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SANDS OF TIME



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THE VALUE OF THE SOUL.

WE cannot tell you its value, because it is worth more than the world, or ten thousand of them put together. “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

The loss of wife, or child, business, or property, might make you miserable for the rest of your days, but what is that to the loss of your soul for ever and ever?

One has said that it would be worth while for all the world to go the whole circuit of the world to save a single soul; so precious is it.

Ask yourself for a moment whether you think the matter of your own soul of so supreme importance that nothing else you can think of should stand before it in your estimation? Put this question to yourself very seriously.

God has thought about our souls. He gave His only begotten Son, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.” (John iii. 16.)

The Lord’s servants also take an interest in souls, and preach the gospel far and wide proclaiming, “Salvation for the sinner,

salvation for the lost." They exclaim, "Be ye reconciled to God, 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." (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.)

The Lord's words are plain enough, "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

Do not disregard these words. If you shut your ears to them, or your eyes to your need, a little while will convince you how foolish you have been, and how awful a thing it is to lose one's soul!

Unless you receive the forgiveness of your sins, they will remain upon you in the blackness of darkness for ever. There is no light there, nor are there any companions.

There is no forgiveness after death; but "in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be." (Eccles. xi. 3.)

Thousands of men and women are going on day after day as though they had no soul to care about, no eternity before them, and there is neither a heaven nor a hell!

But, dear reader, why be lost? Why not turn to the Lord and be saved?

"As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

Christ is the Saviour of sinners. Oh, hear his voice. Come to Him now. He never rejected a sinner who came to Him as such, but do not put off the question of your salvation, lest you lose your precious soul.

Harden not your heart, but come while you may. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." (Heb ii. 3.) Escape there is none, but as surely as you come to Christ He will receive you.

Do not be deceived, the days of the pilgrimage of believers are nearly over, their hopes are shortly to be realised, but the door of salvation will then be closed against all who have failed to accept God's offer of forgiveness and peace, and have not entrusted their precious souls to Christ. (2 Tim. i. 12.)

Dear reader, which will it be with you? Oh! cast yourself upon the grace of the Lord, if still unsaved, He will forgive and save you though your sins be as scarlet, or red like crimson; but there is no forgiveness to him who refuseth to listen to Him who speaks from heaven, and who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn to Him and live.

An awful day lies before this poor world when Rev. xxii. 11 will be fulfilled.

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still;

and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.)

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Read Luke xv.)

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

H. T.

A LESSON FROM 'THE LEMMING.

THE lemming is a rodent, in size between that of a rat and a mouse. Its home is in Norway, and they are so prolific that their numbers are immense.

By a mysterious instinct, every few years the greater number of them set off in a particular direction—the same as other

swarms had previously gone—towards the same point of the Atlantic Sea, about 200 miles from their starting place.

The journey occupies sometimes as long as two years; during which time they swim rivers and lakes, pass over habitations and mountains, devouring everything that comes in their way. They are themselves followed and devoured in numbers by larger animals and birds of the air; nevertheless they increase by the way, and eventually, undiminished, reach their destination. It is a strange fatality, but on a calm, favourable day they take to the sea, and swim on and on in the same direction, until they are exhausted, and all perish, not one ever returning to shore again. We cannot imagine their number, but in 1868 a ship sailed through the struggling host, even 15 hours. Wholesale suicides! and how strange! Yes! but what is stranger still, is that those little creatures describe what is true of thousands of men and women who follow in a continuous stream down to the same place of destruction as hosts before them; and we cannot but think that these lemmings are intended as a warning to such. “Each wandering in a different way, but all the downward road.” “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the

ways of death.” “For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” (Prov. xiv. 12; Matt. vii. 13.)

We therefore affectionately but earnestly raise the question: Are you going on with the many to the place of eternal death and judgment; or are you bound with others to that of eternal life and blessing with Christ in glory? Every step you take is in one or other of these directions. If you are being led on by the enemy of your soul in the way he has led millions before you, you should take alarm at once and forsake your leader. You have an evil heart which is capable of deceiving you in the most serious of all matters; besides which all your sins are written in God's book.

You need a great Saviour. Such an one is willing to save you, and you have but to come to, or believe in Him, to be saved. “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”

If you desire to be saved, we are happy to tell you that God can righteously forgive you and blot out your sins from His sight and remembrance for ever. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. iii. 26.) “The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John i. 7.) “Believe

on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 31.) From our hearts we desire for you, if unconverted, that you may at once turn to the Lord and live.

A WARNING FROM SCRIPTURE.

“Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?”

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.” (Heb. ii. 3.) “He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark xvi. 16.)

“There is none other name under heaven [but that of Christ] given among men whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.)

H. T.

“ THAT WHICH IS LOST.”

(LUKE XV. 4.)

IN the Highlands of Scotland, on those wild and rugged mountains, the home of the red deer, a strange sight is seen at times. While scanning a distant hill-side with a telescope for deer, the sportsman will sometimes observe a moving white speck. On questioning the keeper beside him, he is informed that it is *a lost sheep*. So lost that it is past recovery. Terraces, or flats, have been formed on the hill-side by the action of rain and weather. The

sheep, looking over the top, has noticed how green and fresh the grass appears on the terrace beneath, and without thinking of getting back, has leapt down, to find, after it has eaten the little patch of grass, that retreat is impossible. Neither can the shepherd reach the sheep, the descent is too perilous. *It is lost.* It may be that the poor silly sheep can see and reach another terrace, or even two or more beneath. The story is repeated; the little patch of grass is soon grazed, *and then?* When the last blade is consumed on the last terrace, the poor sheep must either die of starvation, or casting itself over the edge be dashed to pieces.

And so it is with the poor worldling. The pleasures of sin lead him on, ever offering him something fresh, or more agreeable; like the next flat which the poor sheep sees beneath it. But for sheep or sinner it is a *downward path*, like the man in Luke x. 30. Oh, poor pleasure seeker, what will your *end* be? The *last* grass flat of pleasure will soon be reached. *You may be on it now.* The *last* blade will soon be consumed, the *last* bit of pleasure enjoyed, *and then?* What about your *soul's eternity?* Or it may be profit, or renown, yes, even *religious* reputation that you are set upon gaining; and when you have obtained the

last bit of either, or all—*what then?* What about your *soul's eternity?*

But, thank God, unlike the lost sheep on the Scotch hill-side, you are not yet beyond the good Shepherd's reach. He has gone “into the mountains and sought that which is gone astray.” (Matt. xviii. 11–13, spoken about a little child, and my reader may be one.)

“And none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed ;
Or how dark was the night that the Lord passed
thro’

’Ere He found His sheep that was lost.”

He gave His life for the sheep. He went under the dark waters of death to save them. And now He would put thee upon His strong shoulders, and carry thee all the way home to glory, rejoicing over thee. Or, if thou art a little lamb, carry thee in His bosom, pressing thee to His tender heart, that thou mightest know the deep fond love that fills His heart for thee.

Do you object to be *cared for* with *such* care, to be *loved* with *such* love, to be *saved* at *such* cost, my reader? Oh, do but say in thy heart :

“Saviour, I do trust Thee—
Trust Thee with my soul !
Guilty, lost, and helpless,
Thou dost make me whole.

There is none in heaven
 Or on earth like Thee ;
 Thou hast died for sinners,
Therefore, Lord, for me."

W. G. B.

ARE YOU SAVED ?

A WORD TO BELIEVERS.

“**W**HAT!” said a gentleman to whom we put this question as he started to his feet. “How strange to ask me, ‘Are you saved?’” Thirty years ago, sir, I had a lady and gentleman under my care, to bring them to London on a special legal business, and scarcely had we settled down in the train before the lady turned to me and asked that very question, Are you saved? I answered, of course, “No, madam; nobody can know they are saved till they die.” “But,” she replied, “yes, they can; I know, so does my son; and you may know, too, if you will take the Lord’s word for it.”

This gentleman is only a sample of many. An old man of nearly 80 told us he had been praying to be saved nearly all his life, and he did not then know whether he was or not. Some think that only a few privileged ones are permitted of God to

know assurance of their salvation. Even a well-known minister used often to tell his congregation that God was pleased to put some of his children to bed in the dark, that is, in darkness of soul and in distress.

But how great a mistake. The knowledge of one's salvation is the common property, so to speak, of all believers in Christ. It is expressed in the simple gospel message, "What must I do to be saved?" immediately answered by "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." "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." (Acts xvi. 30, 31 ; 1 John ii. 12 ; John iii. 16.) "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The truth is that every sinner who comes to Christ, or believes in Christ, or trusts in Christ, is received and forgiven. His sins are blotted out as a thick cloud from God's sight, and God will never recall them to His remembrance. Never. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth him from all sin, and he is clean every whit, beyond all accusation of men or devil. God

reckons the feeblest believer as His child, a saint amongst saints, and he is loved by God with the same love wherewith He loves His Son. If you have any doubts, God's word gives no authority for them, and He requires nothing of you than that you believe, and it would be your wisdom to turn away from every question that may arise in your heart, or thought that may come from your understanding, and accept God's own statements wonderful as they are. He that believeth "hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.)

As you give God credit for His goodness, you will become capable of enjoying the Father's love, your peace will deepen, and Christ will become increasingly dear to you. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John xx. 29.)

UNCERTAINTY.

Be gone, depart this unbelief !
 My shameless doubts I bid remove ;
 I'll suffer them no more to grieve
 The Lord whom I do really love !

PROCLAMATION !

Be it known unto you that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

A GOOD HOPE.

DO you hope, not knowing whether you are saved? Or do you hope, because, although you know it, you are not yet in the realisation of the blessings of salvation?

Of course, this question is addressed to believers, and does not apply to those who have not trusted their souls to Christ, but are still unsaved, unforgiven.

Such are going on—not to the complete enjoyment of eternal salvation and blessedness, but—alas! to the portion that awaits those who either reject Christ, or neglect the overtures which God is repeatedly making to them. To them the word is, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3), which can never be answered for escape is impossible. The word hope in scripture should be understood scripturally.

Take the following passages for example. God hath, “according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.” “Whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.” (Acts xiii. 23, 26.) “Be it known unto you therefore,

men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Vers. 38, 39.)

We understand from these passages that the Saviour's promise to Israel had then come, and that after His death and ascension, forgiveness of sins and salvation were assured to every one who believed in Him.

Mark the words, "Be it known," "All that believe." No believer can therefore rightly place himself outside these blessings.

They who believed in the apostles' days certainly knew this for themselves, as when Paul wrote to them he addressed them as saints, and said, "Unto us which are saved," "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (1 Cor. i. 18, Eph. ii. 8), and thus assembled themselves together, as a saved and happy people. (Eph. i., &c.)

For what then did those believers hope? This is made plain in Romans viii. Their hope (and ours) is the same as that of the whole creation, only with this difference, that we, Christians, are saved already as to our souls. The lower creatures need not soul salvation, neither will they be raised again, but there is a hope for them of deliverance from the bondage of corruption to which they have

been subjected. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Ver. 19.)

All creation is therefore now still waiting for that blessed event, and we believers are waiting, or hoping, too. God even styles Himself "the God of hope" in chapter xv. in view of the blessing that will come upon His earthly people by-and-by.

Observe what gladness there is in anticipation of it. "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people," "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people." (Vers. 10-13.) The earth will share in the blessing of Israel, the blessing of the heathen and the blessing of the saints of God of the present dispensation when they are manifested with Christ.

The wilderness shall then blossom like a rose—the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the lion eat straw like the ox. (Isa. xi.) How different a state to the present one, dear believer. Thus we are already saved, IN HOPE (as the revised version reads) and are left waiting for the coming of our Lord from heaven to take us to be with Him in glory and fulfil these purposes on earth—for which moment the Lord Himself too is waiting.

May you then give to the winds all your unbelieving fears, and hope to the end for

the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” (1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. xv. 13.)

“But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” (Rom. viii. 25.)

“Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.” (2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.)

It is to this effect that the late Sir E. Denny wrote in the following beautiful poem:—

“O what a bright and blessed world,
This groaning earth of ours will be;
When from its throne the tempter hurl'd
Shall leave it all, O Lord, to Thee!

“But brighter far that world above,
Where we as we are known shall know;

And, in the sweet embrace of love,
Reign o'er this ransom'd earth below.

“O blessed Lord! with weeping eyes,
That blissful hour we wait to see;
While every worm or leaf that dies,
Tells of the curse and calls for Thee.

“Come, Saviour, then o'er all below
Shine brightly from Thy throne above;
Bid heaven and earth Thy glory know
And all creation feel Thy love.”

“THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS.”

(LUKE XV. 1, 2.)

THERE are only two classes of men, those who draw near and hear Christ, and those who hold aloof. “Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.” Unsav'd reader, have *you* ever done so? You have heard what others said about Him, who, it may be, knew Him not. You may listen to your own heart, which totally misrepresents Him; but have you drawn near *unto* HIM to *hear* HIM? Remember that “the hour now is when the dead (souls) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear live.” It is He who speaks in this wonderful chapter. Then draw near unto Him now to hear Him.

“This man receiveth sinners, and eateth

with them.” Did He deny the charge? No, He admitted it fully—it was His glory to receive them. In doing so the glory of His divine origin shone out. “He could not be hid.” He was in the midst of sinners. How would He treat them? He would receive them. How could *the Son of such a Father* do otherwise?—the Father whose portrait He draws in the third section of this parable. Will He refuse you? Have you ever *drawn near* to Him to ascertain?

“I am too bad,” you say. What, too bad to be a sinner? Are you sure you are not too good? You may be too good, but you cannot be too bad. Thank God for that. That robe, that *best* robe, has covered the chief of sinners, the thief on the cross, a Mary Magdalene, a woman in the city, which was a sinner. That Shepherd sought *them*, that “woman” (figure of the Holy Ghost) found *them*, that Father receiveth *them*, and art *thou* too vile? You wrong the blessed Three.

“Oh, but He was on earth amongst sinners then, and He is in heaven separate from sinners now,” do you say?

But is He changed? Has He ceased to own a Saviour’s heart, or to do a Saviour’s part? Nay, nay, you wrong Him. The very last words He spake to us from heaven He spake in the character of “Jesus,” the name

He received because “He shall save his people from their sins.” And what did He say? “Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. xxii. 17.) He wills—will you?

And why is He in heaven? As the evidence of His finished work accepted. For whom? For SINNERS

“AND EATETH WITH THEM.” (Ver. 2.)

That is, holds communion with them—with *sinner*s. That He, the Lord of glory, should partake with such. Should bring them to participate in His joys. As we read, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev. iii. 20.) That is, that to “any man” amongst self-satisfied, religious professors, who say, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” but whom He sees “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” (Rev. iii. 17.) To any who will hear and open He will come in. And people do not knock on the inside of a door. He is outside. And art thou of those who are keeping the door of their heart barred against the Saviour, and He seeking admission? Beware that He rise not up

and close His door against all thy importunity. (See Luke xiii. 24-30.)

On one occasion it was said that He was gone to be the guest of a sinner. And on another—"How is it that He eateth and drinketh with sinners?" But the Saviour answered, "*I came to call sinners to repentance.*" Oh, the condescension of grace! How blessedly the Lord "condescended to men of low estate." To you, to me.

W. G. B.

THE WAY OF CAIN.

"**A**ND Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." (Gen. iv. 8.) There have been many "Cains" since who have had neither the opportunity nor the inclination to go as far as the act of murder, and yet who closely resemble their prototype in other respects.

But what then? Do you shrink at the idea of being called a murderer, and yet think at all well of your heart, when God says, "*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*"? (Matt.

xv.) Every one is born with a heart like Cain's. The word that said, "Not as Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother" (1 John iii.), says also, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."

"*THE WAY OF CAIN*" (Jude 11) is a comprehensive title. Under it may be ranged all the false, though sometimes plausible, theories about God and man, which owe their common origin to *the substitution of human thoughts for divine revelation*, and the admitting the presumptuous idea that a fallen being may have a *will* in the matter of religion. It is not pure, unmixt error, nor is it only the grosser violation of divine precept and human morals. It is a name which may be inscribed on the long catalogue of Papal errors—which Mohammedanism bears on its front—which the Vedas and Shastras of India, and, in short, the text-book of every false religious system, ancient and modern, of every nation under heaven, carries on its title-page.

In our own land, "THE WAY OF CAIN" is thronged by myriads, both of deceivers and deceived.

The Socinian despiser of the blood of Jesus—the despiser of dominion, "speaking evil of dignities," and carrying the infidel spirit of democracy both into things

spiritual and temporal, who, in bringing “a railing accusation” against divinely constituted powers, does that against “the ministers of God,” which Michael the archangel durst not, even against Satan—the Antinomian perverter of the grace of God, living in open sin and uncleanness and talking of “electing love”—the mocker at holy things, “walking after his own ungodly lusts”—*these* are some of Cain’s modern brethren.

But are such the only ones among the nominal christian body? Ah! no. We are living in days when multitudes, professing to believe on Him who was foreshadowed by the sacrifice of Abel, are yet in their hearts standing before God in all the presumption and self-righteousness of his elder brother.

What an awful delusion is the *nominal Christianity* of our time—the unsanctified benevolence, the sickly sentimentalism, the spurious charity—the “*form* of godliness,” which would screen a pagan assemblage of vices (2 Tim. iii. 1–6); how awful is all this!

And if Cain put his fruits in the place of the burnt-offering, in what do those essentially differ from him, who are now fast returning to trust in ordinances, who direct the poor lost sinner to the “sacraments,”

“the church,” the “priesthood,” and the like “broken cisterns,” instead of to the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness in the BLOOD OF CHRIST.

Abel “being dead yet speaketh.” He speaks to all these characters. He speaks to *you*. If an unconverted person, as of old he talked with his brother, so does he now talk to *you*—of blood that cleanseth from all sin—of faith that once and for ever justifies its possessor—of a way to God in which you shall be eternally welcome.

God said, “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” (Gen. iv. 10.) But there is a “blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (Heb. xii. 24.) Believe in it, and *you* too shall find mercy. But if the judgment of Cain was so inexpressibly terrible and if he vainly tried to evade the question, “Where is Abel thy brother?” remember that the unbelieving world will soon have to answer to God for shedding the blood of His Son. “*Where is Abel thy brother?*” will once more be demanded (and how soon?) of those who have heard, and obeyed not, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

SOWING AND REAPING.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters ; for thou shalt find it after many days.” (Eccl. xi. 1.)

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psa. cxxvi. 5, 6.)

Sowing in tears ! sowing in tears !

As the day's bright hours go by ;
Reaping in joy in after years
The fruit of many a sigh.

Sowing in tears ! sowing in tears !

How many alas ! there are
Sowing the seed with hopes and fears,
Scattering it near and far !

Reaping “in joy !” reaping “in joy !”

Yes, some are doing so ;
Reaping “in joy,” the fruit they sowed
With a sorrow none may know.

So Christian, if sowing with tears of grief,
If casting the seed away,
O'er the angry and surging waves of life,
Still watch, and wait, and pray.

There is One who has seen where the seedlet fell,
And has watched thy bitter tears ;
But to learn the lessons of *patience* well,
It may take thee long, long years !

Then “doubtless” with heartfelt joy thou'lt come
From the fields thy toil has swept ;
When the burden and heat of the day is done,
And the heart's last tears are wept !

“JOY IN HEAVEN.”

(LUKE XV. 7, 10.)

JOY in heaven ! What produces it ? The repentance of ONE *sinner*. Marvellous that *heaven* should be so stirred by what produces so little commotion on *earth*. That there should be joy *in heaven* over what produces little else but contempt in the world.

An heir is born to some powerful sovereign, or such an one is married, or ascends the throne, and there is great rejoicing and merry-making on earth. Some mighty conqueror returns at the head of his victorious armies, there is great rejoicing on earth, but such matters receive little notice in heaven. Some poor, broken-down, miserable wreck of a man or a woman on a heap of filthy straw, in some tumble-down garret or hovel, turns their face towards heaven and say, “Father, I have sinned,” and *all heaven rings again with joy*.

And where is the source and spring of this joy ? In the heart of the blessed (that is, happy) God. “There is joy *in the presence of* the angels of God over one sinner

that repenteth." Who is in their presence, and in whose presence are they? In that of God. That is where the joy is, from which all heaven catches the tone.

And only to think that it is not the faultless, self-righteous Pharisee that produces this joy; it is the repentance of a *sinner* that does so—of *a* sinner? Yes, there is joy in heaven over ONE sinner that repenteth. Will you, my unconverted reader, yield heaven this joy? *Your* repentance would do so. Do you ask, "What is repentance?" It is that change of mind which godly sorrow works. Not the sorrow of the world, that works death, as in the case of Judas. A change of mind as to God, that whereas you thought Him hard and exacting, you own Him to be just, and merciful, and gracious. That whereas you thought yourself righteous, and it may be were even religious, you own yourself to be a sinner, to be utterly without claim upon Him on the ground of anything you are or have done, and cast yourself unreservedly upon His mercy.

A young gentleman, the possessor of ample fortune and estate, lay on his couch dying. A wild course of dissipation had thus early ruined his constitution and brought on a fatal malady. Beside him sat his uncle, a christian man, earnestly

pleading with him, and setting forth the *freeness* of God's grace. The young man held the remains of an orange, which he had just sucked, in his hand. “What,” he said, “uncle, do you mean to say that God will receive *me*, a sinner like me, as empty and valueless to Him as this orange? Why it would be ungentlemanly, as it were, to offer myself to Him in such a worthless plight. Do you mean to say He would take me as I am?” “Yes, I do.” “Then,” said the dying man, as he let the empty orange skin drop to the floor, “I will let Him take me.”

Dost thou love the name of Jesus?
 Wilt thou trust thyself to Him?
 Canst thou say, “My Saviour Jesus,”
 Though thine eyes are now so dim?
 Fear not thou! the blood of Jesus
 Cleanses thee from all thy sin,
 In the mighty name of Jesus
 Life, anew, thou may'st begin.

(H. K. B.)

W. G. B.

“THE POOR MAN'S DINNER.”

I HAD a long conversation the other day with a butcher, on the rails to Derby, on the reason why men smoke and drink. This led us to the subject of the

bitter misery that sin produces, even in this life, and the various attempts that men make to smother conscience and drown sorrow. The butcher had just lost his wife, was left with two little children, had passed through some trouble of conscience ; but, what was worse, he often took too much drink. In short we were both agreed that one great reason why men drink, is the misery and burthen of sin. He owned it was a wretched thing thus to go on from sin to sin ; and that solemn word of God sounded heavy in his ears, “The drunkard shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” I found him much interested in the things of religion, and wishful to converse upon them. I found he purposed, at some *future* time, to make a firm resolution to cast off his sins and become religious. Alas ! how many are now in hell, who once had the same intention as this butcher. He evidently thought a little striving of his own, at any time, would do all that is required.

“Well now,” said I, “man is certainly in a wretched condition through sin ; but, how do you think he is to get saved from this guilt and misery ?”

“Well, you know,” said the butcher, “it will not do for a man to go on in his sins until he dies, will it ? He must strive

hard to give up all his bad ways, and live to God.” I replied, “He will never save himself by his striving in that way.”

“What!” said he, “do you mean to say a man must not strive?” “As long as he does strive, in that way,” said I, “he is a rejecter of Christ.” I saw the poor man was evidently trusting in his future strivings. “Explain yourself,” said he. “Whatever do you mean?—A man striving is a man rejecting the gospel of Christ! What can you mean?” said he.

I replied, “I will illustrate what I mean. Suppose you have gone on in sin and drunkenness until you have brought your family to starvation; you have not a farthing to buy them food, and you are too ill to make the least effort, when a friend comes to your house, spreads your table with plenty and begs you to eat. If then you say, ‘No, I must strive to get food for myself,’ would not you be rejecting the kindness of your friend? And would not this rejection of his love continue as long as ever you continue your striving? And is it not so with the lost sinner? Man is so bad that he really does go sinning on until he dies. Is he not as helpless as the starving man? God has come to his rescue—God has given His own Son to meet his deepest need, as a lost sinner, by the death

of the cross. He died to deliver us, because we could not possibly save ourselves. God, the Friend above all friends, has come in Christ to our house of wretchedness and sin ; and He, in pure love and pity, has spread the table of salvation—all things are ready. Oh ! it is God that beseeches poor dying sinners to eat the bread of life spread before them. ‘Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.’ The kindness of God to perishing sinners has now been shewn by the death of Jesus. Now pardon and deliverance are preached through Him. Surely, then, the longer I strive to save myself, the longer I reject the kindness of the God of all love.”

ARE YOU ON THE LORD'S SIDE ?

THE question, “Who is on the Lord’s side ?” was followed by the death of 3,000 men slain by their own brethren, by which judgment the Lord God of Israel vindicated His glory amongst His people, who had committed idolatry and danced around a golden calf.

“I am the Lord : that is my name . and

my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa. xlii. 8.) "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. iv. 10.)

The people had erred in their hearts, and it came out in their ways. If the heart is not right with God, our ways are sure to be wrong. A true heart is one subject to the Lord, and the way to know His pleasure is to consult His word and follow it.

Some years ago a young man made three separate assertions and was simply asked for his authority (from the word of God, of course), and was so astonished to find that he had none, that it entirely changed his course from that time.

There are two things on which every believer should assure his heart before the Lord (1 John iii. 19); first, that he is sincerely desirous of pleasing Him by doing His will; secondly, that he has the authority of scripture for what he holds and follows.

Without occupying the reader unduly with them we may mention three commonly accepted errors. One is that we shall all surely die; another that there will be a general resurrection and general judgment both of the saved and unsaved; and

another, that no believer can be sure of his salvation until he dies.

Now we may safely assert upon the authority of scripture that every believer in Christ is saved the moment he believes, and shall never perish. One passage makes this certain, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life," (John v. 24; see also 1 Cor. vi. 11; Gal. iii. 26; Eph. ii. 1-8; Titus iii. 5.)

As to death: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [or die], but we [believers] shall all be changed." "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," &c. (1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

As to judgment: believers of this dispensation are never judged as to their sins, but are forgiven and delivered from their consequences for ever. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 14, 18.) "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." (1 John ii. 12.)

Believers in Christ will be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ as redeemed and saved. But when the Lord comes and brings them to the earth with Him, He will judge the living then on the earth—the sheep and the goats—and at the end of His millennial reign, He will judge the dead. “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God,” “and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,” “and the sea gave up the dead which were in it.” (Rev. xx. 5, 12, 13.)

What has this to do with being on the Lord's side? Well just this, one who in heart is really on the Lord's side, will be desirous of speaking according to His word—of being faithful to Him in this world of unfaithfulness; is prepared in his soul to stand for Him against many things that he finds are contrary to His mind and glory; in fact is ready to be here as His witness, in a dark place, during His absence from it. The Lord's own are not of the world, even as He is not of the world. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John ii. 15.) Peter speaks of us as strangers and pilgrims, 1 Peter ii. 11, that is, as going on through and not

belonging to the world ; and Paul exhorts to setting our affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for, says he, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

Depend upon it, dear reader, being on the Lord's side implies far more than being a member of a christian congregation, or engaged in christian work ; it involves that we are devoted in heart to Christ, separated in heart to Him from the world, and refusing principles, however largely adopted by others, which cannot be found in accordance with the Master's holy word.

Certainly never was it more difficult to follow Christ than now, because the church has advanced to the world and the world to the church so as almost to form a coalition, and obliterate the distinction between the one and the other ; hence judgment will begin at the house of God. (1 Pet. iv. 17.)

May you, dear reader, be truly on the Lord's side, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ; and he will shew them his covenant.” (Psa. xxv. 14.) It is a blessed thing to know the Lord—blessed too to follow Him, blessed to serve Him, knowing that we have His approbation, and it will

be blessed indeed to be with Him by-and-by, having received our Master's welcome and commendation. May you seek to receive it. The Lord's answers to three men, given successively in Luke ix. 57-62, are deeply instructive to us. The first said unto Him, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," to which Jesus replied that it was not a smooth and rosy path to follow Him. "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." The world gave Him nothing; the Lord called the next one to follow Him, but there was something first in the man's mind which the Lord distinctly forbade by saying, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." The third offered to follow the Lord, but requested to be allowed first to bid adieu to those at home, to whom the Lord said that no one who looks back, having put his hand on the plough, is fit for the kingdom of God. This was no less than a solemn warning as to looking back. "Remember Lot's wife." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

Do you understand these things, dear christian reader? Are you really on the Lord's side? Be encouraged to follow the path and attitude that will bring glory to

the Lord's name here, and receive His commendation to yourself by-and-by. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." (Matt. xiii. 12.)

SALVATION.

To *save* the sinner
Jesus came,
To set the captive free ;
And now my willing
Lips proclaim
What He hath done for me.

His "finished" work
Is all my trust,
And now He lives above,
Eternal proof,
That God is just,
In all this way of love.

Delivered from*
"The wrath to come"
I soon shall see His face ;
And praise in God's
Eternal home
The riches of His grace.

* 1 Thess. i. 10.

“ I A M G O D . ”

(ISA. XLIII. 12.)

“ **T**HOUGH hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” (Prov. xi. 21.) However numerous and strong such may be, it will avail nothing, eternal punishment lies before them, and none can stay it.

Whether sin be open or concealed, it will meet its just judgment by-and-by. “Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after.” (1 Tim. v. 24.) Your sins will therefore meet you again, unless you are delivered from their dreadful consequences meanwhile. With all solemn earnestness we would impress upon our readers that an awful day awaits the impenitent and the lost.

We live in a day of haughtiness, when some are saying with Pharaoh, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?” (Exo. v. 2), and love to walk according to the sight of their own eyes; others going so far as to impugn God’s word and refuse Him the right even to speak to His people. The power of a strong delusion is fast coming over men, and we are left with no

safe guide but God's precious book, which is able to make us wise unto salvation. (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

But God is not only a just God, but a Saviour-God. Although judgment must eventually fall upon the wicked, God has no pleasure in it. Judgment is His strange work, He delights in mercy and has provided a way whereby He can extend it to the chief of sinners, therefore to you. If you are conscious of your need of a Saviour, we thank God for it. there is another “ though ” to which we would draw your attention.

“ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” (Isa. i. 18.) The way of salvation is not yet closed, although we know not how soon it may be. God's limit is “ to-day,” as “ to-morrow ” will, sooner or later, close the present one of grace. “ Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

The basis on which God offers salvation is a righteous one, laid on the death of His beloved Son, whose precious blood was the answer for the sin for which He made atonement on the cross of Calvary.

“ His blood can make the foulest clean ;
His blood availed for me.”

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John i. 7.)

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John i. 29.)

But is God willing to save me now, just as I am? Would the Lord Jesus Christ receive me without anything to recommend me but my sins?

Yes, it is the essence of the gospel and its glory, that He is waiting to receive and save sinners, indeed by His word you are now confronted with the invitation, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” (Matt. xi. 28; John vi. 37; Rom. v. 20.)

As surely therefore as you come to Him, so surely will you be received and saved. The prodigal's welcome is the pattern of the welcome accorded to every sinner who arises and goes to the Lord desiring to be saved. “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” (Luke xv. 10.)

“There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.” (Isa. xlv. 21, 22.)

Trust then your precious soul, dear friend, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.

“ Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not,
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve ;
Because Thy promise I believe ;
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—Thy love I own,
Has broken every barrier down ;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

THE DIVINE COUPLING.

A SHORT time since, in travelling by an express train, from Glasgow to Bradford I met with one of those little striking incidents which frequently prove very suggestive and instructive to the mind. Owing to the opposition of two railway companies, our train had to travel

under very high pressure in order to keep time, and every arrangement was made to avoid delay.

When we arrived at the junction, from which the Bradford line branches off from the main, instead of the whole train stopping to detach the Bradford carriages, a curious contrivance had been adopted, by which, while the engine was at full speed, the Bradford carriages were, in an instant, detached, and the main body of the train flew on at fifty miles an hour, leaving us after the impetus had subsided, standing on the line, as though the connecting chain had given way. Not being aware of the arrangement, we felt a little uncomfortable, and a young man, who sat opposite to me, put his head out of the carriage window and exclaimed, "Oh! we are left behind. I see the train flying round the curve." We could not imagine what had occurred, and, for aught we knew, some other train might come in a few moments and dash right into us.

It was a solemn moment, and I thought it right to improve it by speaking to the young man about the immense importance of *having the link on*. I said to him, "What an awful thing it will be, my friend, to be left behind for ever—to find, when too late, that there is no link connecting our souls

with Christ. May I ask you this solemn question, Is the link on? He looked very serious, and replied, "Well, indeed, sir, I am sorry to say I have not thought so much about these weighty matters as I should."

I then went on to explain to him the simplicity of the link—that it was simply believing in the Son of God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment: but *is passed* from death unto life." (John v. 24.) Here is the link—the precious, living, eternal link of faith. This link can never be snapped. No power of earth or hell can sever the believer from Christ. In Him is life, and the soul that is linked by faith to Him partakes of His life—" *Hath* everlasting life." It does not say, He shall or may have it at some future time. No; he hath it now, and can never lose it. The feeblest believer in Jesus is as safe as the blessed Saviour Himself.

Dear reader, let me ask you, as I asked my fellow-traveller. " *Is the link on?* " What a vital question! How much hangs upon it! Your eternal destiny—your weal or woe for countless ages! In our case the suspense lasted but a few moments, for another engine came down along the

Bradford line and carried us off to our destination.

But, in the case of an immortal soul not linked on by faith to Christ, it is a totally different matter. There is no arrangement, no other resource, no other hope, there is nothing to fall back upon. If there is so much as the breadth of a hair separating your soul from Jesus, there is no life. The carriage may be so close to the engine as that the buffers are actually touching, but, if the link be not on, there is no connection ; and hence, when the engine moves on, the carriage will be left behind.

So also as to the soul and Christ ; there may seem to be great nearness, the buffers of mere profession may touch, but, if the link of faith is not on, there is no personal, vital connection, there is no life, no security. We live in a day of immense profession. Bibles are circulated in millions, and religious tracts in billions ; and we have to thank God for it. But, oh ! reader, think of the awful responsibility ! Only reflect, for a moment, upon what it will be to pass into eternal fire from a scene of such accumulated privileges ! Do let me urge upon you the need of immediate, close attention to the question, “ IS THE LINK ON ? ”

C. H. M.

DROWNED NEAR HOME.

IN a pretty little town in the South of England, during the severe winter of 1898, a happy band of the Lord's followers, had been holding an open air meeting; the Lord Jesus, and "Him crucified," had been lifted up, and faithfully preached. God was realised working in their midst.

As they were going home on this Saturday night, the following sad and pathetic incident occurred.

As is usual, after a gospel meeting, they were singing in the open air, and on this occasion were singing in chorus the following words of warning and invitation.

"You are drifting, you are drifting, to your doom,
Yet there's mercy, yet there's mercy, still for you,"

followed by that solemn refrain--

"Eternity ! Eternity !
Where will you spend Eternity ?"

Little did that happy band of singers know that *just* at this time these solemn words seemed suitably guided for the incident which followed. A poor working man, middle-aged, was staggering and passing along at the foot of the hill, he stood for a few moments intently *listening* to the singing

of their earnest song as it floated on the crisp wintry air.

The happy band of pilgrims dispersed to go to their different homes after looking to the Lord to bless their gathering together in His name.

The next morning, Sunday, one of the speakers was going to a seven o'clock prayer meeting, and as he was crossing the bridge at the foot of the hill hardly knowing why, he paused, and looked over into the brook below, the music of its own ripples being the only sound heard.

In looking across he noticed in the distance three children, and they were *intently* looking at something, which he at first thought was a sack in the water covered with hoar frost, but, *alas*, it was something of far greater importance than he at first suspected. He shouted to the children at the other side of the brook, "*What's that?*" as he pointed to the brook. They answered in a frightened way, "*A man.*" He then saw, in a moment, where he had been mistaken. What he thought was a sack was the poor man's coat turned over his head. Here the poor fellow was lying, with his face *down*, drowned in a *few inches* of water.

The Lord's servant went down to him as quickly as possible. Very few people were

about at this early hour, and these three children were the only onlookers.

He at once raised the poor man's head. The cold, crisp ice was crackling around him, and his hair and whiskers were quite frozen. He saw plainly enough that all efforts to restore him were utterly useless, for life was quite extinct.

He was surprised and startled to find, on looking more closely into the man's face, that he was not altogether a stranger to him, being the *very man* whom only a few days before this accident he had conversed with upon his sad and downward career.

How thankful was the Lord's servant that he had the opportunity of pointing this one to the Saviour. He had looked to the Lord to bless the few words spoken for His sake. They parted, and our friend did not see him again until he looked upon his face in the icy grasp of death.

It appears that as this poor man, who was intoxicated, was going over a plank to reach his home he had stumbled, then fallen, and his head had struck the wall, which instantly stunned him, falling thus into the shallow water, *face down*, the poor fellow met his unexpected end.

Our brother picked up his watch out of the water, and, looking at the time, saw that it had stopped at twenty minutes past

eleven, which was just a little while after the time when the man must have heard the band of His followers singing.

The *last* sounds therefore that he heard ringing in his ears on earth must have been that solemn, earnest question, "Eternity ! Eternity ! Where will *you* spend eternity ?" When he closed his eyes in death, his immortal spirit passed into the presence of God, whom he had sinned against and rejected up to the last day of his life.

Dear reader, young or old, what a solemn lesson is here taught from the sad and sudden death of this man who died so near his home. Had he listened to the timely and kindly warning given him only a few days before he might not so suddenly have been cut off.

A few days after the poor fellow was laid to rest, there to await the resurrection of the dead.

If you do not realise the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour, delay no longer. Come to Him for the free, full pardon of your sins, then you will enjoy the peace of God which passeth all understanding. And hereafter, receive "the crown of life" promised to all the Lord's faithful servants,

"I have a message from God unto thee,
Where will you spend *Eternity* ?"

M. E. W.

“ARISE, HE CALLETH THEE.”

THEY spake of old to him who sat
 In blindness by the way,
 Of Christ the Lord, who, drawing near,
 Could turn his night to day.
 But still he lingered, trembling there,
 Till o'er that living sea
 The words of welcome reached his ear,
 “Arise, He calleth thee!”

And still those words from heaven fall
 On every sinner's ear ;
 And still the Lord delights to bid
 The trembling soul draw near.
 The old, the young, the rich, the poor,
 He calls from wrath to flee,
 And from the death-like sleep of sin
 “Arise, He calleth *thee* !”

He saw thee when, a “great way off,”
 Thou hadst no thought of Him ;
 The door of grace He open threw,
 And seeks to bring thee in.
 A child within its father's home,
 So happy and so free,
 He longs to have you with Himself,
 “Arise, He calleth thee !”

From all the joys this world affords,
 Which perish in a day,
 The gilded snares which Satan spreads
 To lead your steps astray ;
 From sin, from guilt, *however great*,
 From want, from misery,
 From all the sorrows of this life
 “Arise, He calleth thee !”

“AND HE BEGAN TO BE IN WANT.”

(LUKE XV. 14.)

AS we trace the downward course of this young man we find that he receives the first check “when he had spent all.” It was a sad history, but a very common one in this world of ours. He had accepted all that he could get, spent it in self-gratification, used it to place distance between himself and his father, and never turned one thought of love and gratitude towards that father who had dealt so indulgently with him. And oh, my unconverted reader, is it not thus that you have treated God? Do you not owe Him life, and breath, and all things? And to what purpose have you used them?

It was just at this point, “when he had spent all,” that “there arose a mighty famine in that land.” “How unfortunate! What an unlucky fellow I am,” perhaps he said, “I could have borne this when I had plenty of money, but just to happen when I have spent my last penny!” But how truly can we, who know Him, say, “Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the

living.” Prosperity has but been used to sever us further from Him. He will try adversity. “And he began to be in want.” Have us He will, cost what it may to Him or to us. God has *set His heart* on rebel, wandering sinners.

“A CITIZEN OF THAT COUNTRY.”

(Verse 15.)

Instead of turning to his father, the prodigal turned to the world for relief, the world over which he had spent his all, and so he is allowed to learn what the world is. “And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.” What an occupation for a well-born Jew! The most loathsome and degrading. How low he had sunk, for “he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.” He discovers the hollowness of the world’s friendship now.

A young Frenchman of property, who led a gay, spendthrift life, had cause to suspect his butler of stealing his wine. To keep a check upon its use, he marked each cork with the date when the bottle was drunk, and the initials of the friends who had partaken of it. At last the end came. He had “spent all,” became bankrupt, and was sold up. From the wreck of his once consider-

able estate, only a few worthless odds and ends, in some old boxes, remained to him. One day he bethought him to examine their contents. On opening one he found it full of the corks which he had marked. He looked them over, and read the initials of friend after friend, and amongst them all there was *not one* who would do him a good turn or say a good word for him now. And this is but a too faithful picture of the world, to which so many cling. My reader, are you "in want"? In soul-want?

"None but Jesus that can give
Peace and safety while we live;
None but Jesus can supply
Comfort, when we come to die."

W. G. B.

WHY SHOULD NOT I BE SAVED?

DO you not know you are a sinner?
Of course I do; everybody knows
that, I should think.

Not all. Some even deny it, although God has pronounced it true of all in His word. (Rom. iii. 23.) Those, however, who are not convinced now, God says He will undoubtedly convince by-and-by. (Jude xv.) But if you admit that you are a sinner, there is a stern fact before you. *You are lost.* (Luke xix. 10.)

No, not so bad as that, I hope; for is not Christ *our Saviour*?

Certainly not. He is *the* Saviour, and He is *my* Saviour; but if you are still in your sins, how can you say He is yours? It would be more true to say that He is your Judge, for although He is the Saviour now, if you remain and die in your sins, you will have to stand before Him to be judged for them, and you will then be *lost for ever*. (John v. 28, 29; Heb. ix. 27; Rev. xx. 11–15.)

But if others go to heaven, why should not I?

None go there in their sins; it is impossible to reach heaven unless saved. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 3.)

Well I suppose they get saved. Why should not I get saved too?

Why not indeed! You will certainly be saved if you come to the Saviour. He is *ready* to save you, but you cannot be saved otherwise. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) Nothing can meet your case before God but death and blood.

What do you mean by death, and blood?

God says, "The soul that sinneth it shall *die*," and "*the wages of sin is death*," therefore Christ *died for sins*, the just for the unjust, and as "*without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Heb. ix. 22), so the blessed Lord shed His blood to make atonement. "The blood of Jesus Christ [God's Son] cleanseth us from all sin." "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." It is thus Christ *became* the Saviour.

What do you advise me to do then?

By all means come to the Lord, in faith, about your sins. Do not delay or try to improve yourself—which you can never do—but come to Him in your need, *and as surely as you turn to Him, like the thief on the cross, the Lord will save you as He did him.* "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) Now may you do so, *whoever, whatever, or wherever you are.* Remember, your soul, eternity, heaven and hell are in question. If you lose your soul, if you die unconverted and unsaved, how terrible to think that your very sins will torment you for ever and ever. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.) "Behold, now is the accepted time. . . . NOW is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 3.)

What must I do to be saved?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 30, 31.) The Saviour’s words are, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.)

“SUNNY MEMORIES.”

A CHRISTIAN teacher, who taught in a day school in the pretty little town of Sandown, had a class of very interesting scholars. Her heart was filled with deep love to the Lord, and also for the tender lambs He had committed to her care, and she strove by loving influence, in word, and deed, to win them to the Saviour, who so “loved us and gave himself for us.”

Before their summer holidays she always made it a point of asking each of her scholars, during the vacation, to learn a verse from the Bible, which she generally selected from the Psalms. The teacher earnestly prayed that the verses given might be so impressed on their young minds as “a bright memory,” that in after

years they might be remembered, and blessed.

The verse she gave one little girl to learn was taken from Psalm lvi. 3. “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.” The happy breaking up day arrived. The teacher left her little scholars to go on her holiday, and they in high glee went to their different homes, to enjoy for a few weeks the freedom from lessons and work.

The vacation being over, the teacher returned to her duties bright and refreshed. The scholars were also pleased to settle to their work again, and each one welcomed their kind teacher amongst them.

She gathered her little pupils around her on the morning of her return, and asked each of them in turn to repeat to her their portion from the Psalms.

All the children said their verses correctly with the exception of one little girl, who was asked to repeat her verse. But alas, “memory had played her false,” and, poor child, she could not remember it; not even a *single word* could she bring to mind.

As the others had said their verses correctly, this little maiden hung down her head in shame, and tears began to gather in her bright eyes.

What could she do, she had never forgotten before in this way.

She looked up to the Lord Jesus and asked *Him* to help her remember her task. Her kind teacher was very sorry for the difficulty of her young pupil and said to her in her usual kind winning manner, "Cannot you remember the first word, dear?" No! came the reply so sadly, and now tears began quickly to fall.

What was to be done!

A happy thought came into the teacher's mind, and she said to the troubled little girl, "My dear! Can you tell me what it was about."

"Oh yes!" said the little one, and instantly brightening up and looking into her teacher's face said, with such earnestness, "It meant that when I was frightened I was to look up to God."

So the dear child, though she could not remember her verse correctly, had fully understood and remembered the real meaning, and she felt so pleased that the Lord Jesus had helped her to explain to her teacher, even though in a few words, the meaning of her beautiful "sunny memory."

We older ones may learn a lesson from that little one's simple yet true illustration of that precious text of trust. In all times of trial and fear, let *us* look up to our Lord, who is ever near to cheer and bless His needy and tried children.

May that "sunny memory" ever abide with that dear scholar, and in coming years when sorrows fall upon her, may she bring to mind that One to whom she must always look for strength and succour.

So shall the "bread cast upon the waters" through the loving influence of her faithful teacher be found after many days, and blessed. May we *all* hear our dear Lord's "Well done" for faithful service in doing, or suffering, when labour for Him is over.

Then shall we, young and old, "Enter into the joy of our Lord."

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10.)

M. E. W.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS.

AN evangelist had been holding meetings in a seaport town in the north of England, and great success crowned his labours.

Many precious souls were drawn to the Lord. Amongst the anxious inquirers one day who remained behind to be spoken to after the service was over, was a young woman who seemed very unhappy.

After telling the evangelist her story, and

her earnest desire to live as a Christian, she complained to him that every time she began to pray, an unconfessed, and unforgiven theft came up before her mind, which she had committed when living as house-keeper for a gentleman some years before.

She had never been able to pray since that time, and asked the advice of the evangelist, who in reply to the young woman's request for advice said, without hesitation, "My poor girl, the only thing I can see you should do, is to pay the full value of the things you stole."

"But," said she, "the gentleman is dead." "Are not some of the family living, to whom you could go," said the evangelist?

"Yes, sir! there is a son, and he is a gentleman farmer."

"Then" said he, "go to that son, and pay him back for whatever you stole."

"Oh, sir," said the distressed girl, "how can I, though I do want to see the face of God, and receive His full and free pardon for all my past sins. I really could not do a thing like that. Why, sir, my reputation is at stake."

The troubled girl, after this conversation with the Lord's servant, who was much interested in her, went away.

Before her departure, together they kneeled in prayer, asking God's grace and

blessing to lead her out of this trouble, and give her victory over her pride, which was hindering her from making a full surrender.

She did not know what to do. The Spirit of God undoubtedly was working within her heart.

She came back the next day to ask the evangelist if it would not do just as well to put the money into the treasury of the Lord.

“Certainly not,” was his reply to her question; “God does not want any stolen money. The only thing you can do is to make restitution; ask the Lord to enable you to do this, and I am sure He will, and give you the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

For several days the poor girl had a terrible struggle with her pride, but at last His grace conquered, and she went to the residence of the son of her former employer.

She saw him, and told her errand. She made a full confession and offered him a five-pound note, which he firmly refused, the money he said he did not want.

He was glad and thankful she had confessed her former sin, and the girl was very happy, knowing she had the forgiveness of the son of the gentleman of whom she had committed the theft.

She also had the assurance that "God for Christ's sake" had forgiven her all her past sins.

But she would not take the kind gentleman's refusal, and finally persuaded him to take the money she had saved up to make restitution.

She left him with a lightened heart, having his best wishes for her future life.

She went and told the evangelist what she had done, and together they rejoiced and thanked God that the battle with pride had been gained, and the victory won.

The girl fully consecrated herself to the Lord, and lived an earnest christian life ever after, rejoicing in the knowledge that the Lord Jesus had suffered for and instead of her, and had borne on the cross the punishment she had deserved.

Dear reader, do you know Jesus as your own personal Saviour?

We are all "guilty before God," but He has sent an offer of pardon for sin to whomsoever will accept it.

Our Redeemer is mighty to save, strong to deliver, limitless in love, longing to bless and make you happy. Believe Him now. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

M. E. W.

IS THERE A FUTURE?

OR SOUL-EXERCISE FROM DARKNESS TO DAYBREAK.

(A WORD TO THE PEOPLE.)

Introductory.

BECAUSE I am by birth an Englishman, people call me a Christian. I know that I am not a Jew, nor am I a heathen; but what is a Christian? Am I really one?

Friend! for such you are as a reader of these lines, if I am now, I was not *always* a Christian, but I am not going to write a biography. I wish to write down but a few of my heart-exercises for the eyes of those who have now, or may know those who have the same, believing that God would have me write them, and to you or to any who may condescend to read them, I can only tender my thanks. Should these lines bring the same blessing to you as the exercises they describe have brought to me, we shall only rejoice together.

DARKNESS.—CHAPTER I.

While yet young, the first chapter in my life commenced with these questions :—

1. Is man to enter an eternal future, either of endless joy or of endless woe ?
2. Does our sojourn here on earth in any way fashion us for this great hereafter ?
3. Is the doctrine of Christ a MYTH or is it a REALITY ?

Happiness ! Peace ! Contentment on earth ! Such words came to me merely to mock me, so long as these questions remained unanswered !

Yes, my friend, in the deep agony of my soul, in the bright days of my life, as well as in its darker ones, I have asked myself these three questions. Put them to yourself. What answers do *you* give to them ? If you are not prepared to answer, read on.

ATHEISM places “no God” at one end of the chain of life, and AGNOSTICISM places ignorant man at the other. Both declare that there is no connection between the two. I, poor shivering mortal, stood on the edge of this impassable gulf—a great gulf “fixed”—and by whom ? By the wisdom of man !

Atheism tells me “*There is no God,*” and

so answers these questions. Its folly is demonstrated in every flower that blows.

Agnosticism teaches me that "*Nobody knows*," and so it also answers me ; but an inner voice, that of my spirit, asks whether, if man does not know, it follows that there is no knowledge ?

I am neither an Atheist nor an Agnostic !

CHRISTENDOM, busily seeking to alleviate all the time-sorrows of the human race, I have turned to you with my questions, and you too have answered me. I do not forget those answers.

To No. 1 you reply : " No doubt but there is a future state, but no one can know what it is."

To No. 2 you say : " You must work. Do all the good you can, and when you have done it you may then begin to hope, but no one can have any certainty !"

To No. 3 you say : " Our lives are not formed by the ways and methods of Christ. Times have changed since He was on earth, and such a life as His would be entirely incompatible with modern thought."

Atheism ! Agnosticism ! Christendom ! What comfort or what relief have I got from either of you ?

I have turned to the busy worldling—to those men who are careless of all three. They tell me that my questions are the

outcome of "*An overwrought brain.*" They advise me to seek change of scene, and shut out such thoughts, which I should treat as mere "*Aberrations of the mind.*" Am I then *sane* as to everything else, and yet to be counted *insane* because I ask questions which must form the basis (if I am to have any) of all my earthly happiness? Do these questions come—and come again persistently (try to dismiss them as I may)—rendering uneasy my waking hours, and even intruding upon my nights; and are they to remain for ever buried in the recesses of my own breast? An endless heart-misery—which ought not to be mentioned, and which cannot be relieved?

Can this be the end for which man—the only being on earth who has reason, was designed?

Impossible!

I am but a solitary unit—a mere atom in that seething mass of the millions (past and present) called the human family. But by the gift of reason and conscience, this family is superior to every other on the earth. It is, among all the families, the only one whose children shall be made ceaselessly wretched—superior as possessors of reason and conscience, inferior because in misery they seek light which is refused them as to the future? I trow not.

Oh the weariness and distress of my days as they passed one after another. These days became weeks, and the weeks months, and the months became years. My darkness was continuous and only appeared to thicken ; but a new day was about to dawn.

(To be continued, D.V.)

THE ENGINE DRIVER'S PRACTICAL PRAYERS.

CHARLIE B., living in a town in the west of England, was a clever, bright lad ; he was well known and a general favourite with every one who knew him.

He was the only son of his mother, and she had been a widow for many years, but he was a thoughtful and loving son, so he and his dear mother were devoted to each other. She was a sincere Christian, and strove to train up her boy in the fear of the Lord. From his earliest years she taught him to pray morning and evening, so the seeds of truth were early sown in his young heart, and brought forth fruit in later years.

Some gospel meetings had been held, and there was a great awakening in the town where they were living.

Amongst the many who came out boldly

on the Lord's side, and were truly converted, was Charlie B.

Four years previously, the Spirit of God had been striving in the heart of this youth, but the world with its fleeting attractions and temptations, kept him from making a *full* surrender to Christ until he and his mother attended the gospel services which were most heart stirring and where Charlie gave himself to God, henceforth by His keeping power, to be His faithful soldier.

One evening, after this happy event, Charlie and his mother were sitting talking in the twilight; she was telling him how happy she felt at the decision he had made, to follow the Lord Jesus, and as a loving christian mother she wanted to ask him a few questions.

“Charlie, my boy, will you tell me what made you want to be a Christian? Was it your home influence, lessons learned in the Sunday-school, the preaching of the gospel, or has the desire come to you through what you heard at the meetings recently?” Charlie looked up into his mother's face and said, with such earnestness, “No, mother, it was none of these, though they all *helped* me, but the example of an engine driver about four years ago.

“Do you remember, when we were coming from B—— to live here, how I

wanted so much to go on the engine and ride with driver L., who was so kind and interested in me. You were afraid, but the guard you knew so well told you the engineer was an earnest Christian, and that I should be quite as safe with him as in the carriage with you.

“Then,” he said, “you consented for me to stay with the engineer until you or the guard came for me.

“Well, just before starting from the station, I saw him kneel down for a little while, then he rose, and the train started to go. I asked him lots of questions, boylike, about the construction of the engine, and its different parts, and about the many places we passed, and things we saw as we rushed along.

“He was so patient in listening to my many questions, and answered me very gladly. The scenery was lovely, I did so enjoy that day. We went a few miles, then stopped at another station before proceeding.

“Then down again he went on to his knees, just the same as before, and this he did at *every* station, so I tried to see what he was doing. I felt so curious and puzzled I could keep my thoughts no longer to myself. So I just asked the engineer *what* he was doing. He looked at me so earnestly, as he said, ‘My dear boy,

do you ever pray ? ' I replied, ' Oh yes, sir, I pray every morning and evening.' ' My boy,' said he then, ' Each time when I kneel down, *I pray*, for God has given me a very responsible post. There are two or three hundred souls in this train committed to my care.

" ' If I make the smallest mistake, the slightest failure to do all my duty, any neglect, a little inattention to the signals, there would be a terrible accident, and all, or many of the three hundred souls, would be hurried into eternity.

" ' So this is why I kneel down at every station, for a short while, and I ask the Master to help and preserve me, and all the passengers which He has put under my care.

" ' I have been on the engine many years. He has helped me, heard my prayers, and has been my keeper by night and day, and not one soul out of the thousands that have ridden on my train have been harmed. I have never had one accident, so, my dear boy, is not my testimony sufficient to show the immense value of earnest and frequent prayer ?

" ' Remember through life those two words, ' Tell Jesus.' There is nothing too small to tell Him, His ears are open to the earnest cry of the humblest, weakest or smallest child of God.' " Charlie was much

interested and impressed to hear the engineer speak in this way, and the seeds of grace were sown in his young heart from that day, and bore fruit later on as we have already seen. “ So now, mother dear,” said Charlie, after this talk, “ you understand what led me to want to be a Christian. I have told no one about it, but almost every day since I have thought about him, and resolved to be a Christian too.”

And so for four years the life and words of that praying driver had been constantly present with Charlie, and he became at length the instrument of leading him into an earnest christian life.

Thus we see the influence of a godly consistent life. May we all realise, as did the engineer, the full meaning of that beautiful looking Psalm xii., called by some the railway men’s psalm. “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. v. 16.)

“ UNTIL HE FIND IT.”

(LUKE XV. 4.)

OH the perseverance of grace! “ *Until* he find it.” Never till that moment does the good Shepherd relax His

efforts. And how far had He to go after “that which is lost”? To where it was—stripped, and wounded, and half dead. And was this all? Had He not to go into death itself to get the sheep out? “The good Shepherd giveth *his life* for the sheep.” And has He not suffered this for thee, my reader? “Who gave himself a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time.”

Oh, the persevering diligence of grace! “What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and *seek diligently till she find it?*” (Ver. 8.) Reader, has the stupendous fact ever possessed your soul, that there is a divine Person in Christendom—the Holy Ghost—here for the very object of bringing the piercing rays of convicting light to bear upon the hearts and consciences of dead sinners!

The Son must seek the lost. All is founded on His work, therefore it is put in the first place. It maintained God’s righteousness, and permits Him to justify him that believeth in Jesus. The Son must seek the lost, the Spirit must quicken the dead, before the Father can receive the repentant sinner.

And when He has found it, where does He, the good Shepherd, put the sheep? Back with the ninety and nine? Never.

“ When he cometh *home*,” not till then does He put the sheep down.

O Saviour, who hast loved Thine own,
 Thou faithful One and true !
 Who camest down, and wert alone,
 The will of God to do,—
 Lord Jesus, sent One, 'tis Thy voice,
 Thy love, supreme and free,
 That o'er Thy treasure doth rejoice,
 Thy Father's gift to Thee.

(H. K. B.)

But is there no “ wilderness ” for the believer? Certainly, but he passes through it on *the Shepherd's* shoulders—the place of strength and of security. There are many who think they would not like to make a profession, lest they should not be able to keep it. If believers, they forget that Christ will *keep them*. There are those who fear lest they should not “ hold on.” Do you think *the good Shepherd will let go*? He says, “ None shall pluck them out of my hand.” Will He save sinners and lose saints? Never. “ He is *able* also to save them to the uttermost ”—that is all the way through—“ that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” “ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life ”—that is, by His living to intercede for us now.

"I have a Friend ; oh, such a Friend !
 So kind, and true, and tender ;
 So wise a counsellor and guide,
 So mighty a defender !
 From Him who loves me now so well,
 What power my soul shall sever ?
 Shall life or death, shall earth or hell ?
 No ! I am HIS *for ever*."

W. G. B.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

' "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
 looking unto Jesus." (Heb. xii. 2.)

ON Jesus ever fix your gaze,
 Nor let your love grow cold ;
 For every single look at *self*,
 Give *Christ* a thousandfold.

Oh, look to Jesus ! fix your gaze
 On that blest Lamb who died ;
 And ever turn your eye *from self*,
 To Christ the crucified.

Oh, look to Jesus ! in each care
 You'll find Him ever nigh ;
 He listens to your coldest prayer,
 He hears your feeblest cry.

Go in each care and pain to Him,
 Cling closely to His hand ;
 Though all around's obscure and dim,
 He'll guide you safe to land.

ON Jesus ever fix your gaze,
 Nor let your faith grow cold ;
 For every single look at *self*,
 Give *Christ* a thousandfold.

“WHEN HE CAME TO HIMSELF.”

(LUKE XV. 17.)

THIS was the real crisis in this young man's history, and it is the crisis in the history of every soul. He had reached a turning point before, when he “began to be in want ;” but that in itself did not turn him to his father, his only source of real relief. It is when a soul is in want, and a man comes to himself, that he turns to God. A sense of need is not in itself sufficient. How many who feel a sense of need, seek to drown it in dissipation. Or, on the other hand, to allay it by “turning over a new leaf,” that is, leading a more moral life, or even quiet it with outward religious observances.

No, a man must “come to himself,” that is, be brought to feel his helpless and destitute condition, and that with a sense of the goodness there is with God to meet it. “When he came to himself he said I perish with hunger,” and that while in his father's house there was bread enough and to spare for hired servants even.

Have you, my reader, ever been thus “in

want,” and “brought to thyself”? Depend upon it, the time will come when you will feel your need and come to yourself; if not in this world, in the next, in eternity, when it will be too late, if not in time.

The difference between the younger son in Luke xv., and the rich man in Luke xvi., is that the former came to himself when mercy was to be had; the latter, when he was beyond the reach of it, even to obtain a drop of water to cool his tongue in his torments. But he felt his need. “Have mercy on me,” he cried. He had come to himself, he felt his condition to the full; “I am tormented in this flame,” he said. But it was too late. Awful, awful, solemn words, “TOO LATE.” O reader, dear unsaved reader, pause! Turn before it is too late with you for ever. Turn to Him who will have mercy, “to our God, for he will *abundantly* pardon.”

See how earnest the rich man becomes. How he intercedes not only for himself, but for others. (Luke xvi. 27.) How he values the gospel message, its messengers, and its warnings then, for others, when he realises that it is all too late for himself, and he settles down in eternal remorse. That was the effect of “coming to himself” when too late. But repentance is the result of “coming to one’s self” in time; for we find

the younger son say, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

This, then, is repentance, and it is "*the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.*" (Rom. ii. 4.) The evidence of it here was the profligate's confession, "Father, I have sinned."
W. G. B.

IS THERE A FUTURE ?

OR SOUL-EXERCISE FROM DARKNESS TO DAYBREAK.

(A WORD TO THE PEOPLE.)

DAYBREAK.—CHAPTER II.

As the sun's warm breath in spring sweeps over our ice-bound valleys, bringing them out in all their summer beauties, and as a morning slumber lulls the weary spirit after a fever-tossed night, I began this second chapter of my life thus—

"That which is incapable of any solution by the natural mind can only be made known to us by REVELATION. Man

questions in vain both himself and his fellow, the answer which is desired is not to be found in man."

If faiths they may be called, I had tried the faiths of Atheism, Agnosticism, Christendom and lastly the world with no faith at all, and what had I got? Only bitter disappointment. By all, my questions had been answered, but the answers had brought to me no heart-rest. Revelation was now about to unfold to me the mystery of the future. I was glad. I saw that the human circumstances in which I found myself could not affect a revelation, which neither needs nor heeds anything in those to whom it is made. If made, *it brings all*, and furnishes its recipients with the understanding of what it brings. It is the outcome of a Master-mind which has known and planned the whole of life's story from its beginning to its end.

Moreover the revelation would be consistent with all that I see around me to-day, and with all that I find working in me. I did not understand the present. It would not only deal with the future but necessarily with the past and present. Do you ask, Was I disappointed in it? Ten thousand times, had I breath, I would answer, "No! It did not then, and it never has since, disappointed me, but has met every question."

As I have said, One had planned and controlled all the past. He was planning and controlling all the present, and He would continue to plan and control all the future, and thus the whole story was soon spread out before me. It was

“THE REVELATION OF GOD” *

in His ways with man, as contained in the Bible !

All the varied contrarities which I see working in this world—the conflict between evil and good, between light and darkness—demanded such a revelation. Human affairs as they exist to-day cast a slander and suspicion on the very existence of a Supreme Being. And although every human creed, except, perhaps, Confucianism, professes to rest on a “revelation” (and here I was early confronted with a difficulty), yet this was fully answered by the consideration that no one of these so-called faiths has explained all the contrariety of human affairs, and what is of still greater moment they have never explained what I see around me and what I find working *in myself*. They leave entirely out of their calculation the need of meeting and answering righteously every question as to the past, the present, and the

* John i. 18 ; xvii. 3.

future. This revelation of God, as to His ways with man, fully meets every one of these, but it does another and an all important work which to me stamps it as divine. It does not excuse man but *exposes him*. And this must follow. What God is, is fully revealed, and what man is, is fully exposed, but all this is that he may be with God on a righteous basis, and on one which nothing can gainsay.

Hence man's ignorance of himself and of his fellows was fully explained to me. Ignorance of God is ignorance of man. Both depend on the revelation of God, and vanish when *that* is known. Ignorant of God I had remained *in absolute darkness as to myself!* God, who was only *partially* revealed in past ages, is now fully revealed in Christ.

But I had to face a serious question here. I had inquired for light of those who professed Christianity, and I had obtained no help from them. Had Christendom then failed to profit as it should, after having in its hand for nearly 1800 years the revelation of God? I could come to no other conclusion, since I had been told that His (Christ's) walks and ways were too antiquated for modern times! And no one could know, from Christendom, anything *positive* as to the future.

Was *their* Christ in perfect happiness, as man with the knowledge of God, both as to the present and as to the future, when He was on earth ? Did He come so to reveal God to me *that I might be similarly happy ?* The Christ, of whom in the Bible I now read, DID. Were His life and walk totally unsuited to mine now, in the enlightened days (as I was told) of this nineteenth century ? I saw that Christendom life seriously differed from His ; but should mine ? Could I trust Christendom ?

I wanted positive ground for my feet, and I could not get it from such a teacher as this. Taking my Bible, I found myself like a sailor stepping out upon a rock from a storm-tossed vessel. That vessel* is the uncertain doctrines of Christendom, and the mystical labyrinth of "Agnosticism" and "Atheism." Positive blessing was the "REVELATION OF GOD,"—a revelation which I found between the covers of the Bible—adapting itself in every way to ME, exactly where I was. This I accepted fully, and I rejected on the other hand all that I found not in this revelation, whether sanctioned by so-called "Christendom" or not. Do not blame me if you are not in my position, and you will not if you *are*. No doubt I fail and shall fail as others have, but at least

* Romans xi. 21, 22.

I am assured of this, that this ground on which I stand is DIVINE. I may fail on it, but I am assured that it will never fail me.

Now my friend, you who have so kindly followed me in all this relation of the distresses and anxieties of a human soul, a being like yourself, I must thank you. I have reached the end of that which I proposed to write. For myself I am profoundly happy.* I know the past, God's love for me was shewn in the cross ; I know the present, for I am indwelt by the Spirit of God, who in me is a spring of "living water" (John iv. 10), and seeks for me that I walk "as he walked ;" I know the future, for I am to be with Christ,† and like Christ in glory. To you, groaning perhaps, as I was once—oh, that I could now unfold the existence of truth, which would cause you to have but the faint wish to enter into these things as your own. You groan, but I rejoice in the Revelation of God, and, if you cannot now, you may, if you receive it, rejoice with me. The revelation of God was for my, and is for your, *blessing*. Have you profited by it ? If so, you are what I understand by the word, "a Christian," ‡ which word merely means "one who follows

* 1 John ii. 6–8.

† 1 Thess. iv. 17 ; 1 John iii. 2.

‡ 1 Peter iv. 16.

Christ," and you have received instead of the anxieties and doubts of worthy men (and even of professing Christians) that which is eternally stable and divine. Hence it is of such that the apostle says, "Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude.)

But to any reader who has not yet answered the three questions which I proposed to myself in my darkness, I would say, "Keep them before you in the light shed upon them by the REVELATION OF GOD, and may God help you as He desires to do, and as He then will, into what you desire—real soul-rest."

H. C. A.

THE TEXT ON THE WALL.

A DEAR servant of the Lord, who has now been in the glory some time, was, during many years of faithful ministry, earnest and happy in his Master's service.

He was the instrument used by God of leading many precious souls into light and liberty.

He was very anxious that every one that should come into the hall where he was preaching should have this precious truth, "God is Love," burned into their hearts, and so, afraid lest some one might come along and preach some other gospel than that, he had these precious words, "*God is Love*," placed in gas jets at the back of the desk.

And there, telling out its sweet message of love, it shone brilliantly every night.

A short sentence of only nine letters and three words, but a very mighty one. By the power of that short text many people have been won from darkness, intemperance, infidelity and sin in its worst forms, and have been delivered from the power of Satan and translated into the kingdom of God.

One incident I give of blessing as the happy result of this illuminated text. One bitterly cold night in the winter, a poor man left his home, miserable and dejected; he was partially intoxicated and was wandering about so unhappy and not knowing what to do nor where to go. He wandered up and down the street and seeing a hall with the door ajar, thought he might find a warm place inside. No doubt he was led to go there by the Lord. He opened the door, no one was there, pews and chapel

were empty. But that sentence, "God is Love," was to be seen above the pulpit. The poor fellow seemed to see nothing else, he was so attracted by those sweet and wonderful words. He drew back, got up, and went out into the street muttering half aloud, "God is *not* love, how can He be; if He were, He would love me. God does not, cannot love such a ruined outcast as I am. I am wretched, hungry, poor and lost!" But that text, "God is Love," went down into the innermost recesses of his heart. He seemed to hear them ringing in his ears again and again.

The poor fellow felt he must go back, so he turned round and retraced his steps and went quietly into the hall and seated himself at the back by a large stove, where it was comfortable and warm. He sat there waiting during the service, listening intently to the sermon, so suited to his case and seemed greatly affected.

Presently the miserable man burst into tears. The preacher's quick eye noticed him. When the service was over, and the congregation had dispersed, he hastened down, and, seating himself beside him, said in his kind and winning manner, "My friend, what is troubling you? You seem very unhappy. What was there in my address that touched you?"

“Nothing in your sermon, sir,” answered the man.

“Then what are you crying about? What is the matter, my poor fellow? Tell me.”

The man answered, looking and pointing across to the back of the desk, “It was *that text* up there that did it, ‘*God is Love.*’”

The preacher, with his open Bible, talked plainly and faithfully to him, prayed for and with him, and shewed him that there was a way of salvation for *him* that very night through that God who is love. Who “so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.)

All in a moment the poor man realised the Saviour’s love for him, a lost sinner. The scales fell from his eyes, he got up, and went out of that building rejoicing in the Lord Jesus, won by the power of that little sentence, “God is love.”

It is worthy a place printed in letters of gold on our Bibles. The whole precious book is simply “God’s love story.”

God grant that many souls may be led to trust in the Lord Jesus through the power of that one sentence, “God is love.” (1 John iv. 8.)

M. E. W.

“ A CERTAIN MAN.”

(LUKE XV. 11 AND 4.)

“ A CERTAIN man had two sons.’
The Lord did not say, What man of you having two sons, as He had done in the former part of the parable: “ What man of you, having an hundred sheep?” “ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver?” He could not speak thus now, for no man of them would have dealt thus. Only *grace* deals after such a manner, and there was not a trace of it in *their* hearts. But the heart of this Father is full thereof to overflowing. It is the picture of the Father God—“ the God *of all grace*”—drawn by His Son, who had come from Himself to make Him known.

Self-interest would lead an owner of a hundred sheep, if he lost one, to leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which was lost until he found it. *Self-interest* would lead a woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lost one piece, to light a candle and sweep the house, and search diligently till she found it. But only *grace*, sovereign grace—undemanding, all-supply-

ing grace—receives to its heart, and to its home such a profligate son, and after such a manner.

The Lord shewed that God *sought* on the same principle as they themselves, but He *receives* on His own unique principle, totally different to any they acted on, and which only drew forth a murmur, “ This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them,” from the hard, self-righteous hearts of the Pharisees and Scribes to whom He spake this parable. Though why should God be denied the joy of receiving back a son if He chooses?

And notice, it is “ *this* parable ”—not *three*, but *one*. It gives the action of three Persons - three Persons but one God—seeking and receiving, but this diverse action of diverse Persons all concentrated on *one* object—the SINNER.

And though He spake it *to* them, He spake it *for* the publicans and sinners, who *drew near* “ for to hear him,” that He might draw them from His feet to His heart.

Dear friend, did you ever contemplate the great interest that God takes in *you*? who “ will have *all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

It is told of a christian man of large means that he caused a notice to be posted

on his park gates somewhat as follows:—

“ NOTICE.—Any one who shall come to me before noon this day shall receive a £5 note.—Signed, ——. ”

During the morning this unusual notice was read by numbers from the adjoining village on this gentleman's property. It was well scanned and criticised by various wiseacres to discover where the hoax was, for none believed that the notice *meant* what it said. At last it was pretty generally agreed that it was a hoax, or to treat it as such, and though most there had experienced the squire's bounty and christian kindness, they jeered at the notice to their hearts' content.

At last one old man, poorer than the rest, determined to test its truthfulness. For, he thought, if it is only a hoax I shall be none the poorer, and if it be true, I shall be £5 the richer. So just before 12 o'clock—for it had grown late before any would try for themselves—he rang the house bell, and was shewn into the study.

“ Well, John,” said the squire, as he handed him a £5 Bank of England note, “ how is it you're the only one who's come? ”

The old man told his benefactor the reason, and retired overjoyed with his good fortune. When the rest heard it they

rushed with one accord to the squire's house, but 12 o'clock had struck, and it was *too late*, and he had the laugh of them, and could chide them, not only for their distrust of his word, but of *God's* as well, who so many treat in a very similar way. Do you?

W. G. B.

A BOY'S PRAYERS ANSWERED.

“Prayer a necessity.” (1 Thess. v. 17.)

SOMETIME ago an evangelist was holding some meetings for children; the hall was packed with an audience of attentive listeners and there was much blessing amongst the children.

The following story may be interesting. The evangelist, after addressing the young in loving terms, asked all those who wished to yield themselves to Christ to stand up. Three children timidly arose, a boy and his two sisters.

“Now,” said the preacher, “if you are going to trust in Christ you must pray every morning that the Lord will help you to live for Him, ask Him to give you His grace to make you faithful, for without

His help you cannot stand one moment alone."

The boy seemed the most impressed, and there in the meeting he gave himself to the Lord Jesus, whom he trusted for the pardon of his sins.

He went home very happy, and told his mother the decision he had been led to make, and asked her to teach him *how* to pray in the morning. She, like so many more parents, had been *too* busy with her household cares, and had neglected to show her children the need for morning prayer, sufficient, she considered, if they prayed each night before retiring to rest. Yet she was rejoiced when her boy told her he was going to serve the Lord Jesus, and she was glad to help her son when he made his request about prayer. She felt greatly reproved, but this was a blessing to her own soul, so often starved for want of more communion with her heavenly Father.

"Thou canst still the wildest conflict,
Bid the billows cease ;
Thou canst fill earth's busiest moment
With Thy perfect peace."

From the day this dear boy gave his heart to Jesus, he never neglected to pray every morning and evening, which was the secret of the blessed result which followed.

This boy, though sharp and bright in

other respects, was a very dull scholar, which caused a good deal of trouble to his teachers and parents. But after the meetings, to the great surprise of his friends, he suddenly began to improve, and gained considerable praise for working earnestly and doing so well.

His mother heard of this improvement with great pleasure, and noticed the difference in her son, and one day, sometime after his conversion, she was telling him how glad she was to hear such good reports.

“There’s a little secret about that, mother dear,” said he. “I never used to really pray; now I ask Jesus *every* morning to help me with my lessons and He always does, and if the boys tease me and I get into trouble, I go and *tell Jesus*, as the disciples did, and He always brings me out of my bothers and makes me so happy.” How sweet to see such simple faith in this little boy, and how definitely his prayers were answered.

Recently the same evangelist visited the town where the boy, now grown to a lad of fifteen, is living, and also had a quiet talk with him. He was rejoiced to find him a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus. He was also told that he now stood at the head of a class of fifty boys. His Bible is loved and

worn by faithful use, for when he began to pray for God's blessing upon his work he also began to study and enjoy God's word. Prayer is the secret of all power and blessing. Let us trust this dear young soldier of Jesus Christ may be used by God to lead others into the Good Shepherd's arms.

M. E. W.

CHRIST FOR DEATH, AND CHRIST FOR LIFE

“OH, uncle,” said a young lady, a pleasant-looking, well-off person, as far as this world is concerned; “Oh, uncle, have you heard the news? I have only three or four days to live: in three or four days I shall be with Jesus.”

Reader, that is a true story. This young lady, on asking her doctor if she were likely to live long, was told, No! only three or four days. His answer gave rise to a burst of joyfulness! Only three or four days, and she would be with Jesus—with Him, her Saviour, the One who died for her, who went into the grave for her; the rejected One of earth, the One dear to her; the One the world would not have; the One His Father and her Father has set at

His own right hand. She loved Him, she longed to be with Him.

Dear reader, have you ever known what it is to count the days, the hours, until the dear friend, the loved object of your heart, should come, or to watch the clock until the time fixed for your going to meet him? If so, you can tell something of what this dear lady's thoughts were, and oh, wondrous fact, the One she was going to was God's Son. Yes, God's Son, and that blessed One was as anxiously awaiting her as she was anxiously awaiting to be with Him. To be expected by the Son of God—God Himself! Well might her heart yearn to be with that One whose name is Love, and who, when here on earth, expressed in His life and Person God's love to poor, lost, ruined sinners. She loved Him because He first loved her. She had given up herself as worthless, but she rejoiced in Him. She resigned herself and lived in Him; yes, she lived in the love of the one chief treasure God so freely gave to shew His love towards us. She knew Him; yes, here on earth she knew Him who was the express image of God's Person. He had, by the Holy Spirit, revealed Himself to her. "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and

I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

Beloved reader, do you know this One, "who died that you might live"? He would know you, such is His love. God the Father, through Christ's blood, is able to be just, and to justify him that believeth in Jesus, and God now, by this paper, "beseeches you," "Be ye reconciled to God." What! Unreconciled! Look to it, I pray you. Is it so? Unreconciled! You who have to meet God, who have to bow before that One. Every knee shall bow. God says it! are you going to bow before this God whose name is Love?

Are you going to rejoice in Christ, "his salvation" brought nigh to you—and dropping yourself, *your* works, *your* goodness, to receive that Saviour who, through His servant, has said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"? or—refusing His salvation, rejecting God's free gift—to continue a child of the first Adam, a slave to the devil, a servant of Satan, a worker of unrighteousness?

"Father, Thy holy name we bless,
 Gracious and just Thy wise decree,
 That every tongue shall soon confess
 Jesus, the Lord of all to be;
 But oh! Thy grace has taught us now
 Before that Lord the knee to bow."

You have first heard, then, dear friend, of one ready, nay, anxious to die, to go to that Saviour who so loved her. Now read an equally true story of one who knew the Saviour as enough to live for—had been enabled to find his all in all in Him.

“Jesus, of Thee I ne’er would tire ;
The new and living food
Can satisfy the heart’s desire,
And life is in Thy blood.

“Jesus ! Thou art enough
The mind and heart to fill ;
Thy life—to calm the anxious soul,
Thy love—its fear dispel.”

Picture to yourself an old man in an old attic.

[A] A very poor place, as far as this world is concerned—living-room, kitchen and bedroom all in one ; but bright, oh, how bright, in the presence of that One who is the “Brightness of eternal glory.”

A young lady enters.

“Good evening, James,” she says.

“Good evening, miss.”

After a little time the lady remarks—

“Why, James, you have moved your bed. How is that ?”

“Well, you see, miss,” he says, “I thought that whilst it was against the wall, He could not get round it, and so I have moved it out into the room, so that when I am lying

there, I can think that the dear Lord can walk all the way round." "I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

That is it! The dear Lord was his personal friend, his known, trusted, tried and true friend.

Hear of another. An old, blind, deformed, dogless fiddler is asked, "How old are you?" "Seventy," is the answer. "Well, John, you cannot expect to live much longer: do you ever think of that?" "Yes, sir, I'm waiting to go home." "Then you know Jesus?" "Oh, yes, sir, I know Him." "How long?" "Since I was about fourteen, I should think, sir;" and then mark this—he added, "He's to be depended upon, is He not, sir?"

"'Tis the treasure I've found in His love
That has made me a pilgrim below;
And 'tis there, when I reach Him above,
As I'm known, all His fulness I'll know."

Oh, dear reader, can you say this?—do you know Him as your friend—as the One with whom you are to spend eternity? Oh, think of Him! He had personally revealed Himself to these two poor old men; they knew Him, and though perhaps very

ignorant, they had personal affection for the Lord! Have you this affection? If not, dear christian reader, look to it. There is something wrong! for nothing else will keep you; there is something you love better. “For where your treasure is, there *will your heart be also* ;” and where is the One who was these two poor old men’s treasure? Up in heaven, at God’s right hand. Are you there now by faith? “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, *where Christ sitteth* on the right hand of God.” That is the place, where Christ sitteth; He who constitutes the place is the Person. Dear friend, do you know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings, and are you being conformed unto His death? Oh, I pray God bless these little stories to you, and grant us all in these last closing days to know more of Him, the place where He is, and the place He would have us in here, and then His heart will indeed rejoice, for He longs in the fulness of what He is to enter and abide in any true soul. “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Wondrous words. Oh, dear reader, may they be made true to you by the power of God’s Holy Spirit.

“AN ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION.”

DEAR friend, have you eternal life? Stop! Do not be angry with the question, for if you have it you will surely be delighted to say, “Yes! I am in Christ a new creature, and, thanks be to God, through Christ I have eternal life.”

If you had a splendid testimonial given you, would you be ashamed of it? Are you ashamed of having your life hid with Christ in God? Ah, my friend, is it because you have it not that you do not like the question? What, have not eternal life, and walk about unconcerned? Do you not belong to God? To whom then do you belong? The prince of this world, Satan! *To no one else, if not to God!* How blind he keeps you! how carefully he conceals with the straws, it may be, of pleasure, of passion, of profession, of money, of sensuality, the fearful abyss you are walking over, the yawning gulf you so gaily step beside—one slip, one accident to this slight frame, one small nerve broken, one little artery cut, one word spoken, and into that abyss you plunge for ever! Listen

to what the Lord says to those who *know Him not*, that blessed One, who is even now longing to save you, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Well may I ask, Have you eternal life? Mark the difference, “eternal life,” “everlasting fire,” *one* or the other.

My friend, God is not willing that any should perish.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”—thou *shalt*! God says it—God cannot lie. That is the way—the only way.

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be constituted righteous.” Blessed truth. Deceive yourself no longer; you cannot fight against God: “God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” May God’s Holy Spirit cause you now, this moment, as you are, where you are, to judge yourself in God’s presence as one lost, utterly lost, and then in simple faith to believe *God’s* estimate of the value of Christ’s blood, and of faith in His blessed Person, take His salvation, your Saviour, the Prince of Peace, and believing on Him you have “*eternal life*.”

“And this is life eternal, to know thee

the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the *wrath of God* abideth on him."

MISCONCEPTIONS ANSWERED.

YOU put everybody on the same level, which I object to. You say too that nobody will have a chance to speak a word for himself, which is very hard, and that no one can be saved in his own way, as well as you in yours. Is not that so?

Yes, it is quite true, that though we have not all been equally bad, we are all alike on the common platform of sinners, as the scriptures plainly tell us, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.)

By Adam's disobedience all his descendants were constituted sinners. Our sinful natures, our sinful acts, our consciences tell us that we are practical sinners as well. Why deny it?

As well dispute whether coal is white or black, as whether we are sinners or not. God has settled that point for us finally,

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”* (Rom. iii. 23.) David confessed that he was born in sin, “and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa. li. 5), whilst Job asks the potent question, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” and answers it by saying, “Not one.” (Job xiv. 4.)

Admitting what you say, Is there no chance of one being excused and forgiven at the judgment seat? I hope there to plead some extenuating causes at least, and shall cast myself upon the mercy of God.

That sounds well, but you mistake as to the time. “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,” not when a sinner stands at the bar of God in judgment. You are invited to accept the mercy of God to-day, yea, “as though God did beseech, we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God,” and you are responsible to do so.

Our trial is past; it ended with Israel, whom God took up as a sample of His creatures for 1,500 years, giving them every possible advantage, only to find them to be a stiff-necked, disobedient, and wicked people, ending in their being guilty of the death of their Messiah, whom God sent to be their Saviour. The guilt and the

* “There is none righteous, no, not one.” (Rom. iii. 10.)

charges against all mankind are given, the case proved and the sentence pronounced in Romans iii.: "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

When the king, in the Lord's parable (Matt. xxii.), went in to see the guests it was too late for the man without the wedding garment to plead; he was simply asked, How camest thou in hither without it? and he was speechless. Hence, if any man should die unsaved, he will find it too late to correct his awful mistake.

We remember being at a sessions when a prisoner was permitted to make a long defence of himself, until at last the judge stopped him by saying, "That will do, we will hear no more, we are persuaded you are so and so," and sentenced him accordingly. No, dear readers, now is your opportunity, your only one; for God can now be just, and justify an ungodly sinner. Not after death but NOW.

But if I do the best I can, and do no harm to others, is not that enough?

No, my friend, the matter is far too serious an one to be met in that way. You cannot have realised or believed that you are lost, or subject to God's judgment, and that He has made a way—the only way—whereby you can be saved. "The Son of

man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) Christ came to save sinners by dying under the judgment of God for them. "The wages of sin is death." It is only through His death that we can be saved. He has paid to God the tremendous penalty we had incurred. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) You needed a substitute, and none could become this but the blessed Lord Jesus Christ. God placed Him where we deserved to be, and the blessed Lord accepted the judgment that might justly have fallen upon us. On the cross of Calvary that question was finished, and you can now be saved by believing in Christ, which is God's appointed way. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

If you know you are a sinner, if you desire to be saved, and find you cannot save yourself, how gladly should you hear that in His great love God devised this way for you, and you can have peace with God by believing. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

The anxious Philippian gaoler asked,

“ What must I do to be saved,” and was answered, “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 30, 31.) That same way is open to you, dear reader ; only believe.

“ Christ is the Saviour of sinners,
 Christ is the Saviour for me ;
 Long I was chained in sin’s darkness,
 Now by His grace I am free.
 Saviour of sinners,
 Saviour of sinners like me,
 Shedding His blood for my ransom,
 THIS IS THE SAVIOUR FOR ME.”

“ HE AROSE AND CAME.”

(LUKE XV. 20.)

I WISH to call your earnest attention to the fact, that he went *as he was*. He had said, “ I will arise and go to my father,” and he went. Unlike many who follow these words Sunday after Sunday, but never go—have no desire to go—have not “ come to themselves ;” in fact, do not feel the misery of their condition—have not even “ begun to be in want,” that is, to feel the vanity, the emptiness of everything here to satisfy the craving of an immortal soul.

And not only did he arise and go, but he went *as he was*, and owned what he had

done and what he was. He had “sinned,” and was unworthy.

The fatal mistake which so many make of trying to make themselves better, more fit for God, before going, is well illustrated by the following story of the beggar and the painter:—

A celebrated painter was engaged on a great picture of “The Prodigal Son,” a picture which he intended should be a masterpiece, and establish his reputation. He had already painted in all the accessory objects. The father’s house was seen in the background, with the calf in the stall. The servants had the robe and ring and sandals in readiness, even to the father running forth with outstretched arms to embrace his long-lost son. But the son, the central object of his picture, was lacking. A blank occupied the space where he should have stood; for the painter had never yet seen a subject sufficiently destitute and degraded to sit for a model of what he considered his prodigal should be.

One day when walking the streets of London his eye lighted on a broken-down, dishevelled, ragged, filthy creature. He thought he had never seen such a wretched object in his whole life before. He was filled with delight. “Here,” thought he, “is the very man I want. At last I have

found a model that will come up even to my idea of what the prodigal was like.”

He went up to the man and, accosting him, made him an offer of a sum of money which would be a prize to such as he, providing he would do exactly what he told him, and sit as a model for a picture he was painting. As an evidence of his good faith he produced a sovereign, and gave it to the man, who, as may be supposed, readily consented. “ But,” said the painter, “ mind you come to me *just as you are*, do not alter or improve your appearance in the smallest particular. I want you just as you are.” Having laid these strict injunctions upon him, and appointed the time for the first sitting he gave him his card with his name and address.

No sooner had the gentleman left him, amazed at his good fortune and gazing at the sovereign in his hand—he had not possessed such a sum all at once for years, if ever, and then so much more in prospect!—no sooner was he alone, than he began to think what he should do. First of all he would go and have his fill at a cook-shop. Having done this, and feeling somewhat easier and on better terms with himself, he began to consider his condition. A mirror, hanging on the wall, reflected his dirty face and unkempt hair. Why, even he was

shocked at the filthiness of his appearance. “This would never do,” thought he, “What, go to a gentleman’s house in such a state as this!” And then his garments! He began to examine them one by one. The coat was out at the elbows, patched and torn and greased all over, and held together over his naked chest by some odd pieces of string. His trousers broken at the knees, frayed out at the bottoms, and two odd boots, through various rents in which his crippled feet protruded.

“‘This would never do.’” He must rig himself up a bit, to make himself fit for a gentleman’s house. So off he went and got a piece of soap, and at the nearest pump he washed off as much of his dirt as he could. At a barber’s he had his long, matted hair and beard cut and made decent-looking. And with the remainder of the sovereign he procured a suit of clothes and boots at a slop shop. When arrayed in these, and having duly admired himself, in a condition in which he had not seen himself for years, he awaited the time appointed for going to the artist’s studio.

He presented himself at the address he had received in due time, and rang the bell. A footman answered the door, and asked his business. “Please sir, the gentleman as lives here told me to come to sit for

he to paint.” “*You* are not the man,” replied the servant. “Yes, I be,” responded the beggar. “No, you are not,” replied the servant, “you cannot be the man. My master told me to expect a dirty beggar in rags and tatters. “*I be* the man,” asserted the other, and produced the artist’s card in proof. “But I thought it would never do to come to a gentleman’s house without cleaning myself up a bit.” “That is just what my master did not want you to do,” answered the servant. “But I will tell him you are here, and see what he says.”

When the servant announced the model’s arrival to the expectant artist, he rushed out, without hearing more, to bring in the object he had so long sought, and had found at last—the model which would enable him to paint in the prodigal in his great picture. What was his dismay when his eyes fell on the made-up man before him. He had lost his ideal. “You have spoilt it all, you have spoilt it all. I told you to come *just as you were*,” he exclaimed, and without waiting to hear the wretched man’s explanations he ordered his servant to thrust him out of doors.

How many make this grave mistake. They go to the pump of morality, temperance, or legality to cleanse their ways, or to the slop shop of religious observances—

religion without Christ—to fit themselves for God. These things only spoil them for God and for His grace. The more unworthy the objects, the more glory their salvation brings to God. The chief of sinners will be the brightest trophy of grace for eternity. Not that I would say one word against true temperance, morality, or religion in their proper place, but that is after and not before salvation. (See Eph. ii. 8–10.) Not to procure salvation but the proofs and fruits of grace already received.

“Confession is good for the soul,” is a true saying. It is the invariable accompaniment of real repentance. It is due to God. Paul preached “repentance toward God,” as well as faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is the forerunner of forgiveness. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John i. 9.) And again, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” (Prov. xxviii. 13.)

W. G. B.

“WHERE ARE THE NINE?”

AR E you one of them? It was the Lord who asked the question, “Where are the nine?” (Luke xvii. 17), for only one had returned to give glory to God. They had all been lepers, and He had cleansed them. Each had received an equal blessing from Him. He had dismissed their loathsome disease, leaving not a trace of it on their persons.

It was an act of divine mercy, such as we can scarcely imagine. Previously, they had been shut away from the company of God’s people; on no account might they approach others, and if any approached towards them, they were to cover their mouths, as though their very breath was contaminating, and cry out, “Unclean, unclean.”

The distress of these poor creatures was great; they had cried to the Lord to have mercy upon them, and He had done so, but they did not return to Him to give glory to God. Do you know, dear reader, this ingratitude may have a voice to you? and if so, suffer us to apply it. You were once in distress about your soul, and besought the Lord to forgive and save you,

did you not? He gave you the answer of peace, and you were comforted.

His word assured you that He had cleansed you, not a spot of sin remaining upon you, and that He had blotted them all out from His sight and dismissed them from His remembrance for ever. The offence of them (like the loathsomeness of the leper) being gone, He could then look upon you with complacency. What a relief that was to your heart! There was not left a cloud above, nor a spot within! Happy day, when Jesus washed your sins away!

A new era then began in your life, like it did in that of the cleansed leper. He, however, was cleansed only for time, you were saved for eternity. You had previously been a child of wrath even as others, but you became a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. You were the object of God's love, loved even with the same love wherewith He loves His Son. He called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. He set your face heavenward, and gave you an Object for your heart there in the One who saved you by laying down His precious life for you on Calvary, the just for the unjust, that He might bring you to God.

Thus the Lord brought you to the knowledge of Himself, and from that moment

His desire has been that you should have known Him daily better and better. “ My beloved is mine, and I am his.” He redeemed you that you might be His, and loves you with an everlasting love. He will never give up or lose one He has saved and that belongs to Him. “ I give unto my sheep eternal life ; and they shall never perish.” (John x. 28.) No power is able to pluck the sheep out of His and the Father’s hands.

Now, dear reader, you should be ever in the confidence and enjoyment of this love to you. The Lord has saved you not only that He might relieve you, but that He might have you with Him for ever, and that meanwhile, that is, whilst you remain in this world, you should be living to His glory, witnessing for Him and the great things He has done unto thee. (Luke viii. 39.) You may not, however, have your heart possessed with the one single desire to know Him, please Him and serve Him, but to increase in the knowledge of Him is the most important thing in your life. Paul bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the Ephesians for that very thing, “ that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the

breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” (Eph. iii. 17-19; see chap. i. 16-23.)

Paul counted all things loss, “for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” (Phil. iii. 8); and so it should be with us, “For to me to live is Christ,” said the same apostle, and we should have the same purpose in our souls. “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.” (Hos. vi. 3.)

A worldly Christian is false to his calling, whom the Lord saves He separates to Himself. “Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.” “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” (John xvii. 16.) “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John ii. 15.) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 1-4.)

This is an absolute statement; He will not appear in glory without you; He is

waiting for the day of His joy, when He will fetch us away. The Lord has not left His first love as the church in Revelation ii. 4 has left theirs for Him ; but we, alas, grieve Him by our ingratitude and unfaithfulness. A divided heart, it has been said, is the bane of a Christian, and it is sadly apparent that the hearts of many of the Lord's people are taken up with many things which the Lord does not approve of, which are not the things of the Spirit, which have no sanction from the word of God, and do not bring glory to Him, but the contrary.

If therefore, dear reader, you are like one of the nine, if your heart is not right in the sight of God, if you have become entangled with the world, if your affection towards Christ, and your joy in Him, has declined, we beseech you to turn to Him with brokenness of spirit, that He may restore your soul, and strengthen you, and enable you henceforth to live in the enjoyment of His present love, and unreservedly to His glory. Listen henceforth to no voice but the Lord's, who will guide you in all your path. “ I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go : I will guide thee with mine eye.” (Psa. xxxii. 8 ; Hos. xiv.)

H. J. T.

THE BLOOD CLEANSETH.

IN the summer of 1874, B—— and I were led down to Brockville, a town on the banks of the St. Lawrence River in Canada. We pitched our tent near the river, half a mile from the town, and began preaching the gospel in the place, visiting the people daily. One afternoon I was led into a little house on the way into the main street of the town, and a woman past the middle age of life opened the door. Sitting in another part of the room was a poor, weak-looking girl, as pale as a sheet. After talking to the woman, who got blessing through the conversation, I turned to the girl, and began to speak to her. Mrs. B—— stopped me, and said, “Oh, sir, it is no use speaking to her. She cannot understand you, she has had fits ever since she was a baby, and her mind is gone.” However, having known the power of the Lord in a case before this to bring His word home to a poor idiot, I repeated the words to her slowly, getting her to repeat them after me word by word, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Several days I visited the house; the mother was now rejoicing in the Lord in the

knowledge of a present salvation, and in consequence greatly interested about her husband and daughter. Every time I repeated to her the same verse, making her repeat the words after me, till at last one day I asked her, "What does the blood of Jesus do, Fanny?" She answered decidedly, with an intelligent look on her features, "It cleanseth me from all sin." I said to the mother, "I believe the word is entering your daughter's soul, and her mind is opening up;" and it was so. Her mother was astonished at her; she said it was a miracle, and indeed it was, for all conversions are miracles, only that added to this, in her case a wonderful degree of intelligence seemed to come back to her mind.

B—— now got interested in her, and as now she could understand, he led her on to see that not only had Christ died for her sins, and that the blood of Jesus had cleansed her, but that she had died with Christ in His death, *that* death having been applied to her nature. She seemed to get to see her acceptance in the Beloved also, so that when I saw her again after some months, it was wonderful to see her growth in the knowledge of Christ. She was also taught to look for His coming, and to desire it with ardent expectation. I think it was the next year that she desired to take her

place in fellowship with those gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus, at the Lord's table. Not being able to come to the room, a few of us gathered at Mrs. B——'s house, and had a most blessed meeting, the Lord's presence being especially manifested in our midst.

When the cup was passed to her, all at once she rose up, and said, most clearly and solemnly, "I take this cup and remember the Lord's death till He come." All were in tears. It was a day never to be forgotten amongst those who were there. She got gradually weaker, her fits increasing upon her. Her mother would say, "Fanny, how good God was to bring you through that fit;" and she would answer, "Wait on the Lord, and again I say, wait on the Lord." Strangers would come in and ask her, "How are you, Fanny?" She would answer, "I am well;" and when they went away, she would say, "I wish they were as happy as I am now, watching and waiting for the Lord, till He will come to take me home to be for ever with Him."

To her mother she would say, "If I go home first, shall I not be glad to see you when you come? but we will wait the Lord's time." She died in one of her fits; she could not speak, but took her mother by the hand, looked up and smiled, and fell

asleep, safe in the arms of Jesus. Thus dear Fanny fell asleep, a miracle of God's grace to soul and body. Thus does God use the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound those that are mighty, that no flesh should glory in His presence. May God use this incident mightily for His glory perhaps to some weak-minded one!

A. P. C.

A KIND ACTION, AND ITS REWARD.

A POOR newspaper boy in one of our big cities entered a tramcar on an elevated railway.

He slipped in and quietly took a seat near the window, and for a time enjoyed the country scene, as the train rapidly sped on its way.

Poor, wee laddie, he was tired and foot-sore. No stockings or boots to protect his feet from the hard stones of the streets.

His clothes were ragged and worn, his bonny little face looked pinched, and his hollow cheeks and dark lines under his large blue eyes, told all too plainly the sad tale of hunger and suffering. He had not been in the carriage long before he was

sleeping peacefully and soundly. Some little time after the poor boy got into the car, two young ladies stepped in and took their seats just opposite to him.

They quickly noticed the wee laddie and were touched to see him in such a sad forlorn condition.

His cheek rested against the hard window sill; their kind christian hearts could not watch him in this position long, so the elder of the two sisters rose and gently raised his head and slipped her soft warm muff under it; the poor boy now had a pillow of fur to rest his weary head upon, though little conscious of this kind deed, which did not go unnoticed. It was good to watch how that thoughtful action influenced others in the car.

An old gentleman, who was in the next seat to the young ladies, watched the one as she so tenderly placed her muff under the poor little boy's head. He was also touched, so putting his hand into his pocket and without saying a word, he placed sixpence into the young lady's hand, looking and nodding at the same time towards the little lad. The young lady, as we can imagine, was surprised and thankful to see the effect of her little kind act, and she looked up to the Lord in thankfulness for putting this good thought into the

gentleman's heart to help this poor little boy, in whom she felt so interested. She and her sister also gave their mite, which was acceptable in His sight, the "cup of cold water" to one of His little ones, which never loses its reward.

First one passenger and then another followed the example of the kind old gentleman and the two young ladies, some giving more, others less, until nearly everyone in the car had given something to the young lady for the poor, wee laddie. She had gathered quite a nice little sum for him.

When he awoke, what joy it gave her to place the money in his hand; he was confused and excited, and did not know what to say, or how to thank his kind benefactors. He ran home with a heart brimming over with *such joy*, little dreamed of when he left his poor needy home in the morning.

Perhaps there he had a trusting and praying mother pleading for help, which our loving Lord and God always sends sooner or later to the faithful and believing child of God.

The old gentleman and the young ladies were more than repaid for their little deeds of kindness, which example was so quickly followed, as we have already seen. They

little thought such a happy result would follow. We cannot tell the blessing of any service “done *unto Him*.” The little boy in years to come could never forget such unexpected kindness. May it prove a blessing to his soul and may he become a Christian.

Now think of that boy for a moment. What had he done to merit the kindness of those in the train? He had done nothing at all. It was simply his need that drew forth the sympathy of those who saw him. It was his poverty, his ragged condition--his need.

In like manner there was nothing in us to commend us to the love of God, or to draw forth His compassion, nothing save our deep, deep need. The motives of His acting in grace to us were found in His heart of love.

May there be a response in our hearts to His love. May we be able to say, “We love him, because he first loved us.”

M. E. W.

IS THERE NOT A GOD ?

THOUGH such a question is a distasteful one to believers in Christ, yet, lest any reader should believe, or rather say, there is no God, we adduce the following occurrence as told us recently by an eye-witness of it :—

“ Some years ago I and several others were converted at an open-air service on a Sunday morning, amongst a godless set of men, in whose hearts the Lord had been working in power. The preacher had himself been converted on the same spot.

“ After one of our meetings, some who had been listeners began their usual gambling, one of whom was very unlucky. His pocket was empty, and when it came to the last toss, and the money had turned up the wrong way for him, he shuffled the coins with his feet and a hot dispute between them ensued. Thereupon the man called upon God to strike him blind if he had cheated ; and there and then he was struck with blindness, and had to be led to his home.

“ We had all been friends, and in the afternoon, hearing of the occurrence, several of us hurried to his side, when we prayed

for him and pressed upon him the acceptance of the gospel which he had previously neglected. To our joy he received it, and was assured of his salvation. On the following Sunday morning he was led back to the place where he was struck blind, and there testified to the Lord's power and grace to him. He afterwards joined the preachers, and subsequently the Lord in His goodness restored to him the sight of one eye, which testified of His mercy, whilst the blind one testified to His power."

In another place a man said, "May I never move again from this spot," calling upon God to witness that he was not telling a lie; whereupon he not only lost the power to move, but the very earth seemed to hold him in its grasp, and it required the joint efforts of others to remove him, and that only with great difficulty.

Yet another instance. Some farmers had congratulated each other on the good prospects of their approaching harvest, whereupon one of them rejoined in a sullen manner, "Oh, yes; our crops will do well enough if God does not interfere with them;" which hard speech God answered by giving an abundant harvest to all around him, whilst his own was a notable failure, of which a report was spread about in the county in which it occurred. (Jude 15.)

Numbers of such instances have occurred at different times, but the Lord does not always answer such slurs on His goodness, or even the worse challenges of those who deny His existence and His power. It is to His word God directs us for evidences if they are desired.

Ask the Jew as to this, and he will tell you that the waters of Noah are an incontrovertible fact ; and he will further point to the memorial of the passover which has been perpetuated for so many centuries. He will tell you that the event has certainly occurred as if it had been only one of yesterday ; that by no process could it be reasoned away. Moreover, that God fed their forefathers for forty years with manna which He caused to descend from heaven.

Besides this, the consequences of the rejection of their Messiah by the Jews, is a standing proof before the eyes of the world to-day that God performs His word, inasmuch as for their unbelief they are scattered and peeled throughout the earth, and are “without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.” (Hos. iii. 4.) It is evident God has left them to themselves for the time being.

A man's heart must be hard set against receiving any evidence whatever before he can persuade himself that there is no God, and that no revelation from Him has been given. He must have a determined will to close his ears against the truth, and shut his eyes against the glory of God, which even the heavens and the firmament declare. It is only a small thing to believe that there is a Creator, for even a child knows that his father, though a skilful man, could not make even the commonest flower, or a blade of grass.

From the word of God, however, we not only learn that God is a creator-God, but a redeeming God; and it is as such that He addresses you by the gospel, and calls upon you to listen to His voice. He knows your case, your sins, your need, yea, your hardness of heart, and your dislike to have to do with Him. But He reasons with you, and asks, "Why will ye die?" Canst thou brave the judgment-seat, the great white throne? He knows you cannot, and therefore your folly. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"—that is even in the article of death. (Jer. xii. 5.)

Perhaps you deny your responsibility because you are an unbeliever. But it makes no difference whether you believe or

not. It is the same indeed in worldly matters. If an officer from a court of law presents a summons, though it be refused and even trampled upon, it is held to be as “delivered;” and so with you, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear.

H. T.

“A GREAT WAY OFF,* HIS FATHER
SAW HIM.”

(LUKE XV. 20.)

HOW every word in this wondrous parable brings out the fulness and freeness of grace. Nor is it to be wondered at, for God is the God of *all* grace and the Father of mercies. So that we might expect the unfolding of God's heart, by the Son of His bosom, which this parable is, to abound and overflow with grace. How that father's heart yearned over that son! How God's heart yearns over poor sinners, little as they think it. How can they, when law is deeply embedded in all our hearts? That is, that God will be to us in accordance with what we are to Him. Grace acts from itself. It is not called forth by any

NOTE.—The same word in the original as “far” in “far country,” which shews how far the father hasted to him.

worthiness in its object. God finds the motive for His grace in His own heart. How that father's heart went out towards that son, and welcomed the first approach to a return! How God's heart goes out towards the poor sinner, and fosters and strengthens, then welcomes the faintest drawings towards Himself!

What riches of grace are contained in that single expression, “*a great way off*, his father saw him.” How it speaks of God being on the look-out, as it were, for the sinner's approach. Not the trembling sinner on the look out for a kindly glance of His eye, a favourable moment to draw nigh, but the other way round altogether; God on the look-out for the first motion in the sinner's heart towards Himself. With what interest He watches the effect of all His agents: the famine, the treatment of the “citizen,” of the rest (“and no man gave unto him”), of the want, &c. If such His interest in His “banished,” if He thus devises means “that his banished be not expelled from him” (2 Sam. xiv. 14), small wonder that He should, as it were, “make merry and be glad,” when He gets the sinner home; or that His Son should inform us, “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

But not only did he see him a great way off, but he “had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him.” Dear unsaved reader, I would ask you, What do you think fills the heart of God towards sinners, towards you? Is it anger, or is it pity? True, He is “angry with the wicked every day.” He hates his sins, but pity fills His heart towards the poor slaves of sin and Satan.

And what is this “running and falling on his neck, and kissing him,” intended to represent? The willingness, the alacrity of God to forgive and to receive the repentant sinner.

What a moment, what a meeting for both, the father and the son, God and the sinner, whilst all heaven rings again with responsive joy! May it be yours to cause heaven and the heart of God this joy, and to receive for yourself this welcome, ere you lay this paper down, dear unsaved reader, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.

The wanderer no more will roam,
The lost one to the fold hath come,
The prodigal is welcomed home,
O Lamb of God, to Thee!

Though clothed in rags, by sin defiled,
The Father did embrace His child;
And I am pardoned, reconciled,
O Lamb of God in Thee!

W. G. B.

SAVED AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

DEATHBED conversions, so-called, are for the most part doubtful; not that one would limit the grace of God, for the crucified thief, who had sinned all his life with a high hand against God, is not the only example of a soul who, when he could sin no more, turned to the Lord and in grace received a full pardon of all his guilt, and passed from time into eternity washed in the blood of the Lamb, to join in the new eternal song of the redeemed. I repeat they are doubtful, very doubtful. God, who sees the heart, knows; but “by their fruits! *ye* shall know them.” There is a risk at such times of lending a hand to the devil when we least intend it. If my reader has had much to do with souls, has he not had to own, to his shame, that if so-and-so had died when all hope of life seemed to be gone, he would have thanked God for having at the last moment saved a great sinner? But the sick man recovered, and with returning health and strength fell to his old habits of carelessness and sin. Yet that man eagerly listened to the story of the love of God in giving His only Son to die for such as he was. He *seemed* to take in that the finished work of Christ on

the cross was enough to meet his need, and he assented to the truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. He *professed* to rest on these grand foundation-truths, and calmly and quietly lay waiting for the time of his departure. There may be an assent to these truths, and an appearance of peace, without having the conscience reached in the slightest degree as to the question of sin between a guilty man and a holy God. This can be none other than the power of Satan at the right hand of the dying man, speaking a peace that is no peace. Many, very many, have died apparently converted at the last moment. Many, very many, have recovered to go deeper into sin than ever. That man was right who wrote: "care then, . . . not how you end, but how you spend, your days."

My reader may still be unsaved. If so, let him take care that he risk not his soul, as many are doing, to the eleventh hour. That hour may bring with it no offer of mercy.

But do we not read of those who were called at the eleventh hour, and came? Yes, but you forget that those men responded to the *first* call of the Master. No man had hired them. Can you say this?

Was not the thief saved at the eleventh hour? As far as we know, he seized the

first opportunity he ever had of owning the rejected Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and King : “ Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

Not a solitary instance can you find in your Bible of a man who through life rejected every call to repentance, every entreaty to decide for Christ—thus always resisting the strivings of God’s Holy Spirit—and then at the eleventh hour died saved, and at peace with God.

Trifle then no longer with God, with your soul, and with eternity.

S. P.

A WARNING VOICE.

VISITORS to the Castle of Chillon in Switzerland are shewn the great dungeon with its vaulted roof, supported by stone columns, to which prisoners in bygone days were chained ; the one with its iron ring to which Bonivard was fastened for six long dreary years, and the footprints left by him on the solid rock upon which he walked the length of his chain are pointed out ; the sloping rock upon which prisoners condemned to die passed their last night is still there, and the chamber of torture too, with the stake

to which those who refused to own to guilt imputed to them were bound and branded with red-hot irons to extort from them information required.

There is also the "Oubliette." To this dark chamber the prisoner from whom they had failed to extract confession was brought; here he was told that he was now to go free, and that by descending the stone stairs to which he would be led he would find himself at liberty.

Oh, the thrill of joy that filled his breast as the word "liberty" was uttered, the joy of being free from the dark dungeon with its chains and its burning tortures, the joy of meeting again the loved wife and little ones in their mountain home, all flashed upon him in a moment; he scarcely knows why, but he seizes the hand of his cruel gaoler, even to wish him farewell, for his heart is full, and begins to descend the steps, one, two, three, four--no, there is no fourth, and a cry of horror arises from the unhappy victim as he finds himself precipitated upon sharp knives fixed on the sides of this awful well-trap, for such it is, till his body, mangled and bloody, falls into the lake that lies at the foot of Chillon.

Reader, there are thousands of death-chambers turned into "oubliettes" far worse, far more cruel than that at Chillon,

for immortal souls unwashed in the blood of the Lamb, and thus unsaved, are told that a few more moments and they may enter the Father's house of many mansions, that the song of the blessed and the joys of the Redeemer await them, and these unbelievers are resigned, and they pass from time into eternity, their bodies are committed to the grave with a sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life, but ah! the horrors of Luke xvi. 23 are theirs, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." They die in their sins, alas! and now there is no hope, no hope for ever!

Dear reader, is this to be your end? In view of the realities of eternity let me warn you, let me beseech you to be reconciled to God, who is holy, who is just, into whose presence no stain of sin can ever enter, who is light, in whose presence all is exposed, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. The God against whom you have sinned in thought, word and in deed, for every sin committed is against God. Yes, I plead with you to be reconciled to Him.

And let those of us who are called in any way to deal with immortal souls beware lest we play the part of the goaler of Chillon.

S. P.

A NARRATIVE OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

HE was mending a pair of shoes when I saw him first, an old grey-headed man of about eighty. He received me very gruffly, and when I spoke to him about his soul fired up at once: "I thought I was saving my soul by going about preaching, but many were as good as I," &c., &c. I gently but firmly pointed out that I deserved to be in hell, but that God's sovereign grace *had* saved me, that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ *had* washed all my sins away, and that I preached because I *was* saved. I also told him that he could only be saved *as* a poor vile sinner, through faith in the Son of God, who had been crucified, but whom God had raised up on the third day. I told him *we* were *both* alike in the sight of God, both poor vile sinners, and that *both* must be saved in the same way. I told him that since I had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ I was a child of God. He was rather softened by this time and willing that I should pray for him.

After praying together he asked me to call again, and seemed thoroughly broken when I gave him a shilling. That was his

last day of health. Next day he had taken very ill, and had to go to bed, which he never left again. The neighbours say they heard him praying in great agony of soul about his sins. Indeed, from the time of our conversation he seemed to be under deep exercise of soul. This lasted for about ten days or so, when he seemed to find peace. When I saw him again (about three weeks from our first interview) he was very weak in body, but, oh, so bright and happy in his soul. The burden of his song was, "The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." What a change was in him now! He asked the Lord to bless me for having come to see him.

A dear servant of the Lord and I saw him several times after this. There was no mistake, he was always longing to depart and to be with Christ. Last time we saw him he said, "You will come and see me again to-morrow, won't you?"

When we had gone out, he said we had promised to come again on the morrow, but he hoped he would be with Christ before that. He was—he fell asleep that night. Next day when we came, he was absent from the body, present with the Lord.

It was only four weeks since our first interview, and he had lived eighty years without Christ. Oh, the marvellous grace

of God ! May this tale of a brand plucked from the burning be blessed to precious souls. Reader, this may be your chance. “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

W. M.

THE RICH MERCY OF GOD.

(EPH. II.)

“GOD, who is rich in mercy ;” then it flows down, down to the poor, lost man “dead in sins.” Many ignorantly say that salvation begins with one’s self, and man must do what he can and God will do the rest. Now the truth is, man has nothing whatever to do in the work of salvation, for God tells us that was finished on the cross eighteen hundred years ago ; and as a proof that the work was accepted, He raised Christ from the dead, and gave Him a place at His own right hand. All the sinner has to do, if it may be called doing, is to believe and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And what comforting assurance it is when the soul grasps the truth, that it is God’s work from beginning to end ! My salvation does not depend on my faith or feelings, but on God being satisfied with the work of my Substitute on the cross.

A young man said to me some little time since that he felt all right sometimes, but at others his faith failed him, and then he was dull and unhappy. This was one of the many who are really believers and no doubt saved, but are always looking within instead of without; because if it rested on our faith, what a poor thing it would be! but thank God, as one has said, "the proof is outside." There, on the cross, the work was finished, and God has declared Himself satisfied, and I have believed it; and now by grace I am saved through faith. And I say to thee, dear reader, do not look within at the poor, vile self, and desperately wicked heart, or thy poor, feeble faith, but to Him who has finished the work, and is now sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and there thou wilt find rest and peace.

W. H. D.

YOUR RESURRECTION.

"IF a man die, shall he live again?"
(Job xiv. 14.)

Yes! he will certainly live again. Job, who put that question, answered it himself, later on, in most unqualified terms. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the

earth : and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another ; though my reins be consumed within me.” (Chap. xix. 25–27.) Thus though this was uttered 1,500 years before Christ, and nearly 2,000 years more have since passed, yet he looked on to the day when he should be raised again, which is yet future.

Resurrection is indeed one of the plainest truths of the Bible.

Again we say, dear reader, be sure that you will have part in the “first resurrection” ; be sure that your name is written in “the Lamb’s book of life.” Do not even our gardens show us that both the seed of the flower, and that of the weed, after lying in the ground during the winter, come forth again in due season ; and do not our cemeteries say to us that, however beautiful may be the tomb and its surroundings, if there lie within it the body of one who has died unsaved, the day will come when he will be raised again for judgment ; whilst the bodies of all the saved will have been raised 1,000 years previously to a glorious resurrection to be for ever with the Lord.

Dear reader, our subject is a solemn one.

Oh, come to the Saviour, come now, while
you may! H. J. T.

“BUT THE FATHER SAID.”

(LUKE XV. 22.)

ALL hung on that. What would his father say? It was of comparatively little importance what the son said, or for what place he would ask. Very right that he should confess his sin; for “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” Confession is the evidence of repentance. (See also Prov. xxviii. 13.)

But the son could not finish what he had intended to say. How could he? For his father had seen him when he was yet a great way off; had had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Was that the way servants were hired? No, he must let his father have his own way, and give in accordance with the dictates of his own heart. “Bring forth the *best* robe, and put it on him,” &c.

And what is all this intended to represent? The way that God receives sinners.

The Pharisees and scribes had murmured against the blessed Lord, saying, “This

man receiveth sinners and eateth with them ” And so the Son of God’s bosom, the declarer of the Father, draws this picture to shew, not only that God receives sinners, but the way in which He does it. For grace asks for nothing and gives all, and the best of everything too.

Dear reader, do you believe that God is thus waiting to receive sinners, and to bless them ? That He has everything in readiness for them ? Even the calf fatted for the feast ; joys ready prepared ?

On the rugged Yorkshire coast stood a little cottage, inhabited by a poor widow. Her only child, a son, the hope of her old age for comfort and support, had forsaken her years ago. In his hard-heartedness he had followed his own will, and run away to sea. But that mother’s heart never gave him up. Many a prayer had gone up from her lonely bed on windy nights, as she lay awake, and listened for his hand upon the latch ; for she never locked her door, but left it on the latch, “ for,” said she, “ he may come back some night, and I would not have him find my door closed against him. And if he only comes back to die, I’ll gladly nurse him.”

One night she heard a hand upon the latch, and a footstep on the floor below, “ Charlie, is that you ? ” she said. “ Yes,

mother, I've come home to die. Will you have me ?” “ Yes, Charlie, and welcome.”

That mother's love is but a faint reflection of God's yearning over sinners. Will you prove it, dear reader ?

Everlasting glory unto Jesus be !

Sing aloud the story of His victory !

How He left the splendour of His home on high,
Came, in love so tender, on the cross to die.

Yes ! He came from heaven, suffered in our stead,
Praise to Him be given, First-born from the dead.
Jesus, meek and lowly, came the lost to save ;
He, the Victim holy, triumphed o'er the grave.

Christ is Lord of glory, sing we now to-day !
Tell abroad the story, own His rightful sway !
Sing aloud, and never cease to spread His fame,
Triumph, triumph ever in the Saviour's name !

(K. H. B.)

W. G. B.

