



The Message:

An Australian Monthly Gospel Magazine.



“Fear not; I am
the first and the last;
I am He that liveth
and was dead; and
behold I am alive
forevermore, Amen;
and have the keys of
hell and of death.”

(REV. i. 17-18.)



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“The Time is Short.”

HOW soon
Our new-born life
Attains to full-aged noon!
And this, how soon to grey-haired night!
We spring, we bud, we blossom, we are past;
Ere we can count our days, they go, they flee
so fast.

They end
When scarce begun;
And ere we apprehend
That we begin to live, our life is done;
Man, count thy days, and, if they fly too fast
For thy dull thoughts to count, count every
day the last.



The Message.



Changes.

THE changing year naturally reminds us of how changing is the scene through which we are passing.

“Change and decay in all around I see,”

sang the dying poet Lyte, and surely we echo his last words, not as mere sentiment of poetry, be it rhyme or blank verse, but as hard, stern fact.

It is most humiliating to consider that we can see, hear, and feel nothing that is not subject to change. Within and without, before behind, and below, above and around—everything varies or disappears. Time, health, friends, intentions, circumstances—each severally, and all together change.

Now, the Bible speaks of some solemn changes which have occurred, or which will take place. We read of those “who

CHANGED THE TRUTH OF GOD

into a lie” (Rom. i.) Left by God to their native ignorance and folly “because they did not like to retain Him in their knowledge,” they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God even into “creeping things;” and sank morally lower than the brute creation. History will repeat itself. What man has been he will become again (2 Thess. ii.) The human

heart is ever the same. Polish and progress cannot alter it.

"CAN THE ETHIOPIAN CHANGE HIS SKIN?"

Impossible. He was born black! Can the "leopard change his spots?" Never, they are birth spots. "Neither," says God, "can ye do good who are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. xiii. 23).

A curate in India once boasted to a missionary that he had "the cure of *white* souls." Alas, all souls are black, the white-skinned sinners' as much as that of the descendants of Cush. Birth, education, religion, are powerless to effect an inward change. The Law never could change the heart of man. Who...ever became honest in heart by an act of Parliament? Hence, we read in Heb. vii. of

"A CHANGE ALSO OF THE LAW."

The law of Moses was not given to better man, but to evidence how bad he is (Rom. vii.). It "entered that the offence might abound" (Rom. v.). It was "weak through the flesh" (Rom. viii.).

A sculptor may be a clever fellow, but he cannot carve an image out of a bag of sand. The fault is not in him, but in his material. So "the law is holy, just and good;" but man is such bad material that it cannot shape him into the moral likeness of God. He must be "born again" and receive the Holy Ghost before a real change in his state can be effected. Then there is a change indeed.

As soon as Jacob was bidden to go up to Béthel ("the house of God") the word was, "Be clean, and

CHANGE YOUR GARMENTS."

The moral condition and environments of a sinner are entirely changed at conversion. People do not recognise him as the same man. (See Jno. ix. 8, 9.) He makes a clean cut (or he ought to do so)

with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Old things pass away; all things become new—new hopes, joys, desires. He leaves his old sinful self at the Cross, and becomes more and more like his heavenly Saviour—

“CHANGED INTO THE SAME IMAGE

from glory to glory” (2 Cor. iii.). We always become more or less like the object we are occupied with and admire. If a man of the world is known by the company he keeps, so should the Christian be (Acts iv. 13). Indeed, if right in soul, this is the great thing he aims at (Phil. iii.), for he knows that death changes everything else.

“If a man die, shall he live again?” says Job, and he adds, “All the days of my appointed time will

I WAIT TILL MY CHANGE COMES.”

Whether Job refers to death or to resurrection, what he waited for is the only change that the natural man can certainly wait for. When death comes all his prospects and possessions go with his breath. “In that very day his thoughts perish.” What an awful change death is to the sinner; how glorious it is to the saint. Yet death may never come to us believers, but if it does not, the Lord will come and

“CHANGE OUR BODIES

of humiliation and fashion them like unto His own body of glory” (Phil. iii.). What a blessed change that will be to us; yet how fraught with momentous issues it will be to the world. It is said of the wicked, “Because they have *no changes*, therefore they fear not God”; but when grace closes and judgment begins they will have changes enough.

We read that Antichrist, the man of sin, will be revealed, and shall “*think to*

CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS ”

(Dan. vii. 25: contrast chap. ii. 21). Anarchy, re-

bellion, cruelty, famine, lust, and general lawlessness will abound. Indeed, there will be little check on the vile and defiant will of man, unless it be the feeble and persecuted Jewish remnant. But Jehovah shall speak and say:

"I AM THE LORD, I CHANGE NOT;

therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. iii.), and He shall appear for the deliverance of His earthly people, the confusion of His foes, and the establishment of His kingdom (Rev. xix.).

After a lapse of a thousand years, permanency shall again give place to change, for evil shall again vaunt itself (Rev. xx.); but fire shall descend from heaven and destroy the adversary.

Finally, all things shall change, for in the plenitude of His power God shall cause this earth to be burnt up (2 Pet. iii.). Like a huge bomb it shall blow itself to atoms, and the new heaven and the new earth shall be formed.

"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and

THEY SHALL BE CHANGED:

BUT

THOU ART THE SAME,

and thy years shall have no end" (Psa. cii. 25-27).

Whatever be the changes of the coming year, may both the writer and the beloved reader be kept in the care and the changeless love of the changeless One—"till He come."

Our souls thro' many changes go;
His love no change can ever know.

S. J. B. C.

The Serpent of Brass.

TO punish Israel for their murmuring and departure from God they are visited by a plague of serpents, spreading a terrible panic amongst the people.

They spring with deadly coil from the sand. They lurk unsuspected in the stunted shrubs. They hide in the crevices of the rock. They creep within the folds of the tent. There is a shriek, and the neighbours hurry to find one within, gasping, fallen, dead! Now a strong man writhes in anguish and is stretched a corpse.

THE DREADFUL HISS IS HEARD,

and a mother snatches her child. Alas, too late! She presses the dead body to her breast. They multiply till no life is safe, no place is free. The calm night is rent by the cries of the victims and the mournings for the slain. Hundreds are dead on the way. Households are dead at dawn.

Then the people come to Moses, saying, "We have sinned; entreat the Lord for us." Then God directs him to take a serpent of brass, and set it up on a pole; and whoever looked at it should live. With the cry of the perishing urging him to haste, Moses shaped the serpent and set it up glistening in the desert sun. "And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." Such is the scene.

Here is a weird picture of sin—of "sin in the flesh." Upon the still air of the wilderness there rings a cry. The people, roused from their noontide rest, run together. Here lies one writhing in the dust. What ails him? There is no wound from which the life

is oozing. There are no broken limbs, no sign of any blow.

"Bring him forth from the tent," saith one, "it is the heat."

"Set him in the shade," saith another.

"It is the sun," saith a third, "stand back and let him have the air."

"He is faint and overdone," saith another, "give him food."

But deeper than their eyes can see lies the mischief. As if the heart had turned traitor to the man, it hurries the poison through his veins and sends it throughout the system. It creeps into the brain and leaves it darkling; it goes along the limbs and leaves them powerless. Then his struggles cease, the man groans and dies.

THE MISCHIEF IS WITHIN HIM.

We talk of condition, temptation, surroundings, but deeper than these is the poison of sin. It is within, yes, within; an accursed poison in the soul. It paralyses the will, and leaves the sinner indifferent and dead to God. It creeps into the mind and darkens it to God. Circumstances may aggravate the poison within, but circumstances are neither the cause nor the cure of the mischief. It is deeper than any influences with which we can reach it, and more than any surroundings can undo. The poison is *within*—it is "sin in the flesh."—"I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18).

And now comes a simple man who ventures to suggest that it is a serpent's bite! If the people of those times were as clever as the clever people of to-day, think of the derision with which it is greeted. "A horrible delusion—an utter superstition. A

notion fit for these dark ages before we were born! Look at Man, sir. Do you not know that he is the very top and crown of all creation? See him with his lofty intellect, his kingly will, his majestic bearing, set as one having dominion over the kingdoms of the earth! Do you mean to say that a little contemptible reptile, a thing that creeps in the dust, can touch him, and destroy with such a swift and fatal mystery? Nonsense, sir—it is most unphilosophical."

But listen, what is that cry? Run swiftly. Draw back the curtain of his tent. See, there creeps the serpent, and there lies the philosopher, dead, dead. Dead with all his kingly intellect and lofty words.

Ah! so men talk of sin. It is an article of some ancient creed, a lingering superstition of the priests, a mistake of our training. Would to God it were!

IT IS AN AWFULLY REAL THING.

Do you not know, have you not felt, this accursed mischief within you? The good you would, you do not: the evil you would not, that you do. Sin a delusion, a notion, a foolish fancy! Why, into what hundreds of homes I could take you this very night, where staggers the drunken man, the drunken woman; and where the wretched, white-faced, ragged children cower terrified. Go and ask the outcast loathing life; go and ask the drunkard as he grinds his teeth and curses that which is dragging him down to hell, body, soul and spirit. Do you object that I have taken an extreme case? Where did the extreme case begin? What made these extreme and exceptional cases if sin is not a hideously real thing? And turn to the noblest, the purest, the best you have ever read of. Do not their confessions, their prayers, their struggles tell us the

same thing? Sin is real, horribly, awfully, accursedly real. Ask a man who has tried to break its fetters and cast off its tyranny. It is real.

Look yet again—The bite was fatal. Much people died. It was no light affliction which was but for a moment, a passing inconvenience that wore away with time; no sickness was it from which prudence and care could recover them. Not as when Paul shook off his venomous beast into the crackling flames, and it perished there. He who was bitten, died; old and young, strong men and frail woman.

“Ah,” said some of those who are always ready to make light of an illness unless it is their own, “he will get over it; he is young, age is on his side.”

“Ah,” said another, “look what a splendid constitution he has, he will mend.”

“Ah,” said another, “we must hope for the best.”

But much people died. It is the awful picture of sin. It can have but one ending—

DEATH—DEATH—DEATH.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” so rings the warning of God.

How foolishly we talk of it. When it is the child, we say, “He is young and will grow better.” When it is the youth, we say, “Let him sow his wild oats, and he will settle down.” Ah, what cruel folly! What a man soweth that shall he also reap. When he is middle aged, we say, “Yes, it is very sad, but he has a great many good points, you know.” And when he is an old man and dies, we say, “Well we must hope for the best.” And in upon this Babel there comes the terrible note of doom:—“The wages of sin is death,” death, death, eternal death. Ever are those two joined together, and joined to-

gether of God; no man can put them asunder. There is but one power that can ever sever the two, and that is the death of Jesus Christ.—“He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. v. 21). *That* is the brazen serpent, and the sinner who looks *not* thereon must die.

My brother, hold up the lamp of God, and let it fall out here upon the path in which you are going, and look on to the end of it. What voices are those that sound from heaven, how tender and entreating, how loud and commanding, bidding you flee from the wrath to come? What voices are these which sound from another world, weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!

The lips of Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour, He who came not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved, He hath spoken of “the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.” Figurative? Certainly, but what underlies the figure? What does it shape and set forth? I know not—God grant you never may! But it is the figure which sets forth the end and the doom of sin. If sin is a light thing to be excused and laughed away, what is the meaning of that Cross? Why, then, must the Son of Man be lifted up? There in that shame and curse and agony I see sin as I can see it nowhere else. Sin is a deadly and fatal thing—Sin has but one ending, and that ending is the awful mystery of Hell.

THE GREAT REMEDY.

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Notice that this Remedy came

from God, as the remedy of the serpent of brass came from God.

THE SNAKE CHARMERS.

If Israel were as enlightened as men are in our times, the people did not die for lack of advisers and opinions. And, doubtless, they tried all their own remedies before they turned to the Lord. I could think that none would be so busy as the charmers. Amongst them would be some who knew the secrets of the Egyptian snake-charmers. In the "mixed multitude" may have been the professional charmer, boasting a descent which could not fail in its authority. And they come bringing assured remedies. There is the music that can charm the serpent and destroy the poison. There is the mystic sign set around the place that made it sacred. There are mysterious magic amulets to be worn for safety; this on the neck and this about the wrist. There is a ceremony that shall hold the serpent spell-bound and powerless.

But come hither. Lift up this curtain. See here one lies on the ground.

"He sleeps," you say.

Nay indeed, he will never wake again. Why, it is the charmer! Here are the spells, the charms and the mystic signs all about him. And lo! there glides the serpent; the charmer himself is dead.

Many are busy still with their charms—Church services, softened feelings, muttered prayers. Nay, nay, they avail nothing. Religious forms, ceremonies, creeds, are empty and useless if they stop short of the Cross of Christ. "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." In Him, and Him alone, is salvation. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, con-

demned sin in the flesh " (Rom. viii. 3).

Others, doubtless, urged more severe measures. Cut deeply into the wounded part.

BURN OUT THE POISON.

And still much people died.

Ah! the agony and strife, the bitter shame, the keen cutting of remorse, the misery and anguish with which sinners have striven for deliverance. But all in vain—all in vain. Are you not tired of the mummeries of the charmers? Priests and preachers, creeds and theories, is it not time to seek a true remedy? The agony and anguish of your own efforts, the misery of your own failures, can you not find some better way than this?

Moses prayed, and there came an answer. Swiftly he bade the workmen make a serpent of brass, and eagerly he set it up upon the lofty staff. And then throughout the camp went the heralds with the tidings—"God hath given us a remedy. When any man is bitten let him look upon the brazen serpent, and it shall come to pass that he shall live." Blessed be God that He hath devised a way of salvation. We want no other. Against Him have I sinned. With Him alone have I to do, and that which He hath provided I can assuredly accept.

Ah, what a sight it was! Haggard eyes and faces pale in death turned to the glistening sign, and at once the fever ceased, the sufferer lived. Here and there came eager groups, bringing some dying one to look. Gasping, he reaches the top of the hill. The vision bursts upon him. He lives! he lives! "When he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

(Adapted—from a Gospel Address.)

Lost.

WHILE passing through the street, if a straw dropped from my hand I should think nothing and say nothing about it. But should I lose a five-pound note, I should at once think of and speak of my loss.

And why?

Because I knew its value, and could do very badly with its loss.

"I have lost the sheep," says the shepherd, because to him it was valuable.

"I have lost my piece of silver," says the woman, because she could ill afford to lose it.

"I have lost my boy," says the father, because he loved the boy. The lost is valued, the lost is loved.

Oh, what love is in that little word of one syllable, "lost!" You even may not feel that you have lost God; but the grace and value and appreciation all begin on His side. You have chosen the world, the devil, and the flesh; but God says:—

"I love you, I do not wish to do without you. I feel I have lost something. Suns and stars, planets and comets, day and night, summer and winter, are all under My control. The reins of ten thousand stars and systems are held in My uncreated hands. Angels that excel in strength rejoice to do My will, and obey My commandments. The sea hears My voice and calms its waves. 'The floods clap their hands' to My glory. The forests shake at My presence. But, oh! man, made in My image, placed at the head of creation! I have **LOST THEE**. Still I love thee, have so loved thee that I have said, Thou art lost to Me; so loved thee that I have sent My only begotten Son to seek thee."

"We Know"

(2 Cor. v. 1-16.)

CAN it be right for me to go
 On in this dark, uncertain way?
 Say "I believe" and yet not "know"
 Whether my sins are put away?
 Must clouds and darkness veil my brow
 Until I dwell with saints in light?
 And must I walk in darkness now
 Because I cannot walk by sight?
 And shall I just begin to say,
 Oh God, Thy gracious Word is true,
 And cast my doubts and fears away
 When all the world will own it too?
 How can I forth to sinners go,
 And tell of grace so rich and free,
 If all the while I do not know
 Whether that grace has smiled on me?
 How can it be my joy to dwell
 On the rich power of Jesus' blood,
 If all the while I cannot tell
 That it has sealed my peace with God?
 How can I be like Christ below,
 How like my Lord in witness shine,
 Unless with conscious joy I know
 His Father and His God as mine?
 Is this the way to treat the One
 Who woos my confidence and love,
 Who by His death the work has done,
 Which God has ratified above?
 Saviour, forgive my unbelief;
 No more I tremble, fear and doubt;
 I came to Thee in sin and grief,
 And Thou wilt never cast me out.

“Ye were Sealed.”

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”—Eph. i. 13.

WHO believes the gospel?

The *sinner*.

And who is sealed by the Holy Ghost?

The *believer*.

Nothing could be more simple: the *sinner* hears the gospel, and believes it; and the *believer*, being sealed by the Holy Ghost, is brought into the enjoyment of all that belongs to him.

I will illustrate what I mean. Suppose I want a hundred sheep, and go to the nearest sheep-fair, and find what I want. I say to their owner, “I am prepared to give you two pounds each for your sheep.” He contracts to sell me the sheep at the price, I put down the money, and thus the sheep become mine.

What do I do next with them?

Drive them home?

No, I do not take them home immediately, I am not in such a hurry: before I drive them a yard I take my paint pot, and I put *my mark* upon every one of my sheep. If I fail to do this, in driving them home they might get mixed up with some other people’s sheep, and I should not know which were mine.

Alas! that is the way Christians do get mixed up with the people of the world, and often you cannot know the one from the other. It will not do for me to say I think I know that sheep to be mine by a leg mark, or by the turn of his ears, or by his horns: no, I must be sure of my own, and so I put my peculiar mark on each. Similarly, in giving the Holy Ghost, God puts His mark, clearly and distinctly, upon all His own.

But let me ask you this: Did the mark I put upon the sheep make it mine?

You know it did not. I put the *mark* on it *because* it was mine, but it was the *money* I paid for it that *made* it mine.

So it is the work of Christ, the blood of Christ, that redeems and saves, and brings the soul to God, and then the Holy Ghost is given to dwell in the believer as God's seal upon him, and the earnest of the good things that belong to him, so that the believer is sure of glory; his heart is now put in possession of eternal things, and he enjoys them.

It is like the bunch of grapes from Eshcol, which Israel saw in the desert, and beautiful they were, it took two men to carry one bunch. The people were not in the land when they saw those grapes, but having seen the grapes, they had a taste of the land before they got into it.

Before you and I go to heaven, we have, by the Holy Ghost, a taste of heavenly things. We know that we belong to heaven, and we know the atmosphere of the place we are going to. We know the Father, we know the Saviour, we have eternal life, and enjoy communion and fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

W. T. P. W.

"Your Faith."

NO faith (Mark iv. 40; Deut. xxxii. 20). *Little* faith (Matt. vi. 30; xvi. 8). *Strong* in faith (Rom. iv. 20). *Rich* in faith (James ii. 5). *Your* faith *groweth* (2 Thess. i. 3). *Great* is thy faith (Matt. viii. 20; Luke vii. 9). *Lord increase* our faith (Luke xvii. 5).

True Science.

BEYOND THE REACHES OF THE MIND AND THE REACHES OF THE HEART
 "Opposition of sci-ence falsely so called."—1 TIM. vi. 20.
BEYOND THE REACHES OF THE MIND AND THE REACHES OF THE HEART

THE evil genius of Infidelity wooed all the sciences; but they have all cast him off.

He sought to make a home among the stars; but from every sphere there issued a voice having in it a tone of Christ, and evermore repeating, "When He prepared the heavens, I was there."

Scared from the heavens, he betook himself to the depths of the earth, intent on rearing a fortress, founded on the primitive rock, built up with all the strata, and garrisoned by megalosauri and other monster inhabitants of former worlds. But as he proceeded with his imagined citadel, ever and anon sounded forth the same voice, echoing amid all the rocks, "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills, I was brought forth."

Driven from the depths, he turned to Ethnology, and from the woolly hair of the negro, the wild nature of the Indian, the wretched visage of the Australian, and the distinctive types of Mongol and Caucasian, of African and Malay, tried, in the coldness of his heart, to construct an evidence that mankind was not a race of one blood and one brotherhood. But Physiology, tracking his path, sends us to-day from every tribe, the testimony as to man's body, that "God has made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Then he betook himself to Orientalism, sure of finding in the towns of Eastern sages brilliant demonstration that the inspiration of Scripture was

a fable. But now, from Shastra and from Veda, from the lore of Bhuddhism, from the statutes of Confucius, we hear coming a voice, which is compelled to murmur, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Driven from every other scientific retreat, he sought a rest in Archæology, boasting that he would find in the pyramids of Egypt, in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, of Jerusalem and Rome, dust enough to blacken the brow of Christianity for ever. But this day we hear from the banks of the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates, an ancient voice proclaiming, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past hath spoken to us by His Son." The stones of Jerusalem and Rome lift up their voice and cry, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday."

At His footstool, true Science must ever meekly bow, and loyally proclaim, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." (Anon.)

A Letter.

To the Editor of *The Message*.

DEAR SIR,—Accept my grateful thanks for your kindness to me in sending so regularly during 1902 your most useful magazine—*The Message*—for my lighthouse work. We shall see the results of our work when up-yonder in His presence.

And now may I ask you to kindly continue sending the 50 copies each month during next year, for the same purpose; and also let me know the very lowest price you would charge to send me 100 every month, besides the 50, as I would like to send the written ministry to all the lighthouses on our own coasts, which now number 172. I feel sure the magazine must be a blessing to those lonely ones. I never cease to pray for them, and am looking forward to meeting many in glory whose hearts have been cheered and brightened through the silent *Message*. My means are very limited, and it is through self-denial only that I am able to do this work, and I am heartily thankful to all God's dear children who have so kindly helped me in my little service; so do please give me all the help you can, for His sake.

Yours, in Christ's work,

* *

EDITOR'S NOTE.—We send 172 copies each month gratis to this dear worker, and publish the above to again remind our friends of the many demands upon our Free Grant Fund. Who will help?

The Lord's Approval.



† It should be joy to anyone who loves the Lord Jesus to think of having His individual peculiar approbation and love—to find He has approved of our conduct in such and such circumstances, though none know this but ourselves, who receive the approval.

But, beloved, are we really content to have an approval which Christ only knows?

Let us try ourselves a little. Are we not too desirous of man's commendation of our conduct? or, at least, that he should know and give us credit for the motives that actuate it? Are we content, so long as good is done, that nobody should know anything about us—even in the Church to be thought nothing of? that Christ alone should give us the "white stone" of His approval, and "the new name which no man knoweth save only he that receiveth it"?

Are we content, I say, to seek nothing else? Oh! think what the terrible evil and treachery of that heart must be that is not satisfied with Christ's special favour, but seeks honour (as we do) of one another instead!

I ask you, beloved, which would be most precious to you, which would you prefer, the Lord's public owning of you as a good and faithful servant, or the private individual love of Christ resting upon you—the secret knowledge of His love and approval?

He whose heart is specially attached to Christ will respond, "The latter." Both will be ours, if faithful; but we shall value this most; and there is nothing that will carry us so straight on our course as the anticipation of it.

THE BRIDE

In the Day of His Rejection and the Day of His Glory.

THE whore is called "great." The bride is called "holy."—She is called "the holy city," not "the great city." Holiness characterises her.

Gold, precious stones, and pearls, John saw adorning both, but under *different circumstances*.

"The whore" decked herself out with them, whilst the One she professed to own was absent in heaven, rejected by men, and she used such adornments as an unfaithful woman to attract the kings of the earth.

"The bride," on the other hand, is decked with them only when *she is displayed* before all as the Lamb's wife. She waits for all that. To please *His own eye* no such adornment is needed, but when she shall be displayed to *others* as His wife, He will provide her with gold, precious stones, and pearls, so that she shall be seen by all in His own beauty.

J. B. S.

Separation.

SERIOUS people often complain of the snares they meet with from worldly people, and yet they must mix with them to get a livelihood.

I advise them, if they can, *to do their business with the world as they do it in the rain*. If their business calls them abroad they will not leave it undone for fear of being a little wet, but then when it is done they seek shelter and will not stand in the rain.

So providential and necessary calls of duty that lead us into the world will not hurt us if we find the spirit of the world unpleasant and are glad to retire from it and keep out of it.

That which is our cross is not likely to be our snare.

(From "Cerdiphonia," by John Newton.)

"All Things but Loss"

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."—PHIL. iii. 8.

"It was that very spot, sir," said a working shoemaker, pointing to a place in his little workshop; "yes, in that very place, sir, six years ago, that the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul; and how good and gracious He is."

Such was almost the beginning of our happy and profitable intercourse, on paying a visit to this dear brother.

He then said something like this: "When I was converted to God, and knew the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, as my Saviour, I thought, I shall now surely prosper in my little business; but in this I was sadly mistaken, for my earnings very soon fell off. The first year I earned three shillings a week less, the second year three shillings a week less, the third year four shillings a week less, and then my earnings became so little that I thought I must give it all up, and seek some other employment, though I had so enjoyed the Lord's presence with me in this little place.

"Accordingly, knowing a kind Christian man, who held a good situation in a large factory near this, I asked him if he thought he could procure me employment of any kind in his place of business, and he promised to let me know when there was a vacancy.

"But after this I became deeply exercised before the Lord as to what I was about. 'Is this that I am seeking according to my own will or the Lord's will? Is He bidding me to give up my present calling and seek another? for I have had much of the Lord's presence, and enjoyed His sweet company when working alone in this corner.'

"And just then the Lord seemed to say to me, 'Which will you have? Will you go into the factory, and mix with the ungodly multitude with large wages, or remain in this corner and enjoy My presence with small earnings; which will you have?'

"It was a serious moment. I turned it well over in my mind. I considered how weak I am, how easily turned aside, and began to think that if I went into that factory to work, I might be drawn away, and lose my blessed Lord's sweet company.

"So I said, 'Lord, let me have Thy company, even if it must be with small earnings; I'd rather suffer loss than not enjoy Thy presence with me.'

"Now, sir, it is remarkable that from that time work began to come in more than for a long time before."

We could not help thinking that the result was just what we should have expected. We believe that one of the greatest hindrances to souls is their being so taken up with desire for worldly prosperity. The consequence is that the Lord has not got His rightful place in their hearts; and, however many excuses they may make, the question really is, "Am I seeking earthly gain, or the enjoyment of the Lord's presence?"

"Is communion with Him the uppermost desire of my heart?"

Perhaps no point is of more importance for us really to settle in the presence of God. If worldly advantage, to say nothing of the accumulation of wealth, has the *first* consideration, let it not surprise us if such go further and further away from the Lord; but if we are willing to suffer loss, and to lay aside everything that hinders our enjoyment of His sweet company, then we may be sure that He will not forsake us as to food and raiment.

We believe the scripture is as true as ever, "Seek

ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We do well to remember that to the believer it is said, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Matt. vi. 33; Phil. i. 29).

H. H. S.

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"The Point of Joyful Delight."

(Extract of a letter.)

—

MAY your life lie in the point of joyful delight in the Father's will. If you make plans, make them as David did, when he said, "I will be yet more vile." Let us plan still to chose yet a lower, a rougher path. Many sow the seeds of a life of misery, and kicking against God, by planning for themselves comforts their Master never sought. Oh, as His lowly followers, let us not seek to sit where our Master stood and served, nor seek a cushioned seat, when He had nowhere to lay His head. We shall find that the Lord Himself will continually thwart us, and yet compel us at all times to praise Him, binding upon us, as with rivets of gold, all the priceless treasures of heaven.

=====

"Supply Our Need."



OUR lamps burn low—more oil,
 Spirit Divine:
 Our branches droop—more life,
 O Heavenly Vine!

We want the power to serve,
 The power to praise and pray;
 Oh, from Thy fulness, Lord, supply
 Our need each day. \

Two Great Revivals.



THERE were two great revivals in the history of Judah's kings—that under Hezekiah, and that of Josiah.

The first was characterized by *faith*.

You will all, doubtless, remember how Hezekiah prayed and spread the letter before the Lord, and the Lord came in and destroyed the mighty army of Sennacherib.

But Josiah's revival had another characteristic, which was, *attention to the Word of God*. The roll of the book was found, and then came the wondrous revolution effected by the judgment of all things by that perfect standard.

By analogy you have these two revivals in the history of the Church. That of the Reformation was characterized by bold faith, breaking up existing things; and although the Word of God was in measure the basis of appeal, things were not judged according to its standard. Rather was it a *re-formation* of that which was, or seemed to be, the Church around.

In the present day, another action has come, and God is leading those who have an ear to hear back to Scripture; close attention to the Word of God gives a character to the action of His Spirit in the Church at the present time. Everything is judged to which the veneration of centuries and the antiquity of ages had lent a charm, and had led souls away from Scripture; God has taken care, in His infinite, boundless mercy, that when He has commended us to Scripture in the last days, we should find in it everything needed for the exigencies of every hour!

F. G. P.

“The Lord alone did lead him.”

ONE day when I came to the little thicket on the cliff where I used to lie and watch the eagle's nest through my glass, I found that one eaglet was gone. The other stood on the edge of the nest, looking down fearfully into the abyss, whither his bolder nest-mate had flown, and calling disconsolately from time to time. His whole attitude showed plainly that he was hungry, cross, and lonesome. Presently the mother eagle came swiftly up from the valley, with food in her talons. She came to the edge of the nest, hovered over it for a moment, so as to give the hungry eaglet a sight and smell of food, then went slowly down to the valley with the food, thus telling the little one, in her own way, to come and he should have it.

He called after her loudly from the edge of the nest, and spread his wings a dozen times to follow. But the plunge was too awful; his heart failed him; and he settled back in the nest, pulled his head down into his shoulders, shut his eyes, and tried to forget he was hungry. The meaning of it all was plain enough. She was teaching him to fly, telling him that his wings were grown and the time was come to use them; but he was afraid.

In a little while she came back again, this time without food, and hovered over the nest, trying in every way to induce the little one to leave it. She succeeded at last, when with a desperate effort he sprang upward and flapped to the ledge above. Then, after surveying the world gravely from his new place, he flapped back into the nest, and turned a deaf ear to all his mother's assurance that he could fly just as easily to the tree-tops below, if he only would.

Suddenly, as if discouraged, she rose well above him. The little fellow stood on the edge of the nest, looking down at the plunge, which he dared not take. Then there was a sharp cry from behind, which made him alert, tense as a watch-spring. The next instant the mother-eagle had swooped, striking the nest with her feet, sending his support of twigs, and himself with them, out into the air together.

He was afloat now, afloat on the blue air in spite of himself, and flapped lustily for life. Over him, under him, beside him, hovered the mother on tireless wings, calling softly that she was there. But the awful fear of the depths and the lance tops of the spruces was upon the little one; his flapping grew more wild; he fell faster and faster. Suddenly, more in fright, it seemed to me, than because he had spent his strength, he lost his balance and tripped head downward into the air. It was all over now, it seemed; he folded his wings to be dashed in pieces among the trees. Then, like a flash, the old mother-eagle shot under him; his despairing feet touched her broad shoulders, between her wings. He righted himself, rested an instant, found his head; then she dropped like a shot from under him, leaving him to come down on his own wings. A handful of feathers, torn out by his claws, hovered slowly down after them.

It was all the work of an instant before I lost them among the trees far below. And when I found them again with my glass, the eaglet was in the top of a great pine, and the mother was feeding him.

And then, standing there alone in the great wilderness, it flashed upon me for the first time just what the wise old prophet meant, when he wrote long ago: "As the eagle stirreth up her nest, flut-

ings. Think of His discourses (*e.g.*, the sermon on the mount), and how literally or only in principle His instructions can be followed. Think of the parables which fell from His blessed lips and of their *manifold* significance.

Note Hebrews; I. and II. Peter, and James (the epistle of the Kingdom), and how often things are left indefinite, so that whilst we can enjoy the good of them the door may be left open for Christ's earthly brethren of a future day.

How broad is the view, how vast the design, and how many-sided are the aspects, of the Scriptures of truth. They make a Divine mosaic, which the Spirit of truth alone can put together; the forms and colors of which unite and blend in one harmonious whole.

S. J. B. C.



“There is a Friend.”



THEY came, they spoke, the idle commonplace;
That lifted not the load, eased not the heart,
Nor lent to rugged care a kindlier face,
Nor bade the shadows from the soul depart.
They spoke—'twas as a breath of idle wind
Bending the bruised reed it could not bind.

Then Thou did'st come, and give a word to me,
The feeling pressure of an outstretched Hand,
The soul of Faith that bids the shadows flee,
Of Hope, that points the way to brighter land.
Thy Love was like the sunshine after rain,
Cheering the drooping flower to smile again.

C. L. R.

Blackboard Lesson.

GOD so LOVED the world, that He GAVE
His

ONLY begotten Son, that whoso-
ever BELIEVETH in Him

SHOULD not

PERISH, but HAVE

EVERLASTING

LIFE.

FIVE SMOOTH STONES from John iii. 16.

WHAT a wonderful verse John iii. 16 is! Hundreds, thousands, old and young, of all nations, have been saved by its wondrous message. I will write it on the blackboard for you. There now. See how the word G-o-s-p-e-l is formed as an Acrostic! It is all Gospel, only Gospel, any way, every way you can read it.

I will pick out five words, which, like the five smooth stones taken from the brook by David the shepherd lad to slay Goliath, will, if you use them aright, kill outright every stalking giant of unbelief that seeks to keep you in doubt and fear regarding your own personal salvation.

No 1, is—"God so **LOVED.**" Yes, this is the first note of the Gospel. The law began

—"Thou shalt love." The Gospel begins —"God so loved." Not saints, not angels, but "the world"—a world of sinners.

The second—"That He **GAVE.**" Not promised, not offered, but *gave*, without asking, without deserving, gave His Son. Can you doubt His love after that? A loving, giving God. Can you say as one saved sinner did, of that only begotten Son of God —"Who loved *me* and *gave Himself* for me"? This is faith.

"That whosoever **BELIEVETH** in Him,"—not prayeth *to* Him, nor worketh *for* Him, but "*believeth in* Him." That surely is simple enough. To believe is to confide, to trust. You believe in the Bank, and you put in your shilling.

"Should **NOT PERISH**"—no never. I saw the other day, inside a Milner's safe, a lot of valuable things which had come through a great fire. All else perished. They were saved just because they were in it. I am "*in* Him." I shall never perish. Last and best—

"But **HAVE** everlasting life." I have it now, will always have it. Isn't the verse grand?

God LOVED, God GAVE
His Son.

I BELIEVE, I HAVE
everlasting life.

J. R.

Musings by an Old Traveller.



AN old traveller *ought* to be a good one; accustomed to all the vicissitudes of hill and dale, comfort and discomfort, storm and sunshine, rough and smooth.

But, truly, the longer I journey, the more difficult does it appear to me in every sense of the word to be a *good traveller*.


To *take* everything in a right spirit; to *do* everything in a right spirit; to *act* as one who can pass over the ground but once; to be diligent in doing all the work that lies in the way, and yet not entangled or hindered by that work; to make *proper* use of fellow travellers, neither holding them too cheap, nor prizing them too highly; to *run*, and yet with patience; to have eyes all around, and yet no eye but for Jesus; to be quite content, yet pressing on; to be quite alive and quite *dead*.

Is all this easy?

I trow not; the way appears to me to narrow and to steepen as I proceed; not a hope of reaching the end dawns, but as I know myself to be leaning on the Beloved; in His strength I feel as if I am already at home; looking off from Him, I see a bottomless pit on either side, into which I know not whether head or feet would first plunge, but, probably, the fall would be simultaneous.

But really one's head runs round, as we say, with the swarms of creatures in the narrow way, running hither and thither, and no one knows whither; some catching butterflies on the very edge of a precipice; some springing up to see what's in the moon, or to ask her how long she is to last; others digging into the earth, to ask how and when it was made; some have made lighters of some leaves of the Bible, just to put a little spark to their farthing rushlight; and I have to go so very, very near to their deep holes, and one and another says, "Do look in, it can do you no harm to look, they are eminently holy, learned men." But I say, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret!"

The Friend of Sinners.



HE dies! the Friend of sinners dies!
Lo! Salem's daughters weep around;
A solemn darkness veils the skies,
A sudden trembling shakes the ground.
Come, now, and drop a tear or two
For Him who groaned beneath your load;
He shed a thousand drops for you—
A thousand drops of richer blood.

Here's love and grief beyond degree:
The Lord of glory dies for men!
But lo! with joy and love we see,
Jesus, once dead, revives again!
The rising Lord forsakes the tomb;
Up to His Father's court He flies;
Cherubic legions guard Him home,
And shout Him welcome to the skies.

Dry, dry your tears, ye saints, and tell
How high your great Deliverer reigns;
Sing how He spoiled the hosts of hell
And led the monster Death in chains:
Say, "Live forever, Christ and King!
Born to redeem, and strong to save;"
Then ask the monster, "Where's thy sting?"
And, "Where's thy victory, boasting grave?"

ISAAC WATTS.

The Message.



“The Blood of Jesus can do all.”

(A R.C. Priest's Testimony.)



IN 1864, there was sent to the tribunal of Alar del Rey a chest, containing the lifeless body of a man, a well-known citizen of that town, who had suddenly disappeared. Search brought about the arrest of two women on suspicion of having murdered him. At the trial they confessed, and were condemned to death. I was among the priests designated to assist those unfortunate women in their last days, and I had to pass two nights and a day in the chapel which receives all those condemned to death. Thence comes the Spanish expression, “Enter into chapel,” which announces to the culprits the fate awaiting them.

One of these women was specially confided to my care. Her despair was painful to witness. The thought of death, and the prospect of meeting God without having the means of *redeeming* her crime by some good works, tortured her frightfully. In vain did I speak of the confession she had just made, of the cruel death by which she was about to expiate her offence, and specially of the absolution she would receive from my mouth; all that brought only a fleeting look of alleviation on her agonized face, and she ceased not to wring her hands, repeating,—

“Who can tell me that *that is sufficient* to obtain my pardon? . . . Oh, what can I do to obtain pardon, miserable and lost as I am?”

Time passed; the night was coming to a close, and the morrow's sun would shine on the poor creature's lifeless body. I had done all I could think of to console her, and felt terribly the insufficiency of human words in presence of such anguish. At last, and without then understanding the full force of my words, I said, “*But the blood of Christ ought to count for something!*”

“Ah!” said she, seizing with the avidity of a drowning man the cord I held out to her. “Yes, the blood of Christ ought to count for something!”

“Not only,” replied I, “can that blood do *something*, but it can do *all*, for the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, *cleanseth us from all sin.*”

“Is that true?” she said.

“Yes,” was my response; “the Apostle John affirms it in the name of God!”

“Oh, why did you not tell me *that sooner?*” said the poor woman; and I was surprised at the expression of calm on her pale face.

After a minute's silence, she replied:

“The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; but what must I do that it may wash away *mine also?*”

“My daughter,” replied I, “look to Jesus on the cross, and pronounce the words breathed from His Divine lips with His last sigh: ‘Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit!’ Jesus died thus; you must so die, and none will be able to snatch you from God's hand.”

She threw herself on the damp flags of the sombre chapel, repeating;—

“Pardon, through the blood of Jesus, which purifies! Receive my spirit, O Lord!”

Some time after, I was with her beside the fatal gibbet; the terrors of judgment to come again seized her.

"But I have sinned, and I am about to appear before God! Oh, what will become of me?"

"Dear friend," said I, "you can do nothing, but *the blood of Jesus can do all.*"

And, as if this assurance revived her courage, she ceased not to murmur:

"The blood of Jesus has washed away my sin; I commend my spirit into His hands."

A few minutes after, human justice was satisfied.

In 1889, crossing one of the principal streets of Madrid, I was accosted by a stranger, who, with a bow and some friendly words, handed me a little book. I asked of what it spoke; he replied: "Of the precious blood of Christ!" and moved rapidly away. As I observed its title, *Certainly for you also there is a Saviour!* someone said to me:

"Are you not aware that that is a Protestant book, and that you risk excommunication if you are found reading it?"

Alarmed by these words, and little desirous of becoming a victim of the Holy Office, I tore its pages and scattered them far. I continued my way with the sense of relief a man experiences on being delivered from some evil ready to overwhelm him. But though satisfied with the turn of this little adventure, the grave, gentle voice of the stranger still resounded in my ears. Those words, "the blood of Christ," had awakened old memories. All the details of a sombre story of crime, judgment, and the gallows passed vividly before me; at last they drew from me the question, "Since this woman was consoled by the assurance of the virtue of Christ's blood, *why* have you torn the book that recalled that truth?"

I retraced my steps, but the leaves had been scattered by the wind; I found only a little fragment of the red cover, and I re-read with emotion the title, *Certainly for you also there is a Saviour!*

And continuing my serious reflections, "In short," said I to myself, "did you deceive that woman on the threshold of Eternity in giving her the hope of pardon in the shed blood? Your words, were they, then, mere commonplace consolation, memories of cold and barren studies, and to which in reality you yourself attached no importance? And yet that word comforted her in the dark passage, with eyes towards the invisible world, and as on the threshold of Eternity, she again called them to Jesus, and commended her spirit into His hands. And would this cry remain unanswered? And would the flames of hell give a cruel denial to that bright faith, to that simple trust? No, no; that is impossible, that cannot be, that Word is true! But if so, why do you repulse it for yourself, and seek your own pardon by other practices, and by other means?"

I could not turn away my spirit from that serious consideration, and the words of the little tract resounded unceasingly in my ears until, a few weeks later, I repaired to a Protestant chapel, when the preacher's text was:—"*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*"

My conversion dates from that day, and those words which formerly my lips alone addressed to the poor condemned one have, by the grace of God, become the foundation of my joyous hope, and, I dare to say, of a calm and deep certitude.

Until I saw the blood, 'twas hell my soul was fearing,
 And dark and dreary in mine eyes the future was appearing;
 But when I saw the blood, and looked on Him who shed it,
 My right to peace was seen at once, and I with transport read it.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.)

A Wayside Sermon.



ABOUT a year ago the writer had occasion to pass through a portion of the beautiful and historic Mohawk Valley. On a full-length board by the high-wayside, set up on posts, he saw the following, painted :—

“Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life’ (John xiv. 6).

“Without the way, there is no going.

“Without the truth, there is no knowing.

“Without the life, there is no living.”

Here, we thought, is a neat little sermon for every passer-by to read and ponder.

Let us, fellow-traveller to Eternity, examine in detail its few terse statements.

First, Jesus, the Son of God, declares Himself to be the way. He does not, mark, proclaim Himself *a* way, or the *best* way, but **THE** way, excluding by a little word of three letters all other ways. He announces Himself, by the evangelist-prophet, “a just God and a Saviour; *there is none beside Me.*”

It is beyond the power of language to express a claim more definitely. No statement could be more explicit.

Is there no room, then, for the rival claims of Mohammed, Brahma, or Confucius? None, absolutely none. They, and all who make like claims, have been stamped in terms at once decisive and unmistakable. Listen! “All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers” (John x. 8). Where, in view of such a statement, are the claims of the worshippers of the so-called “queen of heaven”? Where is the host of saints whose names crowd the

calendars of Rome and ritualism? They are disposed of once and forever by the proclamation of this "One Mediator,"—"I am the way."

And "without the way, there is no going." A mock charity would have us believe that all will, in the end, fetch up in heaven, whatever course they may have pursued on earth. These are the half-disguised suggestions found in the writings of the late Canon Kingsley and Dean Farrar, and asserted now unblushingly in literature like "Millennial Dawn." As if a mariner by steering east should hope to reach the North Pole, or an explorer expect to find the river's source by travelling down the stream!

He is "the truth." Yet deceived and deceiving men would have the Christian believe that his Lord and God, Christ Jesus, made mistakes; that He lived in innocent ignorance of certain facts of history and science, now well known. We reply that we "have not so learned Christ." This is not our Lord Jesus, but "another Jesus"—a false Christ of their own defiled imagination. Hear the Christ of God: "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me." "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." "The Father which hath sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." "The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me" (John vii. 16; viii. 28; xii. 49; xiv. 24).

We say, with the officers sent to take Him, "Never man spake like this man." He did not, could not, make mistakes. In view of the scriptures cited above, He either knew perfectly whereof He spoke, or He was a deceiver of the first water. We should not be at all surprised if these "higher critics," "foaming out their own shame," eventually came

to believe Him as, "altogether such an one as themselves." How utterly contemptible are the ravings of these "men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth"! And how unspeakably solemn to such are the words of Him whom they malign! "He that rejecteth Me, *and receiveth not My words*, hath one that judgeth him: *the word that I have spoken*, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John xii. 48).

Verily He *is* the truth, and "without the truth, there is no knowing."

He is "the life" also. "In Him was life." "I am the resurrection and the life," He cries. And "without the life there is no living," no living to God, or trying to "live a Christian life." For it is evident that one must *have* a Christian life before he can "live" it. And all man's trying, without Christ as his "life," is branded "dead works" by the Word of God (Heb. ix. 14).

Without Christ, then, there is nothing for the sinner but death, darkness, and damnation.

Death, because Christ "the life" is not possessed; *darkness*, because apart from Christ "the truth" nothing of a spiritual nature can be certainly known; and *damnation*, because Christ—the only way to heaven—being rejected, the only alternative is hell!

Hast thou Christ the way, the truth, the life? Read John i. 12. C. K.



"**Confess** your faults"—"Better go back than lose yourself."



"**Be diligent**"—God gives every bird its food, but does not throw it into the nest.

The Stately Column;

Or, "ONE THING THOU LACKEST."

THE inhabitants of a great city and its surrounding district have come together to celebrate the unveiling of a colossal monument raised to the memory of a public benefactor.

Everything goes off with the utmost *éclat*. There is no hitch in the proceedings. The weather is lovely, the music beautiful, the speeches appropriate and eloquent; and as to the costly memorial,—the centre of attraction—its material, design, and general workmanship prove it to be worthy of such a brilliant assemblage and of the unstinted praise bestowed upon it. Few who see the stately column but predict that it will stand for generations to come as one of the chief sights of the city.

But, ah! how true it is of short-sighted man that he "knoweth not what a day may bring forth."

The proceedings terminate. The crowds disperse. The night falls. With it there comes a fearful storm. The winds rave, the thunders crash, the livid lightning adds its terror to the scene. Hour after hour the tempest roars, till its fury being spent, it passes by and moans away in the distance. Then with the morning light a sight is revealed which fills many with astonishment and grief. The beautiful monument, the pride of the city, is a ruin!

"How did it happen?"—"Where was the flaw?"—"Who is to blame?"—are questions which pass from one to another.

Soon the mystery is solved. It lacked *one thing*. Everything else it had, but it lacked one thing, and this lack has been fatal to its existence. By some unaccountable oversight *the lightning conductor* was

not placed on its summit, and so the electric fluid has done its devastating work without check, and reduced the noble pile to a shattered wreck.

Reader, look upon Christendom to-day, and pick me out your representative religious man—religious, but *without Christ*. How fair he is to look at, and what credit he receives for his good deeds! With an orthodox creed, an untarnished name, and a ready liberality in supporting any philanthropic or religious enterprise, he thinks he has a better chance than most people of gaining heaven. But it is written: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. xvi. 7).

Yes, God looks at the heart of this fair and modern Eliab, and God sees he lacks one thing; and that one thing is the only thing which can shield a guilty sinner from the wrath of God.

He lacks *Christ*—he is not sheltered in Him.

True, he prays, works, is most exact in the performance of his religious duties; but he lacks Christ! Whatever his lips may say, he knows not Christ, trusts not Christ, loves not Christ. His idea of the Gospel is—a belief, a creed, a rubric, a code of doctrines and morals. He is ignorant that it is embodied in a divine Person. He has plenty of religion, but he has not Christ; and consequently all his outward show of piety goes for naught with God; yea, the fairer the show the more surely does it expose him to the righteous judgment of God.

Friend, I ask not "What class do you belong to?"—"What creed do you believe in?"—"What character do you boast of?"—but, "Have you Christ?" If you have not, then, "One thing thou lackest," and the lack of this one thing means ruin—eternal ruin to your soul. You may be fair and attractive—

morally so, I mean—as beautiful outwardly as the young man whom, when “Jesus beholding him, loved him,” but Christ says to you what He said to him, “One thing thou lackest.”

Oh! get this *one thing* at once. Delay not a single moment longer; for though your day of grace still lingers, “the day goeth away, and the shadows of evening are stretched out.” The night is falling! The storm is brewing! The thunders even now mutter! The lightnings already glare! Nothing but Christ can shield you and ward off the bolts of Divine wrath in that hour when judgment shall be poured out on this dark, guilty, death-doomed world.

Whatever you may lack or may not lack, yet in the matter of your salvation we say—

Lack Christ, and you have nothing.

Have Christ, and you lack nothing.

S. J. B. C.



Only One Life.



WE cannot do with our lives what an artist does with his picture, going over his work again and again, retouching here and obliterating there, until the ideal perfection is reached. We paint on a rolling canvas. As fast as our work is done it is wound on the cylinder to be unbound no more till the judgment seat.

THAT LITTLE WORD "ALONE."

IN 1540, in the heat of the Reformation controversies, Joachim II., Elector of Brandenburg, said to his ambassadors who were about to proceed to the religious disputation at Worms, "See that you bring back that little word 'Alone': do not dare to return without it." Both parties were prepared to confess that salvation was to be received "through faith in Jesus Christ," but the Reformers added the little word 'Alone'—salvation through faith in Jesus Christ *alone*. And so this word became the pivot of the contendings of the Reformation period.

It may be that round this "little word" the conflict between the Spirit and our own self-righteousness is being urged. We are willing, perhaps, to trust Christ, if we may add to that reliance a trust in ourselves, in our good works, or in our religious emotions. But this cannot be. Christ's merits stand alone. Calvary is God's eternal attestation to our ruin, as well as to the perfect satisfaction for sin.

"To him *that worketh NOT*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5).

TRUST.



WHEN a sudden sorrow
Comes like cloud and night,
Wait for God's to-morrow—
All will then be bright.
Only wait and trust Him
Just a little while;
After evening tear drops
Comes the morning smile.

The Young Convert.



THE awakened soul (especially when, after a season of distress and terror, it begins to taste that the Lord is gracious) finds itself in a new world. No change in outward life can be so sensible, so affecting.

No wonder, then, that at such a time little else can be thought of; the transition from darkness to light, from a sense of wrath to a hope of glory, is the greatest that can be imagined, and is oftentimes as sudden as wonderful.

Hence, the general characteristics of young converts are zeal and love. Like Israel at the Red Sea, they have just seen the wonderful works of the Lord, and they cannot but sing His praise; they are deeply affected with the danger they have lately escaped, and with the case of multitudes around them, who are secure and careless in the same alarming situation, and a sense of their own mercies, and a compassion for the souls of others, is so transporting, that they can hardly forbear preaching to every one they meet.

This emotion is highly just and reasonable with respect to the causes from whence it springs; and it is doubtless a proof, not only of the imperfection, but the depravity of our nature, that we are not always thus affected, yet it is not entirely genuine.

If we examine this character closely, which seems at first sight a pattern and a reproof to Christians of longer standing, we shall for the most part find it attended with considerable defects.

Such persons are very weak in faith. Their confidence arises rather from the lively impressions of joy within, than from a distinct and clear apprehension of the work of God in Christ. The comforts which are intended as cordials to animate them against the opposition of an unbelieving world, they mistake and rest in as the proper evidences of their hope. And hence it comes to pass, that where the Lord varies His dispensations and seems to hide

His face, they are soon troubled and at their wits end.

They who are in this state of their first love are seldom free from something of a censorious spirit. They have not yet felt all the deceitfulness of their own hearts; they are not well acquainted with the devices or temptations of Satan; and, therefore, know not how to sympathize or make allowances where allowances are necessary and due, and can hardly bear with any who do not discover the same earnestness as themselves.

However, with all their faults, methinks there is something very beautiful and engaging in the honest vehemence of a young convert. Some cold and rigid judges are ready to reject these promising appearances on account of incidental blemishes.

But would a gardener throw away a fine nectarine because it is green, and has not yet attained all that beauty and flavour which a few more showers and sun will impart? Perhaps, it will hold for the most part in grace as in nature (some exceptions there are), if there is not some fire in youth we can hardly expect a proper warmth in old age.

But the great and good Husbandman watches over what His own hand has planted, and carries on His work by a variety of different and even contrary dispensations. While their mountain stands thus strong, they think they shall never be moved; but at length they find a change.

Sometimes it comes on by insensible degrees. That part of their affection which was purely natural, will abate, of course, when the power of novelty ceases: they will begin, in some instances, to perceive their own indiscretions; and an endeavour to correct the excesses of imprudent zeal will often draw them towards the contrary extreme of remissness: the evils of their hearts, which, though overpowered, were not eradicated, will revive again: the enemy will watch his occasions to meet them with suitable temptations; and as it is the Lord's design that they should experimentally learn and feel their own weakness, he will in some instances be permitted to succeed.

By repeated experiments and exercises of this sort (for this wisdom is seldom acquired by one or a few lessons) we begin at length to learn that we are nothing, have nothing, can do nothing but sin. And thus we are gradually prepared to live more out of ourselves, and to derive all our sufficiency of every kind from Jesus, the Fountain of Grace.

(From "Cardiphonia," by John Newton.)



“A Daring Sinner.”



WHO is he? The following lines will tell us:—
 “The saint who’s enjoying communion with heaven,
 The sinner who dares to remain unforgiven.”

The above lines occur in a poem entitled—

“Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?”

It was the favourite poem of the late Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, who was basely assassinated just as he had brought the great civil war to a successful termination. And the fact that he valued such a poem shows what a humble, God-fearing man he must have been. I would invite my readers to procure and peruse the whole poem.

But now to revert to “the daring sinner”—it is a striking expression, worth pondering. What is a sinner? A sinner is a lawless one, one not subject to the law, authority, and will of God: one who does his *own* will and pleases *himself*: God is not in all his thoughts, he does not set God before him: he worships and serves the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. i. 25). *Self* has displaced God. He

worships and serves *Self*—wretched, a bominable *Self*, rather than the blessed God. It is a daring thing to do, to put this slight, this dishonour upon the living God. Marvellous is His long-suffering, that He puts up with such insults from puny, mortal man, whom He has the power to crush in a moment.

Why does He not do it? Because it is the day of His grace, and He is enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted (by sin) to destruction (Rom. ix. 22).

Yes, unsaved one, the sin you make so light of is fitting you for destruction, which will be your sure doom if you *dare to remain unforgiven*. It is a daring thing *to be* a sinner, but more daring still *to remain* one. Thank God, you *need* not. There is a way of life, as well as a way of death, and God invites you to enter it. He is displaying the riches of His goodness to lead you to repentance; you are not in hell yet, you are not past hope yet, and forgiveness of sins is preached to you through Christ: a *full, free, present* and *eternal* forgiveness from *all* your sins is offered to you in Christ's name—now—remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

It is worth having; *will you have it?* Or, will you *dare* to despise this offer and to remain unforgiven? There is no other hope, no other sacrifice, no other name than that of the blessed Jesus, only "a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries;" and you will be one of them, and this will be your doom, if you *remain* unforgiven.

I repeat it—you *need* not do so. A voice from the very glory of God is calling you, and saying, "Come unto Me." The voice of the lowly Jesus, that once spake on earth saying "Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden," now speaks

from heaven: it is thence He calls you, and thither He would draw you—to Himself. It is the same Jesus, but in glory now—in resurrection, life, and power, and He wants *you*, wants you for Himself, to draw you, to deliver you from the power of darkness, from this present evil world, from yourself and your self-worship and self-service, from your sins, from every entanglement and fetter that holds you, to change you from a vessel of wrath to a vessel of mercy.

Will you, dare you refuse and set at nought all His counsel and love? He is stretching out to you His hand of love, and power, and mercy. Oh! value it, grasp it. Touch the golden sceptre which that hand now holds and extends to you: soon it will be exchanged for the “rod of iron” that will break and dash in pieces his adversaries. Delay not, *flee* from the wrath to come, now, at once, ere the door shut, and it be “too late.” Oh! what a poor, blind, infatuated dupe of sin and Satan must he be, who will refuse such an offer of love and mercy from such a Saviour, and *dare to remain* unforgiven!

J. G. D.

How much does your Christianity cost you?

WHEN David would offer sacrifice on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, he declined to receive it as a gift, saying, “I will surely buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt offering unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing” (2 Sam. xxiv. 24). But, alas! how little of this spirit is there now. How few there are who willingly *deny* themselves that they may have to give to the Lord.

“Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right?”

“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”—Psa. xix.

MY old college chum had dropped in to spend the evening with me. Our conversation turned to serious matters, and I dealt with him fully about his soul's salvation. Outside was a blustering winter's night, with howling wind, and beating rain, and we drew near the fire, pitying the homeless and unsheltered.

So the hours flew by until in upon us boomed the tones of the great clock as it struck twelve.

“I must be off,” said my friend, springing up from the depths of an easy-chair. “I didn't think it was so late.”

We lingered, standing in the hall to have another word about the matter we had been discussing, he thrusting himself into his great-coat whilst I talked. Then he stood at the door and had the last word.

“No, no,” said he; “*better no God at all than a belief in hell.* Good-night.”

I shut the door with bolt and chain, and came back and sat by the fire.

“You accept a tradition and are afraid to face what would disturb your creed,” he had said. And further, “You belong to a set, and drift with them in this as in other things.”

The Bible was to him somewhat old-fashioned, and he was somewhat impatient of its being summoned in evidence. “There are new lights,” he said, “in which the age must read and interpret that Book.”

But the matter was far too deep and serious to be the mere subject of a logical conflict. It pressed

upon my own soul, and demanded the answer that should satisfy my innermost conviction.

"What attitude of rest or peace can any man find in holding a belief in hell?" my friend had asked.

"I can't tell you," I answered. "But there is such an attitude, and I think I have found it. It is *a simple trust in God.*"

My New Testament lay within reach of me, and I took it up and turned over its pages.

"I certainly accept this as the Word of God," I said to myself, "and how can I do anything else? I find here One whom I cannot but love, and trust, and delight to reverence. And yet, and yet," I said to myself, "I find in this same Word, and from these gracious lips, utterances dark and terrible. He never spake harshly. He never spake hastily. He never stooped to invent any terrors by which to frighten men into being good. Yet He warns men of 'the damnation of hell,' and of the 'worm which dieth not, and the fire which is never quenched,' and speaks of 'everlasting punishment.' Can I, dare I, brush all this aside lightly? Shall I not accept the Word and trust Him to make it clear by-and-by?"

Then I sat thinking, wondering, questioning, till I fell asleep and dreamed.

* * * * *

I was passing through a city where the people stood in knots, and talked of some horrible outrage and murder. Men and women stood at the narrow entry of their courts, and told indignantly the rumours of the crime. Then I passed the building where the judge was sitting to try the prisoner, whose case stirred all the city.

It was pleasant to get away from these dark things, outside the city—pleasant to leave the noise and crowd, and all the signs of this black crime. So I

went on until before me lay a garden, in all the rich beauty of the spring.

Under the shade of a tree, its old twisted branches just tipped with the dainty young green leaves, sat a little maiden of some ten years, arranging a bunch of flowers. She was singing gaily, staying a moment to turn the nosegay round and look at it, then singing on again as she took up another violet or primrose.

Then on his way there came a man, who carried a scythe in his hand. He crossed the lawn and set the scythe against the tree, and then he stood watching the busy fingers and listening to the maiden's merry song. A sneer curled his lip and a dark frown gathered on his face. He leaned forward, so that his shadow fell over her, and with a harsh voice that startled the singer, he said—

“Do you know what your father is going to do?”

“No,” said the little maiden, turning the sunny face up towards him. “What is he going to do?”

Then with a voice more harsh and grating, and a darker frown—

“Going to hang that poor man that he tried in the court to-day,” said he.

“Hang him!” she said, as the hands fell down at her side, and the sunshine died. And she looked up with wondering eyes and parted lips.

“Yes—going to hang him,” said the man, putting his rough fingers grimly to his throat. “Going to put a rope, a hard rope that will hurt him dreadfully, right round his neck, and hang him.”

“My father is going to?” cried the little maiden, bewildered.

“Yes, your father,” sneered he.

Her cheek grew crimson. “My father *never* would,” she said indignantly, rising up and letting the flowers fall unheeded to the ground.

"You will see, then," said he. "I heard him say it myself."

The sun was hidden. The blue sky gone behind a bank of stormy cloud. The wind rose in fierce gusts, howling about the garden, sweeping before it the fallen flowers. The little maiden went in and sat down in her room.

Then she leaned at the window and looked out over the garden. Far beyond the walls rose the roofs of the grim prison. With hands that hung down helplessly, and tearful eyes, she said to herself, "My father going to hang that poor man! *to hang him!* He never could! And yet, and yet—poor man! Oh, why were there such dreadful things as prisons, and, and——" she shuddered now and could not say the word. "Poor man," she said, "and *my father* is going to—to hang him! *My father*, so kind and loving; never!"

* * * * *

Then I saw myself in a large room, where a grave man sat at dinner. A face noble and generous that one could trust assuredly at once, with firmness, and strength, and earnestness in every look and tone and word, and over all a great benevolence. Beside him a chair was set, and plate and knife and fork, and as he finished dinner he turned to the servant.

"Where is the little mistress to-night?" he asked. "Isn't she well?"

Then presently in came the little maiden. But she, who was used to greet her father with the sunny face and many words of welcome, came sad, and with slow steps, without a word.

"What is the matter, little one?" said the father, holding out his hands to her.

She took the hand and looked up into the father's

face almost reproachfully. And then, with a great sob and eyes that brimmed with grief, she whispered—

“Father, you are not going to—to hang him, are you, poor, poor man?”

Then the father's face grew sad—as sad as the maiden's own, and he laid the little head against himself, and put his arm about her. Only the wind moaned at the window; not another sound was heard for some minutes. Then the father stroked the hair tenderly, and he turned the face up towards his own.

“My child,” said he, “*can you trust me?*”

She looked up at him, and as she looked her whole face seemed to say, “What else could I do?” She put her arm about his neck.

“Yes, father,” she said, “of course I can.”

“Do you trust me to do what is right, and kind, and good?” he asked, still stroking her hair tenderly.

“Yes,” said the maiden, laying the head against him as if she could rest there.

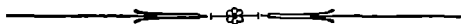
“*Then trust me still,*” said he, “*and one day you will understand.*”

* * * * *

And then I awoke, and thought of our spiritual childhood, and that now “we know but in part,” and I thought of faculties that may develop in us, too, by-and-by, and reconcile a thousand things such as perplex and trouble us now. Soon shall “we know, even as we are known.”

“Thank God,” said I, “I can believe my Father's Word, though I may not understand this profound and mysterious truth; I am content to be a child, to trust and wait.”

(Adapted.)



The World.

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."—Gal. i. 4,

WHEN we do not know what "the world" is, we are very prone to slip into worldliness before we are aware. Some profess not to be clear upon what is worldly. They know well enough, however, the meaning of getting on in "the world." Some look at "*the world*" as that which is glaringly wicked, or God-dishonouring in other people. The poor man speaks of the rich man in his grand house, or the great man who never thinks of God, as being in the world. Such may be the case, but every man has his "*world*" into which he is tempted to go: the meanest as well as the greatest, the most secluded as well as those in the centre of a great city. A pretty ribbon or a new dress, a good dinner or a nice party, may be as much "*the world*" as the gayest and most fashionable assembly.

Often the question is asked, Is it right to go here or there? to do this or that? Is this of "*the world*" or not? God has given us a perfect criterion: "All that is in the world . . . is not of the Father, but is of the world." This makes all plain to a child with the Father. Is this of the Father? If not, it is of the world. How well every Christian understands this in some measure!

Does the size of your world not increase just in proportion as you know the Father? Things are now classed under the title "*world*," that were not thought to be worldly when we started in the race. The road gets narrower as this thing and the other thing are seen to be of "*the world*," till we find ourselves walking in the lonely path with the lonely One.

Fellow-Christian, do you not see something this year to be of "*the world*" that you did not see last year? Have you been thus learning of the Father?

The spirit of the world is paralysing the whole of Christian energy, as it is leavening the whole of Christ-

endom. No wonder that there is a slumber as of death over our land, an unaccountable nightmare resting on the spirits of many Christian men, a feeling that we are just at the awful pause before some fearful explosion.

Christians take the world's ways and party strifes in its politics and rule, blunting the edge of their spiritual nature, hardening their consciences, condescending to mingle in the world's battles. Let the potsherds of earth strive with the potsherds thereof. Where are the garments unspotted by the world? Christians also are mixed up with the world's company, sitting at the world's table, happy with the world's joys and jokes, singing the world's songs.

Young disciples are especially liable to be carried away with the cultivated, respectable, educated, quiet, polite, agreeable, pleasant, worldly companion.

Young believer, in the name of Him who hung on Calvary for you, keep no company with unconverted persons. You may have to meet them at school or in business, but never keep company with them. "Come out from among them and be ye separate." A young disciple was once asked concerning a companion—

"Well, was she a friend or an enemy?"

"In what way?"

"A friend or an enemy to Christ?"

"I really could not say."

"But you know that all are either friends or foes? there is not a third company. Is she converted?"

"I don't think so."

"Then, of course, we know to whom she belongs. Let us be friends to all the Lord's friends, and enemies to all His enemies—loving them, praying for them, and trying to get them converted, but coming out from among them, and being separate." My brother, will that cross, will that bleeding One, not draw thy thoughts, thy words, thyself, away from this cruel world? Thy name, as an individual, was in His omniscient mind, when in darkness and agony He was forsaken of His God. Nails and a cross never kept Him there. He Himself made

that iron and that wood, but love kept him on the cross. Thou hast said, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." His cross, His grave, separate thee from "*the world*," as they separate thee from thy sins.

In this land, at this moment, it is difficult to know the *church* from the *world*. The world, "of the earth, earthy," has said to the Church, the bride of the Lamb, of the heavens, "heavenly," "Come a little down to us, and we will rise a little up to you, and we can shake hands and agree." This in the present day is called *liberality*, *charity*, *large-heartedness*, and he who dares to dissent is called a bigot, one of peculiar views, a man of extremes.

"The world" makes its social gathering and invites the Christian. A compromise is effected. The Christian leaves at home his peculiar testimony for his rejected Lord. "The world" lays aside a little of its open worldliness, and they thus agree. "The world" has been raised somewhat. Its tone has been elevated. The Christian has come down from his high standing ground, and has lost his place as the separated one—His Lord is dishonoured, and this is modern liberality! The world and the Christian agree, and God's name, God's glory, the offence of the cross, are given up as the price of the agreement!

Yea, some have shown their ignorance and heartlessness so much as to bring in Christ's example, and make His conduct a cloak for their worldliness, and the Holy Jesus a minister of sin. True, no one was ever such a friend to the sinner as *He*, and no one was so separate from sinners. Did He contract any defilement by sitting and eating with sinners? It would be blasphemy to think it.

Can you perfectly manifest Christ wherever you go? But the rule here, as everywhere, is perfect and simple, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31.) Do you keep company with that friend because it is for the glory of God? Do you accept that invitation to dinner

because it is for the glory of God? or not rather because you will enjoy it, and perhaps meet someone you like, or something else for you.

And is this following the Lord Jesus? Not a word did He speak, not a thought did He think, not a step did He take, but was for God's glory. Not a company He entered, but this was His *only* reason for going. Is it yours? Let conscience answer. And if you can go on with worldly people and in worldly ways, either you will reap daily and bitter sorrow, and have to come in broken and contrite spirit to the footstool of grace, or you have no heart for the crucified One. You know not the Christ whom the world crucified. You are not Christ's one. You are not a Christian!

At this present day there is nothing that is leavening Christendom more evidently than this worldliness—worldly policy, worldly ways of advancing the cause of Christ, worldly principles, worldly maxims, worldly motives, worldly vindications of conduct, worldly schemes and artifices—all are employed; and worldly arguments are finally adduced to shew that all such are quite in proper place.

The spirit of competition, which is "the life of trade," has been adopted in those un-Christ divisions in the Church of the living God. Artifice and trickery with world-shows, bazaars, and such-like, are used to extract money from the pockets of willing and unwilling victims to advance God's kingdom! the Lord all the time loving the cheerful giver. But cheerful, or not cheerful, the worldly church principle is, the money must be obtained! Read *Babylon's great bazaar*, Revelations xviii. 12 and 13—*gold* at the head of the list, *souls of men* at the foot—not very unlike what may be seen in Christianised lands now.

In the mixture of world and church of to-day, who could discern the Bride of the Crucified One? Everything goes on comfortably. There is little of the taking up of "the cross;" many excuses for conformity to this world.

W. P. M.



{ "Tangle-Foot," }

Or, Lessons from the Fly Paper and the Flies.

DEAR me, have you nothing better to do than sit and stare at that fly paper?" said my wife, half playfully.

And sure enough I was gazing at it most earnestly, and had been doing so for the space of twenty minutes. With elbows on the table, and "Tangle-Foot" right before me, I had been watching fly after fly as they alighted on the oily, tenacious snare, and as they wildly struggled, with whizzing wings and tangled feet, to get free.

And what think you, boys and girls, were my thoughts?

"Oh," you say, "you felt a bit sorry for the flies, didn't you?"

Yes, but these little creatures invade our Australian homes in such troops as to be a source of damage and danger to property, health, and even to life. Hence, they must be destroyed. But my thoughts did not linger in this groove, they ran in another

line. I saw, yes, and I still see in "Tangle-Foot," a miniature picture of

THE SNARE OF SIN.

How harmless it seems. Yet how deceptive and dangerous it really is. Look at that silly fly hovering over its surface. Down he drops, just for a moment, only to explore and taste; but, ah! he will never rise again. His feet are glued to the sticky varnish, and his fate is doomed.

So it is with sin. It often looks most innocent, and young people say, "There is no harm in this." "Let us go just for once." "You must not be too particular." Thus, they excuse themselves, and forbidden and hurtful things are indulged in. But sin sticks to the sinner, and the sinner sticks to sin. Evil habits and companionships when formed pollute every fibre of daily character and fix the soul down to that which is its curse and ruin.

But let us look at "Tangle-Foot" again, and see in it

THE FOLLY OF SIN.

"Tangle-Foot" is crowded with the dead and the dying; yet, here is another victim coming gaily along. Indifferent to the fate of his comrades, he circles around and above them. Then, allured by the supposed feast of good things, his feet touch the fatal mucilage, and he is held fast. How foolish

he is, and how foolish sinners are to rush heedlessly into that which has trapped and bound and slain so many.

"But," you say, "that tiny fly hesitated before he settled, he seemed doubtful."

I daresay, but the temptation was too strong for his instinct of self-preservation. "Tangle-Foot" is very attractive to the flies—so soft, bright, and glistening in the sunlight. It smells, too, so nice and tempting. Oh,

THE FASCINATION OF SIN!

How tempting it is. With what glamour and bewitching promises does Satan cover it to entice and ensnare the unwary. Boys and girls, be sober for a moment, and try and understand what I mean.

How attractive is the novel and the dance to yon giddy girl, and the cigarette and the nobbler to that careless youth.

How hard, and sometimes how lonely and monkish it appears to be a Christian, and how easy and pleasant to go into the world's pleasures and pursuits.

Yes, sin is nice at the start, and tasty, as it is "rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue." For instance, what fun it is to "play truant from school." Yet, often it has to be hidden by a lie, and a lie needs another and another to cover it. When once ensnared, the evil doer sinks deeper and deeper into trouble.

It reminds us of the poet's despairing lines, which he puts into Marmion's dying lips—

"Oh! what a tangled web we weave
When first we venture to deceive."

"Tangle-Foot" illustrates how Satan entangles his victims; it is an object lesson of

THE MASTERY OF SIN.

Do you observe that wretched fly wriggling to escape from the mess he is in? But the harder he tries the worse his plight becomes. His feet are crossed and locked, the glutinous mixture gums his fair wings together, closes his eyes up, stifles his breath, and now he falls over on his side—faints, sinks, and dies.

By no efforts of our own can we extricate ourselves from the wile of sin. The Bible says, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (Prov.); and another scripture declares, "Whosoever shall commit sin is the servant of sin" (Jno.). Only Jesus,

THE CONQUEROR OF SIN,

can set the sinner free. He "did no sin" (1 Pet.), yet, for our sake, He "became sin" (2 Cor.). He came down into the snare, and on the Cross He "sank in deeper mire where there was no standing" (Psa.), to reach us and save us. Then He rose right out of it and triumphed over it.

Watch that fly tugging to get free from the snare. He gets one foot out, but the other feet are still entangled; he gets another out, and a third, a fourth, a fifth, and his wings beat the air with the rapidity of lightning; he pulls, wriggles, and swings, but still the remaining foot is held fast till, exhausted, he falls back deeper than he was before.

Ah, he cannot save himself. But I can save him, and I will! See, I take my pen and safely lift the little creature out of the mire, and he is free. How glad he seems. With what new strength he cleans his slender feet and his wire-gauze wings, and then flies away as far as he can from the subtle wile.

So Jesus saves us, that free from sin's grip we may "cleans ourselves" from our former ways (2 Cor. vii. 1), and with the wings of faith and prayer soar away—as far away as we can from that which once held us captive.

One word more and then I have done. Boys and girls, look at

THE END OF SIN.

When "Tangle-Foot" is crowded with flies, what becomes of it? Why, mother, or sister, or the servant puts it into the fire. Yes, into the fire it goes—flaring up, crackling and consuming.

The end of sin is the fire! Both sin and sinners must go into it. Awful thought. I will not dwell upon it. But if you do not

believe it, open your Bible and read Rev. xx. 14, 15.

Children, children, Jesus is waiting to save you from sin and its doom. There is a lovely scripture, which says—

“ Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they *call* on Him in whom they have not *believed*? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not *heard*? (Rom. x. 12, 14.)

How simple and beautiful is God's salvation—

First, you *hear of Him*.

Next, you *believe in Him*.

Then, you *call on Him*.

What does calling *on* Him mean? It means that you *confess* Him. You not only call *to* Him, but you call *on* Him, and thus publicly own Him as your Saviour.

There are only three things essential to salvation—the hearing *ear*, the believing *heart*, and the confessing *mouth* (Rom. x. 9, 10).

And then—what then? Why, free from “Tangle-Foot,”—

FREE FROM SIN,

and from its sad consequences, you are at liberty to serve and please the One who has released you, and who has said, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (Jno.).

S. J. B. C.

The Message.



The Closing Act in the Drama of Life.



THE closing act will come, and your history—with its known and unremembered actions, long-forgotten words and deeds, motives, thoughts, counsels, prayers, resolutions, and earnest desires—shall be read out and faithfully disclosed. God is the revealer of all, and memory and conscience shall seal the Divine record as *absolutely true*. In the silence of Eternity, without hurry or bustle, your life shall pass before you, and as the scenes shift and change, and you again, in remembrance, recross Life's pathway, "Amen" shall be wrung from lips pallid in despair. Read Revelation xx. 11-12:—

"I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Here, then, is the final scene, the closing act in the drama of life. The spectators are the saved from amongst men; angels, too, are there. The dread silence and hush of Eternity are all around.

The bustle of life is over: its pursuits, activities, and sins past. The earth, which had been the platform of display by God, to man has passed away. Lo! there stands A GREAT WHITE THRONE! its purity is appalling to the unsaved. The Judge—more awful still—is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man.

He ascends the steps of the throne and calmly sits down. Glorious in majesty! Powerful in might! The dazzling purity of the throne is beyond description. The wicked dead stand before Him. Their gaze is rivetted on *His* face. His voice breaks the awful silence. The books are opened. Each one's life history is unfolded, and, as page after page is opened and read out, the solemn "Amen" from every bursting heart, from every agonised spirit, shall attest the truth of the Divine records.

This awful judicial assembly holds its sitting in Eternity—Time having passed with the passing away of heaven and earth. The wicked, the lost, the dead are maintained by power in space, there being no sheltering rocks, nor hills, nor caves to screen them from the penetrating gaze of the Judge. With blanched cheek and pallid lip; in settled despair, they hear the verdict—CONSIGNMENT TO THE LAKE OF FIRE: THE ETERNAL ABODE OF ALL THAT IS UNHOLY. The hour of doom has come. The dread sentence is a righteous one, and is irrevocable.

They might have been saved; they could have been saved. Time and again they heard that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John iii. 16); that "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 8). From the cradle to the coffin, they were urged to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved;" to "Look and live;" but they closed their ears, they stiffened their necks,

they hardened their hearts, and now they are *lost*, lost for ever. They can only blame themselves.

O, Christless soul, awake! awake! awake! Your soul is in peril. If you neglect God's salvation, you shall, you must inevitably perish. There is no door of escape from the lake of fire. There is a way *into* it; there is no way *out* of it. But the Blood of Christ is an all-sufficient shelter. Escape for thy life. May God wake thee up to concern about thy soul!

W.S—T.

2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

THE sun brings life to some branches and death to others. If a branch is on the tree, and the tree is properly rooted in the soil, the sun will bring life to it; but if the branch be amputated, the sun will wither it to death. It is the same sun, and the branches have grown in the same forest, or even on the same tree, and yet the shining of the sun means life to the one and death to the other. It is precisely so with the gospel; if a man will not put himself in a right relation to it, it will be his utter destruction.

The Sinner's Wages.

THE wages of *sin* is death." The wages of sins is "the second death, which is the lake of fire."

G. W. Gy.

THIRST.



“On the subject of thirst-quenching tablets the *Lancet* says, ‘We must regretfully admit that we know of no means but water to relieve the feelings of thirst.’”

THOSE who have returned from the South African campaign tell us that the most formidable foe with which they had to contend out there was thirst. The wounds produced by Boer bullets were oftentimes most severe; the long, weary marches over the barren veldt were truly exhausting, and increased so often by want of food and suitable clothing; the sufferings from enteric fever and other disorders were indeed appalling; but each of these dwindle into insignificance when compared with the excruciating horrors of thirst. Where excessive pangs of hunger would starve a man, those of thirst would first drive him mad.

Ask yon soldier who was so sorely wounded after an engagement, and who had to lie on the burning ground for hours before the ambulance van brought relief to his agony, to describe to you his sorest trouble, and he will tell you that no physical suffering could possibly be compared with the maddening torment of his thirst.

Was there no remedy for all this? For kind friends in England were by no means indifferent to the trials of their brave and absent heroes. The nation's sympathy seemed outpoured on its fighting warriors. Rich and poor outvied one another in seeking to alleviate the distress of those who were fighting for their Empire's glory. Supplies of all sorts were shipped in lavish profusion from our shores. Food and nourishment of every kind, warm clothing in endless variety, luxuries for the sick, amusements for the convalescent were supplied in liberal measures; but that dread thirst! the re-

sources of the nation seemed powerless to meet this frightful need.

Could no pellet be devised? Could science invent no tabloid for the men to carry with them to avail them in their distress. It became the burning question of the day, but, alas! it was proved to be beyond even the purchasing power of money. An appeal to the well-known medical organ the *Lancet*, one of the highest authorities of the day, drew forth the piteous reply that heads this article—it knew of “no means but water to relieve the feeling of thirst.”

But throughout the world to-day there is a widespread and more serious craving than even that of the soldiers in the time of war. For in the heart of every living man, woman, and child is an insatiable longing after happiness that nothing down here can ever satisfy. We may have our own individual ways of seeking to obtain it, but that burning, passionate desire is world-wide. The poor depraved cannibal in the South Sea Islands may have different ideas of obtaining his pleasures, from the learned and cultured professor in his University chambers; the toddling infant surrounded by its toys on the nursery floor may have other ambitions, from the gay votary of society; but in each and every human breast is that self-same quenchless thirst for happiness. And on every effort of the human heart to attain it, sounds that solemn doom, “Whoso drinketh of these waters shall *thirst again*.” Those who refuse to accept it on the authority of the Word of God, prove it true to their cost by the bitterest experience.

“I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,
But ah! the waters failed;
E'en as I stooped to drink, they fled,
And mocked me as I wailed.”

The aching void in the human heart can be filled

by nothing here below. The brightest of earth's joys last only "for a season." We must turn our eyes in a different direction to find "pleasures for evermore."

Jesus, the blessed Son of God, came to earth from heaven's glory—

"Soul thirst to satisfy.
Exhaustless spring, the waters free,
All other streams are dry."

He, and He alone, could say to the human heart, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*." None but a divine Person could utter such thrilling words as these—"NEVER THIRST!" Isn't that the very thing your own heart is craving for? Such a bountiful Giver you will find Him to be! Listen to His own gracious invitation as you hear His final appeal in the close of Revelation xxii.: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life **FREELY**."

Will you not say to Him, like Samaria's daughter did of old, "Sir, give *me* this water, that *I* thirst not" (John iv. 15).

"I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream,
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

E. R. M.

LIVING WATER.

IF you would have the streams of that "river which make glad the City of our God" (Psa. xlvi.) to run into your heart and out into your life, you must dwell in the valley of prayer and humiliation.

Hsi;

Or, "More than Conqueror."

IMMEDIATELY upon his conversion the conviction came clearly to his renewed mind that his opium habit must at once be broken. There seems to have been no parleying about it. He belonged to Christ, and there could be no doubt as to the will of his new Master. Of course, he knew well what leaving off opium smoking would involve. But there was no shrinking; no attempt at half measures. He saw it must be sacrificed at once, entirely, and for ever.

Then came the awful conflict. It was as though the great enemy of souls, seeing his prisoner escaping, fell back upon this opium habit as an invincible chain with which to bind him. How critical was the struggle, how momentous the issues, Hsi himself hardly realised. Upon its outcome all his future power and usefulness depended. May we not believe the watchful care of God encompassed this young believer, as he went down into his terrible fight with the flesh and the devil?

As hour after hour went by, his craving for the poison became more and more intense than the urgency of hunger or thirst. Acute anguish seemed to rend the body asunder, accompanied by faintness and exhaustion, that nothing could relieve. Water streamed from his eyes and nostrils. Extreme depression overwhelmed him. Giddiness came on, with shivering, and aching pains, or burning thirst. For seven days and nights he scarcely tasted food, and was quite unable to sleep. Sitting or lying, he could get no rest. The agony became almost unbearable; and all the while he knew that a few whiffs

of the opium pipe would waft him at once into delicious dreams.

Determined, by the power of God, never to go back to it, the suffering man held on. Medicines were given in larger doses, and native as well as foreign drugs were tried, but all without avail. Prayer was constantly made on his behalf, and Hsi himself, as far as he was able, cast himself upon the Lord.

Refusing to be dragged away one step from his only refuge, he fought out the battle in the very presence of his new-found Saviour. Praying and clinging to Christ, he made his terrible adversary come, as he says himself, "before the Lord's face daily," and there cried out repeatedly—

"Devil, what can you do against me? My life is in the hand of God. And truly, I am willing to break off opium and die, but not willing to continue in sin and live."

In his most suffering moments he would frequently groan out aloud, "Though I die, I will never touch it again!

And there, as he prayed in the stillness, the wonderful answer was given. Suddenly a tide of life and power seemed to sweep into his soul. The reality was so intense that from head to foot he broke into a profuse perspiration. Anguish and struggle ceased, the conflict was completely ended. The Holy Spirit came, flooding his heart with peace.

"He did what man and medicine could not do," records the liberated soul. "From that moment my body was perfectly at rest. And then I knew that to break off opium without real faith in Jesus would indeed be impossible."

(From "ONE OF CHINA'S SCHOLARS.")

what he had heard on those nights; but now, lying alone day after day, there came into his mind the memory of it, and by degrees he was possessed with a great longing to know more about the things of God, and to have a Bible of his own.

He knew that it was from the Bible that the speakers had gathered their knowledge, but that was all. So summoning up courage, he one day consulted Granny about it.

His only encouragement in that direction was a laugh. "Bibles weren't in her line! What did a lad like him want with Bibles?" So the matter dropped for a time, but the lad's desire to possess one did not grow less.

One day, however, up the creaking stairs came noisy, boisterous Jack Lee, the only friend the cripple had in the world.

"Hurrah! hurrah! Got a new berth! Off north to-morrow! Come to say good-bye, Tom," he cried, all excitement, seating himself on the bed, and wiping the perspiration from his brow; "but I've got a real beauty present for you, my lad," taking from his pocket something wrapped in a greasy bit of brown paper.

Tom raised himself on his elbows, not at all gladdened by the news he had heard.

"A bright new shilling for you, Tom, lad. And you're not to spend it till yer wants suffin real particular."

“ Oh, Jack! you’re good, but I want something now very particular.”

“ Yer do? what’s he?”

“ I want a Bible.”

“ A Bible! well I never! Spending all that on a Bible, when I had to scrape months and months to save it in coppers.”

“ Don’t be angry, Jack,” said the cripple boy. “ I do so want a Bible. Please get it, Jack—now—this very evening, at Fisher’s, afore the shop closes. Granny never would; she’d spend it in gin, if I let it get into her hands.”

“ What can yer want with a Bible, Tom, lad? Only scholars understands them there things,” he answered rather crossly.

“ Maybe so, Jack, but I’m hankering after one.”

“ Very well, lad, then I’ll go, but I knows nought about Bible buyin’.”

“ Fisher has ’em at a shilling, for I saw ’em marked in the window when I used to go by.”

Jack descended the stairs less rapidly than he had mounted them. But he got over his disappointment before he returned with a beautiful shilling Bible. “ Fisher says I couldn’t leave you a better friend, Tom, lad, the shilling couldn’t be vested better; and, says he, ‘ It may be worth a thousan’ pounds to the lad.’ So ’pears there’s suffin as we ought to know about.”

Tom's joy and gratitude were unbounded. "I know it, Jack. I know it!" hugging the Book to his breast. "I'm happy now. Oh how kind you were to save that shilling." So Tom got his Bible, and valued it and read it.

Do *you*?—you, reader,—man, woman, boy, girl,—do *you* value and read the Book of God? If so, you will find out what Cripple Tom discovered. And what was that? He found out he was a sinner—lost and in need of a Saviour, and he found that Saviour in Jesus. He trusted Him, confessed Him, loved Him, and was filled with a great longing to do something for Him. But what could he do? Tied to a bed of sickness, it seemed as if he could do nothing but lie still and suffer. But love is quick to discover ways of serving its Object, and so, looking to God for guidance and strength, the little helpless cripple said—

"It won't do to keep all this blessed news to myself;" so he thought and thought, until at last a simple work was decided on for the Master. His bed stood close by the window sill, which was low, and somehow he got a pencil and paper, and wrote out different texts, which he would fold, pray over, and then drop into the noisy street below, directed—

"To THE PASSER-BY—Please Read."

He hoped that by this means someone might hear of Jesus and His salvation.

Generally, his texts were simple, Gospel ones, but sometimes he wrote a text which had been given him by the Lord for his own soul.

This service of love, faithfully rendered, went on for some weeks, when one evening he heard a strange footstep, and immediately afterwards a tall, well-dressed gentleman entered the room and took his seat by the lad's bedside.

"So you are the lad who drops texts from the window, are you?" he asked kindly.

"Yes," said Tom, brightening up. "Have yer heard as someone has got hold of one?"

"Plenty, lad, plenty! I picked up one last evening, and God blessed it to my soul. I have been a Christian for some years, but lately I got cold in souls, and God used your text and spoke to me by it."

"I can believe in God's Word doing anything, sir," said the lad humbly.

"And I am come," said the gentleman, "to thank you personally."

"No me, sir! I only does the writin'; He does the blessin'."

"And you are happy in this work for Christ?" said the visitor.

"Couldn't be happier, sir. I don't think nothin' of the pain in my back, for shan't I

be glad when I sees Him, to tell Him that as soon as I know'd about Him and His great love I did all as I could to serve Him? I suppose you gets lots of chances, don't yer, sir?"

"Ah, lad, but I have neglected them; but, God helping me, I mean to begin afresh. At home in the country I have a sick lad dying. I came to town on pressing business. When I kissed him good-bye, he said, 'Father, I wish I had done some work for Jesus'; and the words stuck to me all day long, and the next day too, until the evening when I was passing down this street your text fell on my hat. I opened it and read, 'I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work' (John ix. 4). It seemed like a command from heaven."

Tears of joy were rolling down the lad's face. "It's too much, sir," he said, "altogether too much."

"Tell me how you managed to get the paper to start it, my lad."

"That warn't hard, sir. I jest had a talk with Granny, and offered to give up my ha'porth of milk she gives me most days, if she would buy me paper instead. You know, sir, it can't last long. The parish doctor says a few months of cold weather may finish me off, and a drop of milk ain't much to give

up for my blessed Jesus. Are people happy as have lots to give Him, sir?"

The visitor sighed. "Ah, lad, you are a great deal happier in this wretched room, making sacrifices for Jesus, than thousands who profess to belong to Him, and who have time, talents, and money, and yield little or nothing to Him."

"They don't know Him, sir. Knowin' is lovin', and lovin' and tryin' to please Him is doin'. It ain't love without."

"You are right, Tom. But now about yourself. How would you like to end your days in one of those homes for cripple lads, where you would be nursed and cared for, and where you would see the trees and flowers, and hear the birds sing? I could get you into one not far from my home if you liked, Tom."

The weary lad looked wistfully into the man's kindly face, and after a few moments' silence, answered: "Thank'ee, sir; I've heard tell of 'em afore, but I ain't anxious to die easy when He died hard. I might get taken up with them things a bit too much, and I'd rather be a lookin' at Him, and a carryin' on this 'ere work till He come to fetch me."

"Well, my lad, then I will see that you have proper food and all the paper you need while you live. I will settle it with one of

the Bible-women. Now, laddie, before I go I want you to pray aloud for me."

There was a bright light on the poor, pale, upturned face, as he said in a tone of the deepest reverence: "Lord Jesus, I know you're a listenin', and I'm much obliged to you for sending this gentleman here to cheer me in my work. Now, Lord Jesus, he's a bit troubled about not havin' lived for Thee in past days, will you help him to see to it that there's nothin' left undone in the comin' days; and please, Lord, make him go straight away and tell them other rich men of Thy love. Now, Lord Jesus, please bless this kind friend, all roads and always. I ask this for Thy name's sake." "Amen," said the deep-toned voice.

Then the gentleman rose and said farewell. Before leaving London he made every arrangement for the lad to be cared for, and then with a gladder heart he went back to his beautiful country home, and lived for Christ. As soon as he could he built a Gospel Hall on his own grounds, and preached Jesus to the villagers, and told them of his second conversion through the cripple boy and his text, many being led to Christ.

News of the dying lad reached them from time to time through the Bible woman, but it was not till winter had set in, and the snow had fallen and covered the earth with

its crystal whiteness, that they heard that the dear lad had "gone to be with Jesus."

The same post brought a parcel which contained Tom's much-prized and much-used Bible. What a precious relic was that marked Bible in that beautiful home! for when the cripple boy's friend lent it to his youngest son to read—the careful marking, the short simple prayers written by the cripple lad on the margin, and his dying wish on the fly leaf, written about a week before his death, that "this Holy Book may be as great a friend to someone else as it has been to me"—made such a deep impression on the youth that he got converted and gave himself to the Lord, and later on to mission work in foreign fields; and out in Central Africa he has shown that worn Bible to many a native Christian, when telling them about cripple Tom and his texts.

Reader, young and old, have you learnt to know the Lord Jesus as your personal Saviour? If not, He waits to be gracious—to be to you, little child, and to you, grown-up man and woman, all that He was to cripple Tom.

If you do know Him, are you seeking to serve Him?

If a dying lad, in suffering and destitution, could joyfully deny himself the little sip of milk, which cooled his parched lips and partly

fed his weary body, surely it is possible for us to suffer a little, deny ourselves a little, and work a little for the blessed Saviour, who has loved us and given Himself for us.

(Adapted.)



WHAT DAY DO YOU KEEP FOR THE SABBATH?*

SOME time ago, on board a train, I had just taken my seat opposite an intelligent-looking man, when he remarked, "I would not like to be a commercial traveller."

"Why?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, "You have so much baggage to carry. May I ask what you are selling?"

"I am giving the gospel away," I replied.

"Oh," said he, "I am very glad to meet you. In what part of the field do you labour?—to what denomination do you belong?"

I said, "I will ask you a question before I reply to yours. What is the self-sufficient guide for the child of God?"

"The Bible," he replied.

"Well, into what denomination does the Bible put me?"

He answered, "If you follow the Bible, you will be a Seventh-Day Adventist."

I asked him to show it me in Scripture; but as he had none, he evaded this by asking, "What day is the Sabbath?"

I replied, "The seventh day."

"And what day is that?"

"Saturday," I answered. This seemed to give him pleasure; but to make sure, he said, "What day do *you* keep for the Sabbath?"

"I do not keep any *Sabbath*," I replied.

My answer shocked him, and with surprise he exclaimed, "What! a *Christian* minister, and not keep any Sabbath!"

"That is just the reason," I replied. "I am not a Jew, but a *Christian*; and because I am a Christian, I celebrate the first day of the week. The Sabbath is that which speaks of old-creation rest—of God's six days of work, and of His resting on the seventh. Besides, it was given to Israel as a distinctive mark between them and the Gentiles.

"But *sin* came in, and God's rest was broken, so that our Lord said, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' God began a new creation in connection with our Lord Jesus risen from the dead on the first day of the week—the Lord's day—the new-creation day, in contrast to the Sabbath, which was the old-creation day.

"In John xx. 19, the Lord Jesus showed Himself to His disciples as they were together on the first day of the week. The early disciples met on that day to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7), and on the first day of the week the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost."

"Then," he replied, "according to your theory, the *law* is done away with."

I said, "Oh, no! the law is not done away with, but *I* am. God's holy law is just as able to curse and condemn the sinner as when it was given amid thunders and lightnings at Mount Sinai; but the law is not for dead people, and I am dead. 'Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ' (Rom. vii. 4).

He did not seem to understand this simple statement of Scripture, so I said, "If a man murders another, is arrested, tried, found guilty, and upon the appointed day is taken by the sheriff, and hanged by the neck until he

is dead—has the law any more claim upon that man?"

"No; of course not," he replied.

"Has the law been done away with?"

"No, but the man has paid the penalty, and has died."

"Now," I said, "that is just how it once was with me.

Once I stood in the place of condemnation, with nothing before me but death and judgment; but God, in love for me, gave His Son, who took my place, assumed all my indebtedness, and died in my stead. So now, in God's sight (see Rom. vi. to vii. 1), I have died, and the law has no more claim upon me, because I am dead.

"One word more. Do not think, because I know this blessed truth, I will go on in sin and breaking God's law. No; for, as born of God, and having the Holy Spirit as power, and Christ before me as a Pattern and an Object, 'the righteous claims of the law are fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit' (Rom. viii. 3, 4)." Read Gal. ii. 19, 20.

A. M. S.



"Here am I, send me."



I SAID, "Let me work in the fields?"

He said, "No, work in the town."

I said, "No flowers are there."

"No flowers," said He "but a crown."

I said, "But I shrink from the place,

There is nothing but noise and din."

A cloud swept over His face;—

"There is worse," said He "there is *sin*."

I said, "But the air is thick,

Dark fogs have veiled the sun."

He said, "Souls are *there* sin-sick,

Lost souls from death to be won."

Self-Occupation.

THERE are four kinds of self-occupation. Self-occupation as to soul

EXPERIENCE.

A beloved servant, now with the Lord, used to say that he never knew souls much occupied with experience—whether that of Rom. vii., Gal. v., or holiness by faith—that it did not end in making *self* a great object of consideration.

They do not know deliverance, and experimental truths seem to offer that which they are seeking. They are not seeking an increased knowledge of *the Grace of God*, or deepened acquaintance with *Christ*; their object of desire is to have a more satisfactory experience. That is, *self* is still their centre. And such souls are constantly occupied either in bemoaning how little they have got or attained, or in complacently assuming that they “have attained” (Phi. iii.).

It has often been remarked that in the writings of those who advocate “holiness by faith” the beauty and perfection of what Christ is in Himself as an all-blessing Object for the heart is very little presented. Christ is set forth as *One who can bring about a new experience* in the believer, and it is easy to see that the new experience has often a more prominent place in the mind than Christ.

SERVICE.

It is a sad thing when *service* interferes with *soul-prosperity*. Service may take possession of the heart until it becomes the theme of conversation, the subject matter of correspondence, and the centre round which the thoughts continually revolve. It is possible to be so engrossed with service that one's meditations are coloured by it, one's prayers are

full of it, and the Word of God becomes simply a quarry out of which material for addresses and sermons can be dug. This is a serious loss to the soul, and many are thereby hindered from making spiritual progress.

Very often young believers who have not even peace with God are encouraged to take up service, and they become so occupied with what they are doing that they are not at leisure to learn or to take their place in the favour of God. Hence, so long as the service prospers, and they get on pretty well with it, they are happy. The service is their life. But when there is no success, and the whole thing seems to be a failure, their joy collapses; and they have to discover how little they have really got.

PHYSICAL WEAKNESS.

Believers with weakly bodies are in special danger of becoming very self-centred. Their condition and circumstances tend to make them very much objects of consideration to themselves. There may be need for great care, for special diet and treatment, and this very often turns to *self-occupation*, and the soul's spiritual joy declines.

I daresay some of my hearers have no difficulty in recognizing the symptoms of this baneful malady. You would like to know if there is a cure for it. Well, I believe there is. The remedy for this kind of self-occupation is to know the love and support of Christ as Priest. I believe the Priesthood of Christ comes into exercise to sustain us above the self-occupation into which we should otherwise sink. In His love He makes His sympathy a reality to our hearts, and the fact that He considers our trouble and has known our soul in adversity as One touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having

been in all points tempted like as we are apart from sin, draws our hearts to Him in a very blessed way. In nearness to Himself we enjoy His love, and are assured of His support, and the moment our hearts come consciously into the circle of his love *self* is no longer the centre. It is in thus drawing our hearts to Himself that Christ succours us. To find that we are objects of consideration to *Him* is an infinite solace, and it brings *Him* before our hearts in such a way that we are sustained above the consideration of ourselves. There is the positive support of *His love*; and thus our weakness becomes the occasion of proving the personal love and support of Christ, so that we are sustained in the joy of God's favour.

IDLENESS.

Few things are treated with such severity in Scripture as idleness, and there can be nothing more destructive of all spiritual joy. People who have no particular household or business duties, and who are not engaged in some form of service, are almost invariably self-occupied and unhappy. It is the will of God that men and women should have some form of occupation, and this ordinance of God cannot be set aside without evil results.

A good many cases of spiritual depression would be quickly cured by a little more work. It is better to dig in the garden, to chop firewood, or to break stones on the road, than to do nothing.

Then if the Lord has called you to any little service of a more spiritual sort you cannot be negligent or slothful in it without suffering loss in your soul. Devotedness will necessarily produce diligence, and where these are lacking the light and joy of God's favour are not likely to be the conscious portion of the heart.

Eight Bible Houses.



BETHESDA—"the house of mercy." We are all in it, but we have not all benefited by it. We read of one who lay there for 38 years without being healed. Are you healed? Have you "obtained mercy?" Do you know the great Physician's skill and power? If so, "the house of mercy" becomes to you—

Bethshan—"the house of healing." Professional "Faith-healers" build houses, which they call "Bethshan," but often they would be better named "Bethsham." Thank God, the true house of healing is no sham. It offers speedy relief and cure to the spiritually blind, maimed, halt, withered. None need despair, not even the moral leper corrupted and loathsome with sin.

Bethlehem—"the house of bread." Yes, there is "bread enough and to spare" *there*. Christ Himself is the portion of His people. "The bread of heaven"—that which heaven feeds upon, and "the bread of God"—He who delights God's heart, is *our* food. Who would turn again to Egypt's fare, with all the fatness of God's house at their disposal? "My leanness, my leanness!" Dare we say so, when such plenty and fulness abound? Bethlehem is sometimes called Beth-lehem-judah (Jud. xvii.), and again, Beth-lehem-Ephratah (Mic. v.). Ephratah means *fruitful*, and Judah signifies *praise*. These two things characterise those who live in God's house of bread.

Bethany—"the house of song." Some give a different meaning to the name, but I prefer this one. Praise or song befits Bethany. It becomes those to sing who have had the "new song" *put* into their mouth. Have you noticed that in Psa. xl. it is all

"*my*"—the Saviour's exclusive work—till the resurrection rock is reached. Then the "*my*" becomes "*our*." He suffered alone, but now he associates us with Himself, and we sing with Him, or we ought to (Psa. xxii. and Heb. i.). "He led them out as far as Bethany and He blessed them." He went away blessing, and He will come again blessing. What a house of song is Bethany.

Bethphage—"the house of figs." This is fruitfulness. Fig-leaves—mere profession, will not do for God. He looks for fruit. "The husbandman that laboureth must first be partaker of the fruit." "My Father is the Husbandman," said Jesus, and we are to "bear much fruit," that He may be "glorified." What "long patience" He displays, as he "*waits* for the precious fruit." As "God's tillage," shall not our souls yield something for God, for all His culture and care?

Bethsaida—"the house of fish." This house is despised by some as too old and common. They complain, and with some cause, too, of bustling Marthas and headstrong Peters (Jno. xxi. 3), and backsliding Ephesians (Rev. ii. 2-4). Yet Bethsaida is as divinely ordained as Bethphage. *Fruitfulness* may be for God, and gospel *service* more for man, but both have their place. Let us never be above doing fishermen's work. It is in Bethsaida that Christ makes us "fishers of men." If we have no "net," let us not be ashamed to cast a line into the heaving sea of humanity which surges around us.

Bethabara—"the house of passage." It was really a ford of Jordan, the river of death. Strangers and pilgrims here. Let us not forget. The tendency of each heart is to settle down. Then God comes in and stirs up our nest, and rolls death in upon us. Oh, for the pilgrim staff, the girded loins,

the brightly beaming torch of a consistent testimony.

Bethel—"the house of God." This is the end—"I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." The earthly Bethel, be it Israel of the past, or the professing Church of the present, has become "Bethaven" (the house of vanity), but no idols can defile the heavenly Bethel; it must ever be true to its name and character. Like Jacob, we see it in vision at the start, and should constantly visit it in spirit as we go on, but the opened heavens, the mystic ladder, and "the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man," await their fulfilment in the coming millennial day. Then we shall enjoy above, in its fulness, what now we have the earnest of below. As the loved hymn says—

How blest a home! the Father's house!
 There love divine doth rest;
 What else could satisfy the hearts
 Of those in Jesus blest?

S. J. B. C.



Keep Your Wings Free.



IF you will go to the banks of a little stream, and watch the flies that come to bathe in it, you will notice that while they plunge their *bodies* in the water, they keep their wings high out of the water; and after swimming about a little while, they fly away with their wings unwet through the sunny air. Now that is a lesson for us. Here we are immersed in the cares and business of the world; but let us keep the wings of our soul, our faith, and our love, out of the world, that with these unclogged, we may be ready to take our flight to heaven.

“The World is Ours.”

(1 Cor. iii. 21-23.)

FULL long our feet the flowery ways
 Of peace have trod,
 Content with creed and garb and phrase.
 A harder path in earlier days
 Led up to God.

Too cheaply truths, once purchased dear,
 Are made our own;
 Too long the world has smiled to hear
 Our boast of full corn in the ear,
 By others sown;—

And see us stir the martyr fires
 Of long ago,
 And wrap our satisfied desires
 In the singed mantles that our sires
 Have dropped below.

Oh, let the cross our worthies bore
 On us be laid;
 Profession's quiet sleep be o'er;
 In action's earnest scale once more
 Our faith be weighed.

Thanks for our privilege to bless,
 By word and deed,
 The widow in her keen distress,
 The childless and the fatherless,
 The hearts that bleed!

The fields of duty open wide,
 Where all our powers
 Are tasked the eager steps to guide
 Of millions on a path untried:
 The world is ours!

Ours by traditions dear and old,
 Which make the race
 Our wards to cherish and uphold,
 And cast their freedom in the mould
 Of Christian grace.

To suffer well is well to serve;
 Stint not, nor stay;
 The years have never dropped their sand
 On mortal issue vast and grand
 As ours to-day.

Oh, small shall seem all sacrifice
 And pain and loss,
 When God shall wipe the weeping eyes,
 For suffering give the victor's prize,
 The crown for cross!

(Anon.)



“DO YOU DESIRE TO HAVE MORE OF CHRIST?”

“**D**O you desire to have more of Christ?” There are few who would hesitate to reply, “Indeed we do.” And yet it is quite true, as often said, that every one possesses as much of Christ as he desires. Of the Israelites in the wilderness, we read, that “they gathered it *every morning*, every man *according to his eating*.” The appetite determined the amount collected. So it really is with ourselves. Christ never withholds Himself from those who truly seek Him; nay, He responds to us far beyond our desires. The fact is, we want more of Christ, and something else besides. This cannot be. It must be Christ alone; Christ our only object, and then He will satisfy even beyond our utmost expectations.

The only Standard of Truth.

THE Scriptures are the only *rule* or *standard* of faith and practice; but the *power* that applies them to our minds is the Spirit, and the *instruments* may be many.

To make a rule, or standard, we must have the whole thing fully out and expressed. A parent, a teacher, a friend, may communicate truth, but none is a standard.

My use of the standard may be ignorant or imperfect; still it is a perfect standard in itself. I, as a teacher, may have stated perfect truth, but it is no standard. The whole truth having been communicated, no fresh revelation to an individual soul of part of the same truth is a standard.

The Bible may be the means of communicating truth; but its great value is, that it is the standard as well as the depository of all truth.

A truth may be most perfectly communicated to me, as a measure of corn may be most accurately weighed; but for the ascertainment that it is so, a standard is required. The Spirit of God may enable me to use the standard of the Word, but this does not make the Spirit of God the standard, any more than the perfect skill of the weighmaster or measurer makes his hand or mind the standard.

I may have spiritually learned truth, and may, as far as known, use this known truth as a test to all presented to me, and so far the intelligence of the Spirit may be a guide. But a standard must be a standard of everything, and for this it must be the whole record of truth, and the perfect record of truth.

J. N. D.

Harry's Conversion.

A YOUNG lad named Harry used to call his horses home by name each night. There were Dobbin, Charlie, Whitespot, and Jennie. In the stables the names of the horses were painted over the stalls. Not strange, is it, that each horse knows its own stall (see Isa. i. 3), and when it turns slowly at eventide into the stable no mistake is made in finding its own resting-place. Perhaps each horse likes its own stall best, and never feels "at home" elsewhere.

It so happened that an evangelist came to conduct a mission in Starfield, the nearest town to High Field Farm, and Harry and two or three friends were prevailed upon to attend one of the evening meetings.

After singing and prayer, the preacher gave out his text—"He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (John x. 3).

Something in it rivetted Harry's attention. The calling by name of which the preacher spoke held him fast. At first he thought only of the names of the horses with which he was wont to plough. He saw the names as he knew them over the stalls—Whitespot, Charlie, Dobbin, Jennie.

Then he seemed to forget everything for

awhile, except that it was just as though someone called him softly by name, "Harry, Harry! Come, and I will give you rest."

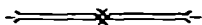
Presently it was repeated somewhat louder, "Harry!" and it was just at that moment that the preacher remarked—"Perhaps the Good Shepherd is calling some here by name, that they may come to Him and trust in Him for salvation, and here and now have eternal life."

It was then that the boy heard the voice again, "Harry! Harry! Harry! Come—come now." He felt as though Jesus was indeed calling him by name, and all that he could whisper in reply was, "Lord Jesus, I come just as I am." And he came, and found joy and peace in the Saviour. That was the night of his conversion.

Time proved how very real it was. All on the farm noticed the change in him. He is a Christian in deed and in truth; he manifests it by the cheery way he goes about his work, so different from the slouching, careless manner he formerly had. There is heart in all that he does. He seeks to bear the sheep mark of Christ, which is love (John xiii. 35). And he is not ashamed to confess Christ.

Little reader, the Good Shepherd is calling you by name. Will you respond, and say, "Lord Jesus, I come just as I am."

The Little Bootblack.



A HUNDRED years ago there lived a little boy in Oxford, England, whose business it was to clean the boots of the students of the famous university there. He was poor, but bright and smart.

Well, this lad, whose name was George, grew rapidly in favor with the students. His prompt and hearty way of doing things, his industrious habits and faithful deeds, won their admiration. They saw in him the promise of a noble man; and they proposed to teach him a little every day. Eager to learn, George accepted their proposition; and he soon surpassed his teachers by his rapid progress. "A boy who can blacken boots well, can study well," said one of the students. "Keen as a briar," said another, "and pluck enough to make a hero."

But we cannot stop to tell of his patience and perseverance. He went on, step by step, just as the song goes—

"One step and then another,"

until he became a man—a learned and eloquent man, who preached the Gospel to thousands. The little bootblack became the renowned preacher, George Whitfield. He was converted to God when seven years old, and was used to the conversion of thousands.

The Message.



What Awoke Them.



A COMMERCIAL traveller had business engagements which occasionally called him to a small iron-working town.

When business is brisk at such places, and work plentiful, the mills are kept running night and day. The steam hammers, some of them several tons in weight, are constantly kept working, beating out the huge masses of molten iron, and thereby causing the very ground to shake beneath their heavy and oft-repeated falls.

To this constant noise the inhabitants of that little town had grown quite familiar; so that in spite of the heavy thuds of the ponderous hammers, men, women, and children could sleep quite soundly through the night without the least disturbance.

Not so, however, with the man of business above referred to. The din of this heavy hammering drove all sleep from his eyes, so that, whenever he was called into that locality, he always arranged for sleeping accommodation somewhere outside.

One night, however, from some breakdown in the machinery, these steam-hammers suddenly stopped working; and the consequence was that nearly the whole of the town woke up.

Now, what awoke them? Not the oft-repeated stroke of the heavy hammers, but their sudden cessation.

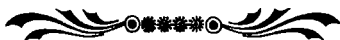
Yes, they could sleep soundly enough when the hammers were at constant work, but when they stopped, they instantly woke up.

How this reminds one of the state of multitudes of precious souls in the present day. While the Gospel-hammer is kept at work—and “Is not My word as a hammer?” saith the Lord—thousands within sound of it are fast asleep. Let the “hammer” come down ever so heavily, they slumber on. They seem to find a lulling comfort in the idea that they live in a Gospel land where it is preached all the time.

But the time will come when the true workmen will be summoned away. “Call the laborers home” shall be heard from their Master’s lips. The hammer of the Gospel of God’s grace and glory shall suddenly cease, and never give another stroke. Then shall there be a great waking up of Gospel-hardened slumberers; and then, throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, shall the bitter cry be heard, “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” Alas! for that day.

Though, in his sleep, the Christless sinner may have dreamt that he was alright, yet in the language of the ancient prophet, “He awaketh and his soul is empty” (Isa. xxix. 8).

O friend, wake up now! While the Father’s arms are still open to welcome, while the Spirit is still here to strive, while the Saviour still waits to bless, oh awake! **AWAKE!! AWAKE!!!**



Many dote on this world as if it were never to have an end, and neglect the next as if it were never to have a beginning.

Are You Saved?

AFTER a gospel meeting a clergyman introduced himself, and told me who he was.

He remarked, "I agree with every word you said in your address; indeed I enjoyed it very much.

"I am glad you liked the subject," I said.

"Yes, indeed I did," he replied; "but do you mean to say that every man may know about his salvation and be assured of it?"

"Why not," I said, "if our salvation depends upon the finished work of Christ for us, and if our assurance depends upon the veracity of God?"

He did not answer; so I continued—

"If the blood of Jesus was shed for me, and I plead it, then the destroying angel cannot touch me. And if God says, 'When I see the blood I will pass over you,' how can I entertain a doubt about it?"

"Y-e-s," he said, hesitating, "y-e-s; but does everybody know about his personal interest in the blood?"

I replied, "What is 'believing' if he does not? We do not believe *about* the blood, but *in* it; that is to say, we have a personal interest therein. We ought to know whether we are pleading the blood, and be sure that we have no other plea for acceptance. The blood was shed to take our sins away. How can we believe that our sins are taken away, and not believe that we have personal interest in the blood?"

My friend went on assenting in a general way, but still raising fresh questions.

As we walked along, I ventured to ask him whether

he had passed "from death into life." "Are you saved?" I said.

"What a question," he exclaimed, "to put to a clergyman! You are a strange man!"

"My dear friend," was my reply, "if you are a guide to others, there is the greater need for this question."

"Is it not an insult," he said, "to ask a clergyman such a question?"

"Far from that," I replied. "If you are saved, it gives you an opportunity to testify of God's goodness."

"You certainly put things in a strange way. Do I look like an unsaved man?" he said, standing in front of me, "My father-in-law is the Rev. Dr. —," and saying this, he looked as confident as assurance itself. "Well you are a strange man," he repeated again, continuing to walk forward, "stranger than your Book—though you are very like it—very like!"

"Come, friend," I said, "why not give me a plain answer to a plain question?"

"What do you want me to say? I preach the doctrines of the Reformation as much as you do!"

I said, "It is well to preach these doctrines, but do you preach Christ?"

By this time he had begun to wax warm, and said rather impatiently, "I wish to be saved as much as you do."

"But, my friend," I replied, "I do not *wish* to be saved, for I *am* saved. When a man wishes for a thing, it is because he has not yet obtained it."

We had already talked for more than an hour, and as yet I had not received a definite answer to the simple question "Are you saved?" to which "Yes" or "No" would have sufficed.

At length, interrupting the course of argument, I

could not help telling him that when believers come together, they do not argue about believing or not believing, but they rather have communion one with another, and rejoice together.

~~At last~~ I suggested that he should do a little thing, which he characterised as a novelty.

I said, "Here is paper, pen, and ink; now will you write down in black and white the words 'I wish to be saved'?"

"Yes," he said; "I know a great many good men who would do that; I have no objection."

"Well, then, do so," I said.

Whereupon he took the pen in hand, and wrote the words, "I wish to be saved."

This done, I asked, "Have you any objection to sign your name to that?"

"None whatever," he replied, and signed his name in full, with a flourish.

I took up the paper, and looking at him, said, "I could no more do that than I could deny God. If I wrote that, it would imply that God had not saved me. You have committed yourself now."

He looked somewhat confused, so I continued, "I can show you a way out of your trouble—it is of no use arguing about these things. Will you write just one word more over what you have already written?"

"What is it?" he inquired.

"Write the word 'Lord' at the head of the paper; that will turn it into a prayer, and then God can give you an answer. 'Wishing' is like writing a letter, and sending it without any address."

After a little more contention, he took up the pen again and wrote the word "Lord."

"Now," I said, "the writing stands thus: 'Lord, I wish to be saved.'" Putting the paper down upon

the table, I said, "Lord, save him; do save him for Jesus' sake!" and he knelt down.

The very attitude of kneeling seemed to melt his heart. It is surprising how people argue while they are sitting, and more vigorously still while they are on their feet; but once down upon their knees, Satan's influence seems broken.

My friend wept in prayer and sought salvation. Better still, he found it, and we praised God together.

What a wondrous change there was in that man, now that he was rejoicing! Before this, he knew the Word of God intellectually, but when he believed it in his heart, he could not help thanking God with gladness. The water of the Word has changed into the wine of the kingdom.

I could scarcely believe that this happy rejoicing man was the same person who only a short time before had been disputing and contending with me.

This clergyman returned to his church and people a changed man. His words and views were the same, but now they had a power and a purpose in them which they had not previously. His congregation could see that he was not so much preaching about a subject, as speaking to them personally about their salvation, with a joy they had never observed before.

The result of this was, that the very first Sunday after his return some people came into the vestry asking the question, "What shall I do to be saved?"

There was also another result, which I must not omit to mention. In the course of the following week, a gentleman of influence in his congregation said to him, "So you have changed your preaching. I tell you plainly that style *won't do here.*"

Thus it will ever be while human nature continues as it is. There are those who are pricked to the

heart by the preaching of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit (Acts ii. 37); others who mock, saying, "These men are drunk with new wine" (Acts ii. 13), and, sad to say, others again, who go farther than mocking, and "gnash their teeth" (Acts vii. 54).

Reader, where are *you*?

W. H.



"Don't Care."

A GREAT many people bring neither Cain's sacrifice to God, nor yet Abel's: they are religiously *indifferent*. Like Gallio, they "don't care":—"Gallio cared for none of these things." " 'Don't care' leads to the gallows," says the proverb. Alas, *sometimes* it does, but it *always* leads to hell. Sinner, beware! and have a care.

S. J. B. C.



PEACE.

He *thought* and planned peace (Jer. xxix. 11).
 He *came* and brought peace (Luke ii. 14).
 He *died* and made peace (Col. i. 20).
 He *rose* and preached peace (Eph. ii. 17).
 He *lives* and is our peace (Eph. ii. 14).

.....

CONVICTION of ignorance is the doorstep to the temple of wisdom.



SIN and punishment, like the shadow and the body, are never apart.

The Greatest Discovery.

IT is said that when Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform, was asked, "What is the greatest discovery you ever made?" his reply was

**"THAT I HAVE
A SAVIOUR IN GLORY!"**

Wonderful discovery. Friend, Have you made it?

But, stop! there is a discovery you must make prior to that one, viz., that you *need* a Saviour. Have you made this discovery?

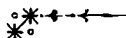
Have you made both these discoveries—that you *need* a Saviour, and that you *have* a Saviour in glory?

If so, you have made the greatest discovery any one can ever make.

S. J. B. C.



"We believe and are sure."



NO need to prove a Saviour
When once the heart believes,
And the light of God's blest favour
In Jesus Christ receives.

No need for weary puzzle
With heart-lore, strange and dim,
When we find our dark enigmas
Are simply solved in Him.



The Curate's Sermon.



SOME time since, as I was distributing tracts in an up-country Australian town, a friend accosted me and remarked, "I wish you would call at yonder house. An old man lies there very ill; a word at the present time might be useful to him."

The house was well-known in the neighbourhood, as was also its tenant, the pleasant, kindly old gentleman, whom I desired to see.

His wife answered the door, and asked me in, and at once introduced me to her husband. The old man seemed too weak to talk much, but he listened with interest as the story of God's grace was read to him, and a few simple remarks were made upon the Scripture.

Now and then, however, his wife interjected a word with the tone of one who was accustomed to expect assent to all she said.

She was an old woman, but tall and strong, and with a restless manner and a restless tongue.

"You talk about 'after death the judgment,'" said she. "Well, I have no more idea of going to the place of destruction than I have of swallowing that bedstead!" And she took up a large palm-leaf fan, and whisked it vigorously round the apartment to expend her feelings, and to drive out the flies, which on this hot day were swarming into the room.

"There," she continued, "that's what I say. I have always lived a good life, and I have believed in Jesus ever since I was three years old, and what more could I do? I believe if people do the best they can they will go to heaven. That's always

been my creed ; it's what I've been taught, and what I shall keep to."

I managed to put in a word to the effect that God had said, "There is none righteous, no, not one," but her voluble tongue could hardly be repressed.

She continued, "I'll tell you what I think about it. Nearly a hundred years ago now my poor dear mother went to church one Sunday in the village of Cardington, in Bedfordshire, England.

"Well, it so happened that the curate who was to preach that day had had great trouble in his house all the previous week from sickness, and he was obliged to appear before his congregation with an apology instead of a sermon, because he could not prepare one. 'However,' said he, 'I will not disappoint you altogether, but will give you a short discourse, which you may find full of meaning and easy to remember. The text is in Job v. 7: 'Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.' And the curate went on—

**" ' Man's ingress to this world is naked and bare.
His progress through the world is trouble and care,
His egress from the world is nobody knows where.
If you do well here, you will do well there —
I can tell you no more if I preach for a year.'**

"After the service was over, my mother told me, the people stood in knots under the elm trees, and commended the curate's sermon, because it was so short, and wise, and to the point.

"And I think it was, too ; it was a *multum in parvo* —much in little, and that's just what I believe."

Such was a statement of this woman's belief, the ground of her confidence wherewith to appear before God, the teaching of a so-called Christian minister, who could preach no more if he preached for a year ! Anyone but slightly instructed in the truth of God

might think it hardly possible that such dark ignorance could be found in a Christian land.

"His egress from the world is nobody knows where."

Is this true? Listen to what God says.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are *the ways of death*" (Prov. xiv.).

"The wicked shall be *turned into hell*" (Ps. ix.).

"The rich man died and was buried; *and in hell . . .*" (Luke xvi.).

And what of the egress of the believer?

"To depart *and be with Christ*" (Phil. i.).

"Absent from the body, *present with the Lord*" (2 Cor. v.).

"To-day . . . *with me in paradise*" (Luke xxiii.).

If the reader does not know where he is going, he had better determine his destination with certainty before he treads another step on his journey.

The rhyme proceeds,

"If you do well here, you will do well there."

Yes, *if* you do well; but, unfortunately, your doing well is not doing well enough, and every honest sinner knows this. Besides, Scripture declares that salvation is "*not of works*" (Eph. ii.). Again, "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us*" (Titus iii.). Doing well here for salvation there, is out of the question. God's order is, Be saved first, and do well after.

I did not venture to argue, but turned to Romans iii. and read God's account of man's character, again pointing out, "There is none good, no, not one."

But it was a hard saying to this self-righteous woman, and she could not hear it.

"Why!" she broke out, "I have listened to

bishops and canons and deans, and ministers of all sorts, and to some of the most celebrated preachers of the time, and I never heard one speak like you. Numbers of good and learned men have approved the curate's sermon, and you are the first I ever heard find fault with it."

With a sorrowful heart I at length rose to leave.

Cases of this sort are so common that it is almost certain that among the readers of this little paper will be found some who would call the curate's sermon sound and sensible.

Affectionately we would say that such a religion can no more save a soul than the moral maxims of Confucius, or the fetish worship of Darkest Africa. There is no Christ in it.

True, the name of Christ may be appended to such a case, and the current profession of belief in Jesus be adopted along with it, but Christ and this religion are utterly opposed to each other, and God cannot own either the religion or those that adopt it, for both alike really exclude Jesus, the only Saviour of men.

So Paul told the Galatians, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. . . . Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law" (Gal. v.). "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. iii.).

Dear reader, "good and religious," your goodness and religion will not save you; let go everything, and cling to Jesus only.

J. N. B.

The Christian cannot consistently make the best of both worlds, but he has the best *in* both worlds—Christ *here* and *there*.

mystery inside the Bible, or out of it! None can unravel it; but, thank God, the youngest, the weakest, the vilest of Adam's fallen race can look to the Cross and see, believe, and adore!

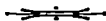
Wonderful love! Do you know and enjoy it? Are its warm, sunny beams shed abroad in your heart? Is the love of Jesus a reality to you? If not, oh then be wise, and before it be too late, before you are shut out in the blackness of darkness forever, before the chilly shades of eternal night wrap themselves around your poor soul—believe that God loves *you*.

“In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John iv. 9, 10).

Wonderful love! yes, wonderful love!

S. J. B. C.

Eph. i. 9, 10.



THE effort of men is to disconnect earth and heaven. They say, virtually, “As far as God is concerned He may abide in heaven, but we want the earth.” In the Revelation what you find is, that men will glorify the God of *heaven*. They do not say anything about the God of *earth*. But Christ comes down (Rev. x.) and sets His right foot on the sea and his left foot on the earth; He lays claim to all. God has said, “Heaven is my throne, earth is my footstool.” Beloved friends, you cannot separate His throne from His footstool.

J. T.

Sour Things.

(Jno. xxi.)

JOHN is distinguished by four things:

First, he was *following* (ver. 20).

Secondly, "Which also *leaned on his breast* at supper" (ver. 20).

Thirdly, "If I will that he *tarry till I come*" (ver. 23).

Fourthly, "This is the disciple which *testifieth* of these things" (ver. 24).

Thus—

His *feet* are in Christ's path.

His *head* is on His bosom.

His *heart* awaits His coming.

His *mouth* testifies of Him.

ALFRED MACE.

"The Master has the Key."

THE mind of a Godly workman was much occupied with the ways of God in government with himself and others, which appeared to him full of inscrutable mysteries.

The two questions, "How?" and "Why?" were constantly in his thoughts.

One day, in visiting a ribbon manufactory, his attention was attracted by an extraordinary piece of machinery. He could understand nothing of the movements. He was informed, however, that all this motion was connected with the centre, where

there was a chest which was kept shut. Anxious to understand the principle of the machine, he asked permission to see the interior. "The master has the key," was the reply.

The words were like a flash of light. Here was the answer to all his perplexed thoughts.

"Yes; the Master has the key. He governs and directs all. It is enough. What need I know more? 'He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will,' and His name is Love."

HUMILITY.



OF all trees, I observe, God hath chosen the vine, a low plant that creeps upon the helpful wall; of all beasts, the soft and patient lamb; of all fowls, the mild and guileless dove. When God appeared to Moses, it was not in the lofty cedar, nor the sturdy oak, nor the spreading palm; but in a bush, a humble, slender, abject shrub; as if He would, by these elections, check the conceited arrogance of man.

(Old Author.)

DEATH.



DEATH has been quaintly called "the terror of kings," as well as "the king of terrors." It stalks through all lands, and is a power which none, however wealthy and mighty they may be, can withstand.

Harmony among Workers.

(1 Cor. iii.)



THE apostle gives here certain antidotes, which would check the setting up of one labourer above another, as well as the exaltation of self in any servant of Christ. May we ponder the truths contained in this chapter, and seek help of God to tread the holy pathway indicated.

LABOURERS ARE BUT SERVANTS.

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but *ministers* [i.e., servants] by whom ye believed, even as the *Lord* gave to each one?”

All labourers serve one Master, from whom each has received the gift of his special ministry, and, therefore, neither have they, as servants, any cause of jealousy, nor have those among whom they minister, cause of jealousy on their behalf. The contrast between the many servants and the one Lord or Master has to be noticed.

It is theirs to stand on the common level of implicit obedience, of which He alone is judge. It is His to give both the work to do and the ability to do it. Hence the question, “Who then are they?”

And the answer is, “They are *servants*.”

Alas, when either servants want to make themselves masters, or when those amongst whom they labour want to make masters of them!

Another reason why there should be harmony is,

THAT THEY ARE NOTHING.

“So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth.”

Those who know they are nothing cannot quarrel, for they can have nothing of their own to contend for, and therefore are all the more at liberty to con-

tend earnestly on their Master's account for the faith "once delivered to the saints."

In this verse the contrast is between the toiler, who is nobody and nothing, and the Giver of the increase, who is everything. And He who gives the increase now, will in the great day give the reward to all His lowly ones, according to the labour of each: for they who are nobodies in their own estimation are somebodies in the eyes of their God, and He will not forget their work of faith and labour of love.

A third reason is that they are

"GOD'S FELLOW LABOURERS,"

as we read in verse 9; not "labourers together with God," as if they stood on a common platform with God, but fellow-labourers who belong to God, and are doing His work, in His husbandry, or in His building.

The point is, *fellowship* in a common object. Were this entered into and remembered, it would prevent all thought of "*my work*" and "*your work.*" All work would be looked on as *the Lord's*, whose prerogative it is to assign to each servant his work. We are too often deceived here.

He discriminates, but let us labour on, content if the work is done, and doing our utmost to its accomplishment. But in our labour it is of the utmost importance to cherish true fellowship, if we would destroy that lordly, hateful "*mine*" and "*thine,*" which mars so much of what we do.

At the close of the chapter we are told

"ALL THINGS ARE YOURS."

We have a mutual possession in one another, even as the Lord has a possession in us all. An appreciation of this would prevent selfish individualising.

One member of the body boasts not itself over another; each does its own work, not for itself, but for the body; not for personal gratification, but for the profit of the whole. The ground of this mutual possession is that we are Christ's, even as Christ is God's.

What sweetness there is in this thought! What unselfishness, what mutual joy in one another it gives!

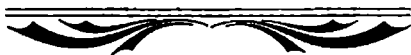
How it banishes for ever the littleness of our selfish hearts, and leads us into the largeness of Christ's heart for *all* the body.

May the Spirit of God impress these points deeply upon the hearts of all, but especially of those who seek to be fellow-workers unto the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that so our work may not be hindered by jealous self-assertion or self-satisfaction.

When these are manifested, it is evident that we have not entered into the mind of Christ Jesus as portrayed in Phil. ii. 5-8, but are occupied with our own things, instead of looking upon the things of others.

It is only as we acquire the Master's lowly mind that we can rightly "work out our own salvation," "shine as lights in the world," and "hold forth the word of life."

G.



IF we set up memorials for our mercies, they will form stepping-stones in our troubles.



YOUR "few things" may be very few and very small things, but He expects you to be faithful over them.

Our Spiritual Revenues.

(EPH. i. 3.)



IF the Queen gave some poor man a high position, everybody would expect her to furnish him with means to stand in that position with comfort to himself and credit to her. It is not less so with God, and when you take this new position you find that there are wonderful revenues connected with it. I fear that many of us are like the Indian spy who received from General Washington, for services rendered during the American War, a parchment entitling him to considerable pension. He hung it round his neck as a charm, and many years after, when he was dying in great poverty, it was found there—the written authority for him to have so many dollars a year until his death. He had never drawn a cent of the money, and though nobody could question his title to it, he had been no better off than if he had been without it. Would it not have been well for that man to have had some good friend to make him acquainted with the real value of his parchment, and to see that he got the good of it? If we miss the enjoyment of the spiritual revenues to which we are entitled, it is not for want of a Friend to tell us what they are, or to see that we get the good of them. The HOLY GHOST has been given to us “*that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God,*” not simply that we might know about them, but know the things themselves.

C. A. C.



The deepest and most useful truths are plainest: And while we keep to them our differences cannot rise high.

Consciousness of Divine Love.



HERE is a difference between knowing that we are loved by the Lord as a matter of faith, and coming into the consciousness of it. We all begin by receiving the testimony of it, as a well-known hymn says :

“ Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

Belief in being loved comes from adequate testimony; *consciousness* of being loved comes from being in the company of the One who loves us.

J. R.



“ God who is rich in mercy.”

(LUKE XV.)



BEHOLD, God hath an *eye* of mercy;—He sees afar off. He hath *bowels* of mercy. He had compassion. He hath *feet* of mercy:—He ran to him. He hath *arms* of mercy:—He fell upon him and embraced him. He hath *lips* of mercy:—He kissed him.

The father *ran*! Mercy comes full speed. Oh, what a difference do I see between the offending son and the offended father. The son's pace is, “*He arose and came*;” he came walking on towards his father. The father's pace is, “*He ran*.” The son most needed to have run; his belly was pinched with hunger, yet he only walks; but his father ran. Bowels troubled with mercy outpace bowels pinched with hunger. God (I see) makes more haste to show mercy than we do to receive mercy. Whilst misery goes a-walking, mercy comes a-running.

God who is slow to anger, is swift to mercy. "*He ran.*" And why then, my soul, shouldst thou be slow of heart to believe? Up and run to Him who will come running with His mercy and His Christ to thee; for, "with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption."

J. DYKE, 1652.

A Good Confession.



"**I** ALWAYS knew that it was *necessary* that Christ should die, but never till now did I know that it was *enough*."

Reader, have you learnt that it is *enough*—that you have to do nothing for your salvation because Christ's work is enough?

The Whisperer.

(PROV. XVI. 28.)



ONLY a faint suggestion,
 Only a doubtful hint,
 Only a specious question,
 With a special tone and tint.
 Only a low "I wonder!"
 A shake of the head—that's all,
 But the whisper grows to thunder,
 And a scathing bolt may fall;—
 And the good ship be dismasted,
 And hearts be like to break,
 And a Christian life be blasted
 For a scarcely guessed mistake.

The Crucible and the Hammer.

(EXODUS xxxv. 31-40.)

ONE of the first proofs that a person is really saved, and consciously set for God in the world, is his knowledge of the fact that God has left him down here to be for Himself. After we were converted, why did not God at once take us home to heaven? One object was, that we might be a reproduction of Christ. Do I get up in the morning with the thought, "There is one thing that I am left here for, that God may see in me Christ lived over again?"

If we are in a right condition of soul, we shall desire to be light-bearers; and if we are to be light-bearers, we must be put upon the wheel. You never saw a potter make a vessel without putting the clay on the wheel. If you are a vessel of honour, you must have been put on the wheel. I do not know your wheel, and you do not know mine; but we each know our own.

The candlestick was, first, of pure gold; for this the crucible was needed. Secondly, of beaten work—beaten into the shape of a lampstand with the hammer. *The crucible* is some severe, short, sharp trial—it is *separative*. The object of the crucible is to make a vessel of *pure* gold. It does not add to or take from it. If a pound of pure gold be put into a red-hot furnace, it comes out two hours afterwards a pound of pure gold; it loses nothing. It is put into the crucible that what is not pure gold may be taken from it.

We are put into the crucible to separate us from the dross. The nearer we get to God, the more glad we shall be to be nothing but what is suited to

God and to Christ; to be separated personally, domestically, commercially, ecclesiastically, from everything that would dim the gold; from everything that hinders our growth, advancement, and testimony for God and for Christ in this world. The object of the crucible is to separate and purify.

The hammer, however, is slow, sure, and formative. We find it in the history of the saints in the Old and New Testaments, and in our own. When Abraham offered up Isaac, it was the crucible for him. Just before, we read, Abraham planted a grove; but after he offered Isaac we never hear of the grove again. The taking away of Joseph from Jacob was the crucible for him, but it acted in a different manner; he needed the successive strokes of the hammer as well. The crucible did not do the work when Joseph went, because Benjamin was slipped into his place; all the rest of his life Jacob had the successive strokes of the hammer, but who would have thought that his life would have had such a magnificent sunset! How splendidly he was formed by the successive strokes of the hammer!

The Lord did not command Moses to make a *mould* of a seven-branched candlestick, and to run the gold into it. No, it was to be hammered out of a solid block of pure gold; it was to be made of *beaten* work, and the character of the metal unmixed, pure gold—"beaten work," not moulded, "of pure gold."

Ah, beloved, we are not fit to be light-bearers for God if we shrink from the crucible and the hammer! If we really want to be light-bearers for Him we shall welcome the crucible because it separates, and the hammer because it forms. If we saw that, we should see how wonderfully all the trials and difficulties that come on us are sent by God. In this

day of trial, when there are difficulties around, when we dread the post coming lest it should bring bad news, when we do not know what sorrow may come next, how wonderful to be able to say, "As for God, His way is *perfect*."

We do not attain to this in a moment. After all the exercises and discipline God has passed you through, can you say, "As for God, his way is perfect"? I do not mean in a stoical way. I abhor stoicism from the depths of my heart. "Jesus wept." He was no stoic. Paul wept. I wish I could weep like Jesus and Paul. It would be a good thing if there were a few more tears shed in this hard day. Tenderness is what we want. Jesus set His face as a flint, yet was there ever such tenderness as His? It is not just stoically saying, "Oh, yes; as for God, His way is perfect!" that is human schooling. Can you really say, "As for God, His way is perfect"? People say they wish to be resigned, and talk about dying and being resigned. Is that the highest condition of soul a saint of God can reach? There are four stages:

1. *Resignation*. That is the lowest.
2. *Acquiescence*. That is not the highest, but it is one above the former.
3. *Justification*. Being able to justify God.
4. *Adoration*. Adoring Him for all His dealings. That is the highest. One of the Latin Fathers wrote on the wall of his cell—

"I bow me to Thy will, my God,
And all Thy ways adore."

That was not resignation, acquiescence, or justification; it was adoration. Can you say, "I know my Father is doing the *best* thing for me? He is doing the best for His own glory, and for my richest blessing. 'As for God, His way is perfect.' I may

be crushed, bowed down, yet will I adore and worship Him."

Look at those poor men, with the blood clotted on their backs, in a damp, dirty, dingy prison cell, yet not a murmur, so above self that they can pray and then praise. "As for God, His way is perfect," (Ps. xviii. 30-32).

God says, "Now that you adore me for all my ways, I will come in for you." "It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect." He puts my way in exact correspondence with His way, and he goes on until the poor weak fingers are so strong that they can break the bow of steel.

It is exceedingly precious to know that God has the metal in His own hand. We see people putting heavy strokes where they should be light, and light where they should be heavy; few where there should be many, and many where there should be few. We are in Divine hands, not in one another's. We are in the Father's hands. "The Father Himself loveth you." He knows how long to keep His bit of gold in the crucible, and when to put it under the hammer. God knows how to touch us so that we welcome the crucible and the hammer, and adore God for both. "As for God, his way is perfect." That is God's way of making light-bearers.

THE LATE H. M. HOOKE.

Heb. iv.



NO real believer could fall in the wilderness. He may fail to enter into the good of things now, but the fidelity of Christ will eventually bring him in.

F. E. R.

“The Work of our Hands.”

“And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.”

(PSA. xc. 17.)

“THE work of our hands establish Thou it;”

Yes! that was my text for to-day.

But what was its meaning I did not feel sure,

Till God's light was thrown on my way.

“It cannot mean *my* work,” I said, “that's so hard,

So endless and wearisome, too—

The patching, and mending, the housework and toil,

Which are clearly my duty to do.”

And sadly I smiled! as I thought of *such* work

As “established” for ever by God—

The mean little duties and heart-wearing toil

That compassed the path that I trod!

But morning sped on as I pondered the text,

And snatched a brief moment of rest,

When a soft rosy mouth stole a kiss from my lips,

And a wee head was laid on my breast.

“Please brush my hair, mother, the school bell has

Said Neddie, my darling, so sweet; [rung,”

So I patted and smoothed the rough tangled locks,

Then tied the wee shoes on his feet;

“The work of my hands,” I thought as he left,

And slowly I turned then away,

For the rooms must be dusted, the cooking begun,

The plain old routine of each day.

To the sitting-room first, I went in its turn,
 Drew the blinds up and settled each chair,
 Swept the carpet of shreds, and sighed over holes
 That would come, though I darned them with care.
 Then I looked at the room, and again to myself,
 Repeated the text of the day.
 "The work of my hands" (when the sun, bursting forth
 Filled the room with a glorious ray).

"*The beauty of God*," my lips whispered aloud,
 Ah! here was the secret at last;
 It's the "beauty of God" on the "work of my hands"
 That makes it stand firmly and fast.
 With a light in my heart, and hope in my soul,
 Away to the kitchen I turned,
 And patiently worked at the work of the day,
 The same old routine I had spurned.
 For I said to myself, "If God gives me this work
 That's plainly my duty all through,
 Then surely I must let 'His beauty' be seen
 In the commonest action I do."

When supper time came, the children asleep,
 How happy I felt when, that night,
 "Jack" looked at me proudly, and said with a smile,
 "What makes my dear wife look so bright?
 "Has the day been an easy one, Nellie, my love?
 You look so radiant and sweet;"
 I smiled, as I thought of the work I had done—
 Tired hands and still aching feet,
 But I looked at my husband, and told him the cause:
 "I had such a sweet text for to-day—
 That the 'beauty of God' on the 'work of our hands'
 Lights it up with a glorious ray,
 And thus for His praise its 'established' and stands,
 And its beauty shall ne'er pass away."

"REST AWHILE."

YOU may have seen a man mowing down a field of grass and occasionally stopping in his work. Whilst he stops he rests, but not altogether, for whilst he is resting he is sharpening his scythe.

We may imagine an uninstructed person watching that man at work, and as he observes him stopping now and then, supposes that he is wasting his time. We know better than that. He is all the better for these few moments. See as he begins, how his scythe cuts down the grass; he gets over his work as quick again.

The Lord said to His disciples, after a time of busy and active service, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile." How needful this is!



"THOU MUST HAVE LOVED ME FIRST."

✻

'TIS not that I did choose Thee,
 For, Lord, that could not be,
 This heart would still refuse Thee,
 But Thou hast chosen me :
 Thou from the sin that stained me
 Washed me, and set me free,
 And to this end ordained me,
 That I should live to Thee.

'Twas sovereign mercy called me,
 And taught my opening mind ;
 The world had else enthralled me
 To Heavenly glories blind,
 My heart owns none above Thee ;
 For Thy rich grace I thirst ;
 This knowing, if I love Thee,
 Thou must have loved me first.

JOSIAH CONDER.

the very beginning of the test, and secretly complain that instead of an answer to our prayer, we have only met that which seems to aggravate the evil we deplore.

If we are crying to God that Christ may have the pre-eminent, the only place in our hearts, He may set about answering our desire by breaking a cherished idol. If we desire to know what it is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, we shall probably have a painful experience of our own weakness first. If we cry to God out of the depths of our shame and sorrow, because our walk and witness for Christ are so unfaithful and inconsistent, He may bring us into circumstances where, proving the wretched results of our folly, we at the same time see the cause which led to those results. Then, if self-judgment ensues, we walk softly, and in our weakness the wisdom and strength of the risen Christ of God find a sphere for their expression.

J. N. B.



"THEN SHALL WE KNOW."

(1 Cor. xiii.)



STILL we study, always falling!
 God can read it, we must wait;
 Wait until He teach the mystery,
 Then the wisdom-woven history
 Faith shall read and love translate.

Leaflets now unpagged and scattered
 Time's great library receives,
 When Eternity shall bind them,
 Golden volumes we shall find them—
 God's light falling on the leaves.



Baby's Song.

SWEETLY, in a railway train,
Rose an old familiar strain
From a child, who sang it low,
Solemn, simple, soft and slow—

“Jesus loves me 'iss I know,
For de Bible tells me so,
'ittle ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong.”

Hushed were voices all around,
Ears bent low to hear the sound;
Hearts were moved by mem'ries dear,
Eyes grew dim with childhood's tear.

All unconscious who had heard,
Knowing not what thoughts she stirred,
Still a little higher rang
From the baby lips that sang—

“Jesus loves me, He who died,
Heben's gate to open wide,
He will wash away my sin,
Let a 'ittle child tum in.”

Yet again the sweet voice came,
Lisping clear that precious Name,
Till, upon her mother's breast,
Baby gently sank to rest.

But the darling's little song
Soothed one soul amid that throng,
And from care it rose above,
Trusting in the Saviour's love.

S. J. B. C.

The Message.



The Haunting Eye.

IN the days of Henry II. of France a most touching and solemn incident of martyr patience and faithfulness has been recorded, telling, as it does, of Christian fortitude and grace amid heartless frivolity and wanton popish cruelty. The historian records it in the following graphic way.*

“The coronation of Queen Catherine de Medici, whose infamous name is eternally linked with the St. Bartholomew massacre, caused Henry to think he might vary the *fêtes* which were being given in honour of the occasion by burning four Huguenots.

One of the four was a poor tailor, who had been imprisoned for eating flesh on forbidden days, and had otherwise given grounds for suspecting his orthodoxy. To burn him simply was not enough. It occurred to the Cardinal of Lorraine that it would add to the zest of the affair if, before consigning the tailor to the stake, he should have him interrogated before the king. The confusion with which the tailor would be overwhelmed in a presence so august, and the incoherence of his replies, would, the Cardinal imagined, mightily divert the court. But the matter turned out otherwise than the churchman had reckoned. The promise was fulfilled to the confessor: “When ye shall be brought

*Wylie's "France and the Reformation."

before kings and rulers for my sake and the gospel's, it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak."

So far from being abashed, the tailor maintained his composure in the royal presence, and replied so clearly and pertinently to all the interrogatories and objections, that the king and priests were confounded. Diana of Poitiers, who was present, came to the rescue, "but," as old Crispin the historian says, "the tailor cut her cloth otherwise than she expected. For he, not being able to endure such unmeasured arrogance in her whom he knew to be the cause of these cruel persecutions, said to her, 'Be satisfied, madam, with having infected France, without mingling your venom and filth in a matter altogether holy and sacred, as is the religion and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

The king, taking these words as a personal affront, burst into a rage, and ordered the man to the stake, and when the day came, the more fully to gratify his revenge, Henry witnessed the execution from a window that overlooked the pile.

The tailor was bound to the stake, the faggots were kindled, and the flames began to blaze up around him. The martyr looked up to where the king sat, surrounded with his courtiers, and Diana of Poitiers by his side. He fixed upon Henry from the midst of the fire a calm, full, steadfast look.

The king's eye quailed before the eye of the burning Christian man. It was looking, he felt, into his soul. Higher blazed the flames, the countenance of the martyr grew yet more livid, his limbs began to crumble and drop off; but his eye did not change. Calm and full, without sign of pain or fear, it still rested upon the king.

The monarch could bear that terrible look no longer. He turned away to avoid it. He looked

away at other objects, but, fascinated, again came back to the blazing pile. There still was the eye which he felt unable either to meet or to shun. He had come there, as he believed, to witness with triumph the death of one who had given him personal offence, but he found that he must change places with the martyr, and sit trembling, aghast, and self-condemned, while the other stood unmoved and calm, his eagle, piercing, unquenched eye still gazing till his body sank into ashes.

The execution was over, but not so the horror of the king. The tragedy of the day was reacted in the dreams of the night. In his sleep the same terrible apparition rose before Henry. There again was the blazing pile, and the man standing thereat, and the haunting eye looking forth from the midst of the flames. For nights the king was scared by this terrible vision, and it never left him till, a few weeks later, he was accidentally killed in a tournament and sent to his long and last account."

* * * * *

But did it leave him then? or does that haunting eye still haunt him amid the shades of endless night?

Awful question to consider. The sinner's sins do not die with him. They follow him to his doom, and make his hell a hell indeed: "Son, remember," reverberates through the caverns of the damned, and the undying worm of remorse eats like a canker into his soul. It may be a haunting eye, a haunting word, a haunting thought, a haunting deed, or each and all combined, but the sinner's sins never leave him—they hold him in time, and they haunt him in Eternity.

Oh, while yet they may be *forgiven* and *forgotten*, let every sinner who reads these lines flee for mercy and refuge to Jesus.

S. J. B. C.

Ready to Perish.



WHEN I was in England, recently, it was my privilege to meet, in a little Essex village, a worthy old saint of God who, for forty years, had preached the gospel to the only congregation in the place. There was neither church nor chapel within a considerable distance, and a cottage, from which the partitions had been removed, served as a meeting-room, where our friend, week by week, instructed the humble villagers in the precious things of God.

How the Lord blessed his work is evident enough, and the following story of grace to a hopeless sinner, told as nearly as possible in the preacher's own words, is not only deserving of a wider circulation, but may prove useful to some anxious reader of *The Message*.

* * * * *

“It was on a Lord’s Day morning, as I was walking out and enjoying the delightful calm and the beauty which clothed the landscape in early summer, that I met Mrs. Tant. A sad, almost despairing expression was on her face, and she turned aside as though she wished to avoid me. I accosted her with a kind greeting, and inquired after her welfare. It was soon plain to me that no ordinary trouble afflicted her—the burden of sins was oppressing her, and the fear of the judgment of God. After a few moments she spoke more freely, as if half glad to find relief by relating her trouble, and then she quoted the words of a familiar hymn:

‘How sad our state by nature is!
Our sin how deep it stains!
And Satan binds our captive souls
Fast in his slavish chains.’

“‘Yes, and what next?’ I asked. But as yet she had not reached beyond the sorrowful confession which these lines contained. She did not remember the next verse, so I supplied it:

‘But there’s a voice of sovereign grace
Sounds from the sacred Word,
Ho! ye despairing sinners, come,
And trust upon the Lord!’

“A strange look of earnest attention passed over her face, and she stood, without speaking, for a moment; then, with a word of gratitude for my sympathy, she hurriedly said good-bye, and turned towards her home.

“I did not see Mrs. Tant for some weeks after this, but calling at her house one day, found her busy and cheerful in the midst of her home duties.

“‘Ah, Mr. Bunting,’ she said, ‘that verse you repeated brought the light into my darkness. I had been sinking lower and lower under the weight of my sins until I could bear the insupportable weight no longer; and the very morning you met me I had gone out with the desperate purpose of throwing myself into the horse-pond! I did not care what became of me. Anything was better than this torture of conscience, day and night. That pond! The dirtiest pond in the parish! But it was good enough for me!

“‘Now I see how good the Lord was to send you with a message of mercy just at the right moment. Those words—

‘Ho! ye despairing sinners, come,
And trust upon the Lord,’

saved me—a sinner ready to perish—from despair, from suicide, and from hell.’

“The joyful confidence Mrs. Tant thus expressed was the spring, thenceforth, of a happy, Christian

life, and it was my privilege, afterwards, to stand by her dying bed, and to see how the same simple trust sustained her, and brightened the death chamber with the dawn of eternal day."

* * * * *

Despairing sinners are not very commonly met with to-day. Yet the evil of sin is such that if a due sense of its outrage against a holy God were felt, the fear and the shame would be intolerable. Shallow people, with their petty ideas of eternal realities drawn to the scale of their own little minds, can never understand a lament like David's: "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Psa. xxxviii. 4). They see no need for confessions like Ezra's (Ezra ix.), or Nehemiah's (Neh. ix.), or Daniel's (Dan. ix.). In their eyes, Peter weeping bitterly over his sins is a weakling, and Paul crying for deliverance from his wretchedness is a fanatic. But the man who never deploras his sins or the plague of his own heart will never rejoice in the grace of a Saviour God.

Let any burdened one who reads this listen to the words of the Son of God: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He took the awful load at Calvary that He might ease your conscience. He was burdened, bruised, and afflicted that you might be blessed, and now in Heaven He waits to receive all who will trust Him. Prove this for yourself, and you will be able to add your witness to the words, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Ps. ii. 12).

J. N. B.

Bible promises are like sunbeams, they shine as freely through the windows of the poor man's cot as the rich man's palace.

F R E E .

THE chains that have bound me are flung
 to the wind, [free;

By the mercy of God the poor slave is set
 And the strong grace of heaven breathes
 fresh o'er the mind,

Like the bright winds of summer, that
 gladden the sea.

There was nought in God's world half so
 dark or so vile,

As the sin and the bondage that fettered
 my soul :

There was nought half so base as the malice
 and guile [control.

Of my own sordid passions, or Satan's
 For years I have borne about hell in my
 breast ;

When I thought of my God, it was noth-
 ing but gloom.

Day brought me no pleasure, night gave me
 no rest ;

There was still the grim shadow of horrible
 doom.

It seemed as if nothing less likely could be,
 Than that light should break in on a dun-
 geon so deep :

To create a new world were less hard than
 to free

The slave from his bondage, the soul from
 its sleep.

But the word had gone forth, and said, "Let there be light!"

And it flashed thro' my soul like a sharp passing smart.

One look to my Saviour, and all the dark night,

Like a dream scarce remembered, was gone from my heart.

I cried out for mercy, and fell on my knees,
And confessed, while my heart with keen anguish was wrung.

'Twas the labor of minutes, and years of disease

Fell as fast from my soul as the words from my tongue.

Now, blessed be God! and the sweet Lord who died!

No deer on the mountain, no bird in the sky,
No bright wave that leaps on the dark bounding tide,

Is a creature so free or so happy as I!

All hail! then, to Jesus! Oh, precious the Blood

That hath worked these sweet wonders of mercy in me.

May, each day, countless numbers throng down to its flood,

And God show His glory, and sinners go free!

FREDERICK W. FABER.

Three Divine "Alls."



THE heart of the blessed God is ever going out toward lost and ruined man. With a yearning heart He lingers over this scene of moral desolation, a scene where death is upon everything. And so, of *God*, we read: that "He will have *all* men to be saved"; and, as to *men*, we are told to send up "prayers and supplications for *all* men;" and of *Christ Jesus* it is said, "Who gave Himself a ransom for *all*" (1 Tim. ii. 3-6).

How encouraging is this to one who is in doubt whether he can be saved or not. "Can I be saved?" is the all-important question of many souls. "Is God's heart toward me?" "Has there been a provision made to save me, since I cannot save myself?" How real are these questions in the mind of one who is convicted of sin, and feels his danger of eternal judgment. But how blessedly answered are these questions in the three Divine "alls" of this scripture.

God now graciously welcomes every one. He says, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out" (Jno. vi. 37). As George Whitfield, in his preaching, used to say, "He is willing to receive even the devil's castaways." None are too vile or loathsome for the Saviour's grace. God is a Saviour-God—He glories in the title. The Gospel is the "Gospel of the blessed (or happy) God;" that is, God is perfectly delighted to welcome every returning sinner, as we read in Luke xv.: "When he was yet a great way off, the father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him"; or, as some translate it, "and covered him with kisses." Yes, God graciously welcomes

all that come to Him in their need. He casts out none. It is the sinner's sinful state and helplessness that give him a title to the Saviour; not his goodness, as some suppose.

God now abundantly pardons all who come; not only pardons, but freely and abundantly pardons. "Let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 6, 7).

Oh, what unspeakable blessings!—Mercy and abundant pardon. What more suited to a poor lost sinner? It is what he needs, and without which he is utterly undone.

Beloved readers of *The Message*, go in for God's mercy and His abundant pardon. Rest not, we beseech of you, until you have tasted it.

See the prodigal upon the bosom of the father. He is tasting the sweetness of undeserved mercy, and abundant pardon at his father's hands. All found its origin in the heart of the father. The poor son needed and craved the blessing; the father delighted to bestow it. So it is with God. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jno. iii. 16).

But more. *God eternally saves all who trust His blessed Son.* It is eternal forgiveness, eternal redemption, eternal salvation, eternal life, and eternal inheritance that has been secured to the believer through the death of Christ, and they are the common portion of all those who have fled to Christ.

Think of it! Eternal forgiveness, eternal redemption, eternal salvation, eternal life, and eternal inheritance—the portion of the youngest and oldest of the children of God. Oh, how rich we are! Though poor in this world, we are "rich in faith,

and heirs of the Kingdom, which He hath promised to them that love Him."

And what is the ground of it all? It is the blood, the precious blood of Christ. This, in its solitary dignity, is the ground of all our blessing.

"I know I have been a sinner, but it's the blood that cleanses, it's the blood that cleanses," were the words of a dying woman.

Beloved reader, trust in that precious blood, and the One who shed it—whom God has raised from the dead, and all these unspeakable blessings are yours.

E. A.



False Confidence.

A SAILOR once, who fell out of the rigging, in his fall caught with both hands a rope, and observers said: "He is saved!" But the rope itself had no fastening, and he fell further and faster, as the rope payed out, till he struck the deck a mangled mass.

So it is with every false trust of men. As the Scripture records—"So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish; whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure" (Job viii. 13-15.)

"He that trusteth in the Lord shall be safe." None others are!

To be in Christ is better than to know it; yet to know it constitutes our present happiness.

“Saved a’ at aince.”



“**I** DINNA unnerstaun this new kind o’ religion. The idea o’ folk getting saved a’ at aince is mair than I can mak’ oot. There’s something unca queer aboot it. There are lots o’ gey gude folk that never speak onything aboot being saved; even some o’ the very elders that tak’ their turn at the plate say little or naething ava aboot it. There wis my uncle Davie, as guid a man as ever put a fit in a black leather shae. I’m shure ye kent him brawly. Weel, he wis an elder for twa-and-twenty years, and never oot o’ his sate in the kirk on a Sunday when he was weel eneuch, and a man that everybody had a gude word o’, and I never heard him say onything aboot being saved. He wisna sae fu’ o’ praesumshun as some o’ them—that’s jist it. Jist luk at oor Jamie himsel’, as gude, I’m gey certain, as ony o’ them that speak o’ being saved, and he widna daur tae say he wis. Hoo some o’ them git made richt a’ at aince, clean bamboozles me. I canna for the very life o’ me mak’ it oot. But whit dae ye say, Nanny?”

“Weel, there’s nae doot but its kind o’ queer a wee,” said Nanny, to her neighbour, who had looked round to see her for a little gossip. “But jist gang on, Mag, and tell me a’ about it.”

“I’ll jist dae that, and mind ye, ye’ll wunner as weel as me when ye hear a’ the story, for it’s as true as I’m tellin’ ye, that Baldy cam’ hame as fou as a piper on Saturday nicht ayont twal o’clock, and kickit up sic a din that a’ the neebors roon aboot them couldna get a wink o’ sleep. Then on Sunday he lay in his bed a’ day, wi’ his heid row’d up in a

clout, tae the kirks cam' oot in the afternin, and yet, the very first thing he telt oor man on Monday morning, when Jamie was jawing him aboot being royal on Saturday nicht, wis that he wis dune wi' that style o' things noo, for he had gotten saved. Did ye ever hear the like o' that, Nanny?"

Nanny declared "it was awfu' queer."

"But it looks as if there wis something in't, for oor Jamie's half-brither, wha works next place tae him, says he hisna heard him sweerin' a' week, and ye ken whit an awfu' tongue he had, and that he sees him aye takin' aff his bannet when he sits doon tae eat his piece alangside the lave o' the men. But it's the quickness o' the thing that mak's me wunner. I hae my ain fears that there's a guide bit o' the mushroom aboot it, but we'll see. He has been teetotal noo and again, for twa or three fortnichts at aince, but he aye broke oot whan he got himsel' kind o' gethered thegither. Some folk are awfu' fond tae tak' the teetotal, and put in the pin, whan their bawbees are a' dune, and they canna get ony mair tick. Nae doot there wis never ony talk aboot religion afore noo, but jist wait a wee, it'll no likely be long till he tak's ane o' his tantrums again, and then the pur jugs on the dresser 'ill come in for a smashin'."

"But did ye no hear hoo it cam' aboot?"

"I did that. Ane o' thae gangrel preachers wis oot haudin' a meetin', and he wis the man that gaed Baldy the pokerin'. I hae gey little faith in thae men that gang aboot preachin'. But they can maistly speak, there's nae doot aboot that. Thae hae got a gude gift o' the gab, and some o' them mak' a gude thing oot o't. A lot o' lazy fellows the maist feck o' them, though I place nae doot but there may be some gude men amang them. Ye

ken wit a rale converted man my brither's auld son has been since be began tae gang tae thae kind o' meetin's. It his been a wunnerfu' chainge wi' him since he began tae gang oot first, and I jist hope that Baldy's chainge is as rale a ane. But ye maun ken that young Peter's chainge wisna sic a quick ane. He got sic a sicht o' himsel', that it wis thocht he wid gang wrang in the heid, afore he got intae the light."

"Weel, as I wis telling ye, the preacher drapped in on Baldy, and after he had gien him a tract he asked him tae come tae the meetin' at nicht. Baldy wis kind o' in the dumps, for Peggy had been doon on him for comin' hame sae late and makin' sic a din amang the neebors, and he wisna unca ceevil tae the preacher when he cam' in. But the man stuck intae him, and touched him on some o' his sair bits, and the tears wur in the corners o' Baldy's een afore he had dune wi' him. He had his Bible wi' him, and he read oot o't whaur it says that nae drunkard can enter intae the kingdom, and then he prayed afore he gaed oot o' the hoose. Peggy says it wis a wunnerfu' prayer. It's maist astonishin' hoo some men can pray, though they hae nae learnin', and wur ne'er at the collage!

"Weel, at seven o'clock, Baldy gaed ower tae the meetin' in the Schule Hoose, and after the preachin' wis feenished he stoppit in. They say that the preacher wis in sic rale earnest that Baldy wis fairly coupet, and couldna gang oot. I canna tell ye what happen't then, for the maist o' the folk cam' oot; hoosomover, that's whan the thing wis dune, for when he got hame, aboot half-an-hour ahint the lave o' the folk, he asked Peggy to bring doon the big family Bible frae the drawer's heid. Peggy brocht it doon when he baud her, wunnerin' a' the time

“Woe unto them.”

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”—ISA. v. 20.



WHY do Ritualists tell us the Lord's Supper must be taken fasting—*before breakfast?*—*Because Christ instituted it after supper.*

Why do they use wafers instead of bread, and wine and water instead of wine?—*Because Christ “took bread and brake it,” and likewise after supper He took the cup (containing “the fruit of the vine”).*

Why do they assert Christ's real bodily presence in the elements?—*Because Christ said “This do in remembrance of Me,” and we evidently cannot do anything in remembrance of a person unless he is absent from us. The Apostle also, when he said, “As oft as ye do this, ye do show the Lord's death till He come,” equally implies His “real bodily absence,” though, doubtless, His real spiritual presence “in the midst” of His own is true and known to faith.*

Why do they imply, by their masses for the dead, a purgatory to cleanse the remains of sin?—*Because we are told that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin”; and again, “By one offering He hath perfected them that are sanctified.”*

Why do they offer the “unbloody sacrifice” for the remission of sins?—*Because “Cain, who was of that wicked one,” offered such a sacrifice, and because “without shedding of blood,” the apostle tells us, “is no remission.”*

Reader, what say *you* to these things?

Do you reply, I am a staunch Protestant?

May be, but do you know in your soul the truth of the passages quoted? Do you know the cleansing

efficacy of the blood of Jesus? You must begin there. Wrong there you are right nowhere, be your *theology* sound or unsound, be you Papist or Protestant.

S.



Solemn Questions.



YOU are wearing out life, perhaps, in the desperate endeavour to grow rich; have you ever asked yourself how much you will "be worth" in Eternity? How rich will you be when death has reduced your estate to a house of six feet by two? You are anxious, perhaps, about your society on earth; have you thought, With whom shall I spend my Eternity, and where?



"BEWARE."

(JOB xxxvi. 18; LUKE xii. 20.)



THERE is no strange handwriting
 On the wall,
 Thro' all the midnight hum
 No threatening call,
 Nor on the marble floor
 The stealthy fall
 Of fatal footsteps. All is safe.
 "Thou fool,"—
 The avenging angel's feet
 Are shod with wool!

“There go the Ships.”

(Psa. civ. 28.)

A MORE literal rendering of the passage would be, “*There* (even in such an element) the ships will go.”

It is quite remarkable that these ships are reckoned among the living creatures which are the objects of God’s care, and are made to contribute to His praise. And, indeed, how commonly a man treats his ship, and speaks of it as a living sentient being, as the poet says,

“See! she moves, she stirs, she seems to feel
The thrill of life from stem to keel!”

Let us, then, see in the ship a beautiful picture of the Christian, and apply our points as we proceed.

1. **THEY “GO.”**

“They will go.” The master, with perfect intelligence of the material he is working with, constructs his vessel and launches it forth upon the deep, venturing his reputation upon it. The material *itself* is incapable of serving this purpose, for if wood, it would soon become water-soaked and sink, while if iron, it would sink at once. It needs to be fashioned with wisdom and skill. Applying this to the Christian *life* our first point is at once suggested, “they will go.” The Christian has life in Christ by the Holy Spirit. At one time a child of wrath by nature, even as others, and walking according to the world; now he is a new creature in Christ Jesus, no more of the world than these ships are of the sea they are passing through. Thus of Christians, as of ships, we can say, “*They go.*” Not all the powers of darkness can hinder them. Spite of

adverse winds and tide, and Satanic rage and craft, Christians "go"—"So he bringeth them into their desired haven."

2. THE POINT TO WHICH, AND THE POINT FROM WHICH, THEY GO.

We next look at the two points, the one before and the other behind, these ships.

The one who has fled to Jesus from wrath to come can well say :

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before."

The Christian has his back upon self because his face is toward Christ; this is repentance. His face toward his heavenly inheritance, his back upon the world. The apostle says: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the calling on high, of God in Christ Jesus."

Again: "Ye turned to God *from* idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven;" thus again, "they will go."

3. THE POWER BY WHICH THEY GO.

These ships cannot go by any power of their own; it must be one apart from themselves. An unseen power propels them onward, whether it be wind or steam.

"Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." The Lord has launched His own forth into this world, and "they will go," guided and controlled and propelled by an unseen hand, "looking not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which

are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

We may think of the denizens of the sea as looking upon our ship as an intruder, a stranger; one for whom they have no room, and whom they will seek with all their might to overwhelm, but yet, "they will go."

4. THE ELEMENT IN WHICH THEY GO.

The element through which "they will go" is a foreign element, one in which they would surely sink if not sustained.

The sea is just a figure of the world, as "the congregation of the dead." "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," but in this element Christians are sustained, and through it "they will go."

The Christian mariner, as he looks abroad upon the vast expanse of raging waters before, behind, around, can say, "He holds the waters in the hollow of His hand." The vast sea of trouble, which seems ready to engulf him, cannot harm him, for this vast sea is in the hollow of His hand.

Yes, those very waves were *commanded* to rise against God's ships, expend their fury against them, and yet to fall back harmless into their own element, having shown the power by which "they (the ships) will go."

5. THEIR FREIGHT OR BURDEN AS THEY GO.

These ships are laden, they carry precious weight. Their Master has not launched them forth merely to show that they can reach the other shore; He has committed a precious trust to them to convey safely.

The Lord said to Abram: "I will bless thee . . .

and thou shalt *be a blessing.*" Abram was freighted with blessing, which was to reach all families of the earth.

"It is God who commanded light out of darkness, who hath shined into our hearts, *for the shining forth* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Every Christian thus is a ship, *freighted* with precious trusts from his Master; his time, his means, his talents, his every energies, are a sacred trust committed to him, to be used for Him.

"Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

6. THE HINDRANCES TO THEIR GOING.

These ships have many hindrances to their going, one of the chief ones being the element they "go" through.

The world is ever that which is to be overcome by the Christian. "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." "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our *faith.*"

7. THE OBJECT OF THEIR GOING.

These ships have an *object* in going. There was a distinct purpose in designing, in expending labor and in constructing them, and committing precious freight to these ships. "These all wait upon Thee (verse 27), for Thou hast created all things, and for *Thy pleasure* they are and were created."

Thus, these ships "*will go.*" The Master has launched them forth for His own definite purpose, and for His glory. They go for His purpose and for His pleasure.

J. B. J.

“Always Abounding.”

“Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”—JUDG. v.

IN an old book we find the following:—
 “Who has commanded to curse Meroz?”

The angel of the Lord.

What had Meroz done?

Nothing.

How? why, then, is Meroz cursed?

Because he has done nothing.

What should Meroz have done?

Come to the help of the Lord.

Could not the Lord, then, have succeeded without Meroz?

The Lord did succeed without Meroz.

Then has the Lord met with a loss thereby?

No, but Meroz.

Is Meroz, then, to be cursed?

Yes, and that ‘bitterly,’

Is it right that a man should be cursed for having done nothing?

Yes, when he *should* have done something.

Who says that?

The angel of the Lord; and the Lord Himself says, ‘He that knew his Lord’s will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes’ (Luke xii. 47).”

“TO EVERY MAN HIS WORK.”

“We might all do more than we have done,
 And not be a whit the worse;
 It never was loving that emptied the heart,
 Nor giving that emptied the purse.”

“What shall we say?”



FIVE times in the first great doctrinal section of Romans does the Apostle ask, “What shall we say?” The question suggests a considerate and an impartial mind, which would fain help a soul in trouble and difficulty

“I desire to reason with God,” said a perplexed one, long ago. “Very well,” replies the ever blessed God, “Come now, and let us reason *together*.” Hence, every now and again in this Epistle God pauses, as it were, and invites us to consider the matter His servant is writing about in all its bearings, and to state our objections, if we have any. Indeed, such is His grace, that, in case we might be too timid to speak, or too ignorant to put our thoughts into shape, He speaks for us, and anticipates what we would like to “say.”

The question of our text is first asked in connection with—

DIVINE VENGEANCE.

“*What shall we say?*” (Rom. iii. 5). “Is God unrighteous?”

Why raise such a question?

Because He “taketh vengeance!”

Indeed. “How then shall He judge the world?”

(v. 6.) He must necessarily execute vengeance *then*. Is an earthly judge charged with unrighteousness when he metes out judgment to evil-doers? If not, why should God be thus charged?

Ah, depend upon it, each and every sinner will in the long run own God as “the righteous judge.” He will be “justified when He speaks and clear

when He judges." So says Psa. li., and all must acknowledge it. The highest critic in "the lowest hell" shall vindicate God as surely as the humblest saint in the highest heaven. God's righteousness remains as untarnished in the eternal punishment of the wicked (chap. ii. 2-5) as it does in the eternal justification of the believer (chap. iii. 25, 26). And the gospel preacher who does not preach the one as clearly as the other, is unfaithful to his trust, his hearers, and his God.

"Everlasting punishment;" "judgment to come;" "the lake of fire;" "the damnation of hell;" "this place of torment;" "outer darkness;" "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth," and such like terrible terms are continually found in the discourses of the Lord, and of those who companied with Him. Hence, he who condemns the using of such expressions, condemns Him who originated them.

No one ever preached hell more faithfully than the gracious Saviour, and the Acts and the Epistles abound with the warning, solemn, conscience-stirring appeals of His Apostles. Preach "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man who doeth evil," we may, and we should, with tearful eye, quivering voice, and breaking heart; and preach it we must, if we would shake the dust off our garments and our feet in the presence of opposers, and cry, "Your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean" (Rom. ii. 8, 9; Acts xviii.)

"Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall punish with everlasting destruction," is a dread reality; and he who, through fear, or false charity and sentiment, refrains from warning sinners of it has no pity and love for their perishing souls.

Our next point is—

THE BELIEVER'S JUSTIFICATION.

“*What shall we say?*” (Rom. iv. 1). Was Abraham justified by works or by faith?

By works, doubtless, before *men*, but not “before *God*” (v. 2).

Before men, “he had whereof to glory,” for he was a paragon of devotedness and holy confidence. Before God, he could not glory. None of us can. If we have nothing but our works when we appear before Him, we shall be confounded, and sink with shame, never to rise again. However fair and fine men’s doings may be in the eyes of men, yet when the searching light of His throne beats upon them, it shows up their defects—defects in motive and desire, which lie behind them, as well as defects in the carrying of them out, and in the works themselves.

“In the Lord have I righteousness and strength:” so said the prophet, and so say we. “The righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. iii. 9), founded on the vicarious work and the atoning blood of Jesus, is our only true ground of confidence in the Divine presence. Apart from it, the best with the worst must own “We are but unprofitable servants,” and be treated accordingly.

The reality of our justification before God, however, is always evidenced before men by—

PRACTICAL EVERY-DAY HOLINESS.

“*What shall we say?*” (Rom. vi. 1.) “Shall we continue *in sin?*”

The question is not, “Shall we continue *to sin?*” That you get lower down in this chapter; and the answer is, It ought not to be so. No, I ought not to sin (1 Jno. ii. 1), for I am no longer under sin. Sin,

the old slave-master, has given me my wages—which is “death” (v. 23), and now I am “discharged from sin” (v. 7), and under no obligation to serve him any longer.

The first question of the Apostle, however, has more to do with continuing in sin: and the reply is, “We cannot!” He does not say, “We ought not,” but, “We can-not!” “How can we, who have died to sin, live any longer therein?” If I see a man, who professes to have a personal, soul-interest in Christ’s death, living in sin, then I say, “It is impossible for that man to be what he professes—he is a living lie” (see 1 John i. 6). As believers, we are committed to Christ’s death, and thus we judge in ourselves and in our associations all sin, for which Jesus died. We “walk in newness of life” (ch. vi.), and we “serve in newness of spirit” (ch. vii.). Christianity, while it provides in grace for failure, never excuses anything short of this.

The little ermine is noted for its purity. Hence we speak of the judges as “sitting in ermine.” This little animal is very shy and quick, and, generally, it can only be caught in one way. When absent from its home, the hunter puts down filth before its little hole. Then, when it returns, rather than defile one hair of its beautiful coat, the tiny creature will lie down and submit to capture and to death. Thus sin is obnoxious to the believer. The divine nature within him abhors it—“hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” This is characteristic of every true Christian, according to Scripture.

But in order to enter into all this, we must know—

CONSCIOUS AND SAVING DELIVERANCE.

“What shall we say?” (Rom. vii. 7). “Is the law sin?”

God forbid, but I am! "I *know* that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." I know this "by the law," and through painful experience. It is not merely doctrinal knowledge, it is conscious, experimental, personal knowledge. I cannot learn it simply from books or from teachers, or even from the Bible: I must learn it also through soul exercise and acquaintance with myself.

"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (ch. iii.). A yard measure exposes the shortness of the cloth, but it cannot make it any longer. A plumb-line shows that the wall is crooked, but it cannot make it straight. A mirror reveals to me my defilement, but it cannot cleanse away the stains.

"The law is holy, just, and good," but it never will, nor can, make *me* so. It can only convict me of my sinful state, so that, in self-despair, I take sides with it against myself, and own its sentence of death and condemnation upon all I am and do as a sinner. Then I look away, in faith, to that righteous One, who charged Himself with all my sinfulness; who bore all the law's penalty and demands, and who died to it all, and rose beyond all its jurisdiction and reach. Thus I am able to say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death." Mark the word—"Hath set *me* free." How intensely personal! Can *you* say it? We cannot learn this truth by proxy, or by rote, or by memory. Each must learn it experimentally. Have you learnt it thus?

If so, you know something of—

CHRISTIAN POSITION AND BLESSING.

"*What shall we say?*" (Rom. viii. 31).

Once more the question is sounded out. The magnitude of the free favor and love of God is such

that it amazes even the inspired Apostle, as well it may. We are the subjects of divine counsels:—fore-known—predestinated—called—justified—glorified! What a golden chain of blessings linking two Eternities together, and binding us as the captives of love at the feet of Him in whom there is no condemnation, and from whom there is no separation. “What shall we say, then, to these things?” Oh, before we say anything, let us turn them over and over in our souls and examine them, and then challenge ourselves as to how far we have really made them our own.

Romans viii. has been called “The Christian’s Inventory of his Blessings.” But in order to apprehend and appreciate and appropriate our spiritual belongings, we must travel step by step through the preceding chapters of this marvellous Epistle. If we jump from ch. iii. to ch. viii. we may lose ourselves, and feel somewhat like a child who is suddenly transported from his copy book of pot-hooks and strokes into the students’ hall, where the classics and arts and sciences are being taught. Instead of asking, “What *shall* we say?” we shall rather exclaim, “What *can* we say?” and thus confess our bewilderment and our inability to give an intelligent and a heart-felt reply to this divine question.

Yes, we must rightly answer the—

(i.) “What shall we say?” of divine vengeance; the—

(ii.) “What shall we say?” of the believer’s justification; the—

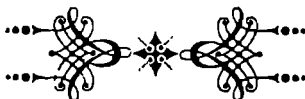
(iii.) “What shall we say?” of practical every-day holiness; and the—

(iv.) “What shall we say?” of conscious and saving deliverance; before we can rightly reply to the—

(v.) "What shall we say?" of full Christian position and blessing (as given in Romans), so as to gauge something of its grace and glory.


Beloved Christian reader, we are living in "difficult times," and problems and puzzles—ecclesiastical, social, and moral—continually confront us and confound us. But if we turn away from men, and from the din of conflicting opinions, and the jargon of human definitions, to our gracious Master, He will give us wisdom to undo every gordian knot of obscurity, and to rightly answer, in all its many connections, the stupendous question, "What shall we say?"

S. J. B. C.



"Our light affliction."

(2 Cor. iv. 17-18.)


HOW sweet is the song in glory,
 The voices are all in tune:
 They sing in the calm, fair morning,
 They sing in the sunny noon.
 Yet many a rapturous minstrel
 Among those sons of light,
 Will say of his sweetest music,
 "I learned it in the night."
 And many a rolling anthem
 That fills the Father's Home,
 Sobbed out its first rehearsal
 In the shade of a darken'd room.



Faith.



AN English missionary was in Central Africa, preaching the Gospel to the black people there. He found it very hard to make them understand the meaning of faith. He said to them, "Listen now to what I am going to tell you." Pointing to some water, he said,

"You see that water?"

"Yes," they answered.

"Well, you never saw that get hard, did you?"

"Oh, no," they answered, looking at him with astonishment at such a thought, for in Central Africa the water never freezes.

"Now," he said, "if you believe me, in the country I come from, the water sometimes gets so hard that I can stand on the top of it."

Upon hearing this, one whispered to another, "Massa's telling lies." The missionary overheard this, and he remembered it.

After a time he returned to England, and one of those who listened to him went with him. When they reached England the winter came, and one clear, frosty morning the missionary took Sambo out for a walk. The ponds and rivers were completely frozen over, and boys were sliding on the ice. Then

the missionary took the opportunity of making good the words he had spoken when in Africa.

Turning to Sambo, he said "Take my hand, and let us go on the hard water and try it."

Sambo did not like to go, but the missionary took his hand and led him on; and then jumping hard upon the ice, said, "Now do you believe what I said in Africa about the ice?"

So Sambo gave in.

Being made to believe because he saw, was not faith on Sambo's part—it was sight. It would have been faith if he had believed the missionary when he was in Central Africa, where the water never freezes. Faith would have accepted as true what the missionary said, although it seemed impossible.

Little reader, God has spoken—Do you believe His word? He has told you of your utterly lost and ruined condition through sin, and of your inability to do anything to merit His favor or save yourself. But, thank God, He has told you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and He declares that then you shall be saved. Will you trust your feelings, thoughts, hopes, or what some people may say? or, will you believe God, just because He says it? *This is faith.*

T. D.

"WHO TEACHETH LIKE HIM?"

WHO teacheth like Him?—
His teaching, how *wise*!

He opens our ears to give heed:
Removes from our eyes
The mists which oft rise,
And teaches the lesson we need.

"Who teacheth like Him?"—
His teaching, how *true*!

What time He spends on us, what care
The heart to renew,
The mind to imbue
With light He alone can shed there.

"Who teacheth like Him?"—
His teaching, how *full*!

Embracing all lines in that Book,
Which is, in His school,
The text-book and rule
To which for instruction we look.

"Who teacheth like Him?"—
His teaching, how *firm*!

He chides, then again He makes plain
The problem or term,
Wherein lies the germ
Which yields a rich harvest of gain.

"Who teacheth like Him?"—
His teaching, how *kind*!

So patient, so gentle is He,
Though laggards behind,
And little inclined
To study we often may be.

"Who teacheth like Him?"—
His teaching, how *sure*!

The lessons *He* gives alone last:
They ever endure,
They only secure
The prize when life's schooling is past.



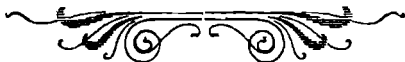
“Judge Not.”



“**J**UDGE not!” The workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see ;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God’s pure sight may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

The look, the air, that fools thy sight
May be a token that below
The soul has closed in deadly fight
With some infernal fiery foe,
Whose glance would search thy smiling grace,
And cast thee shuddering on thy face.

And if he fall, do not despise,
But reach him forth a helping hand.
God suffered it, that he may rise
And take a firmer, humbler stand ;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.



The Message.



How are you building?

“Through wisdom is a house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”—PROV. XXIV. 3, 4.

A WEALTHY land-owner cast about in his mind how he might help an old acquaintance who was in somewhat straitened circumstances. After a deal of thought, he hit upon the following plan.

The man was a carpenter and builder by trade, so his would-be helper called on him, and said—

“I’ve got a job for you. I want you to build me a substantial and commodious house it yon corner of my estate; build it according to your own design and liking, and I shall be satisfied. Do not spare pains nor time, but do the work thoroughly; and here is a cheque to meet all the necessary outlay.”

The man went to work, but being of a mean and a dishonest nature he bought up the cheapest and most inferior stuff and labour in the market. Instead of buying the best, he got old, rotten timber, and poor second-hand nails and screws, and knotty and warped material; and in the place of skilled workmen he employed inexperienced lads and others. Then he “slummed” the work as far as he could without being detected, and covered over his decep-

tion with coatings of thick paint. Moreover, he took little heed to the foundation, which was even more rotten and insecure than the superstructure. By these unrighteous means he was able to pocket a good deal of the sum given to him.

When, however, he handed the house over to the land-owner, imagine his vexation and surprise as the latter said to him:—

“My friend, I have long desired to do something for you, so I decided that when this house was finished I would present it to you, that you might always have a roof over your head in your declining years, and live in a house of your own making and liking. Here it is then, and here are the title deeds. The house is yours by deed of gift.”

Yes, the house was his, but not for long, for one night, during a storm, it fell in, and thus his own wretched and perfidious handy work was exposed, and covered him with confusion: leaving him maimed, half dead, and homeless, and cursing his sin and folly.

The gospel-moral of the story is not hard to explain. Both the writer and every reader of these lines are building for Eternity, and the question is, Will the building stand when tested by the hail, winds, and floods of death and judgment? (Matt. vii. 24-29).

What about the *foundation*? Is it the shifting, sinking sand of human righteousness? Or is it the Rock of Ages? The fabric *you* are rearing is for *yourself*, and if it comes to grief, you alone are the loser. Its foundation is now hid from men's eyes, and only the building seen: but God sees beneath the surface and knows if the basis is secure. “Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” This is the foundation of the house

which "Wisdom" (Christ) builds, and which "Understanding" (the Holy Spirit) establishes, and "Knowledge" (the Scriptures) furnishes. Every other is a cheat and a lie, however attractive it may appear.

What about the *materials*? Are you building with the rotten and rusted good-for-nothing observances of outward piety, covered over by religious veneer, and false profession? Is "the wood, hay and stubble" of worthless imitation your stock in trade? Or, like "a wise master-builder," are you building with the "gold, silver, and precious stones" of sound, God-purchased, God-given, God-approved doctrine, life, and practice? (1 Cor. iii.)

What about the *builder*—I mean you yourself? If you are false, your house cannot be true. Are you a hypocrite? *You are* if you pass current as a Christian before men, and yet have not been born again, and renewed; and cleansed by the Holy Spirit and the blood of Christ.

Oh, heed these questions! Simple and often asked they may be, but on your answers to them depend the vital and eternal issues of your destiny. I affectionately urge you to remember you are building for *yourself*, and not for another; and that your soul's foundation; the true worth of your outward character; and what you really are before God in the secret springs of your being, will all be revealed ere long. "The day shall declare it;"—God says so—and then, "The hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure" (Job viii. 13-15).

S. J. B. C.



A Race for Life.



IT is all up with him, and yet he struggles on! He runs, and yet see the odds against him!

He is pursued by footmen who weary him—he is followed by horses more swift than those, who must overtake him in the long run; whilst, ahead, rolls the deep, dread swelling of Jordan. What chance can the runner have? O but he runs and struggles splendidly. He means to die hard. See how he shakes off footman after footman, and horse after horse, although in the effort he loses ground perceptibly.

There is something profoundly interesting in witnessing the struggle. It is a race for life; or rather, a race against death; or, indeed, against a succession of deaths, against premonitions that most certainly declare a final defeat.

The fight is brave, but futile! These footmen, like little troubles, torment the runner. Now there is an attack of fever, soon shaken off by medical skill; now a bereavement, that dejects for a time; now an accident, that pulls up awhile; now a solemn warning word. These are, however, speedily overcome, and possibly forgotten, though their scar remains, and the runner is by them wearied. The horses, however, are like mighty judgments upon the soul; they tell of a power greater than man's, of a force more than human. There are seasons when the conscience of a sinner is brought face to face with God—there are dark misgivings as to the future. Horse after horse pursues the poor halting runner with the memory of sins unpardoned, and deeds of darkness committed. Yet horse after horse is thrust aside, and

such unpleasant memories are swiftly banished.

And the race continues! But the distant roll of Jordan breaks upon the runner's ear, and its broad, deep swelling has yet to be crossed!

But, victorious hitherto, why not swim securely over the tide? So many difficulties already overcome, why not succeed manfully at last?

But a horse, pale and mysterious, long held in, follows in swift and silent stride. His rider is called "Death!" awful name! (Rev. vi.) Oh! how different from every predecessor! What were the footmen with their stings, or the other horses with their strength, compared to this?

Well may the runner quail! He is hemmed in between death and the swelling Jordan! Fearful position!

The pale mysterious horse has a second rider, for Hell followed with Death. What a trinity of evils for the runner!

Well may the Scripture ask, "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Yes, "How?"

And again the Scriptures say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31).

Yes, "Fearful."

Did my first statement read somewhat light? I must repeat it now: "It is all up with him,"—the runner is beaten, the man is undone, the impenitent sinner is damned!

God's judgments, varied, patient, wise, and divinely suitable, have all been disregarded, spurned, and thrust aside. They may have been sent like "footmen," or like "horses," in ways comparatively gentle, or in ways comparatively severe,—yet these were God's messengers to the soul, and designed by

Him for the sinner's salvation and good. If unheeded, what then?

They fell on Job like an avalanche, but were the instrument of his everlasting blessing; and David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept Thy word." He, too, reaped the benefit of his afflictions.

Reader, are you running too? You have a swelling river ahead of you, and are followed, slowly but surely, by death and hell. Ah! that pale unwearying horse, with its two riders, is in stern pursuit of you, and is certain to overtake you one day!

Stop running! Cease resisting!

Yield some day you must—then yield now!

St. Augustine said, "The way to flee from God, is by fleeing to God." Now you try that! and flee just as you are, and now!

Far too many months and years have you permitted to slip away. The hand of time is leaving its mark upon you. You may have neither another year, nor another month! The pale horse presses hard on your footsteps.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and, if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" (Jer. xii. 15.)

J. W. S.



NO MAN can ever rise above that at which he aims. If your aim is to get on in the world, you will never rise above it.



TRIAL is the file which rubs off much of the rust of self-confidence.

“WOE UNTO HIM.”

“THESE are they who rebel against the light,”
 A says Job.

Alas, for the moth that contends with the candle; or the man who attempts to snuff out an electric light between his thumb and finger. He who spits in the teeth of the wind, spits in his own face; and he who fights against God, not only shows his enmity, but also his folly.

The ancients shot arrows into the sky at their deities who had offended them; but the arrows returning to earth, fell upon their own heads.

“Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds, but woe unto him who striveth with his Maker.” So says God.

Faith.

A MAN may have *strong* faith and yet perish, while another may have *weak* faith and be saved. // How can this be? Some have a strong faith in themselves; others have a strong faith in the church, or a strong faith in good works.

Now we cannot be too simple or clear as to the ground on which God saves sinners. The strength or weakness of faith has nothing to do with it. Is your faith, be it weak or strong, on CHRIST? Is He the Object of your faith? “This is the great point.

For every grief, for every wound,
 His love a sovereign balm has found;
 And sooner all the hills shall flee,
 And hide themselves beneath the sea;
 The ocean, starting from its bed,
 Bush o'er the cloud-capped mountain's head;
 The sun, exhausted of its light,
 Become the source of endless night,
 And ruin spread from pole to pole,
 Than Jesus fail one trustful soul.

A Personal Testimony.



IN my younger days I lived in a country district in the south of Ireland, and my people intended me for the Roman priesthood. In that part of the world the great ambition of every family is to have at least one son a priest. Prayers are expensive, when they have to be paid for, and it is a great advantage to have somebody of your own who will offer prayers and Masses (which are a still more expensive luxury) free of charge. I was set apart, accordingly, as the scapegoat of the family, and I grew up through boyhood with this idea perpetually before me; an ideal of purity and holiness, as it then seemed to me.

Among my early acquaintances was a Protestant of about my own age, and he and I frequently discussed matters of controversy. One evening my friend said to me: "When you go to Mass you worship the Host. Well, granted that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is true, and that the Host is not bread at all, but human flesh, and that the wine has become human blood, yet you know, by what is called the doctrine of "Intention," that if the priest had not the intention to consecrate the elements, they are not consecrated, and when you bow down and worship them, you are only worshipping a piece of bread and a little wine." At this I lost my temper, and when a man loses his temper, it shows that he is losing faith in the truth of his own position. It was so with me, and no doubt is so with many others.

Many doubts began now to occupy my mind, some as to Transubstantiation, and others as to the so-called Sacrament of Penance. I used to go to con-

fession on the first Sunday of each month; but somehow I felt no better nor happier as to the result. I tried more frequent confession, but it did not give me peace. For when one goes regularly to confession, as one has always the same sins to confess, one gets into the habit of repeating them by rote. A young fellow who used to attend with me once made this observation to me, and added: "I repeat my sins in this way mechanically, and sometimes there are sins about which I am not quite sure whether I have committed them or not."

"What do you do about them?" I asked.

"Well, you know," said he, "that it would be a great sin to tell a lie in confession, so in order to make sure to avoid this, I always commit those sins on the day before-hand."

After this I was in a very uneasy state of mind, and knew not what to do. The weight of my sins, and the burden of uneasiness grew daily heavier and more difficult to bear. To get rid of this, I thought of a great many expedients, except the one I ought to have tried had I known, namely, that of going directly to Him who said: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

I had long been friends with a Protestant clergyman of the parish; one evening I happened to be visiting this gentleman, and the conversation turned on the hymn, "The Old, Old Story." I called it a Protestant hymn, but he said it was the peculiar property of neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic, but was a Christian hymn, telling of the Saviour, who died alike for all. And he proceeded to relate that "Old, Old Story," such a story as I had never heard before; the story of human sin and Divine love, the one story in all literature which can turn the Valley of Achor into a door of hope, and rescue

the human soul from despair.

The only fault it had was that it made me feel exceedingly uncomfortable, and I went home a great deal sadder than if I had not heard it. I now found an excuse to visit the parson more frequently than formerly. Of course, I tried to leave him under the impression that I was completely happy. But he must have suspected the truth, as he would talk about my soul. All honour to such men! Once, when I was leaving, he offered me a Bible, but, of course, I refused to accept it. On the contrary, I went to a friend who owned a Douay Testament, and borrowed it from him. I did not do this primarily to find rest for my soul. Surely, thought I, as the Protestants draw all their arguments from their Bible, so I will find in ours the arguments on the other side, which will enable me to overcome them.

But, alas! for "the best-laid schemes of mice and men!" It so happened that the very first time I opened the borrowed Testament my eye fell upon these words: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh" (Rom. viii. 1). Now what could this mean? I will not say that my explanation of the passage was the most correct possible, but the meaning which I extracted from it was this: There is a class of people who are said to be "in Christ Jesus," and these are under no condemnation; whereas I am under the condemnation of my own conscience, and of God Himself, wherefore I cannot be one of those who are in Christ Jesus. Oh! the horror of this discovery! To think that after all my conscientious efforts to attain holiness, I was not at that moment one of God's people in Christ Jesus.

In Dublin, no doubt, there is a tolerably intelligent body of Roman Catholic clergy, and you could go with your difficulties to one of them; but in my parish, whether the parish priest has a good horse or not, he always keeps a good whip, and that is the first argument he would be likely to use. So I went to my friend again, and indirectly introduced to him the text in question. Among other things he told me was this: When the priest professes to forgive sins, he always leaves a little margin unforgiven which must be wiped out by penance, hence the condemnation. But, thought I, when God forgives, He "saves to the uttermost," and "the blood of Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin." It had long been a puzzle to me (as, indeed, it still is) why priests do not make a clean sweep of the sins of their penitents, and not leave unforgiven what we call in Irish an "agusheen," *i.e.*, a little over and above, upon the soul. It is, perhaps, something in the way of a stock-in-trade, to enable one to start again with.

At the end of a fortnight I came to the conclusion that there was no longer any use in endeavouring to strike a compromise—I must be for God or against Him.

Again I paid my friend the parson a visit. I told him I felt like one standing on sand, who felt it every moment shifting from under him. Instead of feeling sad, he seemed quite elated, and said, "Thank God for that! That is just how God wants you to feel. You have been standing on your own righteousness, and He wants you to stand on the solid rock, which is Christ." He asked me if I would consent to our having prayer together. Just imagine me praying with the parson a fortnight before! But now my spirit was broken, and I consented. Such a prayer! He prayed as if God were present, listen-

ing to every word he said, and as if God had really an interest in me. I had been accustomed to regard God as One very far away, whom one could only approach very indirectly through relays of mediators—the priest, saints, angels, and the Blessed Virgin.

I know there is a good deal of difference of opinion on the subject of what is known as instantaneous conversion. Some say a man cannot be converted in a moment. All I know is that when I arose from that prayer I seemed to do so in another world. The load which had oppressed me seemed gone, as suddenly as that of Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," and I felt as if I could fly.

"On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

J. B. S—A.

"As good as dead."

(Rom. iv.)

A BRAHAM was "as good as dead" (Heb. xi. 12) when he became the father of Isaac according to God's promise.

We have to come to this point, that we cannot move hand or foot in the matter of our justification. We are guilty before God, and as helpless to clear ourselves as if we were dead. An old believer told me that for years she had prayed and devoted herself to an earnest religious life in hope of getting the assurance of forgiveness some day. But this did not bring the desired blessing, and eventually she became conscious that she was as helpless in the matter as if her head had been struck off on the executioner's block.

Have you ever put your head down on the block? The moment you do so, God points you to One who came under the stroke of justice for you. One who was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." A person with his head upon the block gives up considering himself, and he begins to consider God. As long as we are trying and striving, it is clear that we have not laid our heads on the block. We have not found out that we are "as good as dead."

C. A. C.



"The glory of that light."

(ACTS ix.)

PAUL'S life was to be devoted to a Man of a different order to the sons of Adam. He saw constantly before him this transcendent figure, the Man of God's counsels, from whose face a single ray put to shame the eastern sun.

I recollect reading that Sir Isaac Newton, whilst making an experiment on the solar light, became so impressed with the brightness of the sun's image, that *for a whole week* wherever he looked he seemed to see a bright red disk. The converted Saul of Tarsus was so impressed by the sight of God's splendour in Jesus, that *for a whole lifetime* he saw always before him the glorious Christ. The heavenly vision gave the tone (that of the light of another world) to his whole ministry.

The first man's glory and righteousness disappeared from his horizon, just as the sun of Damascus had faded before one pencil of rays from the face of Jesus.

E. L. B.

“Quit you like men.”



THE moment we become free from sin we become servants of Him who bought our liberty. We become adversaries to our adversary.

And what an adversary he is! He unites heaven's knowledge with hell's cunning. He possesses vast supplies of heaven's strength without heaven's principles. Behold Him! His gladness is in man's despair—his music in man's groanings—his meat is the lost creation—his drinks are tears and blood—his vassals, spirits as wicked as himself—his presence world-wide—his design, for one and all, temptation, seduction, and the pit.

This adversary has gained too many a victory. See the number, the value of his ornaments. His ornaments! what are they? They are principal souls, the souls of great personages, principal souls undone. The crown jewel in his dusky coronet is not some Byron or Napoleon who knew the Saviour little, but someone who knew Him much—some Judas, some mighty apostate.

Our strife is with the devil himself. He stands between us and tens of thousands whom we want to save. Let us be fully disentangled. Let us go forth against him in burning zeal and in heart pity, in conscious weakness, but in full assurance of faith; let us lay hands upon this Goliath, this crooked serpent, this hell-fiend; let us *close* with him.

The wrestling of Jacob was with God. The wrestling of the Holy Spirit is with man; but our wrestling is with Satan with wicked spirits.

To rescue men—to rescue them for God—to thin Abaddon's legions, to swell the Saviour's ranks—

this is worth living for, but it necessitates the definitely becoming a soldier. The path to Victory is the war-path! I know of no other. Satan has come to our planet; he has deceived the nations. Though master of all, he covets more. He thirsts for our children, and for our children's children, to make them fresh faggots for his flame. Millions upon millions of human beings are being transported direct to hell like wagons of coal for the furnace.

We must, therefore, be up and doing; but where shall our warfare begin? Certainly, at the point nearest to ourselves; certainly, where God has set us; certainly, at home. But having laid siege to every soul that lies just at hand, and while waiting for the Spirit to animate those so dear to us, and yet so dead, where next? I would answer, Where guided. And the guiding will most possibly lead you where vice is thickest, where danger is direst, where time is shortest. We must begin at hell's mouth. Our strongest, tenderest, most Christ-like men should be here—between sinners and the deep abyss—men mighty in their own convictions, mighty in persuasion, mighty in their very fears, mighty to save.

Is it true, or is it not, that there is a ceaseless *Tread*, TREAD, TREAD, day and night, century after century, along that line of march to hell, and that Satan's mail-clad escorts might almost write themselves men of peace, so little opposition do they meet with on their way? Oh! for battle, anywhere—everywhere—getting into close quarters with sinful men and women and children, yearning to save. "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." But conquerors must have trophies in proof of conquest. Where are ours?

H. B. M.

The Divine Pattern.

"See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."—**EXD.** viii. 5.

REMEMBER the "all things." It is for us Christians to bring the greatest principles to bear on the smallest duties. "Small duties?" "Great" and "small" are adjectives that ought never to be tacked on to "duty." For all duties are of one size, and while we may speak, and often do speak, very mistakenly, about things which we vulgarly consider "great," or superciliously treat as "small," the fact is that no man can tell what is a great thing and what is a small one. For the most important crises in a Christian's life have a strange knack of leaping up out of the smallest incidents: just as a whisper may start an avalanche, and so nobody can tell what are the great things and what the small ones. The tiniest pin in a machine drops out, and all the great wheels stop. The small things are the things that for the most part make up life.

I remember once going up to the roof of Milan Cathedral, and finding there, stowed away behind the buttress—where I suppose one man in fifty years might notice it, a little statuette, as completely chiselled, as perfectly polished as if it had been of giant size, and set in the facade for all the people in the piazza to see. That is the sort of way in which Christian men should carve out their lives. Finish off the unseen bits perfectly, and then you may be quite sure that the seen bits will take care of themselves.

"See that thou make *all* things," and begin with the small ones, "according to the pattern shewed

to thee *in the mount.*" Ay, that is where we have to go if we are to see it. The difference between your convictions of duty depends very largely on the difference in the distance that you have climbed up the hill. The higher you go, the better you see the lie of the land. The higher you go, the purer and more wholesome the atmosphere. And many things which a Christian man on the low levels thought to be perfectly in accordance with "the pattern," when he goes up a little higher, he finds to be hopelessly at variance with it. Go up the hill, and you will see for yourselves.

The elevation determines the range of vision. And the nearer, and the closer, and the deeper our habitual fellowship with God in Christ, the more lofty will be our conceptions of what we ought to be and do. The higher we go on the mountain of vision, the clearer will be our vision. On the other hand, whilst we see "the pattern" in the mount, we have to come down into the valley to "make" the "things." The clay and the potter's wheels are down in Hinnom, and the mountain-top is above. You have to carry your pattern-book down, and set to work with it before you. Therefore, whilst the way to see the pattern is to climb, the way to copy it is to descend. And having faithfully copied what you saw on the Mount of Vision, you will see more the next time you go back; for "to him that hath shall be given."

McL.



NEVER does a man pourtray his own character more vividly than in his manner of pourtraying another.



Light-bearers.

"Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?"—MARK iv. 21.

THE bushel being the vessel used for measuring corn, is an emblem of business—we may say of the activity of out-of-door life; while the bed, being the place of rest, may aptly be regarded as an emblem of home life. The bushel and the bed seem to combine the whole of our daily life.

Alas! how often do they cover the light. The Lord adds: "There is nothing hid which shall not be manifested, neither is anything kept secret but that it shall come abroad," which we may well apply to ourselves in relation to our business and our home life. Christianity, if real and true, will illumine all our transactions abroad or at home. The lamp will thus have its true place on the lampstand.

A lamp does its work very quietly; it does not talk or argue, it keeps on shining. Many persons talk grandly who shine feebly. But in the dark, those who would find their way prefer a rush light to the finest argument. The quiet, sober, honest shining of the Christian's lamp does more before the eyes of men to glorify our Father who is in heaven, than all the fireworks of Christian controversy. No argument is so convincing as that of the lamp on the lampstand, giving light to all that are in the house. Where there is but one true Christian in a household, the argument of the lamp on the lampstand should be very eagerly heeded. Say little, but shine much. Be yourself what you wish others were.

Let us remember, too, that it is our own individual

light which is to shine, not someone else's. Every true believer has his own peculiar light, which should be set upon the special candlestick appointed by God for it. A child, a parent, a servant, a master, has each his own appointed place for light-giving. We cannot exchange places with one another, as many seem to wish to be able to do. "If I were so-and-so how easy it would be for me to live for God," "If I were not in these circumstances then I could shine for God," are common declarations which show that the speakers forget they have to give forth their light in the very place and time their lot is cast in, whether the lamp be little or large.

Let our concern be that our lamp is set upon its own proper lampstand, and that it gives light to all that are in the house.

H. W.



The Evangelist.



THE gift of the evangelist is a *great* gift. I do not say that he may not get another gift, as Paul did; but as a rule, as far as I know, I have not seen an evangelist give up his proper calling, and settle down to teach, who has not lost his power. I look upon a gift as some special presentation of Christ to the soul, as has been truly said—when an evangelist stands up to teach, he is sure before long to preach. On the other hand, if a teacher stands up to preach, he is soon drawn into teaching. The Lord bless you much. Come *from* the Lord, and come *for* the Lord, and you are sure to be blessed.

December 23rd, 1896.

J. B. S.

An eye for perfection.

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."—PHIL. iii. 15.

IT is said that an Italian artist one day took his pupils into his picture gallery, bidding them each select a picture to copy.

One of the pupils, after wandering up and down, seated himself before a perfect masterpiece, saying with a sigh, "If I copy any it shall be this one."

Presently the artist came to see how his pupils were getting on. When he came to this one, the pupil ejaculated, "Oh, is not *that* splendid! Look at *that*, not at my daub."

The master replied, "You are the man for me, you have an eye for perfection."

The eye for perfection is, "As many as be perfect." My "daub" is, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." The man with an eye for perfection sees that Christ and Christ alone will do for God, and he sees that God has called him to be like that Man and with Him for ever.

W. J.

"That blessed hope."

DO you ever think how Christ is keeping the bodies of the dead? Do you never say, "Oh, what a heart He has! How tenderly He is caring for them! How He knows that the dust of Stephen is there, and the dust of Paul here, and how He has His eye on every bit of it! And He is ready to bring it all forth when the moment comes."

What a part of the hope is this to one who has had to battle with death—to one who has had to part with loved ones, and to lay them in the grave!

"Oh, death! I will be thy *plagues*," He says. He is coming to avenge the controversy, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. He is coming to make the display of His own glory as the Resurrection, and then each shall have their reward. What a joy it will be to Christ in glory to see the little circles around each labourer that he has been used to. Here, in one corner is Paul, surrounded with his dear Thessalonians, his "joy and crown"; and there, in another, some other labourer, with his around him; and in them Christ will see all that His own grace has wrought.

J. N. D.

"The shadow of the Almighty."

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Ps. lvi.

IS it not a very curious thing that the tendril of a climbing plant will not turn, like a leaf, to the light, but away from the light to the shadow?

Why is this? Because the shadow tells it, in some wonderful and mysterious way, that some object round which it can twine is casting the shadow near it; whereas if light is all around it, that shows that there is no solid object round which it can twine near at hand to intercept the light and cast a shadow. Therefore, the tendril has learned by experience to turn always to the shadow for support.

And so, dear troubled child of God, your trouble will reveal to you the presence of the Mighty One, whose shadow it is, and you can lean all your weakness on His Almighty strength. Let your whole life be a turning to God, who is all your salvation, and should be all your desire.

God intends that the parent should be a blessing to his child; but may we not consider a child as a looking-glass to us, and does not God also order that a child of a certain parent shall be the exact blessing that he needs—a gift from God to help him to discipline himself?

Whilst the parent is teaching a *little* lesson to his child, he may be learning a *great* lesson *himself*. Whilst training his child, he may find out many hidden sins, many secret, undiscovered springs of evil. What a school of discipline! My child is wilful, obstinate, selfish, proud, mischievous. Let me see first what I have to learn in this matter *myself*, and then teach and discipline my child.

Thus the child may become a book to the parent, even as the parent should be the best book for the child. Thus, also, the very sins of our little ones, which cause us frequent sorrow, trial, and humiliation, and which so often lead us to cry to God for them, will be graciously overruled for our blessing and deep profit; for by grace we shall be enabled to correct our ignorance and sin on discovering the like in our child. There we discern it often in its simplicity, and easily trace it to its roots, while a similar evil in us may be disguised and modified by education, hypocrisy, or the fear of man.

"I desire," says one, "to bring up my children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and that they should be obedient and happy children; can you give me any general rule that will help me?"

Yes, I can, and it is this:—If you want your children to be good children to you, *you* must be a good child to your Father. By the grace of God be a good child *yourself*; walk before God *yourself* in everything, and then you will be a good father to your children.

Consider God's Word. It is addressed to us by God as *our* Father; let us read and understand, and seek to carry out the instruction contained in this precious volume into our daily walk; so shall we be books to our children, even before they are able to read; and they will read in us what we learn from our Father. The best way to teach another a thing is to do it first ourselves.

I have been asked, "Can children imitate Grace?" Children *can* and *do* imitate Grace—the greater the Grace set before them to imitate, the better.

The grace of the Lord Jesus! How it is manifested and how it shines in His ways on earth! If we imitate Him we shall deal with our children for their good; we shall *be kind* to our children; moreover, we shall seek to do every kindness in a *kind manner*, and to accompany our kind deeds with *kind words*. *Our* obliquity is often seen in contrast with the perfect way of Jesus.

Mark the conduct of our blessed Lord in Matt. xiv. 15, &c. An opportunity is afforded for the exercise of His grace. He does not immediately attack the ignorance of the disciples, and say, "All the wisdom is with Me." No; but He displays His wisdom and His power in dealing with them, and in leading them into circumstances where they shall prove their own need of Him, and their own weakness without Him. What wisdom! He makes them ashamed of themselves, but he does not put them to open shame. Children are often like the disciples—they think all the wisdom is on their side. This state of mind must be regulated; and in proportion to the wisdom we exercise in training them, the sooner will the lesson be learned. If we fail in this dependent spirit, let us confess our failures; and we should not be deterred from this, even

though our children are present, as they would be, in our daily prayer. This very thing may prove a blessing to them.

As we have need to humble ourselves before God, and to mourn that our progress is so slow, we should not be discouraged when we find the progress of our children is slow; we must be thankful for any improvement, and not mind a little trouble, but look *forward* expecting a blessing. Notwithstanding all difficulties, we may be of good courage respecting the end of our labours, if we by grace trust in the Lord with all our hearts, and do not yield to the continual temptation of leaning, in little matters or great, to our own understanding.

By a right method of dealing, the child will see that you love it, and thus its love will be won. If it asks for that which is not for its good, show it you refuse, not for your own pleasure, but for its profit. God is continually making it manifest that *He is Love*. Let the child have full confidence in your love; show it that you love it, and wish to make it happy; and let it know that you continually seek its benefit, even though you appear not to be noticing it. Obedience is to be taught; but children should see that we seek their happiness, and that all we do is for their good. When they disobey they are unhappy: we should prove to them by every means that we want to *make them happy, and to see them happy*.

Much wisdom and much firmness, as well as love, are necessary for all this, and in order to receive these we must wait upon God.

It is a great matter to deal with God before our children in all circumstances, whether prosperous or adverse (it may be in quiet and secret communion with Him), not talking about it to them, or recom-

mending it, but doing it *ourselves*. One result of this will be a composed countenance in the storm as well as in the calm, and that is what we should see. Our example strengthens our precept, but if our precept is not acted out before them it is of little worth. Children have a very acute perception; and if they see that we believe that God is greater than we are, and that we depend upon Him, and look to Him to guide us, this will be a plain and practical lesson continually before them.

A child will ever try to be master. Striving for the mastery is what human nature aims at; "I will ascend up on high" is the perpetual tendency of the unregenerate heart. And so it is with our children: a child will try how far he can go, and if suffered to gain the ascendancy in the least degree, our trouble and difficulty will be greatly increased, and the child greatly injured. It is most important that this should be early attended to, the earlier the better, even while a babe; never give it the *real* mastery, even in play.

Adonijah was a sad instance of independence and self-exaltation. It is said that "his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" (1 Kings i. 6.) And was it not Adonijah who exalted himself to be king, contrary to the mind of God and of his father?

Again, what became of the sons of Eli? These and many other like things are written for our example. A child is often indefatigable in striving to be master: "*I must have such a thing,*" says he. "*Why cannot I?*" and the like expressions. We must never allow him to gain his point.

Let us remember the end we have in view, and not confine ourselves to the present. It is a great thing so to order, that our children while under

training may be in happy subjection to those who have the care and instruction of them: but we want more than this; our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that they may be saved, and that they may become faithful witnesses for, and good soldiers of, our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOD'S TESTIMONIES AND GOD'S HOLINESS.

(Read PSALM xciii.)

IN this Psalm we shall find some very important principles. Though power be now exercised for the triumph of good, it is no new power. The Lord's "throne is *of old*," Himself from "everlasting." No inroad of evil has touched or weakened that. This inroad has taken place. The passion and will of man had risen up as the angry and tumultuous waves—in vain. "The Lord on high is mightier." Rebellious man is allowed to do this, but the power of the Ancient of Days is concealed from unbelief in the days of patience, so that man thinks all is in his hand. When evil rises up so as to reach Him and call out His action, an instant suffices to bring about the counsels of God in power by their destruction.

But this is not quite all. Faith has that on which it rests—the Lord's testimonies: they "are very sure." God's Word may be counted on as Himself, not only for final deliverance, but for guidance along the path of difficulty.

Nor is this all. There is a character which is a safeguard against delusion, and a means of judging and discerning the right path:—"Holiness becometh thine house."

Oh! how these two principles do cheer and enlighten us in our path. How they strengthen us in the consciousness that it is of God's very nature, and cannot but be so! Thus God's testimonies, and God's holiness secure and fix the heart as to that which is of God.

J. N. D.



ANTI-DIEU ;
Or, Against God.

I READ in the newspaper the other day an item of intelligence which caused my blood to curdle. There are many dreadful things recorded in print from time to time, but this one struck me with peculiar force as most sad and awful.

It appears that in France a society exists called the *Freres de la Cote*. It is increasing with alarming rapidity, and now numbers no less than 250,000 youths, mostly school and college lads between the ages of 14 and 20, who have banded themselves together to advance the cause of Atheism (which denies the existence of God), and to combat Popery (which denies the perfect sacrifice of Jesus).

On the arm of each boy who belongs to this society is tatoed in distinct characters the sign A.D., which signifies the Latin and French words, "*Anti-Dieu ;*" or, "*Against God.*"

I daresay that many boys and girls who read this may wonder at the ignorance and

Godless depravity of these French lads. But bear in mind that the prevailing religion in France is that of the Pope, and when people discover, as they often do, what a wretched farce it is, they conclude that there is no true religion at all! They do not know the Gospel, and supposing there is nothing to choose between Romanism and rank infidelity, they choose the latter. Hence, at the last general census, or numbering of the inhabitants, five million Frenchmen signed themselves as Atheists; and now we hear of this dark youthful society which has for its watchword and flag the reckless device—"Against God."

Boys and girls, if you know not Christ as your Saviour, I am going to say something which will startle you. You are each and all branded with this same terrible device! Nay, do not tuck your sleeves up in alarm; you will not find it tatoed on your arm. The sad fact is more than skin deep. It is engraven on your very soul.

You say, "How do you know? you cannot see my soul."

No, but God can: and what does He say? He says, "The carnal mind is enmity *against God*" (Rom. viii.).

Now, have you ever put your finger on that scripture and confessed "That is true of me?" You sin, do you not? Of course. Well, every sin against God comes from a

hidden evil spring, deep down in the breast, which He calls "the carnal mind."

I have heard of a little boy who, in a temper, let fall a very bad word; at once he felt he had sinned against God, and ran to his mother and told her so. What did she do? Why, she gave him a mug of water and made him rinse his mouth out several times. Then she laid him on his back and put a sponge partly down his throat till the little fellow gasped out, "Oh, mother, I'm choking." Immediately she set him on a chair and explained.

"Tommy," said she, "that naughty word was in your heart before it came out of your mouth. I can wash your mouth out, but I cannot reach to cleanse your heart; only God can do that." Then she put the Gospel before him.

And what does the glad tidings tell us about all this? Simply that if you receive Jesus as your own Saviour, you will be born again, and God will give you His Holy Spirit. Thus you will have within you, not only the carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh, which is *against* God, but also, the spiritual mind, or the mind of the Spirit, which is *for* God. Then when the old mind tempts you to do evil, the new mind will prompt you to look away to Jesus for courage and strength, and in the power of the Holy Spirit you will over-

come the evil propensity.

You may shudder at the bare idea of having the ghastly motto of the *Freres de la Cote* imprinted on your arm, but remember that every evil thought is against God; every evil desire is against God; every evil word is against God; every evil look is against God; every evil deed is against God. "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned and done this evil" is the language of true confession.

A.D.—Anti-Dieu—"Against God" is graven upon that evil nature which still dwells in each of us. But if the new mind dwells there, then, though we may fail, yet it is true that we possess a power and a nature which is *for God*.

The Lord Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Luke xi.). There is no neutral (middle) ground. You are either with Christ and for God; or, with the world and against God. All those who are against God must ere long lose the day. But those who are for God—boys and girls included—are on the winning side. Thank God there is in this hostile scene a happy band of boys and girls who know and confess and rejoice that they are on God's side.

Dear child, are you among their number? Do you belong to this noble band? Have you decidedly taken your stand *for God*?

S. J. B. C.

The Message.



The Drover's Sermon.



SAID a gentleman to me, a few weeks ago, "I was travelling in a train with a clergyman, two ladies, and a man who proved to be an infidel. Farther on a cattle drover also entered the carriage. When the train moved on, the clergyman gave a tract to each; the infidel alone refused it, saying he never read such trash, and that he had two daughters at home whom he would not allow to read the Bible. For full ten minutes he then assailed God's Word, professing to show it up.

The clergyman said, 'Pardon me, sir, but you say this book is not fit for your daughters to read; yet for the last ten minutes you have quoted extracts from it, in the hearing of these two ladies, which you say are unfit for your children. This is most inconsistent.' The clergyman quoted Scripture and argued, but all was rejected by the infidel.

"At last the drover said: 'May I be allowed to say a word, sir? I am a cattle drover, and sometimes I drive sheep, and sometimes I drive pigs. Master went to market the other day and bought some sheep, and I had to drive them home. Near master's farm there is a narrow lane, with nice green grass all through, and a pond at the far end. You

should have seen those sheep go for the grass when I got them in the lane. How they nibbled it, bleating, as though cheering one another on, and when they had put their noses in the pond they seemed as fresh as though just off the Downs.

Farmer says to me, 'Jim, those sheep look fresh.'

'Of course they do, master,' said I. 'They have been filling their bellies as they came along.'

'Well, the next week master sent me to drive some pigs home from the market. I was vexed when I got them into that lane to see how they began rooting up the grass to get the worms and dirt, and I drove them on as fast as I could. And when they came to the pond, in they went, stirring up all the mud, and got home filthier than they started.

'Now, sir,' said the drover, turning to the infidel, 'you are like those pigs. Thousands of dear souls find food and comfort in God's Word, but you do not, because it does not suit your stomach; you would try and spoil it for those who could live on it. And whilst God made the worms to do His work in nature, so He has been pleased to write down in His Word, the Bible, things that you call unfit for reading. And as far as I can see, He has written down these dark sins in the lives of men (things that we should leave out, if we had had to write their lives), to show that it is *vile sinners* His grace can save. Yes, sir, He shows them up just as He sees them, and yet He says, I can save the vilest, for the 'blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.' Take my advice, sir, give up finding fault with God's blessed Word, but believe its message, when it says, 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,' and accept His offer of salvation, to be had through faith in Christ Jesus, and if you will not do that, at any rate, stop trying

to spoil the grass for God's sheep.'

The infidel sat silent all the while, nor did he open his mouth again. But the clergyman said, "My worthy friend, you say you are only a cattle drover, and I have had a college education, but I am free to confess I have learnt truth from you to-day which I have not learnt in all my college career.' "

"Not many wise, not many noble."

S. M'L.

Ritualistic Attire.

Y T is all of Pagan or Jewish origin. (1) *The amice*, a white napkin or kerchief, folded in a particular way, was the ancient head-dress of the heathen priest. (2) *The alb* was the under garment of the ancient Romans, made of white linen and next the body, being, in fact, what we call a shirt, though much longer. (3) *The stole* was a portion of the dress of Roman ladies, worn just as a scarf, boa, or sash is now worn. (4) *The maniple* was originally an embroidered handkerchief, which, instead of being kept in the pocket, was suspended from the wrist. (5) *The chasuble* or *casula*, was the *toga virilis* of the Roman gentleman, put on just as ecclesiastics do now, so as to fall in graceful folds around the person. (6) *The cope* was nothing else than the overcoat of the Roman, being, as they still call it, the pluviate, to ward off the inclemency of the weather.

I had rather suffer for speaking the truth, than that the truth should suffer for the want of my speaking.

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A thousand errors may live in peace with one another, but truth is the hammer that breaks them all in pieces.

do good, and failing again and again? Why, yes! only last Sunday you went to bed after seeing *Dr. Good Resolution*, who told you to make a new start, and leave off this and that, and begin to do something else. Were you not full of resolves to be better and to do better? Have you not already failed? Sin's old wounds have broken out afresh. You meant not to tell any untruths, or say anything wrong, or any unkind things, or use any more bad words, but you have failed, and proved your tongue to be wholly bad. You meant not to go with worldly companions any more, but your feet have carried you with them already. You meant to be prayerful, but already you find you do not know how to pray. You meant to read your Bible every day, but already you find it "dry," and "dull," for your eyes are blind to its holy teaching.

Dr. Do-the-best-you-can, Dr. Good Resolution, Dr. Try Hard, Dr. Be Religious, and all the other doctors cannot make you better. You are growing worse. You begin to say in despair, "It's no good trying;" "I shall give it up."

Thank God, I say.

"But," you say, "I won't care any more."

Oh, say not so! There is One who can make you whole in a moment of time. He knows all about your case. Like the woman, you have "heard of Jesus." You have heard of Him through gospel preachers, and in Sunday School. Perhaps some faithful friend has spoken of Him to you; or, if you are a child, perhaps mother, or father, or even your school-fellows have told you of Him. Why not go to Him yourself? Go, like the woman, trusting His power to heal, and you shall be healed. Go to Him *now*.

Run quietly to your own little room or corner and

tell Him your case. Though He be in glory with crowds of angels around Him, He will hear your cry, and feel your touch, just so soon as your heart goes out to Him in simple trust.

You say you know not how to come, or the right way to come. Be like the woman. She did not trouble about that. She said, "If I only get to Jesus; if I touch but His clothes I shall be made whole." *Her faith was wholly in Him, not at all in her way of coming.* She says, "If I may touch but *His* clothes," not "If I may but *touch*." She chose a strange way of coming, a timid, shrinking way, but she believed He could heal her, and He did. "She heard of Jesus . . . came . . . touched . . . was healed."

Then notice how graciously He dealt with her. He would not have her go away and be afterwards troubled with thoughts that she had stolen a blessing, doubts if it would really last, vain regrets that she had not thanked Him for His healing power.

No! knowing all about her trouble, and her touch, and her timidity, He gives her the opportunity of coming forward to thank Him and tell before others what great things He had done for her.

She came, *trustingly*, to *touch* ;

Then she returned, *tremblingly*, to *tell*.

And then she goes away, *triumphantly*, to *testify*.

J. B. K.

The Bible.—As in Belshazzar's startling vision, the hand may be the hand of a man, but the writing is still the writing of God.



Jer. xxiii. 28—"Who speaks not needful truth, lest it offend,
Hath spared himself, but sacrificed his friend."

The surest way.

THE London correspondent of an Edinburgh paper left the key of the outer door of the house in which his office was situated, in his office. He was out gathering news late at night, and could not make the only person in the house—his office clerk—hear him knocking.

He went to the telegraph office, and wired to Edinburgh to telegraph to the clerk, by their private wire (which was connected with his office), that he was at the outside door! They did so, and the clerk came down and let him in. Though hundreds of miles away, via Edinburgh was the best and quickest way of reaching the clerk!

From this we learn that prayer is the surest way and the quickest of reaching those nearest to us, as it is those farthest away. Wire to heaven to reach those nearest to you. It may seem a roundabout way, but without it all importunity and knocking are in vain. It is God's message to the soul in answer to ours which constrains it to open the door.



Do not Wait.

HOW beautiful is Rahab's faith! She does *not* wait, as recommended by the spies, *until* the people "be come into the land" (ver. 18) to bind the scarlet line in the window; they are scarcely gone when she hastens to put it there, testifying thus to what she has believed; her faith does not linger, it speaks henceforth loudly; she proclaims from her window, Christ and the efficacy of His work to save the most miserable of sinners. Do you?

The Nemesis of the St. Bartholomew Massacre.



WITH the death of Henry III. the line of Valois became extinct. That race had given thirteen Sovereigns to France, and filled the throne during two hundred and sixty-one years.

The last Valois fell by the dagger. All the authors of the St. Bartholomew tragedy were dead, and all of them, with one exception, died by violence. Charles IX., smitten with a strange and fearful malady, expired in torments. The Duke of Guise was massacred in the Castle of Blois, the king kicking his dead body as Guise had done the corpse of the pious Coligny. The Cardinal of Lorraine was assassinated in prison; and Henry III. met his death in his own tent at the hand of a monk. The two greatest criminals in this band of great criminals were the last to be overtaken by vengeance. Catherine de Medici died at the Castle of Blois twelve days after the murder of the Duke of Guise, as little cared for in her last hours as if she had been the poorest peasant in all France; and when she had breathed her last, "they took no more heed of her," says Estoile, "than if she had been a dead goat." She lived to witness the failure of all her schemes, the punishment of all her partners in guilt, and to see her dynasty, which she had laboured to prop up by her many dark intrigues and bloody crimes, on the eve of extinction.

It was not the hand of the Huguenots that was on these men. The hand that smote them was the hand of God, who employed in this instance, as in so many others, His enemies to execute His vengeance upon one another.

The only one who gave any evidence of godly repentance was Charles IX. His life had been full of excitement, of base pleasures, and of bloody crimes, and his death was full of horrors. But as the curtain is about to drop, a ray—a solitary ray—is seen to shoot across the darkness.

No long time after the perpetration of the massacre, he began to be visited with remorse. The awful scene would not quit his memory. By day, whether engaged in business, or mingling in the gaities of the court, the sights and sounds of the massacre would rise unbidden before his imagination; and at night its terrors would return in his dreams. As he lay in his bed, he would start up from broken slumber, crying out "Blood, blood!" Not many days after the massacre, there came a flock of ravens, and alighted upon the roof of the Louvre. As they flitted to and fro, they filled the air with their dismal croakings. This would have given no uneasiness to most people; but the occupants of the Louvre had guilty consciences, and a guilty conscience trembles at a shadow—"There were they in great fear where there was no fear." The impieties and witchcrafts and Romish superstition in which they lived had made them extremely superstitious, and they saw in the ravens other creatures than they seemed, and heard in their screams more terrible sounds than mere earthly ones. The ravens were driven away; but the next day, at the same hour, they returned, and so did they for many days in succession. There, duly at the appointed time, were the sable visitants of the Louvre, performing their gyrations round the roofs and chimneys of the ill-omened palace, and making its courts resound with the echoes of their horrid cawings. This did not tend to lighten the melancholy

of the king.

One night he awoke with fearful sounds in his ears. It seemed—so he thought—that a dreadful fight was going on in the city. There were shoutings, and shrieks, and curses, and, mingling with these, were the tocsin's knell and the sharp ring of firearms; in short, all those dismal noises which had filled Paris on the night of the massacre. The king did not doubt that the massacre had recommenced, and summoning an attendant, he ordered him to go quickly and stop the fighting. The messenger returned to say that all was at peace in the city, and that the sounds which had so terrified the king were wholly the creation of his own fancy.

These incessant apprehensions brought on at last an illness. The king's constitution, sickly from the first, had been drained of any original vigour it ever possessed by the vicious indulgencies in which he lived, and into which his mother, for her own vile ends, had drawn him; and now his decline was accelerated by the agonies of remorse—the Nemesis of St Bartholomew. Charles was rapidly approaching the grave. It was now that a malady of a strange and frightful kind seized upon him. Blood began to ooze from all the pores of his body. On awakening in the morning his person would be wet all over with what appeared a sweat of blood, and a crimson mark on the bed-clothes would show where he had lain.

Mignet and other historians have given us most affecting accounts of the king's last hours; but we content ourselves with an extract from the old historian Estoile. And be it known, that the man who stipulated, when giving orders for the Bartholomew massacre, that not a single Huguenot should be left alive to reproach him with the deed, was

waited upon, when he was on his death-bed, by a Huguenot nurse!

"As she seated herself on a chest," says Estoile, "and was beginning to doze, she heard the king moan and weep and sigh. She came gently to his side, and adjusting the bed-clothes, the king began to speak to her; and heaving a deep sigh, and while the tears poured down, and sobs choked his utterance, he said, 'Ah, nurse, what blood! what murders! Ah, I have followed bad advice; Oh, my God, forgive me! Have pity on me, if it please Thee! I do not know what will become of me. What shall I do? I am lost, lost, LOST.'

Then the nurse said to him, 'Sire, may the murders be on those who made you do them; and if you do not now consent to them, and are sorry for them, trust in the atoning blood of Christ and believe that God will not impute your sins to you, but will cover you with the robe of His Son's justice. To Him alone you must address yourself.'

Thereupon having found him a pocket-handkerchief, as his own was wet through with his tears, after his majesty had taken her by the hand, he made a sign for her to go, and leave him to sleep; and thus he died, crying for mercy."

Alas! alas! history has few sadder scenes than this. We must go as well as the nurse, for it is too painful to stand longer at such a death-bed. But before quitting Charles IX., let us express a hope that he may have found mercy at the last hour. Some of the murderers of the Son of God found forgiveness, why may not some of the St. Bartholomew murderers? It were striking indeed if this Huguenot nurse, spared from the wreck of her people, as it were, was the instrument made use of for leading the dying king to the blood that cleanseth from


all sin! The chief guilt of this enormous crime must rest with those who were the advisers of it, and who, in a sort, coerced the king into the commission of it. Of these, one of the most prominent was Catherine de Medici, and she, so far as we know, never shed a tear for it, and eventually, like Judas, went to her own place.

Charles IX., died on the 30th May 1584, just twenty-one months after the massacre, having lived only twenty-five years, and reigned fourteen. Let us again express a hope that the precious blood that cleanseth cleansed him because he put his trust in it.

Reader, be you the best or the worst of living men, you need the blood. Apart from it, the best must be lost; but trusting in it, the worst—the vilest—can be saved.

(Adapted by the Editor.)

De profundis.


THE help of man and angel joined,
 Could never reach my case;
 Nor can I hope relief to find
 But in Thy boundless grace.
 No voice but Thine can give me rest,
 And bid my fears depart;
 No love but Thine can make me blest,
 And satisfy my heart.



Keep the Fire Burning.*

“The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.”—LEV. vi. 13.

A CHRISTIAN, cold and apathetic in soul, being somewhat perplexed at his state, visited, one evening, a brother in Christ, and told him about his condition.

The other said nothing, but walked up to the fireplace, and taking the tongs in his hand, lifted a large, red-hot, blazing coal from the fire, and placed it on the hob. He did not say a word, but pointed significantly to the coal, which gradually became paler and cooler, the flame finally dying out, and leaving nothing but a black, smoking lump. There was silence for a few moments, the brother praying that the lesson might be learnt and taken to heart. Presently the poor backslider spoke—

“I think I understand your meaning, and it rebukes me. You wish me to remember that it is by constant Christian intercourse that the fire in our heart burns, and that when we ‘forsake the assembling of ourselves together’ the fire dies out.”

Oh, friends, how true this is. How apt we are to grow cold and unfaithful! How prone to stay away from such outward helps! How small a thing is sufficient to keep us from the meetings—a cold day, or a rainy day, or a headache; some disinclination or another! Thereby we not only miss a blessing for ourselves, but make the fire smaller for those who do gather.

And yet the fire will not burn brightly, even if we do meet with fellow-Christians, unless we also meet with the blessed Lord Himself. As the coals only

*May be had as a neat 4-page tract from our office.

give out the imprisoned sunlight which they have absorbed into their substance in former ages, so we can only give out the warmth and brightness we have received from Him who is both Light and Love. It is only by communion with Him that we really keep warm. He is sufficient to keep all his people burning brightly to His praise. And how many a lonely, suffering child of God has proved it! But, usually, our God works by means, and He chooses that His children should be helps and stimulants to one another; and if they refuse to be helped in His way, no wonder that the fire should burn dim and low.

A servant of Christ was once speaking in glowing terms of the work of God in the meeting, and the various methods and agencies by which the saints carried it out. "And now," said he, "come with me and I will show you the warming apparatus." His friend went with him, but he saw not huge boilers, tubs, or fires, but a number of humble people bowing together in prayer. "This," whispered the other, "is our warming apparatus." Ah, and surely they were both warmed and invigorated that night by the hearty singing, and earnest supplication, and cheering words of testimony.

One day an engine was seen standing on the line when it ought to have been going on. The driver was asked —

"Have you no water, that you cannot get on?"

"I've plenty of water," he replied; "but the fire has become low."

Yes; and how often is that the case with our souls! The machinery is all right, the wheels are all in order; but the fire is going down! What are the causes of this? Why should the fire in our hearts ever go down? why not burn as brightly year after year as at the first?

Often the cause is that we get absorbed in other things—business, or pleasure, or even work for the Lord. For even in work for Him the mind gets absorbed with the work, and sometimes forgets Him whose work it is doing. Thus we neglect personal communion with the Master; we neglect the Bible—read it, perhaps, but it is not to us the Book it once was. Prayer is not so much sought by us, and we do not feel the same grief for the evil around. So, little by little, the fire goes down and burns dim. At first it may be unnoticed, but by degrees we begin to feel how cold the atmosphere about us is; and at last we find out that the cause is in ourselves, and that our love is on the wane.

Is there not some moral teaching for ourselves in God's command to His people Israel concerning the fire on the altar?—"The fire shall be ever burning upon the altar, it shall never go out." It was a plain command, which they had to keep by faithfully, anxiously watching day by day, and carefully putting the embers closer together, that the fire might always burn brightly.

Is it not also a command to us to keep the fire always burning on the altar of our hearts? Yes, it is, for if love is not fed, if it does not grow, if it does not advance year by year, it dies down, it dies out! Oh! let us ask ourselves the question: "Is the fire going down in my heart? Am I as warm as I was? And if the answer is not as we would wish it to be, then let us see that it is replenished afresh.

First of all, "Remember from whence thou art fallen;" that is the first step back. Remember the old days, when the fire was burning brightly; remember the love, the restfulness, the happy obedience, the watchfulness, till we are set longing to be as we were.

And then let us "Repent"—judge ourselves and confess; turn away from our coldness, our prayerlessness, our absence from God; and then "do the first works"—begin over again, start out afresh. First works are those prompted by first love.

Oh, let us look once more into the Saviour's eyes of love, to realise what He has done for us; meditate on His great love wherewith He loved us, and the fire will spring up again, a tongue of flame here, a red-hot glow there, till the fire on the altar in our hearts is once more burning brightly for Him. And then let us guard it carefully, as Israel guarded the sacred fire; never suffering it to burn low or dim, so that we may be to the praise of His glory who first kindled it.

The fire Thy love hath kindled
 Shall never be put out;
 The Spirit keeps it burning,
 Though dimmed by things without:
 O make it burn more brightly!
 By faith more freely shine;
 That we may value rightly
 The grace that made us Thine.

EARLHAM.

Mother's Opportunity.

WHAT loving mother does not know the value of the twilight hour, when her children, tired of play, or interrupted in their chosen amusements by the waning light, are unconsciously attracted to her side by the cheerful fireside's glow? The day's boisterous mirth is subdued, and the troubles and disappointments of the day are softened or forgotten in this charmed hour. Motherly admonition is then more tenderly given, and more gently received; and the little secrets and confessions, which might shrink from daylight, are now confidently poured into the loving ear.

“SAVIOUR.”

(A Missionary's experience.)

WHEN I went to a certain part of Africa there was no written language, so I learnt scraps from the conversation of the natives. One word I listened for and never heard. Two years and a half went by, and it seemed as if I never would make the people understand until I found out that word.

One night I heard some of the men telling stories of adventures. One related how his master had rescued him from a lion. I listened eagerly, hoping to catch the word—the long-sought word. The incident was finished, the word was not spoken; my hope was crushed, my heart was sick. Afterwards I spoke to the man and asked him: “What did you call your master when he saved you from the lion?” At once he gave me the longed-for word—the word which means Saviour; and I was able for the first time to make clear to him what the Saviour would be to him. With joy on his face he caught the message, as he exclaimed; “Is that what you have been trying to tell us all this time?”

I spent four years in Africa. For fourteen months I never saw bread; for months I have lived on African beans and sour milk; I have eaten everything from ants to rhinoceri; thirty times I had fever; I have been attacked by native bands; three times I have been attacked by lions, and four times by rhinoceri; but I would go through it all again for the joy of that moment when I heard the word “Saviour,” and saw the light of that man's face at the message it conveyed to him!

Reader, do you know in your heart and life the meaning of that word—“Saviour”?

Restraints.



"WHY this restraint?" the plunging bucket cried,
As it descended headlong down the well.

With ready voice the checking chain replied,
"Oh, foolish bucket, if unheld you fell,
How would you ever reach again the light,
Bringing your crystal treasure pure and bright?
I check the downrush of your reckless fall,
That I to light and service may recall."

"Why this restraint?" a tiny cherry said,
As it swung gaily on the laden tree:

Backward and forward swayed its wilful head,
As, petulant, it struggled to be free.

"Oh, foolish cherry, fleshless, and unformed,
I hold thee," said the stalk, "till suns have warmed,
And juice too filled the tree: be content to rest,
To grow and ripen. Held, thou shalt be blest."

"Why this restraint?" a merry streamlet thought,
As it was held and hindered in its course:

"Why are my waters to a standstill brought?
Why am I turned aside, and stayed my force?"

"That thou may'st gain new force," the old mill said,
"And turn my wheel, when onward thou art sped.

The miller has a service waiting thee:
So thou must wait, that thou may'st useful be."

Thank God, for chains that hold us when we go
At headlong speed into deep wells of joy.

Thank God, for links that hold us till we grow
Upon His tree, where freedom would destroy.

Thank God, if our wild wilful stream is stayed,
That in His mill we may be useful made.

Restraints do often fill us with unrest,
Yet sure we know His will is always best.

“The day of small things.”



THE day we live in is “the day of small things” to those who, like the men of Issachar, have “understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do.” The marvellous power and inherent vigour which once wrought in the church is doubtless still here, and will be as long as the Holy Spirit remains on earth; but it is no longer *displayed* as of old, owing to the divided state of God's people, and their general departure from original principles and first love.

True, we hear of great things being done:—organised missions, numerous conversions, wholesale consecrations, and large sums of money being raised for God's work; but when we compare the permanent results of such efforts with Pentecostal wonders, how small they are. Moreover, they are not effected without recourse to worldly methods which violate scriptural rules (2 Tim. ii. 5), and which betray a sad lack of faith in God, who did His work in days gone by through His servants without such paltry ancillary helps.

If we do God's work in God's way, our day will be “the day of small things” to us. *Multum in parvo* will be written across our lives. It has been said that the Lord's life here was one of activity in obscurity. Such will ours be if we share His rejection and follow in His steps. It will be a constant paradox, and yet divinely consistent (2 Cor. vi. 10, 11).

Now there are five little things connected with this day of small things we might consider. The first is

“A LITTLE FLOCK.”

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”—*Luce* xii. 32.

The figure indicates weakness, timidity, and de-

pendence on the Shepherd's care. Blessed be His name, His sleepless eye and guardian hand safely keep the feeblest lamb. Amid the fears which harass, and above wind and storm, and the roar of "the beasts of the field," we can hear His voice bidding us "Fear not."

And not only does He Himself ensure our ultimate blessing; we have also the purpose of God to assure us, as He says: "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Can man or demon frustrate *that*? Never! God cannot be foiled in carrying out the intents of His grace. Then, trembling flock, let us tremble no more, for we are safe; and if safe, why not sure? None is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand. *There* we were, by electing love, before the world was. Then, in due time He gave us to the Son, and now the Father's hand and the Son's hand guard us on either side, and the Spirit's power keeps us within.

We will not fear, then, a little flock though we be. The Kingdom, with its accessory and attendant glories, is fully guaranteed to us. The Trinity combined has pledged itself to carry us through. Divine strength is drawn out and perfected on the behalf of human weakness. Why should we fear? What do we fear? How can we fear?

"A LITTLE STRENGTH."

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."—Rev. iii. 8.

"Who hath despised the day of small things?" asks Zechariah. He does not refer simply to "small things," but to "the *day* of small things." When great things are in view we usually most readily do the small things, which are the preliminaries and the accompaniments of the great things, and, without which, they cannot be effected. But when it is

the *day* of small things—when, at the most, only small things can be accomplished, then we are liable to slight them and become negligent and slothful.

It was not the man with the ten talents, but the man with the one who was judged. Instead of trading with what he had, he hid it in a napkin, which was really his "sweat-cloth." The napkin which he ought to have used in wiping the perspiration of honest toil from his brow, he used to hide the little talent that he could have employed in his Master's work.

Let us not assume to have more than "a little strength," but, at the same time, let us use what we have. The heroic age of Apostles, miracles, martyrs, is past. Few now are called to die for Christ, but all of us "ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," and this we can do without shedding our blood. If we wait to do great things we shall eventually find we have done nothing. "What is that in thine hand?" (Ex. iv. 2) says God to each of us. Well, though it be as insignificant as the rod of Moses, use it for God, and He will use you. "*Whatsoever* ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord," was said to a Colossian slave engaged in doing the smallest and most menial work.

How vain it is to "go beyond our measure" by attempting what God has not given us the strength to do. Even if we succeed in the attempt, success will be obtained by using means He does not approve of, and at the cost of His smile and "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21). "A little strength" implies the ability to do only little things. But little things done for Christ, from the proverbial cup of cold

water to the most we can do, will receive great rewards hereafter. "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework" is said of the Bride. Needlework is done stitch by stitch. It is the little every-day acts of love and devotedness which will clothe the Church with moral glory in the future day of her display.

"A LITTLE REVIVING."

"Now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."—EZRA ix. 8.

"Wilt Thou not revive us *again*?" pleaded the psalmist. Yes, again and again, He will do it. His patience is unwearying and divine, and well for us that it is so, for we need to be repeatedly revived. We ought not to live on past attainments, like old half-pay pensioners belonging to the retired army list. If we do, our very boast of bygone victories proves that we are gaining no fresh ones. "Forgetting the things which are behind" is the battle cry of those whom God is leading on.

Yet it is only "a little reviving" we can expect, because those who cry for it are so few and feeble. If all saints were aroused, humbled, united and expectant, what a great revival *that* would be. Apostolic marvels might then be wrought again. But, alas, the mass are insensible to their condition; only a handful are awake, and their place is in the dust of humiliation before God, on account of their own failures.

What a tiny remnant returned with Ezra from Babylon. It was with them "the day of small things," as they felt, and as one of their leaders owned (Zech. iv. 10). Hence, they tried not to put Zerrubabel, the true heir, upon the throne, but they bowed to the oppressor's yoke as to the chasten-

ing hand of God. It was not great things they did. They did what they could, and what was consistent with their low estate and with the scattered condition of the nation.

Whatever recovery and light God may have granted in these last days, let those who have it feel more and more that it is only "a little reviving." The tears of "the old men" become such, rather than the shouts of "the young men"; or, may be, that mellowed and chastened experience, when both are combined (Exra iii. 12, 13). May we learn the lesson.

Our next point is—

"A LITTLE SANCTUARY."

"Thus saith the Lord God: Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come."—Ezra. xi. 16.

How precious and consoling is such a promise in a day of brokenness and ruin. The Lord is the same in the darkest as in the brightest hour. He is enough.

Through time, with all its changing scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
Let this support each fainting heart,
That Thou our Sanctuary art.

We find in Him rest, holiness, strength, courage, instruction, quietness, and all else that characterised the divine sanctuary at the first, ere the spoiler's hand cast it down. Human confederacies must come to nought, however orthodox and grand. God will blow upon every system that has not Christ for its centre. Pretension and boasting he *has* humbled, and He will do it again wherever it rears its proud head.

"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear

ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Isa. viii. 12-14).

However circumscribed and individual the path may be, we can always, as Peter says, "Set apart Christ as Lord in our hearts," and find in Him a little sanctuary when all else totters, crumbles, and falls; and, moreover, we can always count on the faithfulness of God to enable us to find a few who are "calling on the Lord out of a pure heart," and with whom we can "follow" (2 Tim. ii.).

"A LITTLE WHILE."

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompenses of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."—HEB. x. 35-37.

Familiar, yet increasing, near and dear, is our hope. Eighteen centuries has the Lord tarried, but when we view it all in the light of Eternity, we shall see it as God sees it, and speak of it as "a little while." "Ye have need of patience," says the Apostle. The "patience of hope" is what we should cultivate. It was when the unfaithful servant said in his heart "My Lord delayeth His coming" that he went all wrong. May we slay every atheistical thought which would dethrone God and His truth, and "hold fast the *confidence* and the *rejoicing* of the hope firm unto the end."

Space and time forbid more, but, in concluding, let us gather up our points, and may God apply them:—

"A little flock" we are, yet secure as under the immediate care of the triune God;

"A little strength" we have, and with it we, negatively, refuse to deny the Lord's name, and, positively, hold fast His Word;

"A little reviving" we need, and pray for, and He delights to give it again and again;

"A little sanctuary," when outwardly all is ruined, is what we prove Christ to be amid turmoil, confusion, and unrest; and

"A little while" describes the measure of our sojourn here till earth's "day of small things" closes, and "that great and notable day of the Lord" is ushered in by the appearing and kingdom of Him Whom we love, for Whom we wait, and with Whom we shall reign.

S. J. B. C.

THE ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE.

JESUS is taken before Pilate. The governor is surrounded by those who are against this Man, who they say is deceiving the people. He says, "Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? But Jesus answered him never a word." In no court-room had such a sight been seen. The silence of innocence meets us. The flower is crushed, but the perfume fills all the air. I am not surprised that "the governor marvelled greatly." The eloquence of silence had spoken to him. His sense of justice is awakened. He begins to take sides with the accused. He asks, "What evil hath He done?" The unreasoning mob cry out, "Let Him be crucified." Thus the scene goes forward. The Creator is tried by the creature, and the Holy is condemned by the sinful, yet He utters not a word. Here we behold the dignity of silence, and the silence of dignity.

* Light on the subject: *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,
By J. N. BARRETT.



Racecourse and Cemetery.

AT Cheltenham (S.A.) the railway runs between a racecourse and a cemetery. On the one hand is the noisy, excited gambling throng; on the other, the city of the silent dead.

What different reflections are suggested in the mind of the traveller as he glances through one window or the other. The riotous folly of the Turf may well represent the fiery excitement of this world. The solemn quietness of the grave-yard tells of the quenching of that fire in the cold waters of death. The Course stands for the frivolous, the empty, the ephemeral; the grave-yard tells of the true, the real, and the abiding.

The traveller to Eternity may decline to regard the realities of death and after death, and, instead, fill and feast his eyes with the madness of present gain and enjoyment. Or, he may allow considerations just and serious to turn away his eyes from beholding vanities, and fix them upon what is so solemnly true. Which is the wiser? Let death teach me how to live, for the world cannot show me how to die.

Shibboleth—the Password.

PROUD Ephraim was jealous of Jephthah's success against the Ammonites, and picked their quarrel with the men of Gilead to their own great disaster. The incident at the fords is suggestive.

Each man about to cross and strike for home was challenged to say the fatal password. Upon this simple thing hung life or death, and 42,000, who could not frame to pronounce the word aright, fell beneath the Gileadite sword.

The soul that would strike for home is still encountered at the waters of death. Is he to pass safely over? That depends on his saying the password. Alas, myriads have never learned it in a lifetime, and at the crisis moment, when the only thing worth knowing is the password through death to heaven and home, they cannot pronounce it aright, and they fall beneath the sword of a righteous God.

Let the rebellious sinner learn to say the password now. Let him not be offended if kindly challenged to declare it by Christian friends. God will at length require it, and *only once* will He demand it.

The World like a Clock Dial.

THE external world is like the face of a clock, on which certain motions are shown, and where certain facts are indicated and registered.

But most people are quite unable to read the face or dial, and to tell the time. Still fewer understand the hidden movements behind the dial. Yet it is these movements that are of the greatest importance.

Behind what is seen, but so rarely understood, are spiritual forces both good and evil, and what is seen is but the resulting product of their action. To those willing and able to understand the secret springs and wheels God shows the hidden mechanism in His Word. "The wise shall understand," but most people look at the indications and at the signs of the times like simple children, understanding

neither the cause nor the effect.

Christians at all events should walk "not as fools but as wise," and, noting the progress of evil, and knowing its cause, wait with patience and confidence for the intervention of Christ to put the clock right.

The Tap fixed in the Wall.

THE little boy in the Mallee Scrub, during the drought, heard with wonder how water flowed anywhere in Melbourne by turning a tap.

"I have sixpence in my box," said he, "and will save it up and get a shilling, so you can buy a tap and fix it in the wall."

How many Christians are such taps, but with no reservoir or supply behind. Turn them on or off, and the result is the same—no outflow for the refreshment or useful service of the one who needs it—of no use, and of little ornament.

The tap in itself may be of little value, but it puts the housewife, the gardener, &c., in communication with the vast reservoir and its inexhaustible supplies. But even a golden tap must be a fraud and a disappointment if there is no inflow, and in consequence, no outflow. Am I connected with God's ocean fullness, or only a fixture in the wall? Oh for reality in all things, and, above all, in things spiritual.

Currents.

CURRENTS are of two kinds—the surface drift currents, which are directed by the winds prevailing during the season, and the changeless deep sea movements, which, like the gulf stream, are the result of constantly operating causes.

Truth is like the last. It is changeless as the eternal Source from which it springs, and which gives it being. Opinion, on the other hand, is a surface drift, and constantly subject to change or

modification. Let no one fear that, when opinion veers and takes a new direction, truth is affected. No; the mighty tide moves on full and irresistible still, nor can its course and beneficent influences be changed until the originating cause is deposed and displaced—and that will never be.

Let no one be alarmed by the shifting uncertainty of the surface drift of opinion, as long as the deep sea current is rolling on in its majesty and strength.

The Tangled Skein.

MISS M—— N—— writes:—"Two little girls were winding a skein of wool in our school-yard one day. I watched them. They commenced at the wrong end of the wool in the first place. Next they came to a little tangle in the wool, and tugged impatiently at it until a loose knot became a tight one. Dragging away at it, they soon had their skein in a very bad way, so I offered to help. A little patience and the tangles were out, and the wool quite straight.

"The smallest one looked up at me through a mass of little curls, and remarked: 'You've taken all the tangles out, and next time I get it all tangled, please miss, I'll bring it to you.'

"Dear little girl! the thought swept through my mind of the One who has 'taken' all my tangles out, and the thought struck me that, if I took my fresh tangles to Him at once, before they got very tangled, I would often be spared the worry of trying to unravel the tangles for myself."

This extract suggests some useful considerations, and reminds of the wise counsel, the tender heart and ready hand of Jesus that solves difficulties, wipes away tears, soothes away sorrows, and extricates from a thousand troubles.



“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”—Pro. i. 10.



THEY came and tempted me to sin,
 But I refused, for deep within
 God whispered low—“My son, say ‘No!’”

They said, “Come now and see ‘the play,’
 And dance and sing—be light and gay;”
 I said, “N—O, my lads, spells ‘No!’”

They tried, with many a wink and joke,
 To make me “toss,” and drink and smoke;
 I was not slow to tell them “No!”

They offered me the billiard “cue,”
 They dealt the “cards;” they pressed me, too,
 The “dice” to throw. But I said “No!”

They tempted me with vicious books,
 Enticing words and lecherous looks;
 I stopped them, though, with one stern “No!”

They sought to make me lower and hide
 The flag I flew; I smiled, and cried,
 With heart aglow—“No! never—No!”

They sometimes tempt me even yet ;
I argue not—they only get
That little “ No ! ” and off they go.

But does some lad enquire the way
He may be able thus to say
The needed “ No ! ” when tempted so ?

Trust Jesus Christ to save your soul,
And let Him all your life control,
And He will show how to say “ No ! ”

When tried, you then will breathe a prayer,
And grace will down the answer bear
And strength bestow to still say “ No ! ”

And angels will with joy behold
You face the tempter’s ranks, and bold
Heaven’s bugle blow, and ring out “ No ! ”

Oh think, Oh think what might have been
The bliss of some now sunk in sin
And shame and woe, had they said “ No ! ”

Come, be a valiant Christian lad :
Hold fast the good, refuse the bad,
And stronger grow by saying “ No ! ”

Help us to keep the colours high
And, by the grace of God, defy
Our soul’s great foe with faith’s brave “ No ! ”

And when at last above we go,
The Home song shall the sweeter flow,
That while below we thus said “ No ! ”

S. J. B. C.

How to Receive.

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 "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."—Luke xviii. 17; Rom. xiv. 17.

WHO knows how to take a gift?
 Any little child.

Ready to receive he stands,
 Shining eyes and open hands,
 Heart and action mild.

Not a doubt has he of love,
 Full of faith and trust.

It is easy to receive,
 It is gladness to believe
 Love gives as it must.

He will take it happily,
 As he knows it's meant.

If the gift be small or great,
 Toy or coin, or half a state,
 He is well content.

He returns the giver thanks,
 Then he uses it.

Does not question for a day,
 Takes the joy it brings straightway
 For his service fit.

Lord, Thy kingdom is Thy gift,
 Given for love's sake.

Help a little child like me,
 All the grace it means to see,
 And Thy love gift take.

Lord, Thou givest royally
 What I could not win.

Help me, since I ever pray
 For Thy kingdom day by day,
 Straight to enter in.

—*Marianne Farningham.*

“Ye are My Witnesses.”



WHAT! Never a word to say
For Jesus, all Heaven's sweet theme?
Abundance of words each day,
Yet never a word for Him.

You speak of each passing scene,
Of friends that your heart holds dear;
You speak of the things that have been,
You tell of each hope and fear.

Whatever attracts the eye,
Whatever detains the heart,
You notice in passing by—
Books, science, or trade, or art.

And yet, for your Lord and Friend,
Who charged you to keep His Word,
You cannot a moment spend
In telling His love abroad.

Oh! pity the wounded souls
That traverse your path to-day;
You know of the peace which rolls
Each grief and fear away.

Oh! bring them His House within,
Who drieth the mourner's tear.
His blood has atoned for sin—
Oh, whisper this word of cheer.

Away with a faithless plea,
That cannot abide the light;
Be wholly for Christ, and He
Will teach you to speak aright.

His love will supply the power,
The measure, the mode, and the theme;
You have but the present hour!
O spend every breath for Him.

The Message.



The Battle of the Ages.

(1 Kings xxii.)



WHAT battle is it—Waterloo, Blenheim, Crecy, Marathon?

No, this battle is more akin to that sanguinary contest of a coming day in the valley of Armageddon (Rev. xvi.), where the armies of earth and hell combine and unitedly and finally pit themselves against the hosts of God. Howbeit, *that* will be to some extent a material conflict, whereas the battle we are referring to is intensely moral. It is a contest between Belial and Christ; the powers of darkness *versus* the forces of truth and righteousness; the kingdom of Satan against the Kingdom of God.

Look for a few moments at this sad and mysterious strife as portrayed long ago in miniature.

Behold

the sinner fighting against God.

Ahab is his name, and a sinner among sinners is he, his whole life having been spent in hostility to God. Alas, once more he takes the field, but it is for the last time. The tragic issue of the battle that has begun has already been foretold by Micaiah the prophet, and soon Ahab's hoary head shall be laid low. Yes, soon shall his bloody corpse teach

and warn of the folly, the weakness, and the fateful end of an enemy of God.

“The carnal mind is enmity against God” (Rom. viii.). Let us courteously, but plainly, ask you who read, “Have you ever accepted this unwelcome truth as true of yourself? There is in your breast an evil nature which is irreconcilable as far as God and the holy claims of His law are concerned. Perhaps you will not admit the fact. Your refusal to do so only proves it up to the very hilt. Why do you kick against it? For the same reason as I refused it for many a day—my will was hostile to the will of God, and I would not bow to His Word.

We have met with pleasant people in train and tram; on the steamer and by the way; in coffee palace and hotel—people willing enough to converse on any subject but that of their soul's salvation. The moment that has been broached, and a personal appeal made, we have seen the lip curl, the eyes glitter, and the flush of irritation and anger mantle the brow; all of which has betrayed the latent enmity of the heart to God.

“This is a hard saying,” you say. Well, hard or soft, just sweep your eye through your Bible and see if it is not a true one. Scripture presents Adam's race as “without strength” when Adam fell; “ungodly” from the fall to the giving of the law; and “sinners” from the law to Christ's day. Then the Cross proves men to be “enemies” of God (Gen. iii. 15; Rom. v. 6-10; Col. i. 21). I know that this kind of doctrine does not obtain and go down with the many, but remember, you *must* accept it before you can get right with God!

The old story of Nelson and the French officer illustrates our point. After a battle in which the French were defeated, the French commander was

brought before the great Admiral. Immediately, the prisoner went up to him and frankly held out his hand. But said Nelson, "Your sword first, sir, then I will take your hand."

So says God to you. He demands your sword as the initial step to your full surrender. Your sword is your *will*. Now, the moment your will abdicates, you own three things:—

1. That you have been an enemy of God (James iv. 4).
2. That you desire to be at peace with Him (Job xxii. 21).
3. That you are ready to accept His terms of reconciliation (Cor. v. 18, 19).

But look at Ahab again, and see in him

the sinner armed,

fighting against God. The battle waxes hot and surges to and fro. The shouts of the combatants; the clang and clash of steel; the roar of the war-chariots; and the groans of the wounded and dying make the place hideous. The air is thick with arrows, flying spears, and stones and missiles thrown by the terrible slingers and the engines of war. Ahab, however, remains unhurt amid the death havoc around. The man is cased in mail from top to toe, and seems invulnerable.

And *you*, too, seem invulnerable to the Divine shafts in the battle you are waging. Your whole moral being is clad in Satanic armour. Have you thought of this? If not, we invite you to glance at yourself in the Bible mirror. It has been well said, "The Bible is the only mirror into which vanity cannot look." Howbeit, is it not better to be humbled by so doing than to close your eyes and, in a state of mental obliquity, to rush on to your

doom ?

In the old persecuting days one of God's servants took refuge in the house of a Christian woman. Presently in rushed the dragoons, crying, *Where is the heretic ?* WHERE IS THE HERETIC ? WHERE IS THE HERETIC ?

The woman said, "Open that trunk, and you will see the heretic."

One of them did so, but saw only a looking-glass. Said he, "There is no heretic here."

"Look into the glass," replied she, "and you will see the heretic."

Fighter against God, look into God's mirror; not to see other people, but to see yourself as God sees you; and be not offended if a modern Nathan cries, "Thou art the man."

Behold *the helmet of pride*, and how exactly it fits your haughty head. Nay, do not draw the vizor down. Look on—

See how firmly rivetted over your heart and conscience is *the breastplate of self-righteousness*.

Look again at *the shield of unbelief*, with which you foil the arrows of truth from the quiver of God.

Look on still, and see fast gripped in your hand *the sword of human wisdom*, with which you contend with your Maker—returning evil for good, meeting argument with argument, quoting text against text.

And what more shall we say about your loins being girt round with *indifference*, and your feet shod with *procrastination*, so that you view with unconcern your reflection in the divine mirror, and are tardy, indeed, to forsake "your own way" and to tread the way of peace ?

What a sight for Heaven to look at—how sad, strange, and solemn. Could you be worse ? For-

give the reply, but we must give it—You *could*, and perhaps you *are*, for you may be disguised as well as armed. Glance into the mirror again, and see if you are

the sinner disguised,
fighting against God.

Ahab, King of Israel, went into battle disguised, and so may you. You may be a total abstainer, a Sunday-school teacher, a church member, and yet be an unconverted sinner. You may be a deacon, or an elder, or a church warden, and still be in "the gall of bitterness." You may even be a parson, a professor of systematic theology, a doctor of divinity, and yet be an enemy of God.

Thank God, many preachers are truly converted, but there are those who enter the sanctum and mount the pulpit with holy mien and sermon in hand whose real character is disguised by their external position. People say, "What a good man he is!" Of course, Satan does not employ profane and immoral men in this secret branch of his dark army, but rather those who are seemingly pious and earnest, and moreover those who do not give the people rank poison, but truth tinged with deadly error. Such men are "deceivers," and they themselves are often "deceived" (2 Tim. iii.). Alas, they make the practice of religious deceit a fine art, as did the Corinthian slow poisoners in the Apostle's day (2 Cor. ii. 17).

Reader, reader, you may be one of these, or only "one of the common people," knowing little of German Neology and Higher Criticism, but whoever you are, God's eye penetrates your profession and sees your real personality and aim. Yes, and

the arrow of conviction
shall yet "pierce between the joints of your har-

ness," as the Syrian arrow found the weak point in Ahab's armour.

"A certain man drew a bow at a venture." We do not know who he was. Evidently his name was unknown to fame. Neither does he appear to have been a skilful archer, or he would not have shot at random, or "in his simplicity" (margin). Probably, too, he never knew who his arrow slew. And he whose words you now read may never know below who his words reach.

" Full many a shaft at random sent
Finds mark the archer never meant."

Stephen Grelet tells us he arrived one boisterous Sunday afternoon at a little country chapel where he was tabled to preach, but no one was there. He, however, went through the service, and preached his sermon to *an empty hall*. Years afterward, a stranger told him he was passing that chapel on the afternoon referred to, and hearing a voice, he went to the door and listened. A text from the preacher's lips went home like a shaft from Heaven to his soul, and was the means of his conversion. Ah! the arrow shot at a venture was guided by a hand Divine, and found its mark.

May some such arrow reach you who read, if never reached before, so that in soul distress you shall cry out, "I am wounded." Then, if you sue for mercy, that arrow shall be withdrawn by the Great Physician's hand, and the wound healed with Gilead's gospel balm. But if you set your teeth and refuse, that arrow shall rankle and fester in your soul forever.

You may say, "Who are you to talk thus?"

He who writes is a humble servant of God, who desires to be faithful to you, as the prophet Micaiah was to Ahab. The king put him in prison for

telling the truth, yet was he happier far than were the 400 false prophets who, prompted by "a lying spirit," gainsayed his words and predicted smooth things to Ahab, urging him to go to war with the Syrians, and thus receive the fatal shaft.

"Turn thine hand," cried he to his charioteer, "and carry me out of the host.

for I am wounded."

Unhappy man, even when the arrow of retribution was drinking his blood, he would not humble himself and turn to God. His dying body might be "stayed up in his chariot" till the setting sun went down in darkness, but he sought not the support of the everlasting arms, and so his soul passed out into eternal gloom. We read of no appealing look for mercy, no sigh of contrition, no tear of repentance. Alas! he was obdurate to the end. He might be incapacitated for active hostility, but his heart was still charged with the old implacable venom—"enmity against God." "And so," we read, "the king died, . . . and the dogs licked up his blood, . . . according to the Word of the Lord."

Now, we are told of another king who had joined hands with Ahab, and who fought with him in this same eventful battle. He, too, had been counselled by Micaiah not to do so, and also warned that if he did, God would take sides with the Syrians against him. Nevertheless, Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, perished not in the battle. And why not? Because when he was discovered by the foe, and about to be slain, he did not brave it out like Ahab, but repented and cried aloud to God for mercy, and mercy he obtained (2 Chron. xviii. 31).

Which of these two examples will you follow?

Will you yield unconditionally, like Jehoshaphat, and receive mercy? or, like Ahab, will you stiffen your neck and rush madly against the thick bosses of Jehovah's bucklers, till death tears off your disguise, strips you of your armour, and drags you as a naked sinner before Him Whose authority you have dared and Whose grace you have spurned?

Oh, men and women, indwelt by an immortality that must run on parallel with the life of God, and possessing souls which must praise for ever in bliss or pine for ever in woe—we beseech of you, take heed!

“Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds, but woe unto him who striveth with his Maker.” “He is wise in heart and mighty in strength who hath hardened himself against Him and hath prospered?” “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and

be at peace,

thereby good shall come unto thee.”

God only contends with you that He might bless you. He contends in grace, and not in judgment. When He begins to act in judgment, one blast of His nostrils will scorch, wither, and consume every foe. But meanwhile He contends that He might bring you to His feet as a suppliant for mercy, so that He might embrace you in love, enrobe you in grace, and enrich you in glory.

If, then, the arrow has gone home, cry out in soul conviction, “I am wounded.” But do *not* cry out, like Ahab, to *man*; cry out, like Jehoshaphat, to *God*. Cry out—

“I yield, I yield, I can hold out no more;
I sink by dying love compelled,
And own Thee Conqueror.”

S. J. B. C.

Christ is All!

ARE you mourning over sin, and longing for assured forgiveness? Christ is all! "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall have remission of sins." Do you want peace with God? Christ is all! "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Do you want righteousness? Christ is all! "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Do you want to be sanctified? Christ is all! "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Do you want to be kept from sin? Christ is all! "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Do you want to be certain, unworthy as you are, that you are an accepted person with a holy God? Christ is all! "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."

Now, what can you want more?

"Oh," says the trembling believer, "I want to be quite sure that I shall be with Him at last." Christ is all! "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 Jno. iii. 2).

If you look at your feelings and your doings for salvation, you are like a person trying to climb a steep mountain of sand—every effort slides him lower. Our poor feelings and our doings are as unstable

and shifting as the sand; there is nothing in either for faith to take hold of. But when faith, looking away from our feelings and doings, takes fast hold of Christ, we are at once on the Rock of Ages.

Christ is rejected on earth—Christ is little *here*; Christ is exalted in heaven—Christ is all *there*. What a contrast! The rejection or acceptance of Christ makes an immense difference. It is quite true that all the wretchedness and misery of this world came by sin, but it is the rejection of Christ that is the cause of its continuance. You see the wretched drunkard, reeling from the ale-house, led by a thin, pale-faced, half-starved child, its mother having sunk into the grave, slowly murdered by him who called himself a father and a husband. Ah, poor drunkard, drunk or sober, the cause of all thy misery is this: thou art a rejecter of Christ. Christ in thy family would have turned a hell into heaven. Look where you will on earth, it is a Christ-rejecting world.

When Jesus looked upon the city of the Pharisees He wept. The sectary may fight and wrangle, and stamp and storm; but the true Christian, when he looks at the masses of rejecters around him, will not fight, but, weeping, seek to save. And what grieves him most is, that much which calls itself the Church dishonours Christ quite as much as the world. What deceit! what covetousness! what selfishness, hatred, malice, cruelty, and oppression! But enough! Look up. Oh, what a contrast in heaven! "Christ is all and in all." No rejecters there! No deceivers there! No drunkards walk the golden streets! No liars there! No slave-drivers there! No sorrow, no pain, not a sigh, a groan, nor a tear there! *Christ is all!*

—*The late Charles Stanley.*

Full Assurance.

(In broad Scotch.)



“THERE’S nae salvation wears sae weel in life, an’ fits sae close on a dyin’ bed, as the grace that comes oot o’ God’s ain hert, an’ which we have ta’en an’ no spurned.

“Oh, aye, haud Jesus Christ tae a puir perishin’ warl’: mak’ Him the heid an’ the hert o’ a’ your preachin’. What would I be the noo without Him, an auld dune, deein’ woman, ga’en doon to the cauld grave an’ outer darkness, jist like a withered leaf droppin’ down wi’ the wintry blast on a lanesone nicht.

“But wi’ Christ, I’m jist like the laverock that kens the mornin’ has come, and is ga’en to rise frae its nest on the earth to mount the lift, an’ wi’ its wee bit cheery sang, meet the risin’ sun.”

“Have you no fears at all in crossin’ Jordan?”

“Na, what should I be fear’t frae when I ken Him Who is the life an’ the resurrection on the ither side? I’m jist like a bairn that’s been awa’ on the fields puin’ flowers, an’ I maun confess, a-whyles chasin’ butterflees, an’ noo, when the sun’s fa’en, I’m ga’en toddlin’ hame. I’ve a wee bit burnie

me ever since I was old enough to understand it. She translates it straight, too, and gives its full meaning. There has never been any obscurity about her version. Her every-day life is a translation of God's Word, and one that a child can read, and that Jerome could not better. Whatever printed version of the Bible I may study, my mother's is the one that clears up my difficulties."

It was a true tribute and a beautiful one, and it starts a vital train of reflection. It should rouse not only all Christian mothers, but all other Christians, old and young, to consider what kind of version of the Bible they are making out of their every-day lives. Will the world learn what God's Word really means through our translation of it into daily deeds, or will we obscure and falsify it? Suppose we come in contact with those who do not know nor read the Bible—will our version be so clear that they must remember and revere it in spite of themselves? Or will they say, and rightly, that, if that is what Christianity means, they can do very well without it? What about our translation for to-day? Can we not make it a truer and clearer one, beginning with to-morrow? The Bible has been translated into nearly every language; and what the world needs now is that it should be translated into every individual Christian's life, and translated right.

The Night of the Betrayal.



HELL has gone forth in power!
 True hearts should wake and weep.
 Can they not watch one little hour?
 This night is not for sleep.
 Earth trembles in the scale,
 Yet knows not of the fight;
 And if her fearful foe prevail
 It will be always night.

Unpitying as the grave,
 Fierce as the winter breeze,
 And mightier than the mountain wave
 That sweeps o'er midnight seas,
 The prince of darkness came:
 Woe to the hated race!
 What man can meet that brow of flame,
 Or live before his face?

No Seraph's sword of light,
 Beddened in righteous wrath,
 Flashed downward from the crystal height
 To bar hell's onward path.
 No trumpet's warning cry
 Rose through the silent air;
 No battle shout went forth on high
 From guarding squadrons there.

Above, the holy light
 Slept on the mountain's breast;
 Beneath, the tender breath of night
 Hushed moaning woods to rest.
 Yet ne'er shall blackest night
 Such deepened horror know
 While stars look down on Olives' height,
 Or Kedron's waters flow.

For who shall tell His woes,
 Whose grief out-gloomed the night,
 When His strong love—bright star! arose,
 O'erfilling heaven with light?
 The gentlest Heart on earth
 Must taste her sharpest woe;
 The tender Plant of heavenly birth
 Hell's fiercest blast must know.

King! of the wounded breast!
 King! of the uncrowned brow!
 What faithful heart shall bring Thee rest?
 What arm shall aid Thee now?
 Lo, sheathed in shining light,
 Heaven's wondering warriors stand,
 With pinions closed for downward flight,
 Waiting their Lord's command.

But never comes that word ;
 That night knows yet no dawn,
 And still must each impatient sword
 Sleep on each thigh, undrawn ;
 Only one Angel may
 Enter the darkened path
 And the blest Sufferer's spirit stay
 To meet the coming wrath.

Poor Earth ! Go mourn beneath
 Thy withered roses now ;
 Thy thorns alone may twine the wreath
 To crown the Saviour's brow.
 Alone His steadfast eye
 Can cleave the rolling gloom,
 Where that dread sentence flames on high,—
 The sinner's death of doom.

Yet firm as Carmel's might—
 When the long-leaping tide
 Shivers its thousand shafts of light
 Far up his patient side—
 His will unshaken stands,
 Though that wild sea of wrath,
 Upsurging to its utmost bands,
 Breaks foaming on His path.

Soft breezes of the West,
 That, sighing as ye go,
 Bear ever on, with kindly breast,
 Each whispered human woe ;
 Here droop your wings and die,
 Low murmuring at His feet,
 Till from His Cross He goes on high,
 Then sound His work complete.

High Heralds of His birth,
 Make His new honours known !
 Tell how the blood—despised on earth—
 Sparkles before the Throne !
 Lo ! struck from Star to Star,
 The gracious echoes fall ;
 To this poor world, that rolls afar,
 Sweet comes the Saviour's call.

Soft, as from weeping skies
 Drops the sweet summer rain,
 Clear comes that call, through Babel cries,—
 To ye, O sons of man !
 Thrust not His mercy back,
 Who claims your hearts to-day.
 Oh ! kiss His feet. Their wounded track
 Hath crimsoned all the way.

Now or Never.

(The Churchwarden's Conversion.)



IN the course of my gospel address, I know not why, I said "There was a great clock in hell, with a large dial, but no hands to mark the progress of time; it had a pendulum which swung sullenly and slowly from side to side, continually saying, 'Ever! never!' 'Ever! never!'"* I also figured the clock of time, with its pendulum, saying—"Now or never! now or never!"

This seemed to make a profound sensation among the people; many stayed to the after-meeting—they would not go away until they had been spoken with. Among others, the churchwarden came to me in a very excited state, and said, "Whatever made you say, 'Now or never!—now or never!'" He was like one beside himself with emotion when he thought of the pendulum which I had described. "Now or never!—now or never!" he kept on repeating to himself, till at last he went away. He was far too excited to talk of anything else, or to listen either.

Later on in the evening, we were sent for to come in all haste to his house. There we found him in great trouble of mind, and afraid to go to bed. After talking to him for a short time, he went on to say that he had a strange thing to tell us—"that that very morning he was lying in bed (he thought he was quite awake), and looking at a little picture of the crucifixion which was hanging over the fire-place, he saw as plainly as possible some black figures of imps and devils walking along the

*Bridsine and Krummacher have expressed somewhat the same idea.

mantelpiece with a ladder, which they placed against the wall, evidently for the purpose of removing this picture from its place. He watched them intently, and noticed that they seemed much troubled and perplexed as to how they were to accomplish their task.

Presently the bedroom door opened, as he thought, and who should present himself but "Paul Pry" (that was the name he had given to a Dissenting preacher in the village, who was a portly man, and always went about with a thick umbrella under his arm)—the veritable Paul Pry, umbrella and all, standing at the door. He said to his visitor, "What do you want here?" The phantom pointed to the picture over the mantelpiece, and said, in a quiet, solemn way, "Now or never! Do you hear, man? Now or never!" The man was indignant at this untimely intrusion, and bade his visitor begone; but, for all that, he still stood at the door, and said, "Now or never!—now or never!" He got out of bed, and went towards the door, but the figure disappeared, saying, "Now or never!—now or never!"

Then he got into bed again, and all was still for a little while, when suddenly the door opened a second time, and the vicar appeared, just as Paul Pry had done, and came towards the bed, as if with a friendly and affectionate concern for his welfare, and said, "My dear fellow, be persuaded—it is 'now or never!'" Then, taking a seat at the corner of the bed, with his back leaning against the post, he went on talking, and saying, again and again, "Now or never!"

The poor churchwarden remonstrated in vain against being visited in this manner, and thought it very hard; but the vicar sat there, and per-

sistently said, "Now or never!" He became very angry, and bade him go out of the room immediately; but the vicar still said, "Now or never!"

"I will 'now' you," he said, "if you do not be off;" and so saying he rose up in his bed, while the vicar glided to the door, repeating "Now or never!" and went away. The poor man, in great distress of mind, turned to his wife, and asked her what could be the meaning of all this; but she only cried, and said nothing.

Then, who should come next but Mr. F——, a quiet man of few words. He had thoughts, no doubt, but kept them all to himself. He came gliding into the room, as the vicar had done, sat on the same corner of the bed, leant against the same post, and in the quietest way possible repeated the same words, "Now or never!"

"Do you hear him?" said the poor distracted man to his wife—"do you hear him?"

He got up, and said he would take the poker and punish every one of them—that he would. The strange visitor made for the door, and, like all the rest, said, as he disappeared, "Now or never!"

The poor churchwarden continued in a most distracted state, and during the day met all his three visitors who had caused him so much anxiety—"Paul Pry," the vicar, and the quiet gentleman, none of whom looked at him or spoke to him as if anything had happened; but when he heard me say over and over again in the pulpit, "Now or never!" pointing, as it were, to the ghostly pendulum swinging there saying, "Ever!—never!" and inquiring of the people, "Do you see it? do you hear it?" it seemed to bring matters to a climax. He said he turned and looked at the wall to which I pointed, and almost expected to see the clock.

I did not wait to hear more, but kneeling down, I begged him to close with the offer of salvation "now."

There and then, by God's grace constrained, he did accept salvation, and yielding himself to God, received forgiveness of his sins and the Holy Spirit.

W. H.

* Light on the subject: *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,

(Continued.)

By J. N. BARRETT.



Services in the Dark.

Q RECENT device for attracting people to church is that adopted by a vicar in London, who has the evening service conducted in the dark—the service and the hymns being thrown on a sheet from a lantern. So darkness is the draw, and by a new expedient borrowed from the pit, the Holy Spirit is again excluded! We shall have illuminated stage and darkened auditorium next, and the whole procedure a performance under the patronage of the prince of darkness.

Of course, there are excellent reasons for this new departure, this novel total darkness preaching. The poor can come without having their poverty exposed! What a bankruptcy of resource the church has reached when this is the last means of attracting people to its services! Before long, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.

Is not the spreading shadow taking its movement from the point where light has long shone the clearest?

Clouds.

THE clouds introduce infinite change, variety, and beauty into our sky and into our surroundings. Could we always tolerate a cloudless sky? And could the believer always find it advantageous to be in a state of continued prosperity? No, changes are needful. "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God," says David, and to be without the fear of God is worse than having the dark, the storm, and the pelting rain.

God sends clouds in mercy. How grateful the shade after exposure to unvarying brightness! How pleasant the cooling shower after the dust and heat! How charming the beauty of golden clouds for ever flushing round a summer sky! What a canvas for painting the glowing colours of summer and sunset! And even the black storm cloud is needed to show off the rainbow's lovely tints. Thank God for clouds. They are a means of discipline, too, and if He command the clouds that they rain not (Isa. v.), even the Lord's land lies waste. "By the clouds He judgeth the peoples" (Job xxxvi.)

The Underground River.

IN the Western States of America there is a river which, after a full, bright, and useful course, suddenly disappears. It plunges into the earth and continues its course for miles underground, at length appearing again, only to vanish after a time as before.

May not this be a simile of the Christian life of too many. At first bright, joyous, and admired by

all, it flows on, conveying a blessing with it wherever it runs. But at length the child of God turns toward the world, and the beautiful life disappears. Some would say it is lost, but no, after a time it emerges again—not another river, but the same stream flowing, perhaps, in its fulness “without a ripple or a curve.”

Oh to beware of worldliness which hides the life and deprives all about us of its beauty and usefulness. Alas! some are so hidden in their course that they are hardly known as Christians at all! May our lives be brightly flowing in the sunshine of God.

The By-Pass or Pilot Light.

† I CAME into the dining-room and found all dark. But there in the gas lamp was a little spark that had been burning all day and night for a year or more. A gentle pull at the by-pass chain, and the room was filled with light. Many a Meeting is a dim, dull place with no spiritual brightness and gracious influence. Good it is if under such circumstances there are two or three, or even only one, maintaining fidelity to Christ, and, in secret, pouring out their hearts to God. They are like the pilot light in the lamp—always burning, though never very much in evidence, always ready to communicate blessing to others when they are ready to receive it, always patient though the time seems long, and, we may say, always rewarded when the Master's hand opens the obstructed way of spiritual energy and grace once more. Be “a pilot light,” constantly burning and shining even though most around you are usually cold and dark, or only luminant upon special occasions. See Isa. xxx. 18. It is the faithful hidden ones that set the rest aglow.

Faith, Hope, and Love.



A VESSEL which is constructed to stand upon three feet cannot stand upon one, or even upon two, without being propped up. When propped and stayed up, it will stand, to be sure, in some way; but there is effort and agency super-added, which would be needless if the vessel were allowed to rest by itself, upon its own feet.

So it is with the Christian. He is intended to rest in Christ, in a threefold way: as the Object of Faith, and Love, and Hope. No man can really and truly rest upon one, or even two, of these without taking from God's Word, or adding to it.

In ordinary life he cannot be happy if he does not trust, and love, and hope. Imagine a man who can trust no one; how harassed and distressed he is with suspicions! Or suppose he is trustful; yet if he does not love anybody or anything, his present life is marred by an insipid and dull selfishness. Or take one who is trustful even to credulity; but suppose he has no hope, his future is black, and dark with forebodings, in trying to look into the terrible clouds of darkness which stand before him.

So much for man in his finite life. But when we remember that he is created for infinity, how much more needful it is for him to have faith, love, and hope combined! By this I mean,

Christ the Object of Faith, for salvation.

Christ Himself the Object of Love, for devotion and service.

Christ in His coming glory, the Object of Hope, for separation from the world.

The Practice of the Presence of God.*

(Translated from the French.)

IT is a just complaint of many books, that they are copies of copies, and grow fainter and falser, the farther they are removed from the originals. An author makes a book, to teach us what he has learned from other books, which books are, perhaps, distant by many descents from that which was produced from the heart and experience of its author. For this reason, the judicious are fond of originals, although they may not have received the last degree of perfection of which they were capable, but are left rude and unfinished. This is the character of this little piece: whatsoever is wanting in the skill of the artist, is richly recompensed by the simplicity of nature, and the force of truth.

The following CONVERSATIONS and LETTERS are by Nicholas Herman, of Lorraine, a mean and unlearned man; who, after having been a soldier and a footman, was admitted a *Lay-Brother* among the barefooted *Carmelites* at Paris in 1666; and was afterwards known by the appellation of *Brother Lawrence*.

CONVERSATIONS.

THE first time I saw *Brother Lawrence* was upon the 3rd of August, 1666. He told me that God had done him a singular favour, in his conversion at the age of eighteen.

That in the winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time, the leaves would

*Abridged from the original. The enlightened Christian reader must bear in mind that the writer lived amid the cloistered shades of superstition, 250 years ago. Albeit, his innate knowledge of God and the personal intimacy he enjoyed with Him set each heart longing to reach a like experience—an experience which no amount of doctrinal intelligence can ensure if it exist apart from personal piety. These Conversations and Letters have, doubtless, been miraculously preserved by God for the profit and good of those of a later day.—EDITOR.

be renewed, and after that the flowers and fruit appear, he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, which has never since been effaced from his soul. That this view had perfectly set him loose from the world, and kindled in him a love for GOD.

That he had been a footman to M. Fieubert, the treasurer, and that he was a great awkward fellow who broke everything.

That he had desired to be received into a monastery, thinking that he would there be made to smart for his awkwardness and the faults he should commit, and so he should sacrifice to GOD his life, with its pleasures: but that GOD had disappointed him, he having met with nothing but satisfaction in that state.

That we ought to give ourselves up to GOD, with regard both to things temporal and spiritual, and seek our satisfaction only in the fulfilling His will, whether He lead us by suffering or by consolation, for all would be equal to a soul truly resigned. That there needed fidelity in those drynesses, or insensibilities and irksomenesses in prayer, by which GOD tries our love to Him; that *then* was the time for us to make good and effectual acts of resignation, whereof one alone would oftentimes very much promote our spiritual advancement.



THAT having resolved to make the love of GOD the *end* of all his actions, he had found reasons to be well satisfied with his method. That he was pleased when he could take up a straw from the ground for the love of GOD, seeking Him only, and nothing else, not even His gifts.

That he had been long troubled in mind from a certain belief that he should be damned. That this trouble of mind had lasted four years; during which time he had suffered much.

That all bodily mortifications and other exercises are useless, but as they serve to arrive at communion with GOD by love; that he had well considered this, and found it

the shortest way to go straight to Him by a continual exercise of love, and doing all things for His sake.

That all possible kinds of mortification, if they were void of the love of GOD, could not mortify a single sin. That we ought, without anxiety, to expect the pardon of our sins from the blood of JESUS CHRIST. That God seemed to have granted the greatest favours to the greatest sinners, as more signal monuments of His mercy.

That since that time he had passed his life in perfect liberty and continual joy.

That in order to form a habit of conversing with GOD continually, and referring all we do to Him, we must at first apply to Him with some diligence: but that after a little care we should find His love inwardly excite us to it without any difficulty.

That when an occasion of practising some virtue offered, he addressed himself to GOD, saying, "LORD, I cannot do this unless Thou enablest me:" and that then he received strength more than sufficient.

That when he had failed in his duty, he only confessed his fault, saying to GOD, "I shall never do otherwise if you leave me to myself; 'tis You must hinder my falling, and mend what is amiss."

That we ought to act with GOD in the greatest simplicity, speaking to Him frankly and plainly, and imploring His assistance in our affairs, just as they happen. That GOD never failed to grant it, as he had often experienced.

In his business in the kitchen (to which he had naturally a great aversion), having accustomed himself to do everything there for the love of GOD, and with prayer, upon all occasions, for His grace to do His work well, he had found everything easy, during fifteen years that he had been employed there.

That he was very well pleased with the post he was now in: but that he was as ready to quit that as the former, since he was always pleasing himself in every condition, by doing little things for the love of GOD.

That as he knew his obligation to love God in all things, and as he endeavored so to do, he had no need of a director to advise him, but that he needed much a Confessor to absolve him. That he was very sensible of his faults, but not discouraged by them: that he confessed them to God, and did not plead against Him to excuse them. When he had so done, he peaceably resumed his usual practice of love and adoration.



HE told me that the *foundation of the spiritual life* in him had been a high notion and esteem of God in faith; which when he had once well conceived, he had no other care at first, but faithfully to reject every other thought, *that he might perform all his actions for the love of God.* That when sometimes he had not thought of God for a good while, he did not disquiet himself for it; but after having acknowledged his wretchedness to God, he returned to Him with so much the greater trust in Him, by how much he found himself more wretched to have forgotten Him.

That he had so often experienced the ready succours of Divine Grace upon all occasions, that from the same experience, when he had business to do, he did not think of it beforehand; but when it was time to do it, he found in God, as in a clear mirror, all that was fit for him to do. That of late he had acted thus, without anticipating care; but before the experience above mentioned, he had used it in his affairs.

When outward business diverted him a little from the thought of God, a fresh remembrance coming from God invested his soul, and so inflamed and transported him that it was difficult for him to contain himself.

That he was as much united to God in his outward employments, than when he left them for devotion in retirement.

That he expected hereafter some great pain of body or mind; that the worst that could happen to him was, to lose that sense of God which he had enjoyed so long;

but that the goodness of GOD assured him He would not forsake him utterly, and that He would give him strength to bear whatever evil He permitted to happen to him; and therefore that he feared nothing, and had no occasion to consult with anybody about his state. That when he had attempted to do it, he had always come away more perplexed; and that he was conscious of his readiness to lay down his life for the love of GOD, he had no apprehension of danger. That perfect resignation to GOD was a sure way to heaven, a way in which we had always sufficient light for our conduct.



HE discoursed with me very frequently, and with great openness of heart, concerning his manner of *going to GOD*, whereof some part is related already.

He told me, that all consists in *heartly renunciation* of everything which we are sensible does not lead to GOD; that we might accustom ourselves to a continual conversation with Him, with freedom and in simplicity. That we need only to recognise GOD intimately present with us, to address ourselves to Him every moment, that we may beg His assistance for knowing His will in things doubtful, and for rightly performing those which we plainly see He requires of us, offering them to Him before we do them, and giving Him thanks when we have done.

That in this conversation with GOD, we are also employed in praising, adoring, and loving Him incessantly, for His infinite goodness and perfection.

That our sanctification did not depend upon changing our works, but in doing that for GOD's sake, which we commonly do for our own. That it was lamentable to see how many people mistook the means for the end, addicting themselves to certain works, which they performed very imperfectly, by reason of their human or selfish regards.

That his prayer was nothing else but a sense of the presence of GOD, his soul being at that time insensible

to everything but Divine love: and that when the appointed times of prayer were past, he found no difference, because he still continued with GOD, praising and blessing Him with all His might, so that he passed his life in continual joy; yet hoped that GOD would give him somewhat to suffer, when he should grow stronger.

That we ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of GOD, Who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed. That we should not wonder if, in the beginning we often failed in our endeavours, but that at last we should *gain a habit*, which will naturally produce its acts in us, without our care, and to our exceeding great delight.

Continued (D.V.) next month.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

(SEVEN C's.)



1st, Jericho, the city of the *Curse*.

2nd, *Came* to where he was.

3rd, Had *Compassion* on him.

4th, *Cured*—"poured in oil and wine" (Ps. civ. 15).

5th, *Carried* on his own beast.

6th, *Cared* for—"two pence."

7th, *Coming*—"when I come again."

J. C. L.



2 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

TAKE this word, and apply it to yourself in its power. Are you leaving the savour of Christ behind you in every place, as perfume is left behind by those who carry it—so sweet as to be unmistakable wherever left?

G. V. W.



“Of Grace” and “of Debt.”

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”—(Rom. iv. 4-5.)



A FRIEND of mine once took a large class of children, and wanted to teach them what

“OF GRACE” AND “OF DEBT”

meant.

So she held up a ginger biscuit and said, “This biscuit will go to anyone who can say the text set to be learned without a mistake. So when I hold it up and say, ‘This is the reward that I *owe* as “*of debt*,”’ I shall mean that anyone who can *earn* it by saying the text can have it.

“But this one is to be for anyone who doesn’t deserve it or earn it, if they will believe me and take it freely, for nothing. So I shall say ‘This is *of grace*.’”

All the children were most attentive, and watched closely.

Then the teacher held up a biscuit, and said, "This is the reward and *"of debt;"* who will have it?"

A little boy stood up at once and said the text, and the biscuit was given to him, for he had earned it. Then another was held up, and the teacher said the same thing again.

There was a pause, for not many could say the text properly; however, a little girl stood up and said the text, and got it.

But a great many could never get the biscuit, because they had failed to learn the text.

Then the teacher held up in her hand a biscuit, and said, "This is a free gift, and *'of Grace,'*" who will have it?"

Fifty little hands were held up in a moment, and the free gift was given to many who did not earn it and get it as the payment of a debt, but simply believed and took it as a free gift.

Then the teacher told them simply that none of us had earned or could earn Salvation, for all had sinned; that we could never get it, nor would God give it as "of debt" owed to us for what we had done.

But that it was "of Grace," because Jesus bore the curse that the blessing might be offered to "whosoever will" (

Beware of Pride.

A MISSIONARY in the South Sea Islands gave an old converted chief his boat instead of his dug-out canoe, and as he sailed in and out among the islands, the people looked at and envied him, and he began to be proud of his position. This affected him spiritually, and finally, after a few weeks, he came to the missionary and said :

“ I have brought back the boat.”

“ Why ? ” said his friend “ What is the trouble ? Isn't she seaworthy ? ”

“ Yes, she is a splendid boat ; I wish that I could keep her, but I can't.”

“ Well, what is the trouble ? ”

“ Ah ! ” said the old chief ; “ I want to tell you that when I sit in that boat, and sail in and out among my fellow islanders, it lifts me above them, and makes me proud, and that brings back all my other bad feelings.”

How soon the old Adam pride crops up : *face* pride—pride of our good looks ; *race* pride—pride of our natural connections ; *grace* pride—pride of our spiritual progress. Let us mortify pride by foregoing anything and everything that fosters it.

“ Out of the heart proceedeth *pride* ” (Mark vii.). “ When *pride* cometh, then cometh shame ” (Prov. xi.). “ The *pride* of life is not of the Father ” (1 Jno. ii.).

✻ Rept ✻

→ MOMENT BY MOMENT. ←

(ISA. xxvii. 3.)



A PEBBLE at the source may turn the stream another way ;

A tiny atom in the eye may hide the light of day ;

A broken string upon the lute may mar its sweetest strain ;

Upon the weakest link depends the strength of all the chain ;

A hidden leak may sink the ship that else all storms might weather ;

The whispered word may break the tie that binds two hearts together.

And like the pebble in the brook, *one thought* may hinder grace ;

One wish, like atom in the eye, may cloud thy Father's face ;

Like passing chord, *one word* may mar the joy that God hath given ;

One act, like broken link, prevent thy leading souls to heaven ;

One sin indulged, like hidden leak, may wreck thy life for ever ;

And *unbelief*, like slander's tongue, love's golden cord may sever.

O Lord, in utter helplessness I bring my heart to Thee,
All its unguarded entrances Thine eye alone can see ;
I have no power to stand against the smallest thought of sin,

And even as I kneel in prayer some secret foe glides in ;
But time's small sands fall one by one, and moments make each hour,

Then every moment as it comes, Lord, keep me by Thy power.

The Message.



Michael Donovan;

Or, THE "ORDER" OF JESUS CHRIST.



UPON a bright and calm summer evening, after a day of hard study, I went for a walk along one of the beautiful roads which lead from the city of Waterford, in the south-east of Ireland. Sauntering easily on my way, half buried in thought, and half drinking in with conscious delight the fresh air and brilliant sunshine, my attention was arrested by the voice of an old man by the wayside, who asked for alms. Turning my look towards him, I was much struck with his tall and dignified appearance, as he stood with staff in hand, his snow-white beard flowing down his breast.

"My friend," I said, "if I may judge from your appearance, you are a very old man—the snows of many years are upon your head and bosom."

"You may well say that," he replied; "only last week I completed my threescore and eighteen years. Strange things have I seen in my day—more changes than I could tell, and the *real* old times seem to have slipped away altogether."

"Yes; and old men like you like to linger upon the past. I hope, however, you have not neglected

to think upon the future?"

"Oh," he answered, "I have not forgotten the care of my precious soul. I have laboured hard, sir, to make my peace with God, and have followed the advice of my Church in all her holy requirements. Poor and despicable though I seem, I am a member, sir, of the blessed order of St. Francis, and of the blessed order of St. Benedict, and of the blessed order of St. Joseph, and I hope soon to belong to the order of the Holy Virgin, 'blessed above all women.' When once I enter that high and sacred order, I hope to be ready for God's summons from this life."

"I am glad," said I, "that you have not been heedless of the great interests of the other world; but I am a member of a far higher order than any of those which you have mentioned."

"Pray, sir, what order is that?"

"I am a humble, unworthy member of the order of the Lord Jesus Christ."

"I never heard of *that* order," said he; "it must, however, be in truth a high one; for Jesus Christ" (*bowing*) "is above all. But how did you gain admission into it? You are a very young man; you must have paid a large sum for the privilege."

"You are right as to the greatness of the order—for 'a Christian is the highest style of man'—but completely wrong as to the difficulty of becoming a member of it. I paid nothing for the safety and the honour. Upon application I was received, and at once, 'without money and without price'; and you, my aged friend, may also be numbered among its happy members with a similar ease and promptitude, and upon the like terms as I was."

"Can it be possible," said he, "that your words are true? I never heard before of religious privilege

without a payment. I should like to be a member of the order of the blessed Saviour. Tell me, sir, what must I do to obtain admission? What did *you* do?

With clearness, simplicity, and loving pathos, I set before the aged beggar the Gospel of the Son of God—told him of the fulness and freeness of the salvation which was purchased on the cross, and how no qualification was required from the sinner who penitently received it. To illustrate the facility and speed of the Divine remedy, I employed the typical act of Moses in raising the brazen serpent amidst the camp of Israel, upon which whoever looked lived, though he had been in the last agony of death.

As I proceeded, the expression of the old man's face changed from curiosity to wonder, and from wonder to awe. Then there was an evident struggle to repress emotion—the eyelids moved quickly, and the muscles worked in the throat. At last, however, restraint became impossible. The tears coursed each other rapidly down his flushed and furrowed cheeks, while he sobbed out, "Thank God, sir, that ever I saw your face, or heard your voice. Oh, sir, you have been as an angel of God to me. Long, long have I been hungering and thirsting for such news as you have brought to my ears. It is indeed God's own Gospel; and long as eternity shall I have to bless God for your making known to me its precious and marvellous truths."

After a time he said, "Sir, would you condescend to pray with me?"

"Gladly, if there were opportunity; but it would not be seemly to kneel upon the public road."

The old man, with me close behind, crossed through an opening in the hedgerow beside the

public path, then moved along the dry bed of a ditch, and soon reached the hollow of a field, which was shaded with hawthorn and hazel. There we knelt.

If ever I prayed in my life, it was then. My soul was full of Christ, and felt His sacred power; and my aged companion, as I could observe, made known the sympathetic emotion of his soul by swayings to and fro, and floods of tears and sobs, and broken responses.

How long we remained in prayer I cannot tell; for we were both borne beyond the note of time by the intensity of our feelings. At last we rose to our feet and looked into each other's face.

"Pardon me, sir," said he; "you cannot imagine what new joy you have been the means of bringing into my once desolate heart."

* * * * *

An unexpected summons called me to a distance from the town, and more than a fortnight elapsed before I returned. Soon I sought for a meeting with my aged friend, but the attempt was in vain.

At last I obtained intelligence of the quarter of the town where he had lived, and proceeding thither, after a long and persevering search, found the house which it was known he used to inhabit. It was situated at the lower part of a narrow and squalid lane. When the door was opened, I inquired for Michael Donovan. A woman answered, "Is it Mike you mean? Oh, sir, he is dead and buried. Last week we laid him in his grave."

"How did he die?" I asked.

"A strange death he had, sir. When he turned *real* bad, we think that at times his mind wandered; for we could hear him talk about a serpent that bit, and of a serpent that healed, and again of the power

The First Invention.

██

“Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”—EccL. vii. 29.



TO-DAY is a day of many inventions, as the numerous and congested Patent Offices of the world abundantly witness. New ideas are constantly originated; new designs, skilfully developed; new discoveries, quickly applied. Man has become so clever that what is regarded to-day as the limit of human possibility may be cast aside to-morrow as obsolete, and replaced by something else more daring and up-to-date.

“Ye shall be as Gods” (Elohim) was the serpent’s lie of old, the echo of which still rings in the heart of man. “We shall soon learn to fly,” people say;—“Science will ere long vanquish disease”;—“In time, we shall devise means to tap the clouds.” Thus they talk, speculate, and aspire. True, both death and life baulk man as much as ever; yet does he hope to invent that which shall annul the one, and discover that which shall create the other.

There is, however, one invention which has never been superseded by a better, or rather, by a worse. No Edison, no Maxim, no Marconi, has attempted to displace it, or even to improve upon it. From time to time fresh names have been given to it, and often has it been adapted, advertised, and applauded, in some modern form, as something new; but, substantially, it has always remained the same.

The invention we refer to is the oldest one extant—it is the first invention. The first invention is found in the first book of the Bible, as the first discovery of our first parents after they had fallen from

their first estate:—

“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons” (Gen. iii. 7).

Thus did they invent, labour, and adopt; and, doubtless, for a while they were well pleased with the result of their inventive genius. Likewise many to-day are equally well satisfied with their aprons of respectability and religiousness with which they essay to hide their true condition from their fellows. But did the first invention prove to be the success its originators desired? It did not. Look at them as they hear the voice of God! That questioning voice makes them tremble, and fills them with shame and fear. Hark to the Divine challenge!—“Where art thou?” Mark how it draws them forth from behind the trees where they have fled to hide, and brings them into the presence of God, cowering with guilt and dismay. List to Adam’s faltering accents:—

“And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

Religious but Christless reader, bear with one who has a care for your soul, and cast not this paper down with an expression of contempt or irritation. Be assured that the covering with which you are trying to conceal your real state will not deceive God. No invention, however subtle and well executed, can do so. You may deceive your most intimate acquaintance, and the devil may so deceive you that you may succeed in deceiving yourself; but He whose eyes are as “flames of fire” will ere long search you, expose you, condemn you; and make you see, feel, and admit what you really are.

“Who told thee that thou wast naked?”

is God’s next enquiry of man. Who? It was conscience that told him. Yes, conscience, which man prides himself on; conscience, which is really

the only good thing in him ; conscience, which raises him morally above the level of the brute :—it was conscience which made Adam afraid to meet God.

Yet did God in His grace provide means whereby our first parents might be suitably clothed ; as it is written :—

“Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them.”

This was grace—now sweetly and perfectly unfolded in the gospel. Oh ! what a contrast there was, and still is, between man’s poor endeavour and God’s rich provision. Notice three points of difference between the “aprons of fig-leaves,” which formed man’s first invention ; and the “coats of skin,” which was God’s first invention after man fell.

1. *The aprons were obtained “without shedding of blood” ; but Adam and Eve could only be clothed with the coats, after the beasts, of whose skins the coats were made, had been slain.*

Probably the slain beasts had been offered in sacrifice, and thus our first parents and their immediate posterity got a dim idea of the righteous way of approach to God, and also of how man could be righteously accepted before God. But, be this as it may, it is plain that *death* had to take place ere man could be clothed.

Thanks be to God, Jesus has died, and by His blood He has opened a way of access to God, so that all who put their trust in Him can know Him as their righteousness before God (2 Cor. v. 21).

Observe yet another contrast :—

2. *The aprons were the invention of man’s wisdom, and the work of his hands ; but the idea of the coats originated in the mind of God, and He made them.*

The root argument of the gospel proves that the only righteousness which avails with God is of His

own providing! In other words, it can be nothing more, and it must be nothing less than *Christ!* Everything else in His sight is regarded as "filthy rags," however much ingenuity and labour we may have expended on it. Our true wisdom is displayed, not in trying to better our state, but in owning how helpless we are, and in receiving "the gift of righteousness" which God offers to all (Rom. v. 17).

Notice yet one more contrast:—

3. *The "aprons" covered our first parents to their own satisfaction, but only for a while; whereas the coats clothed them as long as they needed to be clothed, and to the complete satisfaction of God.*

How true is the application of this. There are few, if any, but what will admit that, whatever they are in their own eyes and in the eyes of others, they are not all they ought to be in the sight of God!—"If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" (Psa. cxxx.)

But, says one and another, "I am trying to do the best I can." Alas! man's best is a very uncertain quantity; and even if he attain to it, what a miserable pittance it is with which to meet the tremendous claims of God's law. If, however, the sinner will own his incompetency, and accept God's provision, God will forgive him, cleanse him, justify him, and so clothe him in Christ that not a vestige of his former state shall be seen.

Beloved fellow mortal, cease to adapt and adopt man's first invention; or else, when you hear the voice of God, you will most surely flee and hide from Him. Be warned in time that no "apron," however closely woven, will cover your sinful condition at "the great white throne." *There* every disguise shall be exposed, and every character revealed. Yea, the very "secrets of men's hearts"

shall then be laid bare, and shame and fear—the two sad marks of the fall—shall fill every guilty breast with despair.

Be wise, then, and have this matter settled at once, and in God's perfect way, by accepting Christ in His sufficiency and supremacy as God's marvellous and gracious provision for your deep need.

"Stand fast in Christ; ah! yet again:

He teacheth all the band,

If human efforts are in vain,

In Christ it is we stand!"

S. J. B. C.

☪ The Evangelist.

IF we had to offer to the world a Gospel of rites, the form of our preaching would be sacerdotal. If we had to offer a Gospel of thoughts, it would be professional and didactic. But we have a Gospel of fact, and therefore we preach. Not we perform, not we argue—we preach. The metaphor in the words is full of instruction. We are "heralds," "criers," "tellers of a message." We have not evolved the message from our own brains: we have received it from God.

Yet there should be a tone of pleading, urgency of invitation. It is not enough that we deliver our message plainly and faithfully. If we have any conception of our work, and are in communion with our Master, we shall feel that we poorly represent it unless we plead with men. The voice tremulous with earnestness, persistent in entreaty, is, at its softest and most winning cadence, but a poor echo

of His. But it will carry further than the thunders of a whole park of logical artillery, and move hearts as nothing else will. Let us not be afraid of letting ourselves down. Let us not be ashamed of the tear and the tremor. We have much more need to dread and be ashamed of an unloving handling of the message of love, a transposition of it into another key which mars its music.

There is a doctrinal preaching in which Christianity is presented rather as a system of metaphysics, theological abstractions, than as the proclamation of a great fact, and a living, loving Saviour. There is no danger in doctrine, but there is much danger in doctrines cut loose from Christ, doctrines hiding Him in their misty folds. It is possible to hide the Cross behind the cobwebs of doctrine, be it ever so orthodox. Let us take heed that we do not conceal Him by the interposition of what is meant to reveal Him, and that we set Him forth as what He is—"the beginner and finisher of our faith."

(Adapted.)



"Love not the World."

A YOUNG man in a boat broke an oar.

A sudden rain storm was coming up, but he was so desirous of securing a duck he had shot, he neglected to go ashore while he could. The squall drove him far from land, and with but one oar he soon found himself helplessly drifting out to sea.

After weary waiting, a sloop was at length seen making for him, and as soon as it was in hailing

distance of the boat the captain bade the man jump aboard the instant the sloop came alongside, as it was sailing under a strong wind. The order was obeyed. He jumped and caught the taffrail with both hands.

"Saved!" you say

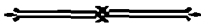
No; for no sooner had he seized hold than he was pulled back, fell into the water, and was seen no more, as the sloop dashed onward in its course.

He had tied the boat's painter about his loins, and so the weight of the boat dragged him down into a watery grave. In trying to save his game he was driven out to sea; and then in trying to save his boat he lost his life.

One sin—one darling sin clung to instead of Christ, may ruin your soul for ever. Oh, what folly to risk a never dying soul for a straw!



"Ye serve the Lord Christ."



SOMEONE has said: "I should have been proud to have held the spy-glass for Columbus; to have picked up his fallen brush for Michael Angelo; to have carried Milton's bag; to have blacked Shakespeare's boots; or to have blown the bellows for Handel."

But if to a discerning mind it is a proud distinction to render a trifling service to human greatness, who shall express the glory, the joy, the dignity of service, however lowly, which is rendered to the Son of God.

* Light on the subject: *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,

(Continued.)

By J. N. BARRETT.



Saved at any time.

“**Q**U**A**N a man be saved at any time?” inquired——.
 “No,” I replied, “a man can only be saved when he wants to be saved.” This evidently hit my friend, and I continued, “You could have been saved long ago if you had desired it. Perhaps you have at times had a languid wish, a passing aspiration after Christ, but a stronger selfishness has throttled the emotion at its very birth. Now, probably, your spiritual desires are weaker and less frequent. When the last desire has come and gone without stirring you to action, then your chances of salvation will have gone, too.”

A man can only be saved when he wants to be. If there is ever so faint a desire to escape from evil and to enjoy the salvation of God in Christ, let it be availed of. Do not wait for another or a stronger movement. Come to God at once. Are you hungering for the Bread of Life? Why wait till the pangs of hunger grow more keen? Alas, appetite may quite decline, and who knows whether it may ever return?

Fallow Ground.

AFTER the soil has been repeatedly cropped it is rendered poorer and less productive. To restore its power, the farmer opens it with the plough, and leaves it to the action of air, sun, and rain for a season or two. The ground lies fallow,

and has its period of rest. During this time the favourable action of air and changing weather restores its strength. The ground yields nothing, but it is receptive of wholesome and strengthening influences, which prepare it to yield good harvests again.

Even so there are seasons when the mind, the life, the soul, the man must lie fallow under the influences of the divine presence and grace. All spiritual service impoverishes the soul, and times of rest beneath the restoring beams of the Sun, and the dews and rains and gentle airs of the Spirit are absolutely needful. At the same time rest must not be too protracted. The fallow ground must be broken up, or else the sowing may be among thorns (Jer. iv. 8). The weeds may come back into the fallow as well as the restored vigour.

Sleeping Sickness.

THE strange malady known as the sleeping sickness is prevalent in parts of tropical Africa.

It seizes upon its victim who is unable to throw off the drowsiness which recurs in spells of increasing frequency and duration. At last the patient dies from exhaustion or starvation.

Surely a somnolence of a spiritual and even more deadly sort holds myriads in its power. Symptoms of unconsciousness, insensibility, and an utter absence of any recognition of awful and eternal facts that make their appeal to the soul, show how desperate the malady is.

Nor is there any remedy within human reach that can waken and stir the soul from its death-like sleep. Yet if the sinner be not awakened he will drowse away the day of salvation, and in Eternity will awake to sleep no more for ever.

Only the Holy Spirit can touch the torpid soul into painful sensibility. Oh, for grace to cry aloud, and constantly to depend upon His sovereign skill and power to effect this.

Testing and Proving.

AN examination is for testing progress; and promotion to a higher class or grade depends on passing in the lower. In God's school there are frequent examinations and testings. They are almost sure to come before an important service is entrusted to the believer's hand. All the saints, and even Christ Himself, were thus tried and proved. Of Joseph it says, "Until the time that his word came (to pass), the word of the Lord tried him." David's faith was proved in the encounter with the lion before he was allowed to confront Goliath. The Lord often tested His disciples (John vi. 6). He Himself was tried, and in the examination He stood every test, and by God's Word overcame every foe.

Those who break down every time are "reprobate," and are at last "rejected" (Jer. vi.) or "castaway" (1 Cor. ix.)

The testing time may come at any moment, and we may well pray, "Lead us not into temptation." (Compare Matt. iv. 1). Happy is the man who can speak with David, and with David's Lord, as in Psa. xvii. 3.

A Word on Character.

CHARACTER is that which marks and stamps a man. But the stamp is not first outward; it is inward, and shows through the transparent medium of a man's daily life. In fact, *spirit* is character, and the spirit of a man comes out in his words and ways, as in Luke ix. 55. A man of evil spirit shows evil character; one possessed by the

Spirit of God alone can show a Christ-like character.

In morality without Christ, a certain nobility of character may be built up by careful training and constant self-control. This is laborious and slow, and for God the life is as fruitless as the Sahara. But a man of no character, that is, a notorious sinner, may in a day obtain a new character, and one exceeding the results of fifty years' culture, if he receives the pardon of sins and the Holy Ghost. He is at once a new man, and, without any tedious process, without any painful effort, he may by a child's dependence display a character entirely new.

Only let the Spirit henceforth possess the man, and he is immediately and permanently transformed.

The Two Chains.

THE chain of humanity began with Adam. He was the first link, and upon him all the other links depended. With the breaking of the first link the whole chain fell, never to be restored.

But God is the God of resource. He replaces the old link which had broken by the golden link of Christ. In Him a new beginning was made. But can the old chain be joined to the new link? No! Thus, neither is the first link repaired, nor the old chain restored. With a new golden first link there is a new golden chain, the strength and stability of which depend upon the first link,—Christ—and He will never fail (Isa. xlii. 4).

Glorious chain of new humanity, and wondrous grace that gives us a place in it! As is the first link, so is the chain (1 Cor. xv. 48). The breaking of that link in Adam shows the character of every link in his chain. But as is the first and heavenly link in the new chain, so are all the other links—golden, beautiful, enduring.

Service.



CONNECT your service with nothing but God, not with any particular set of persons. You may be comforted by fellowship, and your heart refreshed; but you must work by your own individual faith and energy, without leaning on anyone whatever; for if you do, you cannot be a faithful servant. Service must ever be measured by faith, and one's own communion with God. Saul even may be a prophet, when he gets among the prophets, but David was always the same, in the cave or anywhere. Whilst the choicest blessings given me here are in fellowship, yet a man's service must flow from himself, else there will be weakness. . . . "Let everyone prove his own work," and then shall he have "rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." . . .

In every age the blessing has been from individual agency; and the moment it has ceased to be this, it has declined into the world; it is humbling, but it makes us feel that all comes immediately from God. The tendency of association is to make us lean upon one another. When there are great arrangements for carrying on work, there is not the recognition of this inherent blessing which "tarrieth not for the sons of men." I don't tarry for man, if I have faith in God. I act upon the strength of that faith.

Let a man act as the Lord leads him. The Spirit of God is not to be fettered by man. All power arises from the direct authoritative energy of the Holy Ghost in the individual. Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii.) were sent forth by the Holy Ghost, recommended to the grace of God by the Church at

Antioch; but they had no communication with it till they returned, and then there was the joyful concurring of love in the service that had been performed. He that had talents went and traded. Paul says, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Love for Jesus sets one to work. I know no other way.

J. N. D.

The Slave of Appetite.

(1 Cor. vi. 12.)

SMOKING is an idle custom, and too often enslaves its votaries; and even if it does not become a dominant habit, it certainly teaches no lesson of self-denial. A Christian man needs not to seek relief in any such way. It is said to be very soothing when a man is in any trouble or anxiety; if so, in this respect it may be said to be next door to the beer-barrel, or to the use of spirits. If one man may soothe his feelings with this narcotic, another may stimulate them, when he is low and cheerless, with alcohol. The Apostle James says, "Is any merry, let him sing psalms." He does not say, Is any afflicted or low, let him smoke and drink! No; "let him pray," and depend upon God. Many a lesson which might be learned from God on our knees, is let slip altogether because we think there is no harm in relieving ourselves by self-indulgence. "The flesh" is a monster which is never appeased, much less subdued, by gratification.

W. H.

LUKE XIX. 13.—Christian, you have a pound to account for: do not forget!

Wings.



“IT is frequently my practice to repair to a quiet place in the neighbouring bush for meditation and prayer.

“On one occasion, when sitting in this solitary place, moody and desponding because of my difficulties, my attention was attracted to a large winged insect attempting to carry a burden up a ledge of almost perpendicular rocks, formed by quarrying stone in the hill-side. Repeatedly it reached the height of a few feet, and as often fell helplessly down to the starting-place.

“Thus it continued climbing and falling, until I became intensely interested in these strange strugglings. For the unwelcome thought was suggested, that this frequent falling fitly symbolized my feeble, faltering, Christian course. Yes, thought I, that means me—*winged yet creeping*—made for *soaring*, yet foolishly *falling*!

“Still I watched the struggling burden-bearer, and saw that when it fell, it at once regained its feet, and, with unquenched zeal, turned about to try again the toilsome ascent. And then I thought, *that, too, means me*; for though I have failed so many times, yet I have not given up the struggle.

“At length, after nearly a score of vain attempts to reach the summit of the rock, there appeared some symptoms of discouragement, when I said, ‘Foolish insect! why not unfold thy wings and fly?’ But the words strangely rebounded and hit me.

“Wearied now and in despair, it seemed to feel the folly of clumsy climbing and painful falling when God had made it for better things, and suddenly

remembering *it had wings*, and not stopping for vain regrets over its foolish failures, it spread its wings, and, mounting in the air, in a moment it was above and beyond the precipice.

"Ah," thought I "that does mean me!" And how I moaned over the stumbling of my wearying, wingless efforts to surmount difficulties in my own strength. How mortifying that I had not learned the happy art of rising with God-given wings of faith, to fly above the rugged rocks of difficulty in my heavenward path! Oh, what faltering and failing! I felt I need not cry with David, 'O that I had wings!' for I had them, only I did not use them.

"But I learnt the lesson, and now, whenever life's path leads over arduous steeps no human strength can climb, my soul triumphant remembers *it hath wings*. My words are weak to tell the blissful change from *struggling to resting*, from *falling to flying*. When encountering the rugged steeps in the Christian path, and my weary soul, for a moment forgetting this gracious gift of wings, is on the point of sinking, I remember *that* is the exact time for the fulfilment of the promise, 'They shall mount up with wings as eagles!' And now on wings of faith upborne, the free air and sunlight of heaven are mine. O to be ever on the wing!"

(Communicated.)



JESUS.



"I thought of Jesus," said Rutherford, "till every stone in my prison walls shone like a ruby."

The Doldrums and the Icebergs.



THE Doldrums is the sailor's name for the region of perpetual stillness. My experience of these belts of calms is anything but pleasant. The oppression of the atmosphere, the electrical disturbances that affected both body and mind, I cannot forget. Then, there was the dreadful flapping of the idle sails. I once asked a helmsman if he ever fell asleep at the wheel. "Not with the wind blowing," he said. "Well, be honest, man, tell me," I said, "did you ever fall asleep at the wheel?" He replied, "Well, I must confess I did once; it was in a horrid calm like this, there was nothing to do."

Alas! for an Assembly and for a Christian who have reached the doldrums, when every current shifts the course, when no breeze inflates the canvas, when the crew grows sleepy and lethargic, and progress is almost imperceptible. These are the times when the prayer meetings are almost as dull as death. These are the times when people fall asleep: literally, sometimes; and spiritually always. God deliver us from the doldrums!

From one other place I do desire to be graciously saved. From *the ice-fields*! It has lately been reported that the North Pole has been discovered by an explorer. Did he think that he was first? I can tell him that a servant of Christ discovered it long ago. "Are you united in your Assembly?" said one to another. "Oh, yes!" he said, "united, yes." "Thank God for that!" "Ah, but," he said, "we are frozen together!"

It is quite easy to tell when you are voyaging near to an iceberg. The most ignorant passenger

goes down for his overcoat, and wonders what is the matter.

The prayer-meeting is the thermometer of the Assembly. Believe that, and test it, and act accordingly. A company of saints from which the fire has gone out has never made me say, "Lord, let me live amongst them!"

The scenes of icebergs and iceflows are the scenes of storms and, strangely enough, of volcanoes. I do not suppose there is an Assembly in the world more quarrelsome than the iceberg Assembly; for when people have got frozen through sheer inactivity, they must have something to do; so they raise their grievances, and quarrel at their list. How strange it is that some people are never at peace unless they are at war! As soon as one grievance is done, they would fain have another. What a fearful advantage the devil has of us if we get ice-bound!

"Satan triumphs when he sees
The strongest saint begin to freeze."

Anon.



The Pillow of Rest.



WHEN Jesus left this world He left His pillow behind Him—the *Father's bosom!* (Jno. i. 18). Often we find we have got our heads on hard pillows of our own making. The Lord says, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest":—I will teach you that you are loved as I am loved, and therefore My pillow is yours! "The love wherewith the Father loves *Me* is the love with which He loves *you*."

Loved as He is loved! that is rest!

W. J.

The Practice of the Presence of God.

By NICOLAS HEBMAN.

(Translated from the French.)

CONVERSATIONS.

(Continued.)

BEING questioned by one of his own society (to whom he was obliged to open himself) by what means he had obtained such an habitual sense of GOD? he told him that, since his first coming to the monastery, he had considered GOD as the end of all his thoughts and desires, as the mark to which they should tend, and in which they should terminate.

That in the beginning of his noviciate, he spent the hours appointed for private prayer in thinking of GOD, so as to convince his mind of, and to impress deeply upon his heart, the Divine existence, rather by devout sentiments, and submission to the lights of faith, than by studied reasonings and elaborate meditations. That by this short and sure method, he exercised himself in the knowledge and love of GOD, resolving to use his utmost endeavour to live in a continual sense of His Presence.

That when he had thus in prayer filled his mind with great sentiments of that infinite Being, he went to his work appointed in the kitchen (for he was cook to the society); there having first considered severally the things his office required, and when and how each thing was to be done, he spent all the intervals of his time, as well before as after his work, in prayer.

That when he began his business, he said to GOD, with a filial trust in Him, "O my GOD, since Thou art with me, and I must now, in obedience to Thy commands, apply my mind to these outward things, I beseech Thee to grant me the grace to continue in Thy Presence; and to this end do Thou prosper me with Thy assistance, receive all my works, and possess all my affections."

As he proceeded in his work he continued his familiar conversation with his Maker, imploring His grace, and offering to Him all his actions.

When he had finished, he examined himself how he had discharged his duty; if he found *well*, he returned thanks to God; if otherwise, he asked pardon; and without being discouraged, he set his mind right again, and continued his exercise of the *presence of God*, as if he had never deviated from it. "Thus," said he, "by rising after my falls, and by frequently renewed acts of faith and love, it seems as difficult for me not to think of God, as it was at first to accustom myself to it."

As *Brother Lawrence* had found such an advantage in walking in the presence of God, it was natural for him to recommend it earnestly to others; but his example was a stronger inducement than any arguments he could propose. His very countenance was edifying; such a sweet and calm devotion appearing in it, as could not but affect the beholders. And it was observed, that in the greatest hurry of business in the kitchen, he still preserved his recollection and heavenly-mindedness. He was never hasty nor loitering, but did each thing in its season, with an even, uninterrupted composure and tranquility of spirit. "The time of business," said he, "does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clutter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees."

LETTERS.

SINCE you desire so earnestly that I should communicate to you the method by which I arrived at that *habitual sense of God's Presence*, which our LORD, of His mercy, has been pleased to vouchsafe to me; I must tell you that it is with great difficulty that I am prevailed on by your importunities; and now I do it only upon terms, that you show my letter to nobody. If I knew that you would let it be seen, all the desire that I

have for your advancement would not be able to determine me to it. The account I can give you is:—

Having found in many books different methods of going to God, and divers practices of the spiritual life, I thought this would serve rather to puzzle me than facilitate what I sought after, which was nothing but how to become wholly God's. This made me resolve to give the all for the all. I renounced, for the love of Him, everything that was not He; and I began to live as if there was none but He and I in the world. Sometimes I considered myself before Him as a poor criminal at the feet of his judge; at other times I beheld Him in my heart as my FATHER, as my GOD: I worshipped Him the oftenest that I could, keeping my mind in His holy Presence, and recalling it as often as I found it wandered from Him. I found no small pain in this exercise, and yet I continued it, notwithstanding all the difficulties that occurred, without troubling or disquieting myself when my mind had wandered involuntarily. I made this my business, as much all the day long as at the appointed times of prayer; for at all times, every hour, every minute, even in the height of my business, I drove away from my mind everything that was capable of interrupting my thought of God.

Such has been my common practice; and though I have done it very imperfectly, yet I have found great advantages by it. These, I well know, are to be imputed to the mere mercy and goodness of God, because we can do nothing without Him; and I still less than any. It begets in us a holy freedom, and if I may so speak, a familiarity with God, wherewith we ask, and that successfully, the graces we stand in need of. In fine, by often repeating these acts, they become *habitual*, and the presence of God is rendered, as it were, *natural* to us.



IN a conversation some days since with a person of piety, he told me the spiritual life was a life of grace, which begins with servile fear, which is in-

creased by hope of eternal life, and which is consummated by pure love. That each of these states had its different stages, by which one arrives at last at that blessed consummation.

I have not followed all these methods. On the contrary, from I know not what instincts, I found they discouraged me.

I walk before GOD simply, in faith, with humility and with love; and I apply myself diligently to do nothing and think nothing which may displease Him. I hope that when I have done what I can, He will do with me what He pleases.

I have no will but that of GOD, which I endeavour to accomplish in all things, and to which I am so resigned that I would not take up a straw from the ground against His order, or from any other motive but purely that of love to Him.

I have quitted all forms of devotion and set prayers but those to which my state obliges me. And I make it my business only to persevere in His holy presence, wherein I keep myself by simple attention, and a general fond regard to GOD, which I may call an *actual presence of GOD*; or, to speak better, an habitual, silent, and secret conversation of the soul with GOD, which often causes in me joys and raptures inwardly, and sometimes also outwardly, so great, that I am forced to use means to moderate them, and prevent their appearance to others.

I sometimes consider myself as the most wretched of men, full of sores and corruption, and who has committed all sorts of crimes against his King; touched with a sensible regret, I confess to Him all my wickedness, I ask His forgiveness, I abandon myself in His hands, that He may do what He pleases with me. This King, full of mercy and goodness, very far from chastising me, embraces me with love, makes me eat at His table, serves me with His own hands, gives me the key of His treasures; He converses and delights Himself with me incessantly, in a thousand and one ways, and treats me in all respects as His favourite. It is thus I consider

myself from time to time in the Lord's holy presence.

My most useful method is this simple attention, and such a general passionate regard to God, to Whom I find myself often attached with greater sweetness and delight than that of an infant at the mother's breast: so that if I dare use the expression, I should choose to call this state *the bosom of God, for the inexpressible sweetness which I taste and experience there.*

As for my set hours of prayer, they are only a continuation of the same exercise. Sometimes I consider myself there, as a stone before a carver, whereof he is to make a statue: presenting myself thus before God, I desire Him to make His perfect image in my soul, and render me entirely like Himself.

At other times, when I apply myself to prayer, I feel all my spirit and all my soul lift itself up without any care or effort of mine; and it continues, as it were, suspended and firmly fixed in God, as in its centre and place of rest.

I know that some charge this state with inactivity, delusion, and self-love: I confess that it is a holy inactivity, and would be a happy self-love if the soul in that state were capable of it; because, in effect, while she is in this repose, she cannot be disturbed by such acts as she was formerly accustomed to, and which were then her support, but would now rather hinder than assist her.

Yet I cannot bear that this should be called delusion; because the soul which thus enjoys God desires herein nothing but Him.



ADMIRE the fortitude and bravery of Mr. ———. God has given him a good disposition, and a good will; but there is in him still a little of the world, and a great deal of youth. I hope the affliction which God has sent him will prove a wholesome remedy to him, and make him enter into himself. A little lifting up the heart suffices; a little remembrance of God, one act of inward worship, though upon a march.

Let him then think of God the most he can; let him accustom himself, by degrees, to this small but holy exercise; *nobody perceives it, and nothing is easier than to repeat often in the day these little internal adorations.*

Concluded (D.V.) next month.



“Forty Days.”

1. Period between Christ's birth and His presentation in the Temple.
2. Period between His baptism and His three and a half years' ministry.
3. Period between His resurrection and His ascension.



Four “Alls.”

(MATT. XXVIII. 18-20.)

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| “ALL POWER.” | “ALL NATIONS.” |
| “ALL THINGS.” | “ALL WAYS.” |



“DRAW.”

(JNO. XII. 32.)

1. “DRAW UP” (Isa. xii. 3)—Salvation.
2. “DRAW NEAR” (Heb. x. 22)—Approach.
3. “DRAW ME” (Cant, i. 4)—Devotion.
4. “DRAW OUT” (Jno. ii. 8)—Service.
5. “DRAW AWAY” (Acts xx. 30)—Seduction.
6. “DRAW BACK” (Heb. x. 38, 39)—Apostasy.
7. “DRAW YOU” (Jam. ii. 6)—Persecution.

The Little Irish Boy;

Or, "His Right Hand."



IN Ireland, some time ago, a Gospel preacher noticed a little boy who came alone, and who sat very quietly listening as the preacher spoke from the words: "His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory" (Psa. xcviii.). The boy's hair was rough, his clothes were ragged, and his feet were bare, and the preacher was sorry for him.

One day a poor man asked the preacher to come over and see his boy who was dying. He went at once.

He entered the cabin, and saw in the corner, lying on straw, the boy he had seen at the preaching. How ill he looked!

The boy longed to speak to him, and when he caught sight of him he stretched out his poor thin arms, and throwing them up in the air, he whispered, "*His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory,*" and then he fell back and died.

The preacher knew that the boy had believed on Christ, and had been saved through His power. He believed that Jesus had fought the fight and gained the victory—yes, the victory over sin, and death, and Satan. Thus Jesus saved him.

The little boy trudged through wind and rain, bare-headed and bare-footed, to hear the Good News, and he died shouting the power of Jesus to save.

His "right hand" is often spoken of in the Bible. I will tell you three places in which it is mentioned.

1st.—"His Right Hand . . hath gotten Him the victory" (Psa. xcvi.). 2nd.—"His Right Hand doth embrace me" (S. S. ii.). 3rd.—"At Thy Right Hand are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. xvi.).

The *Past*, the *Present*, and the *Future* are shown here.

1st.—Christ *has* gained the victory.

2nd.—He shows His love for us *now*.

3rd.—There are pleasures for us in heaven "for evermore."

Love's Lesson.

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* * * *
 TILL in loving, still in loving
 More than being loved is joy;
 Here there lurks no disappointment,
 Here is peace without alloy.

Be it health, or be it leisure,
 Be it skill we have to give,
 Still in spending life for others
 Christians only really live.

What in love we yield to others,
 By a charm we still retain,
 For the loved one's acquisition
 Is the lover's double gain.

E. W.

“A Ransom for All.”

MANY years ago a fierce war raged in India between the English and Tippoo Sahib. On one occasion several English officers were taken prisoners; among them was one named Baird. One day a native officer brought in fetters to be put upon each of the prisoners, the wounded not excepted. Baird had been severely wounded, and was suffering from pain and weakness. A grey-haired officer said to the native official, “You do not think of putting chains upon that wounded man?” “There are just as many pairs of fetters as there are captives,” was the answer, “and every pair must be worn.” “Then,” said the noble officer, “*put two pairs on me; I will wear his as well as my own.*” This was done. Strange to say, Baird lived to regain his freedom—lived to take that city; but his noble friend died in prison. Up to his death he wore two pairs of fetters!

But what if he had worn the fetters of all in the prison? What if, instead of being a captive himself, he had quitted a glorious palace to live in their loathsome dungeon, to wear their chains, to bear their stripes, to suffer and die for them, that they might go free, and free for ever?

Reader, such a thing has been done. “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for *all*.” “Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.” “He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.”

Have you trusted Him, confessed Him, thanked Him?

The Message.



“Greatly Concerned for your
Salvation.”

YEARS ago there lived an infidel—a blacksmith by trade—who was notorious for his bitter antagonism to the gospel, and the hostile attitude he assumed towards the Lord’s servants. Most of those who had formerly been greatly concerned for his salvation were apparently concerned no longer, for he seemed to be irreclaimable!

Among the exceptions, however, was a devoted man who had known him for years, and who, refusing to give him up, continued to be concerned about him. So real was his concern, that one morning, rising very early, he knelt for hours in prayer, and then resolved to see the subject of his prayers.

With many a misgiving as to the kind of a reception he would get, away he went, and by and by found himself face to face with the abandoned blasphemer, who was standing at his forge, and about to begin his day’s work.

Then the greatness of the theme he desired to speak on; the awful issues of life or death, heaven or hell, that hung on its acceptance or rejection; and a sense of his own utter weakness to convince the one before him; so overwhelmed him that he was unable to speak a word!

Speechless for a time, he was at length able to utter in husky tones the broken words, “*I-am-greatly-concerned-for-your-salvation.*” Then, in a whisper which plainly told out the tender pity and compass-

ion he felt, he repeated, "Greatly concerned for your salvation."

Feeling he could say no more, and now wholly mastered by the emotions that stirred his soul, he burst into tears, and, turning round, left the astonished blacksmith to his thoughts.

"*Greatly concerned for your salvation,*" muttered the man, as he went on with his work. "What does he mean?"

"*Greatly concerned*——. Now, is he that, indeed? If so, it is a new evidence for the truth of Christianity! *Greatly concerned for your salvation—'greatly.'*" He wondered what was the matter with himself "Why," said he, "I'm beginning to feel as if I were concerned, too."

He tried to forget the words, but in vain. They had got hold of his conscience.

At last, after hours of struggles with his conscience, exasperated with himself, he threw down his hammer and went home. His wife, a Christian woman, who had often been greatly concerned for his salvation, wondered what was the matter. By degrees the secret leaked out, and he told her all. Thoroughly miserable now, for the mighty convicting hand of God was upon him (Psa. xxxii. 3, 4), he slowly, and with a feeling of shame, yielded to her advice, and sought the man who that morning had sought him.

Wondering if it were all a dream, he presently found him.

"Sir," said he, "I have come to tell you that I am *greatly concerned for my salvation.*"

Together they turned to the Book of God, so long hated and despised by one of them; and together they bowed before Him Who only can speak peace to a poor troubled sinner's conscience, and Who then and there *did it*.

Reader, unsaved, have you a father, a mother, a relative, a friend, who is greatly concerned for your salvation? Probably you have. But we would like to tell you something else. We, who do not know you, who have not seen you, are also *greatly* concerned for your salvation. Further, and surpassingly more wonderful,

GOD THE FATHER

has given His Son to save you, thus proving that He, likewise, is greatly concerned for your salvation.

GOD THE SON,

the blessed Lord Jesus, is also greatly concerned for your salvation. In matchless love He went down under seas of woe to procure it for you and to bring it nigh to you.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

—not an influence, as some think, but a Divine Person—is striving with you, which is a token that He, too, is greatly concerned for your salvation.

Will you then, can you then, dare you then, remain unconcerned? None in heaven are unconcerned; neither are any in hell—solemn thought—unconcerned! The very atmosphere you breathe seems to vibrate with the words—Be concerned! Your sins, the sins of a lifetime, bid you—Be concerned! The stifled voice of conscience mutters—Be concerned! The winding sheet, the chill coffin, the yawning grave, cry—Be concerned! The falling grains of Time's well-nigh exhausted sand-glass, whisper—Be concerned! A thousand prayers and appeals cast a ruddy glare along your course to ruin, as like danger signals they flash out—Be concerned! And from God's awful judgment bar and Tophet's fiery abyss, the warning hoarsely echoes back again—*Be concerned!* BE CONCERNED!! BE CONCERNED!!!

"*Guilty!*" murmured "The Moat Farm mur-

derer" to his chaplain, at the last moment, as he stood on the fatal "drop;" and even as he spoke the bolt was drawn, and he was launched into the presence of God with the self-condemning word upon his lips.

"*Guilty!*"—a hundred-fold guilty—your tongue, too, shall own yourself to be, if you die in your sins, guilty of despising God's love, guilty of treading underfoot Christ's blood, guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit's grace.

Oh, may God in infinite pity arouse you from your death-like sleep of stolid indifference, and open your eyes to see the eternal peril in which your precious soul is placed. Then will you indeed be *greatly concerned for your salvation.*

S. J. B. C.



Acceptance before God.*

What does it depend on?



THERE are many souls passing through the deep exercises which all must learn before solid peace with God is known. For such I write. They find the heart filled with evil thoughts—the conscience laden with sin—there is no power to pray: everything a burden. Many are passing through these deep waters. Is it not strange to say to such that it is well that even this is so? It is an indication that life is working in the soul—it is not dead.

God has permitted you to get into these deep waters, to learn, not only that you have sinned, which is easy enough, but to learn and to say of your-

self, "that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing." It is one thing to know that I have done *bad* things; but quite another to learn in God's presence, that in me dwells *no* good thing; and what is more, there never will! It is when I come to such a strait as this that I find that the *total* condemnation of a sinner, and the sovereign grace of God go together, and I am free! I learn that my acceptance depends not on what *I am to God*, but on what *God is to me*, when I am nothing but badness, and never can be better. I find then that God is perfect love to me, though He knows *far more* of my wretched heart's corruption than I do myself, deeply as I know and loath the workings of my evil heart. I then find that the mind of the flesh is not merely carnal, but "enmity against God"—that "it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*"

God's grace is greater than my sins—greater than the evil nature that did the sins—and so He has accepted Christ for all I have done and am. Who could look at Christ dying on the cross and say, "He is not enough for my sins?" God has accepted the offering Christ made for sin! Who would dare to say that God has not accepted what Christ has done?

Friend, if you mix up what you find in yourself with what Christ has done, you will never get peace. You may feel the wretched vileness of your heart very deeply. So much the better. The more deeply you feel your wretchedness the better. But Christ died *not* for your virtues, supposing you had any, but for your *sins*—for all you are and have done, and God has accepted Him for you, and you can say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free."

My acceptance never depends on what I am to God in anywise. He has proved I was nothing but bad-

ness, and that I could not be mended. He has shown Himself as nothing but goodness when He knew He could not mend me.

It was just this with the prodigal when he awaked in the far country. He discovered He was perishing; and his misery was sorrowfully increased when He thought of his good, kind father, whose abundance flowed out to the servants in his house, and to which abundance he had *no right*. He made his trembling journey of misery and uncertainty, making up by the way what he would tell his father, and how he would try and get in as a servant. He might reason how it would be with him at his journey's end, before he met his father; but when he met him all uncertainty and reasoning was over. His acceptance into the house depended upon what *his father* was; not what *he* was—he was all rags and filth—a wretched spendthrift, who had squandered away his patrimony with harlots and profligacy of every kind. His father ran out and fell on his neck when his rags were *on him*—not *off him*.

This is the way you learn what God is to you. What you want to learn is, that, bad as you are, you will *never* be better. But if once you get your eye upon Jesus Who “when He had by Himself purged our sins,” went up to the right hand of the Majesty on high, you will find that your peace with God depends upon what Christ has done, and what God is to you, in spite of your sins. You will never then refer to your own heart to get the evidence of your acceptance.

Conscience will not be quieted by service, and thoughts, and reasonings. These things will not bring peace to your soul. You get peace by giving up all hope in yourself, and being cast over upon what God has done for you, and is for you in Christ,

notwithstanding all your vileness. There is no use trying to combat with what you find in your own heart. It would not bring you peace, even supposing you *did* subdue these workings. The *nature* they came from is there; and you cannot change your nature. God has condemned it in His Son upon the cross, when He bore the judgment for you. He has ended the whole thing there and then in His own sight; and He seeks to lead you into the same thoughts as His own about it. Faith is simply the taking of God's thoughts for your own. His are right—yours are wrong. *You* will deceive yourself—*He* never will. Faith accepts His thoughts. He desires that your conscience should be purged, so that knowing all the evil of your heart, as He knows it, you may stand in the light of His presence, and boldly, too, purged and cleansed by Christ. You hate your sin; so does He, and that is why He gave His Son in love, to purge away the thing He hated. "Thank God," you say, "He has purged it away. Instead of condemning me, as I know I deserved, He has cleansed me so perfectly that I can stand in His presence happily, as fit to be there."

You, as an individual, as identified with the life, or new nature, are thus set free to delight yourself in God. The will and affections of the old man will never turn to God. The new man ever will. As long as you are not free, it is all "I—I—I," because you are referring the question of acceptance and peace with God to your own state. When you are free you will never more mix up the question of acceptance and peace with God with what you are, but while you hate your evil nature you will know that your acceptance depends, not on what *you are*, but on what *Christ is*.

The late F. G. Patterson (abridged).



Phelim McCarthy;*

Or, THE PILGRIM OF THE HOLY WELLS.



NEAR Dunee Rock, in the west of "Auld Ireland," is one of those *Holy Wells* which are so numerous, and which, generally, are so beautiful. This one is especially so; it lies in a recess overhung by massive rocks, fern-grown and lichen-covered. The water in its basin is clear as crystal: every pebble at the bottom, white or grey or golden yellow, is visible.

It was kneeling at the margin of this well with head bowed down nearly level with its waters that I first met the subject of the following narrative. Phelim McCarthy had had for years upon his conscience the load and burning agony of a dreadful crime. Against the wishes of his friends and the solemn advice of his priest he had become, when a young man, a member of a secret society. At that time such societies were common in Ireland.

In the part of the country where Phelim McCarthy lived, a great outrage was committed. The agent of an estate, who had harshly if not cruelly treated the tenantry of the landlord for whom he acted, was waylaid and murdered. No one witnessed the crime, it was cunningly as well as cowardly done; the bare and dreadful facts of the case—the empty gig, the blood-stained road, the bruised and mangled corpse—were alone the evidence of the deed of violence. A large reward was for months vainly offered for the discovery of the perpetrators; but at last certain particulars skilfully woven together by a practised detective pointed to a man named Dolan as the doer, or at least a participator in the crime. As is always the case, this man, to save himself from an ignominious

* In booklet form from *The Message Office* (see cover).

death, and his family from shame, turned queen's evidence, and through his testimony, while he escaped, two of his companions in the murder were found guilty, condemned, and executed.

The Government, who from a terrible necessity had used Dolan's services, knew that while he remained in the country his life was not worth a day's purchase; they offered him therefore a free passage for himself, his wife, and two little children to America, but he refused.

It was resolved by the secret society to which he had formerly belonged that he and his should die, and the only question was how and when, and who should be the instruments of their destruction.

: Phelim McCarthy, the subject of our story, while working one day with a spade on his little plot of ground was accosted by a stranger, who by giving the concerted sign proved himself to be a fellow member of the secret brotherhood to which Phelim himself belonged. When any deed of violence specially dangerous was to be accomplished, in order to make detection difficult, the usual practice was to get some fierce and ruthless confederate from another county to be the doer, and hence the visit of a stranger to Phelim on this day.

"You know where this Dolan lives?" said the stranger. Phelim assented. "Then you must be the guide of myself and coadjutor there this night."

"If it be a business," added Phelim, "against his life, or that of his family, perjured informer though he be, I for one will have no hand or part in it."

Knitting his brow, the stranger replied, "I would not give a sixpence for your own life if you refuse the easy task our captain has put upon you and show the 'white feather.' "

Finding, however, that Phelim, from a naturally kind disposition, was resolved, even at the risk of his life, to have no share in a deed of blood, that he had a heart that shrank with horror from making a loving wife and children widowed and fatherless, the stranger changed his tactics, and assured him that no murder was meditated,

but that he and his companion had only been commissioned to give Dolan a sound cudgelling.

McCarthy, desirous of some punishment on Dolan for his treachery, in an evil moment yielded, and consented to be their guide. When darkness fell, he and the men to whom he had been guide were close to Dolan's house, and, in a dry ditch near, lay concealed until the lights extinguished proclaimed that the doomed man and his family were in bed. Leaving McCarthy in his concealment, the two strangers advanced to the silent dwelling, and knocking aloud at the door, demanded admission. Dolan, aware that his hour of doom was come, stoutly refused, and threatened (although with a strange fatality he was unarmed) to shoot the first man that would attempt to force an entrance.

Vain bravado! In a moment the weak panels of the door were shivered to fragments, and a rush was made into the dark dwelling. McCarthy heard from his hiding place a short scuffle and struggle in the house; then dimly perceived in the darkness that the miserable Dolan was dragged along the ground from the shelter of his roof, and then to his horror saw him stabbed in the little enclosure that fronted the cottage.

While this dreadful crime was being enacted, Dolan's wife, left in the house, roused her first-born child, a little girl eight years of age, from bed, and thrusting her into a recess of the chimney, from which the whole room could be visible, hurriedly said—

“Nellie, those men who have dragged your father from the house are putting him to death; when they have killed him they will come to murder me; but, Nellie, my child and darling one, you must be our avenger. Keep close in that spot where I have placed you, and no matter what happens make no noise—your own life depends upon obeying me. When those villians come in to seize me I will throw this handful of flax scutchings* upon the embers on the hearth. In the blaze that will follow, take full notice from your hiding-place of the faces of

* Sometimes used for fuel in Ireland.

those men ; make sure to be able to know them, and be ready to swear against them. Take care of your little brother Terry.

In effect, though in far fewer words, this is what the mother said to the child.

Scarcely were the directions, so fearful to fulfil, given to the child, when, as the mother predicted, the savages, red from the husband's blood, came into the house to steep their hands in the blood of the widow ; but, as pre-arranged, when assailed, death-stricken, and struggling in her last agony, out gleamed from the hearth a stream of light that filled the house with a ruddy glow and threw every place into brightness, all but the corner from whose deep shade the child Nellie, pale and trembling and horror-stricken, looked out and keenly scanned the features of her parents' murderers. How the little girl refrained from a scream or fainting it is almost impossible to imagine ; she herself in after years could not explain her fortitude ; silent however as the grave, with rigid face and tightened breath, she eagerly studied the countenances of the men who, close to her very feet, were slaying her mother. The blood-stained ruffians had no idea of her presence, and never dreamed of the eyes that were witnessing their dreadful deed. Strangers to the neighbourhood, they were not aware of a child being on the premises ; so having killed the two whose names were proscribed, they made no search for further victims, and left the dwelling.

It would be interesting and instructive to relate how the hour of retribution, swift and sure, came upon the men, whose features were indelibly fixed upon Nellie's memory. The law of the land soon had them in its relentless grasp. Having shown no mercy they experienced none.

Long will the day of the trial be remembered in the county town where it was held. The court was thronged almost to suffocation. When little Nellie, pale and trembling, intelligent and of handsome features, appeared in the witness-box, a murmur of pity arose from every

lip; the public prosecutor and ermined judge were deeply affected; the prisoners at the bar at first started in alarm, and then hung down their heads in shame and remorseful agony.

The trial from its commencement was one of unusual excitement, all the facts of the case were of such an extraordinary character; but feeling rose to a pitch of intensity when with bloodless face and nervous hand, and with a shrinking gaze of loathing and horror, yet with unwavering decision, Nellie Dolan pointed out the slayers of her parents, and then told the story which explained the means of her identifying them without a shade of doubt or uncertainty.

As some compensation for the wrong they had done McCarthy, when they themselves were arrested, they kept in secret the fact of his presence and participation in their crime, and as from his concealment in the dry ditch no Nellie's eyes had scanned his features, he escaped detection and the vengeance of the law. But though he escaped with life, from the hour of Dolan's death he had no peace of conscience—a load heavier than he could bear pressed upon his mind—the spectres of the murdered Dolan and his wife ever haunted his vision—a night of blackness seemed to stand between his soul and God.

The penances which he endured, either imposed by his priest or voluntarily prescribed by himself, were severe and of long continuance; no self-mortification or church discipline was shrunk from; vigils and fastings and prayers were made night and day, until his strength was almost worn out and his frame emaciated. But every effort was vain, peace would not return.

The thought then occurred to him that in search of peace he ought to visit every noted holy well and ancient shrine in Ireland; that, beginning in the south, and working his painful way to the north of the island, and performing at every sacred place the severest penance, he should wash in the holy waters and search for the face of God in those sacred spots, which the whole country said were favoured with His special presence.

Never did I see a more remarkable countenance—misery, disquiet, and despair were stamped on every feature; the cheek was pale, the eye sunken, the whole frame of the man in fact was wasted and worn.

For some minutes we stood near him silent and still, and then, knowing that my friend, whose voice was musical and full, would accompany me, I began to sing a well-known hymn.

As we proceeded I could perceive that we had caught McCarthy's attention, and that he was drinking in both the melody of our song and the words we were repeating.

This encouraged me, when we had got to the last verse, to repeat from memory some of the words from God's own Book on which the sacred poem was founded. Slowly and distinctly I said aloud:

“‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool’” (Isaiah i. 18). ‘The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John i. 7). ‘In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace’ (Eph. i. 6, 7).”

Little did I think what a deep impression our sacred song and the words which I repeated had, however, made upon the wretched man. Two days afterwards I met him near the same place, and to my surprise he accosted me.

“May I have a word with you, sir?” he said. “For a long time I have been silent to most men, but I wish to ask you a question. Last Tuesday you stood on the margin of yonder holy well, and said something about the blood that washed whiter than snow; will you kindly tell me, sir, where it is to be found?”

Hearing his question with a satisfaction that may be conceived, I answered, “It is certain, Phelim McCarthy, that the precious blood I spoke of can do you good. Many a soul as burdened as yours, aye, even bearing a heavier load, has there found ease and liberty—no stains are too deep for its purifying power. Its virtues have been tested by the greatest of sinners: the blasphemers

and the persecutor, even the harlot and the murderer, have washed there, and have gone on their way rejoicing, all their stains of sin removed, and their hearts renewed and full with joy."

It was almost painful to see the intensity of the man's look at my closing words. Fear of the knowledge of his dreadful secret was mingled with a gleam of hope and joy that seemed to shoot across the darkness and despair of his spirit. Again he repeated, "Oh, sir, only tell me where it is, and I will go to it."

"McCarthy," I said, "no ocean you could cross, or desert sands you could pass, would bring you to it; no feet of man can travel the road, no toil of body or of limb can conquer the way; 'flesh and blood' are of no avail to reach it."

With a pained and startled look he gazed into my face for a time, and then looked down with a disappointed and puzzled countenance. He was troubled and perplexed, as I intended he should be, to gain his deeper attention.

"But, McCarthy, you will be surprised to hear," I continued, "that that which cleanses from all sin is close to you, is nearer to you than any of the wells in this land which you have visited—aye, is nearer to you than yonder holy well, which near Dunee Rock this moment flashes in the sunlight. It is so near that at this instant, if you will, your hand may touch it—that is the hand of your faith, for it is by the act of your soul that you can appropriate it—it is the precious blood of Christ."

"I do not wonder, Phelim, that all the weary pilgrimages and sore penances you have performed have brought no peace or rest to your spirit. How can our self-torture please a loving God? or how could washings of the body, or wounds and bruises of the limbs, be expected to purify or relieve a burdened soul and a sin-stained conscience? Surely the body is one thing, and the inner being is another; the body is but the robe or house of the soul; and he would be a strange man who should think of removing the defilement of a dirty face by frequently washing his Sunday coat or the walls of his dwelling."

My last remark called forth a slight smile upon his sad, pale face, but I saw he felt the force of my remark, and could not meet it.

The poor sin-burthened McCarthy was fairly melted and subdued by my words, spoken from a full heart. Tears, long pent up, burst from his eyes and rolled down his wan and sunken cheeks; he trembled with emotion, and vainly sought to struggle down the sobs that choked his utterance; seizing my hand he wrung it, and after one or two ineffectual efforts to speak, at last said—

“God Almighty bless you, sir; you have brought the light of a new day to my poor soul. In my ignorance I have been seeking to accomplish an impossibility; but I seem to see now, although dimly, that no work of mine can purchase pardon or bring peace—that bodily service cannot cleanse the soul—that Jesus Christ alone can meet my case, and that to Him direct must I go to get loose from my trouble and long-borne guilt.”

I prayed for him, gave him a Bible I had, and thus we parted.

It was not until a short time ago that I learned the sequel of McCarthy's history. We met inadvertently, and he told me the story:—

“When you left me, sir, on the Dunee Rock Road,” he said, “with the little Bible in my hand, my anxiety burned to read it, and especially those portions which you had marked by a turned-down leaf. Remembering your injunction to read the Book when alone, I withdrew to the most lonely spot I could think of, amid the broken ground, not far from the rock. Beginning at the chapter you named I could not make much out of the first two or three verses; they indeed seemed full of a grand meaning, but though I strained my mind to catch it, it ever escaped me and baffled my understanding; but when I came to the words, ‘God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all,’ I was filled with fear and trembling. I thought with myself, ‘How can one so dark as I am—dark in mind and heart and life—ever venture to come into His presence?’ the gentleman said the clouds retreat before the sun and

fly from his beams, and *perish* by them, and thus it must be with me if God come near me.'

"After a while, however, I went on reading, until I came to the seventh verse, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' The words seemed as an echo to my mind: I thought I had heard them before; and then I remembered that you had quoted them aloud at the well-side when first I met you. Every word came home to me with a strange power; every phrase seemed to meet my case. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son.' 'That blood,' I thought, 'and that alone can cover from sight the stain of blood: and it cleanseth.' That was what I wanted, for long had I been a defilement and a loathing to my very self. 'And "from all sin," blessed be God,' I exclaimed; 'that includes forgiveness even for the crime which, as an accomplice, I have committed.' But then the question started up as an enemy before me: How is the cleansing power of this blood, so precious, to be experienced? what must I or can I do? Scarcely had the question, with its difficulty, come full upon me, when the words of the ninth verse caught my eye, 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' But how confess, dear sir?" he added; "there was no priest within two miles of me; but while I debated with myself, the inquiry flashed across my mind, as in a moment, 'Cannot I speak to God Himself direct at once? He is everywhere, and must be here this very instant; He sees me and can hear me. I will try what a confession to Himself here in this secret place will do. All my dreadful sin I will declare to Him, hide no blot, and excuse nothing, and I will ask Him for the sake of His Son to forgive me, and by His grace to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.'

"I fell, sir, upon my knees and, burying my face in my hands, I prayed. As I prayed and wrestled in supplication the darkness broke away from around me. I got views of God, of His pardoning grace and loving heart, that filled me with self-wonder. In the gladness

of this new vision my burden seemed to loosen, and to roll away from my shoulders; I breathed a new life, a day better than I had ever known poured its light upon me. I felt myself another man, and my heart was so full of a strange joy that I could have sung aloud from the happiness within me. In a word, sir, I went to my knees laden and crushed as though the Dunee Rock were pressed down hard as with a giant's hand upon me, and I rose from my knees as though it had melted away into air, and as if the wings of an eagle had been given me.

"Having found peace with God, sir, I determined with myself that I would do all in my power to repair the wrong I had done by the part I had taken in the murder of the Dolans, not as a satisfaction for my sin, but as an expression of my gratitude to God, and as my bounden duty to my fellow-man. I resolved that I would make out where their two children were, and would take them into my home, and care for them as my own.

"Sad was the lot of poor little Nellie and Terry Dolan after the execution of their parents' murderers. As the son and daughter of a man deemed a base and perjured informer, the public opinion of their townland branded them with infamy; no one would befriend them, even their very kindred shunned and disowned them; no door in the parish would open for their reception, and, outcasts from the place of their birth, they were forced to go to a far-off neighbourhood for shelter. An old woman there, a distant connexion, after many refusals, at last reluctantly consented to receive them into her cabin; when they arrived she greeted them harshly, and with evident disgust, and made their after life a vexation and bitterness. Poorly fed and badly clothed, half-famished and naked, insulted and despised, 'waters of a full cup were wrung out of them,' young as they were, and, like Job of old, they might have cursed the day they were born.

Making my way after a long day's walk to the hovel where they lodged, I entered it and told the old woman my errand. Though glad at the thought of being relieved

of her charge, the savage old creature scowled upon me, and with a malignant spite told Nellie Dolan, now grown a good slip of a girl, who I was, and what I had done in the affair of her parents, and then with a grim smile wished her joy of a shelter beneath the roof of her mother's murderer. The effect of her words upon the child I cannot describe. She became white as a sheet, and trembled violently; drew back from where I stood with loathing and terror, and stared wildly on me. It took long, sir, to explain my case and to calm her agitation; only by slow degrees could I get her to listen to me; my words, however, did not do much, it was my tears at her parents' fate that gained her confidence. Cautiously, however, and timidly did she trust herself to go with me, to become, with her brother Terry, a dweller with me and my children in my home.

"From that day, sir, I have done my best, asking God's help to do my duty by them. I have laboured, as for mine own, to give them bread; I have treated them in all respects as I have my own family. I have cared not only for their bodies but also for their souls, for although not guilty of my dark crime, they, as members of our poor fallen race, are sinners. I have tried to lead them to the precious blood, where my own sin-sick soul found peace and pardon."

H. M.



Finding a Fortune.



A FEW years since a young man went from Ireland to America to seek his fortune. Not long after he arrived there he became converted and found Jesus. He then wrote to his friends in his native land, saying, "I have found my fortune."

“The joyful sound.”

“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.”—PSA. LXXXIX. 14-18.

O LORD, our God, Thy Throne we see
By Justice and by Judgment stayed,
Who firm uphold every decree

And law and statute Thou hast made;
Stern pillars frowning in the light,
Maintaining equity and right;
Men shrink back, stricken by the sight.

For Conscience *there* its guilt must own,
And cower in its native gloom;
One glance at that majestic Throne
Convicts of sin's eternal doom.

Great God! is there no righteous plan
Wherewith to lift sin's awful ban
From off rebellious, banished man?

Yes, for before Thy glorious face
Mercy and Truth go hand in hand;
Arrayed in shining robes of grace
They light with hope earth's dreary land;
And sweetly herald far and near,
In every contrite sinner's ear,
A tale of love for ever dear.

Once they were foes, but Sovereign Power
Brought them beneath the blood-stained Tree,
And there, Lord, in Thy dying hour
They both were reconciled by Thee:
And now, together, both proclaim,
With joyful lips, with tongues of flame,
Salvation through Thy saving Name.

"The joyful sound" falls on our ears,
 And charms us with its music sweet;
 It fills our eyes with grateful tears,
 It draws us to Thy wounded feet:
 Mercy and Truth bid fear begone;
 Justice is met and Judgment borne;
 Clear on our night beams Heaven's dawn.

Oh, blest are we whose hearts thus know
 And love the Gospel Bugle's sound;
 Our joy shall "all the day" o'erflow,—
 Thy favour circle us around.
 Lord, touch *our* lips Thy praise to tell,
 That we may also help to swell
 The joyful sound we love so well.

S. J. B. C.

"Grace Sufficient."



DO not pray for easier lives! Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But *you* shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at what God's grace does through you. P. B.



The Practice of the Presence of God.

By NICOLAS HERMAN.

(Translated from the French.)

LETTERS.

(Concluded.)

I WILL send you one of those books which treat of *the presence of God*, a subject which, in my opinion, contains the whole spiritual life; and it seems to me, that whoever duly practises it, will soon become spiritual.

I know that for the right practice of it the heart must be empty of all other things, because CHRIST will possess the heart *alone*; and as He cannot possess it *alone*, without emptying it of all besides, so neither can He act *there*, and do in it what He pleases, unless it be left vacant to Him.

There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with GOD; those only can comprehend it who practise and experience it: yet I do not advise you to do it from that motive; it is not pleasure which we ought to seek in this exercise; but let us do it from a principle of love, and because GOD would have us.

Were I a preacher, I should, above all other things, preach the practise of *the presence of God*; and, were I a director, I should direct every saint to it: so necessary do I think it, and so easy, too.

Ah! knew we of the want we have of the grace and assistance of GOD, we should never lose sight of Him, no, not for a moment.

He requires no great matters of us; a little remembrance of Him from time to time, a little adoration: sometimes to pray for His grace, sometimes to offer Him your sufferings, and sometimes to return Him thanks for the favours He has given you, and still gives you, in the midst

of your troubles, and to console yourself with Him the oftenest you can. Lift up your heart to Him, sometimes even at your meals, and when you are in company: the least little remembrance will always be acceptable to Him. You need not cry very loud; He is nearer to us than we are aware of.

It is not necessary for being with GOD to be always at church; *we may make an oratory of our heart, wherein to retire from time to time, to converse with Him in meekness, humility, and love.* Every one is capable of such familiar conversation with GOD, some more, some less: He knows what we can do. Let us begin then. Have courage. We have but little time to live; you are near sixty-four, and I am almost eighty. Let us live and die with GOD; sufferings will be sweet and pleasant to us while we are with Him; and the greatest pleasures will be, without Him, a cruel punishment to us. May He be blessed for all. Amen.



YOU tell me nothing new: you are not the only one that is troubled *with wandering thoughts in prayer.*

Our mind is extremely roving; but as the will is mistress of all our faculties, she must recall them, and carry them to GOD, as their last end.

When the mind, for the want of being sufficiently reduced by recollection, at our first engaging in devotion, has contracted certain *bad habits* of wandering and dissipation, they are difficult to overcome, and commonly draw us, even against our wills, to the things of the earth.

I believe one remedy for this is, to confess our faults, and to humble ourselves before GOD. I do not advise you to use multiplicity of words in prayer, many words and long discourses being often the occasions of wandering.

One way to recollect the mind easily in the time of prayer, and preserve it more in tranquility, *is not to let it wander too far at other times*: you should keep it strictly in the presence of GOD; and being accustomed to think of Him often, you will find it easy to keep your mind

calm in the time of prayer, or at least to recall it from its wanderings.

We must *know* before we can *love*. In order to *know* God, we must often *think* of Him; and when we come to *love* Him, we shall then *also think* of Him often, *for our heart will be with our Treasure—Christ*. This is an argument which well deserves your consideration.

Pray remember what I have recommended to you, which is, to think often on God, by day, by night, in your business, and even in your diversions. He is always near you and with you; leave Him not alone. You would think it rude to leave a friend alone, who came to visit you: why then must GOD be neglected? Do not then forget Him, but think on Him often, adore Him continually, live and die with Him; this is the glorious employment of a Christian; in a word, this is our profession, if we do not know it we must learn it. I will endeavour to help you with my prayers.



I AM in pain to see you suffer so long; what gives me some ease, and sweetens the feeling I have of your griefs is, that they are proofs of God's love towards you: see them in that view, and you will bear them more easily. As your case is, 'tis my opinion that you should leave off human remedies, and resign yourself entirely to the providence of God; perhaps He stays only for that resignation and a perfect trust in Him to cure you. Since, notwithstanding all your cares, physic has hitherto proved unsuccessful, and your malady still increases, it will not be tempting GOD to abandon yourself in His hands, and expect all from Him.

He sometimes permits bodily diseases to cure the distempers of the soul. Have courage, then: make a virtue of necessity: ask of GOD, not deliverance from your pains, but strength to bear resolutely, for the love of Him, all that He should please, and as long as He shall please.

Such prayers, indeed, are a little hard to nature, but most acceptable to GOD, and sweet to those that love Him.

Love sweetens pains; and when one loves God, one suffers for His sake with joy and courage. Do you so, I beseech you; comfort yourself with CHRIST, Who is the only Physician of all our maladies. GOD is the FATHER of the afflicted, always ready to help us. He loves us infinitely more than we imagine: love Him, then, and seek not consolation elsewhere: I hope you will soon receive it. Let all our employment be to *know* GOD in CHRIST: the more one *knows* Him, the more one desires to *know* Him. And as *knowledge* is commonly the measure of *love*, the deeper and more extensive our *knowledge* shall be, the greater will be our *love*: and if our *love* of GOD were great, we should love Him equally in pains and pleasures.



* Light on the subject: *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,

(Continued.)

By J. N. BARRETT.



Jewels from Heaven.

THE *Argus* (March 28th) records the fall of an aerolite from the skies containing a genuine diamond! The precious and unusual treasure is now on view in a museum in the U.S.A. Much interest is manifested in it, and a mild excitement of speculative inquiry has been evoked by this brilliant arrival from the heavens.

Jewels from Heaven! How few know that Heaven's brightest Jewel came down to earth, and shone with wonderful lustre here for a time! Was there eager desire to acquire the riches of the world from which this choicest Exhibit had been sent? No, indeed.

There was no beauty in Him that people should desire Him, and the joy and delight of heaven was trampled under the feet of hateful and lawless men!

And still a bit of crystal from the skies attracts more attention than all the crown jewels of Heaven, even though these are displayed that men may receive them for nothing, and be eternally enriched.

Men's ideas of value are all distorted through sin, and most would still place a pretty fragment of carbon far above Christ.

In the Sunshine.


CHRIST is like the central sun, the source of light and life. Exposure to the direct sunlight is beneficial, and even necessary; and, in like manner, it is needful to place oneself in the full rays of the presence of Christ. This is what faith does. The act of faith is like standing in the sunshine. Let no one linger in the chilling shades of unbelief, but take the one step which brings into all joyous good.

The result of taking the step into the sun is that warmth is felt, and the pleasant effects of sunlight are enjoyed. Similarly, the soul that steps into Christ's genial presence by faith becomes at once possessed of salvation, forgiveness, and blessing. These are not found in the shadows of doubt and unbelief, but in the place where faith takes its stand.

There is another result of being in the sunshine: your shadow falls on the ground. Even so good works and conduct will follow faith's step into the sunlight of Christ's presence.


Observe, the warmth is your own experience, the shadow is an effect seen by others. So salvation is known to you, good works prove to others that you are saved.

"Too Cheap."


HERE are some who regard the salvation of God through faith alone in the finished work of Christ as "too cheap." It does indeed cost the believer nothing, but who can estimate the cost to God? So far from being "too cheap," salvation is more costly than any human arithmetic can reckon. And yet, in truth, the objector would have the blessing on more costly terms still! He would like to possess it at a price that would beggar the exchequer of Heaven, and leave God Himself a bankrupt! He would like God to condone iniquity, and to justify independently of all righteousness. He would have God surrender His character in order to interpose between the sinner and the consequences of his sins. What! shall God pay tribute to evil for the deliverance of its victims? Never. He will pay tribute to righteousness by yielding up His Son. He will sacrifice that Son in love to sinful men, but He will never sacrifice His character.

But such a sacrifice is indeed enough, and the ransom price of sinners brings, besides, a rich reversion of eternal glory to God. Who will now say the salvation is too cheap? Thank God, it is received by *faith*, that it might be by *grace* to the poorest (Rom. iv. 16).

Power (1 Cor. iv. 20).


THE Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Talk is cheap and easy, but only power is effective. It is power, indeed, that alone can redeem talk from being utterly empty and wearisome. The Corinthians could talk, and the man who could make the finest speeches was the most popular among them. But what is needed is living power exhibited as power to live. How readily

we are satisfied with fine phrases and sentiments which tickle the ear and amuse the mind, but never stir to action! How easy it is to explain doctrines, distinguish differences, and advocate ideas, while the heart is unmoved, the arm is paralysed, and the feet are crippled! It is wonderful, indeed, that in some cases every function is suspended except that of the tongue, and then that little member may be excited to a greater activity than ever. But it is **POWER** that marks the Kingdom, and power in life and action rather than power in speech.

"True to Name."

A WELL-KNOWN seedsman and florist advertises his seeds as reliable and "true to name."

This is assuring to the purchaser, for it must be disappointing to sow one thing and obtain another.

A name is descriptive; it is that by which a thing is known. But too often men and things are not true to name at all. One called a friend may be a secret foe; another labelled Christian, or church-member, may be a masked hypocrite.

Christ was always true to name, and always is so. Every precious name He bears is a revelation of His person, character or office. In every minute particular He is true to name. Take any name of His and prove it.

Believers should be true to name, and wonderful names are given to them by God: believers, saints, children, brethren, &c. These names are not arrogantly assumed, nor humanly bestowed, nor were they given by God because of any personal worth in those who bear them. But the names accord with God's estimate of His people in Christ, whose great care should be to be *true to name*.

The Pope's Last Poem.



WHEN the illness of Pope Leo XIII. became acute he wrote a poem in Latin entitled "Night Thoughts of a Sighing Soul." The English translation is roughly as follows:—

"The fateful hour is hastening on, Leo; 'tis time now to depart, and to tread the way of Eternity according to thy deserts.

"What fate may await thee? The gifts conferred on thee by God's bounty, or the supreme keys, that heavy charge borne by thee so many years, will bid thee hope for Heaven.

"Think on this with sighs. For he who stands pre-eminent in honour among the peoples, unhappy man! will be punished the more sharply.

"But then a sweet vision aids the trembling soul, and a sweeter voice sounds in converse with it.

"Why does such fear oppress thee and why, recalling thy whole past life in order, dost thou cherish sadness in thy heart?

"'Christ is at hand in pity; if thou be humble and ask forgiveness (oh trust Him!), He will wipe out every sin.'"—*From the Melbourne daily papers.*

This pathetic extract suggests three thoughts:—

1.—In the first place it proves that he who professed to hold the keys of St. Peter, and to bind and unbind the souls of his fellow men for hell or for heaven, was, in his closing moments, harassed on his own account by foreboding fears. "Pre-eminent among the peoples" though he were, yet he thought on the past "with sighs"; and as to the future, all seemed uncertain and portentous. His words imply no certitude of assurance (as in 2 Cor. v. 1-3); nor any anticipation and longing "to depart, and to be with Christ" (as in Phil. i. 23); nor any ring of joy

and triumph (as in 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8): all beyond the grave was to him vague and ominous.

2.—He felt also that his outwardly pious life, prayers, masses, &c., were useless to give him rest of conscience and heart, or to gain for him eternal felicity. How can any mortal who essays “to tread the way of Eternity according to his deserts” have any confidence of being fit for the Divine presence? Such a one can only think of himself as “an unhappy man,” and dread being “punished the more sharply” for “gifts conferred by God’s bounty.”

3.—As a last resource, however, the dying Pontiff professed to turn to Christ alone—apart from Virgin and Saints, &c.—and to trust in His “pity” for “forgiveness,” and to “wipe out every stain.” How sweet, how touching, how true are his closing words.

“*I.H.S.*”—Jesus the Saviour of men. Catholic reader of *The Message*, Protestant, Greek, have you turned to Christ alone for salvation? He, and He alone, can stay the soul in the dying hour, and make the dark valley bright with heavenly light.

“I am thy Salvation.”

NOT what I am, O Lord, but what Thou art!
 That, that alone can be my soul’s true rest;
 Thy love, not mine, bids fear and doubt depart,
 And stills the tempest of my tossing breast.

It blesses now, and shall for ever bless;
 It saves me now, and shall for ever save;
 It holds me up in days of helplessness,
 It bears me safely o’er each swelling wave.

’Tis what I know of Thee, my Lord and God,
 That fills my soul with peace, my lips with song;
 Thou art my health, my joy, my staff, my rod;
 Come life, come death, in Thee I still am strong.

—H. Bonar.

“Right Before!” “Right Behind!”

THE driver from “the footplates” saw
 The distant signal as it fell;
 Fast closed was every carriage door,
 And clear rang out “the starting bell.”
 The crowd drew back, then: “Right behind!”
 The porters cried, and: “Right before!”
 The stationmaster quickly signed,
 And swift the watchful guard waved o’er
 The heads of all his green flag high,
 And shrill his trusty whistle blew.
 The engine snorted in reply;
 Then puffing—puffing—puffing drew
 Forth on its way—all “Right before!”
 And “Right behind!”—its living freight;
 Then steaming, hissing, panting, bore
 Along at an increasing rate.
 With pistons plunging, thus for miles
 All right it rushed, it raced, it flew,
 Far from the waving hands, the smiles,
 The tears of those who said “Adieu!”

* * * * *

Oh! young and old, burdened and gay,
 Of every class and creed and clime,
 We all are travellers on life’s way,
 And need the lesson of my rhyme.

Then tell me, Is it "Right behind!"

And "Right before!" with you to-day?
It can be if by grace inclined

You trust the Saviour while you may!
For you His all He freely gave;

For you—for you He lives, He longs;
His power from fear and harm can save;

His love can fill your life with songs.
The past set right, your eye will view

The future with a tranquil mind,
Assured that right it will be too—

As right before as 'tis behind.

Come, trust Him, then; He asks no more:
He'll keep you all the journey through.

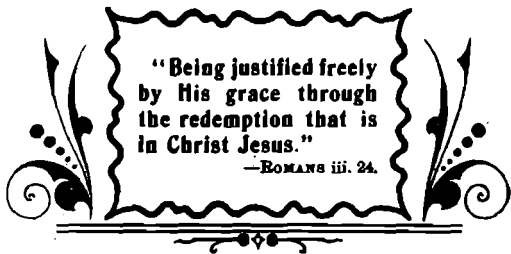
And "Right behind!" and "Right before!"
Will blessedly be true of you.

S. J. B. C.



"Being justified freely
by His grace through
the redemption that is
in Christ Jesus."

—ROMANS iii. 24.



Bible Figures.



THE Figures of Speech most frequently used in the Bible are *Personification*, *Apostrophe*, *Hyperbole*, *Comparison*, *Metaphor*, *Allegory*, and *Parable*.

1. *Personification* ascribes life and action to inanimate objects, as: "The sea saw it, and fled; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted his hands on high." (Psa.).

2. *Apostrophe* turns from the regular object of address, and speaks to the absent or the dead, as if they were present, as: "O Death! where is thy sting?" (1 Cor.).

3. *Hyperbole* consists in magnifying or diminishing an object beyond reality, as: "They were swifter than eagles. It is less than nothing." (1 Sam. ; Isa.).

4. *Comparison or Simile* expresses the resemblance which one thing bears to another, as: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." (Psa.).

5. *Metaphor* expresses resemblance without the sign of comparison, as: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." (Psa.).

6. *Allegory* represents one subject by another, without formally mentioning the subject represented, as: "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it." (Psa.). See also Jotham's allegory (not parable) of the trees (Judges).

7. *Parable* is a similitude of something *real* and *true* in life or nature, from which a moral is drawn for instruction and illustration, as: "A certain man had two sons," &c. (Luke xv.).

The Message.



The Signalman's Warning.



ONE Sunday afternoon two young railway porters stood on the platform at their station. They had an hour's leave before the next train came in. "Let us go where we can have a bit of fun," they said.

"If it's fun you want," said an old porter who was passing by, "just you run up the ladder and look into the signal-box. There you'll see the signal-man reading the Bible, and he'll give you a lot of tracts."

Scarcely were the words spoken when the two thoughtless young men were at the top of the ladder, looking in at the open door of the signal-box. There, sure enough, sat the signal-man, enjoying the hour of leisure also allowed to him, with a Bible open before him; and, to add to the "fun," he got up and handed a tract to each of them, desiring them to read it.

"Read it! oh, yes!" said they; and forthwith one of them began to read aloud a sentence here and there in what he supposed to be a true Methodist drawl, advancing with his companion, as he did so, into the signal-box, the more to rouse, as they both expected, the anger of the signal-man. But they were not prepared for what followed. Without saying a word, the signal-man rose up, locked the door behind them, put the key in his pocket, and sat down.

“Open the door,” said they, “and let us out.”

“No,” said the signal-man, “I shall not let you out till I have said what I have got to say. You know how often an accident happens to those employed on the line. How can I know that it might not be so this very day? If one of you were killed, and I had not spoken to you about your soul, I should then feel that your blood was upon my head.” And, in spite of their further angry remonstrances, the signal-man read one passage after another from the Word of God, and spoke to them of the awful danger of the unsaved sinner, and of the love of God.

Then he unlocked the door and said, “I am now clear of your blood; I can do no more but pray for you.” The two young men then went down the ladder, cursing and swearing, for their hour was all but over; the up-train was close at hand, and one of them had to go on with it to London, returning by the following down-train. He tried, no doubt, to forget all that had passed in the signal-box, and to think of something more agreeable. But he was to be reminded of the signal-man’s last words in a way he little expected. His journey to London and back occupied two or three hours, and he returned as the evening closed in. He at once saw as he stepped out on the platform that something unusual had happened. There were anxious-looking people going to and fro, there were marks of blood on the platform, and a little group of men with awe-struck faces were crowding round the door of one of the offices. The young man seemed to hear again ringing in his ears the words he had tried to forget—“There might be an accident to-day, and one of you might be killed.”

“Something the matter?” he inquired, quite

afraid to hear the answer. "Yes," he was told; "a porter slipped off the platform just as the last train went by. It took both his legs off. They have taken him in there. He is dying."

The young man pushed his way through the crowd. Was it his friend? No; God had not yet closed the door for him. The man who lay senseless on the table was the old porter, who had sent them up to the signal-box, and kneeling by his side, in earnest prayer, was the signal-man! The poor man was still breathing, but gave no other sign of life.

In a few moments all was over, and the young porter could now begin to realize the fact that the man who but a few hours before had been scoffing at the Word of God was himself gone to appear in God's presence. It was an awful thought.

The young man asked one who was present when the accident happened to tell him about it. Had the poor man been senseless all the time? "No, not at first." "And did he speak after you took him up?" "Yes," he spoke when we brought him in." "What did he say?" "He said, 'Fetch the signal-man! I am dying. Fetch the signal-man! I want him to pray!' Yes, that's the way he went on—'Fetch the signal-man.' So we went to fetch the signal-man, and he came at once, but then the old porter couldn't speak, nor know what was said to him; but we could do no more."

And we know no more. The eternal condition of that poor despiser is to us unknown, and must be until the coming of the Lord. But there was one trembling sinner who went that night to ask again to hear the words of life from the one who had spoken to him in vain three hours before. The young porter believed and was saved. His companion remained unmoved. He must have been

far harder of heart from that awful evening than he had been before.

Circumstances alone can never change the heart. It is by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost alone that under *any* circumstances a sinner is brought to repentance. Thus the one thief on Calvary believed and was saved—his companion, who also saw the dying Saviour, perished in his sins.

Oh, the terrible enmity of the natural heart of man against that which he *knows* to be of God! When the old porter saw the awful reality of death before him, the one to whom he had turned for help was the very man whom he had treated as a fool, perhaps as a hypocrite; and, as it came out, he had *known in his heart* that the signal-man was right, even at the time that he had mocked him.

Hugh Latimer.

HIS early youth was spent in following the pursuits of yeomanry (hence, probably, his "Sermon on the Plough"), and his conduct appears to have been most circumspect. He happily escaped, it would seem, the vices so common to youth in his and our own day. He entered the University at Cambridge in his fourteenth year, and being full of boyish fun and vigour he interested himself as much in the amusements of the college as in its studies. He was still a youth when a marked change took place in his conduct (at just what age is uncertain), and he exchanged the games and festivities of his gay college companions for a life of severe asceticism. This sudden transition was brought about as follows:—He was dining together with a company

of fellow-students, when one of the party quoted Eccl. iii. 12, from the Latin Vulgate: "There is nothing better than to be merry and to *do well!*" "A vengeance on that '*do well*'" exclaimed an intemperate monk present; "I wish it were beyond the sea." The embryo bishop was startled. "I understand it now," said he; "that will be a heavy *do well* for these monks when they have to render to God an account of their lives."

After this young Latimer threw himself heartily into the practices of ascetic superstition, and, like Luther, became distinguished for his austerities. Like all of his kind, he learned to attach the greatest importance to matters of a most trifling character, as for example: the missal states that water must be mingled with the sacramental wine. Latimer, while officiating as a priest, would be in great distress of conscience, for fear he had put in too much or too little water! He soon became notorious for his zeal and devotion to the cause of ascetic ritualism, and was accordingly rewarded with the office of cross-bearer to the university. This appointment he held for seven years, and it was his delight to parade in the midst of chanting priests and gorgeous processions of monks and laymen. More religious, his friends thought, he could not be, yet his soul, alas, was still immured in the darkness of unbelief.

The University was at this time in a ferment over the publication of the Greek New Testament, with a Latin translation by Erasmus. The enemies of the Reformation were in a tumult. "Who will meet these new doctrines and champion our cause?" they asked in dismay. The University cross-bearer was the one to whom they expectantly looked for help. A writer says, "This young priest combined a biting humour with an impetuous disposition and inde-

fatigable zeal. He followed the friends of the Word of God into the colleges and houses where they used to meet, debated with them, and pressed them to abandon their faith. On occasion of receiving the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, he had to deliver a Latin discourse in the presence of the University, and chose for his subject 'Philip Melancthon and his doctrines.' Latimer's discourse produced a great impression. 'At last,' said his hearers, 'Cambridge will furnish a champion for the church, who will confront the Wittenburg doctors and save the vessel of our Lord.'

Among the young priest's hearers that day was Thomas Bilney, who had some time before this found peace for his soul in Christ, and had gone over to the cause of the Reformation. He easily detected the untenableness of Latimer's arguments, and longed to win him to the truth. After reflection and prayer, he conceived a most novel plan by which to bring the gospel to his notice. He sought an interview with Latimer at his college residence. "For the love of God," he said, "be pleased to hear my confession." Latimer was delighted. "Ah," he thought, "he has come to recant. My discourse against Melancthon has opened his eyes; he may still be saved to the church." He at once prepared to hear the heretic's confession of recantation. The record says:—"Bilney, kneeling before his confessor, told him, with touching simplicity, the anguish he had once felt in his soul, the efforts he had made to remove it, their unprofitableness, and the peace he had felt when he believed that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He described to Latimer the Spirit of adoption he had received, and the happiness he experienced in being able to call God his Father. Latimer listened

without mistrust. His heart was opened, and the voice of the pious Bilney penetrated it without obstacle. From time to time the confessor would have chased away the new thoughts which came crowding into his bosom; but the penitent continued. His language, at once so simple and so lively, entered like a two-edged sword. At length the penitent rose up, but Latimer remained seated, absorbed in thought. Like Saul on his way to Damascus, he was conquered, and his conversion, like the apostle's, was instantaneous. He saw Jesus as the only Saviour given to man: he contemplated and adored Him. His zeal for the superstitions of his fathers he now regarded as a war against God, and he wept bitterly."

Bilney sought to console him as best he could. "Brother," said he, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The work in the confessor's soul was as complete as it was sudden. His friends were filled with astonishment at the change wrought in him, and the enemies of the gospel were in dismay. The new convert's one object now was to make Christ known everywhere as the only Saviour for lost sinners. With Bilney he entered the gates of Cambridge prison and told the prisoners of Him Who came to proclaim liberty to the captives of Satan, and the opening of the prison-house of condemnation to ruined sinners. They went outside the town to the lazar-house, and there told of that blessed One whose shed blood can cleanse away the foul leprosy of sin. They even invaded the mad-house, and the shriekings of the maniacs were hushed at the sweet and soul-subduing sounds of the gospel of peace. Later in their lives they testified before princes the gospel of the grace of God; and in the end they sealed their testimony with their blood.

(Adapted.)

Forgiveness.

"O Lord, truly I am Thy servant, I am Thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds."—PSA. cxvi. 16.

THERE was once a certain man, named Judge Hale, who, on one occasion, felt great interest in a prisoner who was tried and condemned to death. After his trial, the judge felt so much for him, that he visited him in the condemned cell. He tried to talk to the poor man, but he sat very hard and very stubborn. Among other things, the judge said, "What do you think of me? How do you feel towards me?"

"I hate ye!" said the man.

"Hate me! Why do you hate me?"

"Arn't you the judge that condemned me?"

"But I couldn't help that, my poor man. I am only the servant of the law. You had a fair trial. You were tried by twelve of your own countrymen, any one or more of whom you might have challenged. The evidence was clearly against you; and, upon their verdict of guilty, I could do none other than pronounce upon you the sentence of the law of the land."

The judge's arguments, however, were of no avail. The man continued in the same angry temper. The judge visited him the next day, putting the same question and receiving the same answer. He visited him a third time, and had the same reply—"I hate ye! I hate ye!"

Upon this third occasion, after a short pause, the judge placed his hand in his breast-pocket, and, pulling out a paper, laid it upon the table, saying, as he did so, "There's your *pardon*! And what do you think of me now? How do you feel towards me?"

The man's countenance changed in a moment. Bursting into tears, he dropped upon his knees, and, clasping his hands together, and looking at the judge through his tears, he exclaimed, "Oh, I love ye! I love ye! Take me into your service, and I'll prove it!" The judge did take him into his service, and he proved a faithful servant to the end of his days.

Thus does God's grace and forgiveness affect and melt hearts obdurate and hardened by judgment, so that the delivered and grateful soul cries: "Oh, Lord, truly I am Thy servant, I am Thy servant, . . . Thou hast loosed my bonds" (Psa. cxvi.).

"Too Late!"

O WORD of terror that has already fallen like the thunder of God on too many a heart of man!

See that father as he hastens from the burning house, and thinks he has taken all his children with him; he counts—one dear head is missing; he hastens back—"Too late," is the hollow sound that strikes his ear; the stone wall falls under the roaring torrent of flame; he swoons and sinks to the ground.

Who is that hastening through the darkness of the night on the winged courser? It is the son who has been wandering in the ways of sin, and now at last he longs to hear from the lips of his dying father the words, "I have forgiven you." Soon he is at his journey's end; in the twinkling of an eye he is at the door—"Too late," wails the mother's voice,

“that mouth is closed for ever!” and he sinks fainting into her arms.

See that victim on the scaffold, and the executioner whetting the steel of death. The multitude stand shivering and dumb. Who is just heaving in sight on yonder distant hill, beckoning with signs of joy? It is the king’s express; it brings a pardon. Nearer and nearer comes his step. “Pardon!” resounds through the crowd, softly at first, and then louder and yet louder. “Too late!” The guilty head has already fallen.

Yea, since the earth has stood, the heart of many a man has been fearfully pierced through by the cutting words, “Too late.” But oh! who will describe to me the lamentation that will arise, when at the boundary line which parts Time and Eternity, the voice of the righteous Judge will cry, “Too late!” Long have the wide gates of heaven stood open, and its messengers have cried at one time and another, “To-day, to-day, if ye will hear His voice!” Man, how then will it be with you, when once these gates, with appalling sound, shall be shut for eternity?

T.

John iii. 16.

It is stated that the word “love” occurs in John’s gospel 36 times; the word “world,” 56 times; “life,” 79 times; and “believe,” 99.

In the text, Jno. iii. 16, “God so LOVED the WORLD, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH in Him should not perish,

but have everlasting LIFE," we have all the four words.

Granting the correctness of the calculation, we arrive at results, as follows:—

God's Love and Man's belief, 36 *plus* 99=135.

Life given and received, - 56 *plus* 79=135.

Thus, in the scales of Divine Justice, the love bestowed and believed in *finds its exact equipose* in the life given and received: 135=135.

But $135=3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 5$. *Three* is the whole Godhead; *Five* is human weakness. 135, therefore, sets forth Divine Love (the same in length, and breadth, and depth, and height) permeating the entire scene of creature weakness, and is in exact correspondence with the measure in which Divine Life is taken in and appropriated by faith.

Again, $135 \text{ plus } 135=270$. Now $270=27 \times 10$; 27, or 3 to its third power, will betoken God Himself in the intensity and perfection of His workings; 10 is the numerical mark of responsibility Godward. In 270, then, we have the Godhead, in fullest revelation and power, energising, controlling, sanctifying all creation, whatever the capacities or obligations, on every plane of responsible manhood.

Thus, incidentally and arithmetically, all Scripture attests the truth of John iii. 16, and shows how, by Divine Love and Life, Man's universe is to be filled full with nothing but sheer blessing throughout its whole expanse: God Himself, in all the plenitude of His Being, meeting and holding Man at every turn in all places of His dominions; so that the unbroken song of Eternity is this, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord" (Psa. cl. 6).

John iii. 16 is fulfilled by Rev. xxi. 1 to 5.

W. C. C.-B.-C.

How to Win Them.

A WORD TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

NO two leaves in the forest are exactly alike, yet every maple leaf in the forest has similarity with every other maple leaf. So with children. I want to mention eight characteristics which prevail everywhere among children, which we must understand and make use of if we are to rightly use the material that God has placed in our care, and handle rightly those whom we teach.

First: Childhood is *plastic*. When we grow old we become crystallised, and we cannot change without breakage or cleavage. The child is like the soft clay in the hands of the moulder, and almost anything that the teacher desires to make he can secure. That children are plastic is very evident from experiences through which we pass. A good class may be moulded with marvellous rapidity along faulty lines by the implanting of a thoroughly vicious boy into that class. See how the rest will answer to his vicious touch—how he will contaminate and deform other boys there. That is enough to show that children are plastic, for evil as well as for good, though, of course, a child needs to be “born again” as much as a man.

Second: Children are *imitative*. Therefore with all the more care should we live Christ before them, for they will imitate us, without any question. If a Sunday-school teacher be late systematically, the children will imitate her. If the Sunday-school teacher be given to peculiar care in the matter of dress, the scholars will imitate the teacher. What-

ever the teacher does the scholars tend to reproduce—and sometimes to absurd extremes. My brother was drilling a young fellow one time for a recitation in a pathetic piece. Judge of his surprise when, on the festive occasion, the boy, just at the point of the greatest pathos, drew out his handkerchief and blew a blast like a trombone. The whole thing was ruined. When afterwards my brother said to him, "Why ever did you do that?" he replied, "Why, don't you remember when you were reciting this piece for me you blew your nose just at that point?" This is only an illustration to show how imitative children are.

Third: Children are *retentive*. Their memories are sticky, while ours are slippery. They hold so little to begin with that they are eager to hold more, and you toss a fact into a boy's memory and he holds it. That is one of the most encouraging things, and we want to realise that their memories are not only quick to receive, but are tenacious to retain. In their old age, when they forget the events of the recent past, they hold to the events of childhood with a grip of steel. Thus, the truth—"the incorruptible seed"—implanted in a child's mind, though the child may wander away in maturer years far from the path of life, remains there, and it may be, that by God's grace a fact given to a child in his early years will be the means of his salvation in the far-off country where he is hungering and starving among the swine. Joyful fact, therefore, that all children by nature are retentive of facts given to them.

Fourth: Children are *mercurial*. By that I mean that they are not long in one state. A German philosopher can evolve ideas out of his inner consciousness in the dark for two hours at a time, but a boy cannot. A boy is like a grasshopper; he jumps and leaps and jumps again, and you never quite

know where he started from or where he is going to land. But he is made that way, and you can't change him, and therefore you have to be content to jump with him, if you can; and blessed is that teacher who is agile enough to go over the field with his boy and never lose sight of him. Why, boys and girls sometimes do two or three things at once, which is more than some of us can do.

That is one of our troubles with these children—they are too quick for us. We have slowed up, and they have got a full head of steam on all the time. I was in the roundhouse of a railroad in New York some time ago, and I saw this notice: "No engineer allowed to take his engine out of this roundhouse with less than 120 pounds of steam on." I thought "That's fine. I think that will do for our Sunday-school." How do you expect to handle children if you come to them devoid of zeal and love—with your boilers cold and your furnaces out, and they come with their furnaces white-hot and the boiler full of life and energy?

Fifth: Children are *affectionate*. Blessed characteristic! For where force can do little, love is omnipotent; and the child naturally turns with love towards its teacher if its teacher is human. A child was asked, "What led you to Christ?" And her reply was, "First I loved my teacher, and then I loved my teacher's Bible, and then I loved my teacher's Saviour." Blessed pathway of love! That must be an exceedingly unlovely teacher who cannot win the love of the child. I pity anyone if the child does not turn toward that one with trust and affection. Anywhere excepting among the very wealthy, where children are pitifully *blasé*, you can win the children around yourself and have them twine around you as the tendrils of a creeper twine around

the oak, and thus, with God's blessing, you can lead them where you desire, and be to them a support and a stay while they need it, and remain in their memories after they need you no longer, as sweet perfume remains in a rose garden after sundown.

Sixth: Children are *imaginative*. And this is one of our strong points. To the child a few marks on a piece of paper or a blackboard mean a great deal. A child loves to "make believe," and you put five round discs on the board or on a block of paper in your class, and two little straight marks and say, "Here are the five loaves of the boy, and these are two fishes," and the child's imagination gets to work and fairly transforms those pencil marks so that they become loaves and fishes. The child gets the chairs in its mother's parlour in a line, and they are the Twentieth Century Express, the armchair at the head being the locomotive. It does not move an inch really, but it flies to the child. It is wondrous!

Seventh: Children are *just*. One of the earliest things you will hear a child say in its play with the others is, "It ain't fair." They have a keen sense of right, and if we deal with them unjustly they resent it, and they resent it rightly. In all our dealing with them, in family or in school, we must remember that early development of the desire for marked justice, and that resentment against all partiality and all semblance of unfairness.

Finally: Children are *heroic*. Here again we make a dire mistake, thinking that true heroism is a characteristic that develops late in life, and that we cannot expect heroism from children. Not so. Tell me, was David the boy more heroic or less heroic than David the man? Tell me, was Daniel the boy any less heroic, when he declined to be defiled with the king's meat, than Daniel the man when he walked

into the lions' den rather than cease his prayer? Wasn't the boy just as grand as the man?

Oh, when a Christian child sees its line of duty, and makes up its mind, by God's grace, to follow it, it often follows it more straightly than in later years, because a child is less politic. Even when a Christian man sees the way he ought to take, he may begin to say, "If I follow it, what will its effects be on my business?" A woman sees her line of duty, and begins to say, "If I accept it, how will it affect me in this and that?" Ulterior motives, side interests, begin to confuse our vision and to make our walk somewhat unstable.

A boy in our Sunday-school, about fifteen years of age, the son of a liquor-dealer, came to me and he said, "Father says that I have got to serve the bar now on Sundays. What will I do?" I said, "My boy, what do you think God would have you to do?" He said, "I ought not to serve. But father says if I don't serve the bar on Sundays I can pack and get out. What do you think I ought to do?" I said, "What do you think you ought to do?" He said, "I ought to pack and get out." "Very well," I said, "I have nothing to say to you excepting, when your father asks you to serve his bar you answer respectfully, and say, 'Father, I will do anything for you that is not contrary to the Will of God, but that is contrary.'" I never told the boy I would care for him; I simply threw him back on God. The next Sunday the command came to serve the bar, and the suggested reply came. The boy's father lost his temper, and angrily said, "Then march!" So the boy put up all that he had in a red handkerchief, and marched out into the streets, with no place to sleep and nothing to eat. Now, I say that was grander faith in God than the faith of Abraham when

God told him to go out into a land that he knew not; for Abraham went with his flocks and herds and tents, and my boy had not a single mutton chop or a single place to sleep in. So he marched.

I have seen many a case, not quite as strong as that, perhaps, but which, nevertheless, illustrates the heroism of Christian children in the home, or in the social circle. Let us make no mistake, therefore, in thinking that the child cannot stand for God as well as the man; for both stand by God's grace, and the child stands, perhaps, a little more heroically because he a little more absolutely trusts his Heavenly Father.

(Adapted.)

“And John.”

HAVE you ever wondered why John is so persistently mentioned in the narrative of the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple? Five times his name is linked with Peter's as the tale and its sequel are told. Yet, but for the inspired persistence of the writer, it seems as if John might as well have been left out. Peter is the prominent figure. He speaks the word of power; he stretches out the hand which helps the lame man's lamer faith to make its venture; he speaks to the astonished people and to the offended Sanhedrim. “And John” simply stands at his side, and says nothing, unless we conjecture that the words (iv. 20), which bear the self-same burden as those with which his first Epistle opens, fell from his lips, “We cannot

but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Why, then, is John included in the narrative? Surely not just because he happened to be there. If so, one mention were enough. This five-fold repetition of John's name, if not intentionally significant, is, at least, suggestive.

Peter is the *foreground* of this picture of the ascended Saviour's power. "And John" is the *background*. But the striking figure at the front of the scene is all the more impressive for the gentle face that glows on us from its retirement in the shadows behind. The background has its service to render as well as the foreground. "And John" had his share in the work and witness of that memorable day, as well as Peter. They were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, and Peter found that labour for his Lord was prayer, "and John" learnt that prayer to God was a great work. Peter stood forward and wrought mightily in the prevailing name of Christ, "and John" stood a little way behind his friend, and did a mighty work of prayer in the same Name. While Peter was preaching, John was praying. Peter spoke to men of God, "and John" spoke to God of men. Each did his appointed work.

God needed Peter's preaching, but Peter could not do without John's praying. The man who laid hold on men in the power of God stood in the foreground, while he who laid hold on God in the impotence of man stood in the background. One completed the other; foreground and background made the finished picture of the power of God that almost breathes upon us from the sacred page.

There is still something of the same in Christian life and work. One man stands in front. When he speaks, gainsayers are confounded; when he works, the lame man leaps as a hart. In the wilderness of

a dull and dreary age the waters of life break out, and the mighty power of God is made manifest in the sight of all. Another stands in the shadow behind. He has no particular gifts; he is an obscure man, a mere appendage, as it seems, to a more talented, and more conspicuous, and even more useful, servant of the self-same Lord. Perhaps the copulative that conjoins this Peter and this John is only visible to God. It is written in no earthly scriptures, but in the books that are being written in heaven. Nevertheless, the link is there. This modern Peter needs his modern John. Now, as of old, it must be "Peter AND John."

Perhaps you are an invalid, and the thought rises in your heart, Oh, that I could work, and win thousands to Christ! Well, if you cannot do so in the sight of men, you may do so in the sight of God. In your weakness and retirement, during the long hours when sleep is denied you, you can exercise a royal priesthood in the presence of God, and your believing and prevailing intercession will give you a share in the great work.

If you cannot be Peter, you can be John. Perhaps the weight of your own giftlessness oppresses you. "I am only a very ordinary man (you say)—just a bit of the background." Well, do the work of the background! Stir up the one gift that is in thee, the gift of prayer. Make full proof of the ministry of intercession, which never fails of its reward.

When work is on foot, be constant in prayer. And as you read or hear of Peter, or those who follow him in the true apostolical succession of believing men, being used by God, be sure that God also has a thought for John and his prayers. For it is written, not that Peter only wrought, but Peter—AND JOHN.

J. M.

“An Unbreakable Link between My Soul and God.”



I HAVE, through grace, been by the Bible converted, enlightened, quickened, saved. I have received the knowledge of God by it to adore His perfections—of Jesus, the Saviour, joy, strength, comfort of my soul. Many have been indebted to others as the means of their being brought to God, to ministers of that gospel which the Bible contains, or to friends who delight in it. This was not my case. That work, which is ever God's, was wrought in me through the means of the written Word. He who knows what the value of Jesus is will know what the Bible will be to such a one. If I have, alas! failed it, in nearly thirty years' arduous and varied life and labour (at least such, as far as the service of an unknown and feeble individual usually leads), I have never found it fail me: if it has not failed for the poor and needy circumstances of time through which we feebly pass, I am assured it never will for Eternity. “The word of the Lord endureth for ever.”

The man of intellect produces human infidelity. The man of imagination will give us human superstition, coloured over with the haze of antiquity, for fear what it really is should be too clearly seen. Both give me man. The Scriptures alone give me God. Hence the peculiar form of modern infidelity is, attack on the written Word—the Scriptures. Superstition takes exactly the same ground. The cry of “Bibliolatry!” sounds alike from the intellectual and from the superstitious infidel. Both have the same object of attack, both are infidels—one an

intellectual, the other an imaginative one. Both would persuade me that the Bible cannot itself command my conscience and oblige me to faith as coming from God. Do they not both seek to do this? Is it not infidelity? Doubtless, through the sinfulness of man's will, without divine grace he never will really receive the Word as it is in truth—the Word of God. But is that his fault or the Word's? . . .

My joy, my comfort, my food, my strength, for near thirty years, have been the Scriptures received implicitly as the Word of God. In the beginning of that period I was put through the deepest exercise of soul on that point. Did heaven and earth, the visible Church, and man himself, crumble into nonentity, I should, through grace, since that epoch, hold to the Word as an unbreakable link between my soul and God. I am satisfied that God has given it me as such. I do not doubt that the grace of the Holy Spirit is needed to make it profitable, and to give it real authority to our souls, because of what we are; but that does not change what it is in itself. To be true when it is received, it must have been true before it was so.

And here I will add, that although it requires the grace of God and the work of the Holy Ghost to give it quickening power, yet divine truth, God's Word, has a hold on the natural conscience from which it cannot escape. The light detects "the breaker-up," though he may hate it. And so the Word of God is adapted to man, though he be hostile to it—adapted in grace, blessed be God, as well as in truth. This is exactly what shows the wickedness of man's will in rejecting it. And it has power thus in the conscience, even if the will be unchanged. This may increase the dislike of it; but it is disliked because the conscience feels it cannot deny its truth. Men

resist it because it is true. Did it not reach their conscience, they would not need to take so much pains to get rid of and disprove it. Men do not arm themselves against straws, but against a sword whose edge is felt and feared.

Reader, it speaks of grace as well as truth. It speaks of God's grace and love, Who gave His only-begotten Son that sinners like you and me might be with Him, know Him—deeply, intimately, truly know Him—and enjoy Him for ever, and enjoy Him now; that the conscience, perfectly purged, might be in joy in His presence, without a cloud, without a reproach, without fear. And to be there in His love, in such a way, is perfect joy. The Word will tell you the truth concerning yourself; but it will tell you the truth of a God of love, while unfolding the wisdom of His counsels.

J. N. D.



“Jehovah always before me.”

(Psa. xvi.)



HOW withdrawn from all evil—how powerful, morally, in the midst of this world—should we be, were this always so! There is nothing in this world like the dignity of a man always walking with God. Yet nothing is farther from failure in humility: indeed it is here, it is perfect. Self-exaltation is neither possible nor desired in the presence and enjoyment of God. What absence of self, what renouncement of all will, what singleness of eye, and hence bright and earnest activity of purpose, when the Lord is the only object and end! I say the Lord, for no other such object can command and sanctify the heart.

J. N. D.

Under the Juniper Tree.

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that
are ready to die."

(1 KINGS xix. ; 2 TIM. iv. ; REV. iii.)

DISHEARTENED and weary he lay
Down under the juniper tree :
So faithless was he—not a ray
Of cheer 'mid the gloom could he see.
"Apostasy spreads," hissed the foe,
"Truth fails—all thine efforts are vain."
A Voice whispered : "Though it be so,
Still 'Strengthen the things which remain.'"
"The things which remain!" What are they? *
The man of God asked, with a sigh.
The Voice breathed : "Around thee to-day,
They faint, they sink—'ready to die.'
Though strife and division abound,
Though evil thou canst not restrain,
Yet still 'mid the ruins be found—
To 'Strengthen the things which remain.'"
"On earth still *the Spirit* abides,
The gospel still sounds from above ;
Go forth and wherever He guides,
Still tell the glad message of love.
The Supper—the bread and the wine—
Still speaks of the Lamb Who was slain,
Still spreads thee a feast still divine ;
Then, 'Strengthen the things which remain.'"
"Each week still a few meet for *prayer*,
And graciously thus they are led
To cast upon Him all their care,
Who numbers the hairs of their head ;
And still by His love some are stirred
To gather in faith yet again
To read and to ponder *the Word*,
And 'Strengthen the things which remain.'"

*The italicised words name them.

“ *The little ones* still seek to save ;
 Oh ! care for them ; let them be told—
 Of Him Who His life freely gave
 To save them as well as the old.
 The *tempest-tossed* and the *bereaved*,
 The *sick* in their weakness and pain,
 Still need to be solaced, relieved :
 Oh ! ‘ Strengthen the things which remain.’ ”

“ ‘ Stand fast ! ’ for *the faith* still contend,
 Rise ! Gird thee, ‘ Be strong in the Lord,’
 ‘ Hold fast what thou hast to the end,’
 And great then shall be thy reward.
 ‘ The Lord is at hand ! ’—Ne’er forget
The hope of His coming and reign :
 Despond not, nor murmur, nor fret,
 But, ‘ Strengthen the things which remain.’ ”

“ The Church as a witness has failed,
 Her lamp-stand is gone from its place,
 Her light for her Lord has long paled,
 Yet still shines *the light of His face*.
 Look up—see how brilliant it gleams !
 His glory and grace cannot wane ;
 Go forth, then, reflect His bright beams,—
 Go, ‘ Strengthen the things which remain.’ ”

Then, from under the juniper tree,
 The servant went forth with this prayer :—
 “ My God, still there’s something for me
 To do and to be and to bear ;
 Though feeble, despised, and obscure,
 My soul by Thy love still constrain
 For Thee and for Thine to endure,
 And ‘ Strengthen the things which remain.’ ”

S. J. B. C.

* **Light on the subject:** *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,

(Continued.)

By J. N. BARRETT.



Deep-digging.

† NOTICED that the foundations for a city building were unusually deep and broad, but the reason was because the erection was to be unusually high. A "sky-scraper" must not have a slight foundation; there must be a correspondence between the depth below and the height above, or the lofty aspiring structure will lack stability. The oak is said to be as deep and wide-spread beneath the ground as above it, and thus it can bear the tempests of centuries.

The defect of some Christian characters is, that while lofty in aspiration, and even in pretension, they are not deep in soul experience. The hidden life is shallow and feeble compared with the outward show; and the greater the pretension to a high spiritual status, the greater the danger of a fall.

Deep digging must precede high building. The inward and the outward, the seen and the secret, must correspond, and then stability will result, and the beautiful completeness and power of holy Christian character will be exhibited.

Music and the Spirit.

♫ HERE is music in the air. It is the one thing needful to arouse all the tender feelings of religious flesh. Therefore, let us have music—the solemn roll of the organ, and the massed

company of the chorus singers; or, failing these, we may at least have a concertina and a tambourine, with the added sensation of the rhythm of hands and feet. Oh, yes, it all succeeds admirably. Feelings are touched, tears start, excitement grows, and what may not result now? Well, anything may result that the flesh may produce. But are these the methods that brought conviction to three thousand souls at Pentecost? Did the best revivals with the best results proceed on these lines? Did Whitfield or Wesley owe his success to musical aids? No. The Holy Spirit is here, and everything that would add to Him supplants Him, and dishonours Him.

In conversion, neither music availeth anything, nor moving eloquence, but the power of the Spirit of God operating upon the conscience, and not upon the flesh.

Sleep.

HEALTHFUL sleep is sweet and refreshing, and might symbolize good things in the moral world. But few analogies to the torpor of sin are more striking than the deep unnatural slumber produced by malignant causes.

Snake-bite is one of these, and the heavy sleep it induces is a dangerous symptom. All are bitten by the serpent of sin, and deep and fatal is the spiritual somnolence that results. People neither see, hear, nor feel, and unless aroused must perish.

Intense cold freezes the blood, retards the circulation, and causes like deathly sleep. Oh, the awful frigid state of a soul icebound in sin till divine love touches it!

Opiates also bring on the fatal slumber, and how many opiates the devil has in his pharmacopœia. There are drugged souls everywhere, and unless the antidote be quickly administered they will perish in

their dreams. Oh, for grace and energy to arouse all spiritual sleepers!

Early Conversion a Prophylactic.

ONE great advantage in early conversion is that it is a prophylactic against evils—and sometimes terrible ones—which might fasten upon the young soul. There is no sound sense in the idea of allowing seeds of scepticism to fall into the warm soil of an impulsive heart to germinate there, that their fruit may be tasted and rejected by a maturer and wiser experience. What if the taste be perverted so that the Dead Sea fruit comes to be approved!

The detection of error is only possible to one who knows and loves the truth. The one who habitually drinks the old wine always prefers it to the new.

Let the children, then, know the power, the beauty, and the reality of the truth in Christ, and they will not need to unravel sophistries in order to understand and expose them. They will be wise to what is good, and, in consequence, simple concerning evil. They will not need recovery from the fever of irregular passion, nor from the malaria of sceptical ideas, for early conversion will be a preventative, and prevention is unquestionably better than cure.

“Linger and die.”

HERE are certain waste and barren parts in the Australian States to which this expressive epithet is applied. A farmer takes up a block of land, cultivates it, but gets no return. Yet he sticks to his enterprise, expends his capital, and at last relinquishes his all to his creditors and leaves the place beggared and starving. To linger in such hungry spots is really to die in the end, for they are

literally "a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof."

Such is a picture of this world in which man invests his possessions, his powers, and his hopes. But can the world yield any returns to his needy soul? Alas, no! More and more the soul is impoverished, and the one who lingers there will certainly perish.

Oh, the thousands of hunger-bitten souls that linger and die, hoping for satisfaction, but never finding it, anxious to be rich and despising the true riches. Why should any linger when a land of milk and honey, with green pastures and still waters, is open for free selection?

To linger is to die, for the world is under the shadow of death and judgment. Life is found in Christ alone.

Knowledge and Power.

KNOWLEDGE is not power, Bacon notwithstanding. It may be a means to the acquirement and exercise of power, but in the spiritual realm to say "Knowledge is Power," is to fall into a pleasing deception.

If knowledge were power, should we see so many Christians hobbled and hindered?—Christians who are letter-perfect in the Scriptures, too!

Take for example such chapters as Rom. vi., vii., viii.; mere acquaintance with these precious scriptures does not impart power to escape the tyranny of sin, or the bondage of the law. Power is by the Spirit, and these instructions are only in order to the efficient use of the Spirit's grace made known in ch. viii.

We cannot be too thankful for the light afforded by the Word of God, but there must be practice,

experience, exercise, and prayer, or the truth will not be energetic and operative. The truth may be stored in the head, but it must be brought down into the heart in order to be powerful. Money in a chest, or corn in a grainary is inert and useless. Corn in circulation, or bread assimilated, becomes a force in man's economy. Knowledge is good, but knowledge alone is of little use.

Christian Life a Present Tense.

CHRISTIAN life is always in the *present* tense. It must be so if Christ be the life. Yet many live in the past, and try to borrow light from past experiences and past successes, or they live in the miserable gloom of past sins and unhappy recollections.

The fact is that *present* and *past* have a new significance in Christianity. They are not so much time notes as moral symbols. With God there is no past; all is present to Him. In the case of the believer, the past means his natural self in Adam, and the present his new status in the Spirit. To allow the action of self is to live in the past, that is, really, to die. Present life is life in Christ, and it is eternal, because it is outside and independent of the passing and the temporary.

It is worse than useless to recall the shaded and sorrowful past; and the brightest days that Christ gave us in time gone by may be ours *now* if faith is in exercise. Do not say the days were sunny and have gone, for, see, the sun still shines.

Value the friendship of him who stands by you in the storm; swarms of insects will surround you in the sunshine.

twinkling stars appeared, and the poor mirror found her brilliancy had all passed away. Meanwhile, the golden lamp sent forth a ray of increasing brightness, and clothed the scene around with a mantle of rich light; one could hardly think the flame had not increased, so bright did it appear. The poor darkened glass looked woefully on its lately despised companion, and was silent.

"The night has come," said the little lamp; "but to me it has brought light, and to you darkness."

"Alas!" said the poor mirror, "I despised you once; now you may despise me. I thought *that* light was all my own."

"The day is coming," said the little lamp, and then threw a bright beam on the golden frame of his sad companion, and painted a picture of hope on the gloomy surface. So the mirror felt a ray of comfort in affliction, and blessed the little lamp, who had returned good for evil.

MORAL.

Those who for light and joy depend,
On earth's uncertain day,
Will find, when shades of night descend,
Their brightness fade away.

But those whose souls on Jesus rest,
Who take from Him their bloom,
Will find the brightness in their breast
Increase with outward gloom.

A. H. L.

“So send I you.”

(JNO. XX. 21.)



THE night lies dark upon the earth, and we have light:

So many have to grope their way, and we have sight:

One path is theirs and ours of sin and care,
But we are borne along, and they the burden bear.
Footsore, heart weary, faint they on their way,
Mute in their sorrow, while we kneel and pray;
Glad are they of a stone on which to rest,
While we lie pillowed on the Father's breast.

Father, why is it that these prodigals far roam,
And I with Thee, so glad, at rest, at home?
Is it enough to keep the door ajar
In hope that some may see the gleam afar,
And guess that that is Home, and urge their way
To reach it, haply, somehow, and some day?
May not I go, and lend them of my light,
May not mine eyes be unto them for sight,
May not the brother-love Thy love pourtray,
And news of home make home less far away?

Yea, Christ hath said that as from Thee He came
To seek and save, so hath He, in His name,
Sent us to these, and, Father, we would go,
Glad in Thy love that Thou hast willed it so;
That we should be partakers in that joy
Which e'en on earth knows naught of earth's alloy;
The joy which grows as others' griefs grow less,
And could not live but for its power to bless.



The Solemn Question.

A NOTHER of these dreadful tracts !
Here's one I found upon the road !
It really puts me in a fright,
With its " Prepare to meet thy God."
It speaks of " wrath " and " hell " as facts,
Without a bit of charity,
And asks me " If I die to-night,
Where shall I spend Eternity ? "

Tut, tut, I'm fully occupied,
And really have no time to think ;
From early morn till late at night
I've barely time to eat and drink.
So I must put the thing aside
Until I've opportunity
To settle " If I die to-night,
Where shall I spend Eternity ? "

Besides, I'm young, I'm well and strong,
With chest as sound as any bell ;
My life seems just one long delight,
And yet I'm asked to think of HELL.
No, no, I'll sing a merry song,
Nor let the question trouble me—
This question " If I die to-night,
Where shall I spend Eternity ? "

I've many years on earth to live ;
To-morrow I'm but twenty-one ;
Wait till I've reached ambition's height,
And ease and plenty have been won ;
THEN my attention I will give,
Unpleasant though it still may be,
To answer " If I die to-night,
Where shall I spend Eternity ? "

* * * * *

Alas, death comes ! and lo, next day,
Sad, weeping friends are gathered round
The bed where lies a ghastly sight—
A body that has just been found.
'Tis all that's left—the mortal clay
Of him who, in prosperity,
Neglected Christ—was killed LAST NIGHT,
And now is in ETERNITY !

The Message.



“And what then?”

A true tale of the Franco-Prussian War.”



MANY years ago, during the Franco-Prussian war, I had mounted an omnibus in Paris, when I saw an old lady with a gentleman in the prime of life, both laden with flowers, hurrying to catch it. I helped the lady to ascend. The gentleman followed listlessly. He had scarcely taken his seat by my side, when he exclaimed with a loud voice, “And what then?” Thinking that perhaps I had unintentionally disturbed his flowers, I begged his pardon. But he looked at me with a severe expression, and with a military salute, exclaimed again, “And what then?”

The lady begged me to excuse the singular behaviour of her son, and take no notice of it; and after we had sat side by side some time, she related to me his history, as follows:—

Before the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian war, her son had become engaged to a very beautiful young lady, a lover of pleasure, and a true child of the world. Leon de St. Arnaud, a young officer in the imperial army, was like-minded with her.

One day a lady remarked to the young woman, “You will not always be young and beautiful. You will not always have the world at your feet. These things will end with you as they have with others, *and what then?*”

She regarded the question with due respect, and after a little reflection replied, "What then? Madame, I have really not thought; but from this time I will do so."

And she kept her word. Even if she would have forgotten it, she could not. The words, "These things will come to an end with you as they have done with others—and what then?" followed her as a perpetual presence. Asleep or awake, she ceased not to hear the question, "*And what then?*" Meanwhile, invitations to every sort of festivities came to her as before, and were as often accepted. But it could not escape her young friends and associates that Blanche de Montrouge had lost her cheerfulness, that the song and the dance no longer had any charm for her. So things went on till at length she refused an invitation to the wedding festivities of one of her friends. Leon undertook to persuade her to accept it. He said she must go, for what would people say if he came without her? But she remained firm.

Suppressing his displeasure as well as he could, he demanded the reason of her silly behaviour. She replied, "Leon, all these things will have an end—and *what then?* If this life were the end of all, there might be pleasure in these diversions; but I am convinced there is another life beyond. I cannot go, and I beg you not to go either." But without any reply, the young officer bit his lip, stamped his foot, and left her.

The good seed which had been sown in her heart, as in good ground, continued to bring forth good fruit. That year she broke with the world and its pleasures, and concentrated herself wholly to the Lord Jesus. There was joy in heaven among the angels of God, for another soul had been saved from

destruction and brought to the feet of Jesus.

* * * * *

On the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, Leon went into the conflict. Blanche, who by no means had forgotten him during all this period of trial, bore him on her heart. But Leon, curbing his pride and passion, sought out his early love, besought her, forgetting the past, to marry him at once—overlooking the difference between them. But her Lord and Saviour held the first place in her affections. She thought of the words of the prophet: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" "No, Leon," she said, gently but firmly; "it cannot be till you have found the Lord Jesus your Saviour. Do not deem me indifferent and hard-hearted. Take this little token as a pledge of my love for you and for my God." Upon this she handed him a little package, which he hastily tucked into his pocket, and with a courtly bow left the room without uttering a single word.

* * * * *

Many, many miles distant from Paris, the shades of night are setting on a battle-field. Dead horses lie here and there, amidst the ruin of war. Pieces of cannon and similar things prove that here men have stood and fought against one another for life or death. The darkness increases, covering deeper and deeper the distant landscape and the brave soldiers who have shed their blood and breathed their last breath. It is like a great gloom-pall for the dead. But what is that sound breaking so terribly on the stillness of death? It seems like a slight murmuring, a mournful death-chant, like funeral hymns on that lonely battle-field, deeply impressive in such a place at such a time. Suddenly is heard the tramp of a horse! A German Uhlan, whose

sharp eyes and ears nothing within hearing or seeing can escape, rides over the plain. The rider stops and listens. Then he rides to the low spot in the battle-field from which the sound issues, and finds only a dog, keeping watch over his fallen master. The Uhlan drags the body of the French soldier out of the debris, and carefully thrusts his hand under the uniform to see if the heart still beats. He draws it back instantly, covered with blood. "Yes" he said to himself, "death has escaped this for his harvest. What a stately soldier!" Again he let his hand glide over the senseless form, when something hard attracted his attention. He drew it out. It was a little book, penetrated by a ball. On the front fly leaf was written—

Leon de St. Arnaud, from Blanche de Montrouge. And what then?

Alas! it was he lying so pale, cold and almost dead. The Uhlan was deeply impressed. He repeated aloud what was underscored in the little French Testament—"And what then?"

Meanwhile the faithful dog licked the wounds of his master, till the Uhlan lifted the body on his horse and galloped away.

* * * * *

Again we find the German Uhlan in a lazzaretto, and receive from him the following narrative:—

"Four days ago I found him, late at evening, in a hollow. The wounded and fallen had long ago been collected from the battle-field. They had overlooked this one. Only a dog was near him. I had no suspicion that he was still alive. Poor man! he will never fight again; the ball entered too deeply. It would have killed him certainly if it had not been for that little Testament."

So Leon did not die of the wound. He gradually

recovered, and the first thing he asked for was his little book. But this is the only thing he remembered, so dreadful was the effect of the ball upon the young man. He is not only lame, and beyond recovery, but he has also lost his mind. To everyone he sees, he repeats his military salute, and the only intelligible words he utters are: "*And what then?*" The Germans did not let him want for careful nursing till he could be taken back to his widowed mother. The faithful dog which would not be separated from his master even in the hospital, died a fortnight after reaching Paris.

Blanche de Montrouge went to England, and is still a faithful visitor, having told the precious story of the gospel beside many a bed of pain, comforting the troubled heart, and leading many a sinner to the Saviour of the lost—the Prince of peace. She and the aged mother of poor Leon pray every day for the unfortunate man, that the Lord may yet give light to his darkened mind, and draw him to Himself. They find a ray of hope in the fact that many times as his eye rests upon his little Testament, he breaks out into loud expressions of joy, while at others times he only exclaims, "*And what then?*"

Reader, what of you? Were you cut off where and as you are, "*What then?*" If you die before December ends *What then?* If 1903 be your last year on earth—*What then?* Ah! if you die unprepared—*What then?* God's day of salvation is *now!* If you reject it—"What then!!" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

N. B.



“Son, Remember.”

(LUKE xvi.)

SOME years ago, a visitor at an insane asylum observed a woman passing to and fro in a long passage. As she would reach the wall at either end, she would look eagerly for an object of which she appeared to be in search, and then, failing to find it, she would wring her hands, and moaning piteously, commence again the round. So it was that she passed each day and night, except during a few hours of exhaustion, when in her dreams the same sad search was kept up. She was a mother who had lost her child, and then, in her grief, had become deranged.

Such may be part of the eternal punishment of the worldling. Let us take the love of money. Gold is hunted and gloated over, so that the lust of it becomes a controlling passion. But then comes the grave. *There are no pockets in the shroud.* As the tree falls so it lies. The consuming passion of time will be the consuming passion for Eternity, be that passion gold, pleasure, fame, lust, or aught else.

But there is this difference—in time there is an object to be seized. Now, there may be a maniac pursuit, but there is also a maniac enjoyment. But it is otherwise in a lost Eternity. There the passion so long coveted is gone. The chase after it lasts for ever, but its enjoyment never comes. It is not necessary for us to fall into imagination to describe the terrors of that state. It is enough for us to know that the passions of this life continue to rage in the heart desolated by them, while the objects of those passions are gone. It is an incessant agonizing alternation between a frenzied search and a still more frenzied despair.

The High-Church Lady's Conversion.



ONE day a lady called and said she wanted to speak to me—would I come to her house for this purpose? I went, and she was not long before she opened the conversation by charging me with being very uncharitable. “You say we are all unconverted.”

I replied, “Of course, as children of Adam we are, till conversion takes place; there can be no mistake about that! But when did I say that you were unconverted? Is it not your own conscience that tells you that? When we preach to people as unconverted, those who are changed, and brought from death unto life, know as well as possible that we do not mean them; and they pray for a blessing on the word, that it may reach others, as it once reached them. They do not sit there and resent the charge, for they know what has passed between God and their souls, and are anxious for others to share the same blessing.” She was silent; so I continued, “May I ask you the question, Are you converted? Can you tell me that you are?”

She replied, “I do not know what you mean.”

“Well, then, why do you suppose that I mean something uncharitable or bad?”

“Because I know very well it is not a good thing to be unconverted. But,” she added, “it seems such an unkind thing to put us all down for ‘lost,’ while you suppose yourself to be saved.”

“You may know more about this some day, perhaps; but in the meantime will you allow me to ask you one thing: Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?”

She replied indignantly, "Of course I do. Now, this is the very want of charity I complain of—the idea of asking me such a question!"

She was one of the Rev. ——'s (the confessor's) favourite devotees, and had been absolved by him for several years; the very idea of asking her if she believed on the Lord Jesus Christ made her quite impatient, as well as indignant.

I said, "Do not be angry with me, but what do you believe about Him?"

"I believe everything, of course! I believe the creed."

"Yes, I do not doubt that, for a moment. But do you believe that Jesus Christ died *for you*?"

"Why, yes, certainly: how could I do otherwise; He died for us all."

"That is not the point. I mean, do you believe that He died; and that you have a *personal interest* in His death?"

She hesitated, and then looking at me, said, "Do you mean objectively, or subjectively?"

"May I ask what I am to understand by these words?"

"Dr. —— taught me that, 'Christ died,' is objective, and that 'Christ died for *me*,' is subjective."

"Very good indeed," I answered, "I like that very much; it is quite true. But it is one thing to know *about* subjective faith, and quite another thing to have it. Now I will come back to my question. Do you believe that Christ died *for you*?"

"You evidently mean something that I do not understand," she said in a perplexed manner.

Then looking at the crucifix on her table, I said, "What does that remind you of?"

"Oh, I pray before that every day, and ask the Lord to take my sins away."

"Then you do not think your sins are forgiven yet. How can you ask for forgiveness, and have it at the same time?"

"Do you mean to say then," she replied, with surprise, "that you have no sins?"

"I mean to say that my sins were atoned for, once for all, on the cross; and that, believing this, I have peace and remission of sins. My sins are all cast like a stone into the deep.

"But do you not sin sometimes?"

"Yes, but I do not take my daily sins of omission and commission to the priest or confessor, but to the throne of grace, where the risen and living Christ is now making intercession for me; and I confess them as a *child* to my *Father*."

She was silent; and so was I, inwardly praying for her.

Presently she looked up and said, "I do thank Him for dying for me. Is that what you want me to say?" "Do so," I said—"thank Him for His love in dying in your stead, and shedding His blood to wash your sins away."

"He *shall* have all my heart!" she exclaimed.

So saying, she knelt before the crucifix, and bowing gracefully and most reverently, she reproached herself for not putting Jesus first, and said, "Thou art worthy! Glory be to Thee, for Thy great love to me."

She had got a little light, but she was still very dark.

Then she rose from her knees, and once more turning to me, said, "Thank you so much! God bless you for your kindness and patience with me! I cannot tell you how much I thank you. Oh, I do thank you so much!"

"Dear friend, I cannot refuse your thanks, but I

should like to see you thanking God more than you thank me."

"Yes," she said, "I will. I will sing 'When I survey the wondrous cross.'"

She did not need to find the music, for she knew it by heart; so, sitting down, she began to sing, till the tears came into her eyes, and her voice broke down. "I never knew the meaning of these words before," she said; "'Sorrow and love flow mingled down.' How could I be so blind and ignorant? 'Love so amazing, so divine,' does 'demand my life, my soul, my all!' O Lord take it!"

After this, I had a few parting words with her, and pointing to the crucifix I said, "Remember, Christ is not on the cross now. He died; that is past. He is now risen, and has ascended up on high. The throne of grace is not the crucifix or the confessional, but where Christ sits—at the right hand of God; and we, as believers, may in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell. Have done, then, with this dead ritualism; you know better now. Testify for the glory of God."

W. H.



Holiness and Righteousness.—Holiness *repels* evil, righteousness *consumes* evil. If you drop kerosene upon a hot stove, the heat consumes it; if you drop water upon it, the heat repels the water. The first action is that of righteousness, the last that of holiness.

G. W. GY.



God's First Act after man had crucified His Son was to open a way into His presence—the veil was rent.

J. N. D.

The Course of Sin.



THE voyager enters a current which seems propitious, there is no apparent diversion from his course, his bark speeds well, his oar does not toil, nor his sail strain. In his confidence, all promises success. But it does not seem that he has advanced. A strange familiarity impresses his sense. Still current flows into current, while onward and buoyant is his track. Soon he feels an unnatural vibration. Where he glided he now whirls along. The truth seizes upon him—he is sweeping a whirlpool! Long since he has entered the verge of a maelstrom, and he is now the sport of its gyrations. No power is left his helm or mast; he is the trembling, unresisting prey. He hears the roar; he is drawn into the suck of the vortex. Not only the circle lessens, the very surface slopes. The central funnel and abyss, dark, heaving, smooth, vitreous, yawns. The mariner shrieks, the skiff is swallowed up, where the waters only separate to close; where the outermost attraction was but the minister to the famine of this devouring maw.

R. W. H.

You can no more blame your circumstances for your character than your mirror for your looks.

Divine Facts.



WHEN, in His Word, God states a plain fact, it is our wisdom to bow to it and believe it, even though our understanding may not, at the time, be able to grasp it, nor our experience exactly coincide with it. "God is His own interpreter," and to the soul that patiently waits upon Him He will, in His own time, most surely "make it plain." But should He never in this world be pleased to do so, it is for us to believe it all the same, because of its unerring Author.

If you take your Bible, and turn to the third chapter of John's Gospel, you will find in the last two verses, that God has there recorded four present, solid facts. Let us place them in order thus—

1. "The Father loveth the Son."
2. "And hath given all things into His hand."
3. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."
4. "He that believeth not on the Son the wrath of God abideth on him."

Now, I repeat, these are four facts; *i.e.*, they are no mere human opinions, nor are they based upon any experience in us. They are unalterable facts. How any fact, when believed, may affect you, is another thing: that is a matter of your feeling or experience. For instance, the news of the victorious entrance of the German forces into Paris, years since, produced, no doubt, a vast variety of experiences, as it reached the ears of different persons in different lands; but the fact remained unalterably the same. The experience was produced by the fact believed; the fact was not dependent upon the

experience. A Divine fact believed by the soul will be accompanied by a Divine effect in the soul. So we read, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John v. 10).

Take another illustration. A certain young man is to enter upon large possessions and high privileges when he comes of age. One morning his father addresses him thus: "Let me congratulate you, my son! You are of age to day." "Pardon me, father," he replies, "but I think you are mistaken." "How so?" enquires the astonished father.

"Why, for three reasons. In the first place I don't *feel* that I am twenty-one. Secondly, I was only this very morning looking at myself in the glass, and I'm sure I didn't look like twenty-one. Lastly, I know it to be the firm opinion of many of my very intimate companions that I can't possibly be more than about eighteen or nineteen at most! How can I therefore be of age? My friends do not think I am, and as for myself, I neither feel it, nor look like it!"

Now what, think you, would a wise father do in such a case? He would simply turn to the family register; and if the plain record there did not assure his foolish son, nothing could.

"But," you exclaim, "who would be so absurd as to talk like that?" I reply, Beware, lest you are found manifesting like folly, or worse. For no one can deny that there are multitudes of professed believers in Christ to-day, who pursue precisely the same line of argument, and that in regard of the plainest facts of God's Word. Now, if the father's written testimony in the family register is enough to assure the son of his real age, and that altogether apart from his feelings, surely the written Word of God, "that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,"

ought to be sufficient to give us full assurance of our eternal blessing. Notice in this verse (Matt. iv. 4) how Christ connects "It is written" with "the mouth of God;" for this is how faith ever reckons.

And now, for the sake of any troubled reader, let us look at the four facts, before referred to in John 3.

1. "The Father loveth the Son."

Now, do you believe that fact?

"Oh, yes!" you say, "I do."

But do you feel that the Father loves the Son?

"It is not what I feel," you reply, "I feel sure He does, for the simple reason that God's Word says He does. It is not a question of what I think or feel. It is a fact; and, as such, I believe it."

2. "And hath given all things into His hand."

"Well," you say, "and I firmly believe that fact."

But is it because you feel it, or because you see everything put into His hand?

"Neither," you reply, "but I am fully assured of it. God has declared it."

Now, then, pass on to the last fact.

4. "He that believeth not the Son . . . the wrath of God abideth on him."

Again, I enquire, Do you believe that fact also, viz., that the wrath of God abides upon the unbeliever? And again, perhaps, you answer in the affirmative. But supposing the unbeliever does not feel it! Ah, you respond, but the wrath abides upon him all the same for that. His feeling it would not make it true, neither would his not feeling it make it untrue. There stands the fact recorded, and "the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isa. xl. 8). "But," you say, "I am not an unbeliever—I really do believe on the Son of God." Well, then, just notice the fact which, before, I purposely omitted, viz.:—

3. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

Now, in a preceding verse in this chapter we read: "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (v. 33). And remember that God has not only given a distinct testimony concerning His beloved Son; but has, again and again, stated the plainest facts concerning those who really believe on Him. "If I could only believe I was saved, I should be saved," said an anxious soul one day, "but I have not enough faith for that yet." Now, plausible as this may look at first sight, it is not the gospel. God doesn't say, "If you can only have faith enough to believe that you have eternal life, you shall have it." That would be to make a saviour of your faith, and to shut Christ out. But, believing on His Son, He states a simple fact about you, viz., that you have everlasting life, and leaves you simply to set to your seal that "God is true." If the unbeliever has the wrath of God abiding on him, whether he feels it or not, so in the thoughts of God, has the true believer everlasting life, whether he thinks he has the feeling that rightly belongs to it or not.—*Extracted.*

GEO. C.

Our Life Lesson.

MOSES' life consisted of 120 years (Deut. xxxiv. 7), divided into three forties.

In the first forty years he was learning to be something.

In the second forty he was learning to be nothing.

In the third forty he was learning that God was everything.

K E P T.

THE fishermen of Brittany, so we are told, are wont to utter this simple prayer when they launch their boats on the deep: "Keep me, my God; my boat is so small, and Thy ocean is so wide."

How touchingly beautiful is the prayer for us every day! "Keep me, my God; my boat is so small"—I am so weak, so helpless, so easily carried by the winds and tossed by the waves. "And Thy ocean is so wide"—the perils so many, the rocks so frequent, the currents and the tides of evil so treacherous, the icy mountains of disaster so threatening. Keep me, my God, keep me; my boat is so small and Thy winds are so fierce, Thy waves are so high, Thy waters are so deep, Thy ocean is so wide, I am so buffeted about by sharp adversity, so driven before the storms of grief, so swept by the stormy euroclydon of temptation—"Keep me, my God, keep me!"

G. B. F. H.

"I can die for Him."

IT is the period of religious persecution in Rome. A crowd has assembled near the prison to witness the execution of the Christian. The door of the prison opens, and the prisoner—a young lady—is brought to the stake.

The fagots are placed around her, but before the match is applied a priest cries, "Wilt thou recant?"

The face of the prisoner was pallid, but she returned an answer in a tone clear and firm.

That answer was "No!"

"But why?" said the priest. "Thou canst not give a reason for thy belief."

The face of the Christian lighted up with almost heavenly radiance as she said: "I can't *argue* for Jesus, but I can *die* for Him."

"Blow upon my Garden."



"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."—S. S. iv. 16.



THE prayer is—"blow," and the result is—"flow." Lord, if Thou blowest, my heart floweth out to Thee! "Draw me, we will run after Thee." We know right well what it is to have grace in our souls, and yet to feel no movement of it. We may have much faith in existence, yet none in exercise; much fire of love, yet no love flaming forth; and much patience in the heart, though at the moment we do not display it. The only plan by which our graces can be set in active exercise is by the Holy Spirit breathing upon us. He has the power to quicken, arouse, and bestir our faculties and graces, so that holy fruits within us become perceptible to others. There are states of the atmosphere in which the fragrance of flowers is much more diffused than at other times. The rose owes much to the zephyr which wafts its perfume. How sweet is even a field of beans after a shower! We may have much spice of piety, and yet yield small fragrance unless the living power of the Holy Spirit moves upon us.

(Old Author.)

The Worker's Dream.



“ I HAVE laboured in vain,” a worker said,
 And his brow was marked by care ;
 “ I have laboured in vain.” He bowed down his head,
 And bitter and sad were the tears he shed—
 He was almost in despair.

“ I am weary and worn, and my hands are weak,
 And my courage is well nigh gone ;
 For few give heed to the words I speak,
 And in vain for a promise of fruit I seek,
 Where the seed of the Word is sown.”

But his confidence still in God was kept,
 Though his spirit with grief was stirred,
 Till a silent calm o'er his spirit crept,
 And the night grew dark, and at last he slept,
 And dreamed that he saw and heard.

He thought in his dream that his soul took flight
 To a blessed and bright abode ;
 And he saw a throne of dazzling light,
 And harps were ringing, and robes were white,
 Made white in the precious blood.

And he saw such a countless throng around
 As he never had seen before—
 Their brows with jewels of light were crowned,
 And sorrow and sighing no place had found,
 For the troubles of time were o'er.

Then a ransomed saint came forth and said,

“Thank God for thy work that is past!
I am *one* that thy faithful words have led
The path of life to love and tread :

They have brought me home at last ! ”

And the worker gazed on the dear one's face :

He had seen that face on earth,
When, with anxious heart, in a certain place,
He had clearly told a Saviour's grace,
And men's need of a second birth.

Then the worker smiled, and the angel said,

“Go forth to thy work again ;
It is not in vain that the seed is shed ;
If only *one* soul to the cross is led,
Thy labour is not in vain.”

And at last he woke, and his knee he bent

In grateful child-like prayer ;
And he prayed till an answer of peace was sent,
And Faith and Hope as a rainbow bent
O'er the clouds of fear and care.

And he rose in joy, and his eye was bright,

His sorrow and grief had fled,
And his soul was calm and his heart was light,
For his hands were strong in his Master's might,
As forth to his work he sped.

The will of God will be done ; but, oh, the unspeakable loss for us if we have missed our opportunity of doing it !

The Evangelist.

A TRUE ambassador of Christ will rejoice to preach the Gospel. He sees the light of Eternity flashing in the faces of His auditors. And when, in firm reliance on the aid of the Holy Spirit, he opens his lips before that assemblage, when his fervid heart pours forth a torrent of convicting truth made red-hot by holy emotion, when every word is illustrated by the eloquence of an eager eye and vigorous right arm, when warning and entreaty and persuasion are all combined, and when the preacher becomes the beaming and burning impersonation of God's gracious love, then preaching becomes a joy that an archangel might covet. This is no mere fiction of imagination. Such supreme delight is not confined to the masters of eloquence; they are within the reach of the humblest preacher who will saturate his mind with God's truth, make himself God's mouthpiece, and let God speak through him.



The Sower.

YN Matthew the order of the amount of yield is reversed. There it begins with the greatest, "one hundredfold." In Mark it begins with the least, "thirtyfold." In Mark the Lord is introduced as the *typical* servant, so the order there seems fitting, leading on to that amount which *might* be reached. Matthew, whose gospel is more dispensational in character, may suggest the decline in fruitfulness to be expected as the dispensation advances.

* Light on the subject: *

Parables, Similes, Expositions, Reflections,

(Continued.)

By J. N. BARRETT.

—♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦—

Swallow Holes.

HERE and there in the Western District (Vic.) are curious holes and hollows in the land, known to the people generally as "swallow-holes." During a heavy rainfall these holes fill, but speedily empty again, the water passing away to underground reservoirs or streams.

Such swallow-holes remind us of Christians who drink abundantly of the rain from heaven, and of the well-springs and flowing brooks of wisdom, but retain nothing, and consequently are useless to others. If they would overflow in spiritual abundance, all around might be refreshed; or if they stored their supplies, the thirsty might know where to come for help and blessing. But they take all, and neither give to others nor keep for themselves—"swallow-holes" upon whom the gracious abundance of heavenly supply is spent, wasted, and lost.

This is a serious reproach in a dry and thirsty land like this wilderness, where the believer was designed to be a channel of refreshment.

The Rung Willow.

ON the bank of Barker's Creek I noticed a fine willow tree hanging its long pendulous branches over the water, and tinted with the delicate green of spring's early promise. It looked fair and flourishing, as it had done for many successive spring

times, for it had grown to the dimensions and dignity of a noble tree. But it was "rung"—the fatal axe had circled the trunk, and the tree was as good as dead. In the mild and humid spring weather the tree looked green, but the summer heat would try it, and reveal its actual state. There stood the tree—dead amongst the living, yet looking as vigorous as any.

What a picture of the deceived professor, having a name to live, but dead all the while! Present circumstances enable him to make as good a show as a true Christian, but sin has done its deadly work, and in a short time—for the triumph of the wicked is short, the ways of God, and the judgments of God will reveal the truth, and like a dry log he will be cast into the burning flame—for how could such a tree be transplanted to the Paradise of God?

Saving or Losing the Life.

(MARK viii. 35).

"**F**OR My sake and the Gospel's" puts Christ and the Gospel far above everything else. Nor does this refer to evangelists or special persons only. The application is as wide as "whosoever." What an awakening thought this should be to ease-loving Christians! Surely it should prick their torpid consciences into sensibility.

Is the life to be saved? Then it must be scattered, spent, lost. It must be lost to its owner that Christ and the Gospel may possess it. Christ gave His life for many that they might give Him theirs in return, and unless thus surrendered, those lives are lost.

A candle is of no use until it is lighted; then it gives its light to all in the house. The process, indeed, is a destructive one, for the candle flames its life away. But how much better this is than

being saved in a box! The candle only *lives* as it burns. In the box it is a dead, useless thing. By saving its life it loses it, for it has no life at all. Only in losing its life for others does it attain and fulfil the purpose of its existence.

Ebb and Flow.

CHRISTIAN life should always be at spring tide, high and full.

"Such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam."

Too often, however, an ebb sets in, and by slow degrees the fulness subsides, and the power runs out, until, like stranded boats, all useful services are stopped, and the natural heart and character become exposed like a beach strewn with sea-wrack and worthless rubbish, offensive and unwholesome.

The ebb is gradual, and perhaps unnoticed at first, but it is soon too evident. Then, oh for a turn in the tide! Thank God, the tide will turn when the power of Christ moves on the waters, and He will bring it back to full again, and keep it full if only the heart abides in Him—life abundant, joy full, peace like a river, righteousness like waves of the sea, and service unwearied and abounding.

We may have fluctuations still, but let it be our desire to be in spiritual fulness and power maintained by Christ.

Self-control.

A MILITARY instructor in —, named W—, remarked in my hearing that he naturally had "a most vile temper," but that the exercises of the drill-room, and association with other men, taught him self-control, so that he mastered the evil.

Such self-mastery must not be confounded with the subjugation of self, which Christianity teaches. In these cases self is not subdued to God, nor is it the lowly character of Christ which replaces it. For expediency and for politic reasons the vile temper may be rendered submissive, but this is far different from the crucifixion of self. Indeed, the subjection of temper may only be the result of *self* dominating and controlling the man for some other purpose of its own. It is temper under the mastery of self, not self under the judgment of God.

Man would enthrone self, and let Christ hang on the cross, at the same time improving and decorating self the traitor, that it may seem to have worthiness to rule. Let self be on the cross, and Christ on the throne.

Mirrors.

A PERFECT mirror shows objects as they are ; hence the looking-glass has always been regarded as a symbol of truth. The natural man cannot discern his moral features with clearness, any more than he can see his own face. A mirror is therefore necessary. Such a mirror is the law which reveals to a man that he is a transgressor. The preaching of the Word is also the holding up of a mirror, into which the hearer may cast a hasty and inattentive glance, or on which he may fix his earnest gaze—good for him if he thus learns the truth about himself.

Much preaching is like a faulty mirror, in which the beholder views a distorted image of himself. The mirror may be badly constructed, or it may be designedly not a plane surface. So some preachers mislead through imperfect acquaintance with God and His Word. Others, however, are agents of the

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"Always confident."
 "Always abounding." "Always rejoicing."

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..

"I have set the Lord always before me."

"I am with you always, unto the end."

Thou art my God.
 * My times *
are in Thy hand.
 1904.] (PSA. XXXI. 14, 15.) [1904.

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“YES!”

(Rom. x. 9, 10.)



A YOUTH, convicted and in tears,
 After a gospel meeting stays;
 Hard struggling with his pride and fears,
 As tenderly the preacher says,
 With yearning heart and kind caress:
 “Which shall it be, lad—‘No!’ or ‘Yes?’”

“No!” growls the tyrant, “you’ve no choice,
 I’ve bound you hand and foot too tight.”
 “Yes!” breathes the gracious Spirit’s voice,
 “Say ‘Yes!’ and I will put to flight
 Hell’s fiend, and heal your soul’s distress,
 And snap your bonds. Dear boy, say—‘Yes!’”

No!—Yes! Yes!—No! Which shall it be?
 High Heaven for his answer waits,
 And hearts around pray fervently
 As still he halts and hesitates.
 One simple word can free and bless
 That youth for aye!—Will he say “Yes?”

The white flag waves! The strife is done!
 The enemy no more resists;
 The citadel for Christ is won,
 And in His ranks that lad enlists:
 His heart believes; his lips confess;
 To God, to man, he answers—“Yes!”

Warm, ready hands grip his with joy;
 The preacher faithful counsel gives;
 Then, with a spring, the glad, free boy
 Speeds home, and to his relatives
 Declares with joy he can’t express,
 How grace inclined him to say “Yes!”

That night 'mid praise he sinks to rest ;
 Up with the dawn, he looks on high,
 Pleads for the day one sweet request :
 That God will so his need supply—
 That to the truth his *lips* profess
 His *life* may give an answering "Yes!"

Then strong in Him Who lives to keep,
 Forth to his daily work he goes ;
 And, though the colour oft may leap
 To his young brow, he bravely shows
 To each, to all, he is no less
 Than safe and saved since he said "Yes!"

Oh, happy day! Oh, happy day!
 How cheerfully he bears his cross!
 How brightly beams the upward way!
 How all else seems but worthless dross!
 "Oh, Lord," he murmurs, "who would guess
 How changed all is by last night's "Yes!"

Thus daily while he is below,
 The Lord will be his Guide and Friend ;
 Teach him in grace and truth to grow,
 And bring him safe Home at the end :
 To share, above, the blessedness
 Of all who here in faith say—"Yes!"

S. J. B. C.

