

# FAITHFUL WORDS FOR OLD AND YOUNG VOLUME 14

by H.F. Witherby

---

*A collection of articles and writings by H.F. Witherby from Faithful Words for Old and Young Volume 14, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

149 Chapters

## Table of Contents

0. Faithful Words for Old and Young Volume 14
  1. Preface
  2. A Father's Love
  3. Help to the Fallen
  4. The Infidel and the Shadow of Death
  5. Prayer Heard
  6. Man's Condition
  7. The Divine Treasury
  8. Authority—Service—Power
  9. Service
  10. Power
  11. The Light Will Shine yet
  12. I Want to See Him, so Badly
  13. Willing-Hearted and Wise-Hearted
  14. Scenes From the History of the Early Christians
  15. Bible Lessons for the Little Ones.—7
  16. The Old Chickweed Seller
  17. Evil Nature Insensible to Sin
  18. Perfect Love
  19. Extracts
  20. How I Was Brought to God
  21. Doubts Gone
  22. Procrastination
  23. Come and See
  24. On Exhortation
  25. Scripture Testimony on Fools
  26. Extracts From Swain
  27. Lost
  28. To Our Young Friends
  29. Bible Subjects: Reconciliation
  30. Sowing the Seed
  31. Bible Lessons for the Little Ones.—2
  32. Scenes From the History of the Early Christians
  33. Willie's Master
  34. Have I a Soul?
  35. Extracts From Different Authors
  36. Waiting for Feelings
  37. The Searching of God
  38. Misbelief

39. Our Knowledge Teaching Us Our Ignorance
40. The Mother's Hand, and Baby's Peace
41. Himself He Cannot Save
42. Blind Bartimæus
43. The Carrier's Daughter
44. Oh, Then He Knows
45. Bible Lessons for the Little Ones
46. Bible Reading
47. The Faithful Brother
48. Praise—
49. The Blasphemer's End
50. The Happy Schoolboy Going Home
51. Short Accounts
52. Our Toll Bar
53. He Is Our Peace
54. How Does God Love?
55. Our Place—His Bosom!
56. ALL RUBBED OUT
57. The Value of a Minute
58. Be of Good Courage
59. An Appeal
60. God's Whosoever
61. The Rich Lady Made Rich
62. Not Know!
63. Great Grace
64. The Child and It's Toy
65. About Sin and Sinning
66. Eternity in Relation to God and Man
67. Hosanna!
68. A Servant of the Lord Jesus
69. I Have a Pass! Have You?
70. Bible Subjects: Salvation
71. The First Prayer
72. O Taste and See!
73. The Debt Paid
74. And Enoch Walked With God
75. Favors Which Are Ours Solely of God
76. The Rod and the Serpent
77. Willie and the Stars
78. Little Melaine
79. Salvation
80. The Strangest Man in the Village

81. The Two Brothers
82. I Must Save My Sister
83. Lord, I Love Thee— or, Lord, Thou Lovest Me!
84. The Child and the Earthquake at Colchester
85. The Home Above and the Journey Thither
86. Then Came Amalek
87. In Everything Give Thanks
88. No Want to Them That Fear Him
89. Now or Never
90. Short Swords
91. What Shall It Profit?
92. Ah! He'll Soon Give Over
93. Sacred Memories
94. God Who Justifies
95. Trottie and the Little Fishes
96. The Happy Sunday Afternoon
97. The Draw-Net
98. The Birthday Morning
99. Homeward Bound
100. Six Weeks Without God
101. The Blind Man Led by a Child
102. Our Father's Care
103. "God Bless You!"
104. The Hem of His Garment
105. The Heart in Heaven
106. My Little Sister
107. A Letter
108. I Have
109. Bell, the Navvy
110. Assurance
111. To Soldiers
112. Patience
113. How Can I Get Salvation?
114. Forgetting God
115. I Know and Have Certainty
116. I Will Give
117. Christian Life
118. Be Ye Also Ready
119. John 5:24
120. An Enemy Hath Done This!
121. Seventy Years
122. I Want to Go

123. The Old Villager
124. From Samuel Rutherford
125. The Whole World Is Changed
126. Let Your Light so Shine
127. Temptation
128. God's Care; Have Faith in God
129. Christian Character
130. God's Directing Hand
131. From the Other Side of the Water
132. The Half-Crown
133. The Rich Kinsman
134. In the Days of Thy Youth
135. The Poor Hawker
136. The Anchor Holds
137. Prepare to Meet Thy God
138. Jesus Only
139. A Child's Faith
140. God's Word in the Heart
141. When Am I Happiest?
142. Forever!
143. Rejoice With Air
144. The Prospect
145. "I Want to Get a Crown."
146. Little Thomas
147. On the Right Hand
148. Sowing and Reaping

## Faithful Words for Old and Young Volume 14

---

## Preface

---

ANOTHER chapter in the book of our lives has ended. The dark and the light, the sorrowing's and the rejoicings of another year on earth are gone by, never more to return. With one hand upon the finished chapter, and the other about to turn over the leaf, let its pause and inquire how it stands with us in relation to eternity. A wholesome inquiry, gentle reader, whether we be known as Christian men and women, or whether we be still amongst the undecided and the waverers maybe, among the neglecters of salvation. As the seeds we sowed in the autumn will, should we live, appear before our eyes in the spring in their new form of life, so will the moments, the hours—aye, the memories of this bygone year rise up and stand before us in eternity!

The principles of the irresistible law of sowing and reaping cheer us with their brightest features in genuine gospel work. It is impossible honestly to serve our Master in heaven for naught. True, we do not garner in the grain all at once. Ground has to be broken up, the seed sown, the field weeded on man's part: it is God who gives the increase. It is one experience to enter on an unbroken Prairie, fell the trees, dig out the roots, till the soil, and sow the seed; another ten years hence, as a visitor, to behold the smiling homestead, the golden corn, where was once the wild! All gospel work has somewhat of the hardship of Pioneering in it, but in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not. A gospel magazine, and the labors of those who sustain it, either by pen or by distribution, have of necessity chiefly the seed-sowing character. Still, we again gratefully record many instances, which this year have come to our knowledge, of old and young finding Christ and peace through our pages; so that we have had the joy of reaping as well as the Privilege of sowing.

Once more we thank our correspondents who sent us papers during the old year. We hold several good articles in type ready for the New Year, and others in MS. for the same object. We received a greater number of articles in these twelve months than during any similar period, and our most hearty thanks are given to our fellow-workers. We plead for fresh help for the new year—especially papers suitable for the young.

We would again press upon our friends the importance of awakening individual interest in the periodical. Those who have the leisure, and who kindly interest themselves to obtain subscribers, either in villages or in the humble streets of our cities, ever find That FAITHFUL WORDS is regularly taken in and carefully read. Such assistance in widening the circulation of the Magazine is the truest help that can be rendered to it.

If it were possible it would be a great delight to us to be able to respond to a hundredth part of the applications we receive from town Missionaries and visitors of the poor, who Themselves are without means, for free grants of FAITHFUL WORDS; this matter we leave with our wealthy readers, simply stating that the Publisher will be glad to show such some of the letters crying for help we so often receive.

Again we take the opportunity of stating that all our stories in FAITHFUL WORDS are vouched for as strictly true.

With sincere gratitude to God for enabling us afresh to present a Volume to our readers, and with affectionate greetings to friends, known personally, or save by name, once more our pages are issued with the prayer that their perusal may be a blessing both to the Christian reader and to those who at present know not Christ as their Saviour.

## A Father's Love

---

SOME years ago, when visiting a large workhouse, I found a young man, who had been brought into the infirmary, in the last stage of illness. His countenance and manner indicated that he had once moved in good society, and despite his, utterly miserable appearance I saw that he was a gentleman.

Partly from my experience in sick wards, and partly from a strong impression laid upon my mind, I felt assured that he could not live more than a few weeks at the most. He was much dejected, and suffering intensely both in mind and body; my soul was filled with deep compassion for him, and also with earnest longings and prayer for his salvation.

It was my clear duty before God to tell the poor prodigal—for this I felt sure he was—that I was convinced he would never recover. So I told him I felt certain the longest time he could linger would be six or seven weeks, and having said this, I asked him plainly as to the state of his soul in the sight of God.

"What!" said he, "do you really think I shall not recover? Can I only live six weeks longer?"

"Yes; I feel assured," I replied, "that will be the longest time that you can remain on earth."

He became very thoughtful, and then told me with tears, and in the deepest anguish, of the wicked life he had led. Once he had been rich, but had squandered away some thirty thousand pounds. The awful sin of having been the unintentional cause of the death of his poor wife and his children—who had died one by one from neglect and starvation—filled his soul day and night with unutterable remorse.

As he lay in the infirmary of the workhouse, I beheld a prodigal in the truest meaning of the word—a ruined life indeed—dying, and feeling the misery of his position, and also, thank God! the burden of his sins.

I told him of God and of His pardoning love, but the poor young man had no hope in his soul. He continually said he was too wicked to be saved; the awful life he had led could never be forgiven.

One day, after I had read to him the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's gospel, and while I was pleading with him, he said, "I do not believe such an one as I can ever be saved. Do you think it possible that I could be forgiven?"

That is not the question at all," I answered;" the question is not whether you can be saved or not, for God's word answers that, but, do you know that you are lost?"

"Oh! lost, lost indeed! if any man was ever lost, I am," he answered, and indeed he was. Lost in every sense—lost to the world, lost to his friends, lost through his sins, lost, not knowing how to come to God, and, on the very border of eternity, about to be lost in hell forever!

"Well, if you are really lost and know it," said I, "let us pray. I will plead with my Father for you. I can do nothing—you can do nothing; but I will tell my Father all about it."

So I knelt beside his bed. "Give me your hand," said I. He stretched out his poor thin hand, and I took it in both of mine, and pleaded, with cries and tears, with my Father in heaven for the poor prodigal.

After some little time spent in travail for his soul, the dying man cried out, "I see it now; my sins, which were many, are all forgiven, all forgiven! Oh, that I could have known this before!" God had spoken to his soul; through the Holy Spirit the young man had received Christ in his heart: he was saved!

"Have you no friends?" I asked him, after a while.

He said he had, but that none of them knew where he was, nor had they heard of him for years. "My father," said he, "still lives; will you write to him?"

I gladly telegraphed for the young man's father, and he quickly came to see his prodigal son. Often and often had I read that fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's gospel before, and had loved it well for years; but that day that chapter told me more of the love of God the Father to a poor sinner than I had ever known before. The dear old parent embraced his son, and wept upon his neck, kissing him. He had found his son in this world; his eyes beheld his child, his poor son—saved, and ready for heaven and home. The son put his dying arms about his father's neck and kissed him, and they both wept tears of mingled joy and sorrow. Indeed, the dear father embraced me, too, thanking me for having spoken to his poor son, of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

With tears of joy rolling down his cheeks, that beloved Christian parent lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." His prayers of many years were answered.

There were other relations for whom the father intended to send, that they, too, might see the young man, but that very evening I felt a conviction that the time had now come, and that the son, who had been lost but was found, would not live to see them; so I told this to the young man's father.

"Is this really to be so?" said he.

I assured him I believed his son would be called home very shortly; and so it was, for before the next morning the prodigal had been taken home. C.

## Help to the Fallen

---

How is it there is so little true help for the fallen brother? Because there is so little grief for his sins. We do not feel his sin as our own, nor feel that unless it had been for God's upholding grace, we ourselves should be doing the very evil thing which we condemn in him. Consider the temptation which has overtaken him as your own, and remember your own weakness, and you will be better able to help him to his feet. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:1, 2.)

## The Infidel and the Shadow of Death

---

A MAN I well knew, who had lived in different manufacturing towns, and who had attended "Halls of Science," where he had imbibed infidel teaching, came to our town, and settled there. He soon became a leader and a man of mark among a God-hating crew, and was well known as an avowed Atheist. He was a man of extraordinary strength, and often would he stand up among his comrades, and, smiting his breast, call on God to strike him, if God there was. At last, after years of patience with this infidel's outspoken blasphemy, God took him at his word, and struck him with a horrible and fatal disease. Brought down to poverty and misery, the wise man after the flesh, the mighty man among his fellows, lay in a garret—left to die. His companions had forsaken him; he was left alone—with God!

A terrible struggle ensued in the infidel's soul—into it we cannot enter; of it we know little—but God broke down the pride and enmity of that dying man; God brought to naught in his soul the wisdom of this world, the reasonings of Halls of Science, and made him feel not only what his sins were, but that "God is." Having thus prepared His way in the man's soul, God sent a messenger to tell this poor sinner, who had blasphemed, hated Him, and denied Him, that He is love. How wonderful in mercy—how great in love is God! The former Atheist bowed down before the love of God: he was amazed at such love, which reached to him in his sins.

Summoning his former "Hall of Science" friends, the dying man testified to them of God. He told them of Jesus, and His love to hell-deserving sinners, and of the blood He had shed to cleanse away our sins. "My friends, I used to say there is neither heaven nor hell, God nor devil, but I lied. I said it in my health, with the shadow beneath my feet, but now the shadow has risen, slowly risen, till it reaches my throat; that shadow's name is death."

He told them that he was face to face with eternity. "God," said he, "has conquered me; Jesus has become my Saviour, even mine.

When all my infidel friends deserted me the Lord took me up in His love and goodness." Then he told his old friends how that the God he had denied held out full salvation to the vilest on account of the Saviour's finished work, and begged them to give up their infidelity, and to call on God for mercy.

"It was awful to hear him," said one of the old friends of the former Atheist; "it fairly made my hair stand on end"—yet that very man who so feared, is still a rejector of Christ, and is still living a life of open sin, with the full sense in his soul that there is a God, and a judgment to come. God have mercy on such poor souls! To others the dying testimony sped home—their consciences were stricken, and they turned from their evil ways, and abandoned forever the wisdom of this world, which is folly before God.

F.

## Prayer Heard

---

THE following incident, relating to answer to prayer, will surely encourage us:—

A Christian woman, who in her girlhood often poured out her heart in prayer, and who, as a mother, had a large family of children entrusted to her charge, was so led by God to plead for each and all of them, that of each it might be truly said that he or she was "a child of many prayers."

In the evening of this Christian mother's life, on one particular night, something held her eyes waking—what she could not tell. Suddenly her thoughts fix upon a son living in London. A feeling of intense yearning over him seizes her. Her prayers are now only brief words of agonizing entreaty: "Oh, my Father, watch over him—shield him—protect him; he is in danger; I know not what his peril may be, but Thou seest and knowest, whatever it may be; Thou alone canst help—oh, save him, save him!"

On that very night, and, as nearly as can be proved, at that very hour, this son was returning, rather later than usual, from a friend's house to his lodgings, and, anxious to save time by shortening distances, passed through a street unfamiliar to him, but apparently quiet and reputable. Three men were talking together on the pavement; he passed into the road, when suddenly he was felled to the ground. His cries for help only caused a second blow to be given, which just left him sufficient consciousness to know that further resistance would probably cost him his life. Now, while he was being robbed, his life was spared. Was it not that at that moment his mother's prayers were answered? E. G.

## Man's Condition

---

WHAT should we say of that criminal, who upon being brought in guilty, and upon being condemned to death, stood up and inquired what good things the law of the land expected from him, for those good things he would do in order that he might live? A madman, we should say, or madly insensible to his condition. The sentence of death passed, it is too late to speak of meriting life by future good deeds.

Yet apply this to things spiritual. Every day men are saying, "What shall I do? How shall I keep the law?" God, the Judge, has declared all the world guilty before Him. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Rom. 3:19.) It is all too late to talk of meriting life by works, too late by near two thousand years. It is mad unbelief thus to speak, unbelief in the word of God—"guilty."

## The Divine Treasury

---

IN the presence of the wonders of the Scriptures what babes are we! At the best we are like a little child, who has crept up to the threshold of a treasure house, and who, looking in, comprehends not a thousandth part of the wealth upon which he gazes; and may be our childlike apprehension accounts for some of that lack of reverence which is common to children. We should better understand, if we more earnestly sought to be instructed. "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

## Authority—Service—Power

---

THE first requisite for service is the commission to serve. The servant's most important essentials are his credentials. The man of chief rank and ability, who represents his country as ambassador, or the humblest gatekeeper of the king's palace, each has authority committed to him for his work. The authority given places each of them in his position of service. When the Lord was leaving this earth He said, "The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants" (Mark 13:34); authority, therefore, was that which the Lord first committed to His servants. The servant is never in authority beyond the limits of his commission. In this life it is not for a general to assume the judgeship, or for the policeman to attend the fireman's duty—each servant of his country has authority in his own sphere, not in that of others. God commissioned Saul to be king over Israel; Saul assumed the priest's service, offered sacrifices, and lost his crown. (1 Sam. 13:12-14.) To Moses were given the designs of the tabernacle; to Bezaleel and Aholiab its construction. (Ex. 31) Paul planted; Apollos watered. The Lord has given us authority to do the work He prescribes for us in His Name, not to do the work of others.

God first appoints a man for a service, and then enables him to serve. God called Moses, and commissioned him, saying, "I will send thee." (Ex. 3:10.) The commission of Jehovah was authority for Moses. But Moses looked for power in himself (4:10) to carry out his service, and, not finding it, sought to avoid executing his service; then "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses" (4:14). How often, like Moses, do we look for power in ourselves to fulfill that service to which we are appointed! Our first question should be, "Am I sent?" David went against Goliath of Gath, as Jehovah's servant; Saul looked at David's own power, and endeavored to make him go to war in his armor; but David took with him Jehovah's Name, and by a sling and a stone the giant fell. David went on in faith; the result was in Jehovah's hand; the issue—victory.

Christ's servants have His authority, and greater authority no Christian can possess. Human authority is either that of him who speaks or of those who sent him; it is as great or as small as man—it is neither more nor less. Its boundaries are time, and its limit the reach of the arm of flesh. We have not authority over our fellow servants. Interference is not authority. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." (Rom. 14:4.) Let Christ's servants lay to heart, that the first thing the Lord gave to His servants was authority, and they will be emboldened in their service; for who shall stand against their Master, and what encourages a man more in his work for his Lord than this happy knowledge—my Master sent me?

Our gracious Lord when on earth was the Servant, and as such He had authority given Him of His Father. He spake as one having authority, not as the scribes. (Mark 1:22.) He spake of God, and from God; they, as schoolmen, of their books and from their wisdom. The people were astonished at His doctrine, and, in measure, it is so even now with the servants of Christ, who are like their Lord, for those who speak direct at His bidding, as from Himself, command the souls of men. They may be laughed at, or envied, but their doctrine is not as the scribes. What greater honor, servant

of Christ, can you have on earth than the authority your Master in heaven has given to you? The great men of this world seek service under kings; you are the servant of the Lord of all—go on in your service, serving Him. Let no power on earth drag you from your path of duty.

## Service

---

The next thing we read is, the Lord gives "to every man his work." Most gladdening word! How free it makes the bond slaves of Jesus Christ! He Himself has portioned out to each his service.

In worldly affairs no genuine servant would serve without authority, nor take orders, save from his master. Now, as the Lord gives to every man his work, it is evident that every servant of His needs to take his orders from the Lord Himself. It is a great thing in our Christian lives to know what our own work is. If we each did our own work we should not have an idle moment on our hands all our lives long. The strifes amongst the servants that so mar Christian work would cease, if Christians did their respective work at the command of Christ Himself. We know well that idle people always find time to spy out other people's work. The sluggard, whose garden is full of weeds, busies himself in looking over his neighbor's wall, and in criticizing his digging and planting. But, ye zealous servants of the Lord, the best way to free yourselves from the annoyance of sluggards is to keep so busily on with your own duties that you cannot attend to their criticism.

Let us, each one, take to ourselves this exhortation, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." (2 Tim. 2:15.) If a preacher or Sunday-school teacher is as heavy today as he was a year ago, he needs to be ashamed; if the visitor of the sick is as slow in spiritual discernment to-day as he was a twelvemonth ago, he needs to be ashamed. No improvement during the last three hundred and sixty-five days! In spiritual things there is no such thing as serving a term of apprenticeship, and then reaching to an acknowledged standard, for the whole life of the servant on earth is one capable of practical progress. We should be more able rightly to divide the word of truth after a year's Bible reading than before; if not, we have hardly studied to show ourselves approved unto God. Let us seek and pray to get on in divine things, and long and strive to improve as servants, for our time of serving our God on earth is coming to its close.

We have thus far two great principles before us—individual authority and individual duty—both received directly from the Master. The question now arises, How can we know what is our specific work? "What shall I do to serve God?" is the honest inquiry of many a young believer, and to such we would say, Seek first to utter the apostle's prayer, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" One is your Master, even Christ; get your orders from Him!

We cannot portion out to each other the details of our Christian work—we can merely suggest certain principles. One thing is certain—really earnest Christians are seldom at a loss for work to do. We never saw a really earnest Christian who lacked Christian employment: a devoted soul is usually hired at the first hour of the day. A whole-hearted spirit will give diligence to the hands. The Christian's heart has more to do with his hands than he may suppose.

A safe rule in seeking Christian work is to take the lower rather than the higher duty. Better to begin with a small thing than with a large one. No work for Christ is too small, for His Name to sanctify the service. Servants must not be proud, save of their Master. Serving tables is not such

exalted service as laboring in the word and doctrine; but, we read, "they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 3:13.) Stephen was appointed to the deaconship; he did his work well, and is an example of a servant honored by his Lord: for Stephen died—the first Christian martyr—yea, the first man who had seen the glory of God, the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. (Acts 7) He rose to great honors as a servant of Jesus; we think of him as the martyr, little as the deacon.

Again, work steadily on in what you do; "run with patience," not with spurts. Sow in patience; do not expect fruit before blossoms, or hope that every blossom will become fruit. Do a little work well rather than much carelessly. Prefer to cultivate a square yard of your garden thoroughly to an acre indifferently. Rather teach a class of six children completely than one of a dozen imperfectly. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might and heartily, as unto the Lord. Yet ever remember that nothing we have ever done for the Lord was done in such a way that it might not have been done better—with more prayer, dependence, humility, and self-denial.

Men do not use spades to paint with, nor spinning wheels to run trains. In the house of God men are fitted by God for their work, and, as a rule, we can find out what we are fitted for by observing in what things God is with us. If each servant be doing his own work there will be no clashing of interests in the household. The secret of working in unity is each servant working at the Master's bidding. Each worker bee gathers its own sweetness, but the united labor of the hive produces the honey.

## Power

---

The Lord gives His servants authority and their own particular service, yet without power their efforts are worthless. A sentinel might be told off for his duty, and thus be given both authority and particular service, but if he were seized with sickness he could not fulfill his duty. Power in work for God comes from God. Without true power we cannot serve God acceptably. Power is not deposited in a servant to be used at his own pleasure, but is like the constant flowing stream, which ever owes its volume to its fountain head. The servant is but a vessel, and, unless God supplies him with His own power, the servant is nothing. Like the wire through which the current is passed that gives the light—like the aqueduct which conveys the water, the servant of Christ is but a vessel for communicating that which is of God.

When the "ignorant and unlearned men" shook Jerusalem by their words, the rulers, elders and scribes, asked them "by what power, or by what name" they wrought, and the end of the inquiry was, "they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4) The Lord was the source of their power.

Often do we read in the Acts, of God's servants being filled with the Holy Spirit. "Look you out," said the apostles, "men... full of the Holy Ghost." But the blessed Spirit of God, who ever dwells within God's people, is not ever filling them with Himself. And why? A vessel cannot be filled at the same time with fire and water; we cannot be filled both with the world and with the Spirit at once. "Be ye filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) is the divine exhortation. We may be filled with doctrines or the like, with our service, or with ourselves, yet have very little of the power of God in us. If we are in communion with Christ, self will be out of sight, and we shall be filled with the Spirit. When we are simple, God gives us His power, but we are ever merely instruments in His hand, as the pebble in David's sling, the jawbone in Samson's hand, the rams' horns at the priests' lips; we are nothing in self, and when we try to be something, we prevent ourselves from being used of God.

Power is of God; He has deigned to use His people, to put power from Himself in them, and to work through them for His own glory, and where His people devote themselves to Him, He is graciously pleased to make use of them. The Nazarite of old teaches of power. His long hair expressed subjection to God (see 1 Cor. 11:10—margin); he was under the power of God; his abstinence from the fruit of the vine, from kernel to husk, expressed his withholding himself from the joys of earth. Subjection to God and separation to God are two great elements required in the servant of Christ who really devotes himself to God's service.

We have not to wait till we have power to do our work, but, if sent, we should go and do it. God will give the power to accomplish the service on which He sends us. Obedience is our part, and faith; the power to execute what we are sent to do comes from God. First, let us go forth to do our particular work in the sense that the Lord has sent us; then let us seek hourly from Him His strength to be made perfect in our weakness.

Servants of Christ, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."

## The Light Will Shine yet

---

TWO companions were tramping up a mountain's side one misty and cloudy morning. So thick was the mist, and so hopelessly full of it seemed the valleys, and so heavy were the clouds above, that one of the travelers said to the other, "It is of no use going up any further." However, the other wished to reach the mountain top, mist or no mist, cloud or no cloud—so, mending his pace, on he went. After about an hour the first traveler echoed his first sentiment, "It is of no use," but to be answered once more by a fresh start on the part of his friend, who bounded on for the heights above! After some two hours of uphill work, and endless gray, one of these companions cried out, "The sun will shine soon!" for that peculiar bluish shadow moving about the mist, with which those who watch the breaking in of the light into clouds are familiar, made promise that overhead was the longed for shining light; and so it was, for in another ten minutes the mighty ocean of mist was passed through, and the sunny mountain tops stood shining above the clouds.

Keep going up, Christian; the path to glory is uphill. Keep going on through the depressing circumstances, which, like the endless mist, seem to declare the light is blotted out. Keep going up, for above the mists of the valley, and above the clouds clinging to the hill-sides, the sun is shining. To stay in the dark places is not the path of faith. Keep going up, for the light shall shine on you.

Courage! We often say, "It is of no use going on," but the secret is, we are weary. Our own feet are but the index of our feeble faith. Forward, Christian! It is ourselves who are to blame. Answer the invitations of your sluggish self to rest by a fresh bound upwards, and onwards, and heavenwards. See! already there is overhead the sign of the shining of the sun. Keep going on, for in but a few moments the light and the glory will blaze around you, and you shall see all the mists of the valley under your feet.

## I Want to See Him, so Badly

---

BY the side of a dull, comfortless-looking fire in one of the back streets of the busy town of C—, stood a lad of about nine years of age. To a stranger the boy might have appeared at least two years younger than he really was, so small and slight was he when compared with healthier children of his own age.

Very sharp and thin were the features that marked his wizened face, and a second glance was not needed to tell that "Little Jem" was no stranger to poverty and want. But thoughts of the many hardships of his daily life were not occupying the boy's mind as he stood by the cheerless fire, almost mechanically holding his chilled fingers before the uncertain blaze.

A strange, eager light was in the boy's blue eyes as he silently watched the flickering flames. The still heavily-falling rain, the long hasty run from school, and even his own half-sodden garments were all unheeded. A new joy had that afternoon taken possession of Little Jem's soul. His parted lips, and the bright smile resting on his pale thin face, told of some deep inward happiness that the boy was experiencing.

No marvel that Little Jem's heart was full, and full to overflowing! Strange and wonderful words had fallen on his ears for the first time in his recollection. The sweet story of a Saviour's love and grace had entered his soul by the Holy Spirit's teaching, filling Little Jem with grateful affection towards the loving Jesus who had suffered so much for him.

A Christian gentleman who visited the school, had asked permission to speak a few words to the children in attendance. His request had been granted. He chose for his subject the parable of "The Shepherd and the Lost Sheep," and little Jem had listened to the story as he had never listened before. As the speaker dwelt on the love of Jesus to poor sinful boys and girls in this perishing world, great tears gathered in the boy's eyes and rolled down his thin pale features. Never before had the thought that the Lord Jesus could love a poor ignorant boy like himself entered into Little Jem's mind. Now, he saw himself as never before. Wicked deeds that he had done, bad naughty ways of which he had been guilty, came to his remembrance. Hasty words and angry passions came flocking to his memory. Yes, Little Jem saw that he was a sinner. Like the lost sheep on the bleak mountain side, the boy felt that he too was far away from the Good Shepherd. But as the kind stranger proceeded, and pointed out to the little listeners that, though the sheep had wandered so far, yet so great was the love of the Good Shepherd that He did not rest until He had "found" it.

"Dear boys and girls," the speaker concluded by saying, "such is the love of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to you. The dear Saviour left the bright glory on high in order to seek and to save your precious souls. The stain of sin is on you, but He shed His blood in order to make you pure and holy. As we read in God's own word, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' All those who trust in Him become the lambs of the Good Shepherd. Even to-day Jesus waits to welcome you, and to make you happy forever."

And in his heart, just sitting where he was in the crowded schoolroom, Little Jem had come to Jesus that very afternoon. He had found, indeed, that the Saviour was ready to receive him just as he was. Oh, how happy Little Jem felt as he left the schoolroom and hurried to his humble home! Scarcely had he noticed the fast-falling rain in his newfound joy. It was this same sweet joy that was still filling his heart as he stood before the poor, scanty fire, utterly regardless of his soaking garments.

Almost an hour had passed, and still Little Jem retained the same position. The voice of his mother, just returning from her hard day's washing, aroused him at last.

"Oh, mother," he said, as he threw his arms around her on her entrance, "He's found me at last. I do love Him so. I want to see Him, so badly."

Many words were needed to make the poor woman understand her little son's meaning. She was not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and could not enter into the joy of which her child was speaking.

"Why, Jem, my boy," she said, a few minutes later, anxious to dismiss the subject, "you're almost wet through. You must go to bed at once while I dry your things for you. You'll take your death of cold."

And to bed poor Little Jem was obliged to go, as he had no other garments to wear. Very still and quiet, but very, very happy, the boy lay in his humble bed in the corner of the room.

In time, the poor shabby garments were once more dry and fit for use, but Little Jem showed no inclination to rise. The Good Shepherd was by his side, and his childish heart was satisfied! Morning dawned, and found the boy unable to move. Cold and exposure had taken effect on Little Jem's slight frame. A day or two later, and fever set in. "I want to see Him, so badly," was the constant cry of the suffering boy, and in just a week from the time of Little Jem's first great happiness God gave him the desire of his heart—his happy little spirit passed into the presence of Him whom he had so dearly loved.

Dear little readers, you may not be so poor, so ignorant as Little Jem, but are you as happy as he? Have you ever, like him, come to the Good Shepherd's side and found that He loves you? Sweet it is to be loved by father, mother, sister, and brother, but sweeter still is the love of Jesus for perishing sinners. Can you think lightly of such a love as His? He is "the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep." Come like Little Jem, to Jesus, and you, too, will be happy forever. M. V. B.

## Willing-Hearted and Wise-Hearted

---

WHEN Jehovah purposed to have a dwelling-place among His ancient people Israel, He planned in His goodness that His people should all have the opportunity of helping for the erection of His tabernacle in giving materials and in working with their hands. "Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it" (see Ex. 35) "All the congregation" would include the children as well as the grown-up people, and "whosoever is of a willing heart" would include the richest as the poorest. The heart was that to which Jehovah looked. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Read verses 5 to 9, and you will see that both the poor and the rich could help in bringing the things that were required. "And," continued the gracious commandment, "every wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath commanded." Read now verses 11 to 19, and you will agree that even children's hands could do some of the work that the Lord required for His dwelling-place. God then first called for willing hearts, next for wise hearts; we may all be willing, and we may all be wise to serve our God.

It was a very gracious thing of God so to order that His beautiful house, which He filled with His glory, should be made from the gifts of His people, and by their hands. And thus He orders and purposes even in this our day, for He has not chosen the angels to do His work on earth, but men and women who are willing-hearted and wise-hearted.

At the gracious command the people "came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made; "they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted." Some brought bracelets, earrings, rings, and jewels of gold—things that were their personal ornaments, and they gave them to their God for materials from which His beautiful dwelling-place was to be made. Others brought blue, purple, and scarlet; linen and skins—things that they prized in their own houses. Others again, brought silver and brass, and such as had none of these great things brought shittim wood, fitted for the work of the service. Had some poor man with a willing heart, but having neither rings, gold nor silver ornaments, and neither blue nor scarlet, in his tent, said in his heart, "I will go and hew down a limb of the acacia tree—for that is the tree my God has chosen for His house—and bring a branch of it to Moses," his gift would have been as precious in the sight of Jehovah as that of the princes who poured out their treasures at Moses's feet. A willing heart was that which the Lord loved, and willing hearts brought the gifts that God delighted in. All the wealth of all the world is His; the gold and the silver are His, the trees of the forest are His; nothing that we have is our own, but our God loves the cheerful giver and the willing heart.

We are beginning another year—who are the willing-hearted ones that will present their gifts to God? What can we give to Him? Let us think. We may not be rich—we may not have much to offer, but what can we give to our God? The willing-hearted will come, this new year, to His feet with their offerings of love—some with their time, some with their talents—"every one whose heart stirred him up," and bring the best they can to the Lord. May each of our dear young Christian

readers be among this happy company, in whom God delights. It was a lovely sight to witness the people of Israel flocking in to offer their gifts to their blessed God; and, though our natural eyes cannot see the sight, yet we seem to behold troops of God's people coming to His feet to give Him what they have. God be with them all—"every one whom his spirit made willing."

It is so happy when God's people are willing. It is a sign of great good, as it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." (Psa. 110:3.) See the brave crew man the lifeboat, and launch out to the sinking ship, and learn the joy of exposing yourself to danger for the salvation of others; see the kind nurse laboring over the little child under her charge, and mark the pleasure of self-denial, and learn from such examples the joy of the Christian, who seeks to save the perishing or to nurture the weak.

The wise-hearted first spoken of in this chapter are the women: "All the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands." Some spun blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen—some, whose heart stirred them up in wisdom, spun goats' hair. Happy day in Israel, when the willing-hearted and the wise-hearted "brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work"! There was no murmuring against God amongst them on that day, we may be sure, nor quarreling together, as is the case with those whose hands are idle, and whom Satan employs in mischief. It is so happy, too, in thinking of these wise people, to remember that their own hands did the work. They did not get someone else to spin for them—they did the work themselves for God; and that is the right kind of way to work for Him. It is a happy service for boys and girls who love the Lord to make things with their own hands for the needy, to do what they do their very own selves. The wise-hearted will think of what to do, and those whose hearts stir them up will find out, for example, what poor and aged persons need, and will cheer them by their handiwork. Busy people in God's service are generally happy people; the only busy people who are in the way are the busybodies, who buzz about the workers and fidget them.

It is a great favor from God to be both willing and wise for Himself, Good Dorcas was both, and she made clothes for the poor. No doubt she made them very well, and of the right size for those for whom they were intended. The coats and garments she made, and which the widows who so missed her showed to the apostle, were worth seeing, and God raised her from the dead at the prayer of His servant, and presented her to the saints and the widows. No doubt Dorcas, wise-hearted as she was, continued her work for the Lord when her spirit came back to this earth. May there be an increase in the numbers of wise-hearted boys and girls by our few words in FAITHFUL WORDS.

As you think of the beautiful tabernacle of God, and of the people of Israel coming with their offerings to the Lord, some putting down their rolls of stuff, or their vessels of gold and silver, as our picture represents, may you all be stirred up to be willing-hearted and wise-hearted, for remember that now God's people are His dwelling-place, as it is written, "Ye are the temple of God" (1 Cor. 3:16), and that His people are the living stones who are "built up a spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5), so that we help in our little way in caring for God's house by caring for the people of whom it is composed.

## Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

---

A. D. 30.—The Upper Chamber at Jerusalem.

ON a summer day of the year, which Rome, then the mistress of the world, reckoned the seven hundred and eighty-third from her foundation, a company was assembled in a large upper room in one of the streets of the city of Jerusalem. Of that company, probably, neither Jew nor Roman, had they known of its existence, would have taken much account.

Those who were thus assembled were poor and simple people; the chief among them being a few Galilean fishermen and peasants, who had been known as the followers of Jesus, the son of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth. There were doubtless among the dwellers in the ancient city some who remembered that mysterious darkness which had fallen like a pall upon the whole land at the time when that same Jesus, whom they had seen led along the streets to die between two malefactors, hung upon the cross set up on Golgotha, in anguish and in death. For there were many who had come together to that sight, and who, "beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts, and returned," overwhelmed, it may be, with the conviction that He who had been among them in infinite grace and goodness was in very truth, as He had declared Himself to be, Son of God. But the tide of life flowed on—the memory of that day had grown less distinct, and men's thoughts had learned to run again in the old channels of everyday cares and interests, almost as if no such scene had ever taken place outside their city walls.

With those within that upper room it was far otherwise. To them, the apostles and disciples of this same Jesus, He was everything—

Their subject, and their object, and their hope.

They were "His own which were in the world"; orphaned indeed of His presence now, but still those of whom their Master had said, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

Could the eleven apostles—whose names we read in the first chapter of the Acts—forget that they were those who had been chosen by their Lord—those who had been called from their boats or their money tables to follow Him? Had He not bound them to each other in a strong bond of fellowship during those two years when He "went in and out among" them, drawing them ever closer to Himself by each well-remembered word of grace, and act of love? Were they not those to whom their now ascended Lord had shown Himself alive after His passion, those with whom He had eaten and drunk after He had risen from the dead?

As we read the names of those men of Galilee, we cannot but remember how each had a history, and how to each there was a point of time to which he could look back as the moment when he had been first in the presence of the Master, and when he himself had heard deep in his heart the call to follow Him. To Peter and James, John and Andrew, Christ's call to leave their nets and

come after Him, for He would make them to become fishers of men, had come three years before, as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee. John and Andrew could remember an earlier day, when, hearing the words of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God," they had followed Jesus. Simon could remember how his brother Andrew found him, and brought him to Jesus to receive his new name of Peter the Rock. And Philip, of Bethsaida, could call to mind how he had been found by Jesus the day after, and had been bidden to follow Him. Thomas was in the company; and Bartholomew was also among the number, that "Nathanael of Cana of Galilee" who had once asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and who had exclaimed, all his doubt dispelled by the presence of Jesus, "Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel!" Matthew "the publican," as he calls himself, was there too; the same Levi to whom the word of Christ had come as he sat at the receipt of custom at Capernaum. James and Jude, kinsmen according to the flesh of Jesus who had taught them to own Him as Master and Lord, and that other Simon, whose surname Zelotes showed that he had once belonged to a band of patriots who had striven to shake off the Roman rule, were also among the number of the company in the upper room.

Each had his own precious consciousness of what his Master and Lord had been to him personally, but to none of those whom Christ called His "friends" could the past years of companionship with their Lord be more rich in memories of His blessed words and ways than to Peter and the two brothers to whom, from their burning, impetuous spirit, He had given the name "sons of thunder." They had been with Him in the death-chamber, when He called back to life the little daughter of Jairus; with Him, too, upon the holy mount, when, at His transfiguration, the voice from the excellent glory said, "This is My beloved Son; hear Him"; they had been with Him amid the shades of Gethsemane, "sleeping for sorrow," while He, "being in an agony, prayed more earnestly." One of the three, moreover—the beloved John—had "stood by the cross of Jesus," and could yet bear record of what he saw there.

Companionship with Him, who had chosen them out of the world, had been for all alike, the training for the work to which He called them. For two years they had traveled with Him from village to village throughout Galilee. He had designated them apostles— sent ones— and thus they had gone forth, two and two, with power to heal diseases, and to preach the kingdom of God. He had borne with all their ignorance; often, too, with their selfishness—for they were men of like passions with us. He had patiently taught them, showing them plainly of God His Father; for the Son of God was, in word and act, the Revealer of the Father, and He said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Everywhere they had seen Him bringing help and cure, as they stood around Him while He healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out the devils by His word, and fed the hungry multitudes. To them He had ever been their unfailing Refuge and Succor—rising to rebuke the tempest, coming to them walking upon the sea, leading them into a lonely place to "rest awhile." And we can imagine with what awe-struck surprise they had listened as, upon the road going up to Jerusalem, He began to teach them that "the Son of Man must suffer many things." The Messiah, the One "born King of the Jews," to whom they fondly clung, not only as their Master and Lord, but as the One who should "restore again the kingdom to Israel," had told them that He must "give His life a ransom for many,"—must be "lifted up" that He might draw all unto Him—must "be killed, and the third day rise again."

Now all that He had said concerning His death had been fulfilled. His cross was over. The risen Lord had appeared to seven of His disciples on the Sea of Galilee, and then to more than five hundred at once. On the fortieth day after His resurrection, He had led His apostles out as far as to Bethany, and, in the act of blessing them, He had been parted from them, and carried up into heaven. In obedience to His last command, bidding them tarry in the city until they should be endued with power from on high, we find them, at the time of which we speak, assembled in Jerusalem, to the number of one hundred and twenty, "continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren."

While they were thus waiting, Peter, after recounting the terrible history of Judas, who had been numbered with the twelve, and had obtained part of their ministry, reminded the disciples that the traitor, by being "guide to them that took Jesus," had fulfilled the Scripture, and then brought before them the word from the 109th Psalm, "Let another take his office." "One," he said, "of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, must be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection." Two of those who had known the Lord Jesus in His life on earth, and who could testify of His resurrection and ascension, were set apart, and after the prayer, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these: two Thou hast chosen," they gave forth their lots, and the lot falling upon Matthias, he was numbered with the eleven apostles. The number of witnesses was complete, but the word of Christ was as yet unfulfilled: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." For this power they were still waiting; "the promise of the Father" had not yet come.

## Bible Lessons for the Little Ones.—7

---

I WANT you, dear children, now that you have read these verses in your Testaments, to think for a few moments of something which God has told us at the beginning of His book. It is a very old and very sad story. You all know that in the beautiful place where God put the man and woman whom He had made, there were many trees. We cannot tell what sort of trees they were, but we know they bore fruit, for God said that Adam was to eat of them. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

How plainly God spoke to Adam about what he was to do, and about what he might not do.

I am sure you could all tell me how this story of the man and woman whom God put into His garden ended; but perhaps you have never thought that another story—one of disobedience, and sin, and death—began there the moment God's creatures trusted the devil instead of trusting God, and that that dark story is still being told everyday in this world. The serpent was one of the creatures in God's beautiful garden. In the last book of the Bible, the devil, Satan, the great enemy of God and of all that God loves, is spoken of as that old serpent. Satan, as the serpent, tempted Eve by suggesting evil things to her about God.

The serpent spoke to Eve as to what God had said about the tree of which she was not to eat, and tried to make her think that God was not really good to the creatures He had made, because He had said that they might not eat of that one tree. Eve opened her heart and let into it that lie about God, and then she was ready to listen to another lie of the serpent. God had said about that tree, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and now the tempter said, "Ye shall not surely die." Whose word did Eve trust, the word of God, or the word of Satan? We know that she believed him who is a liar from the beginning, and afterward, when the Lord God said to her, "What is this that thou hast done?" she could only say, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Dear children, it is because we have all, as soon as we could understand enough to make any choice, chosen to believe Satan rather than God; it is because we are all children of Adam and Eve, not before they had disobeyed God and done their own will, but after God had driven them out of His garden for their sin, that we needed the Lord Jesus Christ to die for us, and to be our Saviour.

But He could not have been our Saviour, if He had not been altogether different from any one of us. Was God pleased with the man and woman He had made when He drove them out of His garden long ago? Is God pleased with a little child when He sees him now doing his own will and disobeying his father and mother? But with the holy Child Jesus, God was always well pleased. God could look down from heaven and see Him never doing anything just because He wished to do it, but because it was the will of His Father, and so God spoke from heaven, and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

It was after this voice had been spoken from heaven that Jesus was “led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil,” as you read in the first verse of your chapter. The devil had tempted Eve, and she had listened to him. The devil tempts you and me, and we know how often we listen to him—how often we do just what he tells us to do, because our hearts consent to it, and love to do the evil. Satan tried to get the blessed Lord Jesus to listen to him, but he could not.

We do not know exactly where the place spoken of as the wilderness was, but there are many wild places near the River Jordan, and perhaps it was one of these. At least we know that when the tempter came to the Lord Jesus he did not find Him in a fair garden full of pleasant fruits, but in a lonely and terrible place, where wild, hungry beasts roamed about, and where there was nothing beautiful or comforting.

The Lord Jesus was in that barren, desolate land for forty days and forty nights—more than a month; no friend or dear disciple was there, and we are told in the Gospel of Luke that all that time He was tempted by the devil. Now read the second verse over again. Do you understand it? The Lord Jesus had had nothing to eat all those days and nights, and He was hungry.

Eve was not hungry when the serpent tempted her; the beautiful trees of the garden were all around her, and she could take their fruit freely. It was not so with Jesus when the tempter came to Him and said, “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”

The voice from heaven had said to Jesus, “Thou art My beloved Son,” and now Satan dared to say, “If thou be the Son of God,” just as he had said to Eve, “Hath God said?”

Could not the Lord Jesus have shown Satan that He was the Son of God by speaking one word, and turning, the flints of the desert into loaves of bread? The Lord could indeed have done this, but He would not. Jesus answered the devil, and said, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” He proved that He was indeed God's beloved Son by doing nothing for Himself, but by depending on God, His Father, and leaving His life in His hands.

Will you try to remember that the way for you to answer Satan is the very same way as this, of which the Lord Jesus has given us an example? A simple little, believing child may drive that terrible enemy away by using the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, against him.

SEE that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men.

## The Old Chickweed Seller

---

WE go up a narrow passage, under dilapidated houses, and find ourselves in one of the ten thousand London courts. The houses on either side are in a still further state of dilapidation—tall, lean, hungry-looking places, built of what appear to be black bricks, grimy, gray, and gloomy, loop-holed with sundry broken windows, stuffed with old rags, behind which hang, in a variety of crooked fashions, dirty curtains, blinds, and threadbare shawls that act deputies for damask, yet nearly every one of these rooms is a home for a family.

Into this court a band of Christian workers, consisting of the missionary of the district, a hard-working and earnest man, and a few young helpers, enter. The Lord has given His servant an impulse to come to this spot; and where curses and wild threats have often been heard, as the little band walk up the court, ascends the sweet strain—

“What a Friend we have in Jesus,

All our sins and griefs to bear:

What a privilege to carry

Everything to God in prayer!

A few children gather round, staring with meaningless faces. Some of the windows that still retain the possibility of opening are thrown up, and through cellar gratings and broken panes the song wings its way—

“Oh, what peace we often forfeit!

Oh, what needless pain we bear!

All because we do not carry

Everything to God in prayer.”

Some of the inhabitants in the court curse and swear, but one old man listens to the words—an old man of eighty summers, to whom the missionary had frequently spoken, but who had always repulsed him. The old man had enough to do to sell his "chickweed and groundsel for singing birds," he had said when appealed to about his soul, but now the song of the people who had dropped into the court interested him.

“What's that they say?" the old man muttered—"something about a friend? It's time I got a friend; but who'll befriend such an old sinner as me?" He listened:

“Can we find a Friend so faithful,

Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness,

Take it to the Lord in prayer.”

The old man forgot the struggle to earn the two shillings and three-pence for the weekly rent, and the additional struggle for a bit of tea and dry bread—forgot all, in his wonder, about the Friend of whom the hymn told, and he asked himself again if this Friend could be for him.

The hymn was followed by a short address from the missionary, showing what the Saviour is to the poor sinner—the Friend of sinners, who has proved His love by dying for His enemies. He told the people how Jesus prayed for the very men who crucified Him; how He forgives the sins of all who come to Him, and helps all His own, and keeps them to the end, and how He has gone to prepare a mansion of glory for all who trust Him. The old man drew nearer and nearer, leaning sideways on anything that came to hand.

The ready eye of the speaker saw that interest was awakened in the old man's soul, and he proceeded to contrast the heavenly home with the sad homes by which he was surrounded, finishing by saying that the loving Saviour was the Friend of sinners, even such as the old man who was tottering upon the brink of the grave; He was waiting to pardon and bless every repenting soul.

The tears were creeping down the poor man's face as the little company left the court. "Was this Friend for him?" again he muttered, as he went back to his comfortless abode.

Alone in his poor little home, the aged man sought the Lord—or rather, we should say, the Friend of sinners Himself sought him! The seeker after mercy thought of his eighty years' guilt, of opportunities neglected, and He remembered his behavior to the servant of God.

"I will forgive," was the word of the Lord Jesus to all his questionings.

Curses, oaths, Sabbath-breakings, drunkenness, lies, rose up before him, but the pardoning love of Jesus conquered all.

A short time after, the missionary called upon the eager listener, and how different was the reception received from what had been the case formerly! "How long has this change been?" he asked.

“Ever since that time as you came and sang in the court.”

A few weeks rolled away, and the old chickweed seller was missed from his daily round; a new hand brought "chickweed and groundsel for the singing birds"; the old man had gone to the paradise above, brought to God through the humble instrumentality of the singers and speakers in the gloomy, grimy court.

“So the Lord works," said the dear missionary who told us how the Master had thus called the old man to Himself; and so, in His wonderful grace and love, He fills the home above with those who shall forever sing His praises and the praises of God the Father. W. L.

## Evil Nature Insensible to Sin

---

TAKE a dozen pails full of water from you stream, and endeavor to carry their weight. You cannot lift them! Yet the little fish frolic at the very bottom of the river, with hundreds of pails of water upon them, and they feel not the burden, for it is their natural element. So give a believer a burden of sins to carry, and he prays to be quit of it, but the sinner dives to the very bottom of the river of iniquity, and finds there his home.

## Perfect Love

---

CHRIST has died for and put away the sins of His people; He is carrying them through this world to heaven; presently He will transform them, spirit, soul and body, to His own image.

## Extracts

---

IF I have received Christ into my soul, I have received Him from God alone. And if God has revealed anything in His word, a Paul would have shown it to me as bearing on my walk before God, and leaving me still to walk with God.

THE greatest courage before men, and the deepest reverence before God, are highly consistent, and even congenial.

## How I Was Brought to God

---

SIXTEEN years ago, I went to Scotland to work at my trade as a glassmaker. Like many others, I was "without hope, and without God in the world," seeking pleasure in every way but God's way. I went into the depths of wickedness; I sought the alehouse, theater, and singing room; I tried to enjoy myself and find happiness apart from Christ: all this was in vain. One Lord's Day afternoon, I left my home with the intention of committing a certain dreadful wickedness, but on my way I was arrested, like Saul on his bloodthirsty errand to Damascus.

A man stood by the gaol in Glasgow, and preached from these words—"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:16, 17.) "Some of my companions," said he, "have been hung in this gaol, some have been drowned in the Clyde, and others killed through wickedness; God," he added, "in His wondrous mercy, has kept me from being killed. God used those words in the sixth of Revelation to convince me that I was a lost sinner under judgment. From that moment I was heartbroken, and cried to God for mercy. I wandered up and down the streets, praying to God to put any trouble upon me if He would only save my soul. I knew not how a man could be saved, and I was afraid to die. I had no desire to take my food, for the miserable thought pressed heavily upon me that at any moment I might drop down dead and go to hell. Many a time have I stood at my door, thinking I would drown myself, but I had heard it said that it was wrong to take away one's own life, and this prevented me from doing so.

I remember listening to some people who were preaching in the open air. It was their last outdoor meeting of the season. When they had done speaking they invited the people to a building which stood near by. The people flocked in, then the last one entered, and the door was shut. No one spoke to me, and I went away more sorrowful than before. "There is no hope for me," I thought, and I wept bitterly, lest I should die, and be lost forever.

Sin, death, and judgment are the lot of men, because "all have sinned," and "all the world is guilty." But, thank God, I found there was an open door of escape. Christ has died, and shed His precious blood; He has borne His people's sins and the judgment due to them, and has died in our stead on the cross.

After God had broken me down, and shown me that I was a lost sinner, I heard His message of love. It was through a servant of His who came to preach at the building before mentioned. I went into that building that night a lost sinner, seeking to be saved. The man spoke from John 3:16. He pointed to me personally, and said, "Drunkard, Christ has died for thee! Scoffer, Christ has died for thee! Blasphemer, Christ has died for thee!" Then he said, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I went into that building, as I have said, a miserable sinner, I came out rejoicing: I had found the Saviour—the Lord Jesus Christ, I came to Him, and found that Jesus had been seeking—me oh, wonderful love! God taught me "that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son" had cleansed me from

all sin.

How did I know that His blood was shed for me? By the Scriptures. Christ suffered for sins—I had got sins; Christ died, the Just for the unjust—I was unjust; Christ had died for me.

How often do people say, "Oh! I believe that Christ died for sinners, but I cannot realize that my sins are forgiven—I do not experience the benefit of Christ's death!" But if we search all through the blessed book we shall not find mention of being saved by feelings. The gospel applies itself to all who are on the ground of being lost.

Christ died for sinners; that is just what I was by nature—a lost sinner. He died for me. How do I know this? Is it because I feel it? By no means. How then? By the word of God. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3.) Thus it is all according to the Scriptures.

"Just as I am, without one plea,

But that Thy blood was shed for me,

And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,

O Lamb of God, I come."

J. s—n

## Doubts Gone

---

A CHRISTIAN was staying in a little country village. She did not know any one in the place, and her lonely heart longed for intercourse with others who loved the things so dear to herself'. One day a woman, taking from her some little books she was distributing, told her that she, too, had "peace with God." I cannot tell you how welcome a ray of sunshine this brought to her who had felt so sorrowful. These two were of one mind—having one Saviour, being the children of the same Father—was it then any wonder that as they both "feared the Lord" they "spoke often one to another"?

Mrs. P. related how God had given her the peace she possessed, and how He had led her to Christ as her Saviour, "At that time," she said, "I was living in service, and though I was not notoriously bad, I had no place in the home above, and had I been called away I should not have been ready. I became ill, and then it was that I feared; my fear increased to real terror, terror that was something awful, and everything seemed to go against me. I prayed earnestly, and struggled for salvation, but the more I tried the more wicked I felt. All seemed to go wrong. I felt angry, and a fearful feeling that I must blaspheme took hold of me. Never before had I felt thus.

"Some years went on, and still I had no peace. There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.' (Isa. 48:22.) Still I sought and prayed. One day, as I knelt in prayer, a calm filled my soul, where before all was confusion and unrest. The desperate feeling that I must give way to cursing and bitterness ' left me, and has never since returned. Satan seemed to flee from me."

"It was then that you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and looked alone unto Him?"

"It was, indeed, and though life is a hard warfare, and I have many troubles, God has kept me, and will keep me unto the end."

"True, but remember the little text, 'Kept by the power of God.'"

Before this little talk was over, Mrs. P. was asked to give a text to the father of the young lady who had been talking to her.

"I will give you one, sir," she answered readily, "that has often been a guide to me: Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

"A good guide," her friend replied, "for it leads us to God in prayer, and He is able to keep us from falling.' But if you are a child of His you can never fall eternally. Your children may sometimes grieve you, but still they never can be anything but your children; so with Christians—true believers who are ' born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.'" (1 Peter 1:23.)

## Procrastination

---

SOME little time back a very, very near and dear relative of mine died. He was the only child of a Christian mother, When asked to attend church or chapel he invariably gave impatient answers, such as "I am young" (he was twenty-three), "wait a bit; I want to see more of the world. I shall be religious some day."

Never very strong, he came home one day, saying the doctor had told him that he needed rest, and that he was not to continue work for a little while: still he evinced no anxiety whatever about his never-dying soul. Weeks went by thus, till one day, after watching the tiny hands of his little baby girl, just a fortnight old, he said to his wife, "I will never doubt there is a God again." He then suddenly made up his mind to attend the preaching of the word of God on the following Sunday. But the next Tuesday night he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which left him nearly prostrate, and on the very Sunday he had purposed to hear God's message of love he lay dying upon his bed. Then he said to his wife, "If I ever get over this I will be different." Texts of Scripture were read to him, and his Christian friends implored him to repent and turn to God; but God alone knows what his end was. At eleven o'clock that same night he died.

God nowhere in His word tells us to wait till to-morrow: "To-day if ye will hear His voice." (Heb. 3:7.) "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. 29:1.)

L. S.

## Come and See

---

AFTER Philip had been called to follow the Lord he was anxious to bring others to his Master. He saw Nathanael, and said to him, "We have found Jesus." Nathanael seemed to doubt that any good thing should come from such an ill-famed city as Nazareth, but Philip answered, "Come and see." We read that Nathanael went, and he, too, saw Jesus, and owned Him as the Son of God. We who know the Lord may take a lesson from Philip, and may we say to those around us, "Come and see." People "without hope and without God in the world" need a Saviour, and if in answer to our entreaties they do "come and see" Jesus, with the eye of faith, they will not want to go back, but will say to others, "Come and see, for we have found Jesus!"

A. S.

## On Exhortation

---

SINCE no water comes up by all your working of the pump-handle, it would be as well to throw a little water down the pump, and try what that will do.

Give us a little grace, ye exhorters, before you ask us to give of our stores to the Lord. On, on they continue with that creaking handle "do this," "you ought to do that." All true and right, we deny not, but it is the love of Christ which constrains, and when this fills the heart, there will be no want of flowing water. Pour in a little of the love!

## Scripture Testimony on Fools

---

(From the New Testament.)

THE "fool" is accepted in English, in our day, as a title of contempt, and as such we are forbidden of the Lord to use it of others. (Matt. 5:22.) But God may call us fools if He please (Matt. 23:17), and it may be, that even a reader of these words will do wisely to carry out the solemn exhortation to "become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Cor. 3:18.)

The blind guide.—The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, designates as fools those poor, self-deluded instructors in religion, who shut up the kingdom against men, neither going in themselves nor suffering those that are entering to go in! No vocation on this earth is more terrible than that of the "blind guide"—the man in soul darkness himself, in the gloom and blackness of ignorance of God, who leads other poor blind souls to destruction! These "fools" strain out the tiny gnat from their religious food, but swallow the camel's carcass; they make clean the outside of the platter, but are indifferent as to its inside; they whiten the outside of the sepulcher, but for its contents they care not. The Lord denounced them when He walked in Judaea; may God have mercy on them in our own day in Christendom.

Reader, if you would enter the kingdom, be not led by a blind man, for if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch. Shun every teacher and preacher who cannot tell you the way of salvation, and who cannot give an answer by God the Spirit that he is safe for glory.

The professor.—The Lord speaks of the virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom without oil in their lamps as foolish, (really the same root word as is used for fools). Alas, how many at this moment are among those who have thus gone forth to meet our coming Lord! They have none of the Spirit of God in their Christianity. Ours is a day of many lamps, but of little oil—a day of much profession, but of little reality. Awake, awake, professor, lest when the Lord comes, you be found among those who deceive themselves, and who will be shut out forever from eternal light and joy. No one can surely fail to own that a brightly burnished lamp with no oil therein is a vain and foolish thing to carry in the dark night.

See to it that yours is a religion of truth in the inward parts; be not content with mere profession, lest for a dark eternity this stern word "fool" be applied to you.

The hearer, but not the doer.—The Lord declares that he who hears His sayings and yet does them not, shall be likened to the foolish man (still the same stern word) who built his house on the sand which was swept away by the flood. Works, religion, resolutions, morality, are all for a foundation but sand. Many are building hopes for eternity on nothing that will stand the storm of judgment. Theirs is daring folly. Great will be the fall of these houses when the judgment comes. Woful will be the end of these poor foolish souls. Our first consideration for eternity should be, What is our foundation? Reader, escape from among these deceivers of themselves. Be not yourself as to this the foolish builder in time who is lost for eternity.

The passages already referred to make use of the term "fool" very much in the same way that we now in English accept the word. There are three other words, however, in the New Testament which are translated "fool." One of these words refers to a man without understanding. Numbers of men who have plenty of brain-power would be designated fool, or without understanding, by the Scriptures of truth.

The wise professor without understanding. The Lord, when unveiling the senselessness of Pharisaism, its zeal for external religion, its indifference to the state of the soul before God, said, "Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also?" (Luke 11:40.) God deliver each one of our readers from mere externals in religion. They will never save the soul, nor wash away one stain of sin. The end of such a course of religion will prove its utter senselessness.

The wise skeptic without understanding.—God calls the skeptic a fool: "Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." (1 Cor. 15:36.) The skeptic argues about Scripture and disputes about the truth of the resurrection of the body. To be sure, such a man is wise in one sense; he has reasoning powers, and the world accredits his wisdom. But God calls him a man devoid of understanding. Our bodies shall rise again, and we shall live to die no more. Think of the resurrection, reader, and be not in your manner of life here one who is practically "without mind." Whatever this life be to you, leave not out of your reckoning the resurrection.

The wise man of business without understanding.—A different kind of wisdom from that possessed by the reasoner on abstract subjects is requisite for prosperity in business. In order to get on in this world and to gain riches, a man must be shrewd; and wise the world accredits him to be who succeeds in it. Men write the lives of those who began the world without a sixpence, and who died full of honors and riches. Yet God calls such men, if they are not rich towards Him—devoid of understanding, fools.

The Lord shows up to us the madness and the folly of being careful in business and earnest after prosperity here, to the neglect of our hereafter. To the rich man, in the midst of his plans and wealth, who calculated on markets, stocks, and produce, but never calculated on eternity, God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke 12:20.) Wise for time, wise to make money—rich without God—a fool for eternity, poor, indeed, hereafter—not able even to obtain a drop of water! Eager for the world, heedless of God! Alas!. alas! we so often hear (and as our ink is still wet on our paper we hear) of the sudden death of the wealthy business man. Some say he worked too hard, but this is the real reason, reader—his time had come —his end had approached; God had said, "Thy soul is required of thee." So will our time come—both yours and mine. Are you ready—are you wise for eternity, and rich towards God, or are you a fool for eternity?

Disciples without intelligence.— Another word translated "fool" occurs, amongst other occasions, in a verse with which we are all familiar. It fell from the lips of our risen Lord, when He, in the pity and love of His heart, overtook the two disciple: on their way to Emmaus, and heard them describe the testimony of the women and the others as to His resurrection, and listened as they declared to Him their unbelief. How like ourselves! Lo! the very Scriptures lie before us, and the sweet testimony to their truth is in our ears; but, nevertheless, we too often practically tell our Lord Himself, "We do not believe Thee, Lord."

Then Jesus, as He walked with these disciples, said, "Oh, fools" (that is, without intelligence), "and slow of heart" (heavy, dull of heart) "to believe!" But how tender is the Lord to us, even when chiding us for our dull-heartedness. Child of God, is the open Bible before you, wherein you read of peace and pardon, of the Lord Himself risen from the dead, and of the work of redemption all accomplished, and yet, with its pages before your eyes, are you distrusting Him, and practically telling Him, "I do not believe, Lord"? Be not of them to whom He says, "Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe."

If our reader be, through grace, at peace in his soul before God, we would say to him, "Chide not these disciples, unwise and slow of heart as they be, but cheer them. Remember the apostle who said he was a debtor to the unwise (it is the same word, rendered "fool," addressed by the Lord to His disciples). Go teach them tenderly and lovingly the gospel of God; seek to be in some little measure like Jesus on his way to Emmaus."

St. Paul addressed the Galatians, who were making much of self, and thus making little of Christ, as "foolish" (see ch. 3:1-3.); and so must every legal-hearted soul be spoken of. Many a zealous religious person in this day is trying to get good out of self to present to God; trying to make self worthy for heaven! These are really what the apostle said the Galatians were.

## Extracts From Swain

---

IT is better to be the Lord's servant than the church's idol. It is better to be the Lord's servant than the world's master.

I SHALL be rich when I am emptied of myself and filled with my Redeemer's glories.

THE strongest graces in a Christian soul are only the shadows of the excellencies of Christ.

THE Lord's gifted children are like bees—they are constantly employed in seeking honey from the flowers of wisdom, and storing it up in hives, for the use of the whole church.

IN the battles fought by men, some must win, some lose, but in the Christian conflict every fighter wins.

GOD and His works are alike in this: the more narrowly they are inspected the more beautiful and glorious they appear. Man and his works are alike in this: the more closely they are inspected the more their deformity is exposed.

THE Christian's motto is, "Get good, do good, and give God the glory."

A CHRISTIAN'S comforts may sometimes freeze in his own heart, but the wells of salvation out of which he draws them can never be frozen over.

## Lost

---

ONE day, many summers ago, a family of children of different ages and sizes, accompanied by their nurse, might have been seen walking near the outskirts of a large seaside town. The roads and turnings were all strange to them, for they were that very day removing to a new house, and they had already walked a long distance. They were passing a pretty public enclosure with iron railings all round it, except that here and there an opening was made without gates, so that anyone could enter. The sight of trees, blooming flowers, and shady seats, made one of the children, a little girl of about six years of age, wish to run in and see for herself what the pretty place was like. "No, no," said the nurse, "we must not stay now, but I daresay you will often be able to come here and play, for I don't think that we have much farther to go. Come along, dear."

But the little girl did not choose to wait for her pleasure, or to mind what was said to her just then; so first looking and longing, and then lingering behind, she began to reason within herself—"What harm can there be in just running in for a minute? Oh, I must just see what it looks like inside. I'm sure I can easily catch them up again," and in she ran. Of course, when she was once within the enclosure, one thing after another caught her eye, here was a lovely flower, which must be smelt and peeped at more closely, and so the time slipped by, till the child suddenly remembered where she was, and ran out of the entrance, feeling rather frightened. When on the road again, she felt still more frightened, for no nurse, brothers or sisters, could she see anywhere! and what was worse, so many roads went this way and that way, that she could not possibly tell which one they had taken.

She ran first round this corner a little way, then round another, and so on, till she was hot and weary, and I need not add, tears were running down her cheeks. But all was in vain; so going back to the spot where she first started from, she stood there the very picture of misery, crying bitterly. She felt herself to be lost, and what was more, she had tried her utmost to help herself, and it was all of no use. Dear little readers, this child's condition at that time is exactly like yours now, if you are still unsaved. You, too, are lost, but do you know it and feel it? Do you grieve over it? Try as much as you may, you cannot of yourself find your way back to God the Father and the home above. You need someone to seek and save you, as did the little girl who was lost on the roadside.

While the child was still crying and sobbing, a bright-faced little girl just set free from school came running by, and she stopped and said kindly, "What is the matter, dear? are you hurt? What makes you cry so?" Then the little lost child told her pitiful tale.

"Oh, I am sorry for you; I wish I could stay with you and help you find your way, but my mother tells me always to go straight home from school, and I must not stay for anything on the way, and I must mind what mother says, you know."

"Don't leave me again," cried the lost child; "I don't know what to do." After a moment's thought, the kind little girl said, "I know what I will do, you stay here, and I will run home as fast as I can and tell my mother, and perhaps then she will let me come back and help you"—but suddenly, a shout

of delight, "Oh, there's my sister," was heard, and the elder sister of the lost child, who had been searching for her everywhere, came up. Some time had elapsed before the little girl had been missed, but great had been the sorrow of the nurse and the trouble of the mother. What rejoicings there were when the lost child was brought by her elder sister to the new home, how the kind mother clasped her little one with thankfulness to her bosom, even while speaking to her of her fault, which had caused so much alarm and sorrow!

It was that first look at the forbidden pleasure, then the desire, and then the act of disobedience, which had led to her being lost.

Are you among the lost ones who do not even know that they are lost? or are you lost, and knowing it, are you miserable on that account? If so, the Good Shepherd is seeking and will find you.

Or are you among the happy number of those found and saved ones, who are being led safely along to their new home, where will be eternal rejoicings?

E. G.

## To Our Young Friends

---

WE have received a touching note from the mother of one of the number of our dear young correspondents, and our hearts go out to you, dear boys and girls, as with the black-bordered letter of dear Herbert's mother before us we pen these lines. The letter says: —

"The reason you did not receive our dear boy's paper as usual in reply to your questions is, that after ten days' illness, in the midst of blooming health, the Lord called our beloved one to Himself."

"It is now two and a half years since our beloved boy first confessed Christ," his mother tells us, "and his words upon that memorable and blessed occasion will never be forgotten by us.

"Mother," said he, "I hope I shall never grow up to be a man; the world is getting so wicked, and I do not want to be wicked. But I don't think I shall grow up, for the coming of the Lord seems to be so near, that I think He will come before that time to fetch His people. I am quite ready now, and long for the time when He will come. I know that all my sins are washed away in the precious blood of Jesus."

Bright, happy confession, dear boys and girls. May you, too, each one, be enabled to say, "My sins are all washed away in the precious blood of Jesus, and the hope of the Lord's coming is the bright prospect of my heart." But dear Herbert did more than confess with his lips: "His life ever since," the same pen adds, "has been more or less consistent as a follower of the Lord Jesus; schoolmates, neighbors, playmates had all taken knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus. Although of a very strong will and hasty temper naturally, the grace of God had so wrought in him that his obedience and subjection to home rule and authority were most marked." Most earnestly do we press these last twelve words upon you all, for "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Again his mother says, "His love of the Scriptures, remarks, and questions upon them, were, for some time past, more like those of a matured Christian than of a boy of twelve summers. One subject much occupied his thoughts, and he was continually referring to it—the near return of the Lord. He seemed to be living in the hope of, and in readiness for, that blessed event; indeed, he asked an elder Christian, one day, whether he did not think the reason why Scripture told us not the exact time of the Lord's return was to make us live in the daily expectation of His coming. Our loved one was twelve years and seven months old, and his life ever since his lips first confessed Christ has proved the reality of his faith.

My heart's fervent desire and prayer is that the bright hope of the Lord's return—such a reality to Herbert while living—may be revived in all its soul-stirring power, and that, in heart and life, all God's people may go forth in reality to meet the Bridegroom."

God grant that this simple testimony to you of one of yourselves may stir you all up to follow the steps of our dear Herbert L. as far as he followed Christ. We are all the more constrained thus to speak, for we meet with young people, who but a few years back were children, answering our questions, and who had then, either by letter or by word of mouth, happy things to tell us of the

Lord's love to them, but who now, being grown up to be young men and young women, have gone back into the world. Ah! what sorrowful tales have such to tell us!—the hollow world, its empty pleasures, its unsatisfying character. Still they seem bound to it by chains. How gladly would they come out and be separate from the world, and stand up for Christ! The love of the world still holds them bound to it. A divided heart is ever a wretched heart. No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. Oh, dear young friends, be wholehearted for Christ; give up yourselves to Him. He will make your lives happy and bright if you are wholly given to Him. But, remember, you cannot serve God and mammon.

## Bible Subjects: Reconciliation

---

AT the request of different readers we resume our Bible subjects. Dear young Christian friends, be diligent readers of and searchers into the precious mine of God's truth. Dear Christian workers, be careful to have exact understanding of the great gospel truths, for you will reap in the souls of men the kind of seed you sow.

Reconciliation is a Bible truth of great practical importance, and we will endeavor to approach it. Reconciliation is the change of the state of enmity to that of favor. Man is at enmity to God by nature, as Scripture declares, and as facts witness. There is nothing in man, fallen as he is, common with God. God is holy; man is sinful. Man's conscience makes him fear the holy One, and his love of evil creates in him not one wish to return to God. Scripture is very explicit as to man's hatred towards God, and we cannot receive its teaching on reconciliation unless we bow to its declarations as to our state of natural opposition to God. "Enemies" (Rom. 5:10), "alienated" or estranged (Eph. 4:18), "alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works" (Col. 1:2), are the solemn realities given in God's word.

The starting point with us shall be Rom. 5:10: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." In this text four facts are stated. Our natural state—enemies; the time of our being reconciled—when we were enemies; to whom We were reconciled—God; and the means of the reconciliation—the death of His Son. This text should be very earnestly pondered over. Again in this passage—"God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18)—we are presented with kindred truth. God produces the gracious state of favor on behalf of those and in the hearts of those who were once His enemies. He does this blessed work for us by or through Jesus Christ—and He works in our hearts by His Spirit, so that we receive the reconciliation.

It is apparent that if two men are severed from each other by existing enmity, unless the cause of their enmity be removed, they must remain sundered from each other. And it is also apparent that if the wrong be only on one side, and that the man who has done the wrong will not move towards him whom he has offended, the wrong-doer must remain at a distance, unless indeed the one wronged should graciously make the advances. Again, if all the strength be on the side of the one who has been wronged, the case of the weak and wicked man is in itself hopeless. Now we do not read in the Scriptures of poor, frail man making any advances to God, or even wishing for reconciliation with God, but we learn that God is the reconciler, and that "all is of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself." "All is of God" is a grand gospel note.

The means God uses to effect the reconciliation according to His own holy requirements is the death of His Son. Not the life, not the miracles or tender works of love of Jesus, but His death. It was necessary before God could bring us into friendship with Himself, that everything in us contrary to Himself should be put away out of sight. Hence it is nothing, less than the death of Christ by which God reconciles poor sinners to Himself, for the death of Christ is indeed the end in God's sight of all those for whom Christ died.

We are not yet speaking of what God does in our hearts, and His work of grace there, our first object being to center our thoughts on the great fact that God Himself is the reconciler, and that the death of His blessed Son is that whereby He effects His gracious and wondrous work for His own glory.

Now let us inquire how it is with ourselves, and whether we can truly say that we are no longer enemies to the blessed God. He is love, and He loves poor sinners, and this the death of His dear Son most sweetly proclaims. Almighty power is with God; no advance is made naturally by man to seek His favor, yet God's pleasure is in men, and He subdues our hearts and brings His enemies to love Him.

## Sowing the Seed

---

THE sower sowing his seed by the Lake of Galilee presented very much the same kind of appearance in the times of our Lord, when He was on earth, to that which our picture brings before our eye to-day. For by the aid of photographs, and the pencils of artists familiar with the incidents and customs of the Holy Land, we can almost bring up the very scenes of the New Testament, so sweet to our hearts. The sower busy at his work, the boats by the side of the lake, the rocks and thorns common to the midst of a mountain field, and the pigeons skimming over the ground, all speak to us of those everyday life pictures from which our Lord and Master formed His wondrous parables. How simple, how easy of application were His words addressed to those who had ears to hear—how difficult and hard to be understood by such as lacked that tenderness and brokenness of heart which receives the good seed of the word!

Each of our hearts is like some part of the field; over it the sower casts his seed. He bears the seed-basket near his bosom, and from his bosom he distributes the precious word of God. In the most lovely fields on the mountain-side we often find the broken pieces of rock and their surrounding, briars and thorns. These barren and massive fragments seem to have obtained an immovable place in the midst of the most fruitful places. On them the seed may fall; in them it will strike no fruit-bearing root. The stony ground will not stand the testing hour. That which grows there will wither as quickly as it sprang up. We all shall be tested and tried. Young people seem especially to be among those who "immediately" receive the word. How many dear young persons are now before us, who on hearing the happy gospel word, "immediately" received it, but who, when trouble came, as quickly gave it up as they received it. See to it that you are well-rooted. God grant that none of you may be stony-ground hearers of His word.

The briars and thorns have also gained a footing in the mountain field: no one cares to disturb them. Alas! for the seed that falls among them, for these lusty and worthless growths eat up the fruit-bearing power of the soil wherein they grow. We have before us just now different cases of promising hearers of the word who could not be whole-hearted, else they would not make so little headway.

The lusts of other things have entered in, and have overwhelmed the good seed in their souls. Earnest were these hearers a few months ago; but now the pleasures and interests of the world have rendered the gracious truth unfruitful; the cares of the world have done their deadly work, the thorns have prevailed. Make God your chief concern; take the solemn warning, be not as those of whom we speak, who weep their wasted lives—choked by the world!

We need not apply this part of the parable solely to the unconverted; it has a voice to Christians also. How thankfully would we shield dear young Christians from the sorrows of a life not wholly dedicated to God.

It is impossible to be, at the same time, like a fruitful part of the field and a part like that wherein are the thorns. Be out and out for Christ. In unhesitating, unwavering devotion to Him alone lies

your true joy, dear young believer; and for His sake who loves you, and who died for you, give Him your heart.

The good ground—go where you will, note what field you may—has one peculiarity; it is always soft enough to be plowed up. Its bosom is ever laid open to receive the seed.

So in our hearts the plowshare of conviction of sin precedes the reception of the good word of mercy. True sorrow for sin, true repentance, the tearing open of the heart let none regret. It is in hearts farrowed by God the Spirit that the good seed springs up to bear its golden fruits. We would say to any who lament the hardness of their hearts, and who mourn over their sins—thank God He has made you feel. Thousands are not miserable. The plowman does not drive his plowshare into iron rock. Tears for and grief over sin are results of the work in us of God the Holy Spirit.

God give us all reality, and may the heavenly Husbandman find in our hearts and lives fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold.

## Bible Lessons for the Little Ones.—2

---

(Read Deut. 6:4-9; also verses 13 and 16.)

I THINK you have not forgotten to find out in what part of the Bible those words, with which the Lord Jesus answered Satan when he asked Him to command the stones to be made bread, are written.

The reason why I have asked you to read some verses in another chapter of the same Old Testament book is because we there find other words which Jesus used to answer Satan, when He said to him again and again, "It is written."

The Jews were in the habit of teaching their little boys to learn by heart passages from the Book of Deuteronomy, and the verses from the sixth chapter which you have just read (from the fourth verse to the ninth) were often written down. The paper was then rolled up tight, and put into a little box, that it might be always worn tied to the arm, or across the forehead. This was done because the eighth verse says of God's words, "Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."

Many a Jew, when our Lord was on earth, wore the words of God thus shut up in a box; the blessed Son of God kept them in His heart, where, as you read in the sixth verse, God would have His word kept.

Now, find the fourth chapter of Matthew, and read again the fifth and sixth verses.

Jerusalem is called the "holy city," because God's temple was there. This was not the beautiful house which King Solomon had built, but the last of all the temples; it was built after the others had been thrown down. A pinnacle means a very high place, stretched out like a bird's wing when it is flying. The temple had pillars of white marble, and the roof and pinnacles were of gold, so that it has been thought that it must have looked from a distance like a mountain of snow; while the sun shining upon the pinnacles would make the little points glitter like stars in the clear blue sky. It was to such a high place as this that the devil took the Lord Jesus, and again he said, "If Thou be the Son of God"—, Satan wished to make Jesus prove that He was indeed the Son of God by throwing Himself down from that high place, for he said, "It is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone."

Christ had answered Satan by God's word, and now Satan himself dared to use the very word of God in tempting Christ. The Lord Jesus had said, "It is written," and now the devil said "It is written," too. But Satan kept back a part of what God had said. I will read you exactly what is written about the Lord Jesus in the Psalm, part of which the tempter repeated to Him.

"He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways.

"They shall bear Thee up in their hands, lest Thou dash Thy foot against a stone."

"To keep Thee in all Thy ways"—these were the words which Satan left out.

When Eve, in the Garden of Eden, repeated God's words, she did not say them just as God had spoken them, but put in some words of her own, and also changed what God had said. Eve said more than God had said, and Satan said less than God had written.

Remember, dear children, that we must always repeat God's words exactly as they are written for us in the Bible, not add any words to them, or take any words from them. Suppose some one should try to persuade you to go into some great danger—not to help or save anybody; for no good reason at all—and that person tempted you to do it by saying, "You are your father's child; you need not be afraid, he will take care of you, and not let you suffer or be hurt."

What would you say to the person who could be so wicked as to tempt you in such a way? Would it be really trusting in your father's love and care to go into the danger and see whether he would not come and save you? I think the child who best knew how his father loved him and cared for him would be the very last to treat him in such a way.

The Lord Jesus knew His Father's love and care for Him, and He would not try that perfect love. He answered Satan in those words which you read just now from the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Again the Lord Jesus answered Satan by the word of God.

All this time the Lord did not speak to Satan as Satan; but at the last temptation, when the devil, who is the prince of this world, tried to make the blessed Son of God fall down before him and worship him, Christ called him by his name. Satan means "Adversary"—for an adversary is one who is against another, and tries in every way to cast him down and trouble him. Satan has always been the adversary of God and of all who belong to Him.

So, when the devil took Jesus up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said unto Him, "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me," Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Three times the Lord Jesus had answered Satan by words from God's book; and now the great adversary was conquered and silent. So we read, "Then the devil leaveth and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." God who did indeed "give His angels charge over Him, sent those happy "ministering spirits," who "do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word," to serve and wait upon the Saviour in that lonely place, where, for our sakes, He had endured the temptation of the devil.

Here are two verses for you to learn, dear children about God's word. This verse—

"Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee";

And this—

"By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

## Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

---

A. D. 30.—The Promise fulfilled.

AT the beginning of the ministry of Christ, it was revealed to John the Baptist that the One upon whom he should see the Spirit descending and abiding was "He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." The risen Lord, when He bade His disciples not to depart from Jerusalem, but there wait for "the promise of the Father," added, "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

During the feast of Pentecost, probably ten days after He had been "taken up," and a cloud had "received Him out of their sight," this word of their Lord was fulfilled. This feast, sometimes called "The Day of First-fruits," was at the time of harvest, and lasted fifty days; beginning with the first sheaf of barley which, at the Passover, was brought to the Temple to be offered to Jehovah, and ending with the two first loaves made from the newly-ripened wheat, which, with a peace-offering of two yearling lambs, were waved before Him. It was a joyful festival, and many strangers, besides those "devout Jews from every nation under heaven" who were dwellers in the city, would be at Jerusalem during the time of its celebration.

At Jerusalem we find the Disciples of Christ assembled, "with one accord, in one place," waiting as Christ had bidden them, for the "promise of the Father." Christ had spoken to them of the coming One on various occasions. He had said of Him, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." As His chosen ones thought of the many words spoken by their Master, heard perhaps at the time with careless ears, and now well-nigh forgotten, how precious must this word of Christ have been to them; how they must have longed for the fulfillment of it!

Again, Jesus had not only said that the Comforter should come in His name, but that He should be sent by the Father in answer to His prayer, and that He, the Spirit of truth, should abide with them forever.

Christ had also said that the Holy Spirit should testify of Him, and then, turning to His disciples, whom He was about to leave, He said, "Ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning," but this could only be after the Holy Ghost had come upon them, and they were "clothed with power from on high."

As they were waiting, "suddenly," with manifest tokens of His mighty presence, the Power from on high came. All the house where they were sitting was filled with "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The tongues of flame, parted asunder, showed that God would now have the testimony of His grace go forth to all, to Gentile and Jew alike, even as Christ was given for a light to the Gentiles, that He might be God's salvation unto the ends of the earth. The

immediate result of this outpouring of the Spirit could not be hid. The multitude, drawn together by the marvelous report that poor Galilæans, unlearned and ignorant men, were suddenly able to speak, not in their own dialect, with its rough intonation, but in the Greek and Persian tongues, were confounded.

For on that wonderful day, in the streets of Jerusalem, the sentence pronounced at Babel was reversed, and all those Jews of the dispersion who had come up to the holy city for the feast, heard, every man in his own tongue in which he was born, the wonderful works of God. But there were some there, who only mocked at what they could not understand. Their mockery brought from Peter the first clear note of testimony concerning the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." By the Holy Spirit he brought home to the hearts of those "men of Israel" that the same Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among them, whom they had taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain, was He whom God had raised from the dead! He who, fifty days before, had been led "as a lamb to the slaughter," through the streets of their city, and had submitted Himself to death at their hands—"even the death of the cross"— was now exalted by the right hand of God. He it was who, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, had shed forth that which they saw and heard.

"Beginning at Jerusalem," Christ had said. Thus, in the guilty city, among those who had been His betrayers and murderers, the gospel was first plainly set forth, and those who had shared in the guilt of His rejection and crucifixion learned that "God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ." Many on that day were cut to the heart, convicted that they were verily guilty of that blood concerning which they had prayed in their ignorance that it might be upon them and upon their children, and they said to Peter and his fellow apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

He bade them repent, and be baptized each one in the name of Christ, for the remission of sins; thus openly acknowledging Jesus of Nazareth as their Lord and Saviour.

But, though this testimony to Christ as the risen and glorified Saviour thus began at Jerusalem, it was not the purpose of God that it should end there. Peter added the beautiful words—the full import of which he should afterward understand—"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." What words of comfort and assurance are these for any of us who have learned by the convicting power of God's Spirit that we are "afar off" indeed—as far as sin and alienation from God could carry us, yet not too far for His call to sound in the secret chambers of our hearts! For it is ever true, in the mystery of His ways with us, that to be consciously lost is to be found forever.

Those who received Peter's word were baptized, and on that day, to the one hundred and twenty disciples who were at Jerusalem, three thousand were added.

## Willie's Master

---

"JAMIE, I canna bear to hear ye speak o' my Maister in sic a way as that." These words were spoken with intense earnestness by Willie S., a young lad employed in a large shipbuilding yard in the West of Scotland, as he laid his hand upon the arm of an old shipwright, well known as the most foulmouthed man in the yard, who seemed on this day to outvie himself as he poured forth a torrent of blasphemous abuse of the Bible and the Saviour.

For some weeks gospel meetings had been held in the neighboring town, and, among others, Willie had been led to the Lord Jesus Christ. Ever since then it had been a daily grief to Willie to hear old Jamie D. speaking in mockery and derision of those sacred truths which were now so dear to him. Today, however, Jamie spoke so insultingly of the Saviour Himself that Willie could bear it no longer, and walking quietly across the yard, with a hurried prayer for grace and wisdom, he thus accosted the old blasphemer, "Jamie, I canna bear to hear ye speak o' my Maister in sic a way as that."

"Wha's speaking o' yer Maister?" asked the man, gruffly, as he turned from his work to find himself confronted by the youthful Christian, with cheeks burning, eyes half filled with tears, and quivering lip, all telling of the deep emotion which affected him.

For a moment the lad seemed unable to speak, and then, as every eye in the yard was directed to him, he said, "Oh, Jamie! do ye no ken that the Lord Jesus Christ is my Maister? He deed instead o' me; and indeed, indeed, I canna bear to hear ye say sich things as that about Him."

Jamie D. was so taken aback by this outburst, that he was unable to make any reply, and, almost before he was aware, Willie had quietly returned to his place and to his work.

The old man could see that the other men were touched by what had passed, and he went on with his work without remark, but no more bad language was heard from old Jamie D. that afternoon; and, indeed, the words of the young disciple had sunk deep into the poor blasphemer's soul. The heartfelt testimony of Willie S.'s love to his blessed Lord had moved the old man as nothing previously had done. He went himself to hear what the evangelists, who had told such gracious words to Willie S., had to say, and through them he learned the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and, by God's grace, became a humble follower of the Master. H. A. C.

## Have I a Soul?

---

WHAT a question! I should have thought that everyone knew he had a soul.

But, dear reader, do you act as if you believed you had a soul? I write to such as are unsaved. Do you not rather go on from day to day as if time were passing on without in any way influencing your eternity—in plain words, living your fleeting life here as if you had no soul that will live forever?

Some long time ago a young Oxford collegian found out that he was a sinner—a lost sinner! He read that the wrath of God would be poured out upon all those who obeyed not the gospel—he felt that he had never obeyed it—that he had never bowed to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord and Master. He began to give up his wild companions, and his old habits, and to seek the company of those whom he knew to be followers of the despised Jesus. But he was not happy. He thought he could make himself a better man. He fasted till he became so weak that he could hardly get up the stairs to his room, and he grew so wretched that he seemed to be in danger of losing his mind. However, at last, through the words of a Christian friend, he saw that Christ died for him, just as he was, and unable to do one single thing to make himself better. He believed, through God's grace, that the precious blood of Christ was powerful to take away every stain of sin, and make him who trusted in Jesus fit for the very glory of God Himself.

From the time this young man believed on the Lord his sorrow was turned into joy. He could not refrain from telling everyone with whom he came in contact what a wonderful Saviour Jesus is. From that time he gave himself wholly to the Lord, and no joy was so great to him as seeing the poor people whom he visited brought to his Redeemer. He preached to the poor wherever he could get them to listen, and he would say it was like a new life to him to see the tears washing white channels down the grimy cheeks of the miners, as they left the mines, and heard of God's love to them in sending His own dear Son to bear their punishment. And not only did God give His Son to die in the stead of His people, He now unites them to Christ Himself, and He will place those who believe in His Son in the very same glory above as the Lord Jesus.

After some years our friend went to America—it was before the war of freedom, and in the South the poor Negroes were still slaves. Very badly treated were these slaves. They were not even allowed to attend the preachings of the gospel with the whites! But our friend would take his stand on a mound or a rock, whence his voice could reach a long way, and so some of the poor slaves heard a little of the good news.

At first they evidently thought it was only meant for white people, but at last they began to think it might concern them. One day some of the blacks came to our friend, asking him the question at the head of this paper, "Have I a soul?" Neither did they stop there, for they wanted to know where their souls would go when their bodies died! Right glad were these poor creatures to hear what God had done for them, and soon many might be heard joyfully saying, "have a soul, and it is saved forever, and I am going to be with the Lord Jesus in glory."

Now, reader, will you do one thing for me? Will you for one five minutes think over this question—"is my soul saved forever, and am I going to glory?" Do not let those poor Negroes rise up in judgment against you. You know that you have a soul—take care that you perish not forever in the flames of the lake of fire. L. T.

MAKE others to see Christ in you moving, doing, speaking, and thinking.

IF ye would be a deep divine, I recommend you to sanctification.

## Extracts From Different Authors

---

LET the Lord have the flower of your age; the best sacrifice is due to Him.

GIVE Christ your virgin love; you cannot put your love and heart into a better hand. Oh, if ye knew Him, and saw His beauty, your love, your heart, your desires, would close with Him, and cleave to Him.

IT were my heaven till I come home, even to spend this life in gathering in some to Christ.

TAKE as many to heaven with you as ye are able to draw. The more ye draw with you, ye shall be the more welcome yourself.

THE Name of Jesus is a ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, so perfectly constructed that a child in grace may ascend by it without the least danger of falling.

CHRIST is the only light by which a man can see to read his Bible aright.

TRUTH is like the finest gold: burn it as long as you will, you cannot reduce its weight.

"WE see Jesus," wrote Paul (Heb. 2:9), as if his eye beheld Him, "crowned with glory and honor." Himself seen anywhere causes all else connected with man to drop into a secondary place.

NOTHING, I believe, is known by us aright until its connection with the cross of Christ in God's mind is known. His cross may well make us count, and act towards the whole world, as towards a crucified, put-to-open-shame thing, by its having crucified Him.

IT is truth—a Man in glory in heaven is a truth dear to the heart and mind of God.

THAT which was pure, separate, and lovely in human nature was in Jesus under all its sorrows, but in all its excellence, and excellent in its sorrows.

HE was though despised and rejected of men, the perfection of human nature.

ALL was in perfect subjection to God in His humanity, and had its place, and did exactly its service.

## Waiting for Feelings

---

A SHORT time ago, whilst walking along a country road, I came to a spot where different ways met, when a young man offered to direct me to my destination. "Probably the Lord has a word for this young man," I thought; so, after a little time of silence, I asked him if he had any interest in the things of the Bible. "Oh, yes, sir; and very much interest, too," he replied. But as he did not seem able to express clearly what he meant, I said, "Have you ever felt the burden of your sins, and have you ever been troubled about them?"

"Indeed I have," he answered, "and that very often, too, and one thing I know to be certain—I am altogether what I ought not to be, and I do not get the thing I so much desire."

"You mean peace with God?"

"Yes," said he.

"You say you know yourself to be what you ought not to be. Now, the question is, do you believe yourself to be what God says you are—a lost sinner, and by nature away from God?"

"I believe that," my young friend said, in a way that assured me he spoke from his heart.

"Then it is for you to believe that God in His infinite love has provided a Saviour for you. Look away by faith, dear friend, unto Him, and rest satisfied that God needs nothing more than what His own Son has done. He has taken your place on the cross, and God has dealt with Him according to all that His justice demanded on account of your sins."

"That seems to be all very plain," said the young man;" but, although I have faith in what you say, I remain in the same place, and do not feel I have the proper thing. Sometimes I persuade myself that I have it; then again I find myself as one having nothing at all."

"Ah, my dear friend, I am afraid you are in the same dilemma as are thousands this day: you are putting first what should come last—feelings before faith. You are looking for a change of things to be wrought in you, or for a realization of some particular experience, and unless what you look for remain with you, you persuade yourself that you have not 'the proper thing'! You will never get settled peace with God in this fashion. Peace comes to us altogether in a different way from that, and unless you believe God's way you will always remain in doubt and fear. The one and only source from which we obtain the knowledge of peace with God is His word. You believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has died for you—a poor, lost sinner. Why? Because the word of God says so! It remains for you joyfully to receive those truths relating to the blessed results of Christ's death which the word of God opens out to us. The word of God declares of Jesus: 'He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Rom. 4:25; 5:1.) It is on the authority of God's word alone that we dare say we have real peace of soul; everything depends upon the way you treat God's holy word. I do not wish you to think me severe—God forbid—but I am constrained to tell you that God holds you responsible to believe what He says."

"I think God will yet save me before I die."

"I do not doubt it, dear friend; but let me tell you, if after God has spoken to you, you continue to refuse the message of peace which He sends you, God is displeased with your conduct."

"I only wish I had it. I do not deny the blame is to be attributed to my own thoughts," my young friend continued; "but what would you have me to do?—I feel I am altogether wrong."

I desired to bring this young man face to face with the Lord Jesus, so I said, "Take the Lord's own words as He gives them, and may His precious words, 'Peace be unto you,' enable you to rejoice in the knowledge of His wondrous love."

Here we parted. No doubt the Spirit of God had begun the good work in that young man's soul, but he lacked faith in what God says, and so was living a life of distrust. Is your case, dear reader, similar to that of this young man? Thousands are kept in doubt and fear simply by yielding to Satan's cunning devices. Depend upon it, if God has sent the word of peace to you, and you doubt the truthfulness of that word, the blame is on yourself.

Oh, think of this love, my reader, and think at what a cost the blessed Lord Jesus has obtained salvation for us. May we say with adoring hearts, "Praise the Lord: He is good, for His mercy endureth forever."

W. M.

## The Searching of God

---

CAN you say unshrinkingly with the Psalmist David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts," and in the same Psalm he seems to rejoice to say, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me... for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." (Psa. 139)

Do you feel happy in the recollection that the searching eye of God reads your heart through and through? If it is still black and defiled with unconfessed and unforgiven sin you cannot bear the thought. We were "born in sin," God's word says—born bad to begin with, and we have been bad—have been sinners ever since, and are sinners still if unsaved. At this very moment all are either among the number of those who are "guilty before God," or of those who have been "cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son."

How is it with you, reader? Are you afraid of God's eye—afraid of His voice? If there is still resting upon you the consciousness of sins unforgiven, there will be—there must be—fear, but if all have been forgiven for Christ's sake, He having borne the dreadful punishment deserved by you, then God's "perfect love casts out fear, for fear hath torment."

A child who is conscious of having willfully disobeyed his or her parents' word, shrinks from them, and is not happy as usual in their presence. The simple words, "Come here, come to me," cause it to tremble, or turn pale, and very reluctantly does it obey the parent's call, fearing that inquiry, discovery, and probably punishment will follow. On the other hand, a child who is living in the happy sunshine of a perfect understanding with its parents with nothing to hide from them, runs with joy into their arms: yes, and without being called—fearing nothing.

How important and solemn the question, can I unshrinkingly say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart"? E. G.

## Misbelief

---

"WELL, I can't believe a man is saved forever," said a friend to us, recently.

"How so?"

"Because there is my old companion lying upon his dying bed, cursing God, and he said he was once turned, and now that he does not believe a word about it."

"But was he ever really turned to God, think you?"

"Oh, that I can't say," was the reply.

"So then, because a poor sinner, who once heard the truth of God, lies blaspheming, you say, you don't believe God's good word as the eternal salvation of His people." On plumbing into our friend's soul, we found the bottom of his unbelief was this, he could not say for himself he was saved forever. And because of this unbelief in his heart, he had brought up a poor deceiver's lying words to support himself in his own lack of faith in the gracious truth of God.

This is a not unusual way of reasoning, dear reader.

## Our Knowledge Teaching Us Our Ignorance

---

As we dig into the sacred teachings of God's word we feel increasingly how little we really understand of the Bible. But one cheering consideration should not be neglected by us—the truths themselves are not affected by our imperfect knowledge of them. All the spiritual blessings wherewith God our Father has blessed us in Christ are ours, though we may not have an idea of a ten thousandth part of what the "all" signifies. The little babe receives the benefit of the sunshine equally with the astronomer; the former has no notion of what the sun is—the latter can tell us a great deal respecting its greatness, its glory, and its nature. Yet all that the learned man knows, he will tell us, has taught him what a very little he understands concerning the wonderful sun. The great thing for us in reading the Bible is to get into the sunshine of its blessings. Let us enjoy the blessed sunlight of the divine word. We may then be well able to afford learned persons the satisfaction of analyzing the sunbeams! The simpler our souls, the sweeter our affections, the better. God's "all" and our "all" are of necessity so different. God is God; who can measure Him? or who can rightly comprehend the lengths, breadths, depths, and heights of His "all"?

## The Mother's Hand, and Baby's Peace

---

THE little baby had been fast asleep, but on the mother entering the room with a light in her hand to retire to rest, she woke up, and as the little creature looked at her mother, the little face was lighted up with the joy and peace of loving recognition, and, quite content, she watched with interest all her movements about the room. On the mother, however, extinguishing the light, the sudden darkness startled the child, and she became restless, tossing to and fro under the influence of surprise and fear. The mother, perceiving this, drew quietly near, and gently placed one of her hands upon the child's, and in a moment its fears were subdued and hushed, and, after placing its other little hand upon its mother's, confidence in her presence and love soon did its work, and in a few moments baby was fast asleep; it was enough that her mother was there with her hand upon hers.

In the spirit of this little child, and its attendant result, we have a sweet picture of the work of faith and the presence of Christ in the soul. Though sometimes in the midst of our most exalted enjoyments the darkness of unbelief, the sense of indwelling sin, and temptation fill us with fear, or trying and mysterious dispensations seem to hide His bright face from our view, yet no sooner does He draw near, and we again grasp Him, through living, active, realizing faith, which His Spirit and presence inspire, than we are lifted out of ourselves and all our restlessness, and realize the truth of His own words, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" and of the grand old promise—" THOU wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." W. P. B.

## Himself He Cannot Save

---

DID you ever think that these words have a deep and solemn meaning? Spoken as they were by a mocking crowd—and addressed to the blessed Jesus as He hung upon the cross! Did you ever think, that if the Lord Jesus had saved Himself, we could never have been saved?

Do you ever think of the agony He endured whilst hanging on that cross? God's face was hidden from Him—a cruel, mocking crowd stood around Him, taunting Him, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." And again, "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him."

But God, in His wondrous grace, allowed that precious One, who so willingly laid down His life for us, to be nailed to the cross. Allowed, if I may so speak, those mocking words to be uttered, only that they might bring out His love in greater power.

Reader ponder over these words in your heart, "Himself He cannot save." If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus may they speak to you afresh of His love, and show you more fully what it cost that precious Lamb of God to save us from hell!

If you are still an unbeliever, think of Him hanging there upon the cross, bearing all the wrath of God. What, can you think of His great love for sinners, and yet refuse Him? Oh, yield yourself entirely to Him, and you will find He is the only One worthy of your trust and love. N. N.

### Scripture Testimony on Fools

(From the New Testament) (Concluded from p. 23.)

A BELIEVER without wisdom.—There is another word rendered "fool" which occurs but once in the New Testament. We find it in the exhortation, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools" (or as those without wisdom), "but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise" (or without mind), "but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph. 5:15-17.) These solemn words are addressed to God's own people, and a dreadful thing it is for believers to be "as fools" in the sense of this exhortation.

Suppose a man on New Year's Day had one sovereign given him for each of the ten hours of the day during the year—three thousand six hundred and fifty pounds in all, and that he was told not one penny more should he have during that year. How devoid of wisdom would he be if, seating himself by the river's side, he should take out his wealth and then throw the sovereigns one by one into the water. If he thus flung them away we might well say to him, "Dispose of your means not as a fool, but as a wise man!" Let us turn these three thousand six hundred and fifty sovereigns into hours, and we shall see that each of us during the last twelve months has had at least that number of working hours entrusted to him. How have we spent them? How many a golden hour has been foolishly flung into the River of Time by being wasted and idled away! "Redeeming the time." Save every moment, use each passing hour for God, because the days are evil. Has this been true of us? Ah! we are too much like the spendthrift, flinging his wealth into the river. It will be a bitter thing to come to the end of our life, and to feel we have wasted it. Oh, to be wise! We shall have to give

an account for each hour of our lives. How are we spending the present moment? We appeal solely to God's children. Are we thinking for, working for, living for eternity? Every hour spent, save at our Lord's bidding, is misspent. Every hour spent, save in wise and willing obedience to His will concerning us, is a mistake for eternity. Christian, you often pity the folly of the man of wisdom and of wealth who thinks and works for time only; see then to it that you spend your golden hours for glory and for God.

The fool who becomes wise.—With these solemn warnings before us against folly, we find God bidding His people become fools; and we turn now again to the word "fool" used, broadly speaking, in the way we use it in English; that is, as a term of reproach and contempt. But if God so bid us become fools, need we say it is not in the sense of folly in His sight; no, but folly in the sight of men. Fellow Christian, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." (1 Cor. 1:25.) What God esteems, man despises; what God magnifies, man contemns.

"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise," is a pungent word to each of us. There is no mode of learning true wisdom more difficult than that of unlearning what we think is wisdom. How many a Christian remains but a babe in the knowledge of God, because he abides wise in the wisdom of this world. But the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and therefore if what we regard to be wisdom, is really but foolishness with God, how can we get on? And the more learned a man is, the more difficult it is for him to become like a little child.

A fool for Christ's sake.—For Christ's sake the apostle and his companions were fools. (1 Cor. 4:10.) To be hungry, to be buffeted, to be defamed and despised, was but the path of a fool in the eyes of the world. To be beaten with rods, to be imprisoned, to be stoned, and to suffer countless ills for an end unseen (save to faith), was, in the eyes of worldly Christians, want of common sense. But for Christ's sake the apostle was gladly a fool. Would to God there were many such fools for Christ's sake! Such living examples are unanswerable.

We cannot have the world's wisdom and God's wisdom. They cannot co-exist in the soul. "For Christ's sake" is to the world madness. To seek out the poor and the sick, to care for the dying, to spend and be spent for souls, is to the world infatuation, and a career of fanaticism. Be it so; and God grant a great increase to the number of such infatuated people. To live for the unseen, to have the soul ahead of time, to dwell in the realities of eternity, to have Christ as our object, is sheer nonsense to the world; yet this alone is wisdom, wealth, and bliss. God give each of us, who are Christ's, to be "fools for Christ's sake." Can we wish each other a better wish than this?

Foolish questions.—Ere closing this paper we must add the warning, which comes at the end of the Apostle Paul's writings to us, as to occupation with foolish questions, for there is nothing more detrimental to spiritual growth than this folly. That man who builds on the sand is a fool for eternity, and that saint who occupies his mind with foolish questions is a fool in the light of eternity. Satan at this day has decoyed hundreds of saints from their real wisdom, which is living for God and eternity, by getting their minds to be full of questions about things which are the pet controversies of the hour. Dear young Christian, if you had lived thirty years on this earth as a believer, you would know that every few years Satan raises up a fresh crop of foolish questions to keep God's saints from doing God's work. When these foolish and unlearned questions, occupation with which has completely spoiled so many a Christian, are worn out, Satan has another crop ready to keep

people's minds going. Keep clear of all such questions, which only gender strifes, and be a fool yourself for Christ's sake. Do not shrink from the shame of having your friends call you foolish for not knowing all the things with which they are occupied.

Be a fool for Christ's sake; be out of the fashion of the hour for His sake; be careful to have His Name and glory ever before you. Busy yourself with God's work, with the souls of men, with God's Book, and God's glory. Serve God, live with God. Be wise for eternity!

## Blind Bartimæus

---

THE blind man in his accustomed place by the wayside is a familiar sight to us in our own country. Some of us can remember from our childhood the well-known features of the blind man who sits by the wayside, begging. There he is on his stool from day to day, making the mat of colored strips of cloth, or anon conducting his hands along the broad leaves of the raised-letter Testament, and reading slowly the precious words of life, while his dog, basket round its neck, looks up into our faces as if to ask an alms! There the blind man has sat day by day since we were children. Now he is old, as well as blind and poor, and no one on earth can open his eyes. Some of us may have had more interest in the poor man than simply that of dropping a penny into the basket; we may have inquired after his health and home, becoming acquainted with his name and his surroundings. If so, we should hardly speak of the blind man who sits by the wayside, but of poor So-and-So, the blind man, who sits at such and such a place.

In the East, lepers and blind people occupy an accustomed spot, where they solicit alms. Perhaps a poor leper is carried day by day, and placed on his ragged old mat outside the city's walls, where he may be seen daily for years together, till at last, too feeble to be carried to the accustomed spot, he is seen no more. But there is no one on earth now whose touch can heal a leper.

Sometimes the blind man holds a gourd in his hand, as our artist has given it in our picture, and into the gourd the alms are cast.

Our artist wished to know whether he should draw us two poor men sitting together at the foot of the wall, as he had so often seen them, or only one. We wished for but one, as we desire particularly to speak of Bartimus, who sat outside the walls of Jericho. Both St. Matthew and St. Luke tell us of two blind men who sat there. St. Mark mentions but one. He gives us his name, Bartimæus, and his father's too, Timæus, and so speaks of him, and, indeed, so describes the scene of mercy and healing, that we can but feel assured he knew the poor blind son ' of Timæus by name and character, as well as by sight. How many years he had sat by that highway side we know not? How long, think we, had he lost his sight? By the Lord's word to him, we should suppose he had once seen, perhaps, as well as you and I, but darkness deeper than that of night had fallen on him—that darkness which so powerfully teaches us the terribleness of soul-darkness—there was in the eyes of Bartimus no power for receiving light! So there he sat by the wayside, begging.

One day the hum of a multitude and the tramp of many feet, made the blind man ask what it all meant. "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," the people answered.

Oh! what words of hope were these to Bartimus! He had heard many a time of Jesus of Nazareth. Who can say but that as Bartimæus and the other blind man sat on their mats together they had not frequently talked together of Jesus and His wondrous works, and wondered if ever He would give them sight? I think, had you been a blind child in that day, you would have tried to learn all you could about the blessed Jesus who gave sight to the blind.

Indeed, I am sure, had I been blind, I should have done so; and if we heard that Jesus was in our very town, oh! how would our hearts have beaten in anticipation of our being brought to Him! And now Jesus was coming along the very road at the side of which Bartimæus sat. How his heart leaped within him as he lifted up his voice: "Son of David, have mercy on me!" He cried out, for he wanted Jesus to hear, and as so many people were talking together, and so many feet were tramping along, he cried as loud as he could, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Then a great many people told Bartimæus to be quiet: "Hush!" said they, "hold your peace!" Hold his peace, indeed, when Jesus, who gave sight to the blind, was passing by? Hold his peace, indeed, because the fine people did not wish to be vexed with the wants of a blind beggar? No, no, no! All the louder and the more often did Bartimæus shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

I do so love Bartimæus for his earnest longing and for his faith in the blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Will it not be pleasant to see him by and by in glory, and to hear from his own lips in the city of God all about that wonderful day when, outside the wall of poor accursed Jericho, he sought the Lord and received sight? But happier far than the contemplation of Bartimæus is the sweet pleasure of thinking of Jesus listening to the cry of the blind man. Bartimæus heard the voice of Jesus. The people said to him, "Rise, He calleth thee"; and away he cast his poor ragged old garment—his outer shawl-like covering—and at the Lord's bidding stood before Him, blind, miserable in himself, but trusting in Jesus, and full of hope in His mercy.

How all the people must have crowded close to see what the Master would do Then He asked Bartimæus what he wished that He should do for him. And the blind man cried, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." Then in a moment Bartimæus saw. And what think you he saw?—Jesus! He cast his eyes upon the gracious Lord who had so kindly passed by on the highway from Jericho and had mercy on him.

Now who cries for mercy, and, who says to Jesus, "Have mercy on me"? Who feels his deep darkness of soul? Be not blind and a beggar any longer; Jesus is passing by; He will stop to heed your cry for mercy. Whatever your friends and companions may say to try to stop your calling on the Lord, cry but the louder, "Have mercy on me!"

The earnest cry for mercy is never, never unheeded. Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.

Now listen: "Rise, He calleth thee!" Away with the rags, away with the miserable covering; you shall beg and be ragged no longer; Jesus calls you; come to Him, and as He places His gifts at your disposal, reply to Him, "Give me my sight, Lord"; and then, like grateful Bartimæus, follow the Lord on the way. Be a disciple indeed.

## The Carrier's Daughter

---

THE object which I have in view in narrating the following true story of the patiently-borne sufferings, and the triumphant death, of one who in the morning of life was cut down, as a flower just opening its leaves to the sun, is to show you how happy and how beautiful the grace of Christ can make even a child, and what is its cheering influence on the soul of one quite young, in the prospect of eternity.

Emmie H. was the loving and affectionate daughter of John and Maria H., living in V. From the days of her infancy she had been weakly, and, being the only child, she was fondly cherished by her parents. At a very early age, when she most needed the care and sympathy of a mother, she was called upon to pass through a great sorrow, which severely shook her already weak constitution. Her mother one evening, after putting little Emmie to bed, retired to her rest as usual by the side of her child—the father was the mail cart driver, and at this time away on his duties. Mother and child lay down to sleep, but the mother slept the sleep of death, and in the morning when Emmie awoke she found her cold and still, or, as she told her father on his return home, with a bitter cry, "Mother is gone to heaven."

Child as she was, the duties of making home clean and comfortable for her father now fell on her young shoulders—a duty which she performed with all the energy and ability of one much older. For some ten years she was the thoughtful, busy little housekeeper, doing her best to fill mother's place. Each Saturday everything was cleaned for Sunday, for she loved the Lord's day, and hailed it with delight.

She was to be seen in her place every Sunday at the Sunday-school. Not having a Bible of her own, she became intensely anxious to have one. She saved all the pence which she had given her till she had sufficient to purchase the precious book, and, when at last she had one in her own possession, her joy knew no bounds. Would that all of our dear readers loved and prized the Bible as did Emmie H.! Failing health at last deprived her of the public means of grace, but she would pass her time at home in singing sweet hymns and reading her Bible.

The kind friends in whose house she was lodging noticed that she began to all very quickly, fading like a rose in summer. Soon she became so weak as not to be able to move about. During the few days she lay lingering and suffering upon her bed the work of grace was beautifully manifest to all who visited or nursed her. Without a murmur she patiently and peacefully bore her sufferings and pains, which were intense at times, and, though day by day she gradually became weaker, yet in faith and grace she grew firmer and stronger. Her greatest joy was to speak of Jesus and His love—of the bright and shining angels—of the pearly gates and golden street—and then she would finish by saying, "I long to be there."

Her young soul was flooded with the light of heaven. I remember the first time I called to see her, after we had been talking of the joys of heaven, and I was about to leave, that she asked me to ask the Lord Jesus to let her in through the gate there and then! I at once did so, her face

brightening with a smile the while. She then lay so still, that it was as though her spirit had indeed fled, and we thought she had gone. But her time was not yet come; she had to wait a little longer to witness to others the truth of the gospel.

Lovingly and earnestly did she plead with her father to seek the Saviour, and turn from his evil ways, and meet her in heaven, adding that she should never get better in this world, neither did she want to do so. She entreated those who nursed her to be more earnest in their work for the Lord Jesus.

It was delightful to be with her. Her conversation was heavenly; and it was a pleasant duty to wait upon her, so grateful was she for every little thing done to cheer and smooth her journey. When leaving her one evening, thinking it was the last time I should ever see her on earth, I said, "Have you any message, Emmie, for me to carry from you to the children at school." She answered, "Yes, give them all my kindest love, and tell them to meet me in heaven."

I called the next evening to inquire if she had gone home, and was told "no." When I was shown into her room, she greeted me with a smile, and said, "I am not gone home yet, but am still watching and waiting for the angels to come and bear me home to the skies. But," she added, "I think shall soon be there."

These were the last words I heard from her plainly. I left, and called again the next evening, and found her still alive, though quite unconscious. She had become much weaker; her voice had grown more feeble and indistinct. The doctor had forbidden us to speak to her. The reality and solemnity of the great truth dawned upon us that our dear little friend was rapidly passing away, and had only a few more hours to linger.

The young person who nursed her at times heard the words in the faintest whisper, "Jesus"—"golden gates"—"heaven." Just before breathing her last, her voice seemed to return in all its usual strength and clearness. She opened her eyes, and looking heavenwards, she said, with hands uplifted, "I am coming, yes, I am coming, glory—glory—glory." Her hands fell, and in a few hours after, her longing desire was fulfilled, and she was at home, forever with the Lord.

Thus, at the tender age of eighteen, she passed away to the everlasting mansions, to welcome us home when our work is done; and as I thought of her patience and faith through all her pain, and witnessed the power of the grace of Christ, shining forth in all its sweetness, filling her soul with a joy and peace beyond all understanding, I could not refrain from saying to the friends who stood around her bed, "God grant our last hours may be as bright and triumphant."

Death for her had no sting, and the grave no terror; she was resting and trusting in Christ, and death but snapped the fetters that bound her here, and set her spirit free.

And now, may all who read this simple story seek and love the Saviour who has so loved us as to die for us, and may they all have as sure and as bright a hope of heaven as Emmie had; and as through grace she triumphed and overcame, so may they through Christ triumph and overcome, and sit down with Him upon His throne. C.

## Oh, Then He Knows

---

"OH my dear little boy, what mischief you are getting into! See what you have done! "said a loving mother one day as she entered her parlor, and found that her bright-faced, curly-headed little son of about four years of age had just succeeded in spoiling some useful article of hers, which, of course, he ought not to have touched.

"Oh, mamma dear, I am so sorry: was it naughty?" and the blue eyes wore for a minute or so a sort of half-penitential look, while his mamma added—

"You know it is naughty, dear, to meddle with papa's or mamma's things. You must have forgotten how often we have told you not to do so, for they are not yours to play with like your own playthings. You should not have touched it, then you would not have broken it."

"Do you think, mamma, that the Lord Jesus saw me break that pretty thing of yours?" asked the little fellow, suddenly, some time after.

"Yes, dear, of course He did, because He sees everything, and knows everything," was the reply.

"Oh, then He knows that I really didn't mean to break it; so that's all right," the child cried out joyfully, and, with a great sigh of relief, all the shadows vanished instantly from the merry, sunshiny face, upon which none could ever linger long.

How perfectly beautiful is the sweet, trustful simplicity, the unshaken confidence of a very little child!

Happy little Percy knew that his kind, gentle mother would not dream of punishing him for an accident, although his mischievous little fingers had led him into naughtiness, yet he had not intended to do more than meddle, so was freely forgiven. But the active young mind went even higher and further still, till it rested in the thought of the perfect knowledge, and therefore perfect justice which the ever-loving Lord Jesus of whom he had so often heard, would show and feel towards him.

"He knows all, He knows the truth about me; so He won't be angry with me," was the little one's thought, and it made him perfectly happy again.

Let me ask you, dear young readers, would the same thought give you comfort and happiness? "Thou God seest me." "O Lord, Thou knowest." Do these texts give you a sweet sense of peace, or are you inclined to feel afraid when you think of them? E. G.

## Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

---

(Read Matt. 4:12-25; Luke 3:19-20.)

WE are told in the first and second chapters of the Gospel of John of some things which happened after the temptation of the Lord Jesus was ended, and before He went on the journey to Galilee of which you have just read. See whether you can find any of those things. It was then that many who were afterward disciples of Jesus first came to know Him. A disciple means a scholar, one who learns of another who is his teacher. The youngest child may be a disciple of Christ, and learn of Him, and the oldest man is not too old to go on learning more and more in His school.

Two of those of whom we read in the thirty-seventh verse of the first chapter of John had been disciples of John the Baptist; but when they heard him speak about Jesus, they left their old teacher and followed Him. John was glad to see them follow Jesus; some time afterward he said, in speaking of Christ and of himself, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

It was because of these beautiful words, "Behold the Lamb of God!" which John spoke, that Andrew and the other disciple of John followed Jesus. I am sure even you who are only very little ones could learn to repeat them. Those who are older will be able to count and see how many disciples of the Lord Jesus we read of in this chapter. Some were brought to Him, and one He found. Yes, there were five: Andrew and his brother Simon, whom Jesus called Peter; Philip, who belonged to the same town on the shore of the sea of Galilee; Nathanael, from the village of Cana; and the other disciple of John whose name we are not told.

It was in Cana of Galilee, where Nathanael's home was, that the Lord Jesus did that "beginning of miracles" of which we read in the next chapter. Afterward He went to Jerusalem, at the time of the passover. Ask someone to show you upon a map the way by which the Lord traveled from Capernaum to Jerusalem.

If those children who can draw and write a little would make a map of their own of the three great divisions of the Holy Land, it would help them very much in understanding what they read about the places which are mentioned in this Gospel.

It was when the Lord was in Judaea that He heard that John was cast into prison, and He departed into Galilee. The fourth chapter of John tells us by which way He traveled. He went through Samaria. Look at the map, and you will see that this country lies between Judæa and Galilee. If you look again carefully you will see a city of Samaria called Sychar, where the Lord sat, weary with His journey, on Jacob's Well, and spoke to a woman of the place of the water which He would give. You remember that He called that water "living water." How well it was for that poor woman that He who was Himself the gift of God passed through Samaria on His way to Galilee!

Now find Nazareth. You remember that that town was the place in which Jesus was brought up; He went there first, and then "came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is on the sea coast." This town was distant a day's journey from Nazareth. The Lord was now in the very country of which God's

prophet Isaiah had spoken many, many years before. He said, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light," and this saying came to pass when the poor, despised people in "Galilee of the Gentiles" had Him who was the "true Light" among them, preaching to them, and saying, "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

It was as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee that He saw the brothers Simon and Andrew, fishing. "Follow Me," He said to them, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once Andrew and Peter left their nets and followed Jesus, and so did the two other brothers, James and John, who were in the boat with their father, mending their nets, when they heard the voice of Jesus calling them; for they cared so much to be with Him that they were glad to leave everything else that they might follow Him.

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues." I remember hearing a little boy of four years old ask, "What is a synagogue, father?" Perhaps some children who have read this verse may not know that in the time when the Lord Jesus was on earth every Jewish town had a sort of church, which was built on a hill, so that it could be seen from a distance.

People went to the synagogue every Sabbath day—you know that was every Saturday—and also on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Parts of the Old Testament were read, and prayers were said, while all the people answered "Amen." See whether you can find the chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah, part of which the Lord Jesus read in the synagogue of Nazareth.

But the Lord Jesus, as He went about all Galilee, not only preached, but cured every kind of sickness among the people. Wherever He went, in this sad world, He found sorrow, and the trouble which sin had brought; wherever He went He brought blessing and healing, health and cure. No wonder that great multitudes followed Him. If you had lived then and had had anything the matter with you, do you not think your father and mother would have carried you a long way, if only they could at last have brought you where the Lord Jesus was, and laid you down at His feet, that He might cure you?

## Bible Reading

---

THERE is no time like youth for learning the letter of the Scriptures. Young people do not search out the deeper things of the word in the same way as their elders, but, we assure them, it is far easier in youth than it is in age to reach to a knowledge of the letter of the words of life. As people grow up, they have so many things to think about that they cannot so readily learn by rote as the young, and we should be indeed glad if we could stir up our dear young friends to learn texts and chapters of the word of God.

Now, if our young friends would take their Bibles, and honestly lay aside the Concordance, they would find a very happy way of spending some hours by searching for, and then writing out, texts on Bible subjects. For instance, write out all the New Testament texts which speak of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Having done this, arrange all these beautiful texts in groups. Place together, for example, those which tell us what the blood of Christ has wrought for God's people. We think at once of such blessed things as forgiveness (Eph. ), washing (Rev. ), justification (Rom. ). Then arrange together texts which tell us how that precious blood has magnified God—as, for example, "having made peace by the blood of His cross" (Col. ). Another group of texts might be formed, showing us how the Lord has obtained glory to Himself through His blood—as, for example, "By His own blood He entered once into the holy place" (Heb. ). These texts, neatly written in a book, would be well worth keeping to look at by and by.

A little boy—and a child who has not much spare time—made such a capital little book, which we had the pleasure of seeing. It was all his own work, and very nicely was it done. He wrote out ever so many texts, and there was not a blot or a smear to be seen in his book! Directly we begin to think what wonderful things the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has accomplished for God's people we begin to exalt Him in our hearts. Forgiveness, washing, redemption, justification—nearness to God, liberty of entrance into the Holiest of all—what great things are these!

All our dear young friends who love the Lord Jesus Christ will be profited and delighted by engaging in this little study, we are sure. And if they would learn as well as write out these texts, they would add very much to the value of their labors.

We assure you, you will hardly forget, when perhaps you are grown up, texts so learned. And a mind thus stored with the blessed words of life is richly laden with the wealth of God's great blessings to His people. May each of us be found praying the prayer of the old writer of these beautiful lines—

"Teach me yet more of Thy blest ways,

Thou stricken Lamb of God,

And fix and root me in Thy grace,

As dearly bought with blood."

## Bible Subjects: Reconciliation

PURSUING this theme, we now dwell on the passage in 2 Cor. 5. Let us read from verse 17 to the end of the chapter. On page 27 we observed that God, by the death of Christ, had condemned for His people that in them which is the old man. God, by the cross of Christ, condemned sin in the flesh. The root, sin, which separates us from God, has been judged in the death of Christ. The believer is not an improved child of Adam, or one who is restored to the state of innocence prevailing before the fall, but he belongs to a new creation—he is in Christ; the old things are passed away—all things are become new. Christ has died; He is risen—He has left this earth, and has ascended to heaven; the believer by the power of God is in Christ where He now is.

While Christ was on earth God was in Him, reconciling the world unto Himself. In the Anointed One—in Him whom He had sent—God was doing the Reconciler's part to the children of men. He neither judged nor condemned, He blessed. His eye, filled with compassion, did not mark the iniquities of sinful men; He did not impute to them their trespasses or reckon their offenses against them, but proclaimed love and pardon. Such was God's wondrous way, in Christ, to our guilty race. But the end of this ministry of unutterable love and pity was that man rose up, spat in the very face of, and crucified, the Son of God!

Has man then shut himself up forever in his hopeless hatred to God? Is reconciliation now impossible? Shall God yet reconcile us to Himself? Will He leave us, as we deserve, to perish eternally? Wonder of wonders! God has wrought what none but He could do. Indeed all is of God. From the very cross of Christ the word of reconciliation is heard. It proclaims divine righteousness against man's sin; yet in Him, men made the righteousness of God! Christ, who knew no sin, God made to be sin for us. The sinless One—He who knew not in any kind of way what sin was—the holy One, God made to be what we are in ourselves by nature—sin. Thus has God by the cross of Christ condemned all that we are in ourselves. Our will, our enmity to God, all that we are as sinners, has been righteously condemned by our holy God in the death of Christ, Who died for us. And now from heaven, where He is—in Christ, who has passed out from the judgment of God due to His people, and who sits exalted in the glory of God—we are made the righteousness of God. In Christ risen from the dead, God brings in the new creation, and He puts us in the risen Christ. For us, Christ was made sin; in Him, we are made the righteousness of God. He that is in Christ is new creation.

The word of reconciliation is not that God was in Christ reconciling the world, for that ministry of the anointed One ended by man's refusal to be reconciled, and by man's deepest crime—the cross of Christ. No longer is the voice of Jesus heard on earth, as it was before His death, pleading with men, for men have slain Him.

God has now put the word of His friendship towards man, into human hearts and lips. He has commissioned men to go to their fellow men entreating them, Be reconciled to God! God has made the heart of man the receptacle for His priceless gospel. Angels are not His messengers to bear from Christ glorified in heaven the tidings of wondrous love to sinners. God has given the commission on behalf of Christ to men. Christ's interests and concerns shall occupy them; on Christ's behalf they shall plead with their fellow men. What dignity, what honor lies here!

We are ambassadors, says the apostle. This high title applies to the apostles, but the spirit thereof all believers may seek to apply to themselves. Ambassadors for the absent Christ, and absent from earth because cast out of it by men!

Now how shall this grand dignity be carried out suitably? The chief servants of kings do great things, and from the ambassadors of Christ we may rightly expect that which is in accordance with the greatness of the Master's spirit. Such as are sent from the courts of heaven, and from the glorified Christ of God, must perforce have heavenly greatness accompany them. We ponder over and are amazed at the way in which the ambassadorship is expressed, for divine love enwraps the heavenly message; in importunate pleadings for the enemies to God the gracious words are bound up. We pray—we entreat I Surely, so far as God's servants have risen to the thought of apostolic dignity, will they resemble the apostle-ambassadors in their prayers and entreaties to sinners—Be reconciled to God.

In this spirit, heavenly ways express heavenly truth from Christ in heaven, proclaiming and praying the reception of, the reconciliation. And as this paper is addressed chiefly to our younger Christian friends who are workers in the gospel, let us ask them, as we would ask ourselves, How far is there in us this ambassador spirit?

## The Faithful Brother

---

"THE tail of the storm" is in the Channel, and a brave little cutter is speedily making for port and home. But as the morning dawns a dark spot on the horizon is made out by her captain to be a vessel in distress. The cutter is put about, and all sail possible made for the object that has arrested her course. Presently she is alongside a forsaken ship. The vessel rolls heavily, as though waterlogged. The captain boards her with some of his crew. The silence on the deserted vessel is only broken by the rattle of the chains as she rolls to and fro.

They go below—silence still; peer into the berths—still the same; but at last they come to a cabin, and start back, for there, in the silence of death, lies a still form. Once a living, brave man, like themselves, he is now left alone in his wrecked ship, covered with a foreign flag, on the wild waves. What does it all mean? Where is the crew? What caused his death? These and similar questions pass rapidly through the minds of Captain L. and his men. But there is no time to lose; they must try and get the vessel and its dead captain into port, and then solve the mystery.

Some hours after, the cutter and the derelict safely entered harbor. The news of the strange vessel soon spreads, official information is given, and before the day passes a crew of foreign sailors arrive to claim their vessel.

This was the tale they told. Theirs was a merchant ship, trading between their home and London; they had landed their cargo safely, and were on the return voyage, when the awful gale of the previous night had swept down the mainmast, and struck down the poor captain— fatally injured. His brother was with him, and spite of the storm, they, with loving hands, bore him to the cabin, and did all their skill could invent to ease what they saw too plainly were his dying hours.

As the storm increased, and the waves swept over the ship, she began to leak, and the poor captain begged them to launch the boat and try to reach land. His hours were numbered.

Why stay, with the apparent certainty of death, when there was at least a hope if they forsook the ship? But the brother would not leave the dying man alone, neither would any of the crew; they would stay with him, pay him the last act of respect, and then, if there was the possibility, try to make the shore; if not—well, they would not leave. Nor did they.

The storm raged on—all hope of saving the vessel was gone; their captain breathed his last. All they could do was to cover him with their flag, then lower the boat, and, as they thought, leave the vessel to founder. We know what really did happen to it. In broken English, the poor fellows told their tale, and they rejoiced that at least they could lay their captain where his loved friends, so far away, could at some time see his last resting place in the quiet, mossy grave at W—!

As I heard of these men in their nobility risking their lives to stay by their dying comrade and brother, it made me think of a love, deeper and stronger far, shown to me— shown to you, too, dear friends, who read these lines. I could but think of Jesus, my Saviour, who gave His life for me, and who died in my stead. How have you responded to His love? Have you never thought of it?

Have you gone on in your business or work, or amusements, and paid no heed to it?

Friends, do you know God loves you? You know what it is for your little boy to love you. You would be sorry if he did not care to run to meet you when you come home at night; you like him to climb upon your knee and tell you all he has been doing, do not you? You understand your mother, or father, or friend loving you? Now, God, the mighty God, gave up His only Son to death for sinners, such as you and I. Could you give up your child to die for your friend? He spared not His own Son, and gave Him for His enemies. Have you ever thanked Him for His love? Down with this paper, and thank Him now, if you never did before.

Remember, it was for sinners that Christ died. Come to Him as a sinner, and trust in His mercy. L. T.

## Praise—

---

"WILL you come and see my brother?" said a young woman to me; "he is very ill, and I would like you to speak to him about Jesus." I went, and found a most interesting youth of some fourteen years of age, who was in real concern about his soul, and made ready to hear about that blessed One who "came to seek and to save that which was lost."

The family had at one time been in easy circumstances—the father holding a good position in connection with the mines in Cornwall, but he had lost his situation, and was now a common miner, and being in very delicate health, his family was reduced to great poverty. The mother had died in consumption before they left Cornwall, and poor James had inherited from her the fatal disease, which was making rapid strides upon him. There were no bright earthly prospects held forth to him to bind him here, or mar his vision of heavenly things, but he was really anxious to get that which the world can neither give nor take away.

I had many interesting conversations with James over the word of God. One afternoon I found him in great distress. After some little conversation we turned to 2 Tim. 1:12, and I read, "For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." I said, "Now, James, you see that the apostle Paul could commit his soul and his all to Jesus; why cannot you?"

He said, "I see all you say, and believe it too, but I don't feel that I am saved."

"James," said I, "trust Him first, and then your joy will come after. It is not our joy that saves us, it is Christ who is our Saviour. Faith in Him will bring peace to your heart." Little more was said, but I knelt down and prayed for him, and while praying I heard James saying, "Lord, I commit my soul to Thee: Lord, I commit my soul to Thee." As I rose from my knees James said, "I can trust Him now; He has saved me," and surely his beaming face indicated that the Lord had really revealed Himself to him. The joy that will never end had begun for the dear lad; he was now like the prodigal in the father's house, amid the joy and the mirth, when he had just tasted of the fatted calf. Happy portion! blessed place!

The following day I could not see him, but his sister told me that he had been praising the Lord all night. When I next saw him he said, "Oh, I can trust Him now. But I can praise Him best when nobody sees me." The dear lad's cup was full, and running over! I had many precious seasons with him after that, and witnessed the work of God deepening in his soul.

One morning, about six o'clock, there was a knock at my door. It was one of James's sisters. She said, while her poor heart failed, "Will you come and see my brother? he is very ill, and wants to see you." I went with her, and found him very weak and exhausted, sitting in an old arm-chair, for there was no bed in the house for James. He looked me in the face and said, "Oh, pray for me; I cannot pray for myself now, I am so weak."

I knelt by his side, and he said, "Oh, let me lean my head on your breast." I put my arm round him, and laid his head on my breast.

Then he said, "Oh, put me into that bed." So lifting up the feeble, spent body, and turning down the old, thin, ragged quilt, I laid the dear boy on the only bed in the house—the only bed amongst seven grown-up people, including the dying lad!

Having covered him with the quilt, I put my hand upon his cold brow, and said, "James, is Jesus precious to you?"

His mind wandered for a little, then again. I said, "Is Jesus precious to you, James?" His favorite phrase was, "Praise the Lord," but this time he just uttered one word, and that word was "Praise." He meant to say "Praise the Lord," but had not strength. His spirit had fled. He had gone to finish the sentence in the presence of the Lord.

I closed his eyes and covered him, and could not help inwardly saying, "Farewell, James; I will meet you again in fairer scenes than these."

Dear reader, suppose you were called into "eternity" just as you are, would it be with praise like James, or would you not rather tremble at the thought of meeting God? And well you might, if you are still in your sins. Would it be said of you as of one of old (Luke 12:20), "Thou fool"? Foolish enough, indeed; he had all his treasure here, and nothing for the future. What have you? Will you read the last verse of the third chapter of John's gospel, and ask yourself this question: Which half of the verse am I in? If in the first, "eternal life" is your portion; if in the last, the "wrath of God" abideth on you. Are you satisfied to remain there? Oh, come to Jesus, and, like James, "trust Him," and you will get his portion here, "peace with God," and the glory forever with the Lord! J. R.

## The Blasphemer's End

---

ABOUT two years ago, I was speaking about his soul to a man, who was working at the same place as myself, when he exclaimed, "If there is a God why does He I not strike me dead?"

"I will tell you the reason," I replied. "God knows that, if He were to cut you off ' in your sins, you would be cast into the depths of hell for eternity, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth—where there will be none to hush the awful ' wail of a soul tormented and damned for eternity— none to wipe away a tear. But God ' is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (2 Peter 3:9); 'God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.'" (1 Tim. 2:4.)

The man who uttered the above dreadful words continued to set God at defiance. But this boaster was soon cut off, for one day, while he was at work, he was struck on the head by a hammer, and died.

He had a grand funeral, and his fellow-workmen said of it, "It was very good."

"Ah! but what about his— soul for God has said, After death the judgment'? He may be dead,' but He is not done with.'" J. S—n.

## The Happy Schoolboy Going Home

---

ONE bright summer day we met a little boy of our acquaintance hurrying home from school; his face lighted up with joy and expectation as he danced along the street. He held a small memorandum book in his hand, at which he glanced ever and anon as he hastened on his way towards his home, not far distant. On his reaching us we said to him—

“You seem very happy to-day.”

“Yes,” he said, laughingly. “Why, I’m going home!”

“And what is that book in your hand, in which you seem so interested?” we inquired, half suspecting what it was.

“This?” he said, with a laugh, and tossing up the book in the air; “why it’s my bank-book!”

“What!” we said, “have you a bankbook?”

“Yes, of course,” he answered, laughing again. “I pay in my halfpennies, because father says, ‘Take care of the copper, the silver will take care of itself.’”

“Well, that’s right, and I hope you have a good balance at your bankers; I suppose you have, and it is that which makes you so happy this morning.”

“No, I have not,” he said. “I bought some pigeons the other day, and they have flown away, and I have very little left.”

“Your loss does not seem to trouble you much, just now.”

“Oh, no,” he said; “why should it? I’m going home, and am with my father, you know.”

As he said this off he danced, singing as he tripped along; and as we looked at the bright and gleesome boy we thought what a picture is this of what it is the privilege of a true Christian to be. Going home, that was the element of the boy’s happiness. And is not this true also of the Christian; is he not always moving from his school here towards his true home, the Father’s house above? And though here he may suffer much in common with others, from outward riches making themselves wings and flying away like the little boy’s pigeons, yet he has a treasure in heaven.

These divine certainties and satisfying realities, in the midst of all the uncertainties and unrealities of this passing life, cheer our hearts and put a new song into the mouth; they strengthen us, and quicken our footsteps by the way. And are they not revealed to us for this very purpose? As we live too much in the present and too little in the glorious future, we are often faint and cast down; we have not the child’s faith, which finds its chief joy, not in the school or playground, however beautifully situated or exciting its games, but in the fact, always true in the Christian’s lips, “I am going home.” And should not the fact— not only that we are going home, but that we have also even now such a Father as we have, and that He is ever loving us—make us bright and cheerful

through life's pilgrimage?

God in Christ is now our Father, and we have the evidence of the glorious fact in the Spirit of adoption dwelling in our hearts, enabling us to cry, "Abba, Father."

Believing all these things, how comely and right it is for the Christian to have, in a more exalted sense, the spirit of the schoolboy going home, and whatever his sorrows, trials, and losses here, still to say joyfully in faith, "I am going home; I am with my Father, and whatever I may be, wherever I may be, He is equal to all my needs, and can make me holy and happy in Himself, my present and everlasting portion, and by His grace make me so to abound in those fruits of righteousness and peace, which, while they glorify Him, fill me even now with something of His own satisfaction, blessedness, and joy."

W. P. B.

## Short Accounts

---

So seek to live as you would wish to die. Be ready for Christ's coming, at whatever moment He may come. It will be a sorry thing to be ashamed before Him at His coming: and that is a mournful death-bed the last hours of which are spent in making up the accounts of misspent hours, and in confessing to God a course of life to be deplored.

## Our Toll Bar

---

THERE it stood, as it had stood for ages past, supported by all the majesty of the British law, guarding the highway road to Edinburgh, a barrier against all who would travel along that road as free men, demanding alike from high and low, rich and poor, all who rode or drove, a lawful toll. No grace there, no mercy there; the rich man with his millions, and the poor man with his mites, alike had to meet that demand ere he could further travel along that road!

Pleasantly situated at the junction of four roads, approached by a hill from every side, and commanding a fine view of the surrounding country, Kenton Toll Bar appeared a formidable object against free traveling from every side. Its massive white pillars and five-barred gate plainly told forth that those who could not pay must not pass that way.

But we know of another barrier that stood in the way of many; a gate, so to speak, of twice five bars—even the two tables of stone with their twice five commandments, given by God to Moses and the children of Israel, commandments which demanded obedience alike from all, ere they could be permitted to enter into life.

The law, righteous and just as it is, seemed only to act as a barrier to man entering into eternal blessings; every demand it made on the sinner appeared only to show him more and more his inability to meet its requirements. It was a "ministry of death," a schoolmaster to teach and show us our ignorance; a mirror to manifest the wickedness of man's heart, and the righteousness of God's requirements. Oh! ye who think that the road to heaven lies in keeping those holy, God-given ten commandments, think of the words of Gal. 3:21, 22: "IF there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them That believe." God's well-beloved Son need not have died, if life could be gained by law. The law, holy, just, and good, was "weak through the flesh," and God, by the death of His Son, condemned sin in the flesh. God sent His Son, and through Him God brings poor lost man nigh to Himself!

But a change came! The good news began to spread through the neighborhood that the toll bar was to be abolished; and on November 1st, 1881, travelers might have been seen one after the other paying their fare and passing through as usual until the clock struck twelve! After that hour the road was free!—free to rich—free to poor! A lawful decree had been issued, and justly and rightly the barrier gate was opened, the toll bar was removed.

Just so with the greater barrier. It stood firm "until Christ," but at that solemn moment when the Lord of glory cried, with a loud voice, "It is finished," He made a way into the very "holiest of all," and every poor sinner who comes trusting only in the merits of His precious blood may enter in. Some fifteen hundred years had passed, and men had been trying—vainly trying—to approach God by law, but Christ opened the new and living way, and for the last eighteen hundred years many have rejoiced in finding that grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17.)

So, then, it is no more of works but of grace, even the grace of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I assure you the people for miles round received with delight the news of the barrier being removed from our country road.

Reader, what do you say to the infinite goodness of God for the open way made to God Himself by the death of His Son, and placed before each one of us? Let us each make sure that by faith in Christ we are traveling on the road to glory.

H Y P.

## He Is Our Peace

---

His hands, His feet, His side! Look and look again, poor troubled soul, at your once-crucified but now risen Saviour. He is our peace—He Himself. Behold the marks of accomplished redemption, and rejoice in your Redeemer. Look on Him; the sight of Him heals our sorrows.

## How Does God Love?

---

THE love of God may be viewed in three distinct aspects. First, the love of compassion; second, the love of complacency; and, third, the love of communion. Or, first, the love of God to the sinner; second, the love of God to the saint; and, third, the love of God to the saint who acts obediently.

First, God loves the sinner! Wondrous fact. And for the knowledge of this fact we are indebted to the New Testament. In the Old we find God dealing in mercy, doubtless; for how could He deal with any child of Adam, at any time, save on the ground of mercy? But in the Old Testament man was under trial—not yet treated as formally lost—and he had to learn, through God's varied ways, that his condition was utterly hopeless.

But if, in the Old Testament, the full character of man was not divulged, neither was that of God. Both are declared fully in the New—the total depravity of man—the absolute love of God.

"If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (2 Cor. 4:3); and also "God is love." (1 John 4.)

Take for the illustration of each of these facts the case of the prodigal—for therein the gospel is beautifully pictured. The condition of the man is "lost and dead." He had displayed enmity to his father, and had I gone as far as sin could take him. Brought to destitution, he repents, and, yet in misery, he returns to his father. Now, what was the result? What was the father's conduct towards him? He saw him—had compassion—ran—fell on his neck and kissed him! A more exquisite concurrence of guilt on the one hand and grace on the other was never painted. It is absolutely inimitable, but as absolutely true. The sinner—for such was the prodigal—comes to the Father in the confession of his irretrievable ruin; he is met in that condition by the richest expression of the Father's love. Words fail to describe the scene. Yet that scene is painted by the Master's hand in surpassing beauty, grand in its simplicity, fascinating in its accuracy, and surprising in its peculiarity. Oh! who but God Himself could thus delineate His own compassion?

That compassion, observe, was sovereign. There was naught in the prodigal to call it forth—it was spontaneous. It originated and had its source in the father's heart. It was not kindled, nor brought into existence by anything in the prodigal. Its secret is found in the three precious words, "God is love." That being so the effect is natural. Love takes its own course. And so, when we turn from illustration to doctrine, we find that "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins!" God loved us when we were dead in sins. Do you ask why?—how can this be? How can a holy God love those who are "dead in sins"? Can He love sin? Can He tolerate its faintest breath? Is He not pledged by that very holiness—by the fact that "God is light to judge it—to express His eternal abhorrence of it in the persons of those—men or angels—who have finally offended against Him? Yes, all perfectly true. But the reason of His love for the sinner is simply and only found in the fact that "God is love," and that is enough. It explains all His tender dealings with us. It reminds us that He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It settles the deepest and most perplexing soul-question that can be raised. Oh! when the poor guilty

soul discovers for the first time that, spite of all demerit, he is an object of God's love, he fears no more, he ventures, confides, rests, he is satisfied.

And, dear reader, if you have for years lived in darkness and misery, dreading the day when, perforce, you must meet your unknown God, let me persuade you that He is love, that He gave His Son to prove it, that He wishes your salvation, and that even you are welcome. For this love toward a guilty world is one of deep compassion.

Second, God loves the saint. Here we have the love of relationship, for the term saint, so unhappily misunderstood, simply means a child of God. The moment a soul believes in Christ he becomes a saint; he has not to wait until he reaches glory, or is enrolled in the calendar, but just when he becomes a true Christian he is a saint.

Hence we find epistles addressed to the "saints in Christ Jesus"—inhabitants of some city, performing daily the necessary duties of life. Whoever is set apart in Christ is a saint. It is the relationship into which faith brings the soul. A saint is a child of God, and every child of God is a saint. Let this fact be clearly grasped. What the conduct and marks of such should be we will consider presently. But when God takes up a prodigal He not only shows him compassion; His love goes further still, He invests him in a robe, gives him a ring and sandals. This investiture creates him a saint. The robe declares him justified; the ring betokens relationship; and the sandals for his feet indicate a new kind of walk. But thus clad, he is a saint. It is no question of the amount of his faith, nor of the height of his attainment. He must be a saint before he can think of attaining.

Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, the poor sinner enters upon a new relation with God. He stands forthwith in His favor. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart. He is a child of God. God finds pleasure in him by virtue, not necessarily of what affords pleasure in such an one, but of the fact of relationship.

A parent loves his child, has pleasure in him, finds a source of interest and delight in him that he can find in no other children. This relationship implies complacency. You might show compassion to the beggar boy who cringes at your door, but delight in him you have not. Why? Because he is not yours. Grant the relationship and you admit the pleasure. Hence, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Again, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children unto Himself by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will." It was His good pleasure that we should be in that relation. It is the love of complacency.

Third, God loves the obedient saint. This is the love that a father feels for a child who is dutiful, obedient, respectful—one to whom the father's will is supreme, and who, at all cost, seeks the accomplishment of this. The relation is just the same; but has a father equal confidence in all his children? Can he communicate with equal frankness the same secret to all? Nay, community of interest with the father is not the portion of all alike. It is not want of fatherly affection, nor is it partiality, but it is a question of confidence—of communion.

Take the case of Abraham and Lot. Both were saints, the love of relationship was alike in each instance, but God said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" And "that thing," notice, was the destruction of the city where Lot lived. Yet Lot was not the vessel of communication. Why

this preference? Because Abraham had community of thought with God, while Lot's interests lay in Sodom. Solemn truth! Now, obedience to God leads to this exalted privilege; disobedience, disqualifies and unfits the soul for it. How can there be community of thought or interest with God when His Spirit is grieved? Impossible. And, be assured, that the lack of spiritual intelligence in the word of God, so widely and sadly manifest, is attributable to lack of obedience. Meet a saint whose constant desire and effort is to obey God, to carry out His word, to test all His ways in the world or in the church by that word, and you find one who, in his measure, has communion with God. Obedience is always the test. "To obey is better than sacrifice." Oh! were this principle of unquestioning obedience but in graven in our souls, how different would be the state of the church of God! It is a day of great activity, but withal is it one of obedience? Activity may make much of the vessel outwardly, but obedience may and does humble and crush, yet this vessel alone is meet for the Master's use.

In Deut. 7 we find both the love of complacency and that of communion. Thus in verse 8, "The Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers,"—and, then in verse 12, "If ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them... He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee." The first is according to His oath to the fathers, and absolute; the second is contingent upon obedience, "if ye do." The same principle is found in John 14:21, "He that loveth me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him."

This is the love of communion. As Christians we all stand on one common platform, and in one blessed relationship. Thank God, that is settled, and perfect, and the heart can always turn back to it; but how deeply important to cultivate by obedience to Him a spirit of communion with Him, for our own joy, and His glory in us. J. W. S.

## Our Place—His Bosom!

---

NOT many months ago, a young married woman, who had been brought to God but a few months previously, came to her sister's to die. Her husband and parents were hard and unconverted, caring not for God, and despising, alas, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who loves and consoles His own.

As she was about to pass away, she turned her head upon the pillow, and resting her cheek on her hand, said, "I am in His bosom," and home to the Lord her spirit sped its way.

Blessed place—His bosom! His affection, His love!

The little child, when in pain or trouble, nestles its head on its mother's bosom. There is a comfort to old age when in its weakness the strong arm and loving touch of a friend be felt. "His bosom" is the place of all others for the saints of God.

Some seek for the sense of their place as Christians in glory, or in power; but for the hour of trial, or the moment of death, there is none like His bosom.

An angel might almost covet the pangs of death to find such a place of love as this.

## ALL RUBBED OUT

---

T AM sure you will like to listen to a story of a girl I once knew. She was not a dear child, as some little girls, but had a cross temper, and was not a happy little maiden. But the scripture says, "There is none righteous, no, not one...

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Even if a little child be spoken of, this solemn "all" includes it, as much as grown up persons. Little children are often cross and wilful, they do unkind things, and hit one another, and make faces at one another, and show in their ways that "all have sinned" as much as grown up persons show by their naughty ways that they have sinned. So when I tell you that little Rosie was not a good child, I do not wish you to think that you are any better than she was.

One day Rosie's mother told me that her little child was not at all a good girl, and as she did so Rosie sat in her chair frowning, because she did not like me to know all about her ways.

When we were quite alone we had a little talk about the Lord Jesus; how good He was when a little child on earth—how He grew up to be a man, and was kind to everyone, though people were wicked and cruel to Him; how He let men nail His hands and feet to the dreadful cross of wood, and how He hung there, but did not say an angry word—oh, no—but prayed to His Father for His murderers; how He rose up from the dead, and came out of the grave very soon after He was buried, and went back to heaven, where He still prays to His Father for His people who live in this wicked world. Little Rosie liked very much to hear about the holy and blessed Jesus, and she said, "Do you think Jesus can make me a good girl?"

"Yes," I said, "I am sure He can, and He will do so if you ask Him."

"I am a very wicked girl," she said; "so please will you ask Jesus for me?"

Then we both knelt down, and I prayed a little while to the Lord Jesus in heaven, and then I said—"You ask Him yourself, my child."

After a little silence, Rosie said—

"Do give me a new heart; do take my wicked heart away; forgive all my sins—let the blood You shed on the cross wash them away now. Amen."

Some time after this, as soon as she saw me, the little girl said—

"I know now all my sins are gone; Jesus did take them all away."

I told her I should like to know all she had to tell me, and she said, "If mother will help me I will tell you." The mother and little Rosie then said that one day there was a little sum written on the slate, and Rosie could not work it, but put the figures down all wrong. Then her mother crossed it up and down, and the little child was very sad, and began to cry—"Do rub it out; do take the sponge, and I am sure the sponge will rub it out."

So the mother took the sponge and rubbed the figures out; and the little girl looked so glad, and said, "Now, mother, you cannot see it, and I cannot see it, and no one can see it." The tears were dried, and she sat down for a little while, then she said—

"That is how Jesus rubbed out all my sins. I had done all wrong things—none right—and when I cried and asked Him to rub them out He did. Now He cannot see them, and the angels cannot see them, and I cannot and you cannot see them, and no one will see them any more." Then the little girl and her mother stopped.

Now I must tell you that since the Lord Jesus has spoken to the heart of little Rosie, she seeks to be a gentle and kind child. Her ways are quite different from what they were, and her life is changed. She is good and unselfish to her little brother, and tries to be obedient to her mother. And, dear children, you know that it is by such ways as these that we show that we belong to the Lord Jesus.

E. P.

## The Value of a Minute

---

"OH' that is not worth much," perhaps some child may say, "just one little minute! We get so very many of them, even in a day, that one cannot be of much use to anybody."

Let us suppose that you are walking along on the brink of a dangerous precipice—your foot suddenly slips, another minute and you must be dashed to pieces, but in that one precious minute (precious indeed to you) a strong hand seizes and saves you. Another minute and you would have lost your life; that one minute would have been salvation to you, so far as regards your natural life. Do you at all catch my meaning? It is the present time we have to do with, not the future, as it may or may not come it is God's solemn "now," not our "presently!—to-morrow!—another time." It is God's now that is the accepted time—the time for salvation to poor perishing sinners, whether young or old. If you have never yet been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, if you have never been placed by Him on safe ground forever, you are even now in far greater danger than one walking on the edge of a cliff. You can never be sure of seeing to-morrow's light. To-day, —God's now—the present moment is the only time given, so far as you can tell, for your soul's salvation.

A few years ago a railway train was rapidly speeding towards London, bearing a number of passengers. It stopped at a station, and some alighted there to change lines. While standing on the platform waiting for the train to move on, those who had just left it could soon see that something unusual was the matter. Porters looked frightened and ran hither and thither, and there was evidently some grave cause for excitement, but what the danger was no one could see. Suddenly the station-master rushed down between the lines with no hat on, his hair flying loosely about, and looking intensely anxious. Something he said to the engine-driver gave to his face the same look. In an instant he reversed the engine, and tried his hardest to back the train on to a siding. Slowly it retreated, too slowly it seemed to creep along, while all looked on, those who were still in the train peering anxiously from the windows, little knowing that their lives were in the greatest danger, as well as those of the onlookers. Part of the engine still projected over the line, when an object was plainly seen in the distance—an express train dashing along at headlong speed, carrying all before it. Will the other train escape? Oh, will it? Everyone now well knew the cause of the general terror. Not a word was spoken, all held their breath. A minute of time (probably less) saved it. The other train just drew back—only just—as the express dashed by, and a low groan of deep feeling and relief sounded down the platform. All had been face to face with death in one of its most terrible forms, and had escaped. How many, like the Samaritan leper in the gospels, thought of returning thanks for so marked a deliverance we cannot say, but God grant that it may have been the means of lasting good to some.

All of you, dear children will own that that minute was a truly valuable one, and God is still giving you many such, that your souls (not bodies alone) may be saved. God's word says that a solemn cry shall one day go forth—There shall "be no longer delay"! (Rev. 10:6.) Now the cry is—"Whosoever will may come" "To-day, if ye will, hear His voice."

E. G.

## Be of Good Courage

---

TO prefer the ridicule of schoolfellows to disobedience to the wish of a pious mother is good courage; to turn back from companions on their way to do evil, coward though you be called for so doing, is to be of good courage; to fear God where men despise Him is to be of good courage; yet all such acts as these those who love not God esteem as old-fashioned notions. But, dear young Christian friends, God says, "Be strong, and of good courage," and many a man has gone upon his knees alone to find the strength to do some trifling thing which shall evidence his fear of God.

The easiest way to go through the world is to sail with your colors flying. Perhaps the hoisting of the flag is after all the great difficulty. For a little while after you have run it up people will try to get you to haul it down, but after a while they will leave you alone.

## An Appeal

---

"AM so glad to hear you know the Lord, and are living for Him," said a preacher of the gospel to a young girl, not long since.

"It will be a star in your crown," she answered.

"I did not save you; the Lord did it all. He is our Saviour," replied he.

This young girl for some time had felt herself to be a lost sinner, needing a Saviour, and it was whilst this servant of God was unfolding the way of salvation through the finished work of Christ, and speaking, too, of God's wondrous love in giving Jesus to die for us, that she was enabled to trust Him with her whole heart.

Some time afterward the conversation related took place, and the preacher rejoiced to find the Lord had used him to carry the word of life to this immortal soul.

Dear young girls, do let one of yourselves beg of you to trust the Lord. If it gives such joy to a fellow creature when a sinner is saved, how much greater the joy of the Lord Himself when anyone of us just lays hold of Him, and of His promise—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out"! And what joy there is in the soul of the one who is saved Then life becomes a new thing—we have new things to live for: "To me to live is Christ," said St. Paul.

An unbeliever cannot live for the Lord, or please Him; but, having believed in Him, it is our greatest joy to love, serve, and follow Him, till He shall come and take us to be with Himself forever. N. N.

### Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

"Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him,"

LET us place ourselves once more in thought in the Holy City, about a year after the ascension of our Lord. Jerusalem is now full of the disciples of Christ; multitudes of men and women assemble constantly in Solomon's porch, a place which was perhaps counted sacred, as a relic of the old Temple; but if we were to inquire for the Christians in the city, we should be met only by looks of wonderment; the followers of Jesus of Nazareth did not yet bear that name. It is early, and the threefold blast of the priests' trumpets, as they called morning prayer, has but just died away, the smoke of the morning sacrifice is still lingering about the courts of the Temple, as we take our way through the narrow streets, meeting men of many nations and languages and varied dress. In whichever direction we walk, the same beautiful object fixes our eyes, for above the city of God rises the Temple,

"... a mountain of white marble, steeped

In light, like floating gold."

As the day advances we are aware that something unusual is taking place. A crowd is gathered near a building not far from the Temple courts. They speak in eager, indignant tones, and as we draw nearer we catch the word "blasphemy," often repeated.

If we ask the cause of this stir and excitement, we shall receive different answers. An Essene, as he gathers the flowing folds of his white robe more closely round him lest he be defiled by our touch, will tell us that the members of the Sanhedrin are met to-day in the council-chamber to try a Hellenist who has spoken against the Temple, and the law which Jehovah the God of Israel gave to His people. That white hall is the council-chamber, and there it will go hard with the one who has that day to answer for himself before the high priest and the judges. The high priest is of the sect of the Sadducees—they who say there is no resurrection. He will find no mercy at their hands. The accused does not belong to the holy city, there is something foreign about his speech and ways; but he was a good man; he did great wonders and miracles among the people, he cared for the poor and the widow. He spoke of Jesus of Nazareth, saying that He whom they crucified, liveth.

Can we not picture to ourselves the disciples of Jesus, saying, "The Lord told us so. He told us that we should be delivered up to the councils, and scourged in the synagogues. It is well. Let each of us be even as His apostles, who rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. 'It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord "'? And we can see the vehement gestures of many who, pointing to the glittering heights of the Temple, exclaim of the accused," He hath not ceased to speak blasphemous words against this holy place."

Within that council-chamber, the trial proceeds. The court is specially convened to try those who are accused of any offense against the law or the religious customs of the Jews. The high priest sits in the chief place, and around the hall, in a half-circle, are ranged the members of the court, chief priests, elders, lawyers and scribes, to the number of seventy, as judges.

Before them the Hellenist, Stephen, stands alone, confronted by those who have been brought forward as witnesses against him. His accusers charge him vehemently, and again we hear the words, "blasphemy," "this holy place," "the law;"—the accusation is summed up in one sentence: "We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."

Then, as the high priest puts the question, "Are these things so?" every eye in the assembly is fixed upon the prisoner. Surely, as he stands alone before them, the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon him, for his face seems, even to the eyes of those judges, like the face of an angel.

Let us watch their faces as he speaks. As he begins his narrative of God's dealings with His chosen people, and the familiar names "Abraham," "Joseph," "David," fall upon their ears, the assembly listens with a smile of approval. But the smile fades and the brows darken as, after speaking of the house which Solomon built for the God of Jacob, he goes on to say, "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Then, passing from those who were, in their rejection and their glory, but types of Christ, he speaks of how their fathers had persecuted the prophets, and slain those who spoke before of the coming of that righteous One, of whom they had been the betrayers and murderers, and they forget all else in their blind fury against the accused who has dared to accuse them—the chief priests and scribes, the teachers of the

nation—in such words as these, "Ye have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

The angel-light upon his face awes them no longer, and in bitter rage they gnash on him with their teeth.

But to Stephen, as, full of the Holy Ghost, he looks up steadfastly into heaven, a far different scene is opened. The council-chamber, the witnesses, the angry judges, all disappear, and in triumphant language he tells what has been revealed to him by that steadfast gaze.

"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

With loud cries the judges rush upon him, stopping their ears from hearing such blasphemous words; they drag him from the council-chamber and through the narrow, crowded streets until the place is reached outside the city gates where the blasphemer is to be stoned.

According to the law, those who have borne witness against him are to cast the first stones. Throwing off their long upper garments, they lay them at the feet of a young man, who was afterward to say—speaking to that same Jesus whom Stephen had just seen in the glory of God—"When the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." Yes, Saul the persecutor, who did so much evil to the Lord's saints in Jerusalem, is there. He has seen that heavenly light on Stephen's face; he has heard the words in which Christ's martyr gives up his spirit to the Lord Jesus; he has seen him kneel amid the cry and tumult and deadly volley of stones falling like hail around him, and, ere he calmly falls asleep, pray for his persecutors that the sin of his death be not laid to their charge.

That heavenly light which transfigured the martyr's face is to shine again before the eyes of Saul of Tarsus, but the time has not yet come. As the disciples of the Baptist took up his headless body and buried it, and went and told Jesus, so we imagine devout men gathering the mangled remains of the martyr Stephen, and, with great lamentation, bearing him upon an open bier to his burial. We see them lay him in some garden or cave, or rock-hewn sepulcher. We know not how far their spirits, little instructed as yet in what was subsequently revealed as to the blessedness of those who depart to be with Christ, can rejoice over the brother who has gone before them into the presence of the Lord, but we may be sure that He who once on the midnight sea came to His disciples in their storm-driven boat, saying to them those words of cheer, "It is I; be not afraid," is very near to His own as they stand around the grave of Stephen. Very near them, too, as they return to meet the full tide of persecution, which his death seems to roll in upon them.

Surely we may believe that there were many nameless martyrs in Jerusalem during that terrible time when Saul "made havoc of the church," entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison. We know, from his own lips, that he persecuted "unto the death" the disciples of Christ, besides punishing them in the synagogues and shutting them up in prison, and trying to compel them to blaspheme His Name; for he verily thought with himself, in this time of his ignorance and unbelief, that he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." He had not yet heard that voice from heaven which said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?.. I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest."

Bible Subjects: Reconciliation

WE read in Col. 1 of reconciliation, present, and to come. The believer is already reconciled to God (ver. 21); the things in heaven and earth will be (ver. 20).

In our natural state, as born into the world, we are in ourselves alienated from God; moreover, we were actively enemies to Him in our minds by our wicked works. Both in our fallen nature, which is sin, and in the activities of our sinful nature, we are at enmity to God. Indeed, the very seat of man's intellectual power is the citadel of his hostility to God—heart, will, understanding, all are opposed to God. Yet God Himself, in His infinite grace, has effected the reconciliation of His people to Himself: "You hath He reconciled." God has now brought us into friendship with Himself. The work of the cross of God's Son alone meets God's judgment of what we are in the flesh, and thereby God brings us into absolute reconciliation with Himself.

This reconciliation is the believer's present portion. The grand purpose of the gracious work of Christ for us on the cross will be seen in the day to come, when He will present us to God, holy, blameless, and irreproachable; but not even then will the reconciliation be more perfect than now! When we have no sinful nature left, and when our bodies will be bodies of glory like Christ's, the reconciliation will be no more absolute or perfect than now, though we have the flesh in us, and are constantly doing that which is blamable and reproachable; for the basis of the reconciliation is the death of Christ.

The future reconciliation refers to "all things... whether things in earth, or things in heaven." Christ's glory will be seen in His bringing close to God the things which were in themselves afar off. We but little consider the far-reaching value of the blood of Christ, and how that blood-shedding will bring to Him glory on glory. Observe, the things under the earth, the infernal things, will not be reconciled. Every knee shall bow to Christ Jesus the Lord; but, while all must submit to His authority, things in earth and in heaven only shall be reconciled to God. There is present reconciliation for sinners now through grace, but no future reconciliation for such as in this life refuse God's grace.

Again in Rom. 5 we read of reconciliation as present: —"Our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation" (ver. 11) (not atonement). We have now received. Well, indeed then, may we joy in God Himself, who is our God, the source of all our marvelous privileges and the fountain of our blessings. We joy in Him through our Lord Jesus Christ, for He has revealed God to us, and He has died to bring us to God, and through Him all the blessings flow to us.

If the death of God's Son has changed us over from being enemies to God, "much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (ver. 10). His death has effected the wondrous state of friendship which is ours by grace; and now that He who died for us lives for us, much more shall we be saved by His life. Christ is a mighty Saviour; He was crucified through weakness, but the weakness is now exchanged for power. Ours in a pilgrimage to heaven: we are failing and often sinning on the road; we need His power saving us every step of the way. Our souls, thank God, are saved, and our sins washed away by the blood of Jesus, but such frail and sinning creatures as we are stand in daily need of the might of the living Lord Jesus Christ to bring us all the journey along. And as surely as He has died for us, and as surely as He will present us before His God holy and blameless, so surely will He save us all the way homewards.

As we think of the wondrous favor into which the death of God's blessed Son has brought us, these words: "much more," relating to His saving power as the living Saviour; are exceedingly restful to our hearts. Let us seek a better acquaintance with our living Lord Jesus Christ; we may form some ideas of the value of His work, accomplished eighteen hundred years ago for us; but let every little apprehension given to us by the Holy Spirit of what that work is only lead us the more to delight in Himself, our living Lord.

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read John 3:13; Matt. 5:1-13; 11:28-30.)

PERHAPS some of you, dear children, may wonder why we have read the first of our verses, as it is not in the place where we are reading just now. The reason is, that we may remember who He is who spoke those beautiful words about the people who are "blessed" which you read afterward from our own gospel. You know that the Lord Jesus spoke those words to His disciples, as He sat on a hill, and taught them. He spoke to them about heaven. Have you ever thought how it was that the Lord Jesus could speak about that place? It was because He had been there. You could tell me all about your own home, because you know no other place so well. As the verse you read from the Gospel of John tells us, the Lord Jesus "came down from heaven."

You know why the blessed Son of God came all that long journey from. His bright borne on high down to this world, so dark and so spoiled by sin. It was because

"He had a secret, dear to Him,

Which no one else could tell—

The secret of His Father's love,

Which He knew, oh, so well!"

In order that He might, in His life and by His death, tell that wonderful secret in this sad world, He was quite willing to come and live and die here. It is wonderful to think that there should ever have been in this world where we live every day some one who did not belong to it as we do, though He was born here, and grew up in a poor home with other children. The Lord Jesus was always a Stranger here, for He had come from heaven, and so when He spoke of heaven He spoke of the place He knew best. While He was here, in a place where the men and women, and even the little children as soon as they were old enough to choose their own way, had gone quite away from God, the Lord Jesus learned how sorrowful a place the world is—how unlike heaven it is. It often makes you sad just for a moment, when you run along the road with your hoop, and pass close by a poor, pale child, whose limbs are so bent that he cannot walk. Just for a moment, when you notice that blind man at the crossing, with his good dog, who holds out a brass cup for a penny, you think how sad it must be never to see the beautiful light, and the trees, and the people; but those sad thoughts do not stay long.

It grieved the Lord Jesus in a way we cannot understand to see all the sadness which He saw day by day, for He knew that sin had done it all. In heaven there is no sadness, nor sighing, nor any pain or sickness; but here the Lord Jesus met sorrow at every turn, and He was called the Man of Sorrows; He was "acquainted with grief," for He knew it well.

But while He was teaching His disciples on the mountain, He spoke not so much of sorrow as of happiness. Nine times He said "blessed," and that word means happy. He told His disciples what it is to be really happy, and while He told them that the "meek" people, and the "merciful" people, and those who are "pure in heart" are "blessed," He spoke of a blessedness which He knew ' for the Lord Jesus was Himself just what He spoke of in those nine verses beginning with "blessed," which many of you know by heart.

Suppose you were to pick up a stick of hawthorn, and cut off all the prickles, and smooth away the knotty places—you might say, "Look, I have made this crooked old stick almost straight; what a nice stick it is!" But if anyone put a perfectly straight stick down beside yours, you would see at once that it was crooked after all. What would make your stick, with which you had taken such pains, so crooked? The straight stick which was put beside it? No, you must think again, and you will see that the straight stick did not make yours crooked, but only showed, by being so straight, how crooked your stick was.

So when we read these words of the Lord Jesus, when we hear that He calls those who are meek "blessed," we know at once that those words cannot mean us, for we are not meek. Only He could say, as He did say in those verses which we read last, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

You may try to be meek and gentle, because you know it is right, but it is just because you are not meek that you try to be so. The Lord Jesus always was meek; He never did anything just to please Himself, or because He had a right to do it. He who made everything and had a right to everything, was content with the very poorest things, if it was the will of God His Father. It is true of all the "blessed" things of which the Lord spoke—He was all of them; we are none of them.

Now let me hear you each repeat that beautiful verse which so many of you know so well; that verse in which the One who had not where to lay His head in this world yet calls to all who are weary, and bids them, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." We read these words of our Lord only in this gospel.

You all know what it is to be tired—even play tires one at last; but there is a worse way of being tired, which you know a little about even now; a sort of tiredness which comes much oftener, and lasts a much longer time as people grow older. There are few children who have not known what it is to be restless and unhappy, tired of themselves and of their own way, even when they had thought no way could be half so pleasant. This way of being tired needs the rest which only the Lord Jesus can give. He saw a great many people restless and miserable without knowing why; but He knew that it is sin that makes all the sorrow, and there were none of all the tired, sorrowful people around Him that day, to whom He would not have given rest, if only they would have come to Him.

Next time we shall read of one who had a very great trouble—a sore sickness which no doctor could cure, but who was cured at once when he came to the Lord. Remember, dear children, Jesus still says, to every one of you, "Come unto Me."

"COME unto Me, and rest,"

Jesus the Saviour cried;

Come, children, to His loving breast,

For none were there denied.

## God's Whosoever

---

IN the central and most densely-populated part of a Scottish city stands a large square, through which is the principal access to all the chief thoroughfares and business houses of the city. Crowded at all times, it is especially thronged on Saturday evenings, when to pass through it is almost an impossibility.

On such occasions may be seen, in one place, perched on a temporary platform, a temperance orator; in another a "cheap John," vending his wares; while street-singers, fruit-sellers, and such like, ply their trades on all sides. Perhaps in the midst of all this Babel a faithful few may be found proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to all who will give ear to their words!

One Saturday evening a young man, who was moving along with the crowd, carelessly took his stand quite close to one of these evangelists. The words fell unheeded for a time upon his ear, but unconsciously he pressed closer, and soon began to listen, as he had never listened to anything before. Presently a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a quiet voice asked the question, "Are you saved?"

Never before had the thought that he was not saved crossed this young man's mind. But still he evaded the question, and answered the gentleman who spoke to him shortly, bidding him mind his own business.

After some argument they separated, the young man going straight to his lodgings—rather an unusual proceeding for him—but the fact was he was fully convicted of sin, and of his lost state before God. To use his own words, "To say my state was wretched and miserable in the extreme does not half express it, for words could never tell the misery And anguish of soul through which I then passed." He shunned his old companions and society, and every evening found him in the square, on the look-out for the gentleman who had spoken to him. Not until the following Saturday did he appear, when again he began to tell the story of the cross of Christ, trusting that, by God's grace, some in the crowd might turn and hear the words of life.

Little did the evangelist think that there was one hanging on his every word, listening as for life or death. Moved by the Spirit, he spoke with power from those wondrous words which tell the love of God to perishing men—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

His preaching over, he wended his way to one of the quieter streets on the south side, unaware that his every step and movement was followed, until, when about to enter his own house, a hand was laid upon his arm. He at once recognized the young man to whom he had spoken the previous Saturday evening.

"Oh, sir! I can answer your question now," he cried, earnestly. "I am not saved. Oh, tell me how I can be saved!"

Long did the two men traverse the deserted street, conversing upon that momentous subject; but not at once could the young man grasp the blessed truth of God's salvation. At last they had to part, the gentleman saying, as he shook the young man's hand, "can only repeat my text—' God so loved the world... '—and bid you, like the Israelites of old, look and live."

"But am I really one of God's whosoever?" asked the young man.

"Certainly, all are included," was the answer.

They parted, and the young man went to bed, but not to sleep. He had written upon the wall, of his room that text which had as yet only brought him deep conviction of sin.

He turned his back, and tried to get it out of sight, but still the words rang in his ears.

He tried to rub them out; but no, he had written them too deeply. He rose for a sponge to wash them away, but they could not thus be effaced.

A thought struck him; again he rose, and searched in his box for a Bible. He turned to John 3:16. There were the same words staring him in the face. He fell on his knees, and cried like the storm-tossed disciples, "'Lord, save me; I perish.' I am one of Thy whosoever,' save me!"

In the silence of that early morning he heard the voice of Jesus saying to his soul, "Peace, be still."

Reader, you are one of God's whosoevers: ask yourself which.

"WHOSOEVER believeth on the Son hath life:

"WHOSOEVER believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." K. R.

## The Rich Lady Made Rich

---

IN one of the beautiful old baronial castles among the mountains and lakes of Switzerland, there lived some years ago a lady whose history was told me in respectful terms by one of her faithful old servants.

It appears that the Baron de P., not content with the old family chateau, had built a modern mansion, in which he surrounded himself and his wife with all that the lust of the eye and the pride of life could furnish. But he died, and his childless widow was left alone to enjoy the fruit of his labor, and still to use for others that which she possessed. It was the testimony of all around her that her one desire was to make others happy. The poor, friends, servants, all shared her thoughtful care. She might have said with Job (ch. 29:11-12), "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." And yet if this dear lady could now speak to us from the presence of her Saviour, she would say, "I may have thought of others, but I myself was a Christless soul. I had not that faith without which it is impossible to please God. I was but pleasing myself; I had no other motive or object."

But days of broken health came. A paralytic seizure laid this amiable lady low. She did not know the God of all grace whose hand was thus preparing her for blessing. Still not a murmur escaped her lips. Servants and friends vied with one another in efforts for her ease and comfort, but in vain.

Title, fortune, favor, all were worthless now. Her mind became enfeebled; she thought that she had lost her fortune, and in the most touching way would thank her servants for ministering to her need, fancying that to them she was indebted for everything. In days of health she had been known as having a very keen appreciation of good things to eat and drink. But in the progress of her malady all sense of taste was entirely removed. This added infirmity only drew forth the quiet remark, "God has taken everything from me now."

The servant who told the story, her own special attendant, had long been a happy child of God, and was earnestly looking to the Lord to reveal Himself to this precious soul. And His time came. One day, watching by the couch of her mistress, how rejoiced she was to hear the request to be told a verse in the Bible which speaks of being saved by faith in Christ alone. The Holy Spirit had surely been working in her soul a sense of her need. Gladly her faithful maid repeated, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

"Oh," she replied, "that is enough; I am the sinner, and Jesus is my Saviour."

Three weeks more of weakness and suffering, but of unclouded peace and joy, and she passed away to be forever with Him who had loved her and given Himself for her, and who had sought her to be, if not long for a witness to Him here on earth, a witness throughout the ages to come, to the exceeding riches of the grace of God, in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

“Wisdom is a defense (or 'shadow,' marginal reading), and money is a defense; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.”

(Eccl. 7:12.) S. C.

BE content to wade through the waters betwixt you and glory with Christ, holding His hand fast, for He knoweth all the fords you may sink under; you cannot drown being in His company.—Extracted.

## Not Know!

---

GOD is everything for those who believe on His name. Reader, is He everything to you? I want to start with that question I want you to think of it. If you can say "yes" to it, then you will understand my story.

Some time ago a poor woman whom I know well, was taught of God that if He was not everything to her she had a very poor prospect. She could not enjoy this life—she was too much afflicted for that.

Unable to do more than just creep about her house, there was no chance of her seeing much of what her neighbors called pleasure, and it was this which at first led her to think the more of what comes after this life. There is an "after death," though some people would be glad to think there was not. Mrs. R. found that of all things in this life, she most needed a Saviour—a Saviour who could save her from the judgment that comes after death.

After she found that she needed a Saviour, it was not long before she knew that "He is nigh to all them that call upon Him," and in the mercy of God she obtained forgiveness of sins and rest of soul in Him. Her neighbors would not believe her when she spoke of being ready to go to be with Christ. One day, when I called to read to her, I found her greatly agitated.

"I'm not afraid to die—no! that I ain't," said she. "I knows my precious Saviour would take me to heaven. I'm a poor, failing creature, often grieving Him, but I do know that. It's nothing that I am—I'm nothing—nothing at all; but God is everything.

They tells me you can't know you are saved and going to glory, and I says to 'em, ' Not know! what did the Lord Jesus Christ die for then? 'Them as trust Him do know, and they don't because they don't know what it is to go to Him. I knows by myself. I didn't know anything about it once, and in all my trials and troubles I had no loving God that I could go to. I might say, 'please God,' and ' thank God,' but it did not come from my heart then. No, it's faith that does it—that's what 'tis, faith in Christ."

Now as I heard Mrs. R. say this, I felt that her simple words might perhaps touch a heart somewhere, who would be glad to know that all was settled for eternity for God's people, and that nothing is uncertain—nothing dark. There is enough of uncertainty and darkness here, but as to "after death," all is brightness and certainty.

Some winters ago I was staying at a house which stands at the foot of a hill; on the hill-top are two lamps, and nearly every afternoon at about four o'clock these lamps were lighted. From the windows of our sitting room I used to watch very often for their "bright light to dart up amongst the trees. One evening as I was looking at them two verses came so forcibly to my mind that ever after that night they seemed so connected that I never saw the lamps lit but these verses came to mind, and they were the greatest comfort and help to me.

I give you the two bright lights, dear reader; they are these—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:4.) And "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:30)

All this blessedness is for the one who heareth and believeth.

L. T.

## Great Grace

---

A FEW weeks ago, a poor woman, a stranger to me, came to the door, and said—

“Will you come and see a poor old woman who is dying? We think someone ought to read and talk to her, for she is not ready to die.”

Going at once, I found her in very great agony of body, but in deeper anxiety of soul. I said—

“You are in great pain.”

“O ma'am," she groaned, "I be in great pain, but I baint fit to stand before my Maker. I be such a wicked woman, I baint fit to die, no, I baint fit to die.”

She sobbed very bitterly, crying for God to have mercy upon her. Truly, she was a sad sight. Flushed cheeks and wasted body, in great weakness and agony—convicted of sin, and feeling utterly lost.

Praising the Lord for letting her thus see that she was indeed a lost sinner, I delivered His message that Christ came on purpose to seek and to save even her, for He came to seek and to save that which was LOST. At first it seemed too good to be true, too great to be believed, that God would then, at that moment, pardon all her many black sins, and make her His own child, all that He sought from her being that she should give herself, in all her sinfulness, to Him, and that she should believe His word.

I pointed her to the glorious assurance that the Lord Jesus will in no wise cast out any who come unto Him.

“Then," she cried, "I will come, I do come! Lord,' I will believe. Blessed Lord, pardon my poor soul and take me to be with Thee.”

She closed her eyes, and I thought she had fallen asleep in her weariness, all was so still. I softly repeated John 3:16, and she opened her eyes, but oh! such a change! The calm after the storm, for the storm was over. She said—

“I believe it all, and that He has forgiven even a poor wicked creature like me.”

Showing her how God has by one offering "perfected forever them that are sanctified," I left her.

Upon calling again the next day, I found her fully and simply resting in the finished work of Christ—"trusting Jesus, that was all." Her daughter told me that after I left on the previous day, she summoned the people of the house to her room, and told them how God had pardoned all her sins, and that she had given herself into the Lord's hands. She was full of joy, and said to me—

“Oh, my dear lady, I can't, I can't praise my dear Lord enough; how shall I praise Him? Oh, it is too much! I be so happy and I be so full, and I do want to thank Him more, but I baint able, I am so full my whole self.”

The following day I found her rejoicing more and more.

"Oh," she said, "I can never tell 'ee how happy I be; I can't praise Him eno'. Only to think what a wicked sinner I have been, and that for sixty years I have been serving the devil; and oh, it was such misery!

"Once I thought it was all right with me, for when my poor old father died, he would have a dear lady come to visit him, just like you, you know, my dear, and he said—

"Do please pray with her' (that was me). Go down on your knees, Sarah,' said he to me, and ask God to forgive you, and don't get up till He does.'

"My poor father did sit right up in bed, although he was dying, and he cried to God to have mercy on me. I was on my knees a long, long time, and I did so cry, oh, such tears! And a strange hope came to me, and I did think I was all right; so I told my father, and he said—

"I can die happy now, for the last one has come in.'

"After we laid him in the grave, I came home to my children—for I had a lot of little ones—and I told my husband all about it. But the boys came home and worried me, and what with work and the things of this world, I soon went back to my old ways worse than before, and I have never been in the house of God since, or anywhere else where I could get any good. But oh, my dear lady, when I be come for to die, I felt what an awful sinner I was! Oh, to think that He is so good—oh, it is too much!" and with sobs and tears of joy she fell asleep.

When she opened her eyes, she said"—

And my husband is changed too; the last two days he is quite different. This morning he came in and said—

"Mother, I couldn't sleep for thinking of you.'

I said, Father, you must not trouble any more about me; think of Him who has done so much for me. You know, father, I be His now.'

"But, Sarah,' he said, 'you know how wicked you have been and what bad things you have done.'

"I said, ' Oh, father, don't 'ee bring all that up to me now; for my blessed Saviour's sake it has all been forgiven me, and you must forgive me too.'

"Oh, my dear lady, he is changing, he spoke softer to me; and only think, the Lord will save him too, I do believe He will, don't you, ma'am?"

I said, "I know He will, for we have all been praying for him, and the Lord says, If ye ask anything, believing in My Name, it shall be done."

Oh," she said," it is too much! if I could only get up, I would tell all the people round what He has done for me."

As she lingered, she said—

"My blessed Saviour, do open my eyes. I can see more and more every day; I can see it all now. I haven't got one sin left on me, Thou didst bear them all on the cross for me, and I am so happy-just waiting for Thee to call me."

I asked whether there was anything she wanted, but her answer was always the same—

"Only my dear Saviour to take me home. I do want to 'go, I don't want anybody to tell me anything about the world, I only want to hear about Him, my Saviour."

I told her I was going away for a few days, but if we did not meet again on earth we should meet in heaven. She did not like saying good-bye, and said, wistfully—

"I did think your face would have been the last I should see;" but added, with such a bright smile, "never mind, I will be looking out for you, and won't it be joy to meet!"

And so we parted, but the Lord spared us to meet again, and four days later, quietly she passed into His presence, sixty-three years in the body, and yet only three weeks and one day old.

The father and daughter are both rejoicing now in the pardoning love of God to sinners. EY. B.

To be crucified to the world is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be: how heavenly a thing is it to be deaf and dead to this world's sweetest music!—Extracted.

## The Child and It's Toy

---

SHE would not go to bed without it, and on the nurse attempting to take it from her she burst into a storm of grief, and would not be pacified or settle down to rest until she had it in her possession again. A few minutes afterward, however, she was found quiet, fast asleep, the little object of her most ardent desire loosed from the passionate grasp of her little fingers, and, carelessly cast aside as a thing in which she found no pleasure. And in our eager and importunate grasping after certain things, which to us for a time appear to be so indispensable, but which to the eye of God must often be vain and small indeed, how often do we fill ourselves with the most passionate sorrow, rebel against God, and while dishonoring His wisdom and love, rob ourselves at the same time of our true happiness and peace! And yet how frequently, when the things that we have thus so earnestly pursued, at the risk of so much discomfort and loss, become ours, like fickle and unreasoning children we cast them away from us, having proved that, after all our anxiety to possess them, they have but little or no power to minister to our real wants or to realize our anticipated joys! And should not this sinful perverseness of spirit teach us increasingly to distrust ourselves, to moderate our desires, and to seek and ask for everything in submission to the will of our Father in heaven? W. P. B.

## About Sin and Sinning

---

MEN look at the manner of sinning rather than at the sin itself, and think far less of a sin done in a quiet, respectable kind of way than of the same sin wrought in a gross and glaring manner. A point blank lie is considered very shocking; but deception, politely accomplished, is not even regarded as bad taste. A cultivated and refined person sins in a less rude manner than a savage; but water is water, whether hot or cold, salt or sweet. God does not regard sin as less sin because of the way in which it is brought forth; sins are wicked works, whether politely dressed or in their naked hideousness.

## Eternity in Relation to God and Man

---

"ETERNITY" is mentioned once only in the Scriptures, though there are many words that are equivalent to it—that is, which mean the same thing—such as "eternal," "everlasting," "which was, which is, and which is to come," "the ages of ages," and so forth.

In Isa. 57:15 we find the word—"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." Here is the eternity and holiness of God's being presented. He inhabits eternity; His name is Holy. Such is God, and such is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of all who believe in Him.

Beloved reader, do you know this God, the God of the Bible, as your God? You have heard of Him with the outward ear, but do you know Him in the depths of your soul? Does your heart know rest and joy in God Himself? If not, the word is, "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee," (Job 22:21.)

It is not in the mysteries of science that you are invited to search, in order to find out Him, for "who by searching can find out God?" but you are invited to behold, with the eye of faith, the God of love and truth revealed in Jesus Christ, God's well-beloved Son. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18); "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27); "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person," (Heb. 1:3); "The image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). So that Christ when on earth could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Blessed revelation of God to sinful man, a way surely that secures his eternal blessing, unless it be deliberately rejected.

But that word "eternity," how it swells with importance as we think of it. Eternity! Let my soul dwell upon its awful significance, not only in its relation to God, but in its relation to me and to my fellow-man.

"Time is short," and our life is but "a vapor," "a tale that is told," when past, and yet in this life our eternal whereabouts is determined, Tremendous are the issues of our life. Mad folly that would trifle with the awful reality of eternity.

"On trifles light as air" are men feeding, when it is written for their instruction, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36, 37.)

Eternity! I was in the city of Chicago some time ago, and much moved in spirit by the open sin, the bold rejection of God and His word, the determination to become rich, and to enjoy the present at the expense of the future, that I saw on every hand; and while there, the reality of eternity pressed upon me perhaps as never before. I thought much of eternity, and the masses of human beings rushing on to eternity, regardless of what was before them. Oh, for some way to reach them! For a

voice as loud as thunder to make them hear, and to turn them to the shelter from the impending judgment.

"Eternity! What is it for me, what is it for my fellow-men?" thought I. "Could I measure it? No. Could I comprehend it? No. But I can, must, and shall live it."

As I thought of eternity and its unmeasured and unmeasurable ages, it came to me in this way: Could I take the leaves of every tree in the wide world, and count a hundred years for every leaf; could I take the grains of sand in the deserts and upon the oceans' shores, and count a thousand years for every grain; could I take the drops of water that make up the streams and rivers and seas and oceans, and count a million years for every drop; could I take the particles of air in infinite space, and count a billion years for every particle, and roughly casting up these enormous figures, my sum, when completed, would but give me eternity's breaking morn! O eternity, eternity, eternity!

And you and I, beloved reader, have to spend it; and the question forces itself upon us, Where will we spend eternity?

Sit down, sit down, beloved friend, and face the fact, if you have never faced it before; close your ears to Satan's lies, to man's false reasoning, to his "philosophy and vain conceit"; close your eyes, put your face in your hands upon your knees, and ask yourself the solemn question, Where shall I spend eternity? Will it be an eternity with God and Christ, and the redeemed, in the holy and bright heavens above, or will it be in the "outer darkness," where light and hope can never come?

If it is with God and Christ, and the redeemed, you must be able to say from the depths of your moral being, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen." (Rev. 1:5, 6.) E. A.

GLAD may your soul be, even to walk in the fiery furnace, with one like unto the Son of Man, who is also the Son of God. Courage up your heart; when you tire, He will bear both you and your burden.— Extracted.

## Hosanna!

---

HOSANNA! "Save now," or, "Send now prosperity!" was a triumphal cry, used in the religious services of the Jews when our Lord was on earth. It was specially addressed to God on great feast-days; the priests chanting certain psalms, and the people responding with loud hosannas, the children joining in the shout, and while so doing all waving branches of the palm and willow. On "the last day, that great day of the feast" (John 7:37) of Tabernacles, throngs of people crowded the courts of the temple, and made processions round the altar with great shoutings of hosanna, and weavings of entwined branches of willow; myrtle, and palm. We can form but a feeble idea of the joyful scenes that took place in the glorious temple of God in Jerusalem, and how the hosannas and hallelujahs of thousands rang through its beautiful courts, and echoed down the streets of the city.

In the 118th Psalm, at the commencement of verse 25, is the original of the word hosanna—hosiah-na: save now. The whole of the verse runs thus: "Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity." To read the whole of the psalm is to see at once how surely it speaks of our blessed Lord Jesus. He is "the stone which the builders refused" (verse 22); and we know how He Himself asked the chief priests and the elders of the people, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" (Matt. 21:42.)

The day before Jesus asked this question in the temple, He had come to Jerusalem, as the prophet so many years previously had foretold: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass" (verse 3). The meek and lowly Jesus thus rode into Zion with a very great multitude around Him, and some spread their garments on the road, while others cut down branches of trees, and strewed them in the way. From before and behind Him arose the triumphal cry from thousands of voices, "Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' (See Psa. 118:26.) Hosanna in the highest." They rejoiced greatly. (Zech. 9:9.) Well did those multitudes know these words, for they had again and again cried them aloud in their feast-day services. Now He, of whom the psalmist wrote, Zion's King, was in their midst.

The whole city was stirred, and 'we can well picture to ourselves the crowded streets and house-tops filled with people, all saying, as the joyful procession moved along, "Who is this?" and we can hear the multitudes answer, "This is Jesus, the Prophet of Galilee."

So He entered the temple, the just and lowly Lord. Immediately, He cast out those who sold doves and changed money there: these men were robbers of the country people and the poor. They used the very offerings of Jehovah's worshippers as a means to enrich themselves. He cleansed that sacred building and its courts from these who had turned Jehovah's house, the house of prayer, into a den of thieves. "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever." (Psa. 93:5.)

His fame that day reached to the ends of Jerusalem. The blind and the lame heard the hosannas; they groped or dragged themselves into the temple, and He healed them. Zion's King in grace allowed not sin or suffering a place in the house of prayer. The chief priests, vexed and angry, could do nothing; the temple, as the city, rang with hosannas to Jesus—"Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity."

Children had followed Jesus into the temple. On the feast-days they had joined with their parents in loud hosannas, now they crowded around Jesus and cried aloud to Him, "Hosanna to the Son of David!

See them all looking up into His face! Yes, Jesus loves little children. He loves to have the dear little ones look up to Him; He is love. He welcomed their praise; He is so gentle. May be, they did not understand all that their words meant; but Jesus listened to them.

The priests were much annoyed to hear the children call Jesus the Son of David in the temple, and say to Him, " Save now; send now prosperity !" Who but He can save? Who but He shall send us prosperity? To Him we will cry, Hosanna. Yes! Hosanna to Jesus! The priests might try to hush the children's voices. Very displeased they might be, and indeed, we can see them bidding the little ones not to make so much of Jesus. But, children, you cannot make too much of our blessed Saviour, for He died for us, and He loves little children. So sing hosanna to Him. It was of no use putting up the finger to the children, and saying, "Hush!" for cry aloud hosanna to Jesus, they would.

Really, one could almost wish to be a child again for an hour, were it possible, to stand among a multitude of boys and girls who love Jesus, and who all sing from their heart of hearts His praise. But a brighter and sweeter day is near! All who love the dear Saviour shall stand about Him in heaven; all shall look into His face and sing His praise. Thousands and thousands shall gather around Him, and multitudes of dear little children shall sing "Glory, glory, glory!" Oh, how happy that day will be!

It was in vain to try to hush the children's hosannas in the temple, and at length the chief priests and scribes came to Jesus and said, "Hearest Thou what these say?" "These," that means the children; as if they were so noisy and foolish, yes, so wrong in praising Jesus in the Temple of God. Of course the Lord heard what they said! He hears every word we say. He hears in heaven what you whisper in mother's ear; yes, what you whisper in your heart for mother not to hear! And He hears the children's praises: He loves to hear them. "Yes," said He to the priests.

And then the Lord asked them if they had never read this text: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise" (ver. 16), and this means very little ones, too young to read, but not too young to love; and He left the priests to search their Scriptures. The poor priests and scribes would not praise Jesus; they did not love Him.

God grant that our dear little readers, and such as are too little to read themselves and who are read to—the very small boys and girls, may every one sing the praises of Jesus here, and also in heaven, In the beautiful city of God, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple. (Rev. 21:22.) There no proud chief priests and scribes shall say "Hush" to the children's praises; there the songs of praise shall never, never end; there the blessed Jesus who died for us shall never, never, be pained, nor weep over the hardness of men's hearts; but all shall see His smile of love.

Come, children, one and all, crowd around Jesus the Saviour; cry aloud to Him, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!"

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 8:1-5; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-17.)

YOU have read three accounts, dear children, of a poor sick man who met the Lord Jesus as He came down from the hill where He had been speaking many wonderful words about the kingdom of heaven, and about God His Father.

What was the matter with this man, and why does he fall on his face before the Lord Jesus, and speak to Him so earnestly, while all the people, who had been pressing round so closely before, draw back and seem afraid lest even his dress should touch them?

I think you know that it was a very terrible thing to be a leper, and that was what this poor man was when he came to Jesus. The people knew he was a leper; they knew that he had a dreadful sickness which none of the doctors in Galilee could cure, and they knew that God had forbidden them to come near him. A leper, as he passed along the road, had to cry out with a sad and bitter cry, and when anyone saw him coming and heard the cry, "Unclean, unclean," he got away as fast as he could, or passed by on the other side. Lepers were the most lonely people in all the country. Think what it must have been to see everyone run away from you, and for the mothers to take their little children in their arms as you came in sight and say to them, "No, he is a leper; you must never go near lepers." We can hardly tell how dreadful it must have been.

Many a time that poor leper had longed to be well, to get rid of his sore disease, but it was of no use, he could not make himself even better; no one could cure him, and there seemed no hope of help or comfort for him, until that day which changed his whole life, the day when he saw the Lord Jesus with so many people following him, coming down the hillside on the road to the city of Capernaum.

Perhaps he felt afraid at first to speak to the Lord, when there were so many people with Him, for he was "full of leprosy," and he well knew that not one face in all the crowd of his fellow men would look kindly at him, but that all would shrink away in fear and horror. Yet he knew something about the Lord Jesus which made him not afraid to press in among them all, that he might get near Him and say one word to Him, and so he came and kneeled down before Him, and said those few words.

What were they?

St. Matthew, and St. Mark, and St. Luke, all tell us in their gospels what the cry of that poor leper to the Lord Jesus was, so that we know his very words.

"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

No one could ever care so much about people who were sick and sad, and lonely and helpless, as the Lord Jesus, but the poor leper did not know this. Then why did he come to Him?

It was because he knew that He was not like any of the doctors who could cure other people with their medicines and ointments, but who could never do a man "full of leprosy" any good. He knew

that the Lord could make him "clean," that is, quite well from his dreadful disease. But he was not sure whether He was willing to use His power to heal a poor leper, and so he said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

I know a child who once said, "I know the Lord can save me, but I don't know whether He will." This was like the leper, was it not?

What a beautiful thing we read in the gospel by Mark as to what the Son of God felt when He saw this poor man and heard his cry! He was "moved with compassion," and at once His gracious answer came.

How glad the leper must have been when, "as soon as he had spoken," he heard the Lord say, "I will; be thou clean." The very next thing we read is, "immediately his leprosy was cleansed." What had the Lord Jesus done? He had "put forth His hand, and touched" that poor leper.

No one else dared do this, but the Lord could, by the touch of His blessed hand only, send away the dreadful disease; it could have no power to hurt Him; and "immediately" what all the doctors in the world could not do, was done.

Dear children, it was a real thing to that leper, on the road to Capernaum, to cry to the Lord Jesus and to know that his cry was heard. He received an answer of healing at once, and he was so filled with wonder and joy that he could not help telling what the Lord, who had compassion on him, had done for him. Wherever he went he told his story, and the people who had been afraid to come near him, now came round to listen to his words and to look at him, and then multitudes came to the Lord Jesus to hear Him, and to be healed of their sicknesses, for the leper had told them that he had found One who could make them well, and who was more willing to cure them than they were to ask Him.

How well it is for us to know that we, too, can cry to the Lord Jesus. We can tell Him all about our sore disease—our sin, and ask Him to touch us and heal us, but we must never doubt His being willing to save us; we must never say, like the child of whom I told you, "I know the Lord can save me, but I am not sure that He will;" for He has given His own life to save us, and He has said we may come to Him as that leper came, just as we are, and He has promised that He will never send away one who comes.

## A Servant of the Lord Jesus

---

A DEAR young friend has sent us an account of her Sunday-school teacher; may it be blessed to our readers. Polly says: " The little story which I am about to write is of a loving servant of the Lord Jesus. She was my Sunday-school teacher, and a very loving one, too. It was her earnest desire to lead us children to the feet of Jesus. She was very weak, and suffered very much. She gradually became weaker and weaker, until at last she was no longer able to come to school. In all her sufferings she was always very patient. It troubled us greatly when she was at last removed to the hospital, from which she never returned, as she did not recover. She did not even seem to wish to get better; she said she was ready to submit to whatever the Lord wished. We afterward heard she was as sunshine in the hospital ward, speaking loving words of comfort to all that came in her way. It was a sorrowful funeral—most of the school followed—and yet our sorrow was mingled with joy to think that she had gone to be with the Lord, where she would be happy forever, and all of us who have our robes made white in the precious blood of Jesus shall go to be with Him, never more to part. And now I would conclude my little story with the wish that all who read it would try and follow her example, and be a comfort to all those around them, by first coming to the feet of Jesus, and having their sins washed away in His own most precious blood."

I had a loving teacher once,  
But now she lives in heaven;  
She loved the blessed Saviour's name;  
Her sins were all forgiven.  
She told us children earnestly  
Of the kind Saviour's love;  
She said she wished to meet us all  
In the bright world above.  
Her name is cherished here below,  
Because we loved her so,  
But none could fret, because we knew  
That she to heaven would go.  
And, oh that all might anxious be  
To have their sins forgiven,  
For, oh! it would so happy be

To meet with her in heaven.

P. S.

## I Have a Pass! Have You?

---

THE other day, when at a railway station in a large city, I met a promising youth, who was about to join the train on his way to school for his last term. I was informed that he was the son of godly parents, and the subject of many prayers. When we had taken our seats, in answer to the question whether he knew the Lord Jesus, he frankly replied, "I have heard people speak of Him many times."

"The Lord said when He was on earth, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' (John 17:3.) "How is it with you as to this life eternal?" I asked.

As he made no reply, I pleaded with him on the solemnity of his condition, as one nursed and cradled in the letter of the word, yet still living "without Christ," "having no hope, and without God in the world." Then, changing the subject, said, "Do you come regularly to school by this train?"

"Yes," he replied, putting his hand into his pocket, "I have a pass,"

"Just so, and your pass avails to the end of the year; but have you a pass which avails for eternity? I will show you my pass. It reads thus:— Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' (John 5:24) Your pass avails but for the short journey between these two stations G. and C., but mine from earth to heaven, from death to life, from darkness to light, from condemnation and banishment to no condemnation and no separation."

I feel deeply concerned for my dear young readers who, like this youth, are just ready for stepping out on to the threshold of life, and are full of the prospects of a bright future of prosperity, but who, like him, leave out of their calculations the welfare of, the immortal soul, and are content that those who so dearly love and care for them should alone be the possessors of the choicest of all blessings. It is not enough to be brought up piously; it will not save you having your parents saved; their Christianity is not your having Christ! Knowing about a person is not knowing the person himself. Knowing all about the Bible is not the knowledge of God.

I have a little girl at home who is naturally shy in the presence of strangers. One day a friend knocked at the door, and a strange face appearing in the doorway, the little child immediately retreated into the corner out of the way. And why? Was there anything displeasing in the strange face? No; but she did not know him. So long as you remain a stranger to the Lord you will shun not only the Lord's presence, but the company of His people. Had the little child known that stranger as I did, she could not have helped loving him, and it was not long before she did get 'to know him, and the result was, the shyness immediately disappeared, and she might have been seen nestling on his knee.

How can I get to know the Lord, do you say? By believing. His word. How do I know that that ice will bear me? By trusting my whole weight upon it. It may be with a timid step we proceed at first,

but, as we find it supports us, we grow bolder, and unhesitatingly trust ourselves wholly and confidently upon it.

No matter how weak the faith may be at first, though we may say with one breath, "Lord, I believe," and with the next, "Help Thou my unbelief," yet the more we trust Him the more we find He is to be trusted, and the better we know Him the more do we love Him.

Dear youths, children of Christian parents, you have had many appeals made to you, and many warnings given. I beseech you, in the name of Christ, flee from the wrath to come; get your "pass" for eternity as you begin life. G. R.

## Bible Subjects: Salvation

---

SALVATION is a theme which fills our souls with gratitude and praise, and which, view it as we may, ever gives us to rejoice in God. This grand and gracious subject shall occupy us for a few occasions.

We open our Bibles, and write out a list of the very many verses in the New Testament (we cannot now refer to the Old) which speak of the Saviour, of being saved, of salvation; and looking over the texts, we see that sometimes our bodies, at others our souls, sometimes the present, at others the future spiritual blessings which are the believer's are presented to us.

Perhaps the greater number of texts which speak of salvation are those which treat of it both as the present possession and the future portion of God's people. To limit the thought of salvation to a sinner's deliverance from the wrath to come is to narrow a very extensive truth of God to but one of its parts.

A large number of the texts in the first three gospels about saving and being saved relate to the body. How many of these include both soul and body we may not be able to say, but deeply interesting and suggestive it is to ponder over such texts as these: "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole ...Thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." (Matt. 9:21, 22. See also Mark 5:23, 28, 34) "Thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight." (Luke 18:42, 43.) For it is the same word used in each case, though translated "be made whole" in one, and "saved" in the other. Surely some of the sufferers who sought the Lord for the healing of their bodies found in Him the Saviour! They sought Him for His salvation, as well as for the soundness of their bodies, which latter mercy we find specifically spoken of in such verses as Matt. 12:13, John 5:6, &c., where to be made whole simply means to be made sound. Perhaps in the Lord's words to the woman whose issue of blood He healed, we have both salvation and the soundness presented, for we may read (Mark 5:34), "He said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." Some we know who were found of the Lord, and in mercy were healed by Him of their bodily infirmity, only requited Him evil for His kindness. Take as an example the paralytic mentioned in John 5, and read of his ways. (Chapter 5:6, 9, 11, 14, 15; and 7:23.) Not all who were made sound were saved.

St. James speaks to us of the prayer of faith that saves the sick, (Chapter 5:14-20.) These are encouraging but solemn verses. The sick man calls for the elders of the church, who pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. Now the issues of life and death are in the Lord's hands, and in a most marked way the sick chamber, of which we have read, is taken possession of by faith, and we feel the Lord is there. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Let us not disbelieve that the gracious Lord, the record of whose healing, saving hand is so sweet to us in the gospels, is as near to raise up the sick now as He was when here on earth!

The solemnity of the passage lies greatly in the fact that at times a sickness is sent by God in chastisement for specific sins committed by His people. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." "If any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." We hardly need point out that the death here spoken of is that of the body, and that the sinner who is brought back is an erring believer. God will at times follow His sinning people with judgment, and it may be the sin is such, that prayer is not to be sent up to God for the life of the transgressor. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death." (1 John 5:16, 17.)

These solemn passages should make us fear lest we should be tempted to sin presumptuously against our holy God. On the other hand, we must never forget that whom the Lord loves He chastens, and that sickness and sorrow are allowed to befall us as favors sent by our Father in heaven. In the verses we have considered, we see that wisdom from God is given to understand why the sickness to death is sent. Some special sin had been committed. If God's children should know why judgment is sent, it is their privilege to be assured how their Father sends them trials and sufferings in tenderness and love. Such distresses are amongst their greatest mercies! The discipline of daily life, and direct punishment for presumptuous sinning, are very distinct.

When we reach our heavenly home we shall see in how many ways God has saved us in this life, as regards our bodies. We need more simplicity of heart about our bodies, which are the Lord's. Let us in faith more truly commit ourselves to Him, and more carefully observe His ways in preserving and saving us, and thereby learn to thank Him more for His mercies.

#### Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

UNTIL the martyrdom of Stephen, Jerusalem was the scene of all that took place in the church of Christ. We are not told that the apostles carried their message beyond the Holy City, even into the country parts of Judea; still less did they, in those early days of their ministry, fulfill their mission to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But the great persecution in Jerusalem, in which Saul of Tarsus played so terrible a part, drove the disciples of Christ into distant parts of Judea and Samaria, and also to the northern regions of Syria. Through the preaching of Philip the evangelist, Samaria "received the word of God"; and when Peter and John, sent by the apostles at Jerusalem, prayed for and laid their hands on these despised people, they received the Holy Ghost. The apostles, before they returned, preached the gospel in many of the villages. Still, with this exception, the gospel was as yet preached to Jews only, and it needed that Peter should receive a divine revelation to show him that God's grace was not only for the chosen race. After which he could say to the Gentile Cornelius, "God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

This Roman captain, in charge of a troop of horse at Cæsarea, was one who feared God, and was accustomed to go to the temple or synagogue at the hour of prayer. Yet he was counted "unclean" by the Jews. For they not only refused to have anything to do with Gentiles, as "the uncircumcised;" they held that those who ate unclean animals became themselves unclean, therefore they would on no account eat or drink with Gentiles. The law concerning meats being so

binding, we cannot be surprised that when tidings came to Jerusalem that a Gentile family at Cæsarea had been the home of the apostle Peter, there were some who objected, saying to him on his return, "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them."

It is interesting to notice that, after relating his vision at Joppa, and the lesson it had taught him, Peter specially dwelt upon the fact that the Holy Ghost had fallen upon all those in the house of Cornelius who heard his word concerning Christ—"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins"—and we can but mark the unselfish joy with which his message of God's, goodness to those once "strangers and foreigners," but now "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God," was received. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

But there were other Gentiles whose hearts the Lord opened, others to whose ears the story of His love—not to one nation only, but to "the world,"—came, about this time. News was brought to the church in Jerusalem that at Antioch on the Orontes, a magnificent port in Northern Syria, the "wall of partition" had been broken down, and that, in that heathen city, with its splendid statue of Apollo, its groves and fountains, its chariot races and idol-processions, some disciples, driven thither by the persecution at Jerusalem, had spoken, not to the Jews only, but to the Grecians, "preaching the Lord Jesus."

This city, the home of fashion and luxury, with its gardens fragrant with roses, and its broad streets paved with white marble, had lately suffered from an earthquake. It may be that in the heart of many a gay pleasure-seeker or busy trader a quiet voice had been heard, and the desire to know something of a "kingdom which cannot be shaken" had been awakened by the sense of insecurity which such a calamity must produce. The climate, we are told, was lovely, and to Antioch on the Orontes the rich Romans would resort, seeking amusement at the theaters and excitement in the games. How wonderful to think that, amid all the bustle and gaiety, God was preparing many hearts to receive the message He would send by His servants, so we read that "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord."

Thus, about the year 44, we find "Christians," the name by which the disciples of Christ, Jews and Gentiles alike, began to be called, assembling at Antioch. Much has been written about the probable origin of this name. It certainly was not given by the persecuting Jews, for they called the followers of Christ, in derision, "the sect of the Nazarenes"; then, although Christ's people spoke much of Him, it is not likely that they called themselves by the Name which was so dear to them, for we find them generally alluding to each other as "brethren,?" "saints," "disciples," "believers." It seems probable, therefore, that the name was given them by the Romans or Greeks in Antioch, a place where the people were noted for their cleverness in inventing nicknames. If this be so, how little did the gay wit who first called some poor follower of Christ "Christian" in mockery, guess what a high honor he conferred upon him! All the magnificence and splendor of that proud, heathen city has long since passed away, but it will never be forgotten that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

As in thought we accompany Barnabas, sent thither by the church at Jerusalem, on his journey to the northern capital, we hear him exhorting these Gentile believers "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." Then we follow him as he goes to Tarsus "to seek Saul," for it is he,

the one who had beyond measure persecuted the church of God and wasted it, who is to have the high honor of ministering at Antioch to Christians from among the Gentiles, as the companion of Barnabas, for a whole year. Again we see the assembly of Christians in the heathen city, sending to Jerusalem "by the hands of Barnabas and Saul" that relief which the impending famine in Judea gave them the opportunity of bestowing upon the brethren who dwelt there. We, like Barnabas, "are glad," as we "see the grace of God," in permitting the one who had once hunted down, and persecuted to the death, the disciples at Jerusalem, to be now the bearer of help to them in their necessity.

## The First Prayer

---

THERE was a poor woman who lived with her husband and eight or ten children in a mews in the west end of London. Country children who have never seen London, must remember that the stables belonging to London houses are all built together, somewhere behind or near the houses to which they belong, and all these stables joined together are called mews. So that a mews is like a little town of stables and coach-houses, with rooms above, where the coachmen and other stablemen live, with their wives and children.

Very often the families living in the mews are little visited or looked after by their rich neighbors, and in former times the children ran about and played in front of the stables from morning to night, never going to school, and learning only to be rude and wicked.

The poor woman of whom I am telling you, wished to bring up her children well. That means that she wished them to be tidy, and well-behaved, and clean, and she did her best to make them so. But it never crossed her mind that they had souls to be saved, or even that she herself had a soul. If she knew that there is a God, she thought no more about Him than you or I should think of some heathen idol whose name we might have heard.

No wonder that poor Mrs. Clare (as we will call her) was a very unhappy woman. She was seldom well, and she had hard work to look after the children, and to find means to feed and clothe them. Her husband was only a helper in a gentleman's stables, and his wages were small.

And at last one day there came a sad piece of news to Mrs. Clare. The gentleman told her husband that he was going away immediately to America, for a long time, and that he should want him no more, for he should sell his carriage, and horses, and furniture, and let his house and his stables in the course of a few months. But he said that Clare might stay on in his rooms in the mews till he could hear of another place, or perhaps any gentleman who took the house and the stables might be willing to keep him ort. But some of the furniture in Clare's rooms, which belonged to the master, would be taken away at once, to be sold with the furniture of the house.

Clare did not much mind losing these few bits of furniture, for the rest, which was his own, could be made to do, for the time at least. But Mrs. Clare thought at once of a part of the master's property which she would be very unwilling to lose. All the blankets belonged to him. And now winter was coming, and her husband would be out of place, and they could never afford to buy new blankets. Mrs. Clare's only hope was that, as the blankets were old and thin, the master would not think it worth while to take them away. But the very thought that he might was terrible to her.

Mrs. Clare was not accustomed to having visitors, and as she sat there, feeling very sad and forlorn, she was startled by the sight of a strange woman who stood at the door, and asked if she might come in. This woman was employed in selling Bibles. But it was of no use to offer one to Mrs. Clare. In the first place she had no money; in the second place she could not read; and, alas 1 in the third place she had never had any desire to know anything of the word of God. So she refused the Bible very civilly.

"You look unhappy," said the Bible-woman.

"I may well be unhappy," said Mrs. Clare, "for I don't know how we are all to live now my husband has lost his place, and I'm always ill, and I have such a number of small children," and poor Mrs. Clare began to cry.

"Do you ever pray about it all?" asked the Bible-woman.

"Pray!" said Mrs. Clare, opening her eyes very wide. "No, I never prayed in my life. It's the parsons that pray."

"But every one may pray," said the Bible-woman. "Do you really mean to say you never knelt down on your knees to pray to God?"

"Well I do remember I knelt down once,"

said Mrs. Clare, after thinking a moment.

"I knelt down in the church the day I was married; but it was the parson that prayed."

"Have you never been to church since?"

"No, neither before nor since."

"Nor to chapel, nor to a meeting?"

"No; I don't go to anything of the sort. I haven't time for that, like the gentry."

The Bible-woman seems not to have known where to begin in explaining matters to a woman who was plainly so ignorant as Mrs. Clare. So after thinking in vain how to enlighten her, she only said—

"Praying is just speaking to God, and telling Him what we want. So if you have never done it before, I advise you to do it now." And as there were many more houses to visit, the Bible-woman went on her way and left Mrs. Clare with a new thought in her mind.

"Praying is speaking to God, and telling Him what we want. Why, I think I could do that. It would be like speaking to a friend. It would be a comfort to tell Him. I will tell Him about the blankets."

And then and there Mrs. Clare knelt down and told the Lord quite simply about the whole matter, and she said—

"O Lord, do not let the master take away the blankets, for we do want them so much."

The next morning, quite early, the men came who were sent to take the master's furniture to the sale. Mrs. Clare said not a word about the blankets, but she watched them anxiously. She felt sure that the Lord had heard her prayer, and yet her heart misgave her when she saw them go to the beds and take off the bedclothes. One by one they rolled up the six old blankets, and carried them away with the other things.

Mrs. Clare now felt that there was a trouble even greater than the loss of all her blankets. It had seemed to her such a beautiful thought that the Lord cared for her, and that she might speak to Him, and tell Him of all her wants. And she had really believed that He heard her, and would be

her Friend. Yet now it seemed clear as the day that it was of no use to pray to Him, and she felt all alone in the great wide world in a way she had never felt before. She seemed not only to have lost the blankets, but to have lost the Lord too.

At that moment Mrs. Clare was roused from her sad thoughts by a loud, quick knock at the door. She opened it, and to her utter astonishment she saw the very last person in the world she could have expected to see.

This person was her sailor brother. He had gone to China not long before, and though Mrs. Clare was not learned in geography, she had made a good guess in thinking that China was quite the other side of the world, and she knew Jem was to be there a long time.

"Oh, Jem, I'm so glad to see you," she said.

"So am I glad to see you, Sukey," said Jem, "but it's how d'ye do and good-bye, for I only came ashore in the East India Docks this morning, and I'm off by the next train from the Waterloo Station to Portsmouth. But I said, I shall just have time to go round on the way to see Sukey,' and I've brought a whole cab full of blankets in case you want them, and they're down at the door below. So now, Sukey, if you care to have them, we'll go down to the cab and clear out the cargo."

"Why, Jem, how could you know that was just the very thing I want?" said Sukey. And she ran downstairs after him, and helped him to carry the huge parcel up to her little room, where Jem undid it, and pulled out one blanket after another—large, beautiful thick blankets, such as Sukey had never before beheld.

"Perhaps there will be six of them," she thought. Yes, there were six, and six more besides.

"Why, Jem, how did you come by them? And what made you bring them?"

"It's just this," said Jem, " You know there's a war in China, and I and five of my mates were wounded, and wouldn't be any good for weeks to come. So they just put us on board an East Indiaman, and sent us home, and they gave us each a pair of navy blankets, because we should have to be in our hammocks for most of the way home. And they told us when we went on shore we might have the blankets for our own. And when we landed this morning, first thing we heard was that we were to go on to Portsmouth if we were fit for service. And then my mates said, What shall we do with the blankets, for they won't be any good to us on board another ship? ' And I said, Well, I've got a sister in London, with a lot of small children, and maybe she'd like to have mine, so I'll just take them to her, and go on to Waterloo. Then they said, You'd better take the whole lot, for we haven't got sisters in London, nor any one who'd care to have them.' So here they are, and now I must be off." With these words Jem drove off in his cab, and left Mrs. Clare happier than he had any idea of.

It was a fine thing to have twelve beautiful blankets in the place of six old thin ones. But it was a greater thing to know that there is a living God, who not only hears prayers, but who does for us far more than we ask or think.

You may be quite sure Mrs. Clare now knelt down again to thank the Lord. And when she had thanked Him, she said to Him, "O Lord, Thou knowest we have another trouble. Thou knowest we want nineteen and sixpence. O Lord, please to let us have it in time to pay the baker on Saturday."

Whilst Mrs. Clare had been so unhappy about the blankets she had almost forgotten that the baker had said he could no longer go on letting them have bread without being paid for all the bread they had had for weeks past.

"So," he had said, " on Saturday next I shall leave off letting you have any more bread, and I shall send you a summons, if you don't pay me nineteen and sixpence by twelve o'clock that day, for that's what the bill will come to by Saturday."

Mrs. Clare felt sure the Lord would send her this money. But her husband came home very sad and hopeless, saying he had been everywhere to try to get a place, and could hear of nothing. So it was the next day, and the next.

Then came Saturday morning. "I'll try again," her husband said; "and though it's only five o'clock I'll start and see what can be done."

It seemed strange to go out at five o'clock in the morning, when everyone was in bed, to try to get a place. But the Lord had put this thought into Clare's mind, little as he knew himself that it was God who was guiding him.

In an hour's time he came back. He put a sovereign into Sukey's hand, and said, "Go and pay the baker."

Now Sukey had not said a word to him about the baker, nor about her prayers. But she was sure that the money would come in time.

"How did you get it?" she asked.

"Just as I went out of the mews," said her husband, "I saw a gentleman's carriage upset in the Knightsbridge Road, and I went to help; and when it was all done the gentleman gave me a sovereign. I suppose they were coming home from a party somewhere, so it's well I went out so early."

Sukey went to pay the baker, having thanked the Lord for His goodness. And now she felt that the time was come when it was wrong to keep silence about all that He had done for her. So she told her husband all about it; and when the Bible woman came again a few days after, she told her, too, and she asked if there was no place near where a poor woman like herself could go and hear more about God. "For now," she said, "I want to learn all about Him. But I can't go to any grand place, where people go with fine clothes, for I've got nothing but my old gown, and I shall have to take the baby with me."

Then the Bible-woman told her that a room had been opened in a mews close by, where there was preaching every Sunday afternoon—nothing to pay, and all might go in just as they were, and find a comfortable seat, and hear about the Lord Jesus in plain words that they could understand.

So 'Mrs. Clare went there the very next Sunday, and there she heard the wonderful story that was to make her happy all her life long, and forever afterward. She heard that God not only cares that men and women and children down here should have food and clothes and beds, but that He so loves His dear people, even long before they love Him, that He sent His own Son from heaven, to take upon Himself the punishment of all their sins, of all their ingratitude and forgetfulness of Him,

and their hiding, as it were, their faces from Him, despising Him and esteeming Him not.

Now Mrs. Clare felt for the first time that she was a guilty sinner. She had lived all her life, till the day the Bible-woman came, without one thought of this good and loving God. And it was indeed blessed news to her that, instead of a punishment for all this sin, there was nothing for her in the heart of God but love and tenderness. And that she might have no punishment, He had sent His Son to bear it Himself, and to pay all that great debt, and had given her besides the endless riches of His love to be hers forever.

"I have something better than blankets to thank Him for now," she said to the Bible-woman.

It is always a sure mark that God has poured into our hearts the riches of His love, when we wish to share His joy and happiness with those around. For this wonderful happiness is like a flame of fire, which does not grow less but greater as it spreads from one to another.

Mrs. Clare became very anxious that her husband should go with her to the preaching. But no; he always had some excuse, and it was plain that he was displeased at hearing all this new sort of talk. It made him feel very uncomfortable, for his eyes were beginning to be opened to see that he was a guilty sinner also.

Mrs. Clare, however, went on beseeching him to go to the preaching, and at last he said, "Very well; I'll go next Sunday, if only you can get my coat out of the pawn-shop, for I can't go without a coat."

He felt quite sure when he said this that it was a very safe promise, for he knew well Sukey had never so much as a penny to spare when the end of the week came. She had got some work as a charwoman at a gentleman's house near, and every Saturday morning the housekeeper paid her ten shillings. But then there was all the bread and everything else to be paid for out of that ten shillings, and there was never a farthing over when that was done.

Mrs. Clare knew this too, but she knew also to whom to go for the money she needed to get the coat out of the pawn-shop. She went to tell the Lord all about it, and then she said to the Bible-woman, "You'll see my husband at the preaching next Sunday."

Sunday came, and there was Clare in his best coat, and looking, too, as if he was glad to be there.

"How did you get the coat, Mrs. Clare?" asked the Bible-woman afterward.

"When the housekeeper paid me on Saturday morning," said Mrs. Clare, "she said, 'You must give me change, for I have nothing but a sovereign,' and I said I had no change, and never had so much at a time, nor was likely to have. Then she said, 'You must take the sovereign, then, and remember next Saturday that I've paid you.' So then I went to the pawn-shop and got the coat, and the Lord will see that I'm none the worse off when next Saturday comes."

After this Mrs. Clare was better off, for her husband got some work. He did not tell her that he had also got a Bible from the Bible-woman. He was rather afraid and ashamed lest this should be known, but he went on going to the preaching, and all his spare time he went into the loft, where he had hidden the Bible amongst the hay, and he read it for hours together.

At last he could keep his secret no longer, and he told his wife that "a change had come over him," and that he saw she was right, and that the Lord who had opened his eyes had saved him from his sins.

I can tell you no more about Mrs. Clare and her husband. Many years have passed since I last heard of or saw them. It may be that she has had many, many more answers to her prayers, and now that she knows the Lord Jesus, as she did not know Him at first, she no doubt understands that all is well when He does not give her exactly the thing she asks for. He showed her when she was ignorant of Him that He is the living and true God by giving her just the very thing she asked. But when we know God, and His great love, He is able to treat us as a kind father often treats his children. He will sometimes have to say, "I know you can trust My love, if I refuse to give you the thing you want, and you may be sure I do so that you may have something better, though you may have to wait for it." So, if we have believed in the love of God, we can be quite happy and peaceful, leaving all in His hands. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" F. B.

## O Taste and See!

---

IN the sick ward I noticed a colored woman in the bed next to M. R. Such a contrast! M. R. so white; the other so black, and with very large eyes! After speaking to M. R., I turned round, and asked the colored woman how she was. She said, "Much better, thank you." Then I asked the young person with me to read a little of the Bible to her, which she did. While she was reading, the colored woman nodded her head to show that she understood, and, putting her hand upon her heart, exclaimed, "It (meaning the word of God) is so comfor'ble."

I said, "You have heard this before?" She answered, "Yes," and told me that from a tiny child she had been brought up in the missionary school at Madras. "And," she continued, "I do know Jesus I do know Him; I have tasted Him," putting her hand again on her heart—"I have tasted Him, and so sweet, so precious!"

I wish all our readers could have seen her beaming face and touching manner, and could have heard the tone in which she spoke!

Her breathing was short, and she was weak, but she delighted to tell out of the fullness of her heart that "the Lord Jesus has done all"; that "we have only to b'lieve, and look to Him." "He is my ' all," she told me, and added that she was looking forward every day to "that happy land where Jesus is, where there will be no more sorrow, nor sickness, nor pain." She spoke so sweetly of "that happy land."

We could not stay long, and wishing her good-bye, she thanked us so much, though we had not given her anything. She said she could not read English, only her own tongue, but added, "Thank you so much: it is so kind, so kind!" But she did not know what pleasure she gave—what a joy it was to see and hear her! L. LE M.

## The Debt Paid

---

I KNEW a young German lady, a Lutheran by profession, but who had been brought up in a Romish convent until she was seventeen years of age. On the second day of my acquaintance with her, I spoke to her of the love of Jesus in saving poor lost sinners, but alas! she thought the way to glory was by our doing our best, and said she hoped it would be all right with her at last. She said she believed that all her sins could not be forgiven until she individually had made some retribution for them.

I told her that the work of the Lord Jesus Christ was a "finished work," and that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us who believe from all sin, from every sin of every kind. What could a poor sinner do to put away his sins, or to make retribution for them? Jesus Himself had finished the work.

All her answer was, that every one that had taught her could not be wrong. Her religious instructor had been regarded by religious professors as a very clever man, and he never told her that salvation was without money and without price.

In this state of soul two or three weeks of her life passed away. She accompanied me to gospel service one evening, and at the end was under deep conviction. On her arrival at our home, I again spoke to her of Christ, but the effect of my words seemed to be only to make her more miserable. I then bade her good-night, entreating her to cast herself wholly on Christ, warning her that perhaps before another morning dawned she might be in eternity, and it would be a Christless eternity if she rejected the free salvation of God.

She called me back to her room again, and said, "Oh, M., I cannot sleep another night without Christ."

"Christ has paid the debt, you have only to accept Him. His own Word declares, ' He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.'" (John 5:24.)

In a moment the dark, miserable expression vanished from her countenance, and she answered brightly, "Yes, I see it now; Christ paid the debt, and I am saved."

She is now a shining witness for her newfound Saviour.

Reader, what of you? Can you, like my young friend, bless the Lord Jesus Christ for having paid the debt with His own precious blood? Or are you still trying to do your best, and hoping it will be all right at last, as my young friend was but a few weeks ago? May God in His grace enable you to say—

"Jesus paid it all;

All to Him I owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow."

M. P. C.

## And Enoch Walked With God

---

How brightly do these words shine out in the sacred page! They beam out like a bright star in the midst of the dark histories of the Fall, "the way of Cain," and the wickedness of man, which ended in judgment of the flood. Let us write the sentence without a name: "And... walked with God." Look well at the blank, and pray that your name may be placed where Enoch's stood. The fruit of the Fall springs up on every hand; human wickedness hastens on to the judgment by fire; "the way of Cain" is popular. Seek first of all to walk with God. Man's brief history is well told in Gen. 5 "... lived... years... and he died." In the midst of the record of sin, and of life's vanity, how sweetly do these words shine—"Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him"!

## Favors Which Are Ours Solely of God

---

THE things which are for us of God are perfect and absolute. Let us for a moment consider a few of them. For example—Our justification.

Can a believer be more perfectly justified than he is? This short text alone, "It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:33), answers all questions on the subject. God's work is perfect. He Himself has wrought His people's justification; therefore, since God justifies us who believe, neither addition to, nor diminution from, our justification is possible.

We are justified by the blood of Christ, (Ch. 5:9.) The blood of God's Son has perfectly magnified God respecting our ungodliness and our unrighteousness. That blood is the full and absolute satisfaction to God for all the sins of all the persons who believe. That blood brings to God glory and honor in relation to His righteousness. In the perfection of the blood we are now justified. Nothing can be added to nor taken from the value of the blood of our Redeemer. Every loyal heart utterly repudiates the very shadow of a thought that the value or the power of the blood of his adorable Saviour could know any change, or that God's justifying work by that blood could fail.

"It is God who justifieth." It is God who declares His righteousness through the blood of His Son. It is the blood which perfectly answers God's righteous demands for our sins and also proclaims God's righteousness in having required full satisfaction for our sins. God justifies in grace, but on the basis of His own fulfilled righteousness. The sins of sinners are not passed over, but are perfectly answered for according to the requirements of divine justice. The very thought of justification brings before us God in His righteousness, in His justice, dealing with sin and sinners. We are now justified by the blood of Christ.

Liberty to enter into the holiest is now the believer's, and the liberty is perfect. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness (or liberty) to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19) is a blessing which is ours, and which is ours solely of God. The liberty is God-made. Man could not make it. The holiest is the divine dwelling-place; with that, man can have nothing to do save as God pleases. The blood of Jesus! What part has man in the shedding of that blood?

"Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23.) Man's part therein was his deepest guilt, but in that blood we see God's deepest grace.

The most terrible sin of man has been the occasion of the shedding of the precious blood, whereby the Lord, risen from the dead, has entered into the holiest on high. As we read, "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." (Heb. 9:12.)

We contemplate with wonder this exceeding grace of God. None on earth or in heaven, save God, could fashion such a way into the holiest, and since this wondrous way is made, who shall change it, or add to its perfection? With thankful and adoring hearts it is ours to tread it by faith. The holiest is the dwelling-place of God, which in the figures of Judaism was entered but once every year by

the high priest, and then not without blood shed for the sins of himself, and of the people. The holiest is now where God is, and into this place of light and glory the humblest believer is invited by His gracious God to draw near. As we consider these things, we again say, who shall add to, or take from, the perfection of these blessings which are for us, but which are solely of God?

The believer is now accepted or taken into favor in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:6.)

Now who takes the saint into this wondrous favor? Our God Himself. And who is the Beloved? The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father! Can a believer be more perfectly accepted than this? The favor of God is unchangeable; heaven and earth will pass away, but God knows no variableness nor shadow of turning.

As we meditate upon our justification, our sins, and indeed Satan and his accusations, are in our view, but with them our God, who in His absolute grace, acting for His own glory and that of His Son, has set poor hell-deserving sinners before Himself without a sin to be laid to their charge. When we meditate upon the favor into which we are taken in the Beloved One, no creature can by any possibility have a stand-point whence to rise up and say one word as to what God may deem it His pleasure to perform. Of His own good pleasure He has been pleased that His saints should be accepted, graced, taken into His favor in the excellence, the sweetness, the loveliness of Christ. They are not simply secured by His power and majesty, but brought into favor in the Beloved One—the Beloved of the Father, the Beloved One of God. This unutterably wonderful choice of God is exclusively of God. This grace stands and shines in its own sublime glory; we wonder and adore. God's thoughts are our admiration; let us worship Him for His unchangeable grace.

## The Rod and the Serpent

---

WHEN Jehovah sent His servant Moses to the great king of Egypt commanding Pharaoh to let His people go, the first sign He gave was the victory of the rod over the serpent. The temples and palaces of Egypt bore upon their lintels the sign of the serpent; there it stood with its uplifted head on either side of the sign of the sun, as if to tell to all who entered in those mighty and glorious buildings, that wisdom like the serpent's and power as the sun's, were Egypt's own. Idols and wonders and signs abounded in the land of those temples and palaces where the children of Israel were enslaved, and were building for Pharaoh great treasure cities. In his land, Pharaoh was supreme in power, his greatness and authority were beyond all question. How amazed then must he have been when the message from Jehovah reached him; "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness."

He proudly answered, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." He knew the sun god and the serpents and the hundreds of other gods and sacred creatures worshipped in his land, but Jehovah, the living and the true God, Him he knew not.

Now, when Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron, "Show a miracle for you"—a wonder to evidence that they were truly sent by the God whom they proclaimed—Jehovah had bidden Aaron to take His "rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent." The rod of God was that staff which Moses had in his hand when being a shepherd he fed the flocks of his father-in-law in the desert of Horeb. That rod was the outward and visible sign of Jehovah's power, before which the gods of Egypt and king Pharaoh himself should bow.

We can picture to ourselves the great king in his state and surrounded by his grandees, and Moses and Aaron standing before him having the rod of God with them. Then Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

Pharaoh was accustomed to the signs and wonders of his wise men, sorcerers, and magicians who had power from Satan to deceive men, and to keep them in the bands of idol-worship. So he called for his priests to do as Moses and Aaron had done. Our picture gives us a faint idea of the scene. Pharaoh sits upon his throne surrounded by his great men, before them are the priests with their garments of leopard skins; see they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents!

No doubt Pharaoh said to himself, "The priests of Egypt can show forth as great power as the servants of the God of these Hebrews, my slaves! Who then is Jehovah, that I should obey Him?"

But lo! Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, and then, when the strange scene before the king had come to its end, the sign of the power that Egypt's priests wielded was taken from them—they had no rods left! The power they possessed none could question, God permitted it, and none can question the power of Satan the god of this world, of which the Bible speaks; but the power of God is almighty, and in the end there will be no power and no sign of power left in the enemy's hand.

One thing, however, remained in the king of Egypt, even hardness of heart; this was never changed, and though Satan be stripped of all his power, still his enmity to God will abide. Thank God, He begins with poor sinners by making our hearts to love Him, and we love God because He first loved us.

The rod of God's power will in the end subdue the wisdom and strength of the serpent, though God may now allow Satan to seem to have his own way. We remember what God said at the very first to the serpent in Paradise, when He foretold the coming of Christ the promised Seed, "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." (Gen. 3:15.) And so it was when God began in Egypt to work for the deliverance of His people there; His first sign to the ruler of Egypt was the overthrow of the serpent by the rod. And when we reach the record of the end of this world's history, we come to the time when Satan's power shall be taken from him; the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil (the accuser), and Satan (the enemy), shall be bound with a chain, and held prisoner in the bottomless pit. And then, after a further interval, he shall be sealed up in hell forever, and his power, and all sign of his power, shall be seen no more, but the power and wisdom of God shall rule alone.

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 8:5-14; Luke 7)

THE centurion of whom we have been reading was not a Jew; he was a Roman captain, who had charge of soldiers in the city of Capernaum.

What more do we know about him?

We are not told even one of his names, and the Romans generally had three; but we are told of his kindness to God's people. We know, too, that he had heard of Jesus, and that he wanted the Lord to come to him when he was in trouble, but he did not think he was worthy to have Him come under his roof. Yet, when the Jews spoke to the Lord about him, they said, "He is worthy; he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue."

They praised him very much, and begged Jesus to help him.

Why was this Roman captain in such trouble?

One of his servants was sick and ready to die. This made his master very sad, for he loved that servant, and could not bear to see him suffering dreadful pain in all his limbs, and to know that no one could give him any medicine which would cure him. The Romans often had a great many servants or slaves, and they were not accustomed to think very much about them if they were ill, but God had given this captain a tender heart to feel for the sufferings of others, and he was not ashamed of loving his poor sick servant.

But what had he heard about the Lord Jesus?

We cannot tell. Perhaps the story of that leper, who could not help telling everywhere about Jesus and what He had done for him, had come to the ears of the centurion. One thing he knew—he was quite sure that Jesus had power over everything, just as he had authority over his soldiers.

The first thing a Roman soldier learned was to obey. If he did not obey the orders of his captain, his punishment was very severe. This captain thought how his word was enough for the soldiers who were under him. And so when the Lord Jesus, who was told of the sick servant, said, "I will come and heal him," the captain sent a message to Him—

"Lord, trouble not Thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

This was the message, and you can read it in the seventh chapter of Luke. The Lord marveled—that means wondered—when He heard it, and turning round, said to the crowd who were following Him, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

What a beautiful word from the Lord the centurion had—"As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." It was just so, for when the friends, who had brought the message from the centurion to the Lord returned, all was done. The Lord had spoken the word, and the servant was healed at that very time. The Lord had never come to the house; He had not sent any wonderful medicine; He had never looked upon the poor man who was at the point of death; He had not laid His hand upon him with that touch which had brought cure to the leper. Yet "they found the servant whole"—that means quite strong and well—"who had been sick."

What a happy day that must have been for the centurion and all who were in his house. He loved his servant before, but he must have loved him much more now that he had been given back to him from the gates of death by the word of the Lord.

Christ said He had not found such great faith in Israel. Among the people whom God had chosen for His own people, and had taught for so many years, there were none who understood the power of the Son of God as this Roman, who had been brought up to worship many false gods.

Faith is the gift of God. It was not by any cleverness of his own that the centurion knew there was only One who could heal his dying slave, and that He had but to say to the dreadful sickness, "Go," and it would let go its hold at once.

The Lord told His disciples that many poor Gentiles, like this Roman captain, should sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob all had faith in God; Abraham is the first person of whom we are told that he "believed God," and God counts this faith in His word, which is His own gift, a very precious thing. Do you know what it means, dear children?

## Willie and the Stars

---

LITTLE Willie went one evening to a lecture. When he went it was full daylight, and the pictures and other things exhibited kept his little eyes wide open till it was very late for him, but when he came out of the lecture hall with his mother to go home it was night and very dark. The contrast between the light and bright pictures within, and the darkness without, appeared to him to be very great, and he was evidently frightened, for it was the first time he had been out at night, and so creeping up closely to the side of his mother, he said, "Ou will take care of me, mother, won't 'ou? I couldn't go alone."

The night was dark, the path seemed strange,

Though often seen by day;

"Ou will take care of me, mamma,"

The child was heard to say.

Poor little heart! he feared the dark,

He should have been in bed,

But looking up he saw the stars,

Clear shining o'er his head.

"O ma" said he, "pray what are these?

How beautiful they look

Are these God's eyes, now looking down,

I read of in the book?"

How oft, as through life's night we walk,

And sad in darkness weep,

Like timid child with many fears,

To Christ we gladly creep.

And Jesus takes us in His arms,

And holds us to His breast,

As mother folds her frightened child,

And hushes it to rest.

And when with faltering steps we tread,

'Mid sorrows, gloom and night,  
How like the stars God's words shine out,  
How welcome then and bright.  
And o'er our path the Saviour sends  
The darkness of our fear,  
That we may seek His Father's face,  
And prize His presence near,  
Lord, grant, like timid child at night,  
Our faith to Thee may flee,  
Our darkness make the light more bright,  
Which ever shines in Thee.  
W. P. B.

## Little Melaine

---

“OUT of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise,” the Saviour said when on earth. And how many are the dear little ones in whom God is thus glorified! They may know but little by experience of the sin which dwells within them, or of the deceitfulness of their hearts, or of the world and its vanities, but they have been taught by the Holy Spirit to believe what God says as to their being lost sinners, and to believe the love of Jesus in dying to save them. Blessed are they who thus believe with the simplicity and confidence of “little children.” Needful, too, in order to be saved, for the oldest sinner as for the youngest child.

A little one of but four years old said with triumphant joy a few hours before she died, “I am going to sing His praises forever in heaven.” (“Je vain chanter Ses louanges pour l'eternite dans le ciel.”) This babe had been brought up by parents who desired most of all for their children that they should know the Lord Jesus for their Saviour. Two boys of eight and ten were their little family, till the arrival of a baby-girl, long desired, rejoiced their hearts. Four years later, another baby-boy. A few months after, all the four children were down at the same time with scarlet fever. In one night the two youngest were taken. First the infant died; then the little girl, the joy of the parents' hearts. For her they little thought of danger, till, after a few words about her “precious Jesus,” she exclaimed, “I am going to sing His praises forever in heaven.” Then they knew they were to lose her. Very soon after she fell asleep. How she had loved to hear about Him, and what comfort to the stricken parents that their little one had known Him as her own Saviour! When listening to the story of His death on the cross she was often moved to tears, and would say, “He suffered for me—for me, Melanie.” (“Il a souffert pour moi—pour moi, Melanie.”)

How blest are parents, even in their deepest grief, to have their children sheltered from sin and sorrow here, and safe in the Saviour's bosom forever. Happy, too, for their hearts' earnest desire to be, as expressed by one thus bereaved for earth—

“Let the empty place of that darling face

Be filled with Thy presence, Lord

And the void well-known of the voice that's gone,

With Thy sweet and holy word.”

S. C.

## Salvation

---

THE first text in the New Testament relating to salvation is this: "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.) And in considering the subject of salvation our wisdom is first to consider our Saviour, and afterward the saved people. Jesus saves His people not only from the judgment due to their sins, but also from the weight and love of their sins. He is a perfect Saviour; His is a perfect salvation.

Jesus is absolutely the Saviour: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," (Matt. 18:11) thus did He speak when the little ones were the object of His words; and, when grown-up persons were present to Him, He said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10.) Very little ones have not wandered away from God, as have older persons, and may not, therefore, need the seeking that do the latter; but old or young, little ones or aged sinners, all are lost, and all alike need the Saviour. Jesus came to save—to save absolutely and entirely—not just to help sinners; nay, He describes all sinners alike, little ones and aged people, as lost.

"God sent not His Son into the world to condemn" or judge "the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17; see also ch. 12:47.) He will come to judge, but now He appears before our faith as the Saviour. The blessed Lord presents Himself to all the wide world of sinners as the Saviour sent by God. His own words are salvation to the soul—"These things I say that ye might be saved" (John 5:34); but whoso receives not His words shuts himself up to the judgment. To hear His words, and not to believe on Him, is to reject the only Saviour, and, therefore, to remain forever lost.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" is the faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance (1 Tim. 1:15). All in the wide world are sinners, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and the faithful saying is indeed worthy of all the acceptance of our hearts. A very beautiful passage of Scripture on this theme is "The Father sent the Son, the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4:1); for the Father is the title of God, which expresses His love to His Son and to the children of God most deeply. All those who believe that Jesus is the Christ, are born of God; all the saved are God's children. We will embrace to our hearts the gracious fact that Jesus Himself is the Saviour, and that to believe on Him is salvation. "By Me," He says, "if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John 10:9.) "By Me" How simply do His words direct us just to Himself, how they keep away every difficulty and give to the soul rest!

When the jailor of Philippi asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:30, 31.) They bade him believe on the Lord Jesus Himself, and he did believe, he was saved, and his heart was filled with joy (ver. 34); and every poor distressed sinner who truly believes on the Lord is saved.

When Jesus was born, the angels joyfully proclaimed Him "a Saviour which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11), and after man had despised and rejected Him, and had cast Him out of the world,

crucifying Him with wicked hands, God exalted Him with His right hand; yes, God, in His mighty power, set Jesus on high in heaven, "a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31), and there by faith we see Him now.

He has gone up on high, and in heaven bears for us the name of Saviour. Let us look at some of the texts that so speak of Him. The greeting to God's people on earth of grace and peace comes from on high: "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus 1:4.) "The Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (ch. 3:6). From heaven we look for the coming of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ to change us to His image, and to take us home (Phil. 3:20); and not only do we look for this blessed hope, we look also for the manifestation of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13), when every eye shall behold Him, and all the earth shall be filled with His glory. For then shall the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:11) be established.

Thus we see what great and wonderful blessings are connected with the name of our Saviour. On another occasion we may consider some of the numerous texts which teach us concerning His work of salvation. But sure we are it is a delight to His saved people to think of Him Himself as Saviour.

#### Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

"...and so we went toward Rome. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us...whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God

and took courage."

"And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

THUS St. Luke's narrative ends. He tells us of the arrival at the Eternal City of Paul the prisoner, who had been accused by his own nation, and had claimed his right as a Roman citizen to answer for himself before the imperial courts. The Cesar who wore the purple at this time was the terrible Nero, with whose name the first Pagan persecution of the Christians is coupled for all time.

Of some of those who suffered then we doubtless catch a glimpse among the little band who, in the year 61, went as far as the village of Appii Forum to meet the apostle, as he drew near Rome. The meeting between the prisoner, worn with toil and shipwreck, as he came along the road, guarded by Roman soldiers, and those poor "brethren," mostly slaves, at sight of whom Paul "thanked God and took courage," must have been a very touching one. But it was unattended by any thought of danger; none among the little company could foresee the terrible storm which was so soon to burst upon the heads of all who named the name of Christ in the proud heathen city.

By those brethren, as they started on their journey to meet one whose face they had never seen, the opening words of his letter to them must have been well remembered. He had written to them from Corinth, addressing them as "beloved of God, called saints," and his salutation to them was, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." He had told them how he gave thanks for them, that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world, how without ceasing he made mention of them always in his prayers, making request if by any means

he might now at length have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto them. They knew how he had longed to see them, and had many times purposed to visit them, and now the time had come; the apostle and the beloved ones, over whom he had so longed, saw each other face to face, and their hearts were comforted.

How fully the desire of Paul, expressed in his letter, to preach the gospel to the Roman Christians, was answered, during the time which passed before he left Rome, who shall say? But one short year, and many a humble follower of Christ who had learned from Paul's lips in his own house the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, should pass through a fiery gate to the presence of Him whom, having not seen, he loved.

At this time Rome was still mistress of the world, almost every country then known being subject to her. But she was not a persecuting power. The nations which were subdued by her were allowed to retain each its own particular form of idolatrous worship; even the Jews, who worshipped one God, were unmolested, and we find Paul appealing to Caesar for protection against those of his own nation who sought to persecute him. But, on the other hand, Rome would give no protection to those who had turned from the worship of the many gods, whose magnificent statues of gold and ivory adorned their chief cities, to the worship of Him of whom even the Jews could only say that He was "one Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive."

Of this wicked Roman world, where Paganism was universal, St. Paul speaks to us in the early part of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the words of one of the philosophers of the time we find a strange commentary upon the picture there drawn. "The world," he says, "is filled with crimes and vices; things are gone too far to be healed by any regimen." Other writers tell us of the splendor of the heathen temples, of the magnificent shows, the fights of gladiators, the chariot races and games, the theaters and spectacles. None, however, speak of the little companies of those in that terrible world, yet not of it, who had found in the gospel of Christ that remedy for sin for which the philosopher Seneca looked around in vain. We know not whether Paul was brought to trial, nor by what means he obtained his liberty, but he was absent from Rome when, in the year 64, the fearful scenes took place which, for the first time, brought the Christians to light upon the page of history. A terrible conflagration raged for six days and seven nights, during which time more than half Rome was destroyed. The people, horror-struck, and unable to find any cause for the calamity, tried to discover some means by which the offended deities, who had sent so tremendous a judgment upon them, might be propitiated. At this time of terror and dismay, the Emperor Nero, probably aware that some among his subjects had dared to whisper that he, who had sat upon a tower and watched the flames in their resistless march, while he sang to his harp of the burning of Troy, was himself the author of their disaster, accused the Christians of the crime of having set the city on fire.

The story is told briefly by a Roman historian, who was a child at the time.

"Nero," he writes, "exposed to accusation, and tortured with the most exquisite penalties a set of men hated for their crimes, whom the common people called Christians. Christos, the founder of their sect, was put to death in the reign of Tiberius by the Procurator Pontius Pilate, and the deadly superstition, suppressed for a time, began to burst out once more, not only throughout Judæa, where the evil had its root, but even in the city, whither, from every quarter, all things horrible and shameful are drifted, and find their votaries. To put a stop to the popular clamor, Nero falsely

accused this people of the conflagration, and subjected them to the most barbarous treatment. Those who were first seized, confessed" (that they were Christians?); "then a vast multitude, detected by their means, were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning the city, as of hatred to mankind. Insult was added to their torments; for being clad in the skins of wild beasts, they were torn to pieces by dogs; or they were affixed to crosses to be burned, and used as lights to dispel the darkness of night when the day was gone. Nero devoted his gardens to the show, and held games, in which in the dress of a charioteer he mingled with the rabble, or drove round the circus; so that although the guilty suffered, compassion was excited because they were put to death, not so much for the public good, as to satiate the ferocity of one man,"

The great cathedral of St. Peter now stands upon the spot where the gardens of Nero were once lit up by the flare of living torches. This dreadful form of punishment seems to have been invented for the occasion, that those who were said to have set the city on fire might be seen by the excited populace as they were themselves slowly consumed; for Seneca explains the torture of the "shirt of flame" by saying that the dresses in which the Christians suffered were "besmeared and interwoven with combustible materials."

The names of these unknown martyrs are written in no earthly record; none can tell us how they bore themselves in that fiery trial; but we know that they suffered because they bore the name of Christ, and that it was the grace of Christ that alone could have kept each one of them true to that Name. By each of those nameless confessors life might have been purchased, and death in such fearful guise avoided, by denying that he belonged to the hated company of those called Christians—the infatuated people who refused to pray to any of the gods which others worshipped, and who were never seen at the great heathen festivals, or gorgeous spectacles and processions. "Haters of the human race," men said of them, as they had often said of the Jews—yet we can now see that in accusing the Christians, Nero accused the most harmless and peaceable of his subjects, the only ones, as has been remarked, in all his empire, who prayed for him. At that time the cry that they not only worshipped one God, but had also brought in a new religion, and thus provoked the heathen deities to jealous rage, found a ready ear among the common people. They only knew that the Christians had no temples and no gods, and imagination readily lent itself to the task of giving form to the dark hints which were whispered concerning a people whose worship was so obscure.

We delight to think that to many a martyr in Nero's circus, the words of the letter of the apostle, whom he had so lately seen, must have been as an "anchor of the soul." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" he had asked. "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution?" And triumphantly he had answered, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us, for I am persuaded that neither death... nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This first Pagan persecution is believed to have continued, more or less, until the death of Nero. The year 67 is given as the date of the martyrdom of both the apostles Peter and Paul; the former probably having been crucified at Rome, where the latter was beheaded.

There is little doubt that St. Paul returned to Rome to be again imprisoned, and that the confident expectation, not of release, but of "departing to be with Christ" by a violent death, of which he spoke when writing his second letter to Timothy, was speedily realized. Of the place and manner

of the death of the apostle Peter, that "putting off his tabernacle," of which his Lord had showed him beforehand, we have no certain knowledge.

## The Strangest Man in the Village

---

IN our walks among the hills of S. we one day came to the small village of J. Having books and tracts with us, we availed ourselves of the privilege to distribute them to the country people, and called with them at the scattered cottages. At an old thatched hut, called "Well Cottage," we were very warmly welcomed by its aged inmate, who invited us to enter, and not only received our books, but told us much of her state of soul—how that for the many years of her widowed life she had longed to know that her many sins were pardoned. Gladly did we tell her of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, of forgiveness through His blood, and that God could say of the sinners who believe in His beloved Son, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12.) Her thirsty soul drank in the good news, and her doubts and fears gave place to joy in believing.

She informed us that there were many others in a similar state of soul in that village, and asked us to see them, which we gladly promised to do; but the results of those visits must be told at some other time, as I wish my reader to hear of "the strangest man in the village."

We found him sitting on a stool in the old-fashioned chimney corner, elbow on knee, his face resting on his hand, gazing, with a far-away look, into the fire. We were told that he was very deaf; that few people understood what he said; that he was so wicked as to tear and burn most of the tracts given to him, and that, without exception, he was the strangest man in the place. Upon inquiry we found he was neither a drunkard, swearer, nor ill-tempered person; neither did he boast of his goodness, but his chief employ was reading the Bible. His age and infirmity prevented him from doing much work, or going out of the village, "But," said our informant, "he be so odd that he can't get people to understand what he do mean."

I went to him; gently placing my hand upon his shoulder, and speaking distinctly, so that he should hear, I said, My friend, do you know anything of the Lord Jesus Christ?" Lifting his head up quickly, and gazing intently into my face, with a very questioning look, he said—

"Do you know the Lord yourself?"

"Indeed, I do know Him."

"Well, have you always known Him?"

"No, though I have trusted Him as my Saviour for many years."

"Did you ever feel the burden of your sins, and know your lost condition, and see how unable you were to do anything to fit you for the eye of a holy God?"

"Yes."

"And then God's grace gave you to believe?"

"Yes; light shone into my dark heart; my burden rolled away, and I knew that I was saved."

“And do you love so-called pleasures, such as theaters, balls, and parties?”

“Certainly not; I have no taste for such things now. The time past of my life was thus spent, but when I believed, God gave me a new nature that delights in Himself, and ever seeks to please Him.”

“Give me your hand,” said he; “I’m of a mind with ye. The squire’s ladies and others come to me with their tracts and fair speeches, and I can’t believe them; they are not real. They don’t know Christ, therefore they love the world. ‘If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.’ (1 John 2:15, 16, 17.) Now I’ll tell ye. I do know the Lord Jesus Christ. He is everything to me: In want, my plentiful Supply;

In weakness, my almighty Tower;

In bonds, my perfect Liberty;

My Refuge in temptation’s hour

My Comfort, ‘midst all grief and thrall;

My Life in death, my All in all.’

“I was a sad character—the pest of the village. I drank, I swore, and loved everything that was wicked. One day as I was plowing in the field, the thought came to my mind that my ways would surely lead me to hell, for I knew that I had done bad things enough to take me there. Hadn’t I better try and do better? I would reform; perchance the merciful God would take notice of me. From that day I left off drink, and became quieter, but peace didn’t come. I groaned under the burden of my sins for two whole years. I wept, I wrestled in prayer, I read the Bible. I just felt like a beast before Him. My anguish nearly drove me mad, till one dinner-time I was resting from my work under a wagon, over there by the side of the hedge, and I cried in my sorrow, Lord, have mercy upon a vile wretch like me! ‘It seemed as if the Saviour came and stood before me while He said, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee! ‘I believed His words, and didn’t I praise Him then and there?—

Jesus sought me when a stranger,

Wandering from the fold of God;

He, to rescue me from danger,

Interposed His precious blood.’

“Yes, ‘twas God’s grace freely bestowed upon one of the vilest of His creatures. Praise Him! praise Him!”

Much more we had to say to one another of the deep things of God, and very joyful were our hearts at our happy meeting. But we must leave him in the thatched cottage by the hillside, for we had some miles to walk over the hills to our home.

We offered him some of our books, smilingly asking him if he would burn them.

"Nay, nay," said he; "I'll promise to read them; I only burn those that are not true, lest they should do mischief to others. I'm a strange man to the villagers, because I tell them I know that I have passed from death unto life; that heaven is my home, and I am as sure of it as though I were already there!"

God wants reality, and may He make us to be more real for Him for His dear Son's sake. Amen. E.  
E. S.

## The Two Brothers

---

IN order to place my story properly before my readers, I must go back a few years to my unconverted days, when I was landlord of the B. Inn. Among, those who regularly frequented the house were two young men, brothers, who, like myself, were careless, reckless, and haters of God. Oh, how often was the blessed Name of Jesus used in blasphemy in our common conversation, and how often we called on that Name in mockery, to give a flavor to our wicked talk!

After a while one of these young men came in for his fortune, some ■3000. When he obtained it, he said he meant to enjoy himself; he had waited long enough for his money; and he would see the world. There occurs to my mind, as I think of him, this solemn word, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccl. 11:9.) George carried out the former part of the verse, but thought not of the latter part. He became more and more reckless; night after night he indulged to excess in strong drink—led on headlong to swift and sure destruction by the god of this world.

A few months of hard drinking and continued neglect of himself broke down his constitution, and he was obliged to seek the doctor's advice, but in his mad folly he disregarded the advice he had sought.

For several days he did not visit my inn owing to sickness, but one Thursday evening lie drove up, came in and took the chair that he usually occupied, and indulged himself again.

"The doctor says I'm very ill," he said, "and that I must take care of myself, but I don't believe there's much amiss with me; I mean to enjoy myself. I don't care for the doctors." He left as usual in his little pony trap; two days after, on the Saturday, word came to me that G. L. was dead. He had fulfilled his desire; he had lived for himself. He died as he had lived.

I went and saw poor George as he lay a corpse, and stood by the cold, inanimate clay; the strong will was at last broken by death.

Had I been cut down along with him I must have perished, for I was then a Christless soul, having the wrath of God abiding upon me. Solemn truth. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

About three years after this, the Lord in His mercy met me. He opened the flood gates of heavenly light, and poured His grace into my soul; He brought me into the light of His own presence, Yes, it pleased Him to call me by His grace, and to reveal His Son in me; to call me out of darkness into His own marvelous light, to deliver me from the bondage of Satan, and to translate me into the kingdom of the Son of His love. He saved me by His grace—all, all of sovereign grace.

I had left the inn, and was living in the house I now occupy, when, one Lord's-day afternoon, my wife, whom the Lord had saved also, said to me—

"Do you know that C. L., Inc brother of poor George, is very ill? It is said he is not likely to recover. Do not you think you ought to go and see him?"

I said I would go at once, God helping me, and looked to the Lord that I might gain an entrance into his sick room. Charles's house was a few miles distant from mine. I well knew that, in former days, his wife had regarded me as one who had robbed her of much of her husband's company, and who had led him into sin. When I knocked, the wife came to the door, and to my delight asked me into her husband's room. He lay upon the couch in the drawing-room, very ill; disease evidently fast doing its deadly work. A long time had passed away since we drank the cup of sin together, and Charles looked at me with the greatest surprise, and exclaimed—

"You are the last person I should have thought of coming to see me."

"Well," I replied, "I heard you were ill, and hoped you would be willing to see me." After inquiring about his health, and hearing from him that the doctor had pronounced his case hopeless, I said—

"My mission this afternoon is about your eternal welfare. If your time be so short here, as you say it is, do you believe you are ready to go into God's presence, and to meet His holy eye that searches us through and through?"

Charles answered me in a broken voice,

"No"

"Why not?" said I.

He answered, "Because I am such a wicked sinner."

"Dear Charles, it is my blessed privilege to tell you of the Saviour—the Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, That was His specific object; He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to die for sinners, for ' while we were yet sinners,' Christ died for us. If you are before God as a lost sinner, the arms of Jesus are extended toward you, for He says, ' Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

I recounted to him God's mercy to me in not cutting me off in the midst of my sins, and we then talked of our reckless adventures and past dangers, and how the Lord had delivered us out of them all. Many life-giving scriptures I put before him, to which he listened very attentively, and I left him, praying that the Lord would bless His word to the salvation of his soul.

The following Thursday I called again, asking after his health, when he said, "I am so glad you have come. I hoped you would be here to-day."

"Well, dear Charles, what have you been thinking about?"

He answered: "I have been thinking of those scriptures you gave me; one of them is so before me; I seem so attracted to it."

"Which is it?" said I. "Can you show it to me?"

He pointed me to John's Gospel, chapter 3., putting his finger on that blessed verse, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life.”

"Dear Charles," said I, " herein is the love of God to the poor sinner—to you and to me—yes, God's love to us in the gift of His own blessed Son, so that, believing in Him, we have eternal life, and are passed from death unto life; neither shall those who believe on Jesus perish, but shall spend eternity in the presence of the blessed Saviour.”

After some two hours of prayer and conversation, I again left.

On the following Lord's day I found Charles in his favorite position on the couch. His face bore an expression of delight upon it, so that, on my entering the room, there was no need to ask him whether God had revealed Himself to him; it was manifest that God had in His purposes of love wrought in his soul that which should stand for eternity. He had called poor Charles by His grace; He had destined him to share in the glory in the presence of his Saviour throughout the countless ages of eternity.

Charles delighted to speak of Jesus, his Saviour, to all who came to see him, and to all by whom he was surrounded. He warned them of the great danger of putting off repentance, while he praised God for His matchless grace towards him in saving him.

About a fortnight after his conversion, one night, when sitting up with him, I said, Charles, have you any doubts or fears as to your soul's salvation?”

He replied, " No; none whatever. Look at that scene at Calvary; don't you hear those words from the blessed Saviour's lips, It is finished'? I rest on that. I am just now waiting His own time to call me home. I am ready.”

Thus was the course of the two brothers finished on earth. What will be their eternity, dear reader? What will be mine? And what will be yours?

I. J. S.

HE, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. (Prov. 29:1.)

BOAST not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. (Prov. 27:1.)

## I Must Save My Sister

---

A LARGE factory had caught fire, and an immense crowd of people had gathered to witness the exciting scene. A number of work-people had escaped from the burning building, and were standing in the crowd watching the rapid progress of the flames, when it was whispered, with bated breath, that in the upper flat there were still many young girls remaining, and that all possible way of escape had been cut off. Suddenly a number of them appeared at the windows, wringing their hands in agony, their faces blackened with smoke. A young woman at that moment dashed through the crowd towards the entrance of the burning building, crying, in piteous tones, "My sister is not saved! I must save my sister; I must save my sister!" Some advised her not to venture near the flames; others tried to hold her back, but it was of no use. She wrenched herself from their grasp, and disappeared amid the smoke and flames, crying, "I must save my sister." She was seen no more. Suddenly there was a fearful crash, and the roof gave way, carrying with it into a raging furnace the whole of those who remained. The noble girl perished in the attempt to save her sister's life.

Has not this sad story a voice for us who have been saved from eternal death? Some of us have brothers, sisters, schoolmates, friends, in danger of everlasting fire. They are unconverted to God, unwashed from their sins. The unquenchable flame is right beneath their feet; dying, they would drop into it. God has saved our souls—we stand upon the sheltering rock; death and hell have no dread for us; can we stand and see our friends and kindred perish? Shall they sink down to the ever-burning flame unwarned? Surely not! Then let the Lord's redeemed ones bestir themselves. "Plead with the unsaved. Set life and death before them; do so earnestly, tenderly, faithfully. Seek to get them alone with God. Beat not about the bush, go straight to the point. Eternity is at the door, therefore begin at once. A. H.

## Lord, I Love Thee— or, Lord, Thou Lovest Me!

---

AN aged servant of the Lord, now gone to his rest, used to relate an incident of his youth which, he said, had been for instruction and blessing to him during the whole of his spiritual course.

It was in a dream that this instruction had been conveyed. Foolish and superstitious thoughts as to dreams may be abroad in the world; but surely God can use those moments when in sleep we are withdrawn from earthly influences, to let His own voice be heard, and that He does thus speak to men we know from His own word (Job 33:14-17), "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."

And His children can testify to many a message thus conveyed to their own hearts. Why should not their thoughts during sleep be controlled and directed by His Spirit dwelling within them?

The aged man above referred to had been converted in very early life, and in his newfound joy was much occupied with that which was passing within. One night when asleep, it seemed more vividly than in a dream, that the Lord Jesus stood before him. He fell at His feet with the words, "Lord, I love Thee." There was no reply. Again he said, "Lord, I love Thee." Still no answer. A third time he fervently repeated the words. But not a word came from the lips of the One whom he loved. Then he said, "Lord, Thou lovest me." And the Saviour lifted him up, and put His arms around him. Then this dear young convert learned that it was more grateful to the heart of the Lord Jesus that we should be occupied with His love to us, than speak of ours to Him. Yet He prizes our love—love that shows itself in obedience.

And He says, "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." (John 14:23.) S. C.

## The Child and the Earthquake at Colchester

---

"WHEN the children in the nursery heard the rumbling, not knowing what it was, they were quite delighted, thinking it to be simply a matter for fun; and the nurse on entering the room, found them laughing and rolling about on the floor. On the nurse (a Christian woman), however, trembling with fear, explaining to them that there was great danger, one of the little ones listened very attentively, said nothing, but quietly and immediately went into a corner of the room, fell upon his knees, and asked the Lord Jesus to preserve them. Just as he was rising from his knees, the cook entered, her face pale with fear, which on observing, the little boy cheerfully exclaimed, Oh, Cookee, don't be afraid; I've prayed to Jesus, and He will take care of us,' and then proceeded cheerfully to play with the others as usual, as though nothing had happened."

On reading this interesting incident, received in a letter from a friend who witnessed it, we felt, "Well, here we have an illustration of the blessed fact that ' out of the mouth of babes and sucklings' God perfects His praise; and a faith worthy of Himself, and such as Christ, its Author and Perfecter, can give, illustrating indeed the meaning of His own divine words, 'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'"

This faith, however, He promises to bestow, for He says, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find," and the Christian should remember that however strong his faith may be, his loving Lord, by His Spirit and word, can make it stronger; so strong, indeed, that whatever sufferings, temptations, trials, or calamities may surround us, we shall be lifted above all fear. Thus in the exercise of a cheerful, peaceful confidence, in the midst of all, and contemplating our risen and great Lord's perfection, and work, and faithfulness to His promises, we shall triumphantly exclaim with the apostle, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

"As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." W. P. B.

## The Home Above and the Journey Thither

---

THE Lord has assured to His people the blessedness of the Home above. "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you," are His words, and dear indeed are they to the hearts of tens of thousands. The Lord's people know His "for you" includes themselves. Truly the beautiful Home above is for all the children of God.

"In My Father's house," says our Lord. He had come from the House above to the desert places of this earth. He, the Son of the Father, who knew so well what the House on high is, and the love and joy that dwell there, was despised and rejected, and a Man of Sorrows here. Many mansions are there, many dwelling places: here the blessed Lord had not where to lay His head. On earth He was both a pilgrim and a stranger; and as He told His disciples of the Home above, in His Father's house, His path on earth was about to end; He was in a few days about to return thither. By His words Jesus was teaching His own to turn from earth and earthly expectation, and to dwell with Him in spirit on the blessedness of the Home above. Now, had not the heavenly Home been the great and the lovely place it is, He would have told us, for He loves His own perfectly, according to the measure of His own love. None shall be disappointed who hope in Him; nay, no expectation of ours can rise up to the reality of the excellence of the Father's house.

Yet in that House of many mansions the Lord would prepare a special place for His people. In our little homes on earth we delight in preparing a special charm for the beloved ones long absent but at last returning. We study their special interests, and according to what they most love we seek to surprise them. Love works thus for its objects. Our adorable Lord, who has been here, and who knows, by having tasted suffering, what sorrow is, with His own skill and wisdom has prepared a place for us. How He will surprise our glad hearts with joys He has in store for us on that day! We may be sure it is a joy to the blessed Redeemer to render the place in the Father's house sweet and delightful beyond utterance to the redeemed. Each of His people will have a special joy. It shall be ours to

"Find each hope of glory gained,

Fulfilled each precious word."

Not one good thing of His word on which we have set our hearts shall we look for in vain on that day.

There is rich solace and abiding comfort to our hearts in the contemplation of the Home above. Come, fellow pilgrims to the Mansion above, let us sing "Home, sweet Home" as we journey on to Heaven.

We think of days long gone by, of our childhood, and of our coming home, where at the door of the familiar house waited the beloved parents to welcome us. At that hour home was home indeed. All the wide world was as nothing to that little spot where love to us was everything. How much their love made of us! Such was our reception. And as we think of the love that made the welcome so

sweet, and us so supremely content, we seem to hear our Jesus saying to us—yes, to us—"I will.... receive you unto My self: that where I am, there ye may be also." Surely we may humbly apply this happy memory of earth to our anticipated joys of heaven! For the Lord taught us of divine love by instance of the love of earthly parents. Yes, Jesus will receive us unto Himself! He will welcome us! In His love we shall be satisfied. The love of fondest parent cannot compare with the love of Christ, which surpasseth knowledge. Yet a key to the entrance into this His love may be found in these wonderful words, "That where I am, there ye may be also," for His pleasure is to have His own where He is.

We turn to the latter part of the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and find again our Lord's words, "Let not your heart be troubled." He reminded His disciples how He had said to them, "I go away, and come again unto you," and then took back their thoughts, and ours, too, to what He said about the Home above: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Peace is left for us on earth, and is ours on our journey Home. We praise Him for this exhaustless legacy. No sorrows of the way can deprive us of its riches, Peace is specially for the journey Home, often so troublous, and so long as we are on earth we are on the journey. A heart at peace is a mighty witness on earth to Christ in heaven. His own blood has accomplished our redemption. "Peace unto you" is His word to us.

"My peace I give unto you." "My peace," says our Lord! We may well ponder over this gift. When Jesus was here His peace was perfect; Man of Sorrows He was, but He was ever in peace. He stayed Himself on His Father, and was in peace. Even when men spat in His face, His soul was in peace. On those great occasions when His soul was troubled His peace was perfect, and we hear Him say, "Father, I thank Thee." His obedience to His Father's will, His delight therein, lets us into the secret of His peace as a Man, and He says, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

What words for the way Home, then, are these: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"! Trouble we must have. "In the world ye shall have tribulations," but in Him we have peace. A saint of God on earth in the midst of tribulation, yet without a troubled heart, is one of God's wonders for His angels to look upon. And, further, the Lord bids us not to let our hearts be afraid. Fear is common to our souls. "Be of good cheer," says our Lord to us. He gives us good courage in Himself, and the courage is of Himself; He is the spring of it. Let us seek that our Christianity makes much of Christ. He is the source of our good cheer; He has overcome the world, and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"—our own individual faith in Him.

Say not, dear traveler to the Home above, "Ah! this must mean very strong faith"; for "who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5.) And the least child in the family of God believes that Jesus is the Son of God! Have we never seen a babe in its mother's arms shrink for fear, and as it shrinks thrust itself closer into her bosom? Let your fear but cast you closer on Christ. To His own love let us betake ourselves, and not be afraid. Whatever the next moment may bring forth to us, we shall not be afraid, provided we truly trust in Jesus. Make much of Christ on the way Home; He will make much of you when He conies and receives you Himself in the place He has prepared for you above.

## Then Came Amalek

---

"THEN"—just at the time of Israel's murmurings, just when they had chidden with Moses and had tempted Jehovah! And so it is, when God's people murmur and are disbelieving they expose themselves to the assaults of the foe, and then comes Satan! Yes, while their complaints still linger on their lips, sudden and unexpected, like a flood bursting down a hillside, like a lion leaping upon its prey, comes Satan!

Professor Palmer, in his *Desert of the Exodus*, speaks of a hill whereon, in great probability, Moses sat with uplifted hands at the battle of Rephidim. In some parts of the desert of the Exodus there is fertility,

and around the best watered parts we may well believe the Amalekites would rally, and "when the hostile body had encamped within a short distance of the oasis they would no doubt watch for an opportunity of attacking them unawares in order to take them at a disadvantage."

Not far from the locality where it is supposed the battle of Rephidim was fought is a rock, which the Arabs regard as the site of the miracle that supplied Israel with water;

and to this day they cast pebbles, in the name of Moses, when they come there, in memory of the water which flowed from the rock.

We seem to see the foe creeping up to the camp of Israel, and then, suddenly bursting over the hill-sides, the warriors leap down the rocks and fling themselves upon the host.

The Lord was Israel's strength and shield, but Israel had said, "Is the Lord among us or not?" Ah! "then came Amalek." Yes, let go faith, and Satan is upon us.

It was hardly three months since Israel were slaves in the bondage of Egypt, and how could they withstand these desert warriors? Israel were untrained for war, and were moreover encumbered with their women and children and their cattle. 'They seemed, indeed, to be hut a prey for the foe; they had advanced far into the mountains and valleys of Horeb, and now Amalek seemed to have them for his own. Amalek would slay the warriors of Israel, and take the flock and the herds, the women and the children, a prey for himself. But behold the hill-top! See Moses is there with uplifted hands, and against those hands uplifted in intercession to Heaven, the sword and the spear shall not prevail.

Satan keeps a keen watch on God's people. He is ever on the look out for their murmurings, their unbelief, their questioning of God's faithful, untiring care. Let God's pilgrims make light of His unfailing grace and goodness to them; let the trials of the way tempt them to say, "What is God still for me? Is He still my Defender, my Shield?" and, lo!—then comes Satan. And were it not that our Lord Jesus Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us, we should be scattered to the four winds of heaven.

And how true to Satan's ways this very day is this coming of Amalek. He overwhelms the men who should stand for God, and then he carries captive the weak and the young. Now there are ever warriors in the company of God's people who are called to the front. "Moses said unto Joshua Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek." Joshua, as we know from the book that bears his name, was the energetic fighting leader of Israel. Joshua's is the book of the sword, as Moses's books of the wanderings are those of the rod; and thus, though Israel had but begun their pilgrimage when this call to fighting came, it is Joshua whom God appoints to direct the battle. The great difference between this struggle and the wars 'of Canaan is, that here Amalek came to attack Israel, whereas in Canaan, Israel came to attack and drive out the Canaanites. But view the ways of Satan against God's people as we may, the issues of our conflicts are settled on the mountain top—decided by what Christ is for us. And let Satan's assaults be what they may, God calls us to resist the devil. Resist him, and he will flee from you; take tamely his energies against us, and Satan will certainly get us under his power.

“And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." "Take....the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," says the scripture, for against that Satan cannot stand. Yet, think not that after a battle, and by grace a victory, Satan is overwhelmed, for "the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." Right on to the end there will be conflict with Satan. He is an untiring adversary. Ever on the watch himself, and ever on the look out for unwatchfulness on the part of God's people. Yet, let none be discouraged, for though God try us and allow us to be tried, He is ever for His people, and if God be for us, who can be against us?"

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 8:14-18; and Luke 4:33-42.)

SEE whether you can find on the map the place where the city of Capernaum once stood. You know it was in Galilee, beside that beautiful lake in which Peter and Andrew, and James and John used to fish.

It was in this city that all the wonderful things of which we have just been reading were done by the Lord Jesus. We have read a little history, which God has given us, of how the Lord spent one of His days, while He was here in this world, doing always what God wished Him to do, and showing us what love is in God's heart to those who have never done anything to please Him, or make Him love them, but always turned away from Him.

This was the Sabbath day, and the Lord Jesus had been, in the morning, in the synagogue, teaching the people. You have just read, in the gospel of Luke, of the wonderful work which He did there, and how astonished all the people were when He commanded the wicked spirit to come out of the man, who was crying aloud in the synagogue, and the spirit came out of him, and hurt him not. This wonderful work was done before all those who were there, and as they left the synagogue that day, and went to their homes, all the people were speaking to each other about it, so that the fame of the Lord went out into every place of the country round about.

The next wonderful work of power and kindness which the Lord did was not done before a great many people, but in the house of two of His disciples, where a sick woman lay. St. Mark tells us that directly the Lord went out of the synagogue, He went to this house, the house of Simon and Andrew, and that James and John were with Him. They had all been present while He taught in

the synagogue, and while He set free the poor man who had the wicked spirit from the dreadful power of Satan which had held him fast. We may fancy that the disciples spoke low and moved gently as they entered the house, for they knew that Peter's wife's mother was very ill indeed. Have you ever known anyone who has been ill of a fever?

If you have, I am sure you must remember how anxiously all the friends of the sick person spoke, for often people do not get well when they have a fever; and if they do not die, the fever takes away their strength, so that they are very ill and helpless, even for a long time after the fever has quite gone, and they are getting better.

The poor woman who lay ill in the house at Capernaum to which the Lord went with His disciples had a great fever, so we know that all her friends must have been very sad and anxious. What could they do? They did the very best thing, and the instant the Lord Jesus came into the house, they told Him about her. The Lord loved Peter, and felt for him, and cared very much about the mother of his wife being so very ill. Just as He had rebuked the wicked spirit which had power over the man who cried out in the synagogue, so now, as He stood beside the bed where the sick woman lay, He rebuked the fever. Just as the wicked spirit had left the man whom it had tormented, at the word of Christ, so now the fever let go its hold upon the sick woman, and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

What does that mean? To minister means to serve. It means that the instant the Lord touched the hand of Peter's wife's mother, and rebuked that great fever which had laid her so low, she got up, quite strong and well, and began to go about the house and do all she could to serve and wait upon the Lord Jesus and His disciples. So two people were blessed and healed that day in Capernaum, and the hearts of a great many were comforted and lifted in praise to God.

But the day was not over yet. In that country, after the sun has set, it soon becomes dark, but just at the time when the sun begins to go down, the great heat of the day is past, and the air becomes pleasant and cool. In the cool evening time of that Sabbath day great crowds of people came to Jesus; they had heard of what He had done in the synagogue and in the house of Simon and Andrew, and so they brought to Him many that were possessed with devils, and He cast out the spirits with His word. And all who had any sick with different sorts of diseases, brought them to Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. When the wicked spirits cried, "Thou art Christ the Son of God," Jesus would not allow them to speak. What they said was quite true, for God had spoken from heaven to the Lord Jesus, and said, "Thou art My beloved Son"; but He did not allow the devils to say who He was, because they knew that He was Christ.

Thus, on that day in the city beside the lake, the words which God had spoken by His prophet Isaiah, a great many years before, came to pass.

You read those words in the last of your verses from the gospel of Matthew: "Himself look our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." We know of whom the prophet spoke. No one could ever feel for those who were sick and suffering in the same way as the Son of God did. No one ever felt so sorry as He did when He saw the sorrows of others. It is true that when He saw people in great trouble, He knew that by one word or one touch He could change it all, and bring gladness instead of mourning; but still He suffered with those whom He saw suffering, and felt deep sorrow when He saw what sorrow sin had brought into the world. This is what it means when we read that He

had compassion upon sick, or sorrowful, or hungry people. How wonderful it is to know that the blessed Lord feels just the same now, in heaven where He is, and that the youngest child may still go to Him with anything that troubles him, and tell Him all the truth about it, and be sure that He is listening, and will give help and comfort, when perhaps the trouble is so great that no one else could be of any use.

I WILL put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. (Jer. 31:33)

## In Everything Give Thanks

---

AVERY little girl, only four years of age, was once taken by her parents on a short visit to a seaside town.

On the morning following, she knelt by the bedside, and after having put up a few simple petitions for God's blessing and protection for herself and others dear to her, and for the forgiveness of all her sins, she added, quite of her own accord, "Oh, and thank you very much, good, kind Lord Jesus, for letting me come down to B. with papa and mamma; I did want to come so, and 'tis so nice!" There was no mistaking the sincerity of that thanksgiving: the deep earnestness of the little one's tone of voice proved that she meant all she said.

"The Lord hearkened and heard," for He hath ordained that "praises should be perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings." It rejoices His heart to receive thanks and praises from the tiny lambs of His flock.

"Children's praise He loves to hear,

Children's songs delight His ear."

Many little children forget very often to thank their earthly friends and relatives for their pleasant gifts. This is sadly ungrateful and rude; but how much oftener do they forget to thank God for all the "good and perfect gifts" which He is ever showering down upon them. No child could count up the blessings and comforts which are given to him or to her by God, and which are given so freely, too, without His having been even asked for them; and should there not be thanks returned for them?

Do you remember, dear children, how when the Lord Jesus was upon this earth going about doing good He healed ten poor lepers who came to Him? They were suffering from such a terrible disease that no one dared to come near them, or to have anything at all to do with them. Yet the Lord in His tender pity healed them all. How many out of the ten do you think remembered to thank the Lord for being so kind to them? Surely all of them! No, only one out of ten and he no doubt was considered by the rest to be the worst of the whole number, because he was not a true Jew, but only a Samaritan. Is it much the same now in our day, we wonder? E. G.

## No Want to Them That Fear Him

---

LITTLE Arthur D. was one morning playing with the cat on his aunt's hearth, looking the very picture of health and happiness, and entirely free from care. His aunt, on the contrary, was rather troubled about some money which was owing her, and so as she came into the room, seeing him thus happily engaged, she said, "Ah, if everyone was as free from care as you, my child!" He looked up in her face, and said, in his own simple way, "There is no want to them that fear Him."

Instantly she felt rebuked that she should ever doubt her Father's love, and there was comfort, too, in the thought that "there is no want to them that fear Him."

When speaking to me of it, she said, "I felt that the words came direct from the Lord Himself; they had such power."

How simple trust in the Lord calms our fears Casting all our care on Him, for He careth for us, is the happy way to live.

A short time ago two little girls were left orphans, and they were not left to friends and relatives whom they knew, but to a kind lady, almost a stranger, who had promised to provide them a home. Do you think it troubled them as to where their dinner was coming from? Certainly not; neither did they try to provide it themselves. No; they knew their kind friend had promised to supply it, and they knew, too, she would be as good as her word. They trusted her most thoroughly. And is not this the way God would have us trust Him? Has He not promised to supply all our need, and is He not as good as His word? Can we for a moment think there can be want to them that fear Him? If we do, we most assuredly dishonor Him; for He who has promised is faithful, and what He has promised He is able to perform. Let us, then, just take Him at His word, and trust Him as fully as these children did their kind friend. N. N.

### Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

A. D. 70.

"And wizen ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judœa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there into. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

NOT forty years had passed away since those words of Christ were spoken, when the terrible hour of the destruction of, the holy city by the Gentiles came. The Roman governor Pilate, who held his office until the third year after the ascension of Christ, was succeeded by seven governors in the next thirty years, among them the "most excellent governor Felix," before whom St. Paul stood to answer for himself, and of whom it is recorded that he trembled, as he heard the prisoner from Jerusalem reason of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Early in the year 66, when the Romans were still busy in making good their conquest of Britain, the Jews in Palestine made a desperate resistance, and tried hard to free themselves from their yoke. Terrible scenes of

revolt and outrage followed. In one day the Gentiles in Cæsarea, in revenge for injuries done them, massacred all the Jews, to the number of 20,000. The Jews then attacked the Gentiles, and soon, in every town, the bitter conflict of nation against nation had begun.

When, in the autumn of the same year, the Roman legions drew near Jerusalem, the Christians among the Jews, for the most part, acting on their Lord's warning, left the city and retreated beyond Jordan to the mountain town of Pella, a place about seventy miles off, situated on those slopes of Gilead which were the scene of David's exile when he fled from Absalom. There, and in the district of Perea, they remained, until, when the war was over, by degrees they wandered back to the ruined city. Thus the disciples of Christ, mindful of His word, escaped the fearful horrors of those "days of vengeance" of which He had spoken.

The siege began in April, just at the time of celebrating the Passover, when Jerusalem was densely crowded with Jews from all parts, and contained about three millions of people within its walls. The Jewish historian, from whom we learn much of what took place at this dreadful time, says, "This mighty concourse of people were cooped up in the city as in a prison, and the slaughter of them exceeded all the destructions that men or God ever brought upon the world."

Nero had sent the general Vespasian—soon to be emperor in his stead—to put down the revolt in the province of Palestine, but it was Vespasian's son Titus, who, on his father being called to Rome, actually besieged and finally took the city. The siege lasted one hundred and thirty-four days, and was a time of unexampled suffering. A pestilence raged among the crowded masses of people, and this was followed by a famine so terrible that the besieged became mad with hunger, and devoured even the dirt in the streets. To add to the horrors of that time, the unhappy city was as a house divided against itself, for when Titus with his army appeared on the neighboring heights, three different parties of Jews were at war with each other within its walls.

We are told that when the Roman general had taken the first and second walls of the city, he paused, with his war engine the Conqueror, and proposed to the besieged to surrender; but this offer was scornfully rejected, though each day saw the miserable famine stricken people who left the doomed city and came over to the enemy's camp. The Roman general caused these unhappy fugitives to be scourged and crucified without mercy, while he still sent messages to the leaders of the factions within the city, warning them not to compel him to destroy their temple. They still answered that they preferred death to slavery, and that they could trust their temple to the care of Him who dwelt there, for in His hands were the issues of war.

Meantime, in their fierce hate, they slew the very men who would have taught them how to defend their city, burnt the scanty supply of corn which remained, and drew off the guard from the strong towers, which were its best protection. Even at the last, Titus persisted in his wish to save the city. "If you will but change the scene of conflict," he said, "no Roman shall approach or profane the holy places: nay, I will save them even against your will." Neither party yielding, the Jews were at length driven into the temple as their last stronghold; the fighting still went on in the outer courts; the famine increased; and still Titus sought to spare the sacred building which, in its fair beauty, showing like "a mountain of alabaster topp'd with golden spires," must have contrasted strangely with the scenes of horror and desolation upon which it looked down. At last, by the wanton act of a soldier, a lighted torch was taken into the temple, and soon the whole building was one sheet of flame. When the Jews saw their temple on fire, hope at last died in their hearts, and raising "a

universal but expiring cry of sorrow and despair," they gave up all for lost, and began to hide themselves in the aqueducts and sewers, only to be dragged thence, and mercilessly slaughtered. The city was set on fire in several places, and the work of destruction went on until nothing was left of the stronghold of Mount Zion but a ruinous heap. Titus himself was so amazed at the strength of the "mountain-city," that he attributed his success in taking it to the hand of God.

When he returned to Rome, the victorious general left behind him one of his officers, with instructions to carry on the work which he had begun, and so thoroughly did he fulfill his commission, that we are told that "no one visiting the city would believe it had ever been inhabited." Some of the great blocks of marble of which the temple was built were forty-five feet long, and most of them were thirty-seven feet long, twelve feet high, and eighteen broad. But forty years had passed since the time when Christ in answer to the exclamation of one of His disciples—"Master, see what manner of stones and what building"!—had said, "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down," and His words were literally fulfilled: "Zion was plowed as a field, and Jerusalem became heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest."

More than a million of the unhappy people of that guilty city, over which the rejected King, whom she was about to cast out and crucify, wept, perished during the siege. Of the multitudes of prisoners which fell into the hands of the Romans, some were thrown to wild beasts, to make sport for the people, but the great proportion were sold for slaves; we are told that thirty might be bought for a piece of silver. Of the strong men, some were dispersed among the towns of the empire, to fight as gladiators in the theaters; others were sent in chains to work in the Egyptian mines; but perhaps the saddest of all the captives were those tall and handsome young men who were taken to Rome, that they might walk in the triumphal procession of the conqueror. In this procession rich spoils and trophies were carried; then came giant statues of the gods of Rome, and after them marched a mournful band of Jewish captives, bearing upon their shoulders the spoils of the temple. The "march past" of this sad procession may be seen sculptured upon an arch which is still standing in Rome—the Arch of Titus—which was set up to commemorate his victory. As the traveler of to-day passes under this arch, and sees, on the one hand, the representation of the emperor in his triumphal car—on the other, that of the captives from Jerusalem carrying the golden candlestick, the table of show-bread, and the silver trumpets of the jubilee—what thoughts must fill his mind!

While much in the Eternal City has gone to ruin, God has allowed this record of the humiliation of His rebellious people to remain, a monument for all time. We are told that when the triumph was over the sacred vessels were placed in a great temple to Peace which the emperor had built, while the roll of the law and the curtain of the Holy Place were taken to his palace. Another memorial of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem remains in the coins struck to commemorate the Roman triumph, which bear the inscription "Juda Capta," and the mournful figure of a woman sitting under a palm, while a Roman soldier stands by.

Jerusalem disappears from history from this time until about fifty years after the death of Titus, when the emperor Hadrian, who had made some efforts to protect the Christians from the popular clamors, determined to restore the city, and sent a colony of soldiers to occupy it. The Jews who had taken possession of the place, which they still counted holy, made a fierce resistance, and

began, under a leader named Barcochab, who was believed to be the Messiah, to rebuild their temple. So serious was the insurrection that Hadrian sent to Britain for his best general to quell it. During this time the Christians of Palestine suffered for refusing to acknowledge Barcochab.

After a two years' struggle, Jerusalem was again in the hands of the Romans, and Hadrian determined to wipe out, if it were possible, its very name as a city. The ruins which Titus had left were razed to the ground, and a plow passed over the place where the temple had been. A Roman city was built on the foundations of Jerusalem; a temple to Jupiter upon Mount Zion; no Jew might enter the city on pain of death; and it was not until the fourth century that they were permitted, once a year, on the anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem, to come and weep over its departed glory.

So completely has Jerusalem been trodden down by the Gentiles, who have built city after city upon its ancient site, that it is now only by digging fifty feet below the surface of modern Jerusalem that the foundations of the city of David can be reached. The place on Mount Moriah where Solomon's temple stood is now occupied by a great mosque, for the Turks are masters of the land. Close by this mosque runs the wall of the modern city, and built into the lower part of the wall are some immense hewn stones, which are believed to have belonged to the ancient foundation of Solomon's temple. There, to this day, the Jews meet on Friday evenings, at sunset, and weep for the vanished glory of their nation, while they whisper prayers between the crevices of the stones which once formed part of that house concerning which the God of Israel said, "Mine eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually."

An English traveler once noticed a young Jew at this place; he was sitting, with downcast air, upon the ground. Drawing near, he asked him what book he was reading. The young man pointed to the 22nd Psalm, and the Englishman took the book from him, and read aloud until he came to the 16th verse.

Then he paused, and asked, —

"Of whom speaketh the prophet thus?"

"Of David, and all his afflictions," replied the young Jew.

"But David's hands and feet were not pierced," said the stranger.

He then spoke for some time about the rejected Messiah, but the Jew would not admit that the words of the Psalm could have been written about a greater than David.

Nearly eighteen hundred years have passed away since the terrible events took place of which our Lord warned His disciples, and the "times of the Gentiles" are still going on, the times during which God allows the nations to have supremacy over Israel; but it will not be always thus; the day will come when Jerusalem shall be "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," as she has never been before, even in the brightest period of her history.

## Now or Never

---

IN the northern part of the kingdom, a few years ago, a young coal miner had to descend a mine before the rest of the pitmen arrived. It was about two o'clock in the morning. He stepped into the cage, and was soon slowly descending the shaft, some sixty fathoms in depth. For a short time after leaving the edge of the shaft all went well; but suddenly, when some twenty fathoms below the surface, the cage caught the side of the pit, and tore away a portion of the woodwork; some of it fell down the shaft, other portions fell upon the top of the cage. The young man was in imminent peril, and he knew that, unless some great deliverance came, the cage must be smashed to pieces and he be a dead man in a few more moments. Then he remembered that some thirty fathoms from the top was an old disused mine, and that the "eye," as the pitmen call the hole or entrance, was still open. He at once made up his mind to try the desperate course of leaping into this hole as the cage passed by it. The risk was fearful, but the only chance for his life lay in getting out of the cage, for the timbers continued to fall upon it from the sides of the pit.

He prepared for the dreadful leap across the yawning chasm as soon as the opening should appear to view. In a few seconds it came in sight. With firmly closed lips, and every nerve of the body at the utmost stretch, he made a spring. The gulf was crossed, and a place of safety reached.

Oh, what a palace those slimy, wet walls of the old mine seemed to that young man! Had he remained in the cage he must have been dashed to pieces; had he been one second later in leaping into the hole in the mine, he would have been hurled to the bottom of the shaft. It was with him "now" or "never." He took the "now," and was saved through God's mercy.

Some time after this narrow escape from death, the Holy Spirit led this young man to see his vileness and his sinfulness in the sight of God, and for months he was in a wretchedly unhappy state of soul.

He made his condition known to several Christians, but obtained no help from them; indeed, they rather hindered his finding rest, for the substance of their advice was, "Believe; only believe, and it will be all right by and by"; or they would ask the question, "Do you feel any better?" Instead of showing the young seeker whom and what he had to believe, they cast him back upon himself—miserable self.

Holding a responsible office, the young man's duty was to examine the "workings" of the mine, to see if they were free from explosive gas, and safe for the men to work in. One morning, after making the accustomed examination, he retired to a disused part of the mine, to pray and seek rest in Christ, as he had done for some time.

On this occasion he had in his pocket part of a tract which had impressed him a few days before, and upon his knees, by the light of the Davy lamp, he read the tract, part of which was as follows—

"It is not by repentance"—he had been seeking to repent—"nor by prayers"—he had prayed much—"nor by cries"—often and long had he cried—"nor by tears" —he had wept much—"but through a full trust in Christ, we are saved!"

Full trust in Christ! Simple faith in Him! No, this he had left undone; all the rest he had tried; and instead of trusting to Christ, he had been trusting to himself. Yes, instead of faith in what Christ had done, he was trusting in his own doings. The young man now saw his error; and more, he saw that Christ alone could save him, and he there and then trusted Him, and was filled with holy joy and peace.

Years have passed away; that once young man still lives to praise the Lord, who saved him, and often does he repeat these words to himself: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." (Psa. 40:2.)

Reader, the writer is he who took that desperate leap. He appeals to-day to you; for, through the infinite mercy of God to him, he is now safe in Christ and saved forever.

God has His "now" and His "never." Here are a few of God's "nows":—

"Come; for all things are NOW ready." (Luke 14:17.)

"Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2.)

"The hour is coming, and NOW is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25.)

And here, reader, is one of the "nevers" of God's word. Oh, may it never be your portion to hear it as addressed to you! —

"I NEVER knew you: depart from Me."

(Matt. 7:23.) J. H. I—G.

## Short Swords

---

IT is said, that with the lengthening of the swords of their soldiers, the military power of Rome diminished. Of course, sword s are lengthened for a reason. Short swords mean hand to hand fighting. You must get close to your adversary to strike him with a short sword; and an enemy armed with a longer weapon than your own will hold you at bay, unless your heart be as brave, as your weapon is short.

Preachers of the gospel, visitors of the sick, and whoever is engaged in active Christian warfare—in getting at souls use short swords. Come to close quarters with immortal souls. Wounding, not fencing, is needed. The grand idea should be to strike the heart of the poor enemy to God. Even infidelity, with its long weapons and defensive armor, quails and fails before the short sword in the hand of a man whose courage and love are God-given.

Alas! nowadays very little is known of warring for God with short swords. Generilisms, ifs, hope sos, roundabout remarks as to heaven and hell, suggestions that the unconverted may perhaps at length find themselves mistaken, apologetic language to the effect that after all the Bible may be true, are amongst the fashionable pieces of artillery of the day, with which, however, souls are not wounded and brought on their knees crying "Mercy."

## What Shall It Profit?

---

"OH! how can I leave my horses, my hounds, and my sweet Ballyannan? "Such were the dying utterances of a man who had lived only for the pleasures of this world, surrounded by every comfort, and possessed of everything that could conduce to earthly happiness and gratify the carnal mind.

His mansion was beautifully situated a few miles from the lovely town of Queenstown, Co. Cork; the demesne extended to a river running up from the harbor, and altogether it was a most desirable place.

This man had his horses, his own pack of hounds, and facilities for yachting and boating; he became completely absorbed in the enjoyment of those things, and his daily life was a continual stream of excitement and anxiety to enjoy vain delights to the complete exclusion—yes, extinction from his mind of thoughts of the future. Even in his last moments there was no thought of the soul. But one care absorbed him—"Oh! how can I leave these things?"

What a lamentable state of mind! Not one thought of his Maker, or as to where his soul was going! Can anything be more sad, more heartrending to friends and relations than thus to be gathered round a bed whereon a human being is lying ready to depart, knowing or caring nothing for the life to come, and whose whole existence is centered on things present?

From my experience of the world, and of the large number of those with whom I have mingled, I fear that this man's case is not an isolated one, and although many may not be so absorbed in worldly matters to the utter exclusion of things immortal, as he was, yet, I fear, comparatively few really rejoice in the Lord, and desire to live a holy, humble Christian life.

There is the case of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man died, possibly as the man of whom I am writing, clinging to the world, "but in hell he lifted up his eyes." Our Lord says how hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven. What an example hereof is the man's case of whom I write, and how forcibly it proves our Lord's saying! But, thanks unto our heavenly Father, with Him all things are possible, and He is willing to accept all who come to Him—rich and poor. Oh, that those who have the riches of this world might use them and not abuse them, but dedicate them to His use, to His honor and glory, in helping to spread the gospel throughout all the earth. VICTOR.

## Ah! He'll Soon Give Over

---

ABOUT fifteen years ago, I, and three other men, were employed in Glasgow. At the week's end we used to drink and play cards. We spent our time in folly and sin. We had many escapes with our lives, one of which occurred late one Saturday night. We were all drinking together, and were all intoxicated. The master of the house, a powerfully-built man, came into the room where we were with a large ax in his hand. He, too, was intoxicated, and in his condition could not command his passion. He struck at one of my companions with the ax, and just nicked him on the chin. He was aiming for a second blow, when my companion shouted out to me; I was behind, and caught hold of his arm. Had I not prevented the ax from descending, I believe this blow would have severed his head from the body. I pulled the man with the ax down on the floor, and the others took the dangerous weapon from him, when his wife and children came in screaming, and begged us to let him go.

It was when living in sin, as I have described, that it pleased God to show me my lost and sinful state. He showed me I was a lost, hell-deserving sinner.

I was awakened to a sense of my sin and guilt by hearing a poor ignorant man preaching by the Glasgow jail just when, like Saul of Tarsus, I was going out to fight against the Lord. God spoke to me from this verse in the sixth chapter of Revelation:—"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shalt be able to stand?" A fortnight after this, after God had broken me down, I heard the glad tidings of salvation from another servant of His, a poor collier, who pointed out simply God's love to this poor world in giving His Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I went, a poor, miserable sinner, into the large building where the collier was speaking; I knew that I was in danger of perishing in my sins; I came out rejoicing, having believed God's record that He had given concerning His Son, and the gracious words respecting the work which He accomplished. The work of the Lord Jesus has brought glory to God; and through grace it has brought everlasting blessing to my poor soul, as one saved by grace, through faith, and that not of myself—it is the gift of God.

Now, being saved myself, I began to preach Christ and Him crucified to my fellow-workmen; nor did I rest' satisfied till I had cleared myself of the blood of every one of them, telling them in my simple way the story of the cross. A month or two afterward, God saved two in answer to prayer. One was a fighting man, who has, since his conversion, gone to the Lord.

About twelve months after this the Lord opened my way to come again to England, and it was then that the words at the head of my story were uttered:—"Ah! he'll soon give over; we shall soon hear of him going to the alehouse and theater, as he used to do." Five years after, the man who uttered the above words came to work where I was at Tutbury, in Staffordshire. I saw him coming out of an ale-house, and, going up to him, I inquired after his health, telling him that I was still rejoicing in my Saviour, and was exceedingly happy. The man sighed and said, "Ah! I cannot say that." I then reminded him of the words he uttered when I left Glasgow, adding, "You expected me to return to

my old way of living, but the same God that was with me in Glasgow is with me here at Tutbury. The Lord is still precious to me.”

My old companion wished he could say the same. Shortly after the above conversation he was taken ill. I visited him frequently, and God enabled me to point him to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. I believe he was enabled to trust in the Lord Jesus, whose name is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The daughter of the sick man came to see him. I told her that I believed her father was saved, but the landlady of the house exclaimed, "Oh, no! he has a deal to do in order to be saved!"

But, says the Scripture, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

Perhaps some of my readers are, like this woman, thinking they have to do something to obtain salvation. We have no more to do to obtain salvation than the prodigal had to get the best robe, ring, shoes, and fatted calf. He confessed he had sinned, and was unworthy; and we can say nothing less. A father's loving heart provided every blessing, and the prodigal became the happy recipient of that father's bounty, and the house was filled with heavenly mirth.

God has received Christ up into glory, and we see in that a proof that He is satisfied with the work that Christ did once for all on the cross; and now it remains for us to receive Him by simple faith.

"Nothing, either great or small,

Nothing, sinner, no!

Jesus did it—did it all,

Long, long ago.”

Works flow from salvation like a stream from a fountain, but we must have the fountain first, and

“Until to Jesus' work you cling,

By a simple faith,

Doing is a deadly thing,

Doing ends in death.”

Do not despise God's grace, and neglect the salvation so fully and freely offered in the gospel.

C. SP—N.

"How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! as little do I take away of my great sea, the boundless love of Christ."—Extract.

## Sacred Memories

---

A DYING testimony was not needed to those who knew our dear E. in her walk with God. It seemed as though the closing circumstances of her life were, in the deep purpose of God, according to her heart's earnest desire that in all things Christ might be magnified in her body, whether by life or death.

One day she told me, that the previous day five weeks, it was as though the Lord distinctly told her He was going to take her home. She was in a fainting state after dinner, unconscious of what passed around—one arm quite stiff—and when she awoke to consciousness was surprised to find herself still in the body. She said that while in the state of unconsciousness she distinctly saw the Lord at the other end of the room; that her impulse was to reach Him, and that He said, "Thy day is gone by; I am making thy bed." She then saw there were waves and billows between Him and herself, and she knew she had to pass them to get to Him; but any way was good. From that day everything of earth seemed to her to be coming to its end. She said she felt the Lord's tender goodness in giving her time for preparations for the close of her journey.

These are some of her words, spoken on different occasions: —

"I think I have overlooked death. I have thought of death with and life in Christ, and of the Lord's coming, but I have overlooked death as a fact that might come to me; but five weeks ago I went with the Lord through the conflict, and it is over."

"It is a fiery trial. These are new experiences of the wilderness. It is an easy thing to die at once, but quite another thing to be laid on a sick bed. I am very much afraid of giving praise to anything that is of nature—it is so different from what God does."

Once, when in great agony, she said, "This bringing down, it is all good; but do you pray for submission for me? I did ask the Lord to give me relief, if it were pleasing to Him, and He gave me a little." Then, addressing the Lord, she said, "O Lord, remove this pain, if it is Thy will, but do not let me lose anything by my impatience."

On another occasion, when in great pain, her sufferings being noticed, she said, "Ah! we talk of our cross, but we do not know what it is until we are called to bear it. Never shrink from the cross or try to escape from suffering when you are called to it: go boldly forward through it."

"How wonderful that God should joy over poor sinners, and yet there is joy in the presence of the angels."

"It is a mercy there is no fear—' Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.' A death-bed is very humiliating! Well, when God has done all He has to do in me, He will take me to Himself,"

"This is the end of man. Christ is so precious—no end with Him; Christ, the beginning, middle, and end, has done all the work—His precious blood!"

"It is not the glory that fills my eye, it is the Lord Himself—yes, My glory.' Ah, it is that they shall behold my glory."

On one occasion, after sleeplessness for fifty hours, she was very feeble and excited, and said more than once, "It is hysteria." But her happiness seemed unutterable, and her countenance so beamed with joy that it was impossible not to respond with a smile. "Ah!" she said, "you are rejoicing with me; I'm so glad." She kept lifting up and letting fall the hands placed in hers, looking up, and almost laughing with joy. She was like a bird just ready for flight. Once following the direction of my eyes, she said, "Ah! we can only look up now. 'They shall walk with me in white'—Sovereign grace; yet I am almost faint-hearted sometimes."

"I'm only afraid of not being made perfect weakness, of not being brought low enough."

"I think you have thought more of the love of the Father and I more of the love of Christ, my Master and Lord," she said to a friend. "It is the Father's will that must be done—an undivided stream of love and peace flowing down from God the Father, meeting all the little crookednesses of my heart and will. Pray for me for submission to His will. It is not exactly in submission, but irritability in me."

"I have not the bright manifestations of His glory that I might have," she said; "but I must wait for the reality."

"But you see His faithfulness," said a friend. "He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." "That's just it," she replied; "He is gathering."

"I was thinking it was just possible that I might not see death. The Lord said at the beginning, Behold, I come quickly.' He only waits to bring sinners to Himself ere He comes back; He wishes us to have this blessed hope before us.—' We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.'—' We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'—' Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Humiliation—humiliation—the end of man," were words that more than once fell from her lips." I think it not strange concerning the fiery trial. I need divine strength to carry me through. Christ must be everything—man nothing. We must be emptied of self—that's what we want. It is my Father's will, and I can now say that I am willing, even if I am to have another week. I'm like the dust shaken in the crucible."

After a long silence she said, "Oh, the value of Jesus!" Then she repeated the lines—

"Dear dying Lamb Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed Church of God  
Be saved to sin no more."

"To sin no more! —Precious words! Take me—take me—take me," she kept saying, not with impatience, but desire. And many, many times as if almost unconscious, she would repeat,

"Away— away—away," moving her head at each word from side to side, with an expression of the extremity of weakness.

"Perfect rest-perfect peace. Ah, I want to know that Name when they come." But the enemy was not suffered to approach! Once during the night-whether conscious or not we cannot tell-she said, "Things of earth! what are they; they're not worth looking at!" and said it with great emphasis.

The day before her last she said to a friend, "Some have had glorious and triumphant deaths, I was not ambitious for that, but that the creature might be humbled and God exalted, the creature forgotten."

We spoke together of ending where we began, with Jesus. "Oh, yes," she said, "and there is no end with Him, He has done wonders for me."

"Green pastures," I heard her whisper, and she looked enquiringly. I repeated the 23rd Psalm. It was evidently what she wanted.

Again she looked earnestly at me and said, "Inheritance have you reckoned the time?"

I repeated, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." She smiled and moved her head as with assent and pleasure. After this she lay quiet for a time, and then relapsed into unconsciousness. All this night her sufferings were intense. One was reminded of the writhings of a worm-every fiber seemed to quiver to the touch of the hand pressed (as she liked it) on one particular spot where the pain was the worst. She knew the happy moment was at hand, said she wished to be quiet—the door closed—that she could have no more intercourse with us, though our fellowship would not be interrupted.

Her eyes were continually upward. Only one word we heard, "Mercy," faintly whispered by her-not as seeking, but as having long since found it, and as now tasting it.

Mercy was a word she loved. [E. C. 1858.]

## God Who Justifies

---

WHO shall lay any charge against those whom God Himself justifies? Who is he that shall institute judicial proceedings against those whom God Himself, the Supreme, the Judge of all, has declared free from every charge? Suppose a king, having heard every charge brought against a man guilty of a crime worthy of death, pardons that man and sets him at liberty—who in the realms of that king should dare revive the accusations and institute afresh proceedings against the man? In such case the controversy would be between the king and the accuser. The pardoned man would be under the protection of the majesty of the king, whose will of mercy and whose prerogative of pardon would be directly assailed by the accuser. And thus is it with God's elect—to assail their security is really to rise up against God Himself in His way of grace and mercy, and in His own wonderful ways of pardon, and of justification.

We may confidently abide in peace, for the challenger who cries, "Who shall lay anything against the charge of God's elect?" is none less than God the Holy Spirit, speaking through His inspired apostle. This trumpet-voice sounds throughout the universe of God, and none in heaven nor in hell shall rise up and accept it, for so to do would be to join issues with the Eternal, the Infinite God. What a confidence is here for your heart, poor trembling believer in the Lord Jesus Christ! Yet, though neither heaven nor hell shall accept the challenge, still on earth the hearts of God's elect do at times beat with fear lest after all they themselves should not be truly secure!

Now, as we consider our justification, first of all there must be no question as to our proven guilt. God has brought in all guilty before Himself. (Rom. 3:19.) Whoever, whatsoever the sinner, he has been adjudged guilty. His case has been tried. It requires no fresh trial. A man tried and proven guilty, and under sentence of death, is not to be tried over again: hence to attempt to clear oneself by works is simply to try to set aside the divine verdict—guilty. But if the king so will he may pardon; if not, the law must take its course. God has pardoned—yea, justified—so our confidence is in God.

How often do really seeking souls miss the great reality respecting themselves that lies in the word "guilty," and act as if their case were not already concluded against them as sinners by God's own proof, and by His sentence recorded in Rom. 3:19. It would save seekers after pardon many a fruitless hour if they did but believe what God says as to this; and many a profitless hope, that perchance they might do something to please God and to merit His mercy, would be avoided. The solemn reality is this: all men now at this moment are either guilty before God or are justified by God. Each of us is either like the criminal whose case has been tried, and who is awaiting the sentence of death, or each of us is like him who, though once guilty, is now pardoned! No intermediate place does anyone occupy.

Now it is GOD who justifies the ungodly. God, before whom all are proven guilty, has set forth His righteousness. He has proclaimed His own righteousness to us in His gospel concerning His Son. We have no righteousness in ourselves, and it is too late for us, being guilty, ever to attain to righteousness of our own. Human righteousness which is of works cannot be found; it is

hopelessly too late to seek for it; but now, in this day, since the death and the resurrection of Christ, God's righteousness is manifested and declared. God has given His Son to die for the guilty sinner. Jesus, our Lord, has been delivered for our offenses, and has been raised again for our justification, and God, who gave His Son to die for us, and who raised Him from the dead, counts us righteous upon our faith in Himself. It is obvious that we cannot attain to God's righteousness; but when we believe His gospel, God reckons righteousness to us. (Rom. 4:24, 25.)

God reckoned righteousness to Abraham on the ground of Abraham's faith, and what God did in regard to the father of the faithful, He does now for us. God's principle of justifying sinners has been the same in all ages, viz., the sinner's faith in Himself and in His word. But now that God has openly declared and eternally magnified His own righteousness, both in regard to His hatred of sin and His dealing with it. by the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God sets Him forth in His death and resurrection the object of the faith of the guilty sinner. God sets Him forth, through faith in His blood, a mercy-seat, for the trembling soul who dreads the due of his sins; God shows to us in Jesus and His work His own righteousness magnified; and upon our faith in Himself God justifies us.

And since Jesus was delivered for our offenses, and has been raised again for our justification, there is nothing to be done more. The work is perfect. Every demand divine justice had against the sinner has been met by the Lord's death on our account; and now, since God has raised Him from the dead, God shows to us what a perfect justification is ours through His Son. Jesus risen is the blessed witness to our souls that our sins have been fully and forever accounted for through His death.

Thus none shall dare lay anything to the charge of the feeblest believer in the presence of God. For who shall presume in His presence to question the efficacy of the death of His Son? Who in God's presence shall dare to affirm that that work of His Son lacks completeness? for, lo! at God's right hand is seated His Son whom He raised up from among the dead! The majesty, the glory, the greatness of God—if we may so speak—all refuse the faintest breath that any should dare to breathe against His elect. Wonderful grace wherein we stand; and in this state of free favor the weakest of God's people does stand!

Let our hearts, dear fellow believers in God, and in Jesus Christ our Lord, respond with gratitude and confidence to the justifying grace of our God as we consider His own words, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

"IF by grace, then it is no more of works."

## Trottie and the Little Fishes

---

MERRILY ran little Trottie of scarcely three summers, by the side of her young friend through country fields and lanes, till she reached a pond over which she leaned in rather a dangerous way. "Come along, Trottie dear—don't go so near the pond. Oh, you must come away," said her companion, in some fear. "I only want to see if there are any of Jesus' dear little fishes in the pond to-day. Don't you know which they are? those very little tiny fishes I mean. I asked mamma once if Jesus made them, and she said ' Yes.' So they are His, you know, and He feeds them and takes care of them all day long, and they are so pretty."

But you might tumble into the pond, dear; I am afraid you will, and then very likely will be drowned."

"Oh no, I don't think I shall," the little one replied, very composedly; " or if I did, I 'pect the kind Lord Jesus would let someone lift me out again, or even if He didn't I should not mind so very much, 'cause then I should only go up to live with Him forever, and that would be so nice, wouldn't it? I often wish I could go."

After watching with great delight the minnows sporting in the pond, still giving them the name of "Jesus' dear little fishes," the happy child ran on contentedly.

The love of Jesus seemed so to fill her baby heart that anything and everything that had to do with Him had an attraction for her. Dear little ones, can you say I love God because He first loved me, and then can you go on to love and admire all His works?

The beauties of creation—the pretty flowers—the waving trees—the birds in the woods—the fish in the ponds all speak to us of the Lord Jesus who made them. "All things were made by Him," the word of God says. I often think of my little friend Trottie, and of her trust in the blessed Saviour. "The Lord Jesus is near. He will take care of me." "He made this—how beautiful it is!" And I think how often the Lord Jesus spoke with approval of the spirit of a little child. E. G.

## The Happy Sunday Afternoon

---

SOME years since, in one of the larger towns of the West of England, a faithful servant of the Lord labored earnestly to win souls to Christ, and his efforts were much blessed, especially among those belonging to one of the Sunday-schools of that town. Among the scholars was E., the son of Christian parents, whose brothers and sisters were also the Lord's. E. was often very anxious to be a Christian, and when his parents' friends were speaking to each other of the things of God he sometimes felt as though he would do anything if he could but partake in their joys, but he was very careful, through pride of heart, to hide his anxiety from those around him.

Many in the school, and also some of the boys in E.'s class, were brought by God to rejoice in the knowledge of the forgiveness of their sins, but E. remained unsaved and unhappy. One Sunday he left home for school, feeling utterly wretched. He had been very naughty that day, and had been punished, and was feeling the service of the devil to be hard, and was longing to know what real happiness and peace were! While waiting for the address—for there was to be an address in the school that afternoon—

E. thought, "The Bible says God answers prayer: why not ask Him to send some word to me this very afternoon?"

Acting upon the thought, he leant forward and prayed earnestly for salvation that afternoon. He sat during the address anxiously waiting for and expecting some word which would bring peace to his troubled heart, but none came! Now, instead of believing what God says of all the work for salvation being done by Christ, he was looking for something which should change his heart and give him rest.

The address was finished, and E. remained very wretched. Some of the school remained to pray, and then any who really desired salvation were asked to signify that they wished to be prayed for. E. longed to do so then, but the fear of what those around him might say prevented him.

The meeting was over, and the Tempter began to fill E.'s mind with hard thoughts of God, saying to him, "You will never be saved. You asked God to save you this afternoon, and He says He answers prayer, but He hasn't answered yours, so you may just as well give up all thoughts of it!"

While these thoughts were passing through his mind Mr. M, who had addressed the school, came up, and said to E., You are Christ's, are you not? "E.'s only answer could be" No." Mr. M. then drew him aside to a seat, saying, "I thought you were a Christian. Tell me, do you believe you are a sinner, and that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down here on earth and died for sinners? "All this poor E. did believe, and then Mr. M. said to him," What is to prevent your being saved NOW?"

At once the light from God flashed in on E.'s soul; the Holy Spirit opened his heart to receive what God says, and he saw there was indeed no reason why he should not be saved. Christ had done everything: he had only to accept Christ and to thank God. He knew that Jesus was his Saviour,

who once was dead, but is now alive again—that there was nothing left for him to do but to thank and praise the Lord who had died for him.

Some time has passed by since that happy Sunday afternoon, and since that time E. has only found how faithful Jesus is.

Dear reader, listen to this simple story of that happy Sunday afternoon when God brought to Himself the writer of this story.

E—r. H.

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 8:23-28; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-26.)

IT was in the city of Capernaum, which you can find in the map on the western shore of the sea of Galilee, that the Lord Jesus had done so many gracious works of power during that day of which we were reading a little while ago. You remember how He healed the beloved servant of the Roman captain by His word, without seeing or touching him, and how, when He came into Peter's house, where his wife's mother lay very ill, He touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then I am sure you have not forgotten what happened at sunset on that day, when so many sick people, and people over whom Satan had gained dreadful power, were brought to the Lord, and healed every one.

We cannot wonder that all the people ran together, and crowded round to see such wonderful things. When the Lord saw the great crowd, He told His disciples that He would like to pass over to the other side of the lake; so they took Him, just as He was, in the ship. We do not know what boat this was; but there was a little ship in which the Lord and His disciples had before crossed the water, and in which Jesus had sat while He taught the crowds of people who stood on the shore listening to Him. Other little ships were with this one, as they set out on their voyage, but they may have parted company during the night, for we only hear of the one in which Jesus and His disciples were going across the lake.

Have you ever been out in a small boat when the waves have been rising all round her, and the boat, which seemed so strong and safe while it was calm, tossing like a cork, up and down, backwards and forwards, on the deep, deep sea? If you have, you will know a little how the disciples were tossed about that night, in their boat on the lake of Galilee.

When they pushed off from the shore perhaps the lovely light of the sunset was still falling upon the water, and the little waves were murmuring softly as the boat glided through them. But, as night came on, all was changed. Storms come very suddenly upon that lake. The winds gather among the mountains, and then sweep down and make the water, which had been before so gentle, rise in angry waves. So it was on this night. There came down a storm of wind on the lake; the boat was covered with the waves, and they leaped up the sides, and beat into it, until it was filled with water. Would not you have been afraid if you had been there? I am sure you would, for strong men that night were trembling and crying out for fear. You know the verse which says—

"And all but One were sore afraid

Of sinking in the deep—

His head was on a pillow laid,

And He was fast asleep.”

You know that that One who slept a quiet sleep while the wind and water raged around Him was the Lord Jesus, the One who had made them, and was their Lord. A little while before, He had said to a man who wished to come with Him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," and now that head, so often weary, was laid down upon the cushion of the boat, and Jesus slept.

The disciples used often to ask the Lord to help them, and so now that they were, as they thought, in such danger, they turned to Him at once, and, with a cry they awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us: we perish." And again they cried in their fear, "Master, Master! carest thou not that we perish?"

I once knew a little boy of nine years old, who was surprised that the disciples should have been in such fear, and should have thought they were perishing. When he was reading about it, he stopped and looked up, and said, wonderingly, "But their boat couldn't sink with Him in it." That was true, and it is a beautiful thing to know that we never can be anything but safe with the Lord Jesus. With Him in the boat, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, and the rest were just as safe in that night of storm as they were after the angry waters had sunk to rest, hushed to stillness by His word.

I want you to notice those three words which Christ spoke to the sea. He rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace; be still!" Just the very moment when He spoke those words, a wonderful change came. The wind did not blow less loudly, and the sea grew a little quieter, as it does when we say that the tempest is over; but the wind ceased, and there was a great calm, and all at once, in perfect quiet, the little boat lay at rest upon the lake. All the tossing was over, and all the fear of perishing was taken from the hearts of the disciples. After a storm is quite over, it is a long time, sometimes more than a day and night, before the water is quiet again, but this storm changed into a great calm at once.

The Lord Jesus was sorry that the disciples whom He loved so much, and who had been with Him all the day before seeing His wonderful works, had not understood yet that they might trust Him. While they looked at one another and said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" and while the sight of His power filled them with fear, He said to them, "Why are ye fearful, ye of little faith?" He did not say they had no faith, for He knew where to find, deep in their hearts, that faith in Him which God had given them, and so He asked them again, "Where is your faith?" The Lord may often ask the same question now to those whom He has taught to trust Him, but who, when some great storm of trouble comes, forget that He is with them in the storm and darkness, and cry out for fear, instead of waiting until He rises to say, "Peace; be still!"

## The Draw-Net

---

IT is such a pleasant sight to see the draw-net brought to shore, that I am sure all of you, who have been at the seaside when the fishermen have been hauling it in, have run down close to the water's edge, and have watched the treasure out of the ocean brought to land. But as some of our young readers have not been to the seaside, we must explain that a draw-net is very long and some ten to fifteen feet broad. When fishing with it, a man on shore holds one end of it fast by a rope, as the boat, in which the net is, is quickly rowed round in a half circle to the shore again; then the other end is landed, and thus the net encloses a large space of water. The top of the net is kept floating upon the water—the bottom of it almost touches the ground beneath—so that the net is like a wall, shutting in all the fishes that it has encircled. The men wait a little before they begin to haul it in, which they do at both ends at once. Slowly it comes in—very slowly at first—for the work requires gentle handling to begin with, lest the fish should be frightened, and, the net being also heavy, the water holds it back. Bit by bit, yard by yard, the brown net is dragged through the blue sea, and over the white fringe of breakers. Now a shining white object is seen—now another, looking like pieces of bright silver sticking into the net. As about half the net is got in, the men work more quickly, and more and more of the silver-like looking fishes sparkle in the brown meshes. When almost all is on land, and a space of water only about the size of a large room remains encompassed by the dark line of the floating top of the net, then there is a splashing and a bustling evident, for the fishes do not know which way to swim, and they dash about in vain to escape, and now, with strong, hearty pulls, and as quickly as possible, the rest of the net is brought to shore, and all the fish are leaping about and gasping on land.

See, they are of all sorts, for no one could tell what the result of that cast would be; every kind is gathered together. Some are good; some are worthless. And the Lord Jesus, whose eyes often beheld this casting of the net into the sea, shows us that it is but a picture of the preaching of the word of God, which, like a net, encircles all who hear it. And you, dear young friends, are in that net. Had you been heathen children, it would not have been so. The floating top of the wall of net and its weighted bottom made all the difference to the fish, some being inside, others outside the waters encompassed. So some people are just outside the sound of the gospel; others are within. Those who are within are of every kind; some are good, some bad.

Now, when the net is drawn to shore, the fishermen look over what they have caught. There are, as we have said, all sorts captured. And as it was in the days when Jesus was here, so it is now—the fishermen just cast the bad away. The good they keep.

Are you among the good, or among the bad? Do you love God and the Lord Jesus Christ, or do you not? Those who believe on the Name of the Lord, are the good; those who do not are the bad. Each of us is of one sort or of the other sort. Every reader of this page is encompassed by the gospel—the careless, the prayerless, the rejecter of Christ, as well as the repentant and the seeking soul, and those who love the Lord.

When the fishing time is over, the sorting out time comes. Now is the fishing time. At present the gospel net is still in the sea, but it is being drawn to shore, and really it seems as if it were being quickly drawn in by willing, loving hands, and as if the Lord must soon, very soon, be here. The work of gathering together of every kind in the gospel net cannot last much longer, and then the sorting out time will begin. And thus does the Lord speak of that coming time, "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13:49-50.) Consider very earnestly whether you are the good or the bad.

## Salvation

SINCE the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour, the salvation He has wrought must be worthy of Himself, hence its completeness, its absolute perfectness.

He is the only Saviour; For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.) The word of this salvation was sent first to the Jews (Acts 13:26); they turned from the message, and the apostle then said, "The Lord commanded us, saying, I have set Thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that Thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (v. 47). We read also the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16); but as the Jews have shut themselves up in unbelief, this solemn word has gone out to them," Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it." (Acts 28:28.)

Now when Paul and his companions brought the gospel of God to heathen Europe, then under the unchallenged power of Satan, the damsel who was possessed with the spirit of divination followed them, crying out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which spew unto us the way of salvation." (Acts 16:17.) The demon acknowledged God to be the Most High, and owned that He had salvation for men! And His salvation is for time and for eternity, and from Satan, from the craft of demons, from sin, and from wrath—and for God, for peace, and heaven. Were we heathens, and did we hear for the first time such words of grace, oh! how would our hearts leap for joy! And shall our gratitude be less because our mercies are so manifold? Well indeed may those who have often heard, but only heard, the gospel inquire, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. 2:3.)

Saved means saved. Not half or part saved, but wholly and absolutely saved. When the ship in which Paul was, had been caught in the tempest, "all hope that we should be saved was then taken away," St. Luke says (Acts 27:20); and when at length the crew and passengers were "escaped all safe to land" (ver. 44), they had salvation from the storm and the wreck. So we who believe are saved from our peril and from our ruin.

"By grace ye are saved" (Eph. 2:5, 8), says the Scriptures. And again, "Who hath saved us" (2 Tim. 1: 9), and again, "according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:5), and again, "unto us who are saved" (1 Cor. 1:18); which words show plainly that the believer is saved now, this moment. And, indeed, we must start with this great truth, before we go on to consider the passages which treat of salvation as that which is to be had by the believer in the future.

When God sent the angel to bid Cornelius send for the apostle Peter who should tell him words, whereby he and all his house should be saved (Acts 11:14.), it was God's salvation that Cornelius

received; life, salvation and the gift of the Holy Ghost were therefore his. So when we read, " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," and " Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:9, 13.) Saved means saved. A true believer is as safe now as if he were already in heaven, for his salvation is God's, and his Saviour is the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Spirit, speaking through the apostle Paul, says of the unbelieving and rebellious Jews, "They please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved" (1 Thess. 2:15, 16), and when he speaks of such as hear, but "received not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (2 Thess. 2:10), the terrible end of the disobedient is brought before us. For lost means lost.

## Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

A.D. 81—91

"As unknown, and well known."

IT has been well said that "to believe, to suffer, not to write, was the characteristic of the primitive Christians; thus our records of their faith and their sufferings are very scanty. The terrible tale of the first Roman persecution under Nero is told, not by one who wished to record the fiery trial through which his brethren had passed, but by a heathen historian. The little companies of the disciples of Christ, scattered here and there in the Roman empire, must indeed have been, as the Lord said of those whom He sent forth, "like sheep in the midst of wolves." The faith which they professed was not that of any nation; it did not rank among the many forms of devotion which the Romans counted as religions to be tolerated; therefore the only safety of its followers lay in silence and obscurity. But the faith which is a living principle must make itself felt. The religion of the Christians became aggressive by reason of the very power of life which caused it to differ from the lifeless religions of heathenism. It became dangerously obtrusive by its very obscurity in the midst of the varied forms of worship, which differing in their ceremonies were alike in being attended with much outward show.

As far as we know, during the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, there was a time of rest for the Christians; but thirty years after the first Roman persecution they suffered for a year, under Domitian. The emperor did not spare even his own nephew, but put him to death for his faith, and banished other members of his family among whom the contagion was believed to have spread. It was at this time that the Apostle John, the only one of the twelve then surviving, was banished to the island of Patmos, that bare and rugged island off the coast of Greece, where he saw those visions of judgment and of glory which he wrote in the book of Revelation.

The persecution under Domitian, however, did not last long. Before his own assassination, the emperor had put an end to it, and had ordered those who had been exiled on account of their faith to return to their homes. During the two years' reign of Nerva, his successor, all their property was restored to them; and it was enacted that all slaves who had betrayed their Christian masters should be put to death. Still, although it is possible that the laws against the Christians made by former emperors were repealed by Nerva, Christianity remained a religion unrecognized by the state, and, therefore, though there might be a respite for a time, its followers could look for no protection, and were constantly in danger of their lives if any tumult against them was raised.

St. John lived until the beginning of the reign of Trajan, dying at Ephesus, then a populous city of great trade, in the year 99. Tradition says that the aged apostle, when he returned from Patmos, as long as his strength allowed him to travel, went from place to place, visiting the little companies of Christians; that, when too feeble to walk to the place of meeting, he was carried thither, and that his constant exhortation was, "Little children, love one another."

Before we pass from the first century, we may notice among the few Christian writings of this early time the "Epistle of Clement" and the "Letter to Diognetus." The former seems to have been written in consequence of the dissensions among the Corinthians, and the writer refers to the state of things among them forty years before, when St. Paul wrote his two epistles to them, but only to complain that they were now in a far worse condition than when the apostle wrote.

In another part of the letter he writes to his fellow Christians about the foundations of their common faith, and it is interesting to know that his words were much read, not only at the time, and by those to whom they were first addressed, but by the early Christians generally. "Let us look steadfastly, beloved, to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world. We are not justified by ourselves, by our wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but by faith, through which from the beginning Almighty God has justified all men."

The "Epistle to Diognetus" was written by an unknown hand to one who had desired to be informed concerning the doctrine and way of life of the Christians, probably about the close of the first century.

Diognetus had asked, concerning this "new sort of men," questions such as these: "What god do they put their trust in?" "How do they worship?" "How is it that they look down upon the world, and despise death, and neither make account of those that are legally recognized as gods by the Greeks, nor observe the Jewish superstition?" "What does the affection mean which they cherish one for another?" "Why is it that this new sort of men or mode of living has entered into the course of the world now, and not before?"

The writer replies: The Christians are not separated from other men by earthly abode, by language, or by custom. Nowhere do they dwell in cities by themselves. They do not use a different speech, or affect a life of singularity. They dwell in the cities of the Greeks and of the barbarians, each as his lot has been cast; and while they conform to the usages of the country in respect to dress, food, and other things pertaining to the outward life, yet they show a peculiarity of conduct wondrous to all. They inhabit their native country but as strangers. They take their share of all burdens as citizens, and yet endure all kinds of wrong as though they were foreigners. Every strange soil is their fatherland, and everyone's fatherland a strange soil to them. They are in the flesh, but they live not after the flesh. They tarry on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the laws, and they conquer the laws by their lives. They love all, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, and yet are condemned; they are killed, and made alive. They are poor and make many rich. They are blasphemed, and justified. They are reviled and they bless."

Of their religion he says, "It was not delivered to them as any earthly invention, nor have they been entrusted with the stewardship of any human mysteries. But the almighty and all-creating and

invisible God Himself, from heaven inaugurated amongst men the truth, and the holy and inconceivable Word, and fixed it firmly in their hearts, not sending to men, as one might fancy He would do, some subordinate, either an angel or a prince, but the Framer and Architect of all things Himself. If so, it must have been, as one of the sons of men would argue, to tyrannize, to affright, to strike down with dread. Not so, but in gentleness, in meekness; as one who saves He sent Him, as persuading, not as compelling, for there is no compulsion with God. He sent Him as loving, not as judging. He Himself gave away His own Son as a ransom for us; the holy for the lawless, the harmless for the evil, the just for the unjust. O sweet exchange! O work past finding out! O benefits beyond expectation! that the lawlessness of many should be hidden in one righteous Person, and that the righteousness of one should justify many lawless.”

## The Birthday Morning

---

IT was a bright, sunny morning in June.

From the window all was beautiful—the golden green meadows, the still water, and the old forest of oak and beech trees. But there was nothing so beautiful as a little child who came capering into the room, looking bright as a sunbeam. She held up her little white frock, which was filled with toys. It was her birthday morning, and she was now three. She had come to show her mother the presents she had already had from brothers, and sisters, and nurses.

One by one she laid them on the table, and then suddenly she knelt down at her mother's dressing stool. "O Lord Jesus," she said, "I do thank you for all the nice things what you have given me. I thank you for my doll, and for my little work-box, and for all my things. And oh, Lord Jesus, I thank you that you was punished instead of me. Amen." Then she got up, and looked gravely at her mother, and said—

"You see I 'membered about His being punished."

She had often spoken of Him before, but from this time she spoke of Him continually, to all in the house, to the children with whom she played, to the village people in their cottages. And to her mother she said sometimes—

"I am going to be with Jesus. Soon I shall be gone; you will go all about the house, and you will see me nowhere. There will be no Ada, but you mustn't mind, for I shall be with Jesus."

And so it was. Nine months after that birthday morning, the Lord took her to be with Himself.

It comforted her mother to write down the things which she had said, and how the Lord had taught her during her little life to be gentle, obedient, and unselfish. But the greatest comfort was to remember the words she had said on her last birthday morning, and often afterward.

The little story was printed and translated into other languages, and found its way into many strange places. The Lord had taken His little servant to be with Him, but He still meant to work by her down here, in the sad, dark world out of which He had saved her. One day, at a railway station, a stranger came up to Ada's mother, and said—

"You will forgive me for speaking to you, for know you are Ada's mother, and you will be glad to hear what I am going to tell you."

Then the lady went on to say that she had a friend, an old lady, who had always been religious, and kind, and conscientious, but she had never been happy. She was always frightened when she thought of dying. "It is so terrible," she said, "to know that one ma/ die, and not to know what will be afterward! for however one may try to do one's best, one can never be sure. God must punish sin, and I have many, many sins to remember. I pray that He will forgive me, but it is an awful thought that I must one day stand before His judgment seat."

At last one day the story of the birthday morning was given to this old lady, and her fears and her doubts passed away forever.

"For now," she said, "I see that Jesus has been punished instead of me, and whilst I was once afraid of dying, now I look forward to it, and am perfectly happy."

And soon came the glad tidings that others besides, had found joy and peace through the words of the little child; grownup men and women, and little children, not only those who were soon to die, but those who could live to show that they had passed from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. Some in the slums of London, one the daughter of a thief; some in homes which the world would call bright and beautiful, but where there were hearts more dark and desolate than many in the London alleys.

In such a beautiful home, in a foreign land, a young man was dying of terrible disease after years of suffering. "You will be glad to hear," a friend wrote, "that little Ada's words seemed to come to Prince from heaven, and to bring him perfect peace and joy. He passed away, saying that he would be happy forever with Jesus, who had died for him."

Year after year these good tidings came, and meanwhile someone who had read the little story, wrote some simple verses, telling what the child had said on that birthday morning. Each verse ended with the blessed words that had brought peace to so many souls: "Jesus was punished instead of me."

About twenty years after that birthday, a little boy learned these verses. He was taught to say them by his mother, who knew and loved the Lord Jesus. Others of the family were also believers in Jesus. But there was one who was very dear to his mother, to whom the gospel of God was foolishness. This was her brother, who lived in the same town, and had made a boast that he never troubled himself about "religious nonsense." There are many people such as he was, sensible, and intelligent, and strongminded as to the things of this world, and who feel quite sure that sound common sense is all that is needed for this life; and as to what follows, one knows nothing about it, so it is a part of that same good sense not to trouble oneself about it.

It happened that this man had some slight illness, which kept him at home for a few days. On one of these days, which was Sunday, his sister sent her little boy to see how he was. The boy found his uncle lying on the sofa. When he had given his message, his uncle said to him, "You can stay a little, and amuse me. Say me some of your poetry."

The little boy began to repeat the verses he liked so much, about little Ada.

"What is that?" his uncle said, stopping him suddenly. "Jesus was punished instead of me?"

"Yes," said the little boy, repeating the verse.

"What does that mean?" asked his uncle. "Why did Ada say that?"

"She said it because it really happened," the little boy answered. "Jesus was punished instead."

"How does anyone know that?" asked his uncle, looking like someone suddenly waked up to a new thought.

"It is in the Bible," replied the child; "mother has often told it me."

"I cannot believe it is in the Bible," said the man who had so long spoken with scorn of the book he knew so little. "Go and fetch your mother; tell her to come to me at once, and bring her Bible."

The child obeyed, and in a short time came back with his mother.

"Is it true that it is in the Bible that Jesus was punished instead of us? I cannot believe it is there," said her brother.

The good woman opened her Bible and read: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of many. God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. Christ died for our sins. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

"But," said her brother, suddenly, "if this really happened, I am saved!"

"It did really happen, and if you will believe it, you are saved," replied his sister.

"It is wonderful! Why did no one ever tell me this before? Yes, He was punished instead of me-and if so, God is satisfied!"

And from that moment the scoffing unbeliever was a new creature in Christ Jesus. He had passed from death to life. You may wonder how it was, that he did not first begin to inquire whether the Bible was true. He had professed that he did not believe it, and yet he received those words into his heart without doubt or question, and was perfectly assured then, and ever afterward, that they are the words of God. How was it that he needed no argument to prove to him that God had really said these things?

Do you think that when the blind man's eyes are opened, he needs any argument to prove to him that the sun is in the sky? — that when the deaf man's ears are unstopped, he needs a proof that men have voices? And when God has spoken to the heart, none who have heard His voice have ever doubted again whose voice it was they heard. "The dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." It is the voice that wakes the dead in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And it had spoken to the heart of that man, so long dead in trespasses and sins.

From that moment he was a humble and rejoicing believer in Jesus. He was soon well again, and his whole life was the proof of the great and glorious change which the voice of Christ had wrought in him. He spoke to all around of the Saviour who had died for him.

"It was Ada who taught it me," he said to his sister. "I should like to know more about her. Tell me all you know."

Then his sister gave him the little story. He read it again and again, and kept it always near him.

Four years later he became very ill. His sister went to see him, and found that he was dying.

"I am going to Him who died for me," he said; "it was that little girl who showed it to me. Bring me the little book, and put it in my hand. I want to die with that story in my hand, because it was Ada who led me to Jesus."

And so with the book in his hand he fell asleep. "A little child shall lead them." F. B.

## Homeward Bound

---

WE are not many miles from home; what matter, then, of ill entertainment in the smoky inns of this worthless world! —Extract.

## Six Weeks Without God

---

SUCH was my purpose and desire, as I traveled towards Worthing, one early July morning a few years ago, for six weeks' rest and restoration to health after a severe illness. God's word had taken firm hold of my mind, and for some months past, the divine truth, "ye must be born again," had been disturbing my hitherto utterly careless life. Divine truth I have said, and such from the first I had believed it to be; but the unregenerate heart had rejected and now strove to forget that word, lest its entrance, giving light, should reveal and reprove the darkness within.

The goodness of God led me to repentance within a few days of the time when, in my folly, I had desired to be left alone, One Sunday evening, after hearing an earnest address from the text "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30), my rebel heart was broken and began to seek Jesus. Yet fifteen months more I lingered, through indecision and unbelief, near the kingdom, but not in it, till another Sunday evening found me an anxious enquirer during a special mission to young men. There and then my eyes were opened, and I found peace and rest through believing in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of men.

"Six weeks without God 1" What an awful condemnation that prayer would have become, but for the mercy and longsuffering of Him whom I thus blindly and wickedly resisted! Writing at this later date, the brightness of the love of God in Christ is cast over that dark page of my past history, and shows that the sin is put away by the atoning blood of Christ in whom through grace I have found "life-everlasting life."

Reader, have you, too, resisted the strivings of the Holy Spirit? Oh, repent now and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out! It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, and therefore of yours, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." S. E. R.

## The Blind Man Led by a Child

---

WE saw a tall, powerful, and well-built man frequently passing down a certain street, led by the hand of his little boy, a child of about six years of age. It was a most touching sight to witness the great man so docile and obedient to the touch of the little fingers, as day by day he was led forth to his work—so much strength, by loss of sight, seemingly lost, and made dependent upon weakness. It seemed, however, quite enough for the father that his strong hand was grasped by the little one; and he followed, apparently with the most implicit confidence, up one street and down another, willing to be led, helped and guided by the little hand lost in his own.

The source, however, of all this dependence and docility in which, through his child, he found guidance and safety, was to be traced to the fact that he was blind and knew it!

And in this blind man, and his docility of spirit, we have a striking illustration of the history and experience of many who, through the teaching of God's Spirit, have been guided to truth, certainty, and rest. There was a time in their spiritual history and experience when they were strong and robust intellectually, and very tall in their own estimation, especially in relation to what they believed to be true religion. With great contempt, they looked upon everyone's creed but their own as no creed. When lo, all at once and suddenly, as it seemed to us, we have seen such brought to a stand, and become glad to sit at the feet of some humble Christian of the very type most despised by them, and who, compared with them intellectually, was but a mere child. A striking fulfillment of the declaration, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."

And how this is frequently brought to pass will be well illustrated by the experience of one whom we know, a very fair type of the proud and scornful skeptic just described. This young man happened to be passing through a certain street when his attention was arrested by some voices singing hymns. Partly from curiosity to see what was going on, and partly from a wish to find some fresh materials from the religion of the common herd, through which to exhibit his superior knowledge and destructive ridicule, he entered the building whence the singing issued. While in this spirit, expecting only to hear some worn-out, religious platitudes, illustrative of ignorance—to use some of his own phrases—God's own words, through the lips of the speaker (a poor and illiterate man), were brought home, in their true meaning to his understanding and his attention was riveted. He went out impressed with the nature of God's law and the evil of sin. He could not shake off the sense of personal guilt. His conscience troubled him. This anxiety of soul continued for some days in spite of all his skeptical reasoning, and issued at last through a deep sense of sin in the publican's prayer, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

In this state of mind, almost unconsciously, he turned into the same building again, and listened to the same preacher, whose theme was that of a full and free salvation for the guilty and the lost through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The proud and educated despiser of the

gospel of God's grace, perceiving now, through his wounded conscience, its divine adaptation to his condition as a sinner before God, was led joyfully to receive it in faith, and thus he found rest and peace with God. He was convinced of sin by the Spirit and word of God, and made willing and glad to receive the gospel of Christ from the lips of one whom he had despised.

Reader, are you despising the gospel of God's grace? Do not forget that God's message of mercy is still His, and that it is worthy of Himself, and of your reception through whatever medium it may reach you.

In this day, therefore, of intellectual activity, when hearing a preacher or reading a book, let not your first inquiry be, "Who is this who speaks or writes?" but, "What is communicated, and is it the Word of God?"—and that you may understand and receive, may He anoint your eyes by His Spirit, for God cannot give a book to supersede His own teachings and grace. Remember, too, that the gospel does not make its appeal to the abstract reason of man, but to his awakened conscience and sense of sin, and that a Saviour living and dying for sinners, even the worst, can only be understood and received by a broken-hearted sinner. If such be now your state, He bids you to renounce all hope in yourself: to look to Him and be saved. W. P. B.

## Our Father's Care

---

ONE day I made a purchase at a shop in a country town. The shopkeeper offered to send her little girl with my parcel to the railway station, and, as I had other calls to make, the offer was accepted. I reached the station first, and crossed the line at a level crossing from one platform to the other. The little girl presently came up with the parcel, but before crossing she carefully looked both ways to see that no train was approaching.

When I had received the parcel, I said to her, "Were you not afraid to cross at such a dangerous place, where trains pass so quickly?" The child, to my amazement, answered, without any hesitation—

"I was very careful, sir, for I don't know what my father would have thought if anything had happened to me, for my father thinks the world of ME!

She knew something of the interest her father had in her, and took care of herself accordingly! What a lesson for me was this! My heavenly Father thinks more than the world of me; He gave His Son, who created all worlds, for me!

Oh, then, how much does our God and Father care for us; of what value we are to Him, and what an interest He has in us, His children, and how we ought to take care how we walk! J. N.

## "God Bless You!"

---

HOW often we hear these words—" God bless you! "spoken with an earnest, heartfelt meaning; and, again, they are often used as one of the most ordinary expressions. Of all desirable things, we cannot seek anything to equal the blessing of God for our friends. The words, " God bless you," are three short words, but of the greatest import possible. We are glad to hear them from human lips, when earnestly uttered; but when God Himself blesses His people, they are of untold precious value. Look, dear reader, at these words from God's own book.

"The Lord bless thee,

And keep thee;

"The Lord make His face shine upon thee,

"And be gracious unto thee:

"The Lord lift up His countenance

"Upon thee, and give thee peace." Num. 6:22-27. |

"In blessing I will bless thee." Gen. 22:17.

And keep thee; "I will keep thee in all places." Gen. 28:15.

"Neither will I hide My face any more." Ezek. 39:29.

"I will hear; for I am gracious." Exo. 22:27

"Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance." Acts 2:28.

"My peace I give unto you." John 14:27

|

The Lord bade Moses tell the priests to make the words in the sixth chapter of Numbers their benediction on His people Israel; and this brings us to another pleasant thought, for if earthly priests were so taught, we know that our great High Priest, whom Aaron typified, does constantly bless the people of God. And more, He who "hath made us kings and priests unto God" allows us as priests to bless in the name of our God.

The last verse of the sixth of Numbers says, "They shall put My name upon the children of Israel." We usually have our name put on what belongs to us. How glorious to have God's own name put on us, for we belong to Him. May His name be upon our hearts and be written on our lives!

Finally, the Lord declares, "And I will bless them," and He ever keeps His word. May we each receive and delight in God's blessing! E. D'E.

## The Hem of His Garment

---

FRINGES were worn by the children of Israel upon their outer garment in obedience to the command, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them." (Num. 15:38-41.) These fringes the scribes and Pharisees enlarged, as we read in Matt. 23:5; for diligent indeed over the letter of the Scriptures, while worse than indifferent as to its spirit, they paraded before men the outward signs of obedience to the word.

We read more than once of the hem, the border, or fringe of His garment, and how that to touch it, was to be made whole of bodily infirmity. Let us then consider for a moment what Scripture gives us to understand by the blue that God ordained should be found in the skirts of the clothing of His people the Jews. When Moses and Aaron and the seventy elders of Israel saw the God of Israel, there was under His feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. (Ex. 24:9, 10.) The sapphire—the blue sky above us, speaks to us of heaven. That which was "under His feet" arches over our heads, and as we look above, we say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

The blue was found in the curtains of the tabernacle, in the veil within, in the hanging of the door without, and in the gate of the court; also in the garments of the high priest, and in his breastplate and his miter, was the blue, as Jehovah commanded. Thus the sign of heaven ever had its great place in the "shadow of good things to come" which spake in a personal way of the Lord Jesus.

The hem of their garments reminded the children of Israel that the commandments of Jehovah, if obeyed and delighted in, would render them a free people upon earth, full of prosperity, blessed in basket and in store, and secure from those diseases which afflicted the heathen around them. It also reminded them that as "all the commandments of the Lord" had not been obeyed, hence their subjection to the heathen, their low estate, their diseases. The blue in the tabernacle speaks of the Lord Himself in His character, as of heaven.

By their disobedience the Jews forfeited their blessings as Jehovah's nation; and the Lord Jesus, who alone can make men rejoice, they crucified. Hence the dark shadow of Satan's rule—not the sapphire of the heavens, lies upon earth. But the day shall arise when this earth will rejoice in the King, the Father's kingdom will come, and His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. And those blessed things uttered by the Lord concerning the kingdom shall be found below. Then the sapphire of the heavens will be reflected here, and Israel will rejoice and the nations be glad.

It is now approaching two thousand years since the time when the Lord Jesus went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt. 4:23), and since He sent forth His disciples with authority over "unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease,"

and with this testimony, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 10:1, 7.) Of these powers of the world, or age, to come, many tasted, but notwithstanding all He was despised and rejected of men. Jew and Gentile crucified Him, with this accusation written over His head, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," and written in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, for all the wide world to read, whether in its wisdom, power, or! Surely in that hour it seemed as if the power of darkness had prevailed, and as if both King and kingdom were lost.

But the Lord is risen! and presently in resurrection might He shall bring in the kingdom long since proclaimed, and men shall see that "this same Jesus" who healed their sick and proclaimed His Father is King!

Of the blessedness of the kingdom and of its moral glories who shall rightly tell? These bright things with the dark things of present unbelief are the web and the woof of much of the Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, and thus are the present and the future woven as it were together in His words, for our souls to consider and to obey. But, rather than the kingdom, let us consider Himself. The love, light, joy of the kingdom will issue from the King; in Him all fullness dwells, and through Him now flows to God's people every blessing.

When those possessed with devils were brought to Him, and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick, even as He wrought in power, in love He felt man's misery, and then the word was fulfilled, which says, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. (Matt. 8:16, 17.) Let us, then, behold Him healing the sick. (Read Matt. 14:34-36; Mark 6:53-56.) We see the crowds gathered around Him; the whole region of Gennesaret stirred; every manner of disease, in city, in village, in country, laid down before Him! They seek but to touch the hem of His garment, and" as many as touched were made perfectly whole." Virtue went out of Him and healed them, every one! Blessing issued from Him to all—yea, even from the skirts of His clothing. Well may we say, What will the kingdom and its glories be! What will that day be when the King in His royal estate shall dispense blessings to the wide earth and its millions?

According to the custom of the East, the touching of His garment was an act of homage—an expression of reverence for the sacredness of His person—a willing and expectant acknowledgment of His power, and of His bounty. Yet little did those multitudes who thronged Him know that the King was there! He who served them and loved them was the King whom they crucified.

The hem of their garments taught the Jews of blessings forfeited; the hem of His garment when touched taught of blessings unmerited, brought to earth from heaven in grace, pure grace.

With such scenes as these of the region of Gennesaret before us we can better understand the secret thoughts of the woman, who "said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." His power is perfect, and His love is as great as His power. She "touched the hem of His garment," and "straightway... she felt in her body that she was healed." She received, moreover, in her soul the blessing of His grace, for "He said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." And thus one and another out of the multitudes whose bodies He healed obtained personal soul-blessing from Him. A few of those who ate His bread which He dispensed to the thousands fed upon Himself, who is the Bread that came down from heaven; others followed Him but for the bread they ate! A few who saw Him raise the dead believed on Him; others went their

way and told the Pharisees, who sought to compass His death.

Let us inquire, What are our thoughts, what is our attitude of soul towards the Lord Jesus Christ, now glorified in heaven, and awaiting, in His patience, the kingdom? He will make all in heaven and all on earth to rejoice in His day! Nor does He less in this the hour—this closing hour—of His rejection upon earth make His faithful people in spirit to rejoice. He is the Healer still.

If but to touch the hem of His garment was to receive perfect healing, what shall it be when He shall be seen crowned with glory and honor? (Heb. 2:9.) We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; and yet in glory He will be this same Jesus of whom we read in the four blessed gospels. Yes, the same Jesus whose tender sympathy we experience this day as He upon the throne above cares for us in our weakness and trials here! (Heb. 2:18.) In that day His people in heaven shall rejoice in His kingdom on earth. Earth and heaven shall smile under His rule.

## The Heart in Heaven

---

KEEP your taste, your love, and hope in heaven it is not good your love and your Lord should be in two sundry countries.—Extract.

## My Little Sister

---

NEARLY six years ago the Lord took to Himself a dear little sister of mine. She seemed to be sent to brighten our home for a few years, and to testify of the Lord Jesus, and then her earthly mission was done.

From the time when she first learned to speak and to understand she began to show love for the things of Christ; she was so good and happy, and never did she cause her parents an anxious hour. It was her great pleasure to get her brother to read the Bible to her, and she delighted in its beautiful stories, and in its precious words.

When she was five years of age she was sent to a day-school, where she soon became a general favorite. About this time a mission-room was opened, a mile and a half from our home, and a Sunday-school was held, and the gospel was preached there. My dear little sister was one of the most attentive of the hearers, and many were the questions she would ask about the love of Jesus; but one question was uppermost in her mind—it was this: "If I die, shall I go to heaven?" The answer she generally received was that, of course, she would—she was such a good little girl; but that did not satisfy little Jenny's anxious soul. She always answered that she knew she was not good.

One evening she heard a sermon at the mission-room from this text, "Jesus died." At the end of the service she came to me and said, "I know I shall go to heaven now, for Jesus died for me."

After that evening she was always talking of going to be with Jesus; and once when her mother said to her, "Would you like to go and leave mother, Jenny?" her answer was, "Yes, mother; I love you very much, but I love Jesus better."

On one Sunday at the evening service the hymn, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," was sung, and little Jenny joined with all her might. The next morning she was not very well, and was detained at home from school, and again the next day. That evening when I came from school little Jenny was very hoarse, but still very bright. She sat in my lap a little while, to help me learn my lessons, as she said; when suddenly she got down and cried, "Oh! mother, my neck" (meaning her throat) "hurts me so much."

The doctor was sent for, and as soon as he saw my little sister he said he ought to have seen her before, Dear little Jenny for two days suffered fearfully, but was very patient. Once she said to her mother, "I did not like to tell you on Tuesday morning I felt ill, because I thought it would worry you." At the end of the week all pain suddenly left her. She then sweetly said, "I am safe in the arms of Jesus now; Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow," and turning to her mother, smiled and whispered, "Mother, I'll be waiting at the gates for you there." She then bid all good-bye, saying that Jesus had come for her, and so sweetly fell asleep in Christ at the early age of six years and three months.

"Her earthly task was done,

Eternal life was won."

M. P. C.

## A Letter

---

"DO you like to receive letters?" I fancy I hear you say, "Yes, of course we do." Well, I quite agree with you, for I, too, like to get a letter, and especially if it be from someone I love dearly. But the nicest letters, and those that help us the most, are the ones written by the true disciples of Jesus. So as I have a great many such letters I thought I should like to copy parts of some, in the hope that they may be the means of cheering and helping some of my dear young friends who are traveling on the narrow road to heaven.

It does not matter how old you are, or what position you may occupy in the world. Whether old or young, rich or poor, every one may be a disciple of Jesus. The first letter I am going to copy from is written by a young girl who was a member of one of my Bible classes some few years since: "I know that I cannot do right by myself," she writes, "but I feel as though some one was helping me on. It did seem difficult at first. The texts help me a great deal. I know that Jesus will help me."

The next bit I shall copy is from the letter of another girl, in my present Bible class, who is only seventeen. She has had to pass through great trials, having lost her father in a railway accident, and her only brother, who was drowned. She has had no one to love her, and very few to care for her, and yet she is one of the brightest girls in the class, for, as her letter shows, she has found a friend in Jesus.

This is how she writes to me: "It is so nice to think of Jesus being always with us, and whatever comes, He will never leave us, nor forsake us. I just ask Jesus to help me, and whatever I pray for I think about all day. I seem to wait for the answer, and I could tell you of such a lot of prayers that have been answered... God knows how we are tempted, and He knows our weakness. If I only ask Him to help me, and trust Him, and believe He will, He is sure to do it. If only I have Jesus with me to guide me, and His strength to help me to resist temptation, I cannot go wrong, and I do indeed realize my Saviour's presence. I cannot find words to explain the joy there is in living close to Jesus. I have got into the habit of speaking to Him wherever I am or whatever I am doing. Don't you think He hears and answers just the same, as if we wait till we have time to kneel down? It is so nice to think that God never misunderstands us, and it is sweet to think that Jesus is smiling on us while others frown."

I will only add in conclusion that the "same Jesus" my dear girls find so precious is willing to be your Saviour, your Friend, your Helper. If you go to Him, you will find His promise true to you also: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7.) May you, dear reader, find in Jesus your never-failing Friend in sorrow or joy, in care or prosperity, in health or in sickness. May each who reads this be able to say —

"I have found a Friend in Jesus;

Oh, how He loves!"

T.

## Salvation

WE have spoken of salvation as the present possession of God's people. But none the less is salvation the prospect of those who are saved. We are saved, but we are saved in hope, or by hope. (Rom. 8:24.) Hoping to be saved, and being saved in hope, are vastly different. He who hopes to be saved, does not know that he is saved; but he who knows he is saved, hopes for the coming day of glory if a man be on board ship, he knows he is there, and, being safe on board, hopes for the harbor and his friends whither the vessel is bound. The believer is bound for glory, and for this he hopes. Yet not as one on board a ship might hope; for a vessel may founder at sea; but God's people are in Christ, and their future is as certain as their present. Their hope has no element of uncertainty in it. "Glorified together" with Christ is the grand and certain prospect before the soul saved by Christ, and this expectation filling the heart by the Spirit, enables the believer to say, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For what are the waves and the storms of life but difficulties to be passed over, each of which marks one stage nearer eternal rest! We are waiting—saved indeed by the blood of Christ, safe indeed in Him—for "the redemption of our body," when we shall be glorified like the Lord. Such is the hope by or in which we are saved. We see not yet this grand end this eternal destiny; but we "hope for" it, and the day draws nigh; and "if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Read Rom. 8:18, 30.)

The Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect Saviour. He will save us from every trace of weakness and of corruption that pertains to these our bodies of humiliation, and let us give Him the glory in our hearts in this His gracious title of Saviour! How the matchless energy of a soul filled with longings after Christ gives vigor to the steps of the believer, as we read in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians! St. Paul's eye was fixed on Jesus, glorified, and in the power of this sight every great thing of this world became as dross and as dung to his soul. Christ he reached forth unto, in his eager race, and then, looking round for a moment upon some he loved—his eyes filled with tears because of their earth-loving spirits—he said, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

This salvation is our hope—a hope the early Christians had in power in their souls. Think of the Thessalonian believers, tried and persecuted; and, as their surroundings present themselves to view, with what force does the exhortation come home to our souls, "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on... for an helmet the hope of salvation." (1 Thess. 5:4-11.) With such an helmet they might indeed hold up their heads in the midst of foes. And when Christians become weak, and their spiritual life lacks nerve and fire, they have failed to put on the helmet of the hope of salvation. The battle will soon be over, the foes soon driven back. Victory is assured; salvation and glory are at hand—"take the helmet of salvation." (Eph. 6:17.)

"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed," says the Scripture to each of us, exhorting us by the immediateness of the glory to awake out of sleep, and to live honorably. Day by day the hope nears its realization. How soon it may burst upon us we know not. Well will it be for such of God's people as have their lives now governed by its near approach. Let us not be found sleeping

when Jesus comes, or engaged with such as indulge their debased tastes, or with those who give themselves to jealousy and strife. (Rom. 13:11-14.)

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.) His first coming related to sin, and "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;" His second coming will be to bring this perfect salvation to His people. Happy are they who have the eyes of their hearts looking for Him.

## I Have

---

ONE Lord's day afternoon, at our Sunday school, the following precious confession of the Lord Jesus was made to the teacher of a class of little girls, from six to eight years of age. Jesus as the "Lamb of God," the perfect Sacrifice for sin, and as the Light of God's beautiful city, was the subject that had much interested the class for two or three afternoons. The children had heard how "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter," shedding His precious blood for sinners, and the need of each one of them for going to God about her own sins had been earnestly put before them.

One of the children, always marked by her brightness and attention to the lesson, exclaimed as the class proceeded, "I have." "You have what?" the teacher inquired.

"Asked Jesus to wash my sins away," she answered; when another, joining with her, said, "So have I."

Afterward these little children told their teacher that, one Lord's day morning, they had asked the Lord Jesus to wash away their sins. The teacher questioned them, and finding they really had been speaking to the Lord, said, "And do you believe He has done it?"

With faces full of expression, they replied,

"Yes, teacher."

"And did anyone tell you to do so?"

"No," they answered.

Another little girl, looking up, said, "Jesus heard them, didn't He, teacher?"

Yes, indeed, Jesus had heard these little ones, who in their simple way, knowing that He bids little children come to Him, had gone to Him, and had received His blessing.

W. W.

Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

A.D. 103-107.

"As dying, and behold they live."

AT the close of the first century, and during the early part of the second, the persistent refusal of the Christians to unite in any of the customary acts of worship, either in honor of the gods or of the emperor, began to attract the notice of the Roman government. There was a general law against all religions not sanctioned by the State, and this law might at any moment be put in force. The Christians were in danger, too, of being brought under the notice of the rulers by reason of tumults raised against them by the priests of the idol temples, by image-makers, who, like Demetrius,

feared lest their craft should be set at naught, and by others who lived by assisting at those spectacles—games, chariot races, and combats between beasts and men in the theaters—at which the disciples of Christ were not seen. Moreover, about this time strange charges were brought against those of whom the world around them knew but little, save that they were not of it. The fear of persecution, never long slumbering, caused them to meet in secret, and there were those who did not scruple to hint darkly that at those meetings things were done that would not bear the light.

Early in the reign of Trajan an edict was issued, declaring all guilds or clubs unlawful, and we may easily imagine that the little companies of Christians, acknowledging the strong bond which united them as brethren in Christ, would be endangered by such a statute.

But nothing shows us more clearly the situation of the Christians, and their relations with those around them, and with the Roman government at this time, than some letters which passed between the emperor at Rome and Pliny, a Roman writer, from another of whose letters we have an account of the first eruption of Vesuvius and the destruction of Pompeii, and who had been sent as governor into Pontus and Bithynia, provinces in Asia Minor. We may remember that St. Peter, in his first Epistle, writes to the sojourners of the dispersion in those parts, for there were many Jewish as well as Greek Christians there.

Pliny complains to the emperor that on his arrival in his province he found an unaccountable state of things. The temples were almost deserted, victims for sacrifice were rarely purchased, and upon inquiry he found that "many of every age and rank, and of both sexes," were involved in the danger; "for," he says, "the contagion of the superstition has seized not only the villages, but the open country."

Uncertain as to how far he might legally proceed against this "superstition," he consulted the emperor, frankly telling him what course he had taken in his endeavor to discover in what it consisted. Pliny was a polite, refined, philosophic man— by no means hardhearted—yet he does not hesitate to mention that, in accordance with the custom of his time, he had caused two Christian women, slaves, to be tortured, in the expectation that by that means some confessions of the wicked deeds said to be practiced among their fellow Christians might be wrung from them in their agony. He acknowledges, however, that the attempt had failed. All that he could discover about those who were votaries of the "superstition" was that on certain days they were accustomed to meet before dawn, and to sing a hymn to Christ, as God; later in the day they again assembled and partook of a meal. He also learned that it was their custom to bind themselves to abstain from theft and other wrongdoing, and not to break their word.

Having given this account of the Christians in his province, the governor tells the emperor what method he adopted when any were brought before him. If a man was accused of being a Christian, he asked him whether the charge was true, giving him the opportunity, by a thrice-repeated question, accompanied by threats of death if he should persist, of denying the charge. Some who had persisted in avowing themselves Christians, he had already ordered to be put to death, others, being Roman citizens, were to be sent to Rome for trial; "For I had no doubt," he explains, "that whatever they might confess, wilfulness and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished."

"Many," he adds, "repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered worship with wine and frankincense to your image, which for this purpose I had ordered to be brought with the images of the divinities (this was probably on the occasion of the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of Trajan), and also reviled the name of Christ, none of which things, I am told, a real Christian can ever be induced to do." In much perplexity, Pliny asks the emperor how Christianity is to be dealt with; "shall it be punished as in itself a crime, or only when accompanied by other offenses; shall any difference be made between the accused on account of youth or age?" He hints, in concluding his letter, that his efforts to check its progress had not been altogether in vain, for the temples were already filling.

Trajan, in reply, approves of all which had been done, but says that he would rather trust to his governor's own discretion than lay down any rigid rule for his conduct. He thinks, however, that the Christians should not be sought out; only if any were accused, and the crime proved against them, they must be punished; but even then a man might clear himself by denying Christ, and offering sacrifice to the gods.

How easy it would seem to save one's life by merely strewing a few grains of incense, and doing homage to the emperor's statue! But those who were infected by that "superstition" which so baffled the mind of the cultivated Roman, knew the full meaning of what might seem a trifling ceremony, and refused to purchase life and ease by disloyalty to Christ; they kept His word, and did not, as the governor himself was forced to admit, deny His name.

Later in the reign of Trajan, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, suffered as a witness for Christ. We may remember that this Syrian capital, one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire, was the place where the disciples of Christ were first called by His name. We are told that the emperor, elated by his many victories, yet counted all his conquests incomplete as long as there were any in his dominions of that stubborn sect who refused to worship the gods which Rome worshipped, and threatened with death all in Antioch who should refuse obedience in this matter. Anxious that the storm should spend itself on him, and that the flock over which he had had the oversight for half a century should escape, Ignatius was, by his own desire, brought before the emperor. Thus was Trajan brought face to face with that "immoderate superstition" of which he had hitherto only heard.

Much is told of what was said by the accuser and the accused, but all we really know is that the result of the examination of Ignatius before the emperor was that the aged bishop of Antioch was sentenced to be led in chains to Rome, "there to be devoured by beasts for the gratification of the people."

This punishment was awarded to the worst criminals, notably those convicted of practicing magical arts, of which vague offense the Christians were often accused. Rejoicing that he should be counted worthy, like the blessed Apostle Paul, to be thus bound and taken to Rome, Ignatius, guarded by soldiers, was conducted by sea to Smyrna, where he was allowed to see Polycarp, the bishop of that place, who had been, like himself, a disciple of St. John, along with many others who came to bid him Godspeed, and to receive his blessing. At leisure from all concern on his own account, Ignatius seized this opportunity to send letters to the assemblies of Christians at Ephesus and at Rome; that to the latter place being sent by the hand of some who were going thither by a quicker route than that by which he was to travel. In these parting letters, he dwells much upon the

great truth of the manhood of Christ, and warns those to whom he wrote against that evil doctrine, already crept in among the early Christians, which taught that our Lord had not a real body, and that all He did during His life on earth was done by a phantom, or only appeared to be done.

Such was the teaching of those who, even in the time when St. John wrote, pretended to superior knowledge. The letters also speak in no measured terms of the Judaizing teachers of the day.

With regard to his own feelings at the prospect of martyrdom, Ignatius writes to the Roman Christians:—"Ye cannot give me anything more precious than this, that I should be sacrificed to God while the altar is ready. It is good that I should set for this world in God, that I may rise to Him in life. Only pray for strength to be given me from within and from without, that I may not only be called a Christian, but may also be found to be one." Then, alluding to his long and weary journey, he adds, "From Syria, and even unto Rome, I am cast away among wild beasts, by sea and by land, by night and by day, being bound between ten leopards, which are the band of soldiers, who even when I do good to them, all the more do evil to me."

His keepers at last hurried him forward, fearful of not being in time for the games, and doubtless they looked on with impatience at a touching scene which took place as they drew near the city. There Ignatius was met by some sorrowing brethren, and he knelt down among them, and prayed to Christ to put an end to the persecution, for he hoped that it might be granted to him to die for his flock, and that the feeble sheep whom he so loved might escape.

Not far from the Arch of Titus stand the ruins of the Colosseum. Near where Nero's gardens were, in a hollow between two of the hills on which Rome stood, he had made an artificial lake. This had been drained by Titus, and he began building upon the spot a great circus, large enough to seat 80,000 people. We are told that the captive Jews were employed in raising this gigantic structure, which was so large that at one time water was let into the enclosure, and a mock sea fight was carried on for the amusement of the spectators; but it was more often used for combats between beasts and men. Terrible scenes took place in that arena, while the Romans made holiday, and looked down upon the strife and slaughter below from their seats, guarded by a gilt network hung upon ivory posts from the fury of the animals, rendered more savage by hunger.

The first Christian given to the wild beasts in this amphitheater was Ignatius of Antioch.

#### Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-21.)

WE read in three gospels of what happened after the Lord Jesus had come, with His disciples, in the boat to the other side of the lake. Matthew, and Mark, and Luke all tell us of it, though they do not all speak of what happened just in the same way. You remember that the Lord had just before been speaking to the wild waves which lifted themselves so high upon the stormy sea, bidding them "Be still," and hushing the loud winds to silence.

As soon as He reached land, and was come out of the boat, He saw something much more terrible than the raging water and the wild fury of the tempest. There were people in that country over whom Satan had got such fearful power that travelers did not dare to pass by lest they should fall upon them and hurt them dreadfully. It is plain from the verses which you read in St. Matthew's gospel that there were two men who met the Lord, and cried out to Him, but St. Mark and St. Luke

mention only one of them. What a terrible account you have just read of one of them in St. Mark's gospel. The man did not live in any house, but among the tombs. What does that mean? You must remember that in Palestine at that time people were not buried, as they are in this country, in graves dug deep in the ground, but in caves, or holes which had been cut out of the rock. Many such tombs are to be found near that eastern side of the Sea of Galilee where the Lord Jesus went on shore that day. The Jews could not bear to go near such places, but there, among the dead, homeless and hopeless, this poor man lived!

How long had he been there?

We cannot tell; but it seems that it must have been a long, long time, for he had been often bound with fetters and chains—people had tried to tame him, as if he had been a wild beast—but it had all been of no use. Strong with a strength not his own, by reason of the dreadful power over him of that wicked spirit whom the Lord Jesus called "the strong man," he tore away the chains with which they bound him, and rushed to the mountains, crying aloud, and cutting himself with stones. I want you to think of this, dear children, because you know how often Satan tries to make you think that, if you listen to him, he will give you good and pleasant things, and make you much happier than you are. He may promise beautiful things, but he cannot give anything that is really good, for he has nothing good to give; and, however much pleasure he may set before you, if you will follow in his ways, it can only end, as it had ended with this poor man, in the misery of slavery under the power of one who is strong indeed, and who uses his great strength only to bind his chains more closely round those whom he has made captive. What a picture of misery we see in this poor man! He was possessed by the devil, homeless, friendless, without clothes, crying night and day, and cutting himself with stones!

The devil, the strongman, had indeed done his worst, but a stronger than he was come, and that voice was heard, at which the devils tremble. The Lord Jesus said, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." The wicked spirits knew the Lord, and they never thought of resisting His power, for God is stronger than Satan. The poor tormented man called the Lord Jesus by name—he said, "Jesus, Son of the most high God"—and when Jesus asked him, "What is thy name?" he replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many." There were many Roman soldiers in the country, and their great regiments were called legions; one of these regiments had as many as six thousand men, so we see how well this man knew how to describe the way in which he was oppressed by the devil. But he was now in the presence of Christ, who went about when He was on earth "healing all who were oppressed by the devil," and all the power of the strong man was nothing now, for Jesus had come to set his prisoner free forever.

The poor man was not only delivered from the wicked spirits, but saw the end of the animals into whom they passed, when the herd of swine, which had been feeding on the hill-side, rushed down a steep place into the lake, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled, and told what they had seen in the city and country; whereupon crowds of people flocked to the place.

The sight that they saw struck them with great fear, and yet it was not fearful! The Lord Jesus was there, but He was not alone. At His feet sat the man who was possessed by the devil, and had the legion—but, oh, how changed! He was no longer an outcast wanderer, but clothed, and in his right mind. Those who were there told them how it had all come to pass, and about the swine, and then they turned to the Lord, and began to ask something of Him. What was their request? Was it that

He who had brought such wonderful blessing and cure to the poor man, who had been the terror of the country, would never leave them, but that He would abide with them and bless them still?

No; "they began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts." The Lord granted their request; He turned to leave that shore, upon which He had but just landed, and went again to the ship that He might go back to the other side.

But there was one to whom it was a great grief that the Lord should thus go away—for he had learned to know Him as his mighty Saviour, and he longed to be ever at His feet, and by His side—so we read that, when He was in the act of stepping into the ship, "he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him." Surely the Lord Jesus would have willingly granted such a prayer, we should think, yet He "suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Though the people of that country would not have the Lord Jesus, He would not leave them without a messenger to tell them of Himself. Wherever that poor man went, he had a wonderful story to tell; "he began to publish in Decapolis" (that is the country which you may find in the map stretching on both sides of the River Jordan) "how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."

## Bell, the Navvy

---

BELL was one of a gang of navvies engaged in making a new railway. He was uncouth and uncomely, but the Lord had in grace given him a heart to love Himself, and Bell was known as a Christian. Though he was not polished so highly as some, and did not hang so high in the belfry of life as many, Bell was true metal, and gave forth no uncertain sound. Some of his enemies said he was "a little cracked"; but, as they had not the ear for heavenly music, their opinion need not be noticed. Our friend the navvy seems to have been, like the warning sentinel of the rock, made for rough usage, and to give out its warning in the midst of wild breakers.

Of course, Bell, the navvy, met with persecution. One man in particular used to mock at him and his religion continually; but, as is often the case, God avenged His child, and punished the evil-doer in a way that cast solemnity over the whole gang.

One morning after Bell, in the fullness of his heart, had engaged in his "gospel talk" the scoffer ridiculed him, and roughly told him to keep out of his way. The wild, rough scoffer did not want Bell and his cant—not he; but within an hour how different it was!

The men were running truck-loads of ballast down the metals, and shooting them, to form an embankment. The rails were wet and greasy with recent rain, so that the wheels did not bite as usual. How it happened no one knew, but as one truck shot past, a cry of distress arose from someone just in front of it. It was none other than Bell's scoffing mate. He had slipped. In vain did the poor fellow roll over and over to try and get clear; it was too late—the heavy load struck him, ran over him, and left him bleeding and mangled. His mates gathered round him, and were for taking him to the town infirmary close by.

"No," he said, "I'm dying; let me be." His eyes wandered round the group as if looking for some one.

"Where's Bell?" said he.

The man, who a few minutes before was the object of his scorn, was the very one he now most wished to see. Why not send for the skeptical mate who had laughed at the good old book? Ah! man, there is no comfort in the dying hour to be had from scoffers and skeptics; the Christian was the man wanted for dying moments.

With a longing heart Bell knelt over his prostrate mate and told him how Jesus had died to save.

"Look to Him, Jim; trust Him; He loves you. He waits to pardon. Believe Him," he pleaded.

Who shall say what passed in that hour of death? The Lord only knows.

There are many like that navvy. The servants of Jesus are despised by them, and, what is worse, the Lord Himself is rejected. They beseech Him to depart out of their coasts; but in trouble these very men will cry for the Saviour they sent away. "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace," lest He shall say to you, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand,

and no man regarded...I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind." (Prov. 1:24-28.) W. L.

## Assurance

---

I WAS trying to persuade a man to take God at His word, but he was very angry, and said he would never take to my doctrine. Hundreds of good Christian men and women lived and died without assurance, said he, so why should he not have his doubts.

"What is assurance?" I asked. "Now, for example, you pay a small sum of money that you owe. The person to whom you owed the money receives the sum, and gives you his signature on paper. Well, what assurance have you that the debt is paid, and that it will not be sought for again? Why, the man's name, signed by himself, and hence you keep possession of the paper. You do not hesitate to take man at his word, and yet you are angry with me for taking God at His word."

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." R. S. McP.

## To Soldiers

---

I KNOW that a good many soldiers will read this paper, and my story is about a soldier. This world is sometimes called a "field of battle," and there are numbers of soldiers, who are fighting every day, and who are sure of victory, because they are led by a Captain who never once lost a battle, and never will. I don't mean any great general, and when you get to the end of this paper you will find out for yourselves who I mean. I know a little about fighting, though I did not go through the Crimean War, but I have some old friends who went through it all.

How sick some of you get of the idleness of barrack life, and so you play cards and toss, and all that sort of thing, to "kill time." Now see, friends, there's honest, hearty work for all of you to do, if only you will start right. But you must enlist afresh for it. You cannot buy a commission under my Captain; but He will never turn a man away, who really wants to fight under Him. There's plenty of fighting for you, and never a defeat, provided you obey orders.

Some years ago I knew S., of the —th foot. Now no one cares to be over much in the barracks hospital, but S. was obliged to be there pretty often. The part of it he liked the least was that when a lady, who came to read to the sick soldiers, sometimes spoke a word to him. S. was very well satisfied with himself, and was annoyed at this lady's plain speaking with him. She was kind enough, he could not deny; she did her utmost by bringing little comforts to cheer the invalids; but nothing she could do for S. would make him even civil to her, and he tried all he could to get away whenever she came into the ward. Many years' experience of similar work had taught Mrs. R. the value of the, bare word of God; so she would quote a pointed text of Scripture to S. and leave him.

After a time S. was sent home on furlough; and when there he began to look into the Bible. On his wife expressing her astonishment at this, he said, "Oh, I am only looking for some words that a lady read at the hospital. I want to see if they are really here." So he searched for them, which was much to the joy of his wife, who loved the Bible herself.

Some long time elapsed, when it happened that Mrs. R. was passing through the hospital at the garrison in—. The sergeant said to her, "There's a man upstairs, ma'am, would be glad to see you," but she did not recognize his name.

On going up as directed, she was astonished to see poor S., who had been brought in again. She saw at a glance that he was very ill. How pleased she was to find that instead of wishing her to go away, he was eager to be spoken to about his soul—his never-dying soul.

Mrs. R. read to him out of the Bible of Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, who became a man, and stooped so low as to take God's punishment for sin on Himself, so that repenting sinners might justly be forgiven and saved. She read, too, of His precious blood that cleanses from all sin. This was just what poor S. wanted; he put his whole trust in Jesus, who shed His blood to wash away our sins. He enlisted afresh, and found that the "Captain of our salvation" was willing to take him just as he was.

But all this was not the work of one day; many times did Mrs. R. visit him; she explained to him the holiness of God, and how that no sin could be found in His holy presence. How then can a sinner stand there? Now God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent," and thank God, poor S. learned by the Holy Spirit's teaching what he was, and what God was, too. And at length the day came when he could say, "I am saved at last—Christ died for my sins; the blood has done it; I do trust Him."

One day Mrs. R. found his brothers and friends gathered round his bed, and S. telling them all to seek salvation. He was speaking with difficulty, and using his little strength to warn others not to put off to a dying bed the salvation that God offered them at such a cost to Himself.

After some little talk, Mrs. R. said to him, "We may not meet again down here." He at once brightly said, "We shall in heaven. Jesus Christ died for my sins."

"Have you no doubts?" she asked.

"No, and I want Him to take me."

And then his Captain granted the wish, and poor S. was poor no longer, for he had passed out from the bare ward of the hospital, from all his sufferings, up to the presence of Jesus, who died for him.

S. was gone. There was a soldier's funeral. Some, who once had mocked at the Bible as he formerly had done, followed his body, and not one of those men would have dared to say, as they stood there by the open grave, that they would rather die as they were. No, they knew, and you know, comrades, that it is not all right with you unless you are one of "Christ's own." You may get along now without Him, as I did once, and think you I are going to enjoy life and all that, but can you enjoy death?

Come, then, to Christ! He will receive you, and instead of death being a terror to you, living or dying you will be the Lord's. Fight for Him; He is worthy; and presently you shall go home to Him, and share the spoils of the victory He has won. Soldiers, won't you enlist under Him? L. T.

## Patience

---

PATIENCE is a high Christian quality and grace—one of the highest. Patience characterizes God's dealings with men. Were it not so, who could stand? He bears with our follies and our repeated errors.

If we were patient in the disposition of our heart Godwards, we should express by our ways to our fellow men a like disposition. Let the heart be right in its ways with God, and it will be right in its ways towards men. The first thing is to be right ourselves; our actions to others depend upon this. What should we say of a Christian who can expound Scripture beautifully, but who at home is short-tempered? or of him who relishes a good sermon, but is a bad servant or master? That joyous company singing and shouting of glory to come, are, let us hope, all the best of fathers, mothers, and children! If otherwise, there is need of patience.

## How Can I Get Salvation?

---

A FRIEND of mine had been carrying on some gospel work in a village of North Aberdeenshire. On the morning of his departure he went by permission into a workshop, to give a last word to some young converts. A number of dressmakers and milliners were busy there, and amongst them was a girl whom my friend had not seen before. So addressing her, he said—

"I don't think I have seen you before. Have you been at any of these meetings?"

"No, sir; it was quite out of my power to get to any of them."

"Well, then," he said, "may I ask you the most important question of all? Are you saved?"

"I hope so, sir."

"Ah, but that is not enough for your salvation; you must have something more than that."

"Well, sir, I am trying to do my best."

"Ah, my young friend, your doing is all in vain. The work was completed eighteen hundred years ago. Suppose, now, you had that dress finished: what would you think if anyone were to come in and begin to add to and do your work over again?"

"Well, sir," she said, "I would think it needless, and feel very much hurt. But," she continued, "I have been brought up to work out my own salvation."

"Very good; but when did you get salvation? Can you tell me that?"

"No."

"Well, how can you work out what you have not got?"

"But how can I get salvation?"

"By accepting Christ, who offers you salvation, full and free. Take your place as a lost sinner before God, and by a simple faith accept Christ's finished work. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' (Acts 16:31.) 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.' (Eph. 2:8, 9.) Now promise me that you will read those texts when you go home, and see what God's word says about it," he added as he left, the time granted for the interview being over.

I have reason to believe that that conversation was the means of blessing to that girl's soul. She did search the Scriptures, and she saw for herself, in God's word, that she was lost by nature, and that Christ suffered the penalty of sin. She was led to see that "doing is a deadly thing," and that "doing ends in death." Christ showed her her need of a Saviour, and He showed Himself as her Saviour.

Reader, have you seen your need, and accepted Jesus as your Saviour? or are you still like this girl, doing your best, and hoping, in some vague indefinite way, to get to heaven. Jesus only is the Door; by Him, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. K. R.

## Forgetting God

---

"Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." (Psa. 1. 22.) "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psa. 9:7.)

Yes, dear reader, you have only to "forget God" to be cast into hell. You may not be outwardly wicked; you may not be a drunkard, a thief, or a blasphemer, but if you "forget God" you will be turned into hell. The wicked, and those who forget God, say in their hearts, "God hath forgotten; He hideth His face; He will never see it." (Psa. 10:11.) But God does not hide His face; He sees all the sins you commit, and He does not forget them. He is acquainted with your secret thoughts, with your "down-sittings and uprisings," for the Psalmist says—

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." (Psa. 139:7-11.) J. S—n.

## I Know and Have Certainty

---

NOT long since two persons were sitting talking together. They were strangers, and did not know each other's concerns. Mrs. P., who was old and ailing, was telling her visitor how much and how often she suffered. After a little while the latter began to speak about the difference between the soul and the body—how that the soul must live forever and ever, and of the urgent necessity of salvation.

"Mrs. P.," she said at length, "you would like to be saved, would you not?"

When her body had occupied her thoughts she had spoken cheerlessly, but now she brightened up and answered, with a smile, "Well, I don't feel the need to be. He says in His word we may become as little children, and be converted, and I have it"

"And how did you receive it, Mrs. P.? I wish you would tell me."

"You see," she said, as she began her simple story, "I am getting on in years, and I have ten children. They are all well brought up, and I used to pride myself about that, and think I was such a good woman. I was always sober, and taught my family all I could, and sent them to school. I was full of my own goodness. In my young days things were not explained simply, as they are now. I very seldom went to church, and when I did go, I did not understand. But a few years since I began to feel that, in spite of my goodness, there was something wanting, and about this time, too, there was a preaching going on near, at a place in yonder street. I went, and then it was that I heard for the first time of repentance and conversion. There was one seat they called the penitents' form.' My conscience told me it was my place, but I thought, I need not go there; the Bible says, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet"; I will go home, and get down on my knees in my room alone, and tell God.'

"Some time after this, in a night of pain and prayer, when all was still, the words came to me, Come, sinner, come, with all your sins.' Ah! it was as music to me, and I said, ' Here I am, Lord, and I do thank Thee for Thy dear kindness.' I got forgiveness then, and I am so happy? '

"I only want to hear about Jesus and His word now. I am only a poor ignorant woman. I can't read, but my little girl and I get on together. She is twelve, and can read a chapter, and then I pick out a few verses. When I was ill I could just spell out, in my poor way, words which comforted me. I am not one of those who wish and hope—I know, and have certainty; and as to death, why it is nothing, only a `shadow.' A.

## I Will Give

---

THE Scriptures abound in testimony as to the readiness of the Lord to save, and show that salvation is absolutely an act of pure, unmerited mercy on the part of God. The Lord Jesus came to save sinners, He came to satisfy the thirsty soul, and glorify His God and Father in ministering to our need. He came to bring the poor sinner from that separation from God into which sin had brought him, and where the foolishness and presumption of his desperate heart had led him; Jesus came to bring the sinner out of that state, and to bring him to God, and to make him happy. He came, too, at the suited time. God had fully tested man by the law, and God had pronounced man "Guilty," not "Guilty" only, but also "without strength." But the Lord Jesus came to save, and no power could hinder His purpose. It is sweet to repeat His words, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." It was the express purpose for which He came from above. He came to declare the glorious message that "God is love." He, the sent One, declared, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He did not spare the "living water," He gave it freely. Have you in your heart drunk" living water "? You know what natural thirst is! You have thirsted a thousand times, and probably will thirst again. Have you ever thirsted for that water whereof if you drink you will thirst nevermore? W. M.

## Christian Life

---

CHRISTIAN life By which we mean Christian life lived out. This in its excellence and beauty we have presented to us in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, in a way which must speak to the soul of the true believer, for it is presented to us chiefly by example.

We read from the fifth verse, "Let this mind be in you"—this frame of mind, a practical consideration being in view. And the mind in us, to which we are exhorted, is none other than that which was also in Christ Jesus.

The mind, which was in Him, will be more simply under our eye, by setting out the words in their seven steps-seven stages of humiliation, with seven stages of answering exaltation. By the study of the words we may be led to pray for such a frame of mind for ourselves.

"Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God —

(His HUMILIATION.)

1. But made Himself of no reputation,
  2. And took upon Him the form of a servant,
  3. And was made in the likeness of men:
  4. And being found in fashion as a man,
  5. He humbled Himself,
  6. And became obedient unto death,
  7. Even the death of the cross. | (His EXALTATION.)
1. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him,
  2. And given Him a Name, which is above every name:
  3. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
  4. Of things in heaven,
  5. And things in earth,
  6. And things under the earth;
  7. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." |

He who is equal with God, and was in the form of God, emptied Himself, stooped down and assumed the servant's form. The eternal Son, of His own will and grace, becoming thus a servant, stooped beneath the angel's greatness, and was made in the likeness of men; yes, of poor, weak men. What strange steps of condescending grace! Such is the wonderful story of the incarnation of

the Lord.

And the blessed Lord, being found in fashion as a man here upon this earth, in His lowliness humbled Himself. As God, He emptied Himself; as man, He humbled Himself. He emptied Himself to assume the creature's form, and having assumed it and become a man, He humbled Himself. These are three words never, never to be forgotten as we consider our ways— He humbled Himself! His pathway here, as the perfect man, was one of obedience to His God and Father, to do whose will He came to this earth, and part of that will was that He should die; hence He became obedient even unto death. The stoop from the unutterable glories on high to the servant's place on earth is beyond all our just conception; but the Lord stooped lower still—He became obedient unto death. Nor death alone, but the most shameful death that could possibly be— even the death of the cross. Let these wonderful steps occupy our hearts: from the glory which is His right—equal with God—to the shame which He voluntarily took upon the cross.

Such a frame of mind as this which was in Christ Jesus, Christians are exhorted to have in them, and how lovely would our steps be were such the case in us! We have His example. He will not deny us His grace.

Now, since the Lord emptied Himself, God has highly exalted Him—He sits at the right hand of God. Since He took upon Himself the servant's form—and servants have no name of their own—God has given Him a Name, which is above every name, whether of angels or of men. Since He was made in the likeness of weak men—and Christ was made lower than the angels—God has ordained that to the name of Jesus (His human name) every knee shall bow!

He did not shun the weakness of humanity, and angels came from heaven and ministered to Him here; lo! all things in heaven shall bow to His Name. He was the despised Jesus, the carpenter's son, on earth; lo! all things on earth shall bow to His Name. He died, and he who had the power of death, that is, the devil, seemed to have gained the victory; but, lo! the things under the earth shall bow to His name!

Yes, the humiliation of the cross, to which form of death He became obedient, shall have its eternal answer from every tongue, whether of angels, of men, or of devils, for all shall confess the Son of Man to be LORD—to the glory of God the Father.

Such is the glorious exaltation by God of Christ Jesus, in response to His incarnation, humiliation, and death.

As we mark the effect upon us of these wondrous facts respecting the Lord Jesus, as set forth in the exhortation, the first thing we observe is the call to obedience—.

"Wherefore as ye have always obeyed." Jesus obeyed His God, let us, too, obey. Let this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus.

Christians now have no apostle to direct them, but are precisely where the Philippians were, to whom the apostle wrote; but as the early Christians had, we have the Scriptures to obey.

Let us who are the subjects of such grace work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We are His people, and He is graciously pleased to work in us the will and the power to obey Him. Godly fear and trembling, lest

we should disobey, should characterize us. For we each one are the subjects of His mighty operation. Let it be but a child, still the steps of life's pathway are, if obediently trodden, to the glory of God. What God has done for us, we enjoy; what God is doing in us, we are to work out. In the one case all is His grace; in the other His grace and our responsibility are both evident. God has saved us, the salvation is the individual portion of each of His people; we are, therefore, to carry out what God is doing in us.

The next exhortative call to us from the example of Christ is to moral likeness to Himself. We are to do all things without murmurings and disputings. A man may grumble to himself, he must dispute with someone else. The murmuring spirit is first forbidden, and indeed, if contentment reign within our breasts we shall hardly be likely to be found disputing with others.

And neither murmuring nor disputing, we shall be blameless and harmless, or artless, sincere towards men, honorable before God; a truly noble manner of life!

God's children we are, and we are called to be in our measure like to His blessed Son, and thus we should be without rebuke from God—which, alas! our disobedience so often calls out. We are called to walk as Christ walked, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. How distinctly the character of Christ Jesus is here seen in answering beauty in God's children. Shall we not again repeat the exhortation, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"?

The Lord was the Light of the world, He shone here by every word and step. In Himself He was Light. The Christian appears now in the darkness of unbelief and selfishness, as a heavenly body is seen in the night. The Christian may be compared to a globe wherein is the electric light. Those brilliant beams originate not within the globe, but are energized and maintained by unseen force afar off. So long as the communication is unbroken the light is strong, but sever the connection and the light is gone in less than a moment. The Christian gives out light so long as he is Christ like, and lives in dependence on Him. But, returning to the figure of the heavenly body, the Christian is God's luminary in the world in the absence of the Lord Jesus from it.

What, then, are the rays of the light which are visible to all? We say of the various lights we see, that is gas-light, that oil-light. Of the Christian it shall be said, that is life-light—he holds forth the word of life!—and at once we are reminded of the Lord, who is Light, and who is Life. The Christian is a heavenly light-bearer in the midst of this dark world, and holds forth the word of life to them who are around him. What a privilege—what an honor! And how lovely would be the sight, if on every hand God's children on this earth were shining brilliantly in the beauty of Christ, holding forth the gracious word of life—the word of the truth of the gospel—even as God's stars in the sky shine in their order and loveliness at His bidding in His heavens!

With such things filling the soul of the apostle, and his soul looking on to the day of Christ, he speaks of having neither run nor labored in vain. No, indeed, to have come into Europe, to have been cast into the inner prison, and to have been beaten, as he was, would not have been in vain if as a result in the Philippians he loved, was found this mind, which was also in Christ Jesus.

“O patient, spotless One!

Our hearts in meekness train,

To bear Thy yoke, and learn of Thee,

That we may rest obtain.”

## Be Ye Also Ready

---

IT is night-time, and dark and dreary it is outside the house, where lives a little girl whom I know. Dark and quiet, too, it is in the bedrooms, where she and her brothers and sisters are supposed to be asleep, while the father and mother are staying a little while downstairs after the bustle of the long day. They are enjoying a quiet half-hour over the Bible, which they both love.

Let us take a peep upstairs. Why, what is that on the landing? Something white! Surely it is a child standing leaning over the banisters! Yes; it is my little friend M., and very much frightened she looks as she listens eagerly for the sound of voices below. Why is she standing out there, instead of being tucked up warmly in her cozy bed? This is the reason. M. has very often heard, what most likely you have often heard, that the Lord is coming to take all who love Him up to His own beautiful home, to make them bright and glorious, like Himself, and give them everything that can make them happy. M. knows this is true; she knows that the Lord may come at any moment, and then her mother and father, she is sure, would go up to meet Him in the air, and she thinks, "Shall I be left behind?"

Such thoughts have kept little M. awake, and as she thinks of the Lord's coming she feels that she does not really love Him. She has been listening if she can hear her mother's voice, but all is quiet downstairs. At last she can bear it no longer, and so she creeps quietly out of her little bed and on to the landing to try and find out whether the Lord had really come, taken her father and mother away, and left her behind. And, oh! how glad she is when she hears them at last talking together, and then she knows that she is not left alone!

I am glad to tell you that some time after this M. gave her heart to the loving Saviour, and now she knows that, whenever He may come for His people, she is ready, and will be amongst those who will hear the voice that calls them up to their beautiful home above.

Dear children, I have not told you this just to amuse you. I want you to think whether you are ready if the Lord Jesus were to come just now. He may come, you know. Do you remember the verses in the New Testament that tell us about the Lord's coming for all His people—for every tiny little boy or girl who loves and trusts in Jesus the Lord. Now will every one of you look out the first epistle to the Thessalonians and find the fourth chapter and read the last three verses. You will see now that the Lord Himself is coming, and that those who love Him, but have died, will hear His call first. Just think of the graveyards and cemeteries near you; well, everyone in them who loved the Lord will come out, and we who love Him and are still living in this world, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and be always with Him in the glory.

All the little children who often suffer pain here will lose the pain then, and those who are hungry now will never be hungry then. It will be all brightness forever for everyone who knew that the Lord Jesus was his or her own Saviour.

Perhaps some girl or boy will say, "How am I to know that?" Well, you know you often say and do naughty things, and God sees all that, but He loved you so that He gave His own dear Son to

come down into this world and tell us that He loved us, but that He hated naughtiness, and must punish it too. His Son took the punishment for us, and will wash away the naughtiness from everyone who believes what He says-that is what the Lord Jesus did. He died on the cross, and bore all our sins or naughtiness there. And I am sure if you believe He died there for you, you will begin to love Him and try to please Him, and you will be ready when He comes. L. T.

## John 5:24

---

WILL you read this beautiful verse, and will you also learn it by heart, every single word: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life"?

Here are three happy testimonies about this one verse from three young people. The first quoting it, tells us how God had through it given her to know she has life. She says: "May you take God at His word as I have done. It is a blessed thing to have peace with God. Look to Jesus, and be ye saved."

Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation.' Good-bye."

Little Nellie writes also on this same verse, "I thought I was good enough, but still I was unsaved. It was by this verse I came to see the truth. I went home rejoicing that night because I had found Jesus, and now I am a sinner saved by grace."

And our young friend, Sarah, says, "God in His own goodness opened my eyes to let me see where I was going to keep eternity, but, thank God, I am now trusting in the Lord. I cannot express the happiness I have found. Dear young friends, if you will only look to Jesus, how happy you will be! This beautiful Scripture (John 5:24.), was opened up to me. Think of this—to have everlasting life, and to dwell with the Father in the beautiful home on high. Dear young reader, do you ever think of your never-dying soul? Perhaps some of your schoolmates are cut down, or those who work for your good, and have never even time to say good-bye. Do look to the Lord Jesus."

Do take God at His word, we also say to you; the Lord never deceives any who put their trust in Him. When He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," remember that He is speaking to you, your own self. If there was no one else in the world, Jesus is speaking to you. And when the Lord says, "He that heareth," you must ask yourself, "Do I really hear Him." if you have His word you have life.

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 9:1-3; Luke 5:17-20.)

WHEN the ship, in which the Lord Jesus and His disciples were crossing the lake, touched at the other side, they landed and came to the city of Capernaum. This is called Christ's "own city," for He was much there, and many of His works of love and power were done among the people of that place. We have just been reading of one of those mighty works which are called miracles.

If we try to make a picture in our minds of how it all happened, we must first remember what I am sure some of you have often been told, the difference between the Eastern houses, with their flat roofs, with steps outside, by which people could get upon the roof without going into the house, and the houses of this country.

What was the Lord Jesus doing when the sick man was brought to Him? We know from those verses which you have just read in the gospel of Luke that He was in a house—some people have

thought that it was Peter's house— teaching. Not long before, in the synagogue of Nazareth, where He had been brought up, the Lord had read some beautiful words which God had given to His prophet Isaiah to write about His Son when He should have come to this world. You can find the account of this in the fourth chapter of Luke. The words which Christ read aloud that day begin in this way: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor." This was what He was doing on that day in Capernaum; and so many poor people had come to listen, that not only the house was crowded, so that there was not room for one person more, but the courtyard was full of people, and even the gateway leading to the street was blocked up by the crowd. People were there from all the country round, and among them some learned men, Pharisees and doctors of the law, who had heard the Lord speak in Jerusalem. What a beautiful word is said about this crowd of people—"the power of the Lord was present to heal them."

There is a verse which you may remember in that hundred and third Psalm which so many children have learned— that Psalm beginning, "Bless the Lord, O my soul"— which says, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." This is true of God, and it was true of the Lord Jesus now that He was come a Man upon earth.

We can imagine that there was a good deal of confusion when the four men came, carrying their helpless burden. If a person is only partly paralyzed, that part of him becomes unable to move of itself; with this poor man his illness was so great that he could not move at all; he could do nothing to help himself, nothing to bring himself any nearer to Jesus; he could only lie on his mattress—the sort of bed which poor people have in that country—and allow his friends, two at the head and two at the feet, to carry him. Have you ever thought how sad he must have felt when he had come to the place where Jesus was, the place where the power of the Lord was present to heal, and then found there was no way to Him?

We do not read that he said anything; perhaps his power to speak was gone; but we read a very beautiful thing about those four men who carried him. They knew that no one could cure him but Christ; they were quite sure that the power of God was there; and so they were not discouraged by all the crowd; they felt they must get to Jesus any way.

I think it would have been kind if some of those who stood about the door had made room for them to pass; but sometimes it happens in a great crowd that people can hardly move without making things worse. All we know is, that the four men carried their helpless burden up to the roof, and then tore up some of the covering—not slates or tiles, but something much lighter—and let the sick man down just in front of the Lord Jesus.

Then, looking up, and seeing the poor man on his mattress coming down, the crowd made way, and the man suddenly found himself the nearest of all to the Lord; all the hindrances gone. Jesus knew all about it; He had seen the faith of those who would let no difficulty stop them; and now He spoke to the poor man, as he lay at His feet, The Lord said, "Child, thy sins are forgiven thee." Was not this just what that verse of the Psalm said—"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities"? Sin is more terrible than any disease, and Christ cured the worst thing first.

How dreadful to think that even as those wonderful words were spoken to the sick man there were some in that house at Capernaum who had wrong thoughts about Him who spoke them. The

scribes from Jerusalem did not speak aloud, but they thought in their hearts, as they had said before at Jerusalem, when they had heard Him speak to another helpless man, that He was making Himself "equal with God."

The Lord Jesus, "seeing their thoughts" —and none but God could do that—asked them why they "thought evil things in their hearts." And then He said to this poor man, who could not even stretch out his hand, the very words which He had spoken to the "impotent man" at the Pool of Bethesda, and bade him rise, take up his bed, and walk.

Those who had heard Him say, "Thy sins are forgiven," had seen no change come to the man, for God only can look at the heart; but they now saw him, at the word of Christ, immediately arise and go to his house, glorifying God. No wonder that the crowds were astonished, as they, too, glorified God, saying, "We have seen strange things to-day. We never saw it on this fashion."

## An Enemy Hath Done This!

---

AN enemy hath done this! What? Spoiled the fair beauty of the flourishing young corn, by sowing weeds all over the field! Now this would be a shameful thing to do on a farm, and we can imagine the farm servants coming one morning to the farmer, saying, "Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field?" and then telling him, "But now it is full of weeds!" Presently master and men go to the field, and lo, the weeds are springing up as thick as the wheat!

What a loss this would be at harvest. None but a spiteful foe could work such ill as to take the trouble to go, step by step, all over the field sowing tares; how he must hate the owner of the field to work such ill!

Look at our picture; see the man at work. It is quite a different scene from that of which we spoke on pages 28 and 29. This man has chosen the night-time for his toil, and he is laboring out of the hatred of his heart. We read the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, and first we see the Sower go forth to sow, and the Sower is Jesus, the Lord. "The good seed" which He sows "is the word of God," and "the field" wherein He sows "is the world." Let there be good ground, good seed, and God's blessing, and there shall be a grand harvest.

But "His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." "The enemy who sowed them is the devil"; he hates the Lord, he hates the good seed, and spoil the work of the gracious Sower he will if he can.

Seeds are small things, which when cast over the ground are hardly observable. Satan takes little lies and casts them into men's hearts, and by-and-by they grow up to be great tares. "Hath God said?" was the first evil seed he sowed in the human breast, and, oh! how great and numerous have been the questions, whether God does really mean what He says, from that first day.

It takes a long time to sow over a field: the enemy had done his work leisurely; but at length the servants awoke, to find the tares springing up all over the wheat field! Had the servants been watching, they might have driven the enemy away; but he worked while they slept, and now at whatever part of the field we look, where the good seed has been sown, we see the tares also. Side by side they grow up in the nursery, in the school, in the church or the chapel. What shall be done? The householder replies, "Let both grow together until the harvest."

The harvest draws near. The tares will not be gathered into the barn; they will be bound up in bundles by themselves. They will be sorted out from the wheat, and will be gathered together and be burned. Then will be seen the end of such as having professed to be God's people are after all only professors. They looked like the real and true, but real and true they never were.

"The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." How solemn are these words of the Lord Jesus!

"The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." May each of us be among "them" who "in an honest and

good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”

The solemn parable of the tares needs our earnest attention, and especially in this our present day, when so many profess to be Christians, and yet so few really receive Christ! Let us each earnestly inquire, Have I indeed received His words? Am I the wheat? Such as have received into the heart Satan's words, and believe him, are the tares.

Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

POLYCARP, THE DISCIPLE OF ST. JOHN, A.D. 166.

“To the angel of the church in Smyrna write... Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer... be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,”

IT is interesting to note that it was about the middle of the second century when the gospels and epistles began to be collected into a volume. The epistles had been read chiefly by those in the places to which they were addressed, so that it is not improbable that the Christians at Rome, for instance, were ignorant of that precious letter which the same apostle who wrote to them afterward, addressed to their brethren at Ephesus. The collecting of these scattered epistles was not only of untold value to the Church in those perilous times, but was the means by which, under God's providence, they have been preserved in their integrity.

As we read the history of those times, we cannot but see how constantly some national disaster was made the occasion for a fresh outburst of rage against the Christians. They were counted not only "atheists"—to which charge, their having no temples and paying no sacrificial observance to any deity, seemed to give some color of truth—but "haters of mankind"; while some did not scruple to say that they were devourers of their own children, and guilty of other horrible crimes. There were others, however, who, taking knowledge of their ways, learned to judge them very differently. Among these was Justin Martyr, a native of a Greek town built upon the site of the ancient Shechem, who addressed an eloquent "Apology" to the Emperor Antoninus, and the senate and people of Rome. "I used," he says, "to hear the Christians slandered; but when I saw them fearless of death and of all else which is accounted terrible, I perceived that it was impossible that they should be living in pleasure and wickedness.”

Justin, who received his surname, "Martyr," because he afterward suffered as a witness for Him of whose followers he had thus taken note, tells us how, in his youth, he long sought some firm foundation to rest upon, going from one school of Greek philosophy to another, until he had tried them all, only to be repelled by the falseness which he found either in the doctrine itself, or in the teacher who professed to set it forth. At last—weary and restless—when one day walking by the sea-shore, he was addressed by an old man, who told him that none of the studies which he had so ardently followed, would bring him the peace which he sought, and bade him read the prophets and gospels, and pray that "the gates of light might be opened to him." Justin did indeed find an answer to his prayer, when he turned from the thoughts and guesses of men to the sure word of God.

We next find him traveling in his philosopher's dress through Egypt and Asia, no longer in search of truth, but teaching those doctrines of Christianity which had become so dear to him, to all who would listen. He finally settled in Rome as a Christian teacher, though he still wore his

philosopher's mantle, and was soon, with six others—one of them a woman, brought before the prefect, charged with being a Christian.

In answer to the question, "What kind of doctrines do you profess?" he said, "I have endeavored to learn all doctrines, but have settled at last in the true doctrine—that of the Christians."

When asked where the Christians assembled, he replied that they met where they could; not all in the same place, "for the God of the Christians is not circumscribed by space, being invisible. He fills heaven and earth, and is everywhere worshipped and glorified by the faithful."

After threatening him and his companions with death if they should persist in their superstition, the prefect asked Justin whether he supposed that, if he died, he would ascend to heaven and there receive his reward. "I do not suppose it; I know and am fully persuaded of it," was the confident answer of this philosopher, who, after his long doubtful quest, had found a sure and steadfast anchor for his soul in a hope that maketh not ashamed. Doubtless his faith encouraged his fellow Christians, for we read that when bidden to offer sacrifice to the gods, they cried out with one accord, "Do what you will; we are Christians, and cannot sacrifice to idols." They were sentenced, in accordance with what was then the law, to be scourged and beheaded, as those who had refused to sacrifice to the gods, and to obey the command of the emperor, and they were led away to their death.

In his "Apology," written some time before, Justin had boldly set forth the injustice of persecuting Christians for their religion when all other religions were tolerated; he had also refuted the false charges brought against them, saying that the crimes of which they were accused might with more truth be laid at the door of their accusers. While speaking of the purity of life of the Christians, and of their faith and patience, he adds these remarkable words, "No one ever believed Socrates in such a manner as to die for his philosophy; but multitudes, even in the lowest ranks, have braved death and danger in the cause of Christ."

It is not evident that this elaborate defense of the Christians had any effect upon the emperor, to whom it was addressed, nor upon his adopted son, Marcus Aurelius, by whom he was succeeded in the year 161. It was in the reign of the latter that the persecution became more and more deadly and general, for now the local governors all over the empire were directed to seek out the Christians, and no longer to refuse to listen to any accusations brought against them, even by slaves, whose evidence in ordinary cases was worthless.

In the second year of this philosophic, religious emperor, a great calamity came upon the city. The waters of the Tiber rose to such a height that the cattle were swept from their pasture, and many houses were carried away, among them the great buildings on the banks of the river where the corn was stored. This flood was followed by a famine, when the people suffered terribly; and a pestilence, brought from the East by a returning army, seemed to crown their misery. There were rumors, too, of a vast league among distant nations, who were gathering in wild hordes ready to pour down upon Rome, and all these troubles were ascribed to the wrath of the offended gods, a wrath which could be appeased only by the blood of those impious men who had set them at naught.

Along with this desire for vengeance upon the Christians came a general waking up to greater zeal in the performance of religious ceremonies; countless sacrifices were offered, the temples were

thronged with suppliants, and great efforts were made to do away with all that which might be supposed to have been offensive to the deities.

It was at the time of this cry of alarm and vengeance that Justin and many others suffered at Rome; but it was in Asia Minor that the persecution raged most fiercely. There the Christians were sought out diligently by those whose zeal was rewarded by receiving the forfeited goods of any who had been apprehended by their means. The story of the faith and courage of the aged Polycarp, who had been, as we may remember, a disciple of the apostle John, has come down to us in a letter written in the name of the Church at Smyrna to their brethren at Philadelphia.

The writers mention the case of two confessors at Smyrna. one of whom, after boastfully courting persecution, had been so terrified at the first sight of the wild beasts, that he had consented to sacrifice after the heathen fashion; while the other, by his fortitude, had only quickened the rage of the excited populace. The cry, "Away with the atheists!" rang through the arena, presently to be followed by a clamor for the blood of him who was well known as the faithful shepherd of the little flock of Christians in Smyrna.

"Polycarp! seek out Polycarp was heard on all sides. The aged bishop, at the earnest entreaty of his friends, had retired into the country, but was betrayed by his own slaves, who had been tortured to compel them to discover the place of his retreat. He now refused to take any further measures to secure his own safety, and saying, "The will of the Lord be done," calmly awaited the coming of those who had been sent to apprehend him. When the officers arrived he ordered food to be set before them, and retired to an upper room," where," the letter says," he stood and prayed for all whom he had ever known, both small and great, worthy and unworthy, and for the whole church throughout the world." Thus he continued praying for two hours, until the officers called for him that they might take him to Smyrna. It was a day of public concourse, and the city was thronged as Polycarp, seated on an ass, closely guarded, passed through the streets. On the way he was met by Herod, the chief magistrate, and his father, who, with much show of respect, took the aged prisoner into their own carriage, and endeavored by fair words and promises to shake his constancy, and to induce him to salute the emperor as lord, and to sacrifice to his statue." What is there," they argued," in saying Lord Cæsar,' or in sacrificing?"

Finding their efforts vain, however, they soon changed their soft words for bitter taunts, and cast him from the chariot.

When he was led to the circus, where the public games and shows were exhibited, a cry of fierce joy burst from the multitude, as they learned that Polycarp had been apprehended.

Again the tempter was near: the proconsul, pitying his age and feebleness, tried to induce him not to answer to his name, but he refused thus to screen himself. "Then," said he, "just swear by the genius of Caesar. Say, Away with the atheists! "

As his eyes ran slowly along the benches of the great amphitheater, and rested upon the excited masses who filled them, rising rank behind rank, Polycarp waved his hand, and looking up to heaven, he cried, "Away with the atheists!"

"Swear," said the proconsul, thinking he had relented. "Blaspheme Christ, and I release thee."

"Eighty and six years have I served Him," he replied, as a smile lighted up his countenance, "and He never did me any wrong; how can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"

Further threats—that he should be cast to the wild beasts, that he should be devoured by fire—failed to move him, and at last the proconsul, wearied and baffled, ordered the herald to proclaim thrice in the midst of the circus, "Polycarp has confessed himself a Christian!"

A shout rose from the crowded benches, "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the over thrower of our gods!" and the multitude called upon the president of the games to let loose upon him one of the lions, mad with hunger, which had been brought thither to make sport for the citizens, as they tore their prey limb from limb.

The man excused himself, saying the games were already over; and again the wild tumult arose. The cry was now "Let him be burned!" and was followed by a rush to collect wood for the fire. As they were about to fasten him firmly to the stake, Polycarp begged that he might be tied only with cords, adding, "He who gives me strength to endure the fire, will enable me to remain at the pile without moving." His last words were words of thanks to God, who had counted him worthy thus "to drink of Christ's cup."

When all was over, his disciples tried to gather up what the fire had left of the mortal part of him who had loved them so well, and taught them so long and faithfully, but the Jews besought the governor not to allow them this poor consolation lest, "forsaking the crucified One, they begin to worship this man." "Little did they think," say the writers of the letter, "that it is not possible to forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of the whole world, and to worship any other. For Him indeed we adore; but the martyrs, as His disciples and followers, we worthily love."

An epistle written by Polycarp to the church at Philippi has been preserved. It is interesting chiefly because in it he reminds them of the apostle Paul, "who," he says, "when among you, faithfully and constantly taught the word of truth, and when absent wrote you a letter, which, if you diligently study, you will find to be the means of building you up in faith, hope, and love."

One of the disciples of Polycarp, Irene us, lived on into the beginning of the third century. In a letter, written in his old age, he thus speaks of him: "I could point out the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse, his gait, his form, his manner of life, his conversations, and what he was accustomed to relate of his familiar intercourse with John, and others who had seen the Lord; how he used to repeat their discourses and speak of the miracles of Christ, and of His doctrine, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses. To these things, by the mercy of God, I listened attentively, noting them down, not on paper, but in my heart, and by the grace of God I habitually recall them to my mind."

## Seventy Years

---

"I'VE been working seventy years for it, ma'am, and I don't seem a bit nearer 1 than when I began." And the voice of the speaker died away in a tone of helpless despair that went to my heart as I listened to it.

The words thus addressed to me came from the lips of a strange-looking, wizen-faced old woman, of about eighty years of age. Her tattered mis-shapen garments accorded well with the general appearance of the wretched little hovel in which we were seated, she on an old worm-eaten box in the chimney corner, and on the only chair of which the apartment boasted. Spread over the bed in the farthest corner of the room, and now evidently serving in place of necessary covering, were some quaint-looking garments, which bore witness to the old woman's former occupation. For no less a period than fifty-year had old Jenny Grant been known to young and old as the "bathing-woman" of the sea-side village in which she dwelt. Many a change had passed over that picturesque neighborhood since the early days of her self-chosen vocation. The little village had grown into a well-known and favorite sea-side resort, while many were the visitors who entered the old woman's cottage for the purpose of hearing her quaint description of its development.

But it was not upon such subjects as these that old Jenny and I were now conversing. Only the previous evening, a terrible gale had swept over the neighborhood. The waves of the usually placid bay, lying at the foot of the pretty village, had been lashed by the wind into indescribable fury. From the window of my bedchamber I had seen large vessels break loose from their moorings, and, drifted by the force of the foaming waters, become hopelessly shattered and stranded on the shingly beach. Great loss of life and property had ensued, and it was to ascertain if old Jenny had been a sufferer by the storm, that I had visited her on the morning referred to in my story. I found that it had affected her more severely than I could have anticipated. Fearful of the growing darkness and the increasing fury of the tempest, the solitary old woman had ventured forth in order to purchase a "halfpenny candle." As she was returning homeward, she had fallen on the slippery pathway, and a severe sprain had been the result. To add to her new trouble, an old boatman, who had hitherto paid her a trifle weekly for the use of the garret which he occupied, was also without any means of subsistence. His boat had been lost during the fury of the storm, and henceforth he must be dependent upon the charity of his neighbors. Poor Jenny! there was much to call forth genuine sympathy and interest as I listened to her story.

At its close I spoke to her of Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, and of God's offered gift of peace, salvation, and blessing through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. A look of eager interest was plainly visible on the old woman's countenance as I did so. In simple words, which I hoped her enfeebled intellect could understand, I spoke of the blessedness of those whose sins had been washed away in the precious blood of God's dear Son—those who had fled to Jesus for refuge, and could even now rejoice in the knowledge of a present and complete salvation. It was this that had called forth old Jenny's words, previously quoted—

"I've been working seventy years for it, ma'am, and I don't seem a bit nearer than when I began."

"Working will not do, Jenny," I said, as I silently asked for some word of comfort for her evidently burdened heart. "God does not ask you to work for salvation. If you want to be saved, it can only be in the way He has appointed. Salvation is God's free gift to all those who believe upon His dear Son. God so loved the world that He gave Him to die for us, that we might not come into condemnation."

"But my sins, ma'am! my sins!" interrupted the old woman eagerly, as she gazed earnestly into my face. "I can't get rid of 'em anyhow. And I be afeard I never shall. There's no hope for such as me."

"Jenny," I said, as I saw tears stealing down her furrowed cheeks, "listen to God's own word. In it He tells us that "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." It was for sin that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered on the cross. His precious blood was shed to atone for the guilt of those who believe in Him. "To him that worketh not, but believeth" God offers life and peace "without money and without price." Salvation is His free gift. There is nothing to do for it—nothing to pay for it. Simply take God at His word, and the blessing will be yours."

"Nothing to do—nothing to pay!" repeated the old woman, as a new light dawned into her dark, benighted soul." I never heard so afore. Nothing to do. Nothing? Are ye sure of it, ma'am?"

Quite sure, Jenny," I replied." It is the Lord Jesus Himself who says so, and He makes no mistakes. These are His own words—' Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John 3:16.) And, The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Rom. 6:23.) Will you take what God offers you, Jenny?"

"Aye, aye, that I will," was the old woman's hearty response; "and praise Him and bless Him for such a gift to the likes of me." And as she spoke Jenny's old wizened face lighted up with a joy and brightness which I cannot describe. Peace with God, life, salvation, and everlasting happiness were now hers through faith in the finished work of Him who died for her. No marvel that tears of joy were still coursing down the old bathing-woman's countenance as some minutes afterward I bade her "good-bye," and quitted her dwelling. We could but rejoice together at what God had wrought.

Some months have passed away since that autumn morning, and old Jenny has now entered the Saviour's presence) "not by works of righteousness which she had done," but by simple childlike faith in believing.

How is it with you, dear reader? Are you working for salvation, or are you resting solely and simply upon what the Lord Jesus Christ has done? Even severity years of working could not wash away one sin from your soul. Like old Jenny, at their close you would have to own, "I am no nearer salvation now than when I began." God offers you all that can be for your everlasting blessing. Take His proffered gift, and you will find joy and peace in believing, and, like old Jenny, you also will be ready to exclaim, "I'll praise and bless Him for His gifts to such as me." M. V. B.

## I Want to Go

---

"I WANT to go."

These were the words of one who had been a great sufferer for sixteen years, but who could say, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Great sufferer as he was, he said, "I can kiss the rod whereby I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have thought upon the Lord." He was a light to the village in which he lived, for it was his one great thought how he might glorify God and benefit his fellowmen that lived around, both in regard to soul and body. He was always ready to help others who were afflicted, by ministering to their temporal and spiritual needs. Most faithfully would he point them to Jesus, and tell them He was the only Saviour; and he would earnestly plead with God for the salvation of their souls.

Whenever I went to see him, I found him in communion with the Lord. No matter what trouble or sickness came, this secret communion was undisturbed, and his face seemed lit up with heavenly joy. I often heard him speaking to his God like a man would to a friend.

One day I heard that he was very ill, and I again went to see him. As I entered his bedroom, these words fell on my ears, "My lad, I am dying."

"Mr. T—," said I, "you are not afraid to die?"

"I want to go; pray for the Lord to take me," he replied instantly. "What is left for me? Nothing, but to wait a little while till my Lord shall call me."

Three weeks before his death, Mr. T— said to his wife, "I am going to leave you, but I am ready. I am washed in the blood of Jesus, and I have committed you and all our children to the Lord, and I know He will provide." As one read these Scriptures to him, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not," the dying man exclaimed, "That is my hope; "and then he broke out singing praises to God.

Soon after this, dear Mr. T— fell asleep in Christ.

The most wicked man in the village was broken down, and even in tears, when he heard that Mr. Thad gone home to the Lord. Another godless man whom I met on the day of the funeral, said, "Oh, my lad, old Daniel has gone. If he has not gone to heaven, never a man will go there."

Thank God, he did go, and it was through the precious blood of Christ, which is still the title for every poor sinner who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the work which He has finished. J. S—n.

## The Old Villager

---

WE were giving gospel papers to the dwellers in a row of cottages in Berkshire, where one of our friends found out a man, very weak and aged, whose face bore upon it a sweet and simple expression.

"That hand of mine is a guilty hand," said the friend who had led the old man forth from his cottage; and spreading it open, he recounted a theft that in years gone by his hand had been the instrument of committing. The old man looked astonished at such a confession; but had to make a similar one the next minute, as our friend took his trembling, thin hand, and spreading' it beside his own, said, "And yours is a guilty hand, too. We are both guilty, for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

"Ah! that we be," said the old man, and he evidently meant it—at least, so far as it concerned himself.

My friend then went on to say that the Lord Jesus had suffered for the sins of His people, that for every evil deed they had done, including sins which people generally regard as trivial, He bore the penalty on the cross. "He was wounded for our transgressions," added my friend, "and there are the nail-marks in His blessed hand, though He is glorified in heaven. Tell me, my dear friend, was the blessed Lord Jesus wounded for your transgressions? Can you say, 'It was for me'?"

With a look of childlike simplicity upon his countenance, the aged man said—

"Yes, sir, I can. It was for me."

"Bless the Lord, my dear brother, bless the Lord; He loves you."

Observing his tottering frame, our friend referred to his weakness.

"My heart is very feeble," he replied, "very feeble."

"Never mind, brother; when the frail body breaks up, the spirit will escape and fly away up yonder. It will be as in the little story I will relate to you: —

"One day, I was talking to a woman in her garden, when her husband became very angry and began knocking the things about. Taking up a broom, he struck at a little bird which was singing in a small wicker cage. The cage fell with a crash to the earth and was broken to bits, but the little bird was set free, and it soared up, up, up into the blue sky, singing all the way. You are like the little bird singing in the old cage to-day; but by-and-by death's last blow will destroy the body, and your spirit will be set at liberty, to wing its way right up to heaven and the Lord Jesus." W. L.

## From Samuel Rutherford

---

THAT Christ and a sinner should be one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation; what more could love do?

WHAT remaineth, then, but that my debt to the love of Christ lie unpaid for all eternity? All that are in heaven are overcome with His love, as well as I; we must all be bankrupts together; and the blessing of that houseful or heaven full of bankrupts shall rest forever upon Him.

## The Whole World Is Changed

---

"YES, I am saved! I know it now, and the whole world seems changed to me.

Three months ago life seemed so miserable, since we lost R. Now I have what is so much better, that I can only thank God for taking him away, for the loss has driven me to my Saviour. Yes, saved for three months! "The speaker was an animated girl of intelligent appearance; and her companion an aged man, whose peaceful face confirmed his reply—

"I am most glad to hear you say that.

It is a glorious thing to belong to God here in this world. I have proved it for twenty years. Yes, for twenty years I have not had a doubt as to my salvation!"

Many years have passed since the conversation related above took place; the young girl is now a gray-haired woman herself: but she still says, "The only glorious thing in this world is to belong to God—saved forever and knowing it—having eternal life and knowing it." Very different this to the case of a poor old lady of whom I lately heard. She was a believer in the Lord Jesus, but one of those who thought it presumption to be quite sure of being saved. For forty long years she was a member of a chapel, but never was really happy, until a few months ago a gospel magazine was given her to read; there she saw what God says about believing, and that He says nothing about feelings. She read this: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The paper went on to tell of another person who was always in trouble because she was afraid of being too sure, until she resolved not to mind her feelings, but just trust God's own word; and the result was she soon knew it was not presumption to take God at His word, and have peace in believing.

The dear old lady read this, and said, "Oh, that's beautiful. She was just like me, only hoping; but, ' He that believeth hath everlasting life; ' that ought to be written in letters of gold; "—and golden letters they were to her. Many times she read them; the little magazine was placed in her Bible at the chapter it referred to; and when some little time after, in her last illness, a friend asked her if she were sure of going to be with the Lord, she replied, "God says, He that believeth hath everlasting life.' I believe. God says

I am saved—I am saved."

And so, after a long life of fearing, peace was received through simply resting in the word of God. And then God took her to Himself. But had she known it forty years before! Oh! trust God's word now; anchor your soul there—you can never trust it too much. L. T.

## Let Your Light so Shine

---

MR. B., an avowed infidel, speaking of a Christian lady, said to me, "So Miss S. is dead! Now, she was one of the true salt of the earth—she was a Christian, and, according to her light and belief, so she lived; she believed in Christ, and she lived Christ; she was zealous, loving, charitable—in fact, she was as near as could be to the true ideal of a perfect Christian. I believe she earnestly sought my salvation, according to her belief; and I, knowing her to be what I state, carefully avoided saying anything in her presence which might pain her, and, as I said before, she lived Christ."

I have written this testimony, word for word, as nearly as I can remember, as it was rendered to me by the infidel! The words in italics being those to which he gave special emphasis. Christian reader, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Let men take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. "Ye are the epistle of Christ, known and read of all men." J. M.

## Temptation

---

WE have each of us our own peculiar temptations. What may be temptation to our brother is not so perhaps to us; we are of different metal. There are acids which will blacken one sort of metal at once, which have no effect upon others.

## God's Care; Have Faith in God

---

SEVERAL years ago there lived an aged Christian couple in one of the Highland glens. They had often been in very trying straits, but the following incident shows the goodness of the loving heavenly Father who cares for His people.

They lived in the days when tea was more of a luxury than it is now, and when steam locomotion was almost a thing unheard of. The old man was quite an invalid, and almost the only earthly comfort he craved was a cup of tea, morning and evening.

During a severe winter, when their little supply of both money and tea was exhausted, and when they had no immediate prospect of getting more of either for some time, the morning came when the old man received his last cup of teal His wife began to weep bitterly. On his inquiring the cause, she said, "I am now at my wits' end. That is the last grain of tea; it is a thing you cannot do without, and where am I to get more?"

"Don't distress yourself so," he said; "the Lord will provide."

"Aye, but how?" she said.

"That is not for me to say, but I know He will."

Despite all assurances from the word of God, the wife remained incredulous, and continued to bemoan their poverty and their misery. The day wore on, and with it the usual tea hour came, when the shrill sound of a passing coach horn was heard.

"Now," exclaimed the old man, "I knew the Lord would send us tea; there it is."

"But perhaps that call is not for us," said the wife. "Yes," he said, "it is; go and see."

And so it proved. A kind friend had sent them a chest of tea, together with many other comforts of which they stood sorely in need. Shortly after they received means which enabled them to spend their last days in comfort.

Fear the Lord, O ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.

K. R.

## Christian Character

---

HAVING spoken of the Lord Jesus in His wonderful ways of humiliation, and of the effect that following Him produces in His people, the apostle speaks thus of himself: "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." He had contemplated his boasting in view of the day of Christ because of his beloved Philippians; now he conceives his own death by martyrdom, and regards himself as poured forth, a drink-offering on the sacrifice and service of their faith. He would be as the wine, which, added to the sacrifice as an offering, when poured out, is unseen. But the aroma of the libation perfumes the air, and such a death would be, we may say, a sweet savor to God!

What a view of Christian service is here —what nothingness in self— all that the apostle's life and death was, being an unseen accompaniment to the devotion of others! Let those whom God has called to serve His people, consider the grace in the beloved apostle herein expressed. In the contemplation of his life being thus poured forth he joyed and rejoiced with them all. In view of the day of Christ and its glories, he rejoiced about the Philippians; in the midst of the night of his afflictions he rejoiced with them in his own sufferings, and called them to joy and rejoice with him. The joy of the wine, which is not of earth, is here; its aroma is of the sanctuary.

But while so speaking, Paul had confidence in the Lord (see also Phil. 1:24-26) that he should shortly be able to send Timothy to them to learn how they fared. His good comfort would be their spiritual prosperity—another touch by which we see how truly of the Spirit of Christ he was.

Now the mention of Timothy brings forth the grace which was in that beloved servant of the Master! He cared for the Philippians without effort or constraint—it was natural to him to do so. It is but natural for a mother to care for her child; it is natural, after the divine nature, for a true pastor or evangelist to care for souls. Not by constraint, but willingly is such service rendered, unless, indeed, the constraint be the constraining love of Christ.

Alas! for the others—the once faithful fellow workers—they had grown weary with their toil; and long years of hardship and disappointments do make many a servant of the Lord grow weary of his work. For some reason or other, the love burned not in them with its old force "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." But of the Lord Jesus it is written, "Having loved His own, who were in the world, He loved them unto the end." There is no break in the continuity of His love and care for us. Let the servant learn of his Master, of those who follow Him, and then address himself afresh to the things which are Jesus Christ's. His blessed interests suffer, alas, in the hands of well-known servants of our own day, even as they did in the hands of those servants to whom the apostle referred.

In contrast with such: "Ye know the proof of Timothy," says Paul the aged, "that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel." Neither had the sacred example of Paul dimmed before his eyes, nor had the grand and glorious service of the gospel waned in his affections. Others might fall out of the ranks and leave the arduous place, all the more reason that Timothy

should, every inch of him, be a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Others might neglect the gospel, but Paul, like his Lord and Master, preached it out of the love of his soul, and Timothy nobly served with the apostle.

Difficulties beset Paul—he was in prison—and the way of Timothy's visit was not easy, so that the apostle's desire to visit the Philippians had to be met by Epaphroditus, another beautiful example of Christian character. Epaphroditus signifies "lovely," and so is his Christian life. All that we know of this true servant of the Lord is found in the few verses before us. But are there, think we, many upon the earth "lovely" as he?

Epaphroditus was the messenger of the Philippians, sent by them, with their alms, to the apostle when he, a prisoner, stood so greatly in need of temporal help, and not with their alms merely, but with the pleasant burden of their expressed affection. On his journey, or on his reaching Rome, his destination, Epaphroditus fell sick. He had hazarded his life to supply the apostle's need, and to fill up, by presenting their gift, the deficiency which the beloved Philippians could not supply, for they could not in person hand their alms to him. This was the lack in their service toward him which Paul, who loved them so well, felt, and which the loving spirit of the messenger supplied. The money that may be bestowed upon a servant of God is in itself but treasure of the earth, but the love that bestows it is of the treasury of heaven. The money Epaphroditus brought met Paul's need; the love he poured out satisfied the apostle's soul.

Now, while engaged in this gracious mission, Epaphroditus had been sick unto death. In these straits his care was the distress the tidings of his sickness had occasioned the church at Philippi! He longed after them all, because they had heard that he had been sick! His own pain was not the cause of his heaviness, but the grief of their hearts because of his pain! What mutual love in the Lord does this sweet picture open to us, and how it makes us long that the spring of all this grace may be found welling up in ourselves! And while thus contemplating these traits of Christian character we follow up the streams to their source, and are so led back to these sacred words, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Lest the apostle should have sorrow upon sorrow, God raised up Epaphroditus. And here we may pause for a moment, and consider the sanctifying effect of sickness on the spirits of God's saints! Where would have been the exercise of soul, whether in Paul, in the Philippians, or in Epaphroditus, had there been a miracle wrought to raise him up? God's mercy, not His miracle, for Epaphroditus, rejoiced Paul's soul. The harsh notion that sicknesses in the church are all the result of our unbelief, finds no place in the sacred sweetness of this scene of sorrow, and of joy. There was an aroma rising heavenward in the apostle's trials and pains in the prison, which could not have been found had he had neither trial nor pain!

The titles of Epaphroditus, in joint honor with the apostle, are three brother—"companion in labor"—"fellow-soldier." "Brother in the faith; co-worker in making it known; fellow-soldier in preserving its integrity. Now these honors may be those of the least of all saints. Indeed, the first is of necessity that of all, for" all ye are brethren"—all are of the one family by the grace of God the Father; let, therefore, the love which is of God give its heavenly bearing to the least as well as the greatest.

Fellow-worker with the apostle! But who has reached to this honor?—for he was in bonds, and in imprisonments, in suffering, and in deaths oft. Christian service is the outflow of Christian character. Christ our Lord went about doing good, and, following His steps, His servant Paul labored more abundantly than the rest. Fellow-soldier with the apostle! A noble distinction indeed, but telling of courage and of wounds, of absolute loyalty to the Lord; of a life spent for and at last given up to Him, who is the Captain of our salvation. May God raise up in His church men of the spirit of Epaphroditus, and may He give us to follow the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ, while we remember these words, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

## God's Directing Hand

---

IN the South of England lives a working man, who, a short time ago, had it laid on his heart to read the word of God aloud in all the streets and lanes of the small country town where he lives.

At first our friend did this in his dinner hour, but afterward, being out of work, he devoted more time to this work for his Master, speaking a few words as well. Some called him a lunatic, others a nuisance, but nothing daunted him.

One day as he was reading and speaking in the streets some of those who jeered and laughed at him said, "If you are so much in earnest, why don't you go into the market to-morrow and read there?" It seems that before this he had a distinct impression that he was to go to this very place, and testify for God there the next market day, when the place would be full of farmers, cattle dealers, and people of all sorts.

Our friend was now in very straitened circumstances, being out of work, and it was winter. A few days before a letter had come to him with the news that his father, who lived about a hundred miles away, was dying, and that if he would see his aged parent alive he must go at once.

He had not the means to take so long a journey, and spreading the case before the Lord, he asked that the money might be sent him.

Time passed until the market day came round-still no help came. Then, Bible in hand, the man went into the busy market filled with men and cattle, and, walking round, he delivered his message. The people were astonished; silence prevailed, and for a time business was stopped. The day alone will declare how this message was received, but numbers heard it.

When the servant of God had finished his work, on reaching his home he found a letter awaiting him, containing the needed money for his journey. It had come from a most unexpected quarter, and from a long distance, sent by one who knew nothing of his difficulties.

These facts are recorded in order to encourage simple faith in God, who directs all things for His people, but who bids us walk in faith, casting all our care upon Him. M. B.

## From the Other Side of the Water

---

WHEN you are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the water, and to your wearisome journey, and shall see in that clear glass of endless glory nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, you shall then be forced to say, " If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoyment of this crown of glory." Samuel Rutherford.

## The Half-Crown

---

IT was a cold winter's afternoon, when the snow was lying in patches on the ground, and more snow seemed just ready to fall. A girl called Effie had, nevertheless, started on a long walk to the nearest town. A narrow, winding lane led to the town, and about half-a-mile before the town was reached, the lane took a sudden turn, and passed in front of a row of wretched cottages. They were not the pretty, old thatched cottages of country villages, but they were like a row of dirty houses from the worst part of London, moved just as they were to the side of this country lane. The people who lived in them, too, were not like the country people we see here, with clean smock-frocks and sun bonnets, but they were dressed in the grimy, ragged clothes that the poor wear in the London back streets, with bits of dirty finery here and there stuck on the bonnets of the women and girls. But some had no bonnets and no caps, and their long, rough hair hung about their faces.

As Effie turned the sharp corner at the end of this row of cottages she found herself in a crowd of these people, men, women, and children all huddled together, some laughing and some shouting. To her great relief a policeman, whom she knew, forced his way through the crowd, and said to her, "I will see you safe past, miss. There's a fight going on, and I shall have to stop it, but I will see you safe through the gate into the field path, first." The policeman then made a way for Effie to cross the road to the wicket gate, and as they passed through the crowd she saw the horrible sight of a man and woman fighting furiously. Their sleeves were tucked up, and their fists doubled. They were just making a violent rush at one another, when the policeman, who had seen Effie safe the other side of the gate, seized the man and led him off to the door of his wretched house. He then shut the door upon him, and ordered the crowd to disperse. The woman remained standing in the road. She was quite young, scarcely grown up. She had a coarse, but not altogether ugly face. Her old straw bonnet was torn to tatters, and her rough black hair streamed in the bitter wind.

The policeman came back to Effie and said, "I hope it has not frightened you."

"No," replied Effie, "but it was a dreadful sight."

"And the most dreadful part of it," said the policeman, "is that the man and the girl who were fighting are a father and daughter!"

As the policeman spoke these words a window was thrown open in the top story of the house, and the father's enraged face appeared there. Shaking his fist, he shouted to the girl below, "Get you gone! You will never put your foot inside this door again. Be off with you, you wicked, good-for-nothing hussy."

"If I'm wicked and good for nothing," replied the girl, in a loud, sullen voice, "it's your fault for bringing me up as you did."

The father made no answer. He shut down the window with a bang, and disappeared. The girl stood for a moment looking at the window. Then she turned towards the town, and walked slowly

on, dragging her ragged, slipshod shoes along through the half-thawed snow. Her gown hung in tatters, and she had only an old, thin shawl, in tatters also.

Effie walked on, following this wretched girl, and soon overtook her. "Where are you going?" she said.

"I don't know," said the girl. "I haven't nowhere to go."

"Where will you sleep to-night?"

"I don't know; I haven't no place to, sleep in."

"Have you no friends or relations in the town?"

"No, I don't know any one nearer than St. Albans, and that's ten miles on."

"Do you think you can get there tonight?"

"No, I couldn't walk so far; and it'll be dark in an hour or two."

Effie was perplexed. She, too, knew no one in the town to whom she could apply for a shelter for the girl. But she did not think that the Lord Jesus would like her to leave the girl wandering about in the snow without a home. Dad as she was, Effie knew that He cared about her. Suddenly she remembered that there were five good old ladies, all unmarried sisters, who lived together in the town, and who were very kind to the poor for the love of the Lord Jesus. Effie did not know them, but she determined to go and ask them what was to be done.

"What is your name?" she said to the girl. "Anne."

"Very well, Anne, now come with me. Tell me when you last had anything to eat?"

The girl thought for a minute, and said, "It must have been this time yesterday."

"You have had nothing to-day? How hungry you must be! You see that baker's shop. Take this twopence, and go in there, and buy some bread, and wait there till I come back."

Anne looked pleased. I am not sure whether she had the manners to say "Thank you."

Effie meanwhile hurried off to the pleasant old brick house of the five old ladies. But alas! even on that cold afternoon they were one and all out, and not likely to be home for some time. Effie walked back slowly in the direction of the baker's shop. She knew not what to do next. As she passed the shoemaker's, she remarked in the shop two ladies who were trying on shoes. She knew them only by sight, but she had often heard that they were people who loved the Lord Jesus. She felt sure that for His sake they would help her. So she went into the shop, and told them the sad story of Anne, and that she was now eating her bread at the baker's shop down the street.

The kind ladies went immediately with Effie to see what could be done, It was now beginning to get dark. "You must go home," they said to Effie, "for you have a long way to go. Leave the girl to us. We will take her to a safe lodging, and think what is the best thing to do with her afterward. We will let you know tomorrow, when we have inquired more about her, what seems to be the right plan."

Effie thanked them warmly for their kindness, and Anne looked quite softened at finding that there were really people in the world who cared what became of her.

The next day the kind ladies sent Effie a note. They said that the town missionary had been down to see Anne's father, and had persuaded him to take her back, and to treat her well for a few days; but he would not allow her to go on living at home, and it would be a pity if he did wish it, for the whole family were such low, bad people—the only hope for Anne would be to take her away, and put her somewhere amongst kind Christian friends who would care for her, and try to train her into the ways of a tidy servant girl. As she was, nobody would take her as a servant, nor would she be fit to do any of the work required in a decent house. "There are nice homes in London," the lady went on to say, "where girls are trained and taught, and we will inquire about them, and let you know when we have found the right place."

A few days later the direction was sent to Effie of a training home, where Anne could be taken in at once, and kept for some months till she was fit to be a servant. The payment would be five shillings a week. Effie at that time had no money, but she knew there was no time to be lost, and that God would provide all that was wanted, so she went to the wretched house at the corner of the lane, and asked to see Anne's mother. A tall, gaunt, hard-faced woman, with frizzly hair, made her appearance. Effie told her the plan that had been made for Anne, and asked her if she was willing to let her go to the home.

"I'm willing enough," replied Mrs. B. "She's only going to the bad here at home, and I don't know what to do with her."

"Very well," said Effie. "They will have room for her next week, on Thursday, so I will tell them to expect her."

"It's no use for them to expect her," replied Mrs. B., "unless I go with her every step of the way, for, as sure as she gets to London, she'll be off tramping about the streets, and just keeping away from every place where she'd be put to work at anything."

"You shall take her, then," said Effie. "Will you promise me to take her on Thursday, next week?"

"Well, I will if I can," said Mrs. B. "But you see, miss, I haven't a penny for the railway ticket, and I shall want a return-ticket for myself, too. Half-a-crown that will be altogether, and how am I to get it?"

"I will send you the half-crown by Thursday," replied Effie. So the matter was settled.

Effie had no half-crown. Her last penny had been spent at the baker's shop. She knew no one to whom she would like to go for help. Most of her friends were shocked at her for having anything to do with the people who lived in the disreputable cottages. But I do not think the idea ever came into her mind of asking anyone for half-a-crown. God is always able to provide us with everything that is really needful. She told no one therefore what she wanted.

So day after day passed on. Monday evening came; a relation asked Effie to go with her to London the next morning, to spend a few hours there. They were to go by train, and the station was two or three miles off. Effie preferred walking there, and promised to be at the station by the time the carriage arrived with her relation. The snow had now completely thawed, and the roads

were in a terrible condition. Effie reflected that her muddy country boots would be an unwelcome sight in the London drawing-rooms; she therefore put on some thin house boots, with high india-rubber goloshes over them. On reaching the station she took off the goloshes, and asked the ticket man if he would kindly take care of them till her return. In the afternoon, when she came back, he returned her the goloshes, and she walked home in them. She was taking them off in her room when something fell out of one of them. It was half-a-crown.

"That is for Anne," was her first thought.

Her second was, "The half-crown belongs to the railway company. The ticket man will find his accounts wrong this evening; he must have dropped it into the golosh."

She remembered that the gardener, who would be just starting to go home, lived near the station. She ran down to him, and gave him the half-crown, desiring him to explain to the ticket man where she had found it.

Had Effie known all that she found out later on, namely, that the gardener was both a thief and a drunkard, she would certainly not have trusted him on such an errand. But a power greater than the love of drink directed the gardener's steps that evening. He walked past two public-houses, and delivered his message honestly.

The next morning he brought back the half-crown. "The ticket man found his accounts all right," he said, "and he wished me to say he had no right to the half-crown, and that it would be impossible to find the owner, as no doubt some traveler dropped it who may be far in the north by this time."

So Effie had no scruples about sending the half-crown to Mrs. B. She felt now the more sure that she need not trouble herself about the five shillings which would be due each week that Anne remained at the home. She therefore left the whole matter in the hands of Him to whom all the silver and gold belongs, on the earth and under it.

A few days later she received a letter from the matron of the home. Anne was going on well and happily. But the reason of the matron's writing was to ask whether Effie would allow a gentleman who had called at the home to pay for Anne. This gentleman had been brought by a friend to see the home. He had been very much pleased with it, and had said that he would like to pay for a girl. The girls were then all sitting at their work, and the gentleman, looking all along the row, had pointed to Anne, and had said, "That is the girl I would like to pay for."

So now all was settled, and Effie had nothing to do but to thank the Lord for thus providing all that was needed. What became of Anne? This is a sad part of the history. She went on well for a time, and learned enough to be able to take a place as servant. But she did not remain long in her place; she came back to her old home. Effie then saw her again. She was wonderfully altered. She looked neat and respectable, and her hard, coarse face was softened, and had even a kind and almost sweet expression. A short time after her return, she came to tell Effie that her little sister, who was nine or ten years old, was very ill.

"I believe she's going to die," said Anne;" but she is quite happy. She says she wants to die and go to Jesus. It was a little hymn-book that I brought from the home that has made her feel like that. She makes me read it and sing it to her, and she says Jesus loves her, and has washed all her sins away. It's beautiful to see her, and to hear all she says."

A day or two later the little girl left her wretched home to go to the Good Shepherd who had come to seek and to save her. But poor Anne gave no proof that she, too, had been saved. She was a very different girl from the rude, wild Anne of former days; but she owned she could not feel as her little sister did, just for the reason that she had never believed, as the little girl had done, in the love of Jesus to her. She had not taken God at His word, that He laid upon His blessed Son the iniquities of lost sinners, and that by Him all who believe are justified from all things.

"Christ died for our sins." Five little words! Yet to believe them is to be saved.

Anne went away soon after, and, I believe, married an ungodly man. It may be that some of the texts and hymns she learned in the home have come back to her since, and that the bread cast on the waters has been found again after many days; or it may have been for the sake of the little sister that Anne was taken for a time where she could hear of Jesus, and become the owner of the hymn-book which led the little girl to the Saviour. We shall know some day. Meanwhile, let us learn from all that the Lord does how He can and will provide for every real need, and let us go to Him in perfect trust to tell Him all our wants, even if it be but the need of half-a-crown. F. B.

## The Rich Kinsman

---

IT was a law of old in Israel that if a stranger in the land grew rich, and an Israelite so poor that, in order to pay his debts, he had to sell himself to the stranger as a slave, a kinsman of the poor bondsman might redeem him.

If the poor man had sold himself as a bondsman for ten years' servitude for, say, one hundred pounds, and had worked for his master for six months, then the price to be paid for his freedom would be nine and a half years or ninety-five pounds; or if he had worked five years, then the price to be paid for his freedom would be five years or fifty pounds. "The price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him. If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for. And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubilee, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption." (Lev. 25:50, 51.) The exact value had to be paid, neither more nor less; the stranger to whom the poor Israelite had sold himself must needs have his money returned to him to the uttermost farthing, for God's law is a righteous law, and under it all debts must be righteously paid.

Now, while the Israelite was hopelessly a slave, unable by his own efforts to obtain his freedom, God allowed to the rich relation the joy of setting the poor man free. "After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him." (Lev. 25:48, 49.) And what a joy it must have been to the rich kinsman to come to the stranger with the redemption money, and to buy out his poor brother from bonds into liberty!

You can see the rich kinsman in our picture coming with the receipt in his hand, and telling the poor slave, "The price of your redemption is paid!" Oh! how gladly would the poor man lift up his head, for he could go home to his family once more a free man in Israel.

This gracious provision in Israel of old is a beautiful picture to us of the joy of our Lord Jesus Christ in setting His people free. It was the kinsman of the poor man to whom the privilege fell of giving the liberty, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to have the joy of setting His people free, came to this earth, and took human nature upon Him—He became our Kinsman. He found us in our slavery and misery, with no hope of escape, and no power to deliver ourselves, and He reckoned up the cost of the price of our redemption. We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, for the redemption price was nothing less than the blood of our Redeemer; He gave Himself for His people, out of love and out of pity. And now He comes to the poor slave of sin and Satan, for whom He died, and He says, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."

How wonderingly the bondsman would look up into the face of the rich kinsman! "What is it so? Am I indeed the subject of your favor?" And how shall the redeemed of the Lord look up in His

face!

How often, fellow Christians, have you thanked the Lord our Redeemer for His wonderful love? Poor and a slave no longer, bought with a price, even His precious blood, and now His, and His forever, to serve Him in the happy freedom of love.

## In the Days of Thy Youth

---

"THE days of thy youth" are, of all others, those for remembering God. We, therefore, appeal to such of our young readers as have not done so, to decide for Christ, and to decide now. To-morrow may never be for us, for ere another sunrise, our portion may be eternity. "Now, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts." Decide now.

Give God your heart. He seeks for the keys of the citadel. If the citadel fall, the outworks will soon yield. If your heart be surrendered to God, your life and your ways will soon be given to Him.

God requires all that we are, and He receives us just as we are. God will not hold a little bit of your heart only. "My son, give Me thy heart," He says.

Now there is no time so good as that of youth for the devotion of the heart to God, and this is true of the real Christian. The happy life is the holy and unselfish life. Man cannot serve two masters. It is impossible to make the best of both worlds, save by living here as a stranger, having our citizenship in heaven. The cloudy Christian is usually he or she who is bartering with the world for some of its pleasures. The sunny Christian is that one whose inner life is subject to God, and who holds communion continually with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Time rolls on, and we plead with our young friends for a wholly devoted life, one thoroughly yielded up to God. The example of one young Christian downright in earnest, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, is worth more than a dozen books about religion. "Ye are the epistles of Christ, known and read of all men," and such an epistle as a true Christian life is a letter that all our companions read, and though they may say hard things, yet in the heart they, too, wish they were equally decided for Christ.

"Keep your religion to yourselves," the worldly Christian says; but as well ask a violet to keep its scent to itself, or a candle its illumination, as ask a heart filled with the sweetness of Christ's love, and the brightness of His light, to abstain from making Him known.

All, or not at all, is an old saying, and a good one. Whole-heartedness is the privilege of the Christian. Be a good soldier for your Lord; shun time-serving; seek the honor of decision for the Lord who loves you. He will remember in His glory the faithfulness of His people on earth's battlefield. No one who has suffered for Him shall be passed over in the coming day. The hardship and the toil, the wounds and the griefs borne for the Lord Jesus, shall come into remembrance in heaven.

"In the days of thy youth be all for Christ.

Bible Lessons for the Little Ones

(Read Matt. 9:18-26; Mark 5:25-43.)

YOU remember, dear children, that, when the centurion at Capernaum wanted the Lord Jesus to come and heal that servant who was so dear to him, he asked some of the chief men of the Jews

to go and beg the Lord to come to him. It may be that the "ruler" mentioned in this chapter was one of those "elders of the Jews" who went with the centurion's message. If so, he must have heard the words which Jesus spoke when He said to the centurion, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee."

"There came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live." Mark and Luke tell us that the name of this "ruler of the synagogue" was Jairus, and we learn, too, from Luke that the child now at the point of death was his only daughter. The Lord Jesus went with Jairus at once; He was always ready for anyone who really needed Him. Remember, dear children, that He is just the same now as He was then; though the place in which He is is so different, He has not changed, so we may be quite sure that He is ready to help any little child who has learned that he cannot do without Him. This poor child needed more than help from Him—she needed life—for soon a message came to Jairus to tell him that it was too late for any cure; his little daughter was dead, and so it was of no use to trouble the Master any further.

"But when Jesus heard, it He answered him, saying, Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole." He was "the Resurrection and the Life," and so it was as easy for Him to give back life to this child as it would have been to heal her, as He did so many others. But why did He delay on the way? Perhaps He could have been in time to find her still alive if He had not done so. Was it the crowd around Him that kept Him back? No, it was not the crowd, dear children, but one poor sick woman, who had found that she could not get on without Him. She had tried all the doctors she could find, and after all she was no better, but rather worse, and now she had nowhere else to go, so she went to the Lord Jesus.

Don't you think that every one in that crowd had heard of Him as one who could heal the sick and give sight to the blind? I am sure they had; but they looked at Him just as people do now at any one of whom they have heard much; and then they went away without receiving any blessing from Him. She went to Him because she needed Him, and she knew there was no hope for her except in Him, and so she touched the hem of His garment. This "hem" was a border or fringe, probably of bright blue mingled with white.

We read of many whom the Lord Jesus touched, and we know how His touch had made the leper clean, and how it had made the fever go away at once; but was it of any use, do you think, for the poor woman to touch Him? He had not called her to Him; He was going with Jairus, but did He, therefore, pass her by? Dear children, did He ever pass by any one that wanted Him? Was He ever too busy—He who calls Himself the Good Shepherd—to look after one stray sheep?

This poor woman had heard of His healing others, but now she had come to Him for herself; she had put forth her hand and touched His garment, and that one little trembling touch had made her quite well, for it was the Lord Jesus whom she had touched. She would have been quite glad to have gone away now that she was well; but the Lord wanted her to be not only well but quite happy, and so He said, "Who touched Me?" and when she had told Him everything, He said to her "Daughter, be of good comfort"—the very words He had used in speaking to the poor man of whom you read lately, who had been brought by his friends and laid before Him, "Be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."

Would not this poor woman have lost much if she had gone away without hearing Him say this? First she had heard that He had cured others, and she had thought, perhaps, He would cure her: now she was quite well and strong, and she found, too, that the One who had made her well was her Friend, that He loved her. She could tell other people now that He had cured her, and this was very different, was it not, from hearing of Him as One who could cure? Do you all, dear children, know the Lord Jesus in this way? Can each of you say "He loved me and gave Himself for me"?

But we must not forget the little girl in the ruler's house; the Lord had not forgotten her, though He had delayed a little on the way. When her father got that sad message about her, the Lord, for the first time, chose three of His disciples to go with Him, and they went to the ruler's house. These three were Peter, James, and John—do you remember any other times when He had these three with Him? When they came to the house they found the mourners already there, for in the East, as you may have heard, a funeral takes place just a few hours after death. This time the mourners were not needed, for Jesus took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, "Talitha cumi," which is, being interpreted, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." Here again we have the touch of His hand. He comes to us just where we are; He comes close to us, and He loves to have us close to Him. He spoke to the little girl just as her mother would speak to her when she called her first in the morning. "And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years."

The Lord had given back her life, and do you think that He was content to leave her there? No, He did not leave her until He had told the parents to give her something to eat—for life is a dependent thing; that means, it must be kept up. And just so it is with the life He gives us in our souls; He not only gives it, but He keeps it up. He takes care of us all the way. Why do you think He told the father and mother to give this child something to eat? Perhaps it was because they were so glad and so surprised to have her back again that they would have forgotten all about it. Even a father or a mother may forget sometimes, but you know the Lord Jesus never does forget.

## The Poor Hawker

---

THE hot August sun was shining in a cloudless sky as I leisurely strolled along a beautiful country lane. As I walked slowly on, an almost impressive stillness reigned, when presently it was broken in upon by the sound of a woman's voice singing the well-known words—

"I will believe, I do believe,  
That Jesus died for me;  
That on the cross He shed His blood,  
From sin to set me free."

A few steps farther on brought me in sight of the singer. She was resting in the shade of a tree. There was a certain touch of gentility about her; yet she was unmistakably one of the poorest of wandering hawkers. A glance showed that hardships had aged her prematurely. As I advanced, she hastily rose, and, thinking she was about to beg, I offered her alms. But with a polite "No, thank you, ma'am, I have enough for to-day, and I may not want for to-morrow," she looked into my face and said: "Do you know how long you will live?"

"Yes," I answered; "forever."

"Yes; but where?" she said.

"With the Lord in glory," was my answer. "Is the finished work of Christ your ground for that assurance? In plain words, have you accepted Him as your Saviour?" "Yes, I have," I answered.

"Praise the Lord!" she exclaimed. "So have I. Was it not good of Him to come and save poor sinners?" After some other remarks, thinking I was about to pass on, she said, "Won't you have a little talk about Him? I so seldom meet with any who really know Him." And then she added, as if to herself, "Ah well! it does not matter. I can talk to Jesus Himself." As she had resumed her seat, I seated myself by her side, and we had a pleasant half-hour together, speaking of our common Saviour, who is so much to His own, whether they be rich or poor.

After a little time I learned somewhat of her history. She had seen better days, but had sunk to the most abject poverty. At last a lady had found her hopelessly ill, and deserted by all. This lady had procured her admission into an hospital, where, after many weary weeks, she began to recover, and then the same kind friend began to tell her of the Lord, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. It was the great love of Jesus which first touched and captivated this poor woman's heart, and she drank in with childlike simplicity the story of His love unto death. Her own utter unworthiness was her stumbling-block; but gradually her eyes were opened to see that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. "Aye," she repeated; "the blood cleanseth."

The lady afterward furnished her with a basket of small wares, and by selling them she earned an honest livelihood. "The Lord has raised up," she said, "many kind friends in my behalf. Praise Him

for it; He has been oh, so good to me”

On parting, she said, "You might think this is a lonely sort of life; but oh 1 Jesus Himself comes and keeps me company all the way.”

“The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” He says of them, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.”

K. R.

## The Anchor Holds

---

SOME time ago a gale was raging furiously around the coast, and many vessels were driven ashore and wrecked. The evening before, I had watched a schooner glide into the bay, and then cast anchor preparatory to discharging her cargo. As I watched the vessel for some moments, her great strength and solidity, and also the size of the cables attached to the anchors, struck me very forcibly, little thinking when I left the shore what the morning would reveal!

During the night the gale arose. The fishermen and coastguardsmen on the first warning had hurried down to shore to put all they could in safety. Small yachts and boats were hauled up above high-water mark before the storm reached its worst, but all their efforts could not move the noble schooner an inch—she had to be left to her fate.

When the gray light of morning dawned it showed all along the coast one wild, white line of gigantic breakers dashing on the beach, and the vessel tossed like a cork on the waves. One by one the anchors dragged; the great cables, which, in the calm of the previous evening, appeared to me so immensely strong, snapped like twine, and the poor schooner seemed at the mercy of the remorseless sea as she was driven some distance along the coast. At last she ran ashore, and there in the morning I saw her, as the gale confirmed and the tide came in with resistless force.

Still the vessel was not destroyed. Why was this? The crew had by tremendous effort got one of their large anchor cables firmly lashed to the ship; they buried an anchor ashore high up on land above high-water mark, and then, as the tide rolled in and surrounded the vessel, lifting her up and dashing her from side to side as though she were only a feather's weight, they watched to see the result of their novel anchorage. But it is all right, "the anchor holds," and though the timbers of the good ship are loosened, and spar after spar gives way, and the masts are fallen, the ship braves the tide, for the anchor holds.

There arises another storm—it will come on suddenly. No sea-buried anchor will hold the storm-tossed vessel then. No, nothing but the "anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast," will avail us in that storm. That anchor enters into the glory itself, above all the wild 'leavings and storms of life's sea. Have we, like the crew of that schooner, made firm hold to the anchor which is above? If not, we shall be wrecked. That poor mother, whom I know so well, with her large family of hungry little ones, has not a penny in the house, and yet she can say, "The Lord never has failed me yet, can I doubt Him now?" and so she can calmly leave all her cares with Him. What is the secret? Why, "the anchor holds." The young widowed heart, left to fight life's battle without the manly strength she once so trusted in, yet able to say, "Christ is more to me than even my dear one was," can she have that peace from earth? No; there, again, it is only explained by "the anchor holds."

Ah! dear reader, there is such a thing as perfect peace; there is such a thing even in this world of storm, and trial, and daily cares as gladness and joy, great enough to make one happy in the wildest storm. And it all flows from this—having the soul anchored in God Himself—so that,

forgiven, cleansed, and at peace, we can find all joy there. Dear friend, can you rejoice in this? Ah! if so, "tell others the story." If not, oh, seek it before it is too late. God is waiting to hear your first desire for it. Go to Him for it, and the Lord Jesus Christ has promised He will never cast you out. L. T.

## Prepare to Meet Thy God

---

"MRS. is dead," said a friend to us of a neighbor.

"Dead?" we questioned.

"Yes, she died this morning."

"It must have been very sudden?" "Yes, it was; she had complained of her head lately. Yesterday it was worse, and she was obliged to take to her bed about six o'clock. Her husband came home some time after; he thought she was over-tired and sound asleep, but in an hour or two after saw she was unconscious! The doctor was of no avail —she died about five o'clock in the morning."

But where is the soul?

There was no time for deathbed repentance. Not even consciousness that she was passing away.

Where would you be if taken away suddenly, dear reader? If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus, you would depart to be forever with the Lord. But if not? Oh! I shudder to think of it. Think of the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!

Oh! may this incident from real life, which came under my notice the other day, be used of the Lord to arouse your soul from its sleep. N. N.

I WOULD seek no more to make me happy for evermore, but a thorough and clear sight of the beauty of Jesus, my Lord. Samuel Rutherford.

## Jesus Only

---

"ON what are you resting your hopes for eternity?" I asked a young man, whose manly face, marked with suffering, told too truly he had not long to live. He was only able to speak in a whisper, but sweetly came the answer—"Jesus only."

Before he was obliged to give up work, when he felt that disease was creeping upon him, he was convinced that it would soon end his life. He knew he had nothing to rest upon for eternity, not even a "good life" (as some people say), for he had been a very godless man. His sins filled him with deep concern, and he felt deeply his disregard of his Christian parents, who had been called home; and also he felt the sin of his indifference to their teaching. When in this state of misery, he was visited by the Bible-woman, to whom he said, "It's all so dark."

God used this verse, "All we like sheep have gone astray, "and" The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," to bring this young man out of darkness into light. The two "all's" in the verse arrested him. He knew he was included in the first; he felt that in his soul as a deep reality, and then God gave him to see that he, a poor guilty sinner, was included in the second all, and that his iniquity had been laid upon Jesus by Jehovah. After that day he never seemed to have a doubt nor a fear, but was peaceful and rejoicing. We could not go into his room without noticing the bright look of joy which lighted up his face.

Once, when a Christian friend said to him, "I wish I could bear some of your weakness for you—but that is not to be," he replied, "Christ bore more than this for me."

On one occasion I asked him if he had very bad nights. "No," he replied, "for I have Jesus to talk to."

He looked forward with intense joy to being with the Lord, and to serving Him throughout eternity. The night before he died he was longing to go, and was heard to say, "Jesus, fetch me."

Let me ask you, dear reader, are you resting on "Jesus only"? N. N.

## A Child's Faith

---

CHARLES A. was an earnest worker, full of love to Christ and His gospel, which he delighted to make known, and which he constantly preached, and, like most earnest men, he needed encouragement. But, as is often the case with such, he looked too much to the stars and too little to the small things about him; or, to speak more plainly and without a figure, he was looking for certain large results to come in the way which he himself had marked out, and thus frequently overlooked the simple and unobtrusive evidences of the divine blessing springing up around him and waiting for his grateful recognition. At the time, for instance, to which we refer, there was a little, quiet, pale-faced girl, who came to the service with her parents, and heard him regularly. Charles A. frequently saw the child, whom it was impossible to watch closely without perceiving, as many did, the deep and beautiful work which the word communicated was doing even when the speaker to whom she listened was most cast down and desponding.

This little girl, however, was taken ill, and it was soon painfully apparent that death very speedily must be the ultimate issue. Her sufferings were very great, but were borne with heroic patience, cheering all around, and more especially the speaker from whose lips she had received the gospel of Christ. We wish, however, to call attention to a little incident in her history which happened just before she died.

Being in great pain on one occasion, and wishing to change her position, long occupied and very painful, she asked her father, who was himself very weak, to try and move her. "I wish, father," she said, "you would try and lift me to your knee." "Impossible, my child," was the reply; "I would, gladly, but have not the strength, and indeed if I could, I fear my moving you might prove fatal," for this the doctor had said would be the case. "Oh, do try I" she exclaimed, "and I will pray to God to make me lighter."

Overcome at last by her importunity and faith, her father, with tears, put forth all his strength, looking to the Lord, and succeeded in getting her upon his lap. While he was making the attempt, however, and while holding her in his arms, the little girl constantly exclaimed, "O Lord, make me lighter! make me lighter!" and when at last she found herself seated on her parent's knees, she said, "There, father, did I not tell you the Lord would make me lighter?"

We can readily believe that some hard and logical intellect would laugh at this child's faith; but granted that there is a God, and that He is what He declares Himself to be, it was after all but an approximation to that spirit which ought to live in every heart in simple accordance with the word of God, and the highest form of true reason. B. F. N.

## God's Word in the Heart

---

I CALLED at a cottage, the aged inmate of which received me gladly. I noticed that upon the walls were several texts of Scripture, and putting my hand on my heart, said, "Well, you have got the word of God on your walls: have you got it here?"

"Ah, sir," he replied, "it would not be of much use hanging them up there if I had not got them in my heart."

I afterward heard that the dear old man was suffering from confirmed heart disease, and that he never went out without his name and address in his pocket, as he knew that at any moment he might be taken away from earth. But his name is written in heaven, and with the word of God hidden in his heart he patiently pursues his daily toil.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psa. 119:11) has been said to be "the best thing, hidden in the best place, for the best of purposes." "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." H.

## When Am I Happiest?

---

A LITTLE girl, five years old, once said to her mother, "Do you know when I feel the happiest?" Her mother answered, "I suppose when you are good." "No," said she, "but when I feel sorry for having been naughty, and God has forgiven me."

## Forever!

---

AN existence that has no end the mind of man can well comprehend, for God has made man to live forever. An existence that has no beginning man's mind cannot conceive, for every man had a commencement. We are creatures of the hour. Born into this world, we pass away out of it, when we know not, but we are creatures who, when this world and its fashion have long passed away, shall live forever.

The swiftness with which changes occur in our present day, the rapidity of the decay of many of those things, which men in the past generation regarded as stable and enduring, are but signs of the times betokening the approaching end. Now, as the Christian takes his stand-point and views the process of decay, he opens the word of God, and gives thanks that, though "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass., the word of the Lord endureth forever." (1 Pet. 1:24-25.)

Fellow believer, the word of God can never decay, it must ever abide. You have a new nature, a new life: you belong to God, of whom and by whose word you are born. Seek, then, so to live in this decaying world that you may witness for the enduring and the unchanging; seek to live the Christian life. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." The world and all its glory is but as the flower of the field; yours is a living hope—yours is faith that is fixed on God—yours is the love which is of God. All that God has said shall come to pass. The world will be burned up; its glories are but of the moment. Your portion is an inheritance that is incorruptible; not one blessing of which God has assured you in His word shall fail. The word of your God liveth and abideth forever.

This year has ended, and time's course has run with many whom we knew and loved. How sure is the word "forever" to them. The veteran has passed from battle into rest, which is forever; the sufferer has passed from weariness and pain into peace, which is forever; time's trials, afflictions, anxieties, are exchanged for "ever... with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:7.)

Presently He will come, as He has said, and as it is written of Him, and He will call home all His people. "We, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them (who sleep) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Life's brief day will be over—the world and its changes left; ours will be eternal joy. "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

We open the last pages of the word of God, and the future of His people is declared, and its duration is "forever and ever." No end to the glory and the bliss of heaven. No termination to the songs and the pleasures of the home on high. In these last pages also is the future of the lost declared, and its duration is "forever and ever." No end to the wretchedness and sorrow of hell.

When the Lord Jesus Christ comes He determines our eternal state by that wherein He finds us. Should He come this hour, the unconverted would remain forever unconverted, as the true believer would remain forever the true believer. "The time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that 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. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.”

Reader, what is your present state? This is the vital question which the close of another year once more presses upon us. How many such appeals have the passing years made to you? Can you dare say that this shall not be your last year on earth? Are you still unsaved? What you are, you will be forever, unless indeed to-day—while it is yet to-day—you harden not your heart, but hear God's voice. Ponder over these solemn words "forever," for

You will live in eternity forever.

You will be either in joy forever and ever,

Or you will be in woe forever and ever.

And what you are either at death or when Christ comes, you will be forever.

## Rejoice With Air

---

DOES the Lord Jesus Christ, the Seeker of the lost, thus speak to His friends: "Rejoice with Me, for I have found the sheep I had lost"? Ah fellow-worker for souls, indeed He does. And we can say, we have heard His voice, and seen, by faith, His joy, as He bears home upon His shoulders the sheep He has found.

Behold the wondrous sight; see the Shepherd bearing upon His shoulders His sheep which He had lost. It is Jesus, who was pierced and wounded for our sins. It is Jesus, who died and who lives for the sheep He had lost. Behold Him., Gaze upon Him. His joy is exceeding great. He has sought and He has found. He has saved the sheep which He had lost. Mark you His joy! The poor senseless sheep knows but little of the Shepherd's joy. The saved soul may know it is saved, and rejoice in being delivered from hell. But the Saviour rejoices in the soul He has saved. That soul shall be His prize for all ages. Yes, when this world is burned up, when its arts and palaces, its battle ships and hospitals are but of memory, that one sheep shall be to the praise of the glory of God, and to the honor of Jesus the Lord.

"Rejoice with Me!" Does He call His friends to His joy in vain? The angels behold His joy in heaven, and shall His friends on earth refuse, in the folly of their hardness of heart, to partake in His joy? To fail in this sympathy with Christ is to fail in one of the sweetest joys of Christians. What love, what grace, then, is in our Lord Jesus! How can we thank Him enough that He calls together His friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with Me!"

## The Prospect

---

DOUBT it not, there will be surprises for you in heaven; lovely things which shall cause your heart to rejoice in His love. His love is beyond ours. If we delight in surprising our children with unexpected pleasures, how shall His heart rejoice in the joy our tearless eyes shall sparkle with through all eternity.

To Our Young Friends

ONCE more we have the pleasure of being able to put into your hands another of our Volumes. When we first began to issue our Magazine we little thought how large would be the number of our readers, nor did we dream of the numerous nice, kind letters we should receive from the boys and girls who find pleasure in our FAITHFUL WORDS. We wish you every bright and happy wish as we take our leave of you for this year, and may you grow up to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

We trust that with a new year fresh interests may be awakened in FAITHFUL WORDS, and we shall, as ever, be glad to welcome any questions or letters you may send us.

For our monthly questions, which many of you answer, we should like to see still more correspondents. We ask you to work your-selves, and to try to get others to work, too, over the questions for /886. Whatever you do, do well. Take that as your motto for work. And by "well" we mean the very best you can do. If you are writing a letter, or playing at a game, or studying your books, do what you do as well as you can. And when the word of God is in your hands, and you are answering questions about it, give all your heart and mind to the work. Do it well. Work well done lasts. Those who work well always succeed. Painstaking and perseverance win more races than do any others.

May God bless you all. Farewell for this year.

## "I Want to Get a Crown."

---

WHAT is a crown?" "Oh! I know," calls out little Carrie, "it is five shillings; we had it for our lesson this morning." "Yes that is one kind of crown; but cannot you think of another?" And then Gracie's reply comes: "I think I know what you mean; it is something made of gold, that the Queen wears, isn't it?" "Yes! that is the kind of crown I want to tell you something about. Now, gold crowns will not last forever, but those of which I am thinking will last forever, so they are not really gold crowns."

Some time ago I was talking to some children about the Israelites in Egypt on the night when the Lord sent the destroying angel there, and I asked them, "Who was it that was quite safe on that terrible night?" One little, tiny fellow called out, "Everybody that had put the blood on the door." I was very glad to hear him answer, so I asked him, "And who is it that is safe now?" He replied, "Everybody that belongs to Jesus."

And who does belong to Him? Every little boy or girl who trusts in Him to save him or her—trusts in His blood to wash away his or her sins. Not one sin could be forgiven without His blood washing it away. Are you trusting in the blood of Jesus Christ to wash away your sins?

A girl, to whom I often spoke of God, believed that she was a sinful child, and that nothing could make her ready to go to heaven, save the blood of Christ! The Lord Jesus said He came for sinners, and she trusted Him with all her heart. I was soon told of her happiness. It was so beautiful to know she was really saved forever. We used to talk about trying to please the Saviour, and living to do what He wished, because He says, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." And Fanny found that the only way she could keep from doing the old naughty things was by telling the Lord all things, and asking Him to keep her. Telling Him about all the little troubles at school—the hard sums, and how the girls laughed at her because she could not now join in some of the things she used to do.

Fanny wrote to me, "I know I am saved forever, for I am trusting in Christ, and His blood has washed me; but I want to get a crown." I had talked to her about the crown that the Lord will give to everyone who loves His appearing. Do you know what she meant? I think it was this: she wanted to please the Lord in what she did and said all day long, for she loved Him because He loved her first.

Now you know that when we do nothing to please Him, and go on living as though He had not died for us, and forget how much we cost Him, it grieves the Lord. And I know, too, how much we do forget Him, and how impatient we are, and how we often say and do things that make us cry bitterly when we get up to our quiet bedroom at night, and have time to think over the day, and how it has been spent. Sorrowful as it often is, I am sure if we do love the Lord, we shall tell Him all our difficulties and temptations, and we shall try to remember Him.

So, dear young friends, we are not to get tired of seeking to please the Lord, and we must not think such things are only for grown-up people! It is for everyone, girl or boy, who is trusting with all the

heart to Christ—to try to please Jesus the Lord, who will at His coming give crowns to all who love His appearing. L. T.

## Little Thomas

---

ROME time ago, in Belfast, there lived a widow, with her two dearly-loved children, Thomas and Freddie, aged six and four years. She had passed through the deep waters of affliction. A Christian lady came to visit their lonely home, and told the little boys how that the Lord Jesus came down to this world to give up His life for us. Shortly after, Them as was taken ill, and suffered very much. As his bodily weakness increased he longed to go to Jesus. At the end of the second month intense suffering set in. One Lord's day evening, at four o'clock, we knew that his hours on earth were drawing to a close. At ten he awoke out of a deep sleep, and, seeing his mother weeping bitterly, with a happy smile on his face, he said, "Dear mamma, don't cry for me; I'm going to Jesus. Tell Mrs. G." (the lady who had first told him of the Lord) "I'm gone to Jesus." Then, turning on his back, with his little suffering face beaming with joy, he looked up earnestly towards heaven for several minutes, and, with a happy smile, passed away—

"Safe on His gentle breast!"

Now, dear children, it is the mother of little Thomas who is writing to you. If God should lay you upon a bed of sickness could you say to your mother, "Don't cry for me; I'm going to Jesus"? God grant you may all know and trust the blessed Jesus as your Saviour? E. M. K.

## On the Right Hand

---

"Miss E., why does it say in the Bible that Jesus sat down on the right hand of God? Why didn't God put Him on His left?"

Alfy, who asked the question, is a bright little fellow of eight.

"Because, dear," I said, "on the right hand is the place of honor. God was so pleased with what Jesus did for Him and for us on the cross that He raised Him from the dead, and set Him on His right hand."

Even as I answered the child a ray of gladness filled my heart from that glimpse of the Lord in glory. A. E. E.

## Sowing and Reaping

---

THERE is a solemn text on sowing and reaping which every young person should not only know by heart, but have in the heart. It is this: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7.) Whatsoever seed! You sowed certain kinds of seed in your garden in the spring, and of that very seed sprang up the flowers which you loved in the summer. You did not gather sweet peas from thistle down, nor mignonette from dandelion seed. You reaped what you sowed. And just so is it in daily life—what you sow you reap. If you are kind and unselfish, you will find pleasure in your heart; if you try only to please yourself, and are greedy and ungenerous, you will be wretched. What you do to-day will come up to-morrow, or by-and-by, like the seeds you hid in the ground. You placed a little stick over the seed you buried, to remind yourself where you had sown it. By-and-by it came up above the soil. So all that you do God marks, and for everything done, good or bad, the reaping time will come.

The bright and sunny boy in the midst of his playmates, who are ever glad to have him among them, reaps in their affection towards him the love for them he has sown. While the gloomy boy who, just because he is not so successful as others in the game, cries out, "I won't play any more," reaps in his unhappy spirit his own sowing.

And what is true of the little things of the day, is true of the great things of a life; and what is thus illustrated to us in time is true of eternal things. Such as live for pleasure and for sin will reap what they sow, not only in time, but in eternity. The Lord Jesus tells us that even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple will not lose its reward; there will be the reaping time by-and-by. All the sorrows and trials of God's people endured here for Christ's sake will be like the good seed sown in the winter's ground, the harvest from which makes the autumn so beautiful and glad. Again the Lord tells us, that for every idle word men speak they must give an account in the coming time. So that really every day and every year of our lives is sowing seed.

Now, as year by year rolls away, how important does this great truth make each of our actions appear. When you grow older you will see in your own lives and the lives of others, how true it is that whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap. You will see many of your friends and companions grow up to be useful or useless, just as they lived out their moments and their hours. But, remember, too few believe what God says about sowing and reaping; the many live as if the passing hour was everything for and to them. May you all sow the seed day by day which God loves and values.

"For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Scenes From the History of the Early Christians

THE MARTYRS OF CARTHAGE, A, D. 202.

TOWARDS the close of the second century we hear of the sufferings for the sake of Christ of some Christians in the cities of Lyons and Vienne, where Asiatic colonies had settled. The details of this persecution have come down to us in a letter from the Church in those parts of France addressed to their brethren in Asia. In language pathetic in its simplicity the writer tells how a sudden attack was made upon the brethren, who had been living in safe seclusion. They were first excluded from the baths and markets; then, as an easy prey, robbed of their goods; presently beaten, stoned and dragged about the streets, and accused of crimes "so dark," says the writer, "that it is not lawful for us to speak or even think of them." About sixty were apprehended, and of these, ten drew back in the hour of trial, though afterward some who had denied Christ through fear, when brought to trial a second time, sealed their testimony with their blood. Many perished in the loathsome dungeons into which they were cast, and those who survived imprisonment and torture were reserved only to be exposed to wild beasts in the amphitheater. Great efforts were made to search out victims, even slaves being induced by offers of reward or threats of torture to deliver up their Christian masters; and in this way many were betrayed.

The faith and steadfastness of one Christian slave, however, are specially recorded. The mistress of Blandina, who was herself among those who were taken before the magistrates, trembled for her, lest the young girl should not be able to endure the great sufferings which were inflicted upon the accused, if by any means they might be induced to deny their Lord. But in the midst of all, she was calm, and only repeated her simple confession—"I am a Christian, and no wickedness is practiced amongst us."

The letter also speaks of the sufferings of one named Sanctus, saying that the way in which he endured was a cheer to his brethren, proving to them that "there is nothing terrible where the Father's love is, and nothing painful where there is Christ's glory." It is especially noticed that the bodies of those who had thus yielded up their lives amid tortures, the very record of which may well make us shudder, were burned, and their ashes were cast into the swift-flowing Rhone: for their persecutors believed that they should thus deprive the martyrs of what was most precious to them—the "sure and certain hope" of a joyful resurrection.

In the year 202, the Emperor Severus issued an edict forbidding any of his subjects to embrace Judaism or Christianity. It is thought that the refusal of the Christians in many distant parts of the empire to join in the public rejoicings which welcomed the emperor's return to Rome was the occasion of this edict. We must remember that this refusal does not prove that the Christian subjects of the emperor were disloyal to him, but rather that their loyalty to Christ would not suffer them to take part in the heathen rites which accompanied public rejoicings.

It was about the time of this edict that the martyrdom of some Christians in Egypt and in Africa took place. The story of two African women, Perpetua and Felicitas, is well known. They suffered, with five others, near Carthage, and it is most interesting to read a narrative of their trial and imprisonment, written by Vivia Perpetua with her own hand. She was a young widow lady, whose mother was a Christian, but whose father was a heathen. At the time of her imprisonment her husband had but lately died, and her only child was an infant. Of a faithful and tender heart, Perpetua's greatest trials came from those who were dearest to her by the ties of nature.

"When we were in the hands of the persecutors," she says, "my father, in his tender affection, sought with all his power to turn me away from the faith. 'Father,' I said, do you see this little

pitcher lying here?' He said, I see it.' Then I said, Can it be called by any other name than what it is? 'He answered, No." Neither can I,' I replied, call myself anything else but what I am—a Christian.' My father looked at me as if he could have plucked my eyes out; but he only harassed me and departed. Then, after being a few days without seeing my father, I was enabled to give thanks to God, and his absence was tempered to my spirit."

Alluding to their being removed to a place of closer confinement, she writes: "Again a few days, and we were cast into prison. I was terrified; for I had never before seen such total darkness. What a dreadful day! The excessive heat occasioned by the multitude of prisoners, the rough behavior of the soldiers, and anxiety on account of my child, overwhelmed me. Two of our deacons, however, by the payment of money, obtained our removal for some hours in the day to a more open part of the prison. Each of the captives then pursued his usual occupation; but I sat and nursed my infant, who was wasting away with hunger. In my anxiety, I addressed and consoled my mother, and commended the child to my brother; and I began to pine away at seeing them pining away on my account. For many days I suffered this anxiety, and accustomed the child to remain in the prison with me; and I immediately recovered strength, and was relieved of toil and trouble for my infant, and the prison became to me like a palace; indeed I was happier there than I should have been anywhere else."

After describing a dream which she had in the dungeon, in which she believed she had received a token for herself and her brother, who was among those who were imprisoned, by which they might know that their martyrdom was at hand, Perpetua's narrative, so touching in its simplicity, proceeds—

"After a few days, there was a rumor that we were to be heard. My father came from the city, wasted with anxiety, to pervert me; and he said, Have pity on my gray hairs, my daughter, and do not expose me to the scorn of men. Look on thy brother, look on thy mother and thy aunt; look on thy child, who cannot live without thee. Do not plunge us all into ruin.' Thus spake my father, kissing my hands in his fondness, and throwing himself at my feet; and in his tears he called me not 'daughter' but lady.' And I was grieved for the gray hairs of my father, because he alone, of all our family, did not rejoice in my martyrdom; and I strove to comfort him, saying, On that scaffold whatever God wills will come to pass; for we stand not in our own strength, but in the power of God.' And he went away sorrowing.

"Another day, while we were at dinner, we were suddenly taken to the town hall, where an immense multitude was assembled. We ascended the platform; the rest were interrogated and made their confession, and it came to my turn, and my father instantly appeared with my child, and he drew me down the step, and said in a beseeching tone, Have pity on your babe.' The procurator Hilarianus also said, Spare the gray hairs of your father; spare your infant; offer sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor.' And I answered, I will not sacrifice.' Art thou a Christian?' said Hilarianus. I answered, I am a Christian.' And while my father was still standing there, trying to persuade me, Hilarianus ordered him to be thrust down and beaten with rods. And the misfortune of my father grieved me, and I was as much grieved for his old age as if I had been beaten myself. He then passed sentence on us all, and condemned us to the wild beasts, and we went back in cheerfulness to the prison."

The martyrs were to be kept for the birthday of the Emperor's son, but before that day came one of their number died in prison, and Perpetua was no longer allowed to have her child. But God gave them favor with their keeper, and the little company of confessors was cheered during this time of suspense by being allowed to receive visits from some of the brethren. As the time for their martyrdom drew near, the faithful heart of Perpetua was once more wrung by the sight of the anguish of her father on her account. "As the day of the games approached," she says, " my father entered, worn out with affliction, and began to pluck his beard, and to throw himself down with his face upon the ground, and to wish that he could hasten his death; and to speak words which might have moved any living creature—and I was grieved for the sorrows of his old age."

The slave, Felicitas, may be remembered on account of the beautiful answer she gave to the taunt of one of the servants of the prison, addressed to her when she was in great suffering. Hearing her cry out in her pain, he said, "If your present sufferings are so great, what will you do when you are exposed to the wild beasts? You did not consider this when you refused to sacrifice." "I bear now my own sufferings," she replied, "then there will be another with me who will suffer for me, because I shall suffer for His sake."

The end of these martyrs is related by someone who continues the narrative of Perpetua in an exalted strain very unlike her own simple language. We learn from it that "When the day of their victory shone forth" they wore a joyful look, and that they refused to be arrayed, as was the custom, in robes of sacrifice; the men in scarlet, as priests of Saturn; the women in yellow, as priestesses of Ceres. They said they were going to their death because they would take no part in such profane customs, and the justice of their plea was allowed. And so they came forward in their simple dress, Perpetua singing psalms, and others rebuking the curiosity of the hungry multitude who pressed around to gaze upon them. The men were given to lions, bears and leopards, and the women to a fierce cow. After Perpetua had been exposed to the fury of this wild creature, she turned, forgetful of her own suffering, to help and comfort Felicitas, who lay in the arena, crushed and mortally wounded; and with her last words she besought her brother to be steadfast in the faith. For each of these martyrs of Carthage the end soon came, either by the fangs of a wild beast, or the more merciful sword-thrust of a gladiator; it mattered not by which means they found the way through death to life. Truly did a teacher of the Church in Africa, who died eighteen years later, write—" We conquer by being killed. Call us, if you will, men of the fagot, or of the half-axle (in which we are burned or racked); this is our robe of victory, this is our chariot of triumph. It is victory to gain that for which one fights; our spoil is life eternal. We grow by being mown down. The blood of Christians is the seed of the Church." C. P.

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
  - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**