themselves.

No one would deny it. Bread may be doubtful, but bubbling fountains, pouring rivers, shining lakes are cups so plentiful that few ever add to the prayer for bread: “Give us this day our daily water.” So the Lord chose a cup of cold water as His emblem of small service, when He wanted to say that not the slightest deed done in His name is lost.

Now it is hardly an exaggeration to say that two-thirds of all true service consist in cup offerings of water. Not an hour of life's journey but is rendered easier by their freshening or harder by their absence. Why? Because most of us are burden-bearers of one sort or another; because to most of us a large part of the journey is a dull and trivial trudge; because there is much dust upon the road, and it is load and dust and stretches of the common-place that make one thirsty. We crave the roadside recognitions, a hand-lift now and then to ease the burden's chafe, and now and then a word of sym-

pathy in the step-step-stepping that takes us through the dust. And this is all that most of us can wait to give, for we too are here on business. My brother, you cannot step my journey for me, cannot carry me on your back, cannot do me any great service; but it makes a deal of difference to me whether I do my part with or without these little helps which fellow-travellers can exchange. "I am busy, Johnnie, and can't help it," said the father, writing away, when the little fellow hurt his finger. "True, father, but you might say 'Oh!'" sobbed Johnnie. There's a Johnnie in tears inside of all of us upon occasions—a longing for a little sympathy and Christ-like help:—

"An arm of aid to the weak,
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind words so short to speak
But whose echo is endless,—
The world is wide, these things are small,
They may be nothing—but *they are all!*"

"A cup of cold water *only*." One must not forget, when handing it, that the cup is one thing, the water another. Tin dipper or silver goblet is all one, provided we are thirsty and the water good. So the cup I speak of need be no shining deed of service, need be no deed at all; it is far oftener only a word or the tone in a word, or the smile with a word. That word or tone or smile is the cup,—what is the *water*? Your heart's Christ-like sympathy. The fact that you are thinking a kind thought of me—that, yes, that is the refreshment. That is what sends me on the road with the coolness felt along the veins. It is the face and manner more than the hands which reach out the cup to me. The brusque manner of one friend, his tin cup, may be many times more welcome than the smooth manner—silver-plated goblet—of another; it holds purer sympathy.

The nod, with a gleam in the eyes and a wrinkle round them, may mean a deal more of heart's greeting than another's lifted hat. A "Good morning!" may be tendered so respectfully,—and you drop it at the next step as you drop a boy's handbill on the street, hardly conscious you have held it; or it may come tossed to you, but with something in the face behind the toss that really makes the next few moments of the morning full of holy joy. Listen to this story from Turgeneff's *Poems and Prose*:—

" 'I was walking in the street,—a beggar stopped me, a frail old man. His tearful eyes, blue lips, rough rags,—oh, how poverty had disfigured the unhappy creature! He stretched out to me his red, swollen, hand; he groaned and whimpered for alms. I felt in all my pockets. No purse, watch, or handkerchief did I find. I had left them all at home. The beggar waited, and his outstretched hand twitched and trembled slightly. Embarrassed and confused, I seized his hand and pressed it: 'Don't be vexed with me, brother! I have nothing with me, brother.' The beggar raised his blood-shot eyes to mine, his blue lips smiled, and he returned the pressure of my chilled fingers. 'Never mind, brother,' stammered he; 'thank you for *this*,—*this* is a gift, brother.'


" Whosoever shall give one of these little ones a cup of cold water only . . . shall in no wise lose his reward." It is these "little ones" that gives Jesus' saying its point. Where three or four are gathered together in any relation of life whatever, there is almost sure to be a "little one" with reference to the other; one not so bright as they, not so winsome, not so able to hold his own. When but two meet, one is apt to be a little, the other a big one. And though, quite possibly, to change the circumstances


of the meeting is to change the sizes, so that the little one becomes the big, and the big one little, yet that still shows that two equals seldom meet. We can hardly talk together five minutes without finding it full in our way to say something that may hurt, and something that may help or please.

Yet remember that only souls wonted to self-forgetfulness—souls full of the sweetness of Christ's love can brim over when love is needed. The little thing that makes a moment great is never all done *at the moment*. A man will sometimes on an instant rise to the death-height of self-forgetting; for a stranger's sake he leaps into the sea to save, or he leaps before a rushing engine. But no man reaches even the *cup's* height for another, unless *the years behind have made him ready*. "God's tender mercy is the name in heaven for what we call on earth—"a drink of water." Many dear things full of beauty and grace He hands to His little ones *by each other*. Sometimes, how *can* He reach them else? And sometimes, whom can He use but you and me!

(Adapted.)

My Desire.





 A WIDER vision of the mind;

 A spirit bright with sun;

 A temper like the fragrant wind,

 Chilling and grieving none;

 A quickened heart to know God's will—

 To wait, or forth to run.

S. C.



The Message.

“The Light of Life.”

YOU have often seen a night without moon or stars, when the awful darkness has almost made your soul afraid. A night made terrible by moaning winds, and driving clouds; when the swaying branches of the trees have seemed like arms tossing in despair, and the voice of the breeze has been like the wailing of the lost. The sinner's night is far worse than that. Would to God that we could see your arms raised in despair this evening, and hear your voice in the shadows, crying for salvation.

I have seen upon the sea the curtain of darkness slowly drawn across the sky, until it was all black above, and all that could be seen amid the heaving world of waters was faint gleams of light from the breaking waves. And what do we see upon the sea of life? The curtain of God's wrath against sin is being drawn across the skies of time; darkness lies upon the face of the deep of human sin. Are there any gleams of light? The breaking waves of man's ambition, and fame of glory, give out a pitiful gleam, but it passes when the wave is gone. So man's best efforts in this world of sin are nothing more than the foam of the sea, or the froth of troubled waters.

If man's life is to be illumined, it must be from above. If man is to be saved, he must be saved by

God. The only light that can shine upon the tossing waters of the sea of life, must be the light of God's mercy in Christ.

We read of an awful darkness in Egypt. For three days darkness such as might be felt lay upon the land; men and women could not see each other all through that awful time, and they did not rise from the place where they were. It was horrible. God scattered that darkness, and gave them light again. And I do not hesitate to say that the darkness in which a sinner sits is worse than that; and the shadow of death that hangs over your unrepentant head has a more terrible significance. You cannot rise from the place where you are, and you can only do what the Egyptians did—cry to God. Then cry, men and women, cry to the God of heaven; cry, you who sit in darkness, cry to the God of light.

A miner was walking in a mine with a lighted candle in his hand. A drop of water fell from above upon the candle and put it out. The mine was a very dangerous one; the next step might be death. The darkness was fearful; what should he do? The agony of soul he passed through in those awful moments nearly turned his brain. What a picture of the sinner! of one who has been walking in the light of the sparks of his own kindling, as this man was with his candle. Suddenly conviction of sin comes, and the sinner finds himself in awful darkness, as this man in the mine was. Then comes a trembling in the soul, and the cry from the whitening lips: "I feel death around me in the darkness; what shall I do? I may die at any moment, and then I shall be lost for ever. Oh, help me, God unseen; save me, for I cannot save myself."

The one I have been speaking of remained in this state of alarm for some time. At last he thought

Which is Yours ?



IT was a palatial home, furnished with all the luxury and beauty that gold and silver could buy. But on that bright morning sorrow had entered there. The angels of life and death were struggling in the breast of the mother. She had lived a formal life in the professing church, and an active one in the world. She had become entangled in the lighter amusements and pleasures of life, and had been overcome thereby. But the end was near. Grieving friends watched and waited as the waves of fever and pain surged to and fro. She had spoken her last words to her companion and daughters, and she had now turned to her only boy and said: "Son, there is one thing that I leave to you: it is my Bible."

"Thank you, dear mother," were all the words he could utter.

Soon the dark angel won the victory, as he grasped her heart and it stood still.

The son took the Bible to his home, and said: "This is mother's Bible. She bought it years ago, when I was a mere child, and placed it upon her table, where it remained an ornament until her death. There is where it goes in my home." And it did.

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In that city was another home, in which sorrow had likewise entered that winter's morning. The father and children were standing at the bedside watching the close of the life of a saintly mother. Her voyage had been a tempestuous one, but her frail bark had reached the calm within the water's break. All sails were reefed, and she stood upon the bow ready to step ashore. Words of hope and trust had been her constant theme.

She turned to her son and said: "John, one thing I give to you—my Bible."

His heart was too full for words, but his love found expression in the pressure of her hand and a kiss upon the cooling brow. Soon the vessel touched the sands, the

heart gave one leap for joy, and all was over.

John took that Book, and, although one lid was gone and its pages were torn and tear-stained, he said: "My mother's precious Bible; her last and best gift to me. That Book was her source of comfort and hope. She read it every day, and I will read it. She taught those heavenly truths to her children; I will teach them to mine. She lived by it and died by it; so will I." And he did.

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Here are two mothers, two Bibles, two sons. Which is yours?

Assurance.



BEAR this in mind—that an eternity with Christ, in the unhindered enjoyment of heavenly bliss, could not add either to the truth of God's Word or to the efficacy of the redemption-work of His beloved Son.

Sixty years of Queen Victoria's reign did not add one jot to her title to the crown and throne of Great Britain.

It is quite possible for an estate to be mine, and for me not to *know* it is mine; or to know it is mine by right and title, before I have even tasted a single thing that grew upon it. But it would be poor work to try to make me question my title because of this.

On the other hand, let me remember that rejoicing in the fact that the estate is mine, and enjoying the estate are very different things.

"All things are yours," and soon shall we be in the blissful possession and eternal enjoyment of them. Till then, let us listen to the Spirit's exhortation: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. iii. 1).

GEO. C.

The Great Decision.



HE was a bright young fellow, and I loved him and pleaded with him to decide for Christ, thinking about the time when Jesus stood with that interesting young man in front of Him, whom He loved, and yet who went away with a frown on his brow. My young friend was in the Valley of Decision. He admitted everything, expressed his purpose soon to become a Christian, but could not bring himself to feel the necessity of immediate decision.

But I held on, and finally said to him, as I grasped him by the hand: "There must be a time when you say, 'I will.' It is a pivot on which your life will swing. You never can start to be a Christian until you come to that point. And it will never be easier than now. If you can't do it now, there's no reason to suppose that you ever can."

We were looking into each other's eyes. Suddenly I felt his hand grip on mine with great force, and I saw an electric flash in his eyes, and an illumination come into his face, as he said, "*I will!*" He had made the great decision.

L. A. B.

"NOW."

BELIEVER, you are anticipating the time when you shall join the saints above in ascribing all glory to Jesus; but are you glorifying Him *now*? The apostle's words are, "To Him be glory both *now* and forever."

The Journey of a Soul.



I HAVE a story to tell you. A wonderful story !
It is the history of the journey of a soul.

What is a soul ?

The soul is the immortal creature within the body, which moves and uses it like a machine, and by which the spirit of man must exist for ever.

What kind of nature has this living creature ?

You have only to watch the youngest child to see that *Self* is its object, and *Independence* its principle.

How came *Self* to be thus the object of the creature ? We should never have known had not the Creator drawn back the veil that hung over the far past and thus given us a glimpse of that which happened in His earthly paradise long ago.

He has shown us the Serpent infusing his deadly poison into the creature which had been created innocent ; the dark Usurper enthroning himself in the heart that should have throbbed for its Creator only ; the stream of human life poisoned at its source—God distrusted, Satan trusted. It is the journey of a soul out of this moral darkness into the presence of God that I am about to give you.

The place, then, where the soul whose history I write began its journey, was at one of the favourite resorts of fashion in the north of England.

The time was during one of those gloomy months when, ever and anon, the chill breath of winter lashes the dark waves of the sea into fury, and wraps the earth in its mantle of frost and snow. Thus, when shrinking from the keen, bitter winds, the inhabitants would seek shelter and amusement around their own blazing fires, or in concert rooms and well-heated halls.

It was then that the journey of this soul began.

In a well-appointed house situated in a good part of the town, a party had assembled to while away the time with cards and music. The lamps shone upon a bright scene, truly, to the natural eye; gay laugh and graceful compliment and brilliant repartee were not wanting there. Yet dark as was the winter's night without, there was deeper darkness still brooding over that gay company within. (2 Cor. iv. 4). Had you opened the door of each heart in that gladsome group, you would have found *Self* enthroned within it, and God—*forgotten*.

Perhaps you question the truth of my assertion and say, "Not so;" but let me assure you that had you brought a certain Lamp from its place on the library shelves, and let its light fall upon that thoughtless throng, cries of "Out of place! Out of place!" would have greeted you from every quarter. The darkness would have been manifest indeed, and the searching rays of the Word of God hastily excluded.

Sitting on a stool at her mother's feet was a child of nine years old. She was watching, as children love to do, all the words and actions of her elders. Life was opening brightly for her, and her parents desired that she should enjoy it to the full.

How it was I do not know, but surely it was by no chance that this favoured child of fortune had laid her young hand upon the Word of God! She might have closed it carelessly, or cast it hastily from her, but a picture that ornamented its pages had arrested and riveted her attention. There the artist had striven to depict Death and Hell cast into the lake of fire. The child had looked and trembled. Was such a fearful fate to be hers? And now, while music and song and game went on around her, her

face grew troubled and sad. The glitter and the glory of the scene around her faded from her view, and the stern realities of judgment to come appalled her little startled soul. The light of that discarded Lamp had shone through her darkness, and while it had shown her the hollowness and folly of the present, it had disclosed an unwelcome and dreaded future.

She had caught by its gleam just one glimpse of the broad road crowded with thoughtless multitudes, dancing, singing, and gaming on the way to eternal ruin.

How could the child keep such a discovery to herself?

She could not; for terror possessed her soul.

"I believe," she cried, as she raised her startled and troubled face to her mother's, "I believe that *we are all going to hell!*"

What a shock to the gay company! What words to break in upon the harmony of such a scene!

Stern looks and angry words were turned upon the little speaker. The awkward child was hushed. If *she* had gazed upon judgment to come, why tell it to them. *They*, who were happy in the darkness.

"And *this*," cried the Son of God when He stood upon this earth, "is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John iii. 19, 20).

* * * * *

Years had passed on: the child had grown up to early womanhood, but the soul that once had seen could never forget the terrors of judgment to come. Life with all its pleasures was now before her, but

the thunderclouds of coming doom ever shrouded the far horizon. How should her soul escape the judgment before it?

She felt and owned the darkness; yet shrinking from the Word which had discovered it to her, she turned to man for light, and, gazing round, she saw the strange beacon fires blazing which he has lighted to "compass himself about with sparks." Striving to find his own way back to God, he throws his own light upon himself, judges himself thereby, and if not in mercy awakened, he plunges into the blackness of darkness for ever (Isa. ii. 11).

False lights! False lights! which, like beacons kindled by wreckers on an iron coast, lure poor souls to their ruin.

And now this terrified soul dragged the body in which it lived through numberless outward rites, striving by "will-worship" and many ordinances to fit itself for the presence of a holy God.

Four times a day she knelt in the dim light of a stately church; Sunday after Sunday she received the sacrament, meekly kneeling at the altar rails; and every spare moment she wended her way to places where man told her she could best meet and propitiate an angry God.

But Peace! could there be peace in such a path?

NEVER.

Thus of deliverance this young girl knew nothing, and weary of pursuing that which ever eluded her grasp, she determined to drown her fears in the excitement of a life of gaiety. Then came the whirl of the gay dance, the pleasures of the concert room, the admiration and flattery of many friends.

* * * * *

It was a lovely afternoon in summer, the town lay basking in the glorious beams of the sun, and the

waves, as they rippled to the sandy shore, sparkled like liquid gold. The lovely place was at its loveliest, and sounds around were those best suited to a fashionable watering place in its summer season. Amidst the gay throngs that crowded the esplanade two figures passed in earnest converse. Fashion had done her best to deck the one of them in her goodliest style, but the troubled face and restless eye gave sure token of an unsatisfied soul within.

Ah! that poor soul, how could the praises that man lavished on the well-adorned case in which it lived, appease its terror for the future! It had gazed on all the realities of judgment to come, and though the glance had been but a passing one, how could it forget? Man might flatter and admire, but what could he do for *it*—for the soul which had to live on for ever when the fair form that shrouded it should be mouldering in the dust.

And now the "ruler of the darkness of this world" pressed a step further upon his prey. He had allowed her to occupy herself with the glare of the false beacons, and to walk in the light of the sparks she had kindled until she was ready to "lie down in sorrow," but now that she had discovered the falseness of all this, and was turning from it in disgust, he placed in her way the writings of those who put "darkness for light, and light for darkness" (Isa. v. 20).

She could not *forget*: she would *disbelieve*.

"Soul! take thine ease, a fable hath alarmed thee; the phantoms of a fevered dream have haunted thy path! a merciful Creator shines upon thy way; the Book that hath terrified thee comes not from Him: 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' "

Eagerly had that young girl drunk in the mental poison, and now as she walked along in the glorious

sunlight of that summer's day, loudly rang the bold boast that no revelation from God existed, and that the soul had no future after death.

As well might the waves that through some long winter's night beat themselves to foam at the foot of the Bass Rock, deny its existence, as for that soul to thus attempt to shake the Word of the living God. The very clamour that rang out through the darkness of its moral night proved that it was breaking itself to pieces on an eternal reality. It might deny the *facts*: it could not escape the *power*.

And now a loving friend pleaded with this young girl. With earnest voice she told her of the One who had come forth from God to "bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isa. xlii. 7).

But the voice of the faithful friend was silenced, and so she went and took hold of the unseen Power which the thoughtless girl had defied: she bore her name in prayer into the presence of her God.

And what was the consequence?

The soul that knew no rest grew more restless still; acts of deceit and untruthful words rose in her memory, and with them the ever-stifled yet ever recurring question:—"What if the Bible should be true?"

* * * * *

The summer with its blaze of glory had passed away, the autumn with its burden of rich fruits, and ever shortening days, had followed it; and once more winter's frosty thrall had fallen upon town and country. But that poor weary soul had found no rest: it still struggled on through a darkness of which, through the great mercy of God, it was now perfectly aware.

It was evening, and in a large room in a low part of a certain town a motley crowd was assembled.

Sailors, with their weather-beaten faces and rope-hardened hands, and women whose poor dress and worn countenances gave manifest token of the struggles of life, were gathered together under the flaring gas-jets to hear the sweet story of the Saviour's dying love.

Weak in himself, but strong that night, in the power of God, the speaker opened the Bible and read that wonderful message from God in Isaiah liii. It was the Word of the living God, and by its faithful light shining forth in that scene of moral darkness it held up to view the Son of God as a despised and rejected Man.

Word by word the wondrous message fell upon the listening crowd.

Was there a grieved and sorrow-stricken one?

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

Was there a guilty sin-laden one? "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities."

Was there a soul that had no peace?

"The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

But was there a self-willed soul there that had followed its own wild bent, and was now groaning under a sense of unpardoned sins?

"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on *Him* the iniquity of us all."

This was the message, but it was not only for rough sailors and the hardworking that it came that night. Amazed, half-ashamed to be seen there, the young girl whose history I write had been drawn into that room; and there the light of the glorious gospel of Christ reached her inmost soul.

Where were her fears? *Gone*. Where was the darkness? *Gone*. Where were her sins? *Gone*. She had seen "*Him*, stricken, smitten, afflicted." What needed she more?

And now a living Saviour rose before her and claimed that poor soul of hers,—yea *claimed* its salvation, as the "fruit of the travail of His soul."

What marvel that she left that humble room with God's sunshine streaming into her soul.

* * * * *

It is a solemn moment for a soul when its darkness has been dispelled and it is rejoicing for the first time in the light. The question then arises, Will it let the light shine? The arch enemy, the ruler of the darkness of this world, is ever ready with "the bushel" or "the bed"—business and pleasure (Matt. v. 15, 16). "Let the light shine out by degrees," he cries; "do not show it all at once."

Terrible delusion! Make a stand for Christ at once: your start will colour your whole after path.

And oh! who shall say with what fears and tremblings this new-born soul looked forward to the moment of confession. Ah! and who can say, too, with what tender love the One who had saved her drew to her side, as in all her woman's feebleness she faced the power of the foe. It was in the evening when the time of trial arrived. The family dinner was over, and the servants had retired. Then strange words rang out in that worldly household, and the light flashed in upon their darkness. They heard with wonder that one of their number was "saved;" her "sins had been borne by another;" she had "neither doubt nor fear;" she had been called "out of darkness into His marvellous light."

The father, the mother, the sister gazed at her with amazement, and the two latter, shrinking from

the all-reproving light, left the room. "For whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Eph. v. 18).

Then the father, with all a father's authority and solicitude, strove to put out the beams. For two long hours he reasoned with the child he thought deluded, assuring her that darkness was light, and light, darkness. But she, poor feeble thing that she was, could raise her eyes to the opened heavens and say, "We see Jesus——"

And let me, in passing, just ask *you*, whose eye is resting on these pages, one question. How many blind men would it take to persuade you that there is no such sense as that of sight?

You laugh, perhaps, but believe me, there is a *change in the new-born soul* just as *real and tangible* as that from *physical blindness to sight*. I cannot explain it to one who has not experienced it, I can only entreat you to go to Him from Whom this change can alone be obtained.

I implore you believe that it exists, and do not rest till you have it.

* * * * *

Perhaps you are thinking that now that you have followed the course of this soul "out of darkness into His marvellous light," that here the history must close. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Pro. iv. 18).

Have you ever placed a mirror whose reflecting power has been dimmed by moisture, in the light of the summer sun? If so, you have seen a picture of what happens to the Christian who basks in the light of God. The dews and mists of earth are banished by the warm light of heaven, and the mirror is all ablaze with the glorious beams that keep it bright.

Clothed in "the armour of light," which can alone defend it from the enemy, the soul passes on through his domain—unscathed, passes on unto the perfect day.

But, mark me, the pressure of all things here will be against such a soul: "What communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14). There *can be none*; and the soul that goes on faithfully and fearlessly in the light of a holy God will soon find itself *separated from the world*.

There were rough and stormy days before the one whose history I write. When her friends at home found themselves powerless to shake her out of her "new fangled notions," they sent her, with her sister, to visit a world-loving family in London.

And then all the allurements for heart and eye and ear that the vast city possessed lay before her. Her host, too, puzzled with the strange visitor who had come to his roof, thought to overcome all her scruples by one most tempting offer. He led her to his study, and there displayed before her all that could most attract a woman's fancy: jewels of rarest beauty in settings of antique design. "There," he said, as he opened treasure after treasure, "give up your religion and choose what you will! Whatever you fancy shall be yours."

What a strange offer! How little he knew that in the light in which his strange visitor rejoiced, his costly gems were but worthless baubles! They might glint and flash with all the colours of the rainbow in the earthly sunlight, but what were such glories to eyes that would ere long gaze upon the "King in his beauty." "Gold, and pearls, and costly array" were not for her. (1 Tim. ii. 9.)

Then when he had ended his vain display, she, in her turn, laid bare *her* Treasure. She told him of

the One Who had saved her, and warned him to flee as she had done from judgment to come. But if she had cared little for his gems, he cared still less for hers. He "trampled them underfoot" (Matt. vii. 6).

Thus day by day she struggled on with the stream of all things dead against her; but day by day she experienced more of the tender care of her Saviour.

O ye redeemed ones who float at ease down the stream of this God-dishonouring world, ye little know the strange, deep joy that thrills the hearts of the faithful ones as they breast the surging tide, sustained by the present keeping power of a Saviour God.

It is to the faithful soul alone that Christ reveals Himself in all His tenderness and beauty.

And most tenderly He sustained this young soul in her onward way.

* * * * *

It was the height of the London season, and the parks were thronged with the finest equipages that the rich city could display. Fashion rode and drove amidst the noble trees whose blackened boughs were freshly dressed with the bright green foliage, so soon, alas! to be darkened by the smoke-fogs of the mighty town. To this fair, bright scene she, whose history I write, was taken, and the roll of many wheels and the tramp of many horses sounded around, while smiling salutation passed from friend to friend as the gay equipages swept past each other. But on that sunny afternoon in May there was one carriage which had an occupant whose heart was bleeding from taunt and scorn, and whose tried and tempest-tossed soul was sorely "cast down because of the way."

She had suffered much that morning. There was no earthly voice to whisper words of cheer and

sympathy. Her tearful eye was turned upon the rough waves that swelled around her, and she had lost sight of Him—the only One Who could sustain her in her onward path.

But had *He* lost sight of her? No, His eye was on her amidst the bewildering waves, and His hand was stretched forth to succour.

But how was comfort to reach the lonely sufferer through that charmed circle of thoughtless worldlings?

God has His own way of working.

It was "the season" of the gay and fashionable: it was the season, too, for the poor and indigent who lived upon their bounty.

At the corner of the park stood three blind men with a musical instrument. Shut into life-long darkness, they drew attention to their pitiable condition by playing and singing well-known airs, and as the carriage which bore the downcast girl drove by them, just five words floated to her ear: "*A day's march nearer home.*" Only five short words, but they were all she needed. They raised her drooping eyes to the bright future before her—to the Father's house above, to the Saviour's loving care. Could she not joyfully suffer awhile for Him Whose precious blood had been shed to fit her for that home on high?

Yes, she could, and the light came back to her eye and the smile to her lip as she "considered Him Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself."

* * * * *

At this point a new difficulty met the soul whose journey we are following.

Could it be "acceptable" to Him Whom she loved to see her linked up with unscriptural religious associations, and to hear her, week by week, moaning

over unpardoned offences, and declaring the "burden of them to be intolerable?" Could she, pardoned and delivered as she was on the authority of God's holy Word, thus incessantly deny the efficacy of the work of Him Who had delivered her?

She was sorely puzzled. What was she to do? She would go to the High Church clergyman whom she believed to be her God-appointed guide in such matters and ask his advice.

The vicar received her most graciously, but when she laid her case before him, he began by emphatically denying that such a thing as conversion existed at all; he assured her that she had always been in the light, and that there was no such thing as a passage out of moral darkness into the light of life.

It was then that the soul that stood in the light of God's presence saw that this man was but "a blind leader of the blind," that he had never seen the light of which she spoke.

Shaken thus suddenly from her last earthly prop, she declined both his arguments and his books, and threw herself wholly upon the Word of her God and the guidance of His Spirit. This had been sufficient in the early days, why should it not be so now?

The Vicar was startled and alarmed: "If you only trust to God's Word, and to His Spirit," he cried, "I do not know to what you will come! You may become a Dissenter.

Thanks be to God there are many clergymen even in "the Establishment" who are converted to God, and devoted in His service, but this man was not of such a stamp. Hence he could not commend her to God and to His Word, for he knew not Him upon Whom that young soul was then venturing.

But the Book, the wonderful Book, had new value to her as a "lamp" unto her feet, a "light"

unto her path, to order her steps on her heavenward journey.

How strangely altered all things looked in its light! How it made manifest the intense darkness of the scene here, and man's absolute and entire departure from God! But what a new value it showed in the Cross and Grave of Christ. She could see there, at last, not only the punishment due to her sins borne by Another, but herself crucified, dead, and buried in the Person of her Saviour. And then, more wonderful than all, she saw, that from His grave He had risen the Head of a new creation, the last Adam, the first-born of a new race, that in Him she too was raised, and had become a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. vi. 7).

Where was the *darkness*? Left behind upon the other side of that strange gateway, where the righteous law still thundered over man in the flesh.

Where was the principle—*Independence*? It had been judged by the law as worthy of death, and had met its doom upon the cross of Christ.

Where was the object—*Self*? The light of the faithful Lamp of God, when turned upon her Saviour's tomb showed her that idol lying there, a buried thing.

The soul had not yet finished its journey, but it had "*found*" rest—perfect *rest* in subjection to the Divine will. Thus this dear one, standing on resurrection ground in the full light and love of heaven, and without a fear as to the future, could with joy and gratitude, and in the deepest humility, exclaim: "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for *my soul*."

J. J. J. (*Abridged.*)

of them, but the means or the condition. A gift may be given to me *by* a friend. This is not the sense in which we are blessed "by faith," because God, and not faith, is the Giver. When the little word "by" is used in the New Testament as indicating the cause or prime agent of anything, it is generally the translation of a different preposition from those we have already cited. (See footnote marked ||)

What is faith according to the Bible? Faith is belief. Faith and belief are one and the same word in the original, (instance 2 Thess. ii. 13). If you drop the theological term which fogs so many simple souls, and read, say, Heb. xi., substituting "by belief" for "by faith," how clear is its meaning!

In conclusion notice that:—

The Word of God is the lamp and the light which divinely illuminates the soul and all its ways (Ps. cxix. &c.). As a lamp it guides every little step which our "feet" take: as a light it radiates the whole length of our "path"

Faith is the eye which sees and receives the light, and discerns what the light reveals. Thus unseen and future things become tangible and present realities to the soul (Heb. xi. 1).

The Holy Spirit is the power whereby faith is exercised. Apart from Him, belief is merely mental assent, and of no worth. Divine faith, in conjunction with the Word of God, is the means by which the Spirit of God makes every blessing good in the soul.

S. J. B. C.

Mercies.—Were we to write the mercies of God, our libraries would not hold the records. Were we to write our gratitude to Him, a very small diary would suffice.



Temptation.—When God upholds us, no temptation can move us; when He leaves us, no temptation is too weak to overthrow us.



Soul-exercise.

SOUL exercise is not pleasant, and most will shun it as long as possible. Yet nothing is more needful or more healthful. The saint who desires progress will take care to have secret exercise before God continually. Israel after their conquests returned to Gilgal, the place of circumcision at the first. Priests must wash hands and feet before and after engagements in the holy place. So again and again the members upon the earth must be mortified if the things above are to be sought, and if the power of the hidden life is to be known.

A dull prayer is not exercise, nor is a formal round of Bible reading and petition. Exercise is more severe than that. It includes heart-searching and confession, self-judgment, fasting, and serious meditation in view of Calvary, and all continued till the heart is softened, the spirit chastened, and the soul humbled before God. Thus we enter into death *in secret*, that we may live in power before others. The exercises of death are in the presence of God that the beauty of life may be displayed before men.

J. N. B.

The Church.

THE unity of the Church of God may be compared to a chain stretching across a river; you see it at either side, but it dips in the middle, and if you were to judge by the sight of your eyes, you might suppose that the chain had given way at the centre. So is it with the Church of God. It was seen to be one and indivisible at *the beginning*; it will be seen to be one *by and by*; and it is, in God's sight, one *now*, though the unity be not visible to mortal eyes.

C. H. M.

Links.

Y
L ORD! 'twas Thy voice of love first bade me "*Come!*"
And find redemption at Thy wondrous cross;
A weary, wandering child, Thou brought'st me home,
Rescued from sin, from sorrow, and from loss!

Again I hear that word, above earth's noise,
Sounding across life's dark and stormy sea;
Oh, may the deep attraction of Thy voice
Draw me from all around to follow Thee!

From earthly scenes and ties, however sweet,
From all that here would backward hold my heart,
I would go forth with footsteps firm and fleet,
To be with Thee, dear Lord, where'er Thou art!

Smooth let the waves of life be, Lord, or rough,
Without Thine arm to lean on I must fall;
But while upheld by Thy sustaining grace,
Calmly I walk superior to them all.

And as I gaze upon Thee *where Thou art*,
The vague wild tumult of life's inner sea,
The feverish throbbings of this restless heart
Are calmed, as, risen Lord! I walk with Thee.

For since I've seen Thee seated far above,
At God's right hand in yonder glorious sphere,
The light which led me to that place of love
Revealed the wreck of everything down here!

All longings stilled, while gazing on Thy face;
My heart would find with Thee its quiet home,
And o'er life's waves, through Thine unfailing grace,
Would walk, responsive to Thy gentle "*Come!*"

The long night-watch of life will soon be o'er;
'Tis sweet to pass it, blessed Lord, with Thee;
My hand in Thine, until on yonder shore,
Fair land of peace! I rest eternally!

“It is the Lord.”

(1 Sam. iii. 18; John xxi. 7.)

“**Y**T is the Lord!” was aged Eli's exclamation when the heavy judgment against his house fell from the boy's lips. Eli was not so dull of vision that he could not perceive it, and his conscience might have told him that the judgment was just. “It is the Lord!” said John the beloved, when divine grace shone through the words and acts of the mysterious Stranger on the shore. Nor were John's perceptions at fault. In Eli's case fear made the senses keen, but it was love that made John recognise Christ before the other disciples did.

There are occasions enough in our every-day experience when we might stop and say, “It is the Lord,” unless, indeed, we are as blind as Balaam, and more stupid than his ass. That sorrow, that disappointment, that sad consequence of sin may make all of us exclaim with Eli. But surely those mercies, those gracious surprises, those deliverances, and those favours fragrant with love, might oftener touch our hearts and brighten our eyes, causing us to acknowledge with fervent gratitude, “It is the Lord!” Will not His constant attention to His people produce constant results? Oh for quick discernment to see them!

J. N. B.

PEACE.

IN a quiet hamlet an aged man was dying, and someone asking if he would like her to read to him some gospel passages out of the Bible, he replied in his own broad Scotch dialect, “Na, na, lassie, I thacket (thatched) the hoose in calm weather, and its no needn't noo when the storms come on.”

Happy man! Death was at the door; his faculties were failing; the earthly tabernacle was being taken down; the storm had come; but he was safely sheltered.

“Step by Step.”



A DOCTOR was once asked by a patient who had met with a serious accident, “Doctor, how long shall I have to lie here?” The answer, “Only a day at a time,” taught the patient a precious lesson.

The same lesson God taught His people, and the people of all ages since, through the method of His provision for Israel during their wilderness journey. “The day’s portion in its day” (Exodus xvi. 4., margin). Day by day the manna fell, enough for each day, and no more and no less.

So God promises us, not “As thy weeks,” or “As thy months,” but “As thy days so shall thy strength be.” And that means Monday’s grace for Monday, and Tuesday’s grace for Tuesday, and so on. Why, then, borrow trouble for the future? We are especially told by the Lord “to take no anxious thought for to-morrow.” The true rule is to live by the day, to live a life of trust.

The law of Divine grace is “Sufficient unto the day.” The law of the Divine deliverance is “A very present help.” The law of the Divine guidance is “Step by step.”

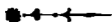
One who carries a lantern on a dark road at night sees only a step before him. If he takes that step he carries the lantern forward and that makes another step plain. At length he reaches his destination in safety without once stepping into darkness. The whole way was made light to him, though only a single step of it was made plain at one time. This is the method of God’s guidance—one step at a time.

It is a blessed secret, this of living by the day. Anyone can carry his burden, however heavy, till nightfall. Anyone can do his work, however hard,

for one day. And in the strength of God, anyone can live trustingly, patiently, lovingly, and purely till the sun goes down. And this is all that life ever really means to us—just one little day.

“Day by day the manna fell;
Oh, to learn this lesson well.”

The Change.



I KNELT oppressed with gloom and care,
Intent on pouring out my prayer;

My heavy heart must seek relief,
And tell my Lord its tale of grief.

But when I kissed His wounded feet,
When low He kindly stooped to greet,
And when I heard, in tender strain,
The music of His voice again —

And felt His peace steal o'er my breast,
And breathed the atmosphere of rest
Which girdles still the Throne above,
And gleams with light, and glows with love:—

Oh! then, like phantoms of the night,
Each haunting fear and grief took flight,
And, with one touch, those sacred rays
Transformed my prayer to grateful praise.

S. J. B. C.



“Is My Heart Stopped?”

§ PURGEON started up once at night in a great fright. He had just dreamed that his heart had stopped beating. His watch was within reach, and, on looking at it, he discovered that it had stopped running, apparently at the very moment when he had dreamed the ugly dream.

His own explanation (probably the correct one) was that at the very moment the watch stopped, his ear had noted the change and brought on the dream.

The great preacher, with that readiness which always characterised him for using common things as illustrations of great truths, seized upon this incident and said:—“How I wish every Christian, whenever he feels the works of piety are not carried on by him, would start up in a fright and say, ‘Is my heart stopped?’” Yes, indeed, what a blessed thing it would be if every saint, whenever he slothfully ceased from service, would suddenly awake as from a bad dream.

“SAFE.”

“Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.”—Psa. cxix. 117.

DO not spoil the chime of this peal by ringing one half a peal! Do not say, “Hold thou me up,” and stop there; or add, “But all the same I shall stumble and fall!” Finish the peal with God’s own music, the bright words of faith that He puts into your mouth: “Hold thou me up, *and I shall be safe!*”

F. R. H.

“Clean Hands.”



ONCE there was a boy whose mother noticed that he was constantly washing his hands.

As this had not been at all his custom up to that time, she asked him why it was.

“Why,” he said, “I want to be very strong; and I read in my Bible ‘*He that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger.*’

Of course it is a good thing to keep the hands well washed, and I was very pleased to find one boy who came to Christ at our children’s meeting, and who had been very dirty before, start the habit of keeping his hands and face and clothes clean. Indeed, when I saw him some time afterwards I scarcely recognised in the tidy clean boy, the rough dirty little fellow I had pointed to Jesus.

But “clean hands” means much more than that. I think it includes it, for God wishes His people to be clean in everything. But it has a deeper meaning. It means our habits or ways. The way we use our hands.

But to keep our hands clean when defiled, we must use “pure water” (Heb. x.) If you look at Ephesians v. 26, you will read of “the washing of water by the word.” The Word of God is the pure water. It is the only pure water. Other good books help, but the Bible is the “laver” of the soul.

God's "Thank You."



LITTLE Jack was only four years old, and a great pet of mine.

One day his cousin, a boy of sixteen, set Jack to work for him. He told him to pull up some weeds in the garden. Little Jack worked away until his fingers were sore and his face was very hot. When, at length, he returned to the house, I said to him: "Jackie, what have you been doing?"

The tears came into his eyes, as he said: "I've been kind to Cousin Frank; I worked dreffly hard for him, but he never said 'Thank you' to me."

Poor little Jackie! I felt so sorry for him. It was hard lines not to have a word of thanks after all his hard work. But that night when I put him in his little cot, he said to me, "Aunty, this morning I was sorry that I pulled the weeds, but I told Jesus all about it, and now I am not sorry."

"How is that?" I asked. "Has Cousin Frank thanked you?"

"No, he hasn't; but inside of me I have such a *nice, good feeling*. It always comes when I've been kind to anyone; and do you know, Auntie, I've found out what it is?"

"What is it, darling?" I asked.

Throwing his arms around my neck, he whispered: "It's God's 'Thank you.'"

The Message.

The Transmitter, The Receiver, and The Message.

MOST of us have heard something of the marvels of wireless telegraphy. By means of this wonderful discovery, electrical messages without the aid of wire, pole, or insulator can be flashed through the air to their desired destination. Away they speed, hundreds and even thousands of miles across great continents and over the mighty Atlantic, till they touch the point at which they are aimed, and mysteriously deliver their contents. Marconi's astonishing discovery bids fair, ere long, to take the place of all ordinary wire telegrams, cables, and even telephonic messages.

Yet for ages past these wave sounds, as they are called, have been vibrating and circulating through indefinite space, though none until recently has heard them.

And why has no one beyond the range of ordinary hearing caught the faint murmur of these tiny air ripples?

In the first place, because hitherto no "Transmitter" has been invented whose subtle power could seize and direct them. And in the second place, because on yonder rocky eminence, or mountain top,

or bold headland, no "Receiver" has been fixed—tuned and ready with its sensitive and receptive mechanism to take in these otherwise inaudible ether communications.

Even so the wave sounds of the whispers of God's love, the counsels and exhortations of His truth, and the low mutterings of His fast approaching, righteous wrath, *throb*, THROB, THROB, year after year through the moral universe, yet the unconverted sinner heeds them not.

And why not? Has God provided no "Transmitter"? Or, to put it plainly: Has God not spoken direct to His creatures? Surely He has. What sober mind could think that God is good and equitable (to say nothing of His being love), and yet that He has failed to reveal Himself to myriads of responsible beings whom He has brought into existence? No, no, such a falsifying of God's character cannot be entertained for one moment. God has not left us without a revelation of Himself, neither has He left us in the dark as to whence we came, what we are, and whither we go. God *has* spoken! For centuries past He has been speaking *direct* to man by means of the sacred Bible, which, like the wireless telegraph "Transmitter," has caught and held and produced His voice, and is still sending it forth far and wide.

Why then is man apparently so insensible to the wonderful communications of God?

Simply because in his heart—the citadel of his moral being—to which God speaks, no tuned "Receiver" is found.

What is this tuned "Receiver"?

It has an old name, though so few utilise it—it is *faith*! Yes, simple, sterling, saving belief is that which receives the gospel message.

But let him who reads understand that true faith is always tuned by grace to a proper pitch, otherwise it would be unable to catch the tones of God's voice. In wireless telegraphy a thousand and one messages may reach a "Receiver," but if it be an untuned one, they are as unheard as though they were unspoken.

Alas, how many messages of light and love come from God which, though heard by the outward ear of man, are unheard by the inner consciousness of his heart. Beware, we beseech you, with being content with head knowledge, and a mere intellectual and historical admittance of the gospel, which makes you *generalise* it instead of *personally* accepting it as meeting your own individual need. It can never be too often insisted upon that the seat of true faith is not in the head, but in the heart. Natural and spiritual faith, mental assent and heart belief, human credence and God-given trust may outwardly resemble each other, but inwardly there is the same difference between them as there is between an untuned and a tuned "Receiver"; and their stupendous issues are as far apart as the woes of hell and the joys of heaven. It is the tuned "Receiver" of faith in the *heart* which is the one and only objective of "all Scripture." To it alone God speaks, and by it alone God's voice is heard.

Dear friend, How is it with you? Have you faith—God-given faith? Divine faith is no more inherent in fallen man than is divine love, joy, peace, &c.: all is of grace—all comes from God. Do you excuse your unbelief by saying: "If faith is God-given, I must wait till God offers it to me"?

Then you need not wait long, for God offers it to you *now*! Peace, forgiveness, righteousness with every gospel blessing is the gift of God, but the one

initial and essential gift whereby you receive all the others is faith, and hence it is the first gift which God offers (Eph. ii. 8).

Could He do more than offer it to you? He could not and yet treat you as a moral and rational being. God cannot consistently deal with you as though you were a bit of insensate and irresponsible machinery. We do not attempt to explain the methods and ways of God with the soul. We cannot do so. We can no more explain them than we can explain the mysterious laws which govern the workings of wireless telegraphy. We can only state certain divine facts which we know by experience to be facts, and which your future eternity of weal or woe shall demonstrate as facts.

And what are these facts? Listen to Paul's summary of them: "Who hath believed our report?"* says he, echoing the prophet's lament. Then, as though he anticipated your excuse, he adds: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x.).

Here we get an epitome of the great gospel facts we have been pressing:—

1. *The Word of God* is the "Transmitter" whereby the gracious report is sent from God to man.

2. *The report* is the glad tidings sounded out by human lips "unto the ends of the habitable world."

3. *Faith* is the tuned "Receiver"; and this faith, marvellous to relate, always accompanies the report! That is to say, when you hear the gospel message with *the ears of your head*, you *may* and you *can*, if you only *will*, hear it likewise in faith with *the ears of your heart*, and thus believe and confess it to the saving of your soul.

S. J. B. C.

*Or, "the hearing of us." "Hearing" and "report" are the same word in the Greek.

Are you right with God?



IN the city of Brooklyn, two or three years ago, a detective went into a drug store, laid his hand upon the shoulder of a young man about thirty years of age, and said, "You are wanted."

"What do you mean?" asked the man.

"You know what I mean. You were in the Albany Penitentiary some years ago; you escaped and went West. You married out there, came back here and settled; and we have been on your track ever since. Now we have you. You need not deny it."

He said, "That is true; I won't deny it; but I would like to go home and say good-bye to my wife and child."

They went to his home. He met his wife and little child in the parlour, and said: "Wife, haven't I been a kind husband? Haven't I been a good father, and worked hard to make a living?"

"Yes," replied the wife, "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I am an escaped convict from the penitentiary. Since I met you, your love for me has made a different man of me; but I am an escaped criminal, and must go back to gaol."

He was all right in his relations to his wife and child, in his business relations, and among his neighbours, but he was all wrong in his relations to the State of New York.

So, reader, you may be a kind husband, a loving father, an obliging neighbour, a good citizen, but allow me to ask you very seriously, "Are you right with God?"

Many a man boasts that he is not a drunkard, a cheat, a liar, but that will not suffice for the presence

of God. You must have something more than that to say.

I was chatting with a young man after a gospel meeting only this week. He was attracted by the gospel message, wished to go to heaven, but told me that he thought he was all right, that he lived a straight life, went to church, and was a communicant.

I replied, "Did the Lord Jesus die for you?"

"Yes," was the ready answer.

He was rather startled when I asked him, "What dreadful crimes have you been guilty of that required the Son of God to die for you?"

If I were to take you to a neighbouring cemetery, and showed you a certain grave in it, and told you that there lay the body of a dear friend, who, to satisfy the claims of the law, had died for me. I think I can see you start in horror and surprise from my side, and ask in frightened tones, "Why, whatever awful crime have you committed?"

Oh! friend, there is an empty grave in Judea, where the body of my Saviour lay. He died to save my soul from hell, He died to satisfy the claims of the law, He died to bring me to God. I can tell you with humble gratitude that I am right with God now, but not apart from the atoning death of my Saviour and Lord.

Nay, further, I can point you to a filled throne, the complement of the empty grave, the proof that God is satisfied with the work done by his beloved Son, and the assurance that my sins are forgiven for "His name's sake."

Can you say as much? Are you right with God? What have you been guilty of that Jesus died for *you*? Have you been forgiven by trusting that wonderful Saviour? A last question, Are you right with God?

A. J. P.

dogs kept for the purpose. Cremation and burying bodies are seldom practised.

The Thibetan monks believe in continual prayer, and seeing that they are unable to repeat long prayers, they invented a wheel something like your phonograph cylinders, with an axle, which enables it to revolve at the slightest push. The words "Onu mani Padmee Hoom," which are inscribed on this wheel, are written in Thibetan.

The words are taken from their Bible, which contains 1,083 works gathered in 180 volumes, each volume in five divisions, viz. : (I.) Book of Knowledge. (II.) Book of Buddha. (III.) Book of Discipline. (IV.) Book of Mount Everest. (V.) Book of Being Delivered from Sins Committed in the Past. In these books the words of Buddha are very carefully noted. These are printed on wooden blocks, and every monastery has a copy of these blocks or "Kashgur."

Being born in the year 1884 in a small village near Ohamalari, north of Bhuban, or on the borders of India, I attended a small lama school at the age of six, where I was taught for my priesthood. I was at the above age, when father, who was a Thibetan high lama, and my Hindoo mother, put me into confinement for two years. This was done in order that I might be more accomplished in the line I was being brought up in. The lonely cave, through which ran a small stream of water, was the only room I had for two years. It is believed that when anyone goes into this cave he shall never fall ill, for this stream, given by Cheunaisi, the great god, shall take away all diseases to itself.

Well, how was I fed? Unlike the rest of the world, the Thibetan father begins at a very early age to train up his child for lamahood. A man, who voluntarily offers his service, has the charge of feeding the candidate who is being prepared for a lama. In the cave where the candidate has taken up his abode is an aperture, through which the servant passes his meals. Neither the servant nor the boy are supposed to see each other. The servant brings the meal, and as he approaches the aperture he turns his

face away from it, and suddenly throwing the meal, he runs away. Many a time my brick tea and rice fell into the water, but no murmur came from my lips. The happy thought of being a great lama hereafter suppressed the sadness. After two years I came out of this cave, was lauded by everybody, and father presented me with a new praying wheel and a rosary.

Many a time I tried to reach the summit of Mount Everest, but failed. The Thibetan saying goes, that whoso reacheth the summit, to him shall be given all the money and treasures hidden in this mountain, and he shall live forever in this world.

I was advancing in my studies of priesthood, and was about to get a promotion. I was now at the age of thirteen, when a Christian missionary, disguised in the Thibetan costume, came into our country with some curios with her which we never saw in our life. Next day we heard some men who had come from afar tell us that they heard a woman who was introducing some unknown doctrine. This missionary who stayed with us for a night, had got away very early next morning into the next town.

She was brought before my father, and he, standing on a rock, after having read his Bible, asked what should be done to her.

"Kill her," said one. "Throw her over the rocks," said another. At last one, who was the aged leader of the crowd, said: "Bring a spiked saddle, and we will make her ride on it; without torture there is no forgiveness." Being an elderly-looking man, his advice was taken. A spiked saddle was brought, and she was thrown across. But here starts my conversion.

Whilst she was being thus tortured, a Bible fell off her arm. It was an English Bible. Father, seeing he could not read it, threw it into the fire. But from the Bible, as it dropped from her arm, there fell a slip of paper which did not attract attention, and seeing this slip of paper fall, I made up my mind I was going to see what was on it. After conducting the horse round and round, I gave it to a lama friend, who took the woman to the borders of India,

but not on the spiked saddle. After going round and round this slip of paper, I suddenly dropped my praying-wheel, and when I went to pick up this praying-wheel I picked up the slip of paper at the same time. It was black with mud from the trampling of over a thousand feet. I rubbed off the mud, and read in Thibetan as follows:

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

This interested me, for our God, Cheunasi, does not give us everlasting life, and I made up my mind that I was going to find out about this “For God so loved.” So, seeing one of my dear fellow-mates, I asked him if he would go with me in search of this new God we had found. Oftimes we went near a cave and read this John iii. 16. Finally, we made up our minds that we would go and learn from this missionary where this God was, and then go in search of Him. We heard from some lama that she had got safely back over the borders, and so to the borders we were going. One night we started out, passed over rocks and cliffs, and came to the first village, then the second, and then the third. Here we were arrested for trying to desert our homes, as we had to run away from home in order to find this missionary.

We were taken back home. My friend had both his arms cut off, and I, being the son of a high priest, had to do a penance, which demanded my measuring myself over the mountains for a month. But I had this slip of paper with me all the time, and after my penance I started reading it often.

One day, after reading it a number of times, I started out once more, after risking my life. This time I went alone, and having passed eight or nine villages, I was arrested again. This time I was going to be killed. I was being escorted home by a man, and one night we slept near a great waterfall. In the middle of the night I heard a horrible yell, which woke me up suddenly. I tried to wake my man up, but seeing he was not there, I got up and looked for him; but as I was looking in the waterfall,

I saw this man in the moonlight, dead. I thought at first it was all a dream, but soon realised it as a fact. I never knew how he got killed. It was here, whilst sitting on a rock, that I read John iii. 16 over fifty times.

Again I started out, going in a different direction, and finally came quite close to the Indian borders. As I was walking one day, I suddenly came across some of the Thibetan robbers, who rob the devotees going to Lhasa. They seldom spare your life. Now, these robbers stripped me of everything, and one of them was going to take my John iii. 16, which was on a slip of paper, but with some sleight of hand trick, I managed to put it in my ear, after making a ball of it. Seeing that they had taken mostly everything I had on my person, I felt a little sorry, but I started reading this paper again, and I kept on going to see this missionary.

Having no compass or chart with me, I followed the sun, or, as we call it, followed the setting sun, that is, travelling west. A deer that someone had killed, and had left half-skinned, I saw a little way off. I ran up to this deer, and after a half-day's work, pulled the skin off by means of a sharp bamboo edge, and then put it on my feet to serve the purpose of the shoes the robbers had taken. I also took the venison and kept on going, saying to myself:

"If God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, He will always feed me and clothe me."

One day it was bright and clear. Everything was going well, and I was nearing the plains. As I felt a little warm, I sat down on a rock to repeat John iii. 16, when lo! what should I see at the back of me but one of those Himalayan black bears making straight for me. I had no stones, no bamboos to protect myself with, and no place to hide. I had only a few seconds left. The bear was hustling to tear me, and my courage failed. Just then I looked around me, and at my right side I discovered a small cave. On the cave was a stone, which I could have rolled if I had the time, as the stone was on the edge of the cave, but seeing the little time I had I ran into the

cave. The bear came running from the mountain, and alighted on the stone above the cave with such force that he threw it down. Down came the stone in front of the cave, and I was safe. There was my bruin friend shut out from getting me. I said to myself, "The good God Who so loved the world must be watching over me, and I am going to find Him." After the bear had kept me there two days, during which time I fed on the venison, I got out, after rolling back this rock. Then I sat down and read a hundred times, "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."

After this experience I did not meet with any other. By inquiry about this missionary I at last found out where she was, and came to her; sent her my visiting card—the card that she had dropped: "God so loved the world." She recognised her writing, and after thanking God for the little harvest she had reaped, sent me to school, where I was educated in English.

Now I am in America, and I am preparing myself to go home and preach this John iii. 16 to my people at home, who are perishing for the lack of my blessed John iii. 16.

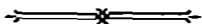


THE DAILY CROSS.



WAIT not for some great cross to show
 How much with patience thou canst bear;
 Try now thy strength in bending low
 To take the cross of daily care;
 It may seem poor and small instead,
 But it may yet more needful be
 To train thee, first of all, to tread
 The path of true humility.

“Encourage One Another.”



NOTHING is sweeter and more needful in the Church than encouragement. No mission is more divine than the encourager's. In no other way can we do more good than by going about speaking words of cheer.

I am told that in Westmeal, near Antwerp, there is a convent of Trappist monks who represent a strangely perverted conception of Christianity. There are thirty-six monks who live there together, under the vow of perpetual silence. They dress in rough sackcloth, with ropes about their waists, their heads shaven and their beards undressed. They live on bread, sour milk and vegetables, sleep on hard boards, and spend their days in frigid and solemn silence. If a visitor speaks to one of these monks, the monk draws his cowl closer about his head and moves away. Each day he walks in the garden and looks into a grave opened and ready for the one of the company who is first to die.

This, it is claimed, is a high ideal of Christian living. This order of monks suppose that they are illustrating in a lofty way the holiness and beauty of Christianity. But it is not such living that Christianity teaches. Christ and His apostles did not live such a life. They did not walk about in silence. They were ready to give cheer to all they met. Christ taught His followers to let their light shine on the world's darkness. He would have us hide within our hearts our cares and sufferings, and give out only blessing and gladness. May we encourage one another, day by day, with divine encouragement.

Asking for Signs.



IT is touching and interesting to see how God deferred to the weak faith of His people in Old Testament times. He was willing to give assurance to His Word by signs. Abram says: "Whereby shall I know?" (Gen. xv.), and he gets a vision. His servant asks that the "appointed" damsel may be indicated by her kindness. Gideon spreads his fleece twice, and makes requests which are very graciously granted in sign of his mission and of the Lord's presence with him. Jonathan at first says, "It *may be* the Lord will work for us" (1 Sam. xiv.), but is prepared to accept the certainty of divine help if his sign is granted. Hezekiah asks: "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me?" and gets, in answer, the retreating shadow on the dial. Zecharias' demand for a sign, however, meets with a rebuke (Luke i.). His dumbness is a reproof of his unbelief, while affording what he asked for—an evidence of God's faithfulness. God offered Ahaz the grace of a sign, but the impious king declined it, so the Lord gave a better one than he could ever have asked or imagined.

God thus graciously accommodated His ways to the times of imperfect revelation in the past. Now, however, such signs should not be needed, and they are not granted. The case of Zecharias is striking in this connection. The story of past concessions may strengthen our faith now, and give a side-light on the gracious character of God, but it is "*the Jews*" that now "require a sign" (1 Cor. i.), and to them the last sign has been given in the death and resurrection of Christ. Now exalted, He is "the power

of God," and thus an abiding sign to all, if they will but candidly allow the evidences. Does faith need these aids now that Christ is known as risen and ascended to the place of all power and authority? No. To look for signs is to expect divine tolerance of unbelief. Instead of strengthening faith, such concessions would only weaken it by leading to a superstitious and unspiritual regard for omens. God often guides His servants by His ways, little and great, in providence; and divine manifestations are doubtless abundant to discerning eyes, but they are granted to faith, not to unbelief, which would trust a sign rather than Christ Who is the power and the wisdom of God.

J. N. B.

"Six feet of it will do for me."

A CLEVER lawyer sat in his office conversing with a client, for whom he had been transacting some business. The lawyer's client was a Christian. Taking exception to the ways some men make money, the lawyer said, "Man, if you are to be so particular as that, you will never possess much of this world as your own."

"Six feet of it will do for me, one day, to lay my bones to rest," said the Christian business man; "that's all I'll need of it then. It is good to have an inheritance secured in the world beyond the grave."

The lawyer sat in dumb silence. His thoughts never ran in that direction: he was living only for the present world. And so many are. They forget how soon it will elude their grasp, and six feet of "mother earth" for a grave will be all they need.

“Where?”



“**W**ILL you come to the preaching to-night?”
He answered, “I am going down.”

She looked him in the face and replied,
“Where?”

Ah! where—WHERE? The days and years tell how we are going, but do you know where? You have only a short life for earth, and all your interests in this scene must cease when life departs. We bury our dead, we take their places, and do their work, but they are gone. They left their palaces and their huts; their stately homes and their squalid abodes; they disappeared from the throne, the council, chamber, the mart, the workshop, and the home. They are gone, never to return. We are following on, and soon we too shall be summoned to the presence of our God. Why grasp so eagerly what you must give up so soon? Why be so occupied with that which is but for a day? Life is like gazing on the shifting scenes of a panorama. We gaze upon a scene depicted on the glowing canvas; it attracts our gaze, our eyes are rivetted upon it, when lo! it passes away and another scene takes its place. And so with our lives; like the shifting canvas of a panorama, earthly scenes go by; this day delights us, but lo! it makes way for another; there is pleasure in the morning, and sorrow in the night; a blue sky at noon-tide, and thunder when the vesper song is sung. And soon the prompter's bell will cease to ring, and the blank curtain of death will descend to hide it all. If you have only a life-interest in every thing here, it behoves you to think of that which is beyond. This life is but the prelude to that which is to come.

H. W.

The Two Seals.



THE Holy Ghost never seals people who are in their sins; that would be to sanction sin. Nor does He seal people in doubts and fears; that would be to sanction doubts and fears. It is written: "In whom also, after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. i. 13, 14).

Your seal, which is faith in the blood, and God's seal, which is the personal in-dwelling of the Holy Ghost, are not identical. Let Scripture speak as to both. "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." Thus, in receiving His testimony, you are setting your seal to the truth of His testimony to the work of His Son. You deliver as your act and deed—according to lawyer's language—that God is true in saying that He gave His beloved Son to die a wretched death for such as you. Did you ever see a person unable to write signing for his name? One who can write, having done all that is necessary, holds the pen, and the person unable to write just touches the top of the pen, whilst his mark is being affixed to the document.

Now, you are the person unable to write; but you just touch the pen, so to speak, which God holds. You say, if ever so feebly, "Lord, I believe," and He affixes your mark to the document of His Word. That is setting your seal to the truth of the fact that God is true.

The Master of the House.

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”—Eph. iii. 17.

WHEN Jesus comes in to dwell in the heart by faith, He becomes to that heart the Master of the house—settling everything in order, and ruling supreme.

There was a Christian man who was an earnest worker in the gospel, but he had one sad failing, and that was a most ungovernable temper. I need hardly tell you that though he preached well on Sunday, his sermons had not much effect on Monday.

He was a real Christian, but he had never found out the secret of victory over his temper. He used to come back to his study and cast himself on his knees and say, “O God, how I disgraced myself to-day, I might just as well give up in despair.”

One day he had a terrible outburst of temper, and was heartily ashamed of himself, and threw himself on his knees and said, “O my Lord, O my God, must I always go on like this? I have struggled against this temper, I have prayed over it, and I am as bad as ever; O my God, teach me the secret of victory over sin.”

Now, God did teach him the secret that very night in a very strange dream.

He thought he was in his study; and looking upon the floor he was surprised to see it all covered with dust and dirt. Then looking hastily out of the study window, he saw “One like unto the Son of Man,” walking slowly up towards the door. He said to himself: “Surely it is my Lord, but oh! my Lord is coming, and here is my house filthy. I must get my house cleaned before He comes.”

So he hastily seized a broom and began to sweep

out his study, with the natural result that the dust rose in clouds and nearly choked him.

Then he laid down the broom utterly exhausted. Then a knock came at the door, and he heard the words: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

No, he wouldn't do that, he must first get things tidy; so he began to sweep with redoubled energy.

Again he laid down the broom, quite exhausted, and again the Voice said, "Let Me in."

No, he must make things decent, so he swept away. Again came the sweet voice, "Let me in."

But he went on sweeping again until completely done up and, ashamed, he rose and went slowly to the door, and with much fear and trembling he lifted the latch (the latch is your *will*, my brother) and flung open the door. Then the Lord looked lovingly upon him, and said, "Behold I will sprinkle clean water upon thee. From all thy filthiness and from all thine idols I will cleanse thee." And lo! shining seraphs trooped in: one he recognised as Faith, another as Love; and there were Hope and Patience and Power and Temperance, and every other grace he had so often needed and longed for! In short, with Christ there came the "things which accompany salvation." Then in a moment the place became clean and orderly, and fit for the gracious presence of the Master.

With a sweet sense of rest he awoke, and lo! it was a dream. Then on bended knee he cried: "Oh! my Lord, my God, come into my heart with all Thy vast resources—come in, come in and supply, control and order the house which is Thine."

(Adapted.)

“Until the Day Break.”

(S. S. ii. 8-17.)



IT WAS spring—but ah! my soul was sad,
 The rising tear I could not quell;
 While other hearts were light and glad,
 I wept within my silent cell.

But, lo! a sweet and quickening voice
 Came softly on my listening ear,
 And made my drooping heart rejoice,
 For, oh! I knew my Lord was near,

“Arise! arise! Salomê, hear!
 My undefiled, My beauteous Dove,
 Why sorrow thus? I come to cheer,
 And gladden all thy soul with love.

“Thou knowest Me! Have I not died
 To bless thee, Love! to make thee Mine?
 Ah! see my brow, My bleeding side,
 And weep no more: Am I not thine?”

“Yes, Lord,” I cried, “I know Thee well
 Thy wounded heart, Thy bleeding brow
 A tender tale of mercy tell;
 My Best Beloved, my Saviour Thou.”

I spoke—and oh! His heavenly look,
 And loving smile, divinely sweet!
 My willing hand He gently took,
 And drew me from my lone retreat.

“’Tis spring,” he cried. “Come forth and see—
 The tender vines are budding now;
 The fig tree bears—and, hark! for thee
 The turtle sings on yonder bough.”

Through sunny vales, and cooling shade,
 In converse sweet we passed along;
 But oft our lingering steps delayed,
 To catch the turtle’s heavenly song.

But oh ! His own melodious tongue
Was dearer far than all I heard ;
On this my rapturous spirit hung,
And treasured every gracious word.

His tender theme, it was all love—
His own sweet love, so full and free,
That made Him leave His home above,
And sorrow, suffer, die for me.

On this He dwelt—and oh ! I found
My heart dissolve at all He said ;
The joy I felt, on all around
New light, and life, and glory shed.

Sweet, blessed day ! but ah ! it pass'd,
The dew, the shades of evening fell,
And night stole on, and found at last
Salomé in her lonely cell.

My Lord had fled—He could not stay—
For earth, you know, is not His home,
But yet, He said, “ At break of day
Salomé ! Love ! again I'll come.

“ O weep not then—bear up awhile ;
The day,” He cried, “ is coming fast,
When thou shalt dwell beneath the smile,
The sunshine of My love at last.”

Sweet promise ! ah ! what else could make
These tears of rapture fill mine eye ?
Without it, Lord ! my heart would break,
My mourning spirit droop and die.

There is, there is a world of rest,
Dear Saviour, for my weary soul,
Where all are holy, all are blest,
And love's unfailing waters roll.

And there, beside those healing springs,
Far, far away from fear and strife,
Thy Dove shall fold her silver wings,
And nestle in the tree of life.

SIR EDWARD DENNY.

Confession.

"Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering."—LEV. vi. 5.

NOT only is it true that both God and man are gainers by the Great Trespass Offering presented on the cross at Calvary; but we also learn, from the foregoing quotation, that God looked for confession and restitution, when any trespass had been committed. The sincerity of the former would be evidenced by the latter. It was not sufficient for a Jew, who had trespassed against his brother, to go and say, "I am sorry." He had to restore the thing wherein he had trespassed and add a fifth thereto. Now, although we are not under the law, yet may we gather much instruction from its institutions; although we are not under the schoolmaster, we may learn some good lessons from him. If, then, we have trespassed against any one, it is not enough that we confess our sin to God and to our brother, we must take restitution; we are called upon to give practical proof of the fact that we have judged ourselves on account of that thing in which we have trespassed.

We question if this is felt as it ought to be. We fear there is a light, flippant, easy-going style in reference to sin and failure, which must be very grievous indeed to the Spirit of God. We rest content with the mere lip confession, without the deep heartfelt sense of the evil of sin in God's sight. The thing itself is not judged in its moral roots, and, as a consequence of this trifling with sin, the heart becomes hard, and the conscience loses its tenderness. *This is very serious.* We know of few things

more precious than a tender conscience. We do not mean a *scrupulous* conscience, which is governed by its own crotchets; or a *morbid* conscience, which is governed by its own fears. Both these are most troublesome guests for anyone to entertain. But we mean a *tender* conscience, which is governed, in all things, by the Word of God, and which refers, at all times, to His authority. This sound description of conscience we consider an inestimable treasure. It regulates everything, takes cognizance of the very smallest matter connected with our daily walk and habits—our mode of dress—our houses—our furniture—our table—our entire deportment, spirit, and style—our mode of conducting our business, or, if it be our lot to serve others, the mode in which we discharge the service, whatever it be. In short, everything falls under the healthful moral influence of a tender conscience. "Herein," says the blessed apostle, "do I exercise myself, to have *always* a conscience void of offence toward God and men."

This is what we may well covet. There is something morally beautiful and attractive in this exercise of the greatest and most gifted servant of Christ. He, with all his splendid gifts, with all his marvellous powers, with all his profound insight into the ways and counsels of God, with all he had to speak of and glory in, with all the wonderful revelations made to him in the third heavens; in a word, he, the most honoured of apostles and privileged of saints, gave holy diligence to keep always a conscience void of offence both toward God and man; and if, in an unguarded moment, he uttered a hasty word, as he did to Ananias the high priest, he was ready the very next moment to confess and make restitution, so that the hasty utterance, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall," was withdrawn, and God's word

given instead—"Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people."

Now, we do not believe that Paul could have retired to rest that night with a conscience void of offence if he had not withdrawn his words. There must be confession, when we do or say what is wrong; and if there be not the confession, our communion will assuredly be interrupted. Communion, with unconfessed sin upon the conscience, is a moral impossibility. We may talk of it; but it is all the merest delusion. We must keep a clean conscience if we would walk with God. There is nothing more to be dreaded than moral insensibility, a slovenly conscience, an obtuse moral sense that can allow all sorts of things to pass unjudged; that can commit sin, pass on, and coolly say, "What evil have I done?"

Let us, with holy vigilance, watch against all this. Let us seek to cultivate a tender conscience. It will demand from us what it demanded from Paul, namely, "exercise." But it is blessed exercise, and it will yield most precious fruits. Do not suppose that there is aught that savours of the legal in this exercise; nay, it is most thoroughly Christian; indeed we look upon those noble words of Paul as the very embodiment, in a condensed form, of the whole of a Christian's practice:

"Herein do I exercise myself to have ALWAYS a conscience void of offence toward God and men."

C. H. M.



As to Guidance.

(For Young Believers.)



THERE may be many things in regard to which you have difficulty in knowing exactly what you ought to do. "Ought I to go to parties now that I am a Christian?" perhaps some timid little Christian says.

Now in these, as in all other things, it is quite possible for young Christians to get into a bondage in which God never intended His children to be. He has called us into liberty. His grace has not hedged us round with rules: "Thou shalt not do this," or "Thou shalt not do that," but it has given us a new nature which leads our desires out towards Him, and makes us *want* to do the things that please Him; and He has promised that "If any man will do His will *he shall know*" (Jno. vii. 17).

In many cases the young Christian need never be in doubt as to whether a thing is right for them or not. If the Christian be a child under control, where there is no actual sin involved, the will of mother or father must be taken as God's will for the Christian child. The Word of God is plain: "Children, obey your parents." As God has placed your parents over you, He expects a full obedience to all their wishes, unless, of course, to obey means actual sin. Even where your parents' wishes are not the same as your own, or where you do not like doing the thing your parents wish, still God expects a glad obedience, and will take it as given to Himself, He has said: "If ye love me ye *will*."

But when in doubt, and your parents express no particular wish one way or the other, or if you are

not under parental control, and you are free to act as you please, let there be earnest waiting upon God for His guidance—and remember that He has three principal ways in which He makes known His will to His people.

1.—*The Bible*, which is a written revelation of God's will. Let that be diligently searched, with earnest prayer, in all times of doubt.

2.—*His Spirit*, whom He has promised shall guide us into all truth. God's Spirit acts usually through God's Word, but sometimes you may feel convinced that a certain course is God's will for you, though you may not be able to tell exactly how you know it. At such times be quite sure there is nothing in God's Word to the contrary, and be much in prayer, that you may make no mistake. He has said: "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me."

3.—*Our daily circumstances*. Sometimes, when you are in doubt, God will so order things over which you have no control, as to make things quite clear. An illness, or the weather, may make it impossible for you to do what you had planned. Instead of murmuring at these things because they upset our own arrangements, let them be gladly accepted as God's will for us, and as one of His ways of leading and guiding us in the path that His love sees to be best for us.

One word more. In all things be quite sure that you are "ready to obey." Oftentimes we ask for guidance, having already made up our minds as to which way we are going to take. Let there be the "willing spirit," and the readiness to follow wherever God leads, and you will find that the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

A Little Prayer.



GOD make my life a little light
 Within the world to glow,
 A little flame that burneth bright
 Wherever I may go.

God make my life a little flower
 That giveth joy to all.
 Content to bloom in native bower
 Although its place be small.

God make my life a little song
 That comforteth the sad,
 That helpeth others to be strong,
 And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff
 Whereon the weak may rest,
 That so what health and strength I have
 May serve my neighbours best.

God make my life a little hymn
 Of tenderness and praise.
 Of faith, that never waxeth dim,
 In all His wondrous ways.



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