

# FAITHFUL WORDS FOR OLD AND YOUNG VOLUME 15

by H.F. Witherby

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*A collection of articles and writings by H.F. Witherby from Faithful Words for Old and Young Volume 15, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

156 Chapters

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## Faithful Words for Old and Young Volume 15

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## Preface

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ANOTHER year has glided away, and once more we take up the pen to introduce a fresh Volume of FAITHFUL WORDS to the reader its contributors are so numerous — its stories are no less varied than those of its predecessors. Here is the Volume: it shall speak for itself. This opening remark is made with the utmost thankfulness to God, and with gratitude to the writers, who from all parts of the country have so generously contributed papers this year, being actuated by the disinterested desire of helping on the work of the gospel. Eternity is at hand, and, when life battlefield is exchanged for the glory on high, high Honor will accrue to every servant of Christ who sought with a pure heart to serve the Lord. Not even the gift of a cup of cold water to a thirsty disciple will be then forgotten, neither will the presentation of the words of life to longing souls then lose its reward, however humble the “cup” which contains the living water.

The stories of the Volume are all vouched for as literally true. Most of them relate occurrences within the personal knowledge of the writers; many of them are life experiences of those who narrate them.

We appeal to the Christian generosity of our friends and co-workers still to do their utmost in maintaining the character and the circulation of the Magazine, invoking the aid of pen and personal interest. The “depression” that has prevailed has told to some extent upon our circulation, and we call upon our friends to help us, by making the Magazine more widely known; for while our individual subscribers are more numerous than during any previous year, some who once were enabled to make grants of some hundreds of copies to needy gospel workers can no longer do so, or, at least, do so on a smaller scale than before — hence we ask each of our numerous subscribers to introduce FAITHFUL WORDS to the knowledge of one friend or one neighbor, and by this means the accumulative force of various small efforts will more than supply the deficiency felt by the decrease in strength of the few larger ones.

Christian worker, the time is short! And to reader and writer it is shorter than it was even one year ago. Seize the God-given opportunity of the present, passing moment — use the talent of the fleeting hour in view of eternity and the Lord’s approval; be simple-hearted and single-eyed for Him, and you will not have to wait for heaven to receive your reward, for divine joy shall possess your spirit. Work for eternity. In a little while the questions which agitated the hearts and taxed the zeal and energy of so many during the bygone year will be but as a dream. Remember, each golden grain of the word of God sown in a human heart during the past year will be found again — no dream, but a living reality in eternity.

## From the Galley to the Glory

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WHO was William Reid? Was he some great general, like Grant, upon whose skill the fate of a continent had depended? Or some great politician, like Bismarck, to whose iron will all Europe bows? Or some philanthropist, like Peabody, with whose praises America and Europe alike have rung? He was none of these. Neither councils of war, nor councils of state, ever knew his presence; while as to munificence, however great his love to mankind was — and it was great — riches and wealth were never his. Who was he then, this William Reid? He was simply the colored cook on board the sailing ship “Rangitikei,” which sailed from Auckland, in New Zealand, for London on August the 25th, 1884. Such indeed he was by birth and circumstances; but he was also, what eternity alone will fully reveal, a son of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

To be shut up in a ship for weeks or months with men who know not the Lord is ever a trial to those to whom, through grace, He has become precious, and it was indeed a cheer, therefore, to find on board, one like Reid entirely devoted to His Master’s service. No trumpet that gave an uncertain sound was his — no light hidden under a bushel was his — but out of the fullness of a full heart, he loved to tell forth the praises of the Saviour who died for him. Thus every evening during the long, cold nights between New Zealand and the Horn (and owing to constant easterly gales we were forty-two days in rounding it), while the wind shrieked through the cordage as we lay to, and the ship plunged sullenly into the great heat seas, he would gather together into the galley all that would come, to tell them of the Saviour’s love. What a contrast! Without the howling gale, angry seas, and the icy breezes of those low latitudes; within, the light, and warmth, and peace, and story of God’s love. No flights of oratory were his no gorgeous similes, no sounding phrases reading God’s word (and this he never failed to do), and in a few short, powerful word: drawing out there from the lesson of the exceeding greatness of God’s love, and the exceeding hatefulness of sin, this was all he sought to do.

And what a happy disposition was his! He was one who was ever singing and making melody in his heart to God. Well can I recall him at his work — now heaving his bucket over the side, now giving a stir to the great pipkin of pea-soup, and now, with a cleaver, smashing up some packing case for firewood —singing with his great bass voice, “Dare to be a Daniel” (smash, down comes the cleaver), “Dare to stand alone” (smash), “Dare to have a purpose true” (smash — an extra powerful one this time), “Dare to make it known.”

“It is no wonder we get head winds,” said the captain to me one morning; “I caught that rascally cook singing, ‘Dare to be a Jonah.’” Nevertheless, the captain well knew that the cook had something to which he was himself a stranger. The very gladness of heart of one who knows God’s full and free salvation is a testimony in itself to the unsaved.

On a preceding voyage, in another ship, Reid had proclaimed the gospel seemingly without result, one of the crew, a German and an infidel, especially annoying him. One day this man came to Reid with an infidel question, and he replied that he was not much of a scholar himself, but that God had spoken in His word, and then he quoted a verse of Scripture. Reid then asked the infidel

to speak to one of the lady passengers, whom he had found was a believer, adding that she would tell him more than he could.

In the course of a few hours the lady in question came to the galley to rejoice with Reid over the infidel. He was much surprised, and said, "Why, he hasn't long left me, after asking me some infidel question."

"Yes," replied the lady, "and the text you quoted went home, and, instead of coming to ask me for explanations, he came to tell me that the Lord had spoken to him." Several conversions followed among the men all the crew were spoken to about their souls — and the saved men longed for their captain. Now anyone who has been on board ship will know what an autocrat the captain is, and how difficult of approach, especially for the crew. After much deliberation, they decided that the German should undertake the service, and an opportunity having presented itself, he carried it out. The captain listened attentively, and finally broke down, and owned, with tears, that he was a believer, but had been living away from God for years. Happy, indeed, were the meetings held after this on board that ship!

On board the "Rangitikei" one of the men professed to find Christ, but shortly afterwards fought with one of the crew, from which time, out of shame, he did not attend the meetings. Others of the crew were also impressed, and who knows but that yet the word then sown will bear fruit to Christ's glory? One man, an Irishman and a Catholic, pretended to be exercised, and had a long talk with Reid, who brought the word to bear. At the end of the conversation the Irishman said, "Doctor" (all ships' cooks are called "doctors"), "I thought we differed, but I find we're both agreed." Continuing, solemnly, "Yes, we're agreed; you keep your opinion, and I keep mine." He then fled, leaving poor Reid to his discomfiture!

Speaking generally, like the Master whom he served, Reid's reward was with God, and there was little externally to cheer him. Thus, after rounding the Horn, when the weather grew warmer, and the sailors no longer needed the comfort of the galley fire, his congregation grew less and less, till one day I found him sitting alone in the galley between two piles of hymn-books, and he said, "I tink de men ob dis ship are Parsees— at any rate, they are fire-worshippers."

On subsequent nights during our long voyage of one hundred and thirty-eight days the writer met Reid in his cabin (fortunately, he had one to himself) to read the word, and thus by the study of the Bible did Reid, whose heart was set on giving up the sea to devote himself entirely to the Lord's service among the colored people of his native land, Jamaica, get clearer views as to the fullness, length and breadth, of the gospel of God. How delighted he was as the treasures of the word opened out to his soul the testimony, in the Epistle to the Romans, of man alive in sins, each member warring against God (Rom. 3:10-19), and God's solemn verdict pronounced, "None righteous, no, not one!" But God commending His own love to us, "in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," and His setting forth Christ as a mercy-seat through faith in His blood, so that His claims against the sinner having been met, He can act consistently with His own character in justifying him which believeth in Jesus (3:26). And the truth of the believer bidden to reckon himself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord (6:11) and to practically show in his life, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (6:4).

Also those treasures in the Epistle to the Colossians (2:13), of the believer, once dead in sins, but quickened out of that state of death, together with Christ, and risen with Him (3:1). He ascended, and sitting at God's right hand, while the believer, as a risen man, bidden to seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth! And again those in the Epistle to the Ephesians (2:5, 6), of the believer, once dead in sins, but quickened together with Christ, and raised up, and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Greatly did he enjoy these and other precious truths, and specially that of God setting man aside at the cross, and giving the believer in Jesus a life beyond death and judgment in Christ risen from among the dead.

Well, the long voyage came at last to an end, and Reid accompanied me through the docks to the nearest cabstand, where, with a hearty shake of the hand and "God bless you," I, the invalid, said farewell to him, the strong man, to meet him never again until we meet together amid the ransomed host. Shortly after landing he wrote to me, saying that he was waiting for a vessel to take him to Jamaica, and that meanwhile he was working for the Lord in the East end of London. I replied, but got no answer in return, till on May 28th a letter came in a strange handwriting, telling me that Reid had caught smallpox, had been taken to the hospital, and had died, and was buried at the East End Cemetery, Finchley, on April 25th My correspondent adding, "Dear Reid often spoke about you, and the happy times you had coming home. How beautiful the Epistles are!" So there he rests.

No mighty throng of mourners swelled his funeral train, no marble monument adorns his grave; unwept, unknown, he lies; but when the trump shall sound, and the archangel's voice be heard, when the Lord Himself shall descend and rally the sleeping and the living saints — for He will send no messenger to fetch His own — Reid, too, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, no longer in his body of humiliation, here despised because of his race, but with a body of glory like unto His own. Surely we mourn him, and others such as he, not as mourners without hope. Surely we comfort one another with these words. How often would he sing—

"It is well with my soul."

Well then, but better now — for "to depart and be with Christ is far better."

Fellow believer, are you delighting, as Reid did, out of a full heart to tell out to a perishing world the love of Him who died? Fellow sinner, will you madly reject or neglect so great salvation, and leave this world for eternal banishment from the presence of God? or will you, as a lost sinner, accept the Saviour who so lovingly invites you to Himself, and enjoy that Saviour here and in eternity?

J.F.

## Life's Pilgrimage

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MANY a bitter memory, like the mile-stones on the roadside, marks the fresh stages of our journey through this world to eternity. But be the past full of sorrow, it is bright before. Day by day the pilgrim to heaven approaches nearer home. Nor is it only that each stage, each new year, marks the truth afresh that we are nearer home, but each event of our lives teaches us to say more truly to our God, "Thou wilt preserve us." How great are His words, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and underneath are His everlasting arms, perfect in strength, and unwearied in bearing the burden of His people.

## One of God's Mysterious Ways

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"I OFTEN think," said Joe, a laboring man, "of what once happened to me many years ago, and it seemed so curious that I've often telled it to my mates and others, and I thinks about it scores of times. I was working at that time at K —for Lord W., draining, and every fortnight I had to walk to E■ to fetch the wages for me and my mates. It was seven miles each way, and when I got to E■ I used to always call at a public-house for a glass or two, for what I speak of took place long before I give my heart to the Lord, and at that time I liked my glass. After I got our wages I used to call again for another glass before returning with the money, and this went on pretty regular. A chap used to go to this same public-house, whom we called Jim. I knew him well, and he was a rough customer, I can tell you. In them days if anyone had spoken to Jim about his soul he would have thought nothing about knocking him down. He was one of the roughest chaps I ever knew. I generally saw him when I went to this public-house at E—, and very often we had a glass together.

"Well, I went one day to E■, and called for my glass as usual, and there was Jim. He seemed very queer, as I thought, and hadn't much to say. I asked him what was the matter, and he said he felt badly and low, so I invited him to drink off his glass and have a drop with me, and he would no doubt soon be all right again.

"'Nay,' says Jim, 'I'll not have any more, and I'll tell thee what, Joe, it strikes me I shan't drink much more gin in this world.' "His manner was so earnest that I couldn't mistake his meaning, but I told him to hold his noise talking like that. 'Thou's got a bit low-spirited,' I says; thou'll be all right again soon. Come, have a drop.'

"'No, I won't have any more,' he replies, 'but if thou's going back to K■ I'll walk a bit of the way wi' thee.'

"'Well, just as thou likes,' says I; so I drank off my glass, and away we went.

"'Joe,' says he, 'I'm going to die.'

"'Hold thy noise,' I says. 'What does to mean talking like that?'

"'I tell thee, Joe,' says he, 'it's right — I feel sure of it — and what's worse, I know I'm lost.' "'Why,' I says, 'I never heard a chap talk so queer in my life. What's t' matter wi' thee?'

"'I don't know,' says he, but I'm miserable, and I feel sure I'm going to die, and I know I'm lost, and I don't know what to do,'

"'Why, if I were thee,' I says, 'I would go and see t' parson.'

"'Nay,' says he, that's no good. Thou knows he's Lord W.'s brother, and he don't care to talk to such chaps as us.'

" 'Well, I don't know what to say to thee,' says I. I'se wading through lots o' prayers myself to hell — there's nowt about that — but I remember when I were a lad my old grandmother used to read

to me out of t' Bible, and pray with me too, and I remember she used often to read a place somewhere where it says if we believe on Jesus we shall be saved, and not lost.'

"'Ay,' says Jim; 'where's that?'

"'Why, I don't know rightly,' says I, 'but I think it's in John. I feel sure it's in John, and I believe it's somewhere about t' third chapter. She often used to tell me about it.'

"'What did she tell thee?' says Jim.

" 'Why thou knows,' I says, 'she used to say 'at what's in t' Bible must be true, and thou knows it must be true if it is in t' Bible, and t' Bible says somewhere, and I believe it's somewhere about t' third chapter of John, that if we believe in Jesus we shall be saved; and thou knows, as far as I can make out and remember, it's in this way: we've never seen Jesus, but we have to believe in Him, and that's same as seeing Him, and that's faith, and that's how we have to be saved.' And we talked like that till he cried, and I cried, and we both seemed as if we wanted to be saved, especially Jim, and I, in my simple way, told him as much as I could remember of what my poor old grandmother used to say.

"At last he left me, and I said, If I were thee I would get t' Bible when I got home and see for myself. I feel sure thou'll find it somewhere about t' third chapter of John, and thou knows what's in t' Bible must be true, and thou must pray,' and poor Jim seemed very glad, and said he would, and so we parted.

"After I left him something so queer seemed to come over me, and I never felt so happy in my life, and I could hardly help shouting out as I went along, Glory, glory!' But before I got to K — I got thinking about other things, and when I got there my mates had got a barrel of beer, and I joined them, and soon forgot all about it.

"A fortnight after, as usual, I went to E■ for the wages, and as usual I called for my glass, and the first thing I heard was that poor Jim was dead. It did send a queer feeling over me, I can tell you, and I should have liked to have gone and asked his mother how he died, but I didn't like, and as it was fifteen years after that before I fully gave my heart to the Lord, I never knew his end, but I've often wondered."

What a wonderful instance we have in this short narrative of the marvelous grace of God! We can imagine we see the saintly old lady sowing the seed in faith, without perhaps seeing any results, and yet at a most unlikely time, to all human ideas, God in His grace uses the seed thus sown to direct the heart of a poor, lost sinner to the beautiful and loving message contained in John 3:16, and finally there is the answer to her prayers in the conversion of Joe himself. What a mine of truth there is in God's word! "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccl. 11:6.) "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." (1 Cor. 3:7.) F. C.

## Can't I take my Money with Me?

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A FEW years ago, when I was residing in a village in Hampshire, I frequently met in my rambles an old man, with hair as white as snow. He was a person of considerable means; he had several houses, some land, and it was supposed had a good sum of money also in his possession.

Suddenly he became seriously ill, and, being a Roman Catholic, the priest was at once sent for. The old man's will was drawn out. He devised his houses and lands, and when asked how he would dispose of his money, declared, "I will take my money with me!"

He was of course told that such a thing was impossible; but his heart and mind had become so completely fixed on the money he had stored up in his house, that he was absorbed with that one thing.

"What!" he cried, shortly before he died, "can't I take my money with me?" And so he passed away from this world into eternity.

What a scene! He knew when in perfect health that he must leave all things behind him when he went into eternity, but in his dying moments his heart was so set on the gold that perisheth that he could not part with his idol. In 1 John 2:15 it is written, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And again it is written, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24.) Have you an idol, reader? you cannot take it with you. VICTOR.

## The Coming Day

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LOOK at this flower. He fashioned it; He has formed it a marvel of beauty, and painted it with His hand. From what a dull, dark seed it sprang. This contrast is but a lesson of the resurrection, and the change that awaits us. How different the deathbed from the resurrection morning. He will lavish the skill of His love upon us at that day; His own hand shall produce the glory; He Himself will change the poor bodies of humiliation. The uncomely seed shall be the fair flower for His glory and joy.

## God Fails Not

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“THERE are many Christians, like young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land move when the ship and they themselves are moved. Just so not a few imagine that God moveth, and faileth, and changeth places, because their godly souls are subject to alteration — but no, the foundation of the Lord abideth sure.” — Rutherford.

## Self-Righteousness and the Sinner

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Self-Righteousness. Where are you going in such a hurry?

Sinner. To Christ, I hope.

S.R. You hope, indeed! It will not be long before you're down again by sin and temptation. Look at your clothes now, covered with the dirt of sin and the mire of the slough of despondency.

S. True enough; still I mean to go, for I'm not more than a sinner, and it is written of Christ, He "receivedth sinners."

S.R. — Ah! yes; but not those who are so far gone as you are. Your filthiness and rags would be an offense to Him.

S. But it is written that "His blood cleanseth from all sin," so I shall go in spite of you and of unbelief, even though He spurn me.

S.R. Presumptuous man.! Do you not know that it is written the heavens are not clean in His sight, and that nothing can enter His presence which deflieth or maketh a lie? On what ground, then, dare you approach Him?

S. On the ground of His own word. He says, "Whosoever cometh unto Me I will in nowise cast out." I shall venture upon His word.

S.R. You're an ignorant, obstinate man! How can you expect to be received when your best friends have forsaken you, and the very worst say you are too vile for their company?

S. Woe is me, that all you say is true! But still He says "He will not cast out," and it is written of Him "that He gathers in the outcasts"; that "He will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick"; so I'm determined to go.

And go this poor sinner did. Pleading only the free invitation of Christ, and by faith resting on His blood and righteousness for his acceptance with God, he found salvation and peace. Reader, do not listen to the suggestions of self-righteousness and unbelief within, or of Satan and the world without, but go and do thou likewise. B. F. N.

His uplifted Hands.

## The Lord's Last Act on Earth

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THE Lord Jesus had risen from the dead, and once more He led His disciples to the slopes of Olivet. "He led them out as far as to Bethany." (Luke 24:50.) It was His last day upon earth, though little did His disciples know that such was the case. Their hearts were set upon the kingdom. "Lord," said they, "wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6.) What should hinder? The religion and the rule of man reach no further than the grave. Priests and Pilate had done all that man could do— Him they had crucified. But lo! Him God had raised from the dead. The power of God had been established, and man's worst wishes were forever frustrated. Jesus was risen. The King could die no more. What then should hinder the incoming of the kingdom? Surely as those men, who had seen their beloved Master scourged, spit upon, and crowned with thorns, looked into His face, they might well inquire, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" and seek His royal honors.

But with gentle words Jesus bade His loved ones know that the times and the seasons were not for them to be acquainted with. The Father had other things in store for His children. True, the kingdom shall come, the Father's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven; but other things must first take place. Witness to the risen Jesus should be given to the wide world, beginning from the earth's dark center — Jerusalem, where He had been crucified, and to this end the Holy Ghost was about to come from heaven to enable the disciples to give the testimony.

Now when the Lord had so spoken, He bade His disciples His blessed farewell, "He lifted up His hands and blessed them" — those hands which some forty days before had been nailed to the cross. And in the gracious act of blessing, "while He blessed them, He was parted from them." So Jesus left this earth, blessing His people upon it. Thus He took His leave of His own below. Then "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven," "and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

With rapt amazement they saw Him rise, and "they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up." Adoring wonder filled their souls. Jesus crucified was risen, Jesus risen was taken up to heaven, and the glory embraced Him, "a cloud received Him out of their sight."

The work of the blessed Lord on earth was ended, and His last act on earth was blessing — yea, as He was parted from them, He was still seen with uplifted hands for them. The work on earth was over, but the love was still the same. Whether on earth or in heaven, His hands are lifted up to bless His people, for He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

We love and prize the last words and the last acts of our friends; let us love and prize the last words — blessing, and the last act on earth — hands uplifted, of Him who in infinite condescension has made Himself our Friend indeed.,

## The Lord's Present Acts in Heaven

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When the cloud had received Him, two men stood by the astonished disciples. These men were clad in heavenly attire — in white apparel. They had come as messengers from above to the disciples on earth, and so swiftly had they come on their errand, that as He went up, they stood by the disciples, and they also spoke to them and said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?” He was hidden from the natural eye. The disciples could see no more than do we — blue or starry skies. The natural eye could behold Him no more. He had entered into glory. But the revelation from heaven came through these two men to the disciples on the earth: “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” For the King shall come.

“Now we see not yet all things put under Him.” (Heb. 2:8.) The kingdom tarries, is not yet restored to Israel; not yet does the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters the sea, “but we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and Honor.” We see into heaven, not indeed with the natural eye, but with Spirit-given perception, and lo! there Jesus is crowned.

Yet no scepter is seen in His hand, rather the frankincense — not yet hath God made His enemies His footstool — but as He sits on God's right hand, in the place of highest glory and power, His hands are lifted up still: He is blessing His disciples on earth.

He is the Great High Priest on high. Such is His glory now. It is not that we see all things put under Him — far from it — for Satan holds a large sway over the earth, and sin and death prosper abundantly, but none the less, while the kingdom waits the King, does He not gain rich glories. We see Him in His present glory, and we see His people led by Him through a suffering and sin-stricken world to the home above.

It may seem strange, but it is His glory today to lead God's people home, to sympathize with them on the way, and bear their burdens— yea, to succor in weakness, and to prevail in trial — and when sin leads astray it is He who recalls the soul, and when heart-broken it is He who sustains. He is “this same Jesus” on high that He was on earth below; His hands are lifted up to bless, though the heaven has received Him out of our sight. It may seem a strange thing even to His people that it is an Honor and glory to the Lord so to care for His own, so to prevail for them that not one shall be found missing when the roll-call is read; but so it is, His grace is like His name, “Wonderful,” and His power is almighty. “He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.” He stoops to our weakness, He meets us in our fears. When we feared the shipwreck, lo! Jesus stilled the storm; when we thought we should perish, lo! He was nigh to us, and whispered, “It is I: be not afraid.”

There are no straits, no circumstances, no trials, no despondences so severe that Jesus shall fail to bring us all through, and through all. “We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us

therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:15, 16.)

For eighteen hundred years He has conducted the affairs of His people; never has He once failed to hear the cry of any one of them. No child’s voice has He ever neglected, and long before we cried He saw our danger and our need. Let us then trust Him more truly day by day till He shall come with uplifted hands for us, even as He left this earth blessing His own.

## The End of the Battle

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“HUSH!” said his mother, a woman of this world, “hush! his mind is wandering; he thinks he is in battle.”

But Heaven is listening as the young officer utters his last words upon earth■

“To the front! to the front! My Shepherd leads the way. Higher Higher! Higher!”

Then his well-known Leader gave the command — “Come up higher,” and he fell asleep.

S. C. M. A.

## In the Plains of Shittim

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HOW different was it with Israel, when they were at their ease in the plains of Shittim, from that day when, with their food packed upon their shoulders, they left the land of Egypt! When the light of liberty first dawned upon them, they started as Jehovah's pilgrim-host to the better land — to Canaan, and its promised milk and honey; forty years after they "pitched in the plains of Moab, on this side Jordan, by Jericho," and overcome by the seductions which surrounded them, learned in their ease to sin against God.

The barren places they trod, upon leaving Egypt, threw them upon God for every needed thing. Morning by morning the manna He sent fresh from heaven fed them; day by day the waters He caused to flow in the desert sustained them; and day and night His cloudy pillar was their guide. None the less did the manna fall, or the mercies flow, or the cloudy pillar shadow them in Shittim; but ease and luxury abounded in those enervating plains, across whose stream the hills and cities of the promised land are visible.

We may well take up our parable from the first and the last stages of Israel's wanderings, from the beginning and the ending of their pilgrimage, and speak to our hearts upon the solemn fact that so few of God's people end their days with the zeal in which they began them. At the first, Israel sang praises to the Jehovah of their salvation; they shouted the songs of victory He had put in their mouth, but gradually they became a murmuring people, gradually they grew discontented with the ways of their God, and at length when the promised land was in view, and they sat down to behold it, they made themselves one with the idolaters of Moab, and corrupted themselves in the sight of their Holy One.

Yet God directed them as truly to Shittim as to the borders of the Red Sea. His cloud discovered for them as truly a camping ground in the plains of Moab as the path through the deep waters. He was their God as much at the end as at the beginning of their pilgrimage. Forty years in the pathway of His people was to them a long, long time, but to Him who is from everlasting to everlasting, a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. The early hours of new life, or the later moments of our pilgrimage, are indeed great things to us; they test us and prove us; but our God abides the same. He has said of Himself, "I am the Lord, I change not."

To the eye of the surrounding nations Israel was very different at the end of the forty years from what they were at the time of their beginning. At the first they were but as a company of escaped slaves; at the end they were a people who held a position amongst the wandering tribes of Sinai — a mighty people, too — whose godly tents and whose lion-like strength caused the nations to tremble. But God had allowed the reality about Israel to express itself during the forty years of the wandering in the wilderness, and he is a poor scholar in life's school who having been a Christian for several years has failed to learn not only his utter helplessness and unworthiness, but to acknowledge that unless God hold him up day by day, fall into evil and iniquity he certainly will.

Men may accredit Christians whose Christianity has marked them a certain number of years; indeed they generally do so. At the first, when a man breaks from the world and sings his song of salvation, the world regards him as an adventurer. The Christian says, "I am free"; the world says of him, "He is gone mad," but as years roll on the Christian is more or less tolerated by the world around him, and maybe it is even accepted that real Christians do exist on the earth. And herein lies a danger, for so long as the open enmity of the world has to be encountered, the Christian needs have his armor buckled on; but Satan's temptations for him in the plains of Moab are of another kind — ease, not hardship, the world's alliance, not its enmity; and under these it is now frequently with God's people as it was with Israel, what opposition failed to accomplish the seductive invitation succeeds in obtaining.

It is better for the Christian to have all the world against him, and to have God with him, than to yield to ease, and self-indulgence, and friendship with God's enemies. Vain were the attempts of Balak, Moab's king, to raise curse or sword against Israel so long as God beheld the people with favor. Balaam's words abounded in blessing. "The prophet" beheld Israel in glory and in strength, and, as his vision regarded their latter end, his unwilling lips declared their grand future, with this sigh for himself, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." A poor prayer for the one who is not righteous — a vain hope for him who at length died by the avenging sword! Hundreds of times do the world's prophets testify of the true believer that it is well to die as the righteous; but the Christian declares also that it is well to live as the righteous.

In the plains of Moab, Israel lived not as the righteous; they joined affinity with Baal and the Midianites. There can be no fellowship between light and darkness—no union between God and Satan; on one side or the other are the respective camps, and alliance with the world on the part of God's people must assuredly bring the sword of judgment down upon the heads of the transgressors. The sword awoke against Israel, and the people whom Balaam could not curse fell by the sword of divine judgment. The Christian occupies an impregnable position so long as the Lord is on his side; but when he bows down to the gods of the world, it is with him as it was with Israel when the anger of the Lord was kindled against them in the plains of Moab.

Let us beware then, fellow Christian, of the seductions of ease and self-pleasing, lest we be led away from the true pilgrim spirit, and lest by joining affinity with the world we, with the very hills of Canaan before our gaze, find the sword of divine judgment arise against us, and hear His voice recalling us through our afflictions to true dedication of heart and mind and body to Himself.

## I will wait till after Christmas

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KATIE ROSE was one of the elder girls in the same Sunday-school as myself. It was great grief to her teacher to see what little attention she paid to “better things” out of the word of God, and how almost everything else was spoken about, save the gospel, for which many have laid down their lives.

Katie’s teacher had often spoken to her about the sin of neglecting this so great salvation, which God bids us to receive at His hands. On one Sunday in December he pleaded with her to decide to trust God for salvation there and then, but her answer was, “No, no; wait till after Christmas, then I will.”

Is our life ours to call our own, and to do with as we like? No; and so God says, “To-day” (not to-morrow), “if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.”

Ere Christmas Day had passed Katie’s soul was required of her. She was perfectly well on Christmas Day morning, and was enjoying the pleasure which Christmas brings, but whilst eating a simple chestnut she was choked, and in less than twenty minutes had passed away.

Where is she now? God knows. We know not what may have passed within her during those few minutes. But does it not show us what a slender thread to trust to? “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh” (Heb. 12:25); “for if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. 2:2, 3.)

Oh, boys and girls, to you is this salvation sent. Take this narrative as a warning to you from one who was herself once far away from God, but who has been brought nigh by the “blood of Jesus.” Do not resist the Spirit when He whispers in your heart the invitation of God, saying, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” (Isa. 1:18.) You know, dear boys and girls, how sinful your hearts are, and you cannot make them white — only the precious blood of Jesus can do that. Then come to Him, and He will make you clean.

## One Sin Leads to Another

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I WAS considering the story of Gehazi the other evening, and the sin of untruthfulness, and how one falsehood is sure to lead to another. Gehazi's sin brought before my mind a little incident, showing how one act of disobedience, as well as one untruth, leads to another.

My mother had given me and my sisters a little bottle each — imitation scent bottle s — but in giving them we were told never to take them to school. But one day I disobeyed her by taking mine. In going to school we had to pass some ponds (or clay pits), which we had also been strictly forbidden to go near. But on this particular day, as we were coming home, some of my school-fellows went down to one of these ponds, and filled some bottles they had with them with water, and now I thought how nice it would be to fill mine. You see, if I had not disobeyed in taking it to school, I should not have been tempted to fill it with water.

Well, down I went, intending to fill it; but, alas I it slipped from my fingers and sank to the bottom! Then I began to think how wrong I had been, and how angry — or rather, grieved — my mother would be at my disobeying her. But fortunately for me, as I then thought, one of the elder girls reached down her hand and drew up my precious little bottle, which you may be sure I was very pleased to see. Then the girls began to say, "Oh, your mother need never know," and, as I had got my bottle back, I stifled conscience, and said nothing about it.

My sin of disobedience was not found out, but it found me out, for, although I had not told anyone, after I got to bed I could not sleep — for fear of what, do you think? That my mother would find out that I had disobeyed her, and punish me as I deserved? Oh, no; my fear was lest the Lord should come, for I knew I was not prepared to meet Him. Perhaps you wonder why I did not go straight and tell my mother. You see, I had put it off at first, and it is always harder to do right afterward.

But let me ask you, Have you ever done anything wrong? Have you told a lie to hide a fault? Has your sin found you out, and you are in terror lest the Lord should come? See to it that you own to your parents the wrong you have done; but, above all, go to the Lord Jesus now — do not put that off another moment — for how do you know that the next moment will be yours?

For some years after the little incident I have spoken of, I was always going to turn over a new leaf, but never did I get rest. Sometimes when awake in the night I would think, "If the Lord does not come before the morning I will be different; I won't do this, and I will do that." But all my good resolutions fell to the ground. And why? Because they were made in my own strength. I did not then know the Lord Jesus as my Saviour. I believed in Him, but not with the heart. I was like a woman to whom I was speaking the other day. She said, "I do believe, and yet I am not saved."

Ah! she believed with the head then, but about a fortnight after she believed with the heart, and now she knows she is saved, and, as she says, "It's all through the blood."

Yes, nothing but the blood of Jesus can cleanse our souls from sin.

A dear old woman told me the other day that when quite a young girl she read a little book, entitled "Names written in the Lamb's Book of Life," and she thought, "I hope mine will be written there"; and her name is written there, not by any good works of her own, but simply by the Lord Jesus.

He will receive you, will wash you in His own blood, and make you fit to live with Him forever. You will not be afraid then to go to sleep for fear the Lord should come, and leave you behind. Oh, no; for He will not forget even the smallest child that believes in Him, but will take them, each and all, to be with Himself in glory forever.

## A Little Child's Confession

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CALLING to see an aged man who was ill, in the village of R —, I found a number of persons who had also come to see him, and among them a little girl. I first spoke to the aged man as to the assurance of salvation, and next addressed a few words to the others, and then, speaking to the little one, said, "If you were to die would you go to heaven?"

The child hesitated, but after a short pause, in a sorrowful way, answered, "No."

Those present seemed startled at the reply of the child. Had it been from a grown-up person, no doubt they would not have thought so much of it, but coming from one so young it seemed strange. Whatever could make the child say No? Surely she must not have understood the question, or did not know what she had said.

From the way in which she spoke, I concluded that the child had some reason for giving the answer she did, and I was anxious to know what was on her mind, so I asked her why she thought she would not go to heaven?

With evident emotion, and a feeling of sorrow, she replied, "Cause I took mother's sugar."

Those present laughed at the thought, but to my mind it gave indication that the little child had a sense that in doing this she had done wrong in the sight of God, for I do not suppose that until then her mother knew anything about it.

"Well," I said, "it was wrong for you to take mother's sugar, but that need not hinder your going to heaven if you believe on the Lord Jesus, for His precious blood cleanseth from all sin. You feel you have done wrong— that you, though young, are a sinner, and therefore as such could not enter heaven. Well, what a happy thing it is that Jesus died to save sinners. Those who believe in Him have their sins all taken away, and they are made fit to dwell up there in His presence."

Dear little reader, you have done many naughty things, and though no one else may have seen you, God did; and even one sin would keep you out of heaven. Some boys and girls act as though God was not looking at them; but He is, and unless they believe on Jesus, and trust in His precious blood, they cannot be saved.

Whether you have the consciousness of being a sinner, like the little girl referred to, or whether, because you are young, you think it would be well with you, let me lovingly tell you that God says, "All have sinned." You are included, and therefore need a Saviour.

## The New Year

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We are at the beginning of a new year and new hopes and new promises fill many hearts. Since God has marked out our lives in portions of time, having made the lights in the heaven to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, it behooves us as His creatures, to consider our entry into a new era of time. "What is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," says the Scripture, and we must not live according to the notion that everyman is mortal but ourselves. Many an one will enter into eternity this year — time will pass away for thousands and thousands of men, women, and children of our own age this year. Let us then enquire. How would it be with me should I be called out of time into eternity? Should the Lord this year fulfill His promise and come again, would His coming rejoice our hearts? There is only one way of giving a practical answer to such questions, and that is by now — this day — being ready. We trust our reader is ready. "Be ye also ready."

To the Christian may this year be a fresh start, a bright beginning again on the journey. Forgetting those things which are behind, let us reach forth to those which are before. We are nearer heaven than we have been ever before in our lives. It is a time to gird up the loins, and to trim the lamps. Let us look to God, and hope in Him for better things in a spiritual way than we have ever before known.

To our younger friends and readers the new year speaks perhaps more loudly than to their seniors. For the years seem to grow shorter as we grow older. Dear young friend, seek to love the Bible more this year than you have done, and make more time for prayer than hitherto. Many are proposing resolutions for the new year, but if the heart be directed to God by His word and by prayer, the course of each day will be in the right direction. Be not satisfied with being assured you are fit for heaven, but seek so to live and so to think that you may have the Lord's approval. Remember that a boy or a girl can please the Lord as much as a man or a woman; make His pleasure your great concern, and this will be to you a happy new year.

## Reading the Bible

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READ God's word as He has written it, for the Bible means what it says. Read the Bible as God's word to you, your own self, for God is speaking to you by His word. Read the Bible prayerfully, for we cannot understand it save as He teaches us its meaning by His Holy Spirit. Read the Bible frequently, for the more often it is read the more joy do God's children find in reading it. There was a little boy who lived in the days when it was not lawful to read God's word. He learned five chapters by heart, and then his Bible was taken from him, when he said, "You may take away the book, but you can never take away from me the five chapters, for I have those in my heart."

## Narratives from the Gospels, in the Light of Jewish Customs

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### THE BURIAL AT NAIN.

IT was in the spring of the year — a time that speaks of life out of death — when the Lord Jesus a third time left Capernaum. That city had previously been the scene of His mighty works; there had He cast out the demon, rebuked the burning fever, and wrought other miracles not particularly mentioned. During a later visit, He had healed the palsied man, and now, in the second year of His ministry, He had wrought a great work; by the simple utterance of His word He had healed the centurion's servant, though he was at a distance lying sick. The "next day," however — that upon which He took His departure to Nain — was to see a still greater work. Never, since the days of Elijah and Elisha, had such a thing been known as the raising of a dead man to life. Such a marvel was this day to happen.

Accompanying the Lord was a "great multitude of people." They were probably drawn to Him by the miracles He had wrought, as at another time "a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased." Was the question suggested to the minds of these, "Is this He that should come, the Christ, the Messiah?" Their hope seemed to run high, for all through the long twenty-five miles from Capernaum to Nain the people had kept Him company. Thus it must have been evening — the time of burial — when they reached the gate of the little city Nain, that is, "Pleasant." And very pleasant doubtless it was in those days, so much so that the Rabbis saw in it the fulfillment of the promise to Issachar: "He saw the land that it was pleasant." But now, we are told, "a few houses of mud and stone with low doorways, scattered among heaps of stones and traces of walls, is all that remains of what even these ruins show to have been once a city, with walls and gates. These rich gardens are no more, the fruit trees cut down, and there is a painful sense of desolation about the place, as if the breath of judgment had swept over it."

About ten minutes' walk to the east of Nain is still to be found an unfenced burying ground, and thither on that spring evening was journeying another multitude, and the two processions met.

In a few words — simple, but, as it were, full of tears — the evangelist describes this second procession. "Behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her." Thus they met — death on the one hand, Life on the other — the Prince of Life. What would be the result?

Before answering this, we must speak of some of the Jewish thoughts and customs relating to death. As we should suppose, to a people brought up in the knowledge and fear of the true God, death was an intensely solemn thing, though that right solemnity which springs from the knowledge of the connection between sin and death was clouded and overlaid by many a superstition. They never made light of it, however, and the history of good King Hezekiah shows how, to a truly godly Jew, the news of death was sad and fearful. "The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth." And with

such a prospect before him, can we wonder that the pious king “wept sore”?

As death was regarded as the punishment of sin no wonder that every means were taken to ward it off; for to die under fifty years of age was “to be cut off,” and “premature death was likened to the falling of unripe fruit, or the extinction of a candle.” What grief, then, must it have been to the widow’s heart to lose her only son by (as men would suppose) the judgment of God “cut off in the midst of his days.”

During sickness the neighbors would be frequent in their visits of sympathy, for that was a religious duty urged by the Rabbis, and it was believed that “whoever visits the sick takes away the sixtieth part of his sufferings.” Moreover, a blessing would surely fall upon the visitors, for was not the Shechinah — the glory of God — verily present, though unseen, above the sick man’s bed? While, still further, the prayers of the pious would be sought; the remedies — real or magical — of the physicians would be applied, but in vain; and by-and-by the blast of a horn told the neighbors that “the angel of death” had entered the sick house. It was now the house of mourning — mourning keener and more bitter to a Jew than we can associate with even so heavy a stroke. “Make thee mourning,” says Jeremiah, “as for an only son, most bitter lamentation.” “I will make it as the mourning of an only son,” says Jehovah by His prophet Amos. And even more significant is the prophecy of the future sorrow of Israel over their rejected Messiah: “They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son.”

Let us step, as it were, into this house of grief at the little town of Nain. The mother, standing up, rends her garments; the dead body is washed, anointed, and robed in the best that the mother could procure, and perhaps (though it may be a later custom) is covered with metal, glass, or salt, and laid upon earth and salt.

And now the poor mother has to submit to customs and observances, which we can well imagine added to the grief of her already desolate heart. What can be more distressing than a routine of mourning? But in matters of death and burial, as in all others, the Rabbis showed themselves adepts at inventing “burdens grievous to be borne.” She must sit on the floor, and neither eat meat nor drink wine. No one may wash nor anoint himself, nor engage in any business during the first seven days. Study must be banished from the house; the phylacteries are put away; the scanty necessary food must be prepared outside the house, and eaten, if possible, not in the presence of the dead, and, at least, with the back to the body.

Kind and pious friends assist in the preparations for the funeral — considerately forbidden by the Rabbis to torment the mourners by much talking — and the flute-players and mourning-women attend with doleful music and chants. “Alas, the lion! alas, the hero!” or some such formula, is the burden of their lamentations.

As soon as possible the burial takes place. As the procession starts, chairs and couches are reversed, and the mourners who are left at home sit upon the ground or low stools. Before the bier goes, first of all, a funeral orator, extolling the good deeds of the dead, and crying “Weep with them, all ye who are bitter of heart!” Then come (in Galilee, but not in Judæa) the women, for the reason that by woman death came into the world, and she ought therefore to lead in the funeral. Among them would be the mother, so quickly seen by the Lord’s compassionate eye. Following them, the body, not confined as we are accustomed to see, but lying upon a bier, or open coffin,

called Mittah, or, if of wickerwork, Keliba. The common practice was to leave the face uncovered; the hands were folded upon the breast, and if the dead had been unmarried or childless, something distinctive was put into the coffin, as a pen and ink or a key. An additional solemnity was given by the common supposition that the disembodied spirit hovered above the coffin. From the bier project handles borne by friends and neighbors — unshod — in different parties, relieving each other frequently, so that the greatest number possible may share in so good a work, and in the pauses during such changes, orations are delivered and laments are made. Following the coffin come the mourners and musicians, the friends, and “the multitude,” of whom many may be strangers.

How came they to follow? it might be asked. The Rabbis taught as to the words, “Ye shall walk after the Lord your God,” that they refer to the imitation of His doings. And as He clothed the naked, so should we; as He visited the sick and comforted the mourners, so also should we; and as He buried the dead, we should imitate Him in that action, and it was expected that as diligent observance would be given to the last as to any of the former acts of mercy. Not to do so was said to be mocking one’s Maker; work, study, everything, must be given up for it, or if that was absolutely impossible, reverence must be shown by rising up before the dead. Thus the sad procession to “the field of weepers,” or as others called it, “the house of eternity” (Beth Olam), would gradually increase in numbers by every fresh accession of passers-by. Jr.

## Justified from all Things

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THE chimes of a neighboring village clock were telling the hour of four, as not many months since two ladies seated themselves to rest on the trunk of a fallen tree. Together they listened to the quaint old melodies, as one after another they floated out from the ivy-covered belfry. It was a lovely spot the two friends had chosen for a resting-place. Behind them a long winding avenue of noble-looking beech trees, just at this moment resplendent with all the beauty of their luxuriant autumn foliage; before them a vast stretch of undulating country, through which, spreading like a line of silver light in the distance, might be traced the course of the Thames as it sped on its way to the mighty ocean.

Around them the music of birds and the hum of insect life added charm to the lovely scene. Yet it was not of the wonders or beauties of nature that the two ladies had been speaking together during their afternoon's wanderings. Until very recently, although closely related, they had been comparative strangers. But latterly, an indefinable something had drawn them much together, and mutual confidence had been the result. And this afternoon their conversation had turned upon a matter of vital importance to the minds of both.

"My life seems to me to have been a wasted one," said the elder lady, in a sad, despondent tone, as the chimes ceased and the two friends resumed their conversation. "I look back over it in terror and shame. I see nothing in it for God; nothing to plead for me before Him. I have not been as regular in attending divine service as I should have been. And oh, Mary, worst of all, I have neglected to take the Sacrament!" And, as she spoke, the lady turned towards her companion with that restless, anxious look which so often reveals the disquietude of the mind within.

For a few moments the younger woman made no reply. Deep thankfulness was filling her heart for this unlooked-for opportunity of speaking to her friend of the Saviour of sinners. Oh, for wisdom to tell out the message of Jesus' love in a way that would meet all the longings of that troubled heart!

"You think as I do," continued the lady quickly, mistaking her friend's silence for inability to answer. "I ought to have stayed to the Sacrament always, and at any cost. I wish I had done so. I feel I need something now, and I have nothing."

The remark needed no explanation. One glance at the face of the speaker was sufficient to explain its purport. Rank and refinement stamped the lovely countenance; but another impress was also making itself very visible. Disease in its most beautiful but, nevertheless, irresistible form, had already — established its claims. It was the knowledge of this, and the certainty of its final issue, that had been the means of arousing the lady to the fact that a time was drawing near when she must meet a just and a holy God.

"There is but One who can meet the need of which you speak, dear Gertrude," said her companion gently, as she turned towards her friend and gazed anxiously into her troubled face.

However great the privilege of remembering the death of the Redeemer, even as He has said, she saw that her friend was looking to the Sacrament, and not to Christ. She continued, "No forms or ceremonies of any kind ever made known pardon or peace to an awakened conscience. Jesus said, 'Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.' He knew that none but Himself could ever satisfy the need of our souls."

"But I am not fit for Jesus," responded the lady bitterly. "The neglect of the appointed ordinances weighs so heavily on my mind. Had I but attended them better, it might not have been so with me now! Oh, Mary, pray that at the last God may be merciful to me for the sake of His dear Son!"

"God is ready to pardon you at this very moment, dear Gertrude," replied her companion quickly. "His word tells us He waits to be gracious. You are a sinner, and God is holy. But his love led Him to give His Son to suffer for sin, that all who believe may be justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses."

"The law of Moses, that is something like 'forms and ceremonies' then? Is it? Oh, tell me!"

"Yes. Nothing but the blood of Jesus could ever put away one sin. God said, 'Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom.' And that ransom was Christ. 'He offered Himself without spot to God;' bore 'our sins in His own body on the tree,' that we might be delivered from the terrible consequences of our guilt. Christ made atonement for our sin. For us there remains nothing to do. We simply 'believe the record God gave of His Son,' and we have 'eternal life.' And 'that life is in His Son.' The knowledge of this will give rest and peace forever."

"And is this all for me, Mary?" asked the lady eagerly. "I never knew of this before. Will He receive me just as I am?"

"Just as you are, dear Gertrude," said her friend, in an earnest tone. "A lifetime spent in attendance on forms and ceremonies' could not atone for man's guilt; but, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' As I said just now, we believe,' and are justified from all things."

"All this for me! All this for me! He gave Himself for me," repeated the lady in wonder and surprise, while tears of joy and gratitude flowed down her happy countenance as she drank in the message of God's love and mercy to perishing sinners. The blessed sense of peace with God flowed into her soul, and she realized for herself "joy and peace in believing;" while, like one of old who had also taken his place as a sinner in the presence of a holy God, she went down to her house justified.

But a few weeks since, and Gertrude's happy spirit entered the Saviour's presence. The love that had been revealed to her during that afternoon's ramble kept her joyful and peaceful to the end. No thought of "forms and ceremonies" clouded her vision, as she realized that the hour she had once so dreaded was come. She had trusted in the word of the living God, and it did not fail her. Through faith in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ she passed into the Saviour's presence, there more fully to grasp the meaning of those wonderful words, "justified from all things."

And now, dear reader, what are you clinging to for your soul's salvation? Are you thinking that forms and ceremonies will make you fit for the presence of God? Search God's word for yourself,

and you will find that “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash away sins. Put your trust in the Saviour of sinners, and you, too, will find “joy and peace in believing.” It is His word, and not ours, which says, “For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” (Heb. 10:14.) M. V. B.

## One Step More

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ONLY one step! "That is not much," says one; "Anybody can take it," says another; "Nothing to make a fuss about," says a third; "But I dare you to take it," cries a fourth. No doubt we are all well acquainted with this kind of argument. Now I am going to tell you of "one step" that I would have taken, but was not allowed, and of another step that I was forced to take, and for both of which I am now able to thank and to praise God.

Only a step! Yes, only a step, but where? Ah! that is the question. It is all very pleasant and easy to walk out in the light, but what about the dark? All very well to walk upon the even earth, but what about wading through the water?

Yes, only a step not taken, and yet the thought of it robbed me of sleep, and changed the purpose of my life. The incident occurred many years ago. Since that time numbers of things have happened to me, and have been long forgotten; but this is as fresh and green as ever, and no doubt will remain so to the end of the chapter.

It happened thus: I had gone to Rams-gate to spend a few days, taking my faithful companions — my books; and one morning, having, started out as usual for an early walk before breakfast, I was returning by way of Dumpton, around the East Cliff Lodge, the residence of the late Sir Moses Montefiore. Busy with my book, I walked on, not thinking where I was going, when suddenly a light from beneath flashed into my eyes, startling me, and causing me to step back. I had reached the edge of the cliff! The flash was caused by the sun suddenly breaking through the cloud upon the chalk beneath, and but for that I should have taken the one more step that would have been my last. Little did I think then that this lighting of the eye was but a prelude to the illumination of the mind.

Recovering myself, I resumed my reading, and walked home, without any feeling of gratitude for deliverance, or even a thought of danger. So the days wore on. But holidays have an end as well as a beginning. And here I must tell my reader, that having lost my father in infancy, I was wholly dependent upon the counsels of a dear mother, and faithfully she discharged her trust. My very earliest recollections are of the hymns and the passages from the Bible that she taught me. Had I at the time of which I am writing been asked, "Are you a Christian?" I should certainly have answered, "Yes." And yet I was not in Christ; I had yet to learn this. And oh! dear reader, have you learned it?

Once more at home, I must of course tell all the little details since I had left it; and so the incident of the edge of the cliff was rated. This greatly excited my poor mother. Why was I so heedless? She might never have seen me again.

When night came, and I retired to bed, I hoped that sleep would soon come and hush the feelings my mother's words had aroused; but there was neither sleep nor rest for me that night. No sooner had I lain down than there came to me once more a bright light. I was upon the edge of the cliff, only, and below, the rugged rock; and looking upon this, and for the first time seeing the danger, I

heard a voice saying to me, "Only one step more! Only one, and it would have been your last. Only one, and you would have stepped out from time into eternity." And then the same small, still voice asked me one question, only one question: "Where would you have gone?" and everything in the room echoed "Where?"

No wonder I could not sleep. I was only too glad when morning came, and I could lose myself in the busy day; and so I did. But the longest day has an end, and night came again, and I lay down, having almost forgotten the past night; but the Good Shepherd had not forgotten me. Once more in the dark, back came the old question: "Where would you have gone?"

This time my soul had to make an answer, and what could I say? I could not get away from the fact that I should have gone into the presence of God unprepared. I had heard of a Saviour who came to earth to die for sinners — yes, to save the worst; but I had never been taught of a personal Saviour. I had prayed for others, but what about myself?

Awful is the thought that while God is love, yet that the impenitent will be banished from His presence. In my distress I cried for salvation, and then the voice of Jesus was heard: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And, taking the Saviour at His word, I was able in spirit to cry■

"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!"

And then the cloud was removed, the mists rolled away, and a new song was put into my mouth.

And now, dear reader, have you found the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour? If so, you can rejoice with me. If not, seek Him at once, and you shall find Him. You have entered upon a new year.

One step more! Whither are you going?

W. T. N.

## The Sure Foundation

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THOMAS SHEPHERD, of Charlestown, died before he was twenty-seven. The day before he died he said to Dr. Cotton Mather, “My hopes are built on the free mercy of God, and the rich merits of Christ, and I do believe that if I am taken out of the world I shall only change my place: I shall neither change my company nor my communion.”

## Twice Saved

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ONE morning I was on the deck of my barge, which was anchored in the Thames beside another of about the same size. Nobody was about at the time on either of the boats. It was rather early, and all were either getting breakfast in the cabins or making arrangements for the ensuing day below the deck. I was standing at the side, and looking into the water between the two boats, when the boat gave a sudden twist, and I lost my balance, falling headlong into the water.

This is very dangerous, for the water sucks you underneath the boat, and there is no chance for your life if you cannot swim, and, as I could not swim, I was soon fast sinking. I had just given myself up as lost, thinking there was no one on deck of either of the boats to see me, when suddenly my hair received a sudden jerk, and presently I found myself upon the deck of the boat that lay alongside of mine. I turned round to see who was my deliverer, and what was my astonishment to see — not a rosy, good-natured bargeman, but an African. He had seen me in the water, and had caught hold of my hair, and had drawn me safely on deck of his boat. I had never seen that black man before, nor have I seen him since to thank him for saving my life. God had provided for me so that I should not perish that day.

Thus was I saved the first time, and I owned that God had been merciful to me in directing the African as my deliverer, and I have often longed to see the man and express my thanks and love to him.

This deliverance set me thinking, and not long after I met with one of God's servants, and through him was brought to Christ, and saved forever. The Saviour of my soul did not just stretch out His hand and set me on my boat — no, He died for me, that I might not sink down into hell, and He has also prepared me a home when I leave this earth. This Saviour is the Lord Jesus. He came down from heaven, His beautiful home, and died on Calvary for perishing sinners; He came to put all our sins away that we might by Him be saved forever. If He had not done this we should have gone into hell to spend eternity. He came not only to the rich, but to save those who are poor, for all are lost. There are but two ways — the narrow, which leads to heaven and happiness, and the broad, which leads to hell and misery. Which is it to be?

## The Best Thing in This World

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“MY dear old friend, can you tell me what is the best thing in this world?” So spake a servant of Christ, as he placed his hand lovingly on the shoulder of a poor-looking old man. The old man turned round, and, looking into the face of the one who had accosted him, said —

“Yes, sir, I can; for though I never learned to read, yet God has taught me by His Spirit, and I know what is the best thing in this world.” Then, slowly and feelingly, the old man said —

“The best thing in this world, sir, is to be ready for the next.”

Reader, is there a better thing than that? Are you ready? — ready for glory and eternal blessedness with Christ in heaven? Thank God, there is such a thing as being ready, and such a thing as knowing it, too.

But are you ready? If not, do you wish to be ready? and do you wish to be ready now? Then turn to God now. Repent now. Believe in Jesus now. Have faith in the blood now. Now confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and say, “O Saviour of the guilty, I do believe Thou didst die for me, even for me,” and thou shalt be saved — now. “Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” J.B.

## Praying About Our Little Things

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AMONG my many sick friends there is one to whom I am especially attached. The friendship between us began about a year after my first visit, and it has gone on increasing. It arose in this way. One day she earnestly inquired of me —

“Do you believe in prayer being answered in the little things of daily life?”

“Most assuredly I do,” I said.

“Oh, I am glad to hear you say so, for no one I have yet asked agrees with me that it is right to pray about little things.”

“With God everything is of importance that in any way affects His children,” I replied; “therefore in that belief nothing can be too small to make a matter of prayer. Christ Himself says, ‘All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.’ (Matt. 21:22.) St. Paul tells us, in everything let your requests be made known unto God.’ (Phil. 4:6.) There is no limit to our prayers there, you see.”

“No,” she answered. “I am glad you have come; you have made me so happy.”

Mrs. R. has been a great sufferer for many years; indeed, at the time of my first call, her life was despaired of, and though now much better, still she is often in fearful pain for hours at a time, and yet she is ever gentle, uncomplaining, and cheerful, and is always trying to do good as far as lies in her power. Her one theme of conversation is “Jesus and His love.”

“Such a Father we have!” are some of her words. “Bless His Name forever! The brightness of my heavenly Father’s love covers all the dark spots in my life. I love to pick out His mercies; it does me good, and draws me nearer to Him at once, and then when I feel He is near, I can see nothing but mercy and love.”

Dear Christian reader, do you try to pick out all the mercies? do you delight to talk of Jesus to others? If you do, then yours is a happy life. It may not be a remarkable life, it may not be a splendid life in the eyes of the world, but it is a life beautiful in God’s sight, and one which will be a constant blessing to all around, like the dew — silent, but refreshing all it comes in contact with. Do you know the blessedness of praying about everything, little things as well as great? If not, let me entreat you to do it at once, for until you do, you can have no idea of the blessings you have hitherto missed. A. T.

“SINNER, will your peace be sickness proof? Will your peace be death-bed proof? Will it be judgment proof?”

## Hiding Sin!

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HOW frequently does a sin, hidden in the heart, and lying there unconfessed, prevent the soul from finding peace with God! “When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long... I acknowledged... my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” Unacknowledged sin is like a bar against the door of the heart, shutting it up in its own misery.

There are at this moment three sorrowful cases before us of awakened sinners having unacknowledged sins upon them, which keep these three unhappy persons in misery of soul. The first is a respectable young woman. At times she seems as if she must soon get clear from her bonds, when again she is more terribly bound than ever. Not a spark of joy, nor a glimmer of sunshine, is in her soul. A lady most earnestly pressed upon her to own what the unacknowledged sin was, for she let us know that there was a secret somewhere — a sin lying between her soul and God! But the result of this entreaty was that the unhappy young woman, while owning the fact of a sin lying upon her conscience, chose rather to turn altogether away from Christian friends than confess her secret.

The second case is that of a young man. “I have attended religious services from my youth; I cannot help going to them. I go, though I don’t want to go; I am impelled to go,” said he.

“And yet you have no comfort, no rest?”

“None, none,” he answered, despondingly.

“Why is this?” we further inquired. His manner betokened the truth: there was a secret — an unconfessed secret. We told him we were assured such was the case.

“It is so,” he replied, in a dazed kind of way; adding, “there are difficulties which cannot be surmounted.”

“With your friends?”

“Yes,” he replied.

“But God is infinite, and you and your difficulties are but as the dust of the balance with Him. He went behind Israel when Pharaoh pursued, and cut a path through the Red Sea for His people. Confess to Him, and trust Him.”

But no, that young man remained in bitterness for months together: he would not own what kept him back from God.

The third case is that of a servant woman. At times she appears to be in absolute despair of soul. Indeed, some Christians who spoke to her stated that her mind was affected! Had they known more of Psa. 32:3, 4 —

“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me” — they would have better gauged her state. Between her and God there seemed to hang a dark veil.

A young Christian woman, who felt there was some hidden thing keeping this desponding soul from God, begged of her to open her mind and tell the truth; and thus the truth came out, that she had long been witness to her fellow servant’s constant robbery of her mistress! This, she said, she had fell a sin against God, and yet she dared not own it to her mistress.

Since we penned the above, several months have passed by, and now we can say that two of the three persons we have referred to are rejoicing in God’s salvation. “I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin, Selah.”

Ponder over the three selahs in the thirty-second Psalm. The first two verses of this Psalm express a grand and glorious fact, and the blessedness thereof rings out again in the fourth chapter of Romans! Both King David and the Apostle Paul, speaking by the Spirit, declare how blessed it is to be forgiven our sins.

The third and fourth verses of the Psalm are the expression of one who feels, but confesses not his sin. Selah, saith the Spirit of God hereto. Pause, consider!

The fifth verse teaches the blessedness of owning to God what our sins really are, making to Him particular confession and acknowledgment of our evil ways — having close and personal dealing with Him! Alas, thousands of souls never, never thus deal with God. Selah — pause, consider! saith the Holy Spirit to this.

The sixth and seventh verses testify how gracious is our God in His forgiving mercy. He compasses about His people with songs of deliverance. Selah — pause, consider! saith the Holy Spirit unto this.

And shall we not do so? Will not our reader, who up to this hour has buried the guilt, the sense of which burns within, in his or her own bosom, just now fall before God, and own to Him the sin and the transgression so long hidden and unconfessed? Selah — pause, consider!

## It Is Finished

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(John 19:30)

NOTHING can be more plain than the simple testimony of Scripture, that the Lord Jesus Christ has accomplished the work of salvation on the cross. Yet, in the face of the gracious facts of the gospel, how painful it is to hear souls, who, in reality, have a desire to be saved, saying, "We must endeavor to do our utmost if we would be saved!"

We find on almost every page of the New Testament the distinct and simple conditions which the blessed God has set before the sinner, and apart from those conditions there is no possible way or means of obtaining peace with God. Salvation is of the Lord — absolutely of the Lord — hence it necessarily amounts to this, that in order to secure it, obedience to the conditions laid down in the gospel becomes every poor needy sinner.

It often happens that when a soul is awakened to the facts of its lost condition before God, and of having to meet God, and when the yearning inquiry is raised in the heart, as it was in that of the Philippian jailor, "What must I do to be saved?" that immediately the thoughts are directed inward instead of to the Saviour. It is vainly supposed that power exists in self to do some extraordinary work or works by way of atoning for a past life of alienation from God. Now, to our beloved reader in such a case, we would say by the word of God, that what you are vainly seeking to do, and what you are vainly hoping to get, by resolutions, works, prayers, and tears, the Lord Jesus Christ, eighteen hundred years ago, accomplished by His death upon the cross. Yes, and His work redounds to the eternal glory of the blessed God, as well as abounds to the blessing of poor lost sinners. There is none other ground for obtaining pardon and peace than this of which you may have heard a thousand times, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" for "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

How great is the delusion by which the great enemy of the truth fills the heart and mind of awakened souls, by insinuating the lie that there exists ability in man for him to atone for his sins to God. Beloved reader, hear the word of the gospel which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of the apostle Paul spoke to the Galatians of old: "I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Such a doctrine, so common to the human heart, is in the face of the testimony of the gospel an utter error, for all men have been declared to be sinners by God, and (both Jews and Gentiles) under the power of sin. But blessed be the fact, that when all had been declared "without strength," then, too, it was said, "Christ died for the ungodly." Like the impotent man of whom we read in the third chapter of the Acts, we have been without strength from our very birth, absolutely incapable of delivering ourselves from ourselves, and thus we ever must have rained, but for the blessed Son of God, who died for us and rose again. He has gloriously finished the work which He came to do, and His own words which He uttered upon the cross bear witness to the fact — "It is finished."

"Weary, working, plodding one,

Wherefore toil ye so?

Cease your doing; all was done

Long, long ago.”

It is the happy privilege of every believe to look by faith straight up to the glory of God, and behold Christ Jesus “crowned with glory and Honor,” glorified above, Himself in heaven the eternal witness that the work was finished on earth. Yes, God raised Him from the dead, thereby declaring His unbounded satisfaction in the work of His Son. Now “we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and Honor.” (Heb. 2:9.) Happy is that man who can thus look up and behold in the person of Christ the “same Jesus” who finished the work of salvation at Calvary, and by virtue of whose work it is said by the Holy Ghost to every believing sinner, “Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. 8:12.) W. M.

## Forward! Forward!

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“BE always displeased at what thou art, if thou desirest to attain to what thou art not: for where thou hast pleased thyself, there thou abidest. But if thou sayest, I have enough,’ thou perisheth: always add, always walk, always proceed; neither stand still, nor go back, nor deviate; he that standeth still proceedeth not; he that deviateth revolteth; he goeth better that creepeth in his way than he that runneth out of his way.” — St. Augustine.

## He Abides Faithful

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UNBELIEF may, perhaps, tear the copies of the covenant which Christ hath given you; but He still keeps the original in heaven with Himself. Your doubts and fears are no part of the covenant, neither can they change Christ. — Samuel Rutherford.

## Religions of India

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IN traveling through India, various forms of human religions are met with. At least one hundred thousand of the people are called “Fire worshippers.” They worship all the elements, but regard the sun and fire of paramount importance, on account of their conspicuousness. In their temples holy fire is always burning, and it is supposed originally to have come down from heaven. Even their dead are exposed to the elements, until “the birds of the air” flock to the carcass, and the body is consumed away.

Millions of the people of India have a profound reverence for Mahomet and the words of his book, the Koran. They are not idolaters. Their creed may be concisely stated as follows — “There is one God, and Mahomet is His prophet.” They meet for prayers in plain buildings, but, like the ancient Pharisees, they exceed in the show of empty pressions. The regularity and frequency of their wrongly directed devotions have often won for them admiration and respect.

A little incident that came under our own observation will suffice to illustrate the power of the forms and customs of the Mahomedans. Two of us were driving in a hired conveyance to a railway station. It happened to be mid-day, the Mussulman’s hour for the third prayer. Suddenly the conveyance came to a halt.

“Move on; hurry up,” we shouted, but a deaf ear was given. What was our surprise to espy our faithful Mahomedan coachman on the top of the carriage, face turned in the direction of the sacred city of Mecca, in the solemn attitude of prayer as he rapidly muttered his oft-repeated cry to Ullah (God) and Mahomet.

Alas for the millions held in the terrible bondage of Mahomedanism! Their system contains no atonement, and no Saviour; their only hope of salvation being by good works the most essential of which is form of prayer.

An innumerable company of others of the people in India are Buddhists and Hindoos. The prominent figure in the worship of the former is the image of Buddha; whilst in the worship of the latter there are “gods many and lords many.” It is affirmed that there are three hundred and thirty millions of deities, or nearly two to every Hindoo living. The most abominable practices are perpetrated and sanctioned by these different gods and goddesses, so that full license to human theorizing and fleshly indulgences is the inevitable result.

The picture upon the preceding page an apt illustration of many scenes the writer has witnessed in the temples of Buddha.

Well, it was in India, the country of strange creeds, that a person of our acquaintance was born — a Mahomedan. He grew up in the midst of his Moslem friends and faith, but while still a young man became anxious to, know something definite, something satisfying, concerning God and His requirements. He grew saddened with vexed thoughts, and became laden with a burden, which was too heavy for him, but how to get rid of it he knew not.

Naturally he consulted his Molvies, or Teachers first, but they rendered no help, for, as we have already mentioned, they have no deliverer in their religion to which to point. So the young man was cast back upon his own efforts, and he became zealous in, good works, wandering from mosque (temple) to mosque, from jungle to jungle, till he had traversed the entire length of India.

After this he saw Hindoo priests, and sought comfort from their instructions, and betook himself to many of their numerous shrines, and followed their tortures and penances. Sometimes he would sleep in trees by the side of the sacred rivers, and, again, would beg his food, which he placed in a dried human skull. But no rest or joy could he find to his troubled conscience and heart.

One day, however, he chanced to be attracted to a crowd of people assembled under a shady tree. They were listening to the grand and simple story of God's great love to sinners. Love to sinners was just what the poor man needed. He then heard of a Friend, a Saviour, a Substitute before God, and a free salvation. Oh, how amazed he was! And he believed the Christ of God then presented.

Now he lives in peace with God, and testifies to all around what great things the Lord hath done for him. Once he was blind, but now he sees.

Do not point the finger of derision at the deluded heathen, nor pity him alone, for if still without Christ, young or old, your case is equally pitiable. Almsgiving, church or chapel-going, saying of prayers, and the like, can no more avail to bring a sinner nigh to God in England than did all the wanderings and privations, the prayers and the penances of my friend in India avail to save his soul, or to give him peace. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." H. G. B.

## The Boy of Ten Years of Age

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MANY have been our happy privilege in writing of God's precious love and mercy to dear children and others of riper age in FAITHFUL WORDS, and now I am again to tell you of a little boy of ten years of age whom I nursed with scarlet fever last year. I am the sick nurse in a large boarding school, so when any boys in the school are ill, they are sent over to my cottage.

The first thing I do is to tell God all about them, and to ask Him to be pleased to make them well; but I do entreat Him to save their souls before they leave me.

The little boy about whom I am writing was a very naughty boy indeed after he began to recover from the fever. When he was brought to me, he was very nigh unto death. The doctor told me to watch him very close all night. I knew his soul was not saved. I besought the Lord to spare his life; and in the morning he breathed much better, and he gradually got well. At that time I had four boys ill. When they could all be together, I read a portion of God's word to them every evening, and explained it to them. They all listened most attentively.

One evening, when I went up to bed at ten o'clock, this naughty boy was not asleep, as he usually was. So I said, "What! not asleep, dear?" He replied, "No; I am so wicked, I cannot go to sleep."

I said to him, "Confess your sins to Jesus, and He will forgive you."

He said, "I have told Him what a sinner I am; if I die to-night I shall go to hell."

I told him to own and confess all his sins, and not to hide anything from the Lord, and that He would soon give him peace of conscience.

"I have done so," he said, "but I am no happier."

I talked to the poor troubled boy for some time, and then, as the hour was late, I begged him to be quiet, or I must leave the room.

But, poor boy! he turned and turned, and though he did not speak again, I heard him groaning nearly all night. My bed was in the same room. It was a night not to be forgotten. In the morning, he came downstairs into my sitting-room, and so calm, so gentle, so nice. Oh, such a different boy from what he had been! For he was so rash and obstinate that I used to hope in my heart I should not have him come thus to me again.

Soon after this, I took these boys to the sea-side, and promised them that when we were there I would take them to hear the gospel preached. The first Sunday was a very wet day, I therefore told them I could not possibly take them out. They all said at once, "Let us collect round and pay for a fly," asking me if they might go so. I told them they might, so all arrangements were made, and we took our seat near the preacher.

This is a little sketch of the subject: "Eternal life, and how we get it; how we know it; the Person who gave it; the joy of knowing it; and the power to walk in it." This boy sat with riveted attention.

When we got home we had to turn to all the portions again, and as soon as the boys came down the next morning, the Bibles were brought out and all the portions found. The dear boy about whom I am writing, came to me a few days after and said, "It is only believing that saves us, is it not?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I shall tell my mother that she can know that she is saved in this world, but I must not tell my father, or he will flog me." Shortly after this he was well enough to go to his home, and, when he is allowed, he writes to me.

Dear boys who read this story, do you be sure to find Jesus for yourselves, and, I pray you, never rest until you are quite sure that you are saved; for, until you are saved, do remember that you are lost, and that there is no place for you after death but hell, however good you may think you are. Until you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and own your sins in reality to Him, you have no Saviour. How many boys and girls are dying. Where will you be, if your turn comes next A boy of twelve years and two months has just died, with whom the boy, whose conversion to God I have just told you, used to sit within the same school. We do not know where that boy's soul is now. Deal boys, do accept God's grace and love now. He has nothing against you — all love to give you. Oh! why be Satan's boys any longer? If you knew him you would flee from him. F.T.

## Has Got It

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WHAT we have we do not hope to have, because we have it. When you desire to have something which is good for you, and you have received it, you are not expecting to receive it: you rejoice that you have it.

At a children's meeting, a short time ago, I was speaking about John 5:24, in which the word "HATH" occurs. Now "hath" and "hope" are quite different words, and they do not mean the same thing. HATH does not mean HOPE, and HOPE does not mean HATH. While hope refers to something we have not, hath refers to something we have.

Some persons read this twenty-fourth verse of John 5. as though the word "hope" were in it, but it is not. We will print the verse, and you will then notice, as did the children at a meeting lately, that the word "hope" is not there. Here is the verse: — "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." No, the word "hope" is not in the verse; but there is the word "hath" in it, for it says, "hath everlasting life"!

Well, that is just what we were speaking about at our children's meeting, and, as I knew there were some little ones present who did not know what the Lord Jesus meant when He uttered those words, I asked the question, "What is the meaning of the word hath? Does it mean hope? for the Lord says, hath everlasting life."

"No, it did not mean hope to get," several answered.

"Then what does it mean?"

For a moment or two there was no reply. There were children present who knew what the word meant, but they did not quite know what to say. However, the silence was soon broken by a boy, who had been very attentive at our meetings; he seemed a very happy little boy, I thought, and he answered, "Has got it."

The answer gives the meaning in a simple way.

"Yes," I said, "it means present possession, or, as you have expressed it, has got it. This Scripture tells us that he who believes has everlasting life — shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

And now, dear little reader, you will remember that it is the word hath that is in that verse — not the word hope.

Many little children believe in their hearts— they trust in the living, loving Lord Jesus, and are saved — saved, not because they have done any good, oh! no. They know they are sinners; but they believe in Him who died to save sinners, and because Jesus died they are saved. They have heard and believed His word.

“He that believeth on the Son HATH ever-lasting life” — “has got it.” R. K.

## The Story of Wee John

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WEE John was only just over four years of age, but his young life showed that he knew the Lord. He had learned by word and example of the Lord Jesus, whom he was taught to love and obey, and the little boy loved the Lord much. He would join heartily in singing, and often would he sing alone of Jesus and His love in dying for us. And on certain occasions he would be heard to exclaim, "I'll get to heaven and be with Jesus."

His parents, and those who knew him, will not soon forget his bright face when singing the following verses■

"I will sing of my Redeemer,

And His wondrous love to me:

On the cruel cross He suffered,

From the curse to set me free.

"Sing, oh, sing of my Redeemer;

With His blood He purchased me:

On the cross He sealed my pardon —

Paid the debt, and made me free."

But John fell ill. He and two sisters were all unwell together, and continued to be ailing for two or three weeks. When nearly recovered, they waited anxiously for liberty to get out and enjoy themselves in the garden. The weather was fine, but cold, and it was found that they had had a slight attack of a serious sickness, and now having caught cold, they were in great danger. The sisters got well, but wee John grew worse. The doctors did all they could to remove the trouble, still he got worse and worse; and at last, when all was done that could be done, there rained little hope of his getting better.

The day before he passed away, when suffering much, on hearing one repeat this verse■

"Who is He, in deep distress, Fasting in the wilderness?"

John said, "Yes; it's Him, it's Him: He is the King of Glory!"

In the night he was very weary, and wanted rest. He had suffered much, and had borne his pain with patience; and, thinking if his mother went to bed, it would make her better, he begged her to do so. But in all his trouble, when a word was spoken about Jesus, though worn out with pain and fatigue, the dear child at once would respond to the very last, and say, "Yes, it is Jesus; I love Jesus." After a few more hours' suffering, exhausted and worn out, Jesus put wee John to sleep.

Dear young reader, how would it be with you, if you were thus taken away? Are you ready? John was young and tender, yet he loved the Lord, who loves all His own. Do you love the Lord? You may say, "I am older than John;" then all the more need for you to trust the Lord, who "came to save that which was lost." He loves little children, and said, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Trust in Him, for He died to redeem us, and His precious blood was shed to cleanse from all sin. D. D.

## Narratives from the Gospels in the Hat of Jewish Customs

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### THE BURIAL AT NAIN.

(Concluded)

IN a previous paper we spoke of the journey of the Lord Jesus, accompanied by great multitude, from Capernaum to Nain; of meeting of the funeral procession at the gate of the little city; and we described the habit: and customs of the Jews in connection with sickness and death, as well as the order of the funeral, and the mourning on the road We spoke of the traditional law which enjoined that all passers-by should, if possible, join in the procession, which probably accounts for the “much people” being with the widowed mother. Now we turn back to the gospel narrative.

The two processions met; would that one from Capernaum follow the solemn duty imposed by the teachers of the law, and retrace with the weeping mother its steps to the Beth Olam? Which on that spring afternoon would give way? Would life, or would death? Had He, who was bringing life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel, power to redeem from the very gates of the grave?

“And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her.” Notice the title used; it is not the name Jesus, so frequent in the gospels, but a title of authority and power — the Lord. The word arrests our attention, for Jesus is never called “Lord” by Matthew in his narrative; it is indeed used by speakers whose words he reports, never by the evangelist himself. The title is not used by Mark of Jesus until he applies it in his last two verses to the Risen and Ascended Lord. It is not used by Luke until he recites this story of Nain; so that it is really the first instance of this title of authority and power being applied to Jesus in His circumstances of humiliation — as One who humbled Himself not only “to behold the things which are in heaven, and in the earth,” but actually came to earth making Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Here, in this Scripture, He is owned as Lord, and we discern the fitness of the occasion, for the power of the devil had been exercised in bringing in death; the power of the Lord is to be used in giving life. Yet it is power mingled with compassion, for “His compassions fail not.” “He comforteth those that are cast down.” And what a number of scenes from the gospel crowd to the mind at the mention of His “compassion,” in all which scenes the compassion found action in deeds of love and mercy! The hungry multitudes, the blind men at Jericho, the crowds of, sick, the Galilean leper, together with the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Father welcoming His lost son; in all these the compassion was far more than a passing emotion, as it often is with us.

Did the Lord hear the orator call upon the bitter in heart to “Weep”? He knew what griefs and sorrows were, and on another occasion He wept at the grave of His friend; but now in the consciousness of His divine, almighty power, He bids the bereaved mother, “Weep not.” Then He touched the bier, undefiled in so doing, because He was above all ceremonial defilement, and the bearers, perhaps full of wonder, stood still.

To the only son, still sleeping in death, He said “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!” “And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered [literally and how truly, gave] him to his

mother.”

Need we wonder at the great fear which fell on all? We remember Elijah (as perhaps they did) and that only son of another widow woman. We remember Elisha, and the only son of the Shunammite, and the death of both these sons. We remember the prayers of Elijah, and his stretching himself three times upon the dead body; the prayer of Elisha, and the laying himself upon the child twice at least, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands, and the life of both came again. But here on this Nain road a Stranger meets the sorrowful procession, and at a word, invoking no name or power, using no means, but with all the authority that is His as Prince of life, He commands, “Arise!” “And he that was dead sat up.” And as the widow of Zarephath confessed, “Now by this I know that thou art a man of God,” so these people confess, “A great Prophet is risen up among us,” and “God hath visited His people.”

Yea, and “greater than a prophet.” Their words were true, though they used them not literally: “God hath visited His people:” Immanuel, God with us. God, manifested in flesh. His power it was that wrought through Elijah and Elisha. He was the God before whom these prophets stood and served, veiled though His glory was at this time under such lowly guise. Truly He could be none other than He whose voice quickens dead souls now, and who will in the hour that is coming cause all that are in the graves to hear His voice.

We wonder what became of the funeral meal when the mourners, their tears wiped away, reached their home again? It was a meal of round, coarse food; round, emblematic on unto death; coarse, for it was a time of mourning. The tide had turned, and instead of it being life unto death, life issued out of death.

In all ages the inner meaning of this history has been discerned. True history it is, a real act of mercy, a miracle of love, but withal a picture of the meeting of a dead sinner and the life-giving Saviour. And the believer traces with thankful and adoring heart — though it may be as in a parable — the record of a point in his own history, when he heard the voice of the Son of God, and hearing, lived. And I cannot close this paper without asking you, my reader, Have you ever met Him thus? Has His voice ever aroused you out of your sleep of death to live to Him? Or are you still dead in trespasses and sins? Other than these two states there is none; either dead to God, or living to Him? Which state is yours? Jr.

## About Weeds

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WE are staying for a few months in a house which has a neglected garden. It is early spring; the old fruit trees are full of blossom and of beauty, and the currant and gooseberry bushes are laden with promise; but as we look upon the soil we see weeds — weeds everywhere. The paths are covered with them, the flower-beds are choked with them, and the kitchen garden is burdened with them. Amateurs we are, but no pressed gardener shall touch these weeds — attack them ourselves with our own hands we will, for we are determined to learn a lesson in weeds.

Nothing can grow while these weeds hold their own, and since they have had their own way for a year or more, they are defiant in the extreme. Like inbred sins, they are not easily mastered. The paths offer hard work, but it is a disgrace to walk on weeds — go they shall. The incessant clack of the hoe sounds like labor in vain. Now a welcome shower has come, and what looked like a hopeless task has changed altogether. That shower by its softening influences has gently said to us, “Pull them out!” So on our knees we go, and take to our fingers rather than the hoe. “Pull them out — root and all?” Yes, unless God the Spirit soften the soul we can make little way against weeds on the hard, well-trodden path; and when He does so work, our surest way of working is upon our knees. Get to the root — get to the root, every gardener of the Lord who would attack weeds. Weeds! weeds! Weeds in the mind, weeds in the head, weeds in the heart! Half the practical lessons of life are about weeds.

So the early spring days passed. We dug and hoed, and then we sowed our borders.

But even before our seeds had sprung up came the weeds also; and as the seeds arose to battle with the weeds we knew not the good from the bad, hence the seeds suffered and the weeds multiplied. The seeds were foreigners; the weeds were natives to the soil, and well at home in it. But after a while, what with rake and with fingers, the weeds were slowly brought under, and now the seeds begin to hope. Weeds are always growing. Neglect weeding, fellow Christian, and yours will be but a Door show of fruit in the coming day. Now, weeding, at least spiritually speaking, is humbling work; hence it is not popular — there is nothing to show for it! — for it is but getting rid of the bad. Yet leave a bad propensity alone and it will flourish, and by-and-by choke the growth of the good seed in you. Weeds and good seeds will not flourish together.

One of the children would water the weeds in his little garden, and his answer always was, “I sowed seeds there.” Few of his seeds came to maturity — the weeds won the day; and a sore disappointment was it to witness the supposed sweet-scented flower pulled up by the roots, and left to wither. Yet not such a trial as is that of the Christian who has nourished evil thoughts and ways for years, and at length discovers that what he regarded as good seed were only weeds!

Weeds have such roots. Pull them up, dig them up, hoe them and cut them in pieces, still, after all is done, fibres of them will rain in the ground, and then after a shower of rain the very piece of ground over which most labor was spent, will be seen to be dotted all over with fresh weeds — little ones, and looking like innocent plants, truly. But let these little ones alone, and see then

where the good seed will be! Attack the beginnings of evil, Christian, in your heart. Each day you let a sinful way alone it will root deeper into you, till by-and-by, it may be, you will say, as do some, "Oh! there's no harm in that!" and your heart will be hardened. Beware "lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Beware of little weeds, for little they never remain. Up they must come! Mortify your members you must. The works of the flesh are manifest. Thistles are thistles, whether just showing above ground or ten feet high; little and large, all came from the soft thistle down!

Little weeds have large roots. See what moisture, what life these weeds suck out of the ground. A great deal goes on underground, unseen to mortal eye, before the witness of even one green shoot appears! Sow a seed, and just when the pale green shoot shows itself dig it up, root and all, and probably the fibres will be found to occupy a space in the soil nearly as large as your fist. Thus it is with what comes out of man — his evil thoughts, and words, and ways have all of them great roots in his soul, which God sees. Man judges by the fruit, as it is written, "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7: 20.) God judges by the root as well as by the fruit. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth;... the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7.)

This garden, so long neglected, has taught us an old lesson on weeds and it reminds us of a remark made by one farmer to another, and overheard as the train rushed through young cornfields, some of which were yellow with weeds: "They are so deep in that they will cost pounds the acre to get them out!" A neglected soul is full of bad habits, full of self-indulgence, full of the fruits of the flesh. It will cost much to get them out!

It cannot suffice us, who are indeed Christ's, just to know that we are Christ's, we must live as Christians; and, remember, a great part of the Christian life is the getting out of the weeds.

One cheerful word before we dismiss this subject. It is now early summer, and we again take up our pen to confess that our hoeing and digging have not been in vain. The paths may now be trodden without reproach, the borders are freed from their former masters, and there is a good crop of various vegetables in the kitchen-garden. Where there were weeds, now there is fruit. But as we look upon the changed scene, the memory of the clack, clack of the hoe rings in our ears, and preaches this sermon on weeds — "Get rid of them."

## The Aged Stone-Breaker

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SOME summers ago, two friends were driving in the country late one afternoon, when doubt as to their road arose in their minds. They were miles from home, and it was growing late. One thought it would be wiser to turn back to the sign-post last passed, but the other had impressed upon her mind a conviction that they had not "lost the way," but were just being sent by God to some child of His, whose need and whereabouts were to them as yet unknown.

So they drove along, enjoying the restful beauty of the quiet lanes, and the subdued evensong of the birds. At last they came to some lonely cottages on a hill-top, a long way from any other houses, and only separated from the roadside by little gardens full of old-fashioned flowers. Through the open door of one the housewife was seen, preparing the evening meal, and glancing out the while, for passers-by were few and far between.

Tired with the long drive, they were wondering whether they could ask for a cup of tea, when words of warm welcome drew both inside the clean little room.

Facing the door sat an old man, hale and cherry-cheeked, though bent with the weight of years, and the travelers soon found that he and his wife were rejoicing in the knowledge of the love of Jesus, and walking humbly with their God. Sitting awhile over the refreshing cups quickly placed before them, they grew deeply interested in hearing the old man's simple story of his conversion half-a-century before, and the marvelous way in which the Lord had since led him.

The cottage was some four miles from the nearest town, with only a few dwellings of farmers' Laborers and the like scattered here and there among the fields, and all these long years he had gathered into the tiny room behind, on the Lord's day, such as would come to hear of Jesus and His love, and he also held a little Sunday school for the children of his poor neighbors.

"Out o' this room, sir," he said, "I do bless God those little 'uns have gone o'er the wide world, and some on'em are now ministers, some missionaries, telling others in a better way nor mine what they first larned here."

His hymn-books were old and shabby, and his Bible almost worn out. His faith in the power of the living word of God, as well as the wisdom he had received from above, were most remarkable.

At seventy-six he now broke stones on the highway for his daily bread, but evidently no thought of complaint entered his mind. "I has some glorious times on my knees, I can tell 'ee, sir," he said, with glowing face.

From the wife, the reason why the Lord had guided that particular afternoon to the cottage was learned, and those so guided there, rejoiced in the privilege thus given of rendering the little needed help. Then, kneeling upon the stone floor, the two visitors commended themselves and the aged pair afresh to the loving care of God, and went their way home.

Since then at times, a few gospel magazines or papers have been sent to the cottage, and also an occasional cheering note written to the old people. Sometimes a few lines in reply have been received, telling their simple but peaceful story. But one day came news from the wife that the old man had been nine weeks in bed, very ill, and that he probably would not again leave it. At the earliest opportunity his friends went to see him once more, and thus does one of them describe the meeting: "I shall never forget the manifest peace of that dying chamber. He was propped up by pillows, his long snow white hair giving him the venerable appearance of his age — now seventy-eight — and his clear, bright eyes telling of the mind unimpaired and the soul untroubled. Although our visit was quite unexpected, and he had only seen us once before, he knew us directly. Upon the white coverlet lay the old worn Bible open at the 103rd Psalm, and upon it the large horn spectacles through which he had learned so many precious promises, now the comfort of his declining days.

"They call this a deathbed,' he said, with a happy smile; I calls it just beginning to live.'

"I can't say much, sir, I grows so faint, but I do want to tell 'ee this: Jesus Christ to-day is more precious, more sweet, more comforting to me nor He was fifty years ago. He is with me all the day long, and I'm just waiting.'

"The effort of speaking brought the perspiration over his wrinkled face, and as his wife tended him with loving hands, he whispered, Just waiting till He takes me.'

"His failing strength could not bear more, and we bade him good-bye, his trembling finger upraised to heaven and his farewell words, feebly spoken, but how strong in faith! We'll meet up yonder! "Through the open window the cool evening air fanned his brow, the trailing rose that clung to the cottage wall threw its fragrant scent into the room, and the twitter of the birds in the thatch was the only sound that broke the stillness; all was peace.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" E. B.

## A Modern Pharisee

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“HERE are those ranter-folk again, and setting up a tent now.”

The speaker was regarding from her house, with no very favorable eye, the operations of two young fellows in a neighboring field, to one of whom she was not altogether a stranger, for he had been previously preaching in the kitchen of a house close by, and she had been invited to attend. This on one occasion she had done, but only on the condition that she might sit unobserved in the back kitchen; with the result that she had gone away saying, “That young man talks as if we were all sinners but himself.” And, no doubt, it is galling for a thoroughly respectable, middle-aged woman, against whom the neighbors have not a word to say, but rather the reverse, to be informed, in no measured terms, that she is a sinner, and a lost sinner, and that if she is to be saved, it must be together with the vilest, and on the ground of simple grace alone. And now the very man who had presented to her, probably for the first time in her life, in plain unvarnished language, these unpalatable truths, was helping another to erect a tent for gospel preaching within a stone’s throw of her own door!

However, hostile criticism notwithstanding, the tent was in due course erected, and the villagers flocked in to see what was going on, and after a few meetings had been held, prompted, perchance, by idle curiosity, but directed nevertheless by God Himself, our critic one evening entered the tent and took a seat, and the preaching began. Not long had she listened before idle curiosity was exchanged for attention, and attention for anxiety, and night after night found her in her place hanging on the preacher’s words. Meanwhile, her presence and anxious face were not lost upon the one who preached, and after the last of one of the week-night services, he called in to see the friend who had lent her kitchen for the previous preaching’s, and said, “Do you know Miss K. is drinking in every word; pray for her. I believe that on Sunday she’ll be saved.”

That Sunday night the portion dwelt upon was the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, bringing before the soul the claims of a holy God, and access to Him, shut out to the sinner by his sins; but God in grace providing by the blood of the goat, upon which Jehovah’s lot fell, a means whereby He, while maintaining His righteousness, can at the same time come out in love, and be just Himself and the Justifier of them that believe in Jesus.

“See, sprinkled with the blood,

The mercy-seat above;

For justice had withstood

The purposes of love;

But justice now withstands no more,

And mercy yields her boundless store.”

Was God light? His own word declares it of Himself. How could He then have to do with that which was moral darkness, pitch darkness — the sinner in his sins — save to judge him? Was He righteous? In truth He was. Could He then suffer those in His presence upon whom He had pronounced the solemn judgment, “None righteous; no, not one”? Nay; that were to belie His words who says that He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity. Terrible hour for him or her who has to stand, clad in their own righteousness, before Him who has declared such to be but filthy rags! Awful doom to be pronounced by Him who is the righteous Judge. But is God only light? No, He Himself says that He is also love. Were He light alone, He would demand that the sinner should be doomed to everlasting banishment in hell. Were He love alone, so to save a sinful world, His holiness and righteousness would be forever gone. How then can He act; for His holiness will not allow Him to pass over sin, and His love will not allow Him to plunge the sinner ruthlessly into hell? The answer to this mighty riddle is the cross; for there at once by the blood of Christ, God’s righteous claims as to sin are fully met, and all His heart of love flows forth towards a guilty world.

And so the preacher from the type turned to the great Antitype, and told how the blood of Christ was sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, to meet the eye of God, so that He, as it were, was stretching across the blood-stained seat a hand to the vilest sinner present, and in mercy asking him or her to be reconciled.

And one there was that Sunday night who took that place; none other than our good religious friend, the scorner of the “ranter-folk.” With women of the city who were sinners, with dying thieves, she gladly took her place. Never had she been in such low company before; but, meeting with them in the tent at G— that night, she also met with Him who “receiveth sinners and eateth with them,” who had “not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

How few there are who thus learn God. Most learn the other aspect of the cross of Christ, brought out in the type of the Scapegoat, which bears into an uninhabited land the sins confessed upon its head. They are content to find that themselves are cleared, and little think of God. Hence they are assailed by doubts and fears; now happy, now dejected, and so are little able to testify to others of a full and free salvation. But God does not so act. He first sets forth His own righteousness, and has the whole question raised and settled by Christ upon the cross, and then He shows us how we can be saved. And in the consciousness of this blessed truth alone is lasting, settled peace to be found; for God declares Himself to be “a just God and a Saviour,” a just God first. (Isa. 45:21.)

Next day our friend was in the kitchen, which she once despised, and speaking of the hand stretched out to the filthiest sinner there, said brokenly, with tears, “I took it, and could scarcely keep my seat, I so longed to get up and tell them all.”

Fellow sinner, vile sinner it may be; self-satisfied, good, religious sinner it may be, the hand of God is still stretched forth to you in love, beseeching you, “be reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

(2 Cor. 5:20-21.) J. F

## Plunged into Eternity

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ONE day, while speaking to a crowd of people in a small village, this scripture flashed across my mind; “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” (Prov. 11:21.) After pointing out from God’s word man’s utter ruin, and God’s remedy, I drew the attention of the people to a sad event, which had lately occurred in the neighborhood.

A wealthy farmer, who was out riding late at night, and in an intoxicated condition, had fallen into the river which ran through the next village, and was drowned. Divers came from Liverpool, but were unable to find the body. It was recovered afterward by a man who was walking along the riverside, though the poor body could hardly be recognized.

Then there came the funeral; but what about the never-dying soul? Those words rang in my ears — “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.)

After again warning the people, I turned homewards, and, while on my way, was met by some people from the village in which I lived. They told of the sad death of one whom I knew to be an open enemy of God and God’s people. Two men in the village had joined together to steal some fowls, but they were found out. The policemen were searching the house of one of the men, when the other who had taken part in the robbery, rushed out of his house saying, “The police shall not take me!” He ran across the fields, but stumbled near the bank of the river and fell in. The few spectators seemed powerless to render him any assistance, and, after throwing up his arms and crying wildly, “Oh, save me! save me!” the man went, unprepared, into the presence of the God he had sinned against.

Has not this a word for those who are going on in their sins, unprepared to meet God? How marked is the contrast between a saved and a lost person I One, trusting in Christ’s work on the cross, knowing that the precious blood has washed away all his sins; the other dreading to think of the future, trembling at the thought of judgment.

God grant that those who are in the latter condition may believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, so that, if suddenly called to die, they may be ready, and not pass into the presence of a Judge, but into the presence of the One whom they love because He first loved them. J. Sp■n.

## Who Holds Your Hand

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COMING through the City, at one of the busiest hours of the afternoon, I learned a lesson of childlike faith, which I would fain always practice. It was at a thronged junction, where six roads meet; cabs, omnibuses, and carts were rolling along, when noticed a little boy come to the corner — a bright little fellow with a close-fitting woolen turban upon his head, and a satchel full of books over his shoulder. He was evidently going home from school, but to reach that home he would have to cross the crowded thoroughfare, where dangers thronged thick on every hand.

Now, what did he do? Rush blindly on, regardless of threatening vehicles, leaving his safety to chance, or trusting to his own wisdom and nimble feet? This is what many do in daily life. They have learned so much at Mr. Worldly-Wiseman's school that they can thread their way homeward in perfect safety. My little boy did not act rashly. Nor did he go to the opposite extreme, and wait until the traffic stopped. He would have lost his tea had he stayed at that corner until there was a clear path. Some act thus in life. They think to tarry till the dangers are all gone by. They will tarry a long day if they wait for such a favorable opportunity. Nor did my boy get bewildered and excited at the many coming and going. How often some of us are guilty of such a course of action. We look at the many things of this whirling age, until we are fairly mazed and incapable of doing anything wisely.

A tall, stout, City policeman was standing at the crowded corner, and my boy did what he had doubtless done many times before, he went to the good-natured officer, and, putting his little hand into the great strong hand, looked up into the man's face with eyes that said, "Please, Mr. Policeman, take me across the road." Answering the little fellow's faith, the constable took his hand firmly, and then calmly walked into the carriage-way. Not a vehicle dared threaten, for the power of the law was on the child's side, and with perfect confidence in the midst of bewildering danger he passed over.

May we not act thus when dangers throng our path? Not rush on; not wait for a favorable opportunity; not give way to perplexity and bewilderment, but at once go to the Lord Himself, and, placing our weak faith in His strong hand, silently ask Him to lead us over. Will He not respond to our trust?

I felt that boy was not troubled with a guilty conscience, or he would not have acted after such a fashion. Had he been doing wrong he would have dreaded and feared the gentleman in uniform. Ah the reason why we often fail to put our hand in God's hand, to be led through life's dangers, is because we have a guilty conscience. Oh to have full confidence in Him who says, "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not." (Isa. 41:13.)

We have one advantage over the boy which ought to make faith easier, the One in whom we trust is our Father, not only full of power to stay the crushing wheels of misfortune and calamity, but full of love — love to each of us, individually and personally.

Shall we not say, as we approach Him at the perplexing corners of our homeward way from life's school: —

“The throng is great, my Father! Many a doubt

And fear of danger compass me about,

And foes oppress me sore. I cannot stand,

Or go alone. O Father! take my hand,

And through the throng

Lead safe along

Thy child.”

W. L.

## There Is Hope for the Worst

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WHAT can be more worthless than a bruised reed or weaker than a piece of smoking flax? And yet it is written of Christ: “a bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench” (Isa. 42:3); and how beautifully the Lord illustrated this fact by His death! Not only did He die to put away the sins of sinners, but in the act of dying He saved the dying thief. “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom,” said the poor outcast, bruised and weak, with his eyes all but glazed in death, dying for his own sin.

“Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise,” was the loving reply.

He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the dimly burning flax. No; the most perfect and holy Being that ever lived is the most infinitely perfect in His love, tenderness, and sympathy for the ruined and lost. He will not despise nor reject those who are weak under the power of temptation, nor cast out the worst who have been crushed and broken, defiled and made useless by actual sin. To all such He still speaks, and invites them as “weary and heavy laden” to come to Him for deliverance and rest. For such He bled and died, that He might heal and make them whole.

Oh, listen to His words, ye bruised and broken ones. He invites you to come; come and rest upon His blood for cleansing, His death and resurrection for justification, His Spirit to sanctify and make you whole. Come at once; come as you are, in your true character; as sinful, worthless, broken, deserving only hell. Come renouncing all hope in self, and trusting only in Christ for your acceptance with God, and He will save you; your little spark of hope He will fan into a flame of joy through a full and free forgiveness and blessed assurance of interest in His love and work; and where you are most weak, He will by His grace make you most strong to resist and overcome all sin. And oh, ye consciously bruised, doubting and fearing ones, hear the loving word of Christ to you. He says He will not break you; then He will receive and heal you. Be content to come to Him in your true character as bruised and broken, and receive the full and free salvation He invites you to take, and rejoice in His love. Come, then, to Christ just as you are.

Just as thou art, with all thy fears,

Making no merit of thy prayers,

Nor trusting in thy cries and tears,

O sinner, hear and come!

Dream not that better thou wilt be,

But come at once, to Jesus flee,

He loves to save, and why not thee? ■

O sinner hear and come!

Oh, come, believe, oh, trust and live,  
Freely thy sins Christ will forgive,  
All thou canst need He waits to give,  
O sinner, hear and come!

B.F.N

## The Poor Collier

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A POOR collier had been at the point of death, but it pleased the Lord to restore him. The first day he went back to his work he was pushing some wagons, when he fell and hurt his chest. However, he managed to get up, and then began to push them with his head. One of his comrades called to him that was not the way to send them along, when the man exclaimed, "If I push another I hope I shall drop into hell!" and as soon as he had uttered the words he fell down dead. And, oh, what a sensation went through the men in the pit. In a moment he had passed out of time into eternity. Let this incident be a warning to its readers.

J. Sp — n.

## Words of the Son of God

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THESE are the words of our God: “God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” (John 3:17.) Wonderful words they are — wonderful purpose, grace, and love do they unfold to us.

NOT TO CONDEMN —

not to cast out poor hell-deserving sinners— not to banish them eternally from His presence — not to detect, expose, convict, prove guilty, and then assign to merited judgment, did God, Who is light, send His Son into the world. Not to prove to man his vileness and his baseness, his hypocrisy and his sin, and then to reward him according to his works, did the Son, Who is the Light of men, the Light of the world, shine here — no, not to condemn the world was He sent.

How awful do our sins appear to us when viewed in the light of divine truth; how utterly vile do we become in our own eyes when we see, ever so feebly, by the work of the Holy Spirit of God, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. But what we are in ourselves, what our sins are, God alone knows. Yet He sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world.

As the Lord walked on this earth, the sins of men, and the hardness of their hearts, were present to Him; but His mission from heaven to earth was mercy. “Who made Me a judge or a ruler over you?” “Neither do I condemn thee; go, sin no more,” are words of His we well remember. He saw the unrighteousness of men, He saw their sin as none but He could see — He beheld the actual evil as God sees it; for the Son is God, even as God who sent Him. But He came not to condemn.

The thief, who hung at His side upon the cross, and whose last hours were spent in casting curses into His teeth, in his dying moments justified the Saviour, and then cried, “Lord, remember me.” Jesus did not condemn him; He pardoned, saved, assured him, and filled the poor man’s soul with comfort and with joy — “To day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” He did not come to condemn — He came to save. Mary Magdalene, though possessed with seven devils, He cast not out, but He freed her from her master and tormentor, and made her for time and for eternity a grateful, loving disciple of Himself. Lepers, types of sinners in their sins; the palsied, types of sinners in their helplessness; the blind, types of sinners in their darkness of heart, He cast not out; He had mercy on all — none sought His face in vain Out of His own love, God, Who is love, sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that through Him the world might be saved. He gave His Son, His eternal Son, His only begotten Son, to come into this world of ours to die for the guilty and the lost, and the Son of Man has been lifted up, He has bled and died upon the cross, the Just One for the unjust. God, Who is light, made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. Jehovah laid upon Him the iniquity of us all — of all His people. Jesus has been wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace has been laid upon Him. No, not to condemn was He sent, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Here again are His own words: “He that believeth on Him is not condemned.”

## Not Condemned!

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No, for He is the believer's substitute; He Himself "bare our sins in His own body on the tree;" "He loved me and gave Himself for me." In His love He died that we might live. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," but "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Perfect love, perfect light. The light declares by the death of the Son how vile are we, how utterly lost and dead to need such salvation; the light declares that God, sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. The love declares itself by the death of the Son measureless to the chief of sinners.

He that believeth on Him is not condemned, for Jesus has been judged in His people's stead. The wrath of God has been poured out upon Him, His soul has been made an offering for sin. The debt has been paid, the penalty has been borne, the full satisfaction has been rendered to God by Himself once and forever. His death has made full and absolute atonement for our sins. Hence the believer on Him is not condemned; "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Christ has risen up from among the dead; whosoever believes on Him is justified from all things.

But let us listen once more to His words: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God."

## Condemned Already

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What! before the day of judgment, now in this lifetime, now in the midst of this world's gaiety and religion, now while at peace and in quiet, smoothly enjoying life, now already before the day of grace has ended? Surely not? Yes; condemned already!

But why? Because the sins are so black— so deeply dyed? The value of His atoning sacrifice forbids our answering Yes, and it is written of all believers, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." ALL sin means all every sin. Not one is left out, none is too vile, too deeply ingrained, for His blood to cleanse; yes, and to cleanse after such a manner that the very light of God shall but show by its shining the perfection of the cleansing. Whiter than snow, whiter than the pure snow fallen fresh from heaven on the mountain top whereon shines the noonday sun. How then can a sinner be condemned already? Lay the reason to heart, it is a solemn one indeed. "Because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God." He has not believed in the Sent One of God, the sacrifice for sin, the ever-blessed Saviour. To disobey Christ, in not believing on His Name, is willfully, deliberately to be one's own destroyer for eternity.

Once more let us hearken to the Lord's words. He tells us why men do not believe — why they are condemned already.

## The Condemnation

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He declares to be this: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Men love sin, pleasure, their own will and way; men love darkness rather than light; and they prefer the way of the world, and their own cup of delight in sin, to the love of God, to the light of God, to the Son whom God hath sent, Jesus the Lord. But few do even regard disbelief in Christ as a sin at all; to most the sin which shall condemn forever — for all other sins may be forgiven — is but an idea, an opinion, a creed!

God's purpose in sending His Son into the world is not to condemn, but to save. None are condemned who believe on Him. All are condemned already who do not believe on Him.

The condemnation is this: man loves sin rather than Christ who died to save.

How is it with our reader? We draw herewith a line, and write on either side thereof the description God in His word gives of men, whom He has divided into two classes —

NOT CONDEMNED. | CONDEMNED ALREADY.

On which side of the line are you?

Do you say, "Not condemned"? Then the reason is this, you believe on the Name of Jesus who died for you who took your place, and was judged in your stead. To Him be everlasting praise and blessing.

Do you say, "Condemned already"? The reason is this, you do not believe on Jesus — you say you can afford to live without Him who died to save. God give you to see your sins, your hardness of heart, and to repent, lest everlasting condemnation be your portion.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him." (John 3:36.)

## Carrie

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CARRIE D., the young friend of whom I am going to tell you, was brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour at about the age of thirteen. One day, when walking down a road in the town of W—, she noticed written on a fence before her these solemn words — “Sinner! Where wilt thou spend eternity?” She was frightened and troubled by the question — she tried to forget it, but could not — so, on returning home, she took her Bible, and the first words she read were, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16). She probably read more, for she found out that she was a sinner, and in need of a Savior. She was aroused, but, failing to trust Christ at once, she did not then find Him. The good work was begun, however, and, although there was a delay of some weeks, Carrie at last put her trust in Christ, and found peace in believing. She was now filled with joy, and wanted to do something for the Saviour who had done so much for her. Carrie commenced distributing tracts, and, as she found opportunity, used to speak to others of the Saviour. She was in the habit of giving away tracts on her way to school.

One morning she did not take the tracts with her as usual. Seeing an old lady in the road, she longed to give her a tract, and, on looking into her home-lesson book, she found just one. Carrie offered it to the old lady, who took it, and read the title — another solemn question — “Where will you be a hundred years hence?”

“Can you tell me where you will be in a hundred years’ time?” asked the old lady.

Carrie, who now knew where she was going to spend her eternity, was able to reply—

“Yes, I can. I shall be with my Saviour in heaven. Will you be there”

The old lady shook her head. Carrie stood and endeavored to point her to Christ, but had at last to leave her, for fear of being late at school. She was cheered by the old lady’s parting words: “Good-bye, my dear. I will go home and read my Bible, and not rest till I have found Christ as my Saviour.”

Soon after this, Carrie again met the old lady, who took her by the hand, and said, “Oh! my dear, since the day I first saw you I have known the greatest joy in my heart. I went home and found peace with God that same night.” She also told Carrie that she was going away, but that if they never met again on earth, they would meet in heaven through the precious blood of Jesus. I could tell you of other things that Carrie did because of her love to Christ, but now I want the young readers of this to think about the question that was blessed to her soul.

You may not be so old as Carrie, but do not on that account turn away from the question. You are not too young to die; you are not too young to trust Jesus. If you are older than Carrie, so much more need for your coming to Christ at once.

Oh! my dear young friend, think of the time you are wasting! Your young life might be spent in the service of Christ, and every day that you remain away from Him is a day lost. Some, it is true, are

saved when they are old, but they have lost something which they can never regain, even in eternity— years, precious years, which might have been spent on earth for Christ.

Sinner! where will you spend your eternity? “Sinner!” — God’s word for you if you are still unsaved. (Rom. 3:23)

Where? In heaven, with Christ and the redeemed? or in hell, with the devil and his angels? (Col. 1:12-14; Matt. 25:41.)

“Eternity!” My dear young friend, think of this solemn word. When once you have passed from this life your future happiness or woe is unalterably fixed. Time ends; eternity, in this sense, begins.

Flee, then, to Jesus; He has died to atone for sin, and all who rest upon His finished work receive forgiveness of sin and everlasting life; trust Him as Carrie did, and as thousands of other children have done, and then seek to bring others to trust in Him, too. Your eternity will then be a blessed one — far more blessed than human tongue can describe.

“Eternity! But Jesus died

Yes, Jesus died on Calvary.

Behold Him, thorn crowned, crucified,

The spotless One, made sin for thee.

O sinner, haste! for refuge flee—

He saves, and for eternity!

Eternity! Eternity!

Where wilt thou spend eternity?

W.W. H.

## An Affectionate Appeal

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MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS, — I will tell you of my conversion, which took place when I was about fourteen years of age. I had attended the Sunday school, and God's Holy Spirit had shown me that I was a sinner, and that I needed the pardon of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then I thought I must give up all pleasures, and become a dull and miserable creature. Perhaps some of you are as I was, and think you will lose your happiness if really converted. Now I soon found that this thought was a mistaken one, for the joy after finding the Lord Jesus as my Saviour was far, far greater than any joy I had had before.

While concerned about my soul, I put off the real question to some future occasion; till one Sunday evening when, reading a story of Satan tempting people to put off coming to God, until at last it was too late, and life was passed, I there and then determined to yield up myself to God. But I did not find this easy, for I was dreadfully tempted.

At last, having tried to venture my all on the Lord Jesus Christ, I thought, "I will sit down and wait for Him to give me His blessing," and then repeated to myself these verses of the dear old hymn:

■

"There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged in that blest flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day,  
And there may I, though vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away."

God gave me to know that my sins were washed away, and I realized then that I was, saved.

I can never forget it, for all seemed so simple, just to believe what God says is true; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I have found it to be true since that happy evening years ago that true religion will do for dark and cloudy days as well as for those when the sun shines. Jesus is a Friend whether in affliction or in comfort. He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "God bless you" is the prayer of your friend in New Zealand, who signs herself.  
E.S.

## Be ye also Ready

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A FEW months ago, at the request of an aged man, I went to see a little girl who lay at the point of death. Though her suffering was very great, she was perfectly happy, and delighted to look forward to the time when the Lord Jesus would call her to Himself.

“Yes, mother,” she would say, “I shall soon go to Jesus; but you and father must come too; you have only to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and then you will meet me in heaven.”

Shortly before her death the little one raised her hand, and, counting her thin fingers, said, “One, two, three, four, five — in about five minutes I think I shall be with Jesus.”

She lay quite still for a few minutes, and then joyfully exclaimed, “Oh, mother, Jesus has opened the gates of heaven for me, and His angels are beckoning me to come!” And thus, without a sign of fear, the little child entered the presence of the Saviour she loved so well.

Reader, how would it be with you if you had only five minutes to live? Should you, like this little girl, long to be with Jesus, or would you say, “I am not ready to die”? Do not, I beseech you, put off your soul’s salvation any longer, but come to the Saviour just as you are, knowing He is waiting to receive you. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16.)

## The Well

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THE mention of the well brings up the memory of some of the sweetest of the Old Testament stories, and some of the most gracious words of our Lord when He was on this earth. We can never forget Him, when wearied with His journey, sitting at the side of Jacob's Well, the cool waters down deep below, and though He had made them and bidden them flow, refreshing hundreds, yet sitting thirsty Himself, and asking of a stranger a draft.

Many a strife arose in olden times for the well and its waters, as we read in the Old Testament. Moses stood up and helped the daughters of Jethro when the shepherds would first possess the water for their flocks. Isaac's servants and the Philistines strove about the wells; and from St. Paul's day to this, the gospel, which is water of life to our souls, is too often made an occasion of strife by the shepherds of Christ.

But worse than the strife of the shepherds was the act of the Philistines, who stopped the wells which Abraham had dug, and wild "filled them with earth." They purposed that those waters which "the father of the faithful" had reached, should no more refresh flocks, nor be a blessing where his tents had been pitched. Thus do the Philistines still, for they who are enemies to God's gospel try to stop the wells of His truth, and to fill them with earth, so that longing and thirst) souls shall not have whereof to drink.

Now we read that when the king of the Philistines said unto Isaac, "Go from us!" he "departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." And dwelling in Gerar, what does the Spirit of God record that Isaac did? It is a word full of significance to all the children of faithful Abraham, as to their homes. Dwell where we may, we all do wisely to give heed thereto — "And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father... and he called their names after the names his father had called them." God grant that every Christian child of Christian parents — who in their day dug wells, and which wells at the dead of the Christian parents had been filled up — may dig again these wells, and call them after the names by which their parents called them.

How lovely are the names of some of these — as we read, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" — and from these fresh, cool waters of God's grace, of which we heard in our youth by the names of the wells of peace, of rest, of life, we will clear away the earth and the earthly things that have closed them up, and as we see and drink again of their living waters we will call them once more by the names which our parents called them. Shall it not be so, young men and women — you whose parents drank for their own souls of peace, and rest, and life, and who presented these waters to you These waters are new and fresh to us to-day, though old and fresh yesterday. The gospel of God's grace is ever new, but ever what it always was.

But while we must lay firm hold and never part with the grand old truths of God's word, of which the world would indeed rob us, we may learn a further lesson from the patriarch Isaac. Having opened up the old wells, his servants digged in the valley, and found there a new well. On Isaac's

servants was the toil of the digging — to them the joy of the finding of the springing water—but, lo! the Philistines came and strove, saying, “The water is ours.” Then Isaac dugged again, and again the jealous Philistines strove for the reward of his labor, when he moved off from them, and once more he “dugged another well,” and there the Philistines let him alone. “Now,” said he, “the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.”

Where the Christian digs, prays, and labors over God’s word he shall surely find the springing water; but if such labors lend the herdmen of other flocks an occasion for strife, then, like Isaac, go further, Christian, and dig again. It is a pity indeed that many of God’s servants do not see the wisdom of Isaac, or, if they perceive his wisdom, that they fail to follow his ways. St. Paul was a great well-digger: he would never boast himself in another man’s line of things made ready to his hand, but toiled himself in fresh fields. It is a most happy word as to service when we can peacefully say, “The Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land” — a great secret of success, too, for no work for God prospers when the herd-men strive.

A man who can dig one well, and who finds God giving him water, can dig another. And better dig three, as did Isaac, than strive over the gospel. Let us aim to make the gospel known, and to make God’s children joyful. But far be it from us to strive over the springing waters, for they be God’s gifts to us. So dig and call the well Esek, that is Strife, or Contention; and dig again, and call the next well Sitnah, that is, Accusation, or Hatred — indeed from this word we have the name of Satan! Stay not there; remove, and a third time dig, and call the name of it Rehoboth, that is, Room, and there tarry.

But we return to the story of Jacob’s Well, for our Lord spoke blessed words of living water there.

The woman of Samaria came in the heat of the day to obtain the water from Jacob’s Well. She had to walk from the town to draw up the water to fill her water pot, and to carry it home. But soon the store thus labored for would be spent, and then the next day would see like labor for a fresh supply. “Living water”— bubbling-up, springing water! What could it mean? “Sir, from whence hast Thou that living water?” she said to the Lord, who, a stranger to her, had asked her, “Give Me to drink.” Have not we, too, as she, been astonished at His words, and maybe asked the same question of Him in our hearts — “Whence hast Thou that living water?” This living water is not of earth; it cannot be reached by digging. It is the gift of God, for “the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.” It becomes ours solely of grace.

“If thou knewest the gift of God.” Oh I if thou knewest, poor toiler after earth’s pleasure, surely thou wouldst toil no more, but wouldst ask. If thou knewest “who it is that saith to thee,” said the Lord to the woman of Samaria. She for a few sentences fenced this question, but at last she asked of Him, “Sir, give me this water?”

Shortly after, she was found in the streets of her city inviting sinners like herself to seek and to find Jesus. And they testified to her, and to us, “Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

Reader, do you know Him thus? Jesus is indeed the Saviour of the world. He died to save. He lives to bless. He gives the living water still. Those who drink of the water that He gives “shall never thirst,” for His words are true, “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well (or fountain) of water, springing up into everlasting life.” No need to go outside the house to draw, with

such a fountain within our souls. No fear that the supply shall exhaust itself, for the water which He gives springs up into everlasting life.

Do we wonder that the woman left her water pot by Jacob's Well when the Lord put within her a fountain of living water? Do we wonder that true Christians leave their water pots — their old pleasures and amusements? They leave the old because of the joy of the new. Drink, and you shall thirst not.

## Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs

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### The Garden-Sepulcher.

IN a previous paper on the raising of the young man at Nain we saw that the gracious and compassionate act of the Lord effectually stopped the funeral procession at the gate of the little city. He who had been dead went not to the "house of silence," but to his home again in company with his mother, whose widowed heart the Lord had made to sing for joy; but He, whose love and power had wrought this, was Himself going on to death, and to burial — He, the Prince of Life, was to be taken by the wicked hands of men, and slain, even as the Scriptures had said; He was to be buried, but — God be praised! — He was to rise again, also according to the Scriptures.

We turn now to the subject of sepulchers, especially as connected with the tomb of the Lord, and take up the Gospel narrative at the point where that honorable counselor, Joseph of Arimathwa, besought the body of the Lord from Pilate. The request was granted. Associated with Joseph was another Sanhedrist, Nicodemus, who, like himself, had been a secret disciple of Jesus. But the time for secrecy is past, for then as now, the cross is the revealer of the thoughts of men's hearts, and Christ being dead, they boldly confess Him in whom alive they had only secretly believed. They take the precious body, and doubtless bear it at once to the sepulcher. They had not far to go, for the sepulcher was in the place where Jesus was crucified; moreover, the day was fast closing, and the Sabbath drew on. With some haste, therefore, the last sad rites were performed; a napkin was put about the head; the body, anointed with the sweet spices which Nicodemus had brought, was swathed in cloths of clean and fine linen, and consigned to Joseph's own new rock-hewn tomb. The customary observances are absent; but we do not miss them, they are better away. To those who believed that Jesus was the Christ, the sound of flute and the wail of hired mourners at such a time would be an intrusion. If we take the stand point of man's sin, no amount of conventional grief could be adequate to the occasion; if we take the standpoint of His love in giving His life for the sheep, we feel not grief but deep, though chastened, joy. As to mourners indeed, how few there were! Here and there a faithful heart which, like Mary's mourned the loss of the beloved Lord, or, like the two disciples who on the Emmaus road saw all their hopes for Israel dashed to the ground. But this was all, and the day of mourning is yet to come, when, as a man mourning for his only son, they shall mourn for Him whom they pierced.

How wonderfully was the Scripture fulfilled in this matter of the sepulcher: "He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death." This especially strikes us if we remember how the robbers crucified with the Lord at once part company when taken down from the cross. They were carried away to one of the two burial-grounds for criminals which existed at Jerusalem: He, though dying a criminal's death was laid in the rich man's tomb. The poorer classes had not their private tombs We read that Josiah cast the powder of the burnt grove [Asherah] upon "the graves of the children of the people," and that the dead body of Urijah was cast into "the graves of the common people." To such a common burying-ground the procession from Nain seemed to be journeying. But the moderately well-to-do, and especially the rich, prepared beforehand the place of their

burial, and the sepulcher of the wealthy Sanhedrist becomes the resting-place of the Lord, contrasting strongly with the surroundings of His birth, when the cattle “crib” was His cradle.

What is the tomb like? As we draw near, we find ourselves in a “court,” prescribed by traditional law to be six cubits (about nine feet) square. Here, on ordinary occasions, rest the bier and bearers upon their arrival. From this “court” the cave, which might be six or eight cubits long, four or six cubits wide, and four cubits high, opens.

Running from the sides into the rock are niches (called kûkin) for the bodies, each about four cubits long, with a height of seven, and a width of six, handbreadths. In the smaller tomb would be niches for eight bodies, in the larger for thirteen. These are ordinary tombs, but a man might construct one for himself containing only one niche. But by the expression “wherein was never man yet laid” it seems to be pointed out that Joseph’s tomb was constructed in the ordinary fashion.

Here then the sorrowing disciples deposit their precious burden and roll the large stone (called golel) to the door of the vault. Mary Magdalene and others watch from a distance. Then the men depart for the Sabbath is near. The women also go, to a labor of love — the preparation of fresh spices for a more formal anointing.

On the next day, Jewish suspicion calls to mind the words of Jesus that He should rise from the dead. So the chief priests and Pharisees seek the command of Pilate that the sepulcher might be made sure until the third day. Without many words Pilate bids them go, make it as sure as they can, and though it is the Sabbath day, they (while the disciples “rested according to the commandment”) throw to the winds their punctiliousness, and seal the golel, either where it touched the rocky walls, or more probably, where a smaller stone (dophek) was customarily placed against the golel. A guard was also mounted in the “court.”

The Sabbath passes, the third day comes, and according to Jewish law the friends might visit the tomb. It was on this day — so the common belief ran — that the spirit, which had been hovering about the body, finally departed. At day-dawn — indeed bore the darkness had fled from the morning light, the faithful Magdalene is at the tomb. The golel is rolled away! With hasty steps she speeds to Simon Peter and to John. “They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid Him.” Together run the two disciples, John outstripping Peter, and passing through the little court, he stooped and looked into the chamber. He went not in, but Peter, following, entered. Jesus was gone. No sign of hasty removal was there; all was orderly, the clothes lying and the napkin rolled up. Then entered John, who saw and believed. But, he adds in his gospel, they knew not the Scripture, that Jesus must rise from the dead. And they go home again.

What had happened? Who had moved the stone? Was Mary’s surmise right — that someone had taken away the body? The first gospel tells us. There had been a great earthquake, and an angel of Jehovah had descended from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. The Lord had risen! And “to have left the stone there, when the tomb was empty, would have implied what was no longer true.” And when the women laden with spices came, they found every hindrance which they had anticipated gone. Then entering, they hear from angel lips, that Jesus the Nazarene who was crucified, was no longer there; He was risen: “Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

They departed, and Mary Magdalene, who had hurried away upon seeing that the stone was moved, returned. She stood outside the sepulcher weeping. Everything was against her: her Lord crucified; and now that she would have relieved her sorrowing heart in caring for the precious body, that too was gone! Stooping down, she gazed intently in, but did not discern, or her pre-occupied mind did not take in the full meaning of the fact, that they were angels who were sitting there, “Why weepest thou?” they asked. “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.”

Then she turned; it was no place for her, where Jesus, even though dead, was not. She turns and meets Him whom she sought, though she knew Him not. “Why weepest thou?” He likewise asks. “Sir, if thou have borne Him hence—”; but the word “Mary,” in His well-known accents, tells her that it is her Master — “Rabboni!”

Thus her patient, waiting love was rewarded. Jesus was raised again, for it was not possible that Death should hold Him; no corruption could assail Him; nor could Hades detain His spirit. The bitter cross was over, and now, truly a conqueror, He reveals Himself first of all — not, as we should imagine, to the chief of the apostles, but — to a weeping, despairing woman, whose love had kept her near Him, though it might even be as He lay in the tomb.

And is it not so now: that He makes Himself known, not because of great gifts, or abilities, or position, but where there is a heart set upon Himself?

Jr.

## The Two Roads

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“WHATEVER have you got there, Mary?” exclaimed a young man gazing at a mysterious looking placard which, on his return home, he found nailed up in his cottage.

“It is only a picture that two ladies brought me this afternoon,” replied his wife; “they told me to fasten it up on the wall here. It is about the two roads in the Bible. Look, Robert! this is the broad way that goes to hell, and this heart, with ‘hopeless’ written on it, is to show that those who tread this path are miserable, because without God and without hope for eternity. And see, this is the narrow way which leads to heaven; it starts at the cross of Jesus, and ends with a crown of glory.”

“I can’t say I like the thing, Mary,” returned her husband, moodily. “You’d better take it down again.”

“No, I can’t do that, Bob, for it was given me on purpose to put here; if you don’t like it you must take it down yourself.”

“Well, put it upstairs, if you must have it somewhere; anywhere but here, where I shall see it every time I come in.”

“You can put it just where you like, Robert; but I dare not move it.”

So the diagram remained, giving its unwelcome message to Robert every time it caught his eye. He would generally try to look the other way, especially when his wife was present; but she often saw a furtive glance cast at it from behind the towel, as he washed his face, or while apparently busy at other things. Once or twice, coming in suddenly, she caught him standing earnestly studying the picture, and her heart was full of hope that it was indeed doing the work for which the ladies had given it. Still, if he spoke at all of the objectionable chart, he only expressed annoyance, and cavilled at it, saying there was no sense in the figure, for, as the narrow way came out of the broad one, they were really all walking on the same road.

“Yes, Bob, so we were at first, for we were all born in sin. Until eighteen months ago you and I were walking on that broad road together; but then, you know, I found out that I was a sinner, and that the path I was treading led to hell; soon after I heard of Jesus and His dying love, and gladly came to Him, and He has saved me. Now I am going on the narrow way to heaven, and I do want you to walk there with me, for, as the picture shows, the two roads will never meet again, though they were one at the beginning.”

“And what do you think of our little Minnie and baby? Which road are they on?”

“Minnie is too small to know much about it yet, and of course baby knows nothing; but Jesus loves little children, and He died to save them, and I know that if either of them were taken now He would have them in heaven with Him. But, dear Bob, you cannot possibly take the same ground that they do before God, for you are old enough to be responsible as to which road you choose to take.”

Weeks passed on, and Mary had the sorrow of seeing her husband still engrossed by the world and its fleeting pleasures. He had great talent for music, which often furnished him with an excuse to refuse his young wife's pleadings to go with her to hear the gospel preached. It repeatedly happened that he had just at that hour an engagement to perform at a concert, or to join some friends for music practice.

Poor Robert! he was moral and upright, a member of "The Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society," highly respected by all; he was the kindest of husbands, the most loving of fathers, but he was out of Christ, and he knew it, and was ill at ease. Especially did he feel this when with Christians, and therefore as far as possible he avoided their company. Mary was sorry to see how abruptly he would leave the house when her mother entered; or, if left in charge of the little ones, and unable to escape, would beg her not to speak of the Lord's things.

However, the diagram, undisturbed still, lifted up its silent testimony, and gradually, almost imperceptibly, a change was working. Robert would sometimes confess to Mary that the hymns he sang pricked his conscience. The opposition of former days was gone; he was so much "won by the conversion" of his gentle wife (1 Peter 3:1) that he now respected her Christianity, and even went so far as to own he wished he had what she possessed. He would often hold her up as an example to others, and though Mary modestly shrank from praise, which she felt was more than she deserved, still it made her heart beat high with hope that her many prayers for her beloved husband's conversion would soon be answered.

On coming in from chapel one Sunday evening, he seemed much overcome, and remarked that if his heart had not been so hard he would have been quite broken down by the sermon he had heard, for it was almost more than he could bear.

A few days later Robert was busy upstairs at some carpentering for his wife, while she was at her work below, when a sudden cry from him brought her hurriedly to his side. The sharp tool had slipped, making a terrible cut in his thumb, and Robert was white and trembling, and wholly unnerved. Mary hastily summoned her mother, and together they bound up the ugly wound, and gave him restoratives. For a day or two he let himself be nursed at home; but impatient to return to his work, did so as soon as the wound seemed healing, and thought no more of the accident.

So a week passed quietly away, when Mary was made uneasy by her husband repeatedly complaining of a stiff feeling in his face, to which no simple remedy she tried could give relief. She persuaded him to go to the doctor, who told him it was only the effect of a chill, which poultices would soon remove. However, this did not prove to be the case; the stiffness and pain increased to such a degree that he found great difficulty in opening his mouth to take any food. Convulsive spasms also began to shake his whole frame, and Mary, terribly alarmed, sent for further advice. The new doctor, having heard the symptoms, asked if the young man had lately met with any accident.

"Yes," replied his mother-in-law, who had come in to help to nurse him, "he cut his thumb a fortnight ago, but it is about well now. Look!" and she showed him the nearly-healed wound.

The doctor abruptly left the room, signing to her to follow.

"It is lock-jaw," said he, as soon as they were alone, "and he must die. Break it as gently as you can to the poor young wife."

"Mother," called Robert, "come up and tell me what he said."

Lifting up her heart to God to guide her words, she came slowly and sorrowfully back, and stood in silence by his bed.

"Mother, I know he has told you I am done for; it's all up with me."

"He has, my lad."

"Oh, mother, mother, what shall I do to be saved? I am dying, and I am a great sinner. Jesus would never have such an one as me."

"Jesus died, my lad, for great sinners, and He says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"Jesus died for great sinners," chimed in little Minnie, who unobserved had followed her grandmother to the bedside; "Jesus will have my daddy, I know He will."

Sorrowful days and nights followed of painful watching by the dying bed of the beloved husband and son. Great as were the bodily sufferings, they were not to be compared with the terrible agony of soul of the poor young man, who fully realized now, when he feared it was too late, that he had neglected the salvation that is in Christ, and that he was indeed hurrying to the end of that broad road that leadeth to destruction.

His devoted wife lost sight of her own great sorrow in her earnest desire to help him to find peace in believing; and several of the Lord's people, hearing of his deep distress, came and read to him from the word of God, and earnestly prayed by the bedside that the wandering sheep might be found by the Good Shepherd.

One who in past days had often pleaded with Robert now sat hour after hour with the sufferer, telling him, as he was able to bear it the story of the Saviour's love, of the full and free salvation He has accomplished for the sinner, and seeking to explain to him that simple faith in Christ would make it all at once his own. As he thus spoke the first gleams of light and peace pierced the dark clouds of doubt and unbelief that shrouded the soul of the tempest-tossed one.

Mary and her mother were full of heartfelt thankfulness that evening, for He who responded long ago to the faith of those who laid their sick one at His feet had now said to their dearly-loved sufferer, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," and they felt the sting of death was gone. But the devil would not let his captive go without a struggle, and soon the new-found peace faded before his subtle attacks.

"Oh, Mary, it is all gone!" he cried, "and I am as miserable as ever. I keep fancying I am standing in the market-place, and one and another comes and invites me to this concert or to that pleasure, and I give in to them all; and I have lost Jesus, and they are dragging me to hell."

"It is the devil who is buffeting you, dear Bob; don't give in to him; resist him; and he will flee from you; God says so 'He that is for you is stronger than he that is against you.'"

But Robert could not get the victory; weak in the faith, he could not withstand the tempter. Mary was sorely grieved to find that all she could say brought no comfort; and longed for some Christian friend to come; but feared, as it had already struck ten, that all would have retired for the night.

God, however, knew her need, and even as she cried to Him for help, a knock was heard at the cottage door, which she opened to admit the minister of Robert's chapel. He apologized for coming so late, but said he had just heard the young man was dying, and felt he could not wait till the morning.

Mary, in a few words, told him of her husband's deep soul-trouble. He at once knelt by the bedside, and in earnest prayer laid the whole matter before God, with fervent entreaty that the Lord would again lift up the light of His countenance upon the dying man, and restore to him the joy of His salvation. As he prayed, the evil one fled, and peace as a river flowed into Robert's soul, never to leave it again. Now, in broken sentences, he turned to exhort the one who had come to minister to him:—

“You, who teach the young, do warn them that they don't come to an end like mine. Tell them what a terrible thing it is to be on a dying bed without Christ. Even if, as I have done, they should find Him at the eleventh hour, still, let them take warning by all the misery of soul that I have passed through. Bid them seek Him while they have a life to give to Him. Do be in earnest in rousing souls to seek Jesus.”

The minister was quite overcome, and said to Mary as he left, “Your husband has been preaching to me, and not me to him.”

Left alone with his wife, Robert tenderly alluded to their soon-coming separation, and implored her forgiveness for anything in which he had pained her in the past, saying how much he regretted that he had not sought the Lord with her in those happy days when the goodness of God should have led him to repentance. His mind reverting to that which had first roused his sleeping conscience, he added earnestly, “I don't want you to take down The Two Roads' now; leave it where it is, to speak to everyone who comes into the house. I am no longer afraid of it, for I know I am in the narrow way that leads to life eternal,”

During the three days that Robert still lingered, he gave a bright testimony as to the preciousness of the Saviour to each one who came to him, and had a word of loving exhortation for those who knew Christ, to be more wholly for Him.

The last night his breath came with great difficulty, but his mind was as clear as ever, and his peace unclouded. The words were hardly intelligible through the clenched jaws, but those standing around the bed could distinguish such sentences as “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.” Then later, “Lord Jesus — come —,” failing to utter another word, he looked wistfully at the mother, who, reading his thought, added, “Quickly.”

His expression now became one of intense and rapturous joy; his uplifted eyes were illumined with a bright and glorious light, as though reflecting some vision unseen by others. He waved his hand upwards, while his lips tried to pronounce the precious name of Him who had become all in all to him, “Jesus — Jesus — Jesus.”

So he passed away, to be forever with the Lord, who had loved him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood. D. & A. C.

## Will You Take God at His Word?

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I MUST tell you of one of my young friends, whose name is Maggie. “Oh, how I should like to see you truly saved, Maggie,” said I to her one day, “now, will you promise me to repeat these words every night this week before you retire to rest: ‘O Lord, show me myself?’”

This Maggie promised to do, and I said no more to her for six weeks, having left her in the Lord’s hands to bless her soul. It was about the end of that time that, one evening, Maggie came to me in great distress, because of what she had heard the minister say the day before. He had urged all his congregation to come individually to the Lord Jesus, and to come at once, just as they were. Poor Maggie was in sore trouble of heart. “No to-morrow is promised me,” said she, “in God’s word — ‘To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts,’” and, she added, “I long to be saved, but I have always believed. The devils believe and tremble; they have no peace, neither have I.”

Then I gave her these two texts of scripture, “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all,” and “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” and also a slip of paper having written on it, “Will you take God at His word? say yes, or no.”

Most gladly did Maggie say yes, and no sooner had the word fallen from her lips than she wept for joy. Indeed, I too rejoiced with her, and, remembering the blessed words of Jesus, “I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10), we both thanked the Lord for His grace in saving such wretched creatures as we are.

## Washed in the Blood

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A DEAR friend of mine was sometime ago brought to the Saviour, and I cannot do better than give her conversion in as near her own words as possible.

“Thank God,” she said, “I have a conversion to tell. It was on a Sunday afternoon, in a little mission room. I went there merely to pass the time, for the Lord’s day was a burden and a weariness to me. The preacher read the seventh chapter of Revelation, and read over again this part of the fourteenth verse, ‘These are they which have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,’ and then he read a hymn having this line in it —

‘Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?’

“‘Let me ask each of you,’ he said, are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Do you stand in God’s sight pure and white, clothed in the robes of spotless righteousness? or do you still cling to the old garments fouled and stained with sin? Is it a light thing that the Saviour poured out His life-blood, and now waits offering you pardon and peace?

“‘Let those,’ he continued, who really know that they are washed, sing■

‘Yes, I am washed in the blood,

In the sin-cleansing blood of the Lamb.’

“I, for one, could not sing those words. My heart condemned me, and I stood convicted of sin. There and then I saw my need of cleansing, and left the meeting as in a dream, my one wish being to be left alone with God. For days that chorus kept repeating itself in my mind, but, through feeling wretched and undone, I made the too common mistake of looking within for some evidence of salvation, instead of looking off self to Christ.

“Some time after, at the close of a meeting in our village, the minister asked those who were saved to confess to it. I felt I must do so, and upon this joy and peace filled my soul. It is written, 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.” (Rom. 10:9.)

And now, my dear reader, let me ask, Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? God says, “When I see the blood I will pass over you.” Death may come to you, and after death comes the judgment. If you are not sheltered under the blood I tremble for you. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission. The great sacrifice has been made once for all, and now Jesus invites you to Him. “To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as whit as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

K. R.

## God's Comforts

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GOD does not say to His needy, sorrowing children, "Go thy way; be warmed and fed." Nay; if He calls upon Rachel to refrain from weeping for her little ones, it is because "they shall come again from the land of their bondage." If He would comfort mourners at Bethany, it is by telling them, "Thy brother shall rise again." If mourning saints now, He says, "Them also which sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him." God has gathered every ray of joy and triumph round this hour, and encircled it with a halo of grace and glory.

"Oh! morn too bright for mortal eyes,

When all the ransomed saints shall rise,

Caught up with Christ to reign."

THE world thinketh that godliness may sleep a a bed of down till it come to heaven.

LIFE is a warfare, Christian; be strong and of a good courage. There are no blessings to soldiers who are cowards.

"PRAYER hinders no work," says the proverb, and we may add, "No work prospers without prayer."

## Only a Step Between Life and Death

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“TRULY as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.” So said David to Jonathan when he fled from King Saul. The king sought his life, and David realized his danger.

Reader, may it not be said of you that there is but a step between you and death? But have you ever yet, like David, realized that such is really the case — that the brittle thread of life may snap at any moment? And what then? Perhaps, like thousands more, you think there is no danger. Well, Nabal the Carmelite did not think there was but a step between him and death when he sent the contemptuous message to David — “Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?” But a few days after God smote Nabal, and he died. Neither did the rich man, whose ground brought forth abundantly, think there was any danger when he proposed to himself in the midst of his prosperity to eat, drink, and be merry. Yet, “God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” But, even should your life not be immediately cut short, it is at the longest “but a vapor that appeareth for a little and then vanisheth away.” Oh, if you have never realized your danger, be persuaded to consider it NOW.

But, if there is, on the one hand, only a step between you and death, there is — thank God — a Saviour at hand. He is willing to receive you, for He has said, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

“Only a step to Jesus! then why not take it now? Come, and thy sin confessing, to Him, thy Saviour, bow. Only a step to Jesus! a step from sin to grace — What has thy heart decided? the moments fly apace. Only a step to Jesus! oh, why not come and say, ‘Gladly to Thee, my Saviour, I give myself away’?”

Awake then! awake ere it is too late! Hear the word of the Lord — “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?”

D. D. C.

## The Bread of God

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THE God of Elijah who once saw fit to make use of ravens as His messengers whereby to sustain His servant, is in our day the same ever-loving, ever-watchful Father, using, if need be, little homely sparrows to bring a word of peace and comfort to the hearts of His tried ones. Such was the case, not long since, with one upon whom domestic anxieties were weighing rather heavily. Illness was in the family, and the heart sickness of suspense was keenly felt. Just outside the window a number of sparrows were chirping and twittering cheerily over some crumbs thrown for them. Each received its morsel, and flew away satisfied. As the eye rested for a moment absently upon them, the thought flashed through the mind, framing itself into a quick petition — an upward glance of the heart to God— “Oh, how sorely I, too, need a morning crumb — a portion for the day; for I, too, am hungry — hungry in soul. Give unto me, O my Father a strengthening portion — a crumb of comfort whereby I may be sustained throughout the day, and know the power of Thy strength in my weakness afresh!”

As an instant reply, Christ’s own forcible words dropped softly and sweetly upon the anxious mind, “I am the bread of life.” “He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” (John 6:35, 57.) “My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For, the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven.” Christ Himself! the Bread of God — the Word of God, by which man shall live. What more, what other sustenance can any soul need? The now rejoicing heart would gratefully respond■

“Jesus, Thou art enough,

The mind and heart to fill,”

and praise flowed freely but silently forth.

Fellow pilgrims through a dry and barren land, where is absolutely no sustenance for the soul, feed much upon Christ — the bread of God■ the only true source of spiritual nourishment. He can refresh and satisfy heart, mind, and spirit, as nothing else can.

Learn also, even by the most humble means, to observe the loving kindness of the Lord. He who cares for tiny sparrows, will also sometimes teach by them. He has said, “Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

## Jesus Led as a Lamb — Jesus as the Lamb Leading

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ISAIAH tells us “He is brought (or led) as a lamb to the slaughter.” In the book of Revelation we read of those who “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” Our first text brings Jesus before us as a lamb being led, “led to the slaughter,” and none was ever led to such cruel slaughter as He. Who led Him? Not gentle hands; rough, fierce men hurried Him to death, and they were instigated by the hatred and malice of those belonging to His own beloved nation. This thought must have caused Him deeper anguish than all bodily pain. Did He not say in view of His griefs, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death”? (Mark 14:34.)

They seem to have had it all their own way, leading Him first to priests, then to Pilate, then to Herod, and back to Pilate again, and, from him to Calvary, where they slew Him — “the Lamb of God.” What deep, mysterious love, that He should allow Himself to be so led!

But the scene changes: He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, leads His people. “They follow the Lamb.” Where does He lead His redeemed and glorified ones? Not to suffering and death, but to endless joys — to fountains of living water, to pleasures for evermore. In those bright scenes above He most graciously and tenderly retains His character of the Lamb.

Jesus leads us while we are here on earth, and He says to each of us, “Follow thou Me.” (John 21:22.) This is a personal call. He will guide us in all things day by day; let us seek to obey His voice. There is nothing really worth knowing without the knowledge of Him. All other wisdom will be as nothing — with it, all other may be sanctified. Let us work and live for Him, who “was led as a lamb to the slaughter” for us — for us!

St. Mark, in his account of Jesus giving sight to a blind man (ch. 8:23), tells us, “He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town.” How gently His hand would guide that man away from the bustle and the noise; how carefully would He lead him, telling him where to avoid a stone or a rough place, and where it was safe for him to tread; then, at the end of the journey, He gave him the blessing of sight, that thus the man might see the powerful and gentle Saviour who had so tenderly “led him out of the town.”

Does He not deal thus with us? He led us “out of the town” — away by ourselves. We did not always see Him; our eyes were once blinded by doubt. He leads us still, and He will do so to the end, then He will give us eyes to behold Him — “the King in His beauty.” Yes, very soon and “we shall see Him as He is.”

E. D. E.

## The Old Clock

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THERE was an old clock we were acquainted with so eccentric in all its movements that it could seldom be depended upon. Its interim was in a strange condition, for, unless it was touched in a very peculiar way, any attempt to remedy its aberrations would only make it worse; indeed, our friend declared it was so testy an affair that his own temper was often lost in the vain endeavor to put it right. And so it often is with Christians — they often err, and point the wrong way, through being so touchy; and not only so, but they make others point the wrong way too, who catch their spirit for a time while trying to put them right. Perhaps the best way to deal with such persons is to pray for them, and to leave them to their aberrations and to leave them in higher hands to be corrected.

## The Three Steps

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THERE is a story told of a poor, half-witted man, named "Foolish Dick," who used to say there were only three steps to heaven■ "out of self, into Christ, up to glory."

## Spring up, O Well!

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(NUMBERS 21:17.)

THE journey is almost over — the wilderness well nigh passed — the need of the rock gone by. And on the very borders of the land we find to Israel are given “springing wells” and a song. They entered the wilderness with a song — “The Lord hath triumphed gloriously,” but its echoes soon died away amidst the murmurs and provocations of the journey. At the end, they have another song, as the princes and nobles digged with their staves — confession of their pilgrimage. Yes, another and a pilgrim song, not loud, with timbrel and dance — not of the great things done at the Red Sea — “Is it not said in the book of the wars of the Lord what He did in the Red Sea?” — but a humbler refrain: “Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it.”

“A little while our Lord shall come.” “Home! home of light and glory,” we too sing.

Ah! God has a history of our wilderness campaigns. All the victories His saints have achieved over sin and Satan; every struggle and tear in secret, unknown to any but God; trials of faith and patience, found unto praise, and Honor, and glory at the appearing of Christ. All the victories of God’s saints are displayed in His chronicles, in marvelous grace He giving them credit for what His sustaining power has wrought: “What He did in the brooks of Arnon” ... “there was not one city too strong for us: the Lord our God delivered all unto us.” (Num. 21:14.; Deut. 2:36.)

Meanwhile we have the springing well; and the “song,” spite of groans, tears, sorrow, and failure, is still ours to sing, as we near the end of the journey. The excitement and exultation of the first song may have passed away, as does the blossom from the tree, but precious fruits of the Spirit — love, joy, peace— remain to ripen in the sunlight of His love and presence.

“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink... and the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” J. B. M.

## The Unfound Name

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IT was a dull, cheerless day in the middle of November. Heavy fog pervaded the atmosphere, through which the houses on the opposite side of the street were only just visible. Indoors, bright blazing fires and comfortably furnished rooms might compensate for the outward gloom, but in these the fog was already casting its shadow, and making their brightness a little cold and chill. It had even entered the pleasant nursery in which little Emma B. was seated, gazing thoughtfully out into the street below.

It was Sunday, and brothers and sisters more robust than herself had accompanied their parents to a simple service held not far distant. Emma had watched them disappearing round the neighboring corner, inwardly wishing that she herself could have been one of their number. A shadow was on the little girl's face, the impress of some deep subject of thought which was just at present occupying her mind. Something was troubling her; for the dark brown eyes usually so bright and animated, were now thoughtful and sad.

During the early morning reading, Emma had heard words of such deep import to her mind that she had been anxious and uneasy ever since. The chapter selected had been the twentieth of Revelation. One verse in particular had fallen on her ears with strange solemnity, and had awakened in her mind the feeling of uneasiness to which we have already referred. The verse in question was the fifteenth and last: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." No wonder that little Emma looked sad as she pondered over its meaning. Was her own name inscribed in that precious volume? This was the question occupying Emma's mind as she stood gazing silently out of the nursery window into the street below.

Many a Bible story rose to her remembrance, the principal characters of which she tried to recall. The names of Sarah, Rebekah, Ruth, Naomi, Mary, Martha, and many others presented themselves readily to her imagination. But she could not recollect any incident in connection with her own name.

Tears filled her eyes as she turned from the window, and with her little Bible seated herself by the blazing fire; for to her childish mind the book she held in her hand was none other than the "book of life" of which the verse had spoken. How frequently had it been called such within her hearing!

Eagerly, anxiously, the little girl commenced her search. But no trace of her name could she discover. Verse after verse, page after page, chapter after chapter were closely examined, but with the same result. Once her eye fell upon the name of a playmate to whom she was greatly attached, and her heart beat quickly as she thought her own name might not now be far distant. But "Julia" was not, as she had hoped, followed by "Emma." And, after an hour's search, poor little Emma closed her Bible, buried her face in her hands and wept. Her name was not to be found in the "Book of Life," and hence there was but one terrible conclusion.

Presently the little girl raised her head and looked around. All spoke of wealth and comfort. Not many nurseries were furnished so luxuriantly as her own. In one corner stood the large exercising

chair, the delight of the children in rainy weather. In another, the commodious rocking-boat, capable of holding five of the party at once. Then there was the quaint-looking but nevertheless sweet-tuned sideboard piano, upon which any of the children might amuse themselves without fear of correction. But even as Emma looked at one after another of these treasures, she remembered another verse that did not at this moment tend to allay her fears. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

A species of picture-frame suspended from the wall suddenly attracted her attention. It was a strange design. By means of touching a small spring, twelve views of various incidents in the journeying of the Israelites were successively disclosed to view.

Hope filled little Emma's mind as she drew her chair in front of the picture, and then tried to compare it with the Bible narratives in her hand. Long lists of names were to be found among the descriptions, each of which was anxiously examined, but all ending with the same result. Once or twice nurse passed in and out of the apartment, but observing that Emma was apparently reading, she did not interrupt her in her occupation.

Slowly the morning wore away, and with it hope had died out of the little girl's heart. Once more her face was wet with tears. It was thus that her mother found her upon her return. Drawing Emma to her side she gently drew forth the cause of her sorrow.

Tenderly and simply she pointed out her little daughter's error, after which she explained to Emma the meaning of the verse that had so affected her.

"Jesus loved us, my darling," she said, as the little aching head was laid against her bosom. "Sin had come in and separated us from God. But He loved us, and came to bear the penalty of our guilt. For us He suffered the shameful death of the cross, that all who believe may be brought into the blessedness of life and peace. To believe in His love, Emma, is what He asks.

Listen to His own blessed words, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.'

All who trust in His precious blood are transferred from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son, and their names are entered in the book of life of which we were reading. None can pluck the sheep from the Good Shepherd's hand, they belong to the Saviour, and He will guard and keep them till He calls them to dwell forever in His presence."

And resting quietly in her mother's arms, dear little Emma took in the sweet story of a Saviour's love, and her little heart found "joy and peace in believing." No further fear or uneasiness with regard to her name ever again crossed her mind; she "believed" in the name of Jesus, and was perfectly happy in the knowledge of His love tards her.

Long since little Emma has passed away; she rests now at home, and joyful in the presence of Him who died for her. How blessed for her that when called to die she could be quite sure that her name would be found where she wanted it to be!

Dear little reader, are your names in the book of life? The Saviour waits to bless you, as He blessed the dear little girl of whom I have told you. He offers peace, pardon, and life to you to-day; accept His blessed message.

M. V. B.

## Saved or Lost — Which?

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THE following is the story of the conversion of a young lad of about fifteen years of age. He went to some special services, which were conducted by an earnest evangelist, who, being himself happy in Christ and rejoicing in the knowledge of sin forgiven, was longing that others should share in his joy.

“Dear friends,” said the speaker, “you are all of you saved or lost. You are on your way either to eternal happiness and joy, or you are on the downward road that leads you to everlasting torment; you cannot take a middle path, for God says there are only two ways — the strait and narrow way that leads to life; the broad one that ends in hell.

“A terrible shipwreck happened a short time ago, when many precious souls were ushered into eternity with scarcely a warning. Very few of the passengers that sailed in that ship ever reached the land to tell the sad tale.

“Now, if you had been on the beach at that time, and a man had come to you, saying, ‘Do you know that there were sixty passengers on board that vessel which has just gone down? — twenty escaped safe to shore, twenty were drowned in the sea, and twenty were neither saved nor lost!’ what would you think of such a man? You would at once say, ‘The man is mad.’ Well now, many are just like that man, for they say, ‘I know I am not saved, but I should not like to say I am lost: it’s far too dreadful to contemplate such a thing.’ But now listen for a minute to what God declares in His word, and we know every word is true: turn to John 3:18, what do we read there? ‘He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.’”

So ran the address to which the lad D — L ■ listened. He saw the force of the illustration; he knew he could not say, “I am saved,” but hitherto he had not considered himself lost. His conscience was thoroughly aroused, and he opened his heart to an earnest Christian, who was the means of leading him to accept God’s mercy, and he now rejoices in Christ as his own Saviour.

Dear reader, Are you saved or lost: which is it? Answer this most solemn question before God, and if you cannot truly say, “Thank God, I am saved,” then, like the young lad of whom I have told you, do not rest till you, can say, “I am saved.” Life is short; you may never see the light of another day. Oh, look to Jesus now; He has died that you, the sinner, might never die, and — oh, wondrous thought! — that you might live forever with Him in heaven. Simply take Him at His word, trust Him with childlike faith, and thank Him for His salvation.

## The Wedding Garment

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(Matt. 22)

WHEN a great person invites to a feast in Eastern countries it is customary to send not only an invitation, but also a garment to those who are bidden; further, it is usual to send not only the invitation and the garment, but, just when the feast is ready, a messenger, saying, "Come, for all things are now ready,"

Should a king send the invitation to any of his subjects it would be almost the same as a command — contempt of the message would be contempt of the king, and disobedience would be regarded and treated as treason.

Men think but lightly of their offense in slighting the message of God to them. Not only is it written, "As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5: 20), but it is also said, God "commandeth all men every where to repent." (Acts 17:30.) To turn to the farm and to the merchandize, instead of heeding the divine invitation to joy, is a crime against the majesty of God.

The robe sent to the invited guest would be one just suited to the occasion. We read of garments kept in the royal wardrobe to be used for state occasions — garments which cannot be bought, but which belong to the king, and are bestowed by royal favor on such as are honored to stand before him. However fine or beautiful the clothes of the invited might be, the eye of the king would be satisfied with none other garment for his guests save that of his own providing.

So is it with God and the guests whom He in infinite condescension invites to partake of the joy of the feast in Honor of His Son. He sends out His invitation, and along with it what we may term the robe of perfect fitness, to appear before Him. The invitation comes to whom He pleases to send it. "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." It is to the Honor of the King that there should be guests at the feast; hence many are called.

The terms of the invitation include the reception of the robe. There is a story told of an English officer in India to whom an invitation came from a great ruler to be present at a marriage feast. The Englishman prepared to go, but as he was leaving his house, one of his Indian servants said to him, "Sahib, you have not on the wedding garment." The officer at first did not understand, for he had not heard of such a robe being sent to him; indeed through the ignorance of his English servants it had been put aside. But enquiries were made, the garment was found, and attired in it the officer went to the feast. How often it is that a poor sinner, who receives God's invitation, knows not that God sends not only the gracious call to come to Himself, but bestows on those who accept His word of love, perfect fitness to appear before Him. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." (Col. 1:12.)

The servants of God should, like the officer's native servant, know well what their God's ways as to the invitation are. Never should an invitation be given without the perfection of God's way of

salvation being shown. A veteran in God's service was telling us, the other day, how that, when God first awakened him to his need of salvation, he heard over and over again from godly ministers the invitation, "Come to Jesus — come to Jesus," but so little of what God's salvation really is, that he despaired in his soul of ever being saved: how to come he knew not. Now he most earnestly presses upon all the servants of God who go out into the highways and "bid to the marriage" to explain to their hearers what God's salvation is; and we would echo the same wholesome truth, saying, "Remember the robe is sent with the invitation."

When God, through His servants, invites a poor outcast to Himself — to the joys of heaven — to the everlasting feast and song above, He provides, not only the joys of the feast, but presents also perfect fitness for the invited to be present. In Christ all perfections abound. In Christ "we have redemption... the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:4.) In Christ Jesus we Gentiles — we men and women of the highways, once far off — are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2:13.) So that when a sinner truly believes he truly receives. He is by God accepted in the Beloved. (1:6.)

The best robe wherewith the prodigal was clad upon entering his father's house marked at once the richness of the father's glory in grace, and the fitness of the son to enter and to be at home in the house. He was welcomed outside the house when in his rags; he was brought into the house worthy of being his father's son. The robe he wore came from his father's wardrobe — it came not from the far country. So it is with the wedding garment — it is all of God's handiwork. No human hand has woven its perfections — no human hand has added a stitch of broidery thereto. However we view the garments in which we may be attired in our daily lives — and some are, no doubt, very respectable compared with others — the fitness to be present before God depends solely upon His grace and the favor He bestows upon us in Christ.

How great was the indignity, yes, the insult, rendered to the king by the guest who accepted the invitation but rejected the robe! "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how earnest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" The servants would not have dreamed of asking the man into the palace without leaving the robe for his attire. Was he like so many — oh, so many! — in these days of Christian profession, who speak gaily of going to heaven, yet who leave Christ out of their religion? who say they expect to dwell with God in the joy and the glory of His presence, yet who are content to fix their hopes on the future upon religion, morality, or simple good-nature! Did Christ the Son of God come then from heaven to earth for nothing? did He die upon the cross for no end? Oh, terrible will be the awakening of the vain, proud heart, which discovers, when too late, that to dream of a title to glory without Christ is but an insult to God, and an unpardonable crime against His eternal majesty!

At the king's question the man was speechless. There was no excuse to render, he had despised the king's gift, and had come into the king's presence according to his own proud thoughts.

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" — taken away from the joy of the feast, and cast into the dungeon below, because of his pride in willfully rejecting the wedding garment.

The Lord says, "Many are called, but few are chosen;" and in our day, how true it is that many are called, for the very highways and the byways resound with the call; but too few who hear the call care to appropriate to themselves the wedding garment.

Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs.

#### THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN.

FEW parables of the Lord are more familiar to us than that, the title of which stands at the head of this paper, and probably few scenes were more familiar to the Lord's hearers than the one described by Him — the going up to the Temple for prayer. Happy indeed would it have been if those journeys to the sacred building had always been made in the true spirit of prayer, so that the words which He on another occasion quoted from the prophet might have been really fulfilled: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Such seems to have been its design, though very singularly there is no mention of prayer in the entire Mosaic code. It is not enjoined, and no example is given of prayer, unless we class under that head the threefold benediction of the high priest and the "profession" of the Israelite at the offering of the basket of first fruits and "poors' tithe."

But Solomon, upon the consecration of the Temple, in his dedicatory supplication, recognizes prayer as an act suited to all states and conditions, and with it the Temple is closely connected. "O Lord my God, hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which Thy servant prayeth before Thee to-day: that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which Thou hast said, My Name shall be there: that Thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant shall make toward this place." Here is the secret of a Jew's interest in the Temple: Jehovah had set His Name there. And though Solomon's Temple might fall, yet in the house which rose again upon its foundations, to the Jew, Jehovah's Name was still there. So in drought, in famine, in battle, in defeat, in captivity, the Jew bethought himself of the Temple, and his eyes turned toward the city which God had chosen, and to the house which was built for His Name. Thus Daniel in the land of his captivity opened his window toward Jerusalem, and Jonah in the belly of the great fish said, "I will look again toward Thy holy Temple." So we read in the Gospels of the pious resorting to the Temple, and in the Acts, of Peter and John going up thither at the hour of prayer.

But devout and prayerful as to a casual observer the people would appear to be, we find that formalism and hypocrisy to a large extent prevailed. How sharply the Lord spoke of those hypocrites who loved to pray standing in the synagogues and corners of the streets that they might be seen of men! "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." And not only do the Gospels preserve this condemnation of empty prayer, but when we turn to Jewish teaching, it unwittingly records its own condemnation. The Rabbis make prayer a meritorious act: "Moses was accepted by the Lord," say they, "not for his works, but for his prayers." One Rabbi, indeed, well declared that to convert prayer into a regular recurring duty, is not devout supplication. True words are these. But when we meet with the current Rabbinic saying, "Prolix prayer prolongeth life," we discover one of the causes of the "long prayers" condemned by the Lord. Again, "Since every berechah (thanksgiving) contained praise of the Divine Name, it was considered by the Jews an act of piety, and therefore entailing merit, to repeat as many as possible, till it was declared an evidence of special righteousness to say a hundred such berachoth (thanksgivings) in the course

of a day.”

It is believed that in the time of the Lord some amount of freedom was allowed in prayer, but already burdensome rules (which afterward were made more stringent) were imposed as to posture, etc. It was laid down, either at that time or a little later, that the back must be bent till every bone was visible; that the voice must not be too loud, nor too low; neither, if during prayer even a serpent should twine itself round the heel of the suppliant, must it be shaken off — a restriction removed in the case of a scorpion, whose bite was more dangerous. In these and other ways all true prayer was in danger of being crushed out of the heart, under the “grievous burdens” imposed by the spiritual guides of the people.

But if prayer itself was so meritorious, the place in which it was offered was of no small importance. For, though Rabbi Jochanan (a contemporary of the Apostle Paul) excellently says, that he who prays in his house fortifies it as with a wall of iron, he adds that this holds good only where a Jew is alone — where no community exists. There, the synagogue must be resorted to. Others went further, and held that prayer was valid only when offered in the synagogue. How different the spirit of Christianity as expressed by St. Paul: “I will that men pray everywhere.” So other causes than the fact that Jehovah’s Name was set in the Temple, would induce suppliants to resort thither.

Thus the Lord brought a familiar sight to the minds of His hearers when He spoke of the two men, who “went up into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are [literally, the rest of men], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess [rather, acquire].’” That is all; it is not a long prayer, but we are amazed at its terms. There is no word of petition in it! Can it be that the Lord has chosen an extreme case, to make Pharisaism repulsive? Not so, for prayers of celebrated Rabbis are preserved which astonishingly resemble this self-complaisant utterance. “I thank Thee, O Lord my God,” prays one, “that Thou hast put my part with those who sit in the academy, and not with those who sit at corners [money changers, &c.]. For I rise early, and they rise early: I rise early to the words of the law [Thorah], and they to vain things. I labor and they labor: I labor and receive a reward; they labor and receive no reward. I run and they run: I run to the life of the world to come, and they to the pit of destruction.” Strikingly similar is the prayer of Rabbi Nechunjah: “I thank Thee, O Lord my God, and God of my fathers, that Thou hast cast my lot among those who frequent academies and synagogues, and not among those who attend theaters and games. Both I and they work and watch: I work for the inheritance of heaven, and they for their perdition, as it is written: ‘For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption!’” One more example of Rabbinic righteousness will suffice. R. Simon ben Jochai (“whose worthiness was so great that through his lifetime no rainbow was needed to insure immunity from a flood”) said: “I have seen the children of the world to come, and they are few. If there are three, I and my son are of the number; if there are two, I and my son are they; if only one, I am he!”

What light such a spirit throws upon those passages of Scripture which speak of the self-righteousness of the Jews — of those who, ignorant of God’s righteousness, went about to establish their own! So with the Pharisee of our parable; he has no petition to ask; but dividing all

mankind into two classes, he sets himself in the one, and “the rest of men” in the other. The latter he paints in the blackest hues, as a background to the brighter tints of his own virtues. The most abominable sins are imputed to others. As for himself, he is not only free from them, but he can point to a higher obedience than the much revered Torah demanded. That enjoined a fast once a year only — on the day of atonement; he fasted twice a week. Again, the law called upon the people to give a tithe of the land, whether of seed or of fruit; but this Pharisee paid tithes of all that came into his possession. So he closed his prayer; and, satisfied with himself and his righteousness, he goes his way. Alas! when the testing time came, what would he and such as he find their righteousness to be worth? Absolutely nothing; in the light of God’s presence it would appear only as filthy rags.

Very different was the poor publican who came up to the Temple. He indeed stood afar off but as an old writer truly puts it ■

“One nearer to God’s altar trod

The other to the altar’s God.”

The Pharisee might advance farther into the Temple, but the publican, though afar off, approaches nearer to God. Standing with downcast eyes, smiting upon his breast, he really prays, and his prayer has furnished till this day words for the contrite soul “God, be merciful to me, the sinner.” He, like the Pharisee, marks himself out from other men, but to condemn himself, and in his prayer for “mercy” lies an acknowledgment of his guilt and the need of propitiation. His few words come from a deep source — not from the lips only, but from a heart such as God delights to make His dwelling — the contrite and lowly. And both Pharisee and publican depart from the place of prayer possessing what each esteems above all other things — the one his own righteousness, the other God’s mercy. In the eternal issues — what a contrast! The one to receive abasement and shame for his self-righteous pride; the other to be exalted, though his exaltation is indeed reached by way of the Valley of Humiliation. For, “I tell you,” is the Lord’s emphatic comment, “this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that abaseth himself shall be exalted.”

Oh, let us not miss the lesson which in this parable is written large for us! Let us not imagine that its application extends to a little sect of the Jewish people and ends there. It reaches down to us. For the words were spoken to “certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.” It may be each of our readers would refuse to admit such full-blown Pharisaism as is described by the Lord; but is our trust in self or in God? The blessing which the publican received can never exist with Pharisaic pride, and to lose that blessing is to lose all. May we, like the publican, prove the truth of God’s word, that a broken and a contrite heart He will not despise. Jr.

## My Conversion

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I DO not know that I ever doubted the truth of Christ being the Son of God, for, from early childhood, I was taught to reverence His name, and it was due to pious training, that not until partly through my “teens,” the real activity of sin became evident in my life. But how rapidly it grew! I can remember as I pen these words tonight how I hurried downhill in the pathway of wickedness, until even those who had been companions in the early stages of my career were left behind. But the picture of those dark days, the memory of which brings pain, shall not be drawn. One thing, however, which may be a word of encouragement to some soul, shall be recorded: Jesus saves even the vilest, for He has saved me.

A few years of life passed by, in which various experiences — carelessness, anxiety, strivings, hope, fear, and well-nigh despair — were intermingled. Then came a certain night, never to be forgotten. I was spending the evening with a married sister, whose next door neighbor held Bible-readings in his house, and to these my sister and her husband were invited. There was to be one of these readings on the night of my arrival. I preferred to stay with the children, and my relatives went together, I remarking, in jest, that they might get me an invitation for the next occasion! The following week, when I had forgotten all about my remarks, the gentleman who conducted the readings sent a message that he would be pleased to see me, and, thinking it would pass away an evening, the invitation was accepted.

I had only been in England a couple of months, and the Bible-reading was strange to me. The evening was commenced with a hymn, which I thought a very ordinary one, and the tune execrable, and then a portion of Scripture was read and spoken about. Very quietly the gentleman handled his subject, but inch by inch, so to speak, word by word went home to my heart, and in one short hour I was changed from an indifferent, careless scoffer into a convicted miserable sinner before God.

Can I describe it? No, nor anyone else! It was the work of God by His blessed Spirit, using and applying His word to my consciences. I do not even remember the portion of the word that was read, but I saw that night the sword of the wrath of Almighty God abiding over the unprotected sinner. And what was I? What had I between my sins and a holy God? Nothing— no, nothing. There I stood revealed to myself—a vile, helpless, hell-deserving sinner, naked before God. Oh, reader, have you ever seen yourself thus? Do not measure the extent of your transgressions; one sin, as much as a million, will place you in the sinner’s unprotected condition before the holy God.

My heart was too heavy to say much. I left the house, and went home, and to bed, to be alone. Oh, what agony of mind was mine! I was haunted with the memory of my sins — many of them, long forgotten, rose up before me. Death, the one thing of which a guilty sinner is afraid, stared me in the face, and after death the judgment! —eternal death, not annihilation. How was I to stand then? I was alone, because without Christ, and what terror does this bring to the soul! Slowly and sadly the night passed, and with the morning came a feeling of carelessness again. But, thank God, with that device of Satan to drown my convictions, God gave one word from Himself — “My Spirit shall

not always strive with man.” I knew the Spirit of God was striving with me; and what if He should go away, never to return, and leave me without hope! Oh, the thought was agony.

As soon as possible I hastened to my sister, and found her, to my surprise, rejoicing in a newly-found Saviour. What a contrast we presented! The day was spent in praying often together, and towards evening she enquired if I might see the gentleman at whose house I had been the evening before.

Bible in hand, I called at the house, told simply and truly my trouble of soul, that I knew myself a sinner in the sight of God, and that if I had to die that moment I should find my portion with the damned. I told the gentleman also that I believed the book in my hand to be the word of God, and was prepared to accept it as such; confessed that Jesus is the Son of God — that He came down from heaven to die for sinners, and that I knew myself to be a needy sinner, and then earnestly inquired if my friend could help me?

He smiled at my earnestness, which not only surprised me, but made me think him unkind. Then he bade me open the Bible at the fifth chapter of St. John’s Gospel, and told me to read to myself two or three times over the twenty-fourth verse: “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.”

I read the words calmly, quietly, and as I did so God, in His mercy, opened my eyes. When the dark clouds have gathered above, obscuring the sun, and covered the sky with an inky blackness, sometimes just in one little spot there is a break, and a gleam shoots through, brightened by contrast with the darkness around. So it was to my soul as the truth of God’s word burst upon me.

Let us open the Bible and read that verse again: “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.” Oh, joy! I had heard the word many and many a time, and now I believed; I had everlasting life.

The gentleman said nothing. No doubt he was praying. The silence was long and sweet — too precious to be broken. At length I looked up, and through tears of joy said, “Then I have everlasting life?”

My friend replied, “Yes, if you believe what God says in that verse.”

I replied, “Lord, I believe.” And, blessed be His name, I have never doubted Him from that day to this.

Dear reader, again I ask, have you ever realized what it is to stand unprotected from the coming judgment? If you have, and this simple narrative of the Lord’s gracious dealings with a poor sinner has brought the memory of that time back to you, do not put away again the great question. If you do, you may find to your cost that you cannot put away the realities of hell and an eternity without Christ. Oh! let me plead with you, very solemnly and very affectionately. Myself a brand plucked from the burning, I implore you not to let another night, another hour pass, but seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near. Now He sits as Saviour, and whosoever will, may know Him as such; but to those who refuse Him, He will shortly sit as the Judge. No mercy then! No Saviour then! Nothing but judgment; nothing but torment.

That blessed One, the Lord of life and glory, will soon come to make up His jewels, to gather up to Himself all His redeemed ones, all who believe in Him, all who trust Him. To be left behind is to be left for judgment. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2) — then, will be too late. Sadly solemn will he that cry■

"Too late, too late,

Ye cannot enter now."

A. L. M.

## Floating with the Tide

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A FEW years ago, on a bright summer morning, a young girl was bathing with her companions in the sea. She was a tolerably good swimmer, and therefore felt under no restraint as to the distance she might go. Now there happened to be a strong current at that time towards the open sea, about which all the bathers had been warned. But as she was floating along lazily on her back, she suddenly drifted into it, and was carried out to sea with great speed.

Her friends cried out to her in violent excitement, but the motion was so delicious that the young girl could not resist the enjoyment a little longer, promising herself plenty of time to swim back. Suddenly, on looking round, she was startled to find herself at a very great distance from the shore, and immediately began to swim back with all her might. But oh, horror! she had miscalculated her strength.

After several minutes of despairing effort she found herself only losing ground. Already she was nearly exhausted with the struggle, and at last, with a cry of hopeless agony, abandoned herself to certain death. And the cruel wave hurried her along in its relentless arms.

But suddenly, when life was nearly extinct, a strong arm seized her, and dragged her into a boat, in which she was taken to the shore, and there restored to life.

You know what I am going to say; but do not stop reading with a smile. Many people can tell you the way to heaven who will never get there themselves. Does that take anything away from its reality and truth?

How many young men and women go out into the world with many a solemn warning ringing in their ears; and yet, just because certain places on the chart have been marked as dangerous, they are led by a fatal curiosity only just to go and have one peep at them. They go, and bitterly do they repent of the knowledge thus gained. What would they not give to unlearn that, the knowledge of which is consuming body and brain, and destroying the immortal soul? Oh! take my advice before it be too late; fly from the fatal current of vice. Do not be allured by the opening sweets of sin; each rose conceals a poisonous thorn, which will rankle deeply in your bosom. And yet how many have fallen into this fatal current, only to find that our own efforts to escape are vain, and to turn at last in helpless shame and misery to Jesus Christ.

Perhaps, dear reader, you are just entering into the world. The pure associations of home life, the merry schooldays, have passed away forever. Life is before you with all its pitfalls; many of them hidden in the dark. Yes, there is only one clue to guide your feet in safety, one golden clue, that is — Jesus Christ. Oh, come to Him at once! Bring Him all the fire and energy of youth. Flee from the very appearance of evil. And you who are old, you who have left the paths of virtue, you who are haunted by the ghosts of misspent years, you who have sunk to the deepest depths of degradation, come to the loving Saviour while there is still time. He is waiting to deliver and to forgive you. “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.” “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.” “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;

though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

## “Honey.”

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TWO bonnie round cheeks as rosy as could be, and two little dimples nestling there whenever the red lips parted in laughter; two great wondering eyes, speaking of some possible depth in the baby-soul as yet scarcely conscious of its own existence; a loving little voice with a pathetic ring in it. As little “Honey” sat upon the doorstep — for he really did sit for five whole minutes sometimes — in the sunshine, the neighbors passing had always time for a kiss and “Bless his heart”; and the tall lady, who so often went in and out where sin and sorrow beckoned, never forgot to bestow her kiss upon the dirty little face, whose sweetness no amount of black could hide.

Solemn consideration — the mischief-loving, laughing, dirty little boy has eternity before him. Will the soul anchor upon the everlasting Rock, or lie, a wreck, upon that fearful ocean where God’s creatures, sought and loved by Him, groan in the anguish of eternal remorse?

The years have rolled by, the babe has grown up to be a man. It is a cold Christmas night, not more than three years ago, and a ragged, wild-looking young man and his consumptive, thinly-clad wife, step into a little chapel in a small country village in Hampshire. Night after night through the year the young man’s evenings had been spent at the public house close to the hovel he called home; week after week his earnings had gone in drink; while his delicate wife, and the four children, were almost starving. But this night he had yielded to his wife’s persuasions to go with her to some service. “I don’t care where,” he said: and so they sat together for once, to hear the message which the wondrous heart of God has been giving out through so many, many years.

The young man returned to his home. He had heard nothing, he said, but he knew the preacher’s eyes were fixed upon him all through the address.

Day after day passed, days of wretchedness and unutterable despair. “Give up the drink and all will be right,” said a voice to him. So, much to the astonishment of the landlady, her best customer failed to appear. But that gave no rest of heart to the young man.

“Give up swearing,” urged the giver of false peace; and for a little while the wondering wife and children missed the accustomed oaths; but the oaths were still in his heart, and the closed lips were not the means of opening the heart to Jesus.

“Give up the smoking,” whispered the one who had kept so close, and as “Honey” sat before the fire that evening, the pipe was taken out of his mouth, and, with the tobacco-pouch, consigned to the flames, and the wife who watched him thought him gone mad, for although she knew about the Saviour, and felt that He alone could change her husband’s life, she did not know Him for herself.

But still the fear and wrestling were at this young man’s heart, so he turned toward the little chapel in which he had spent his Christmas evening. He told his history to the minister, who was just coming out of it, who listened to the story of conviction of sin and its terrible horror.

“Come to me on Sunday evening,” said the minister; and the wretched young man turned away with his soul full of misery and death, wondering where he could find a resting-place for his

crushing load. He walked to the bridge spanning the ever-flowing river, and as he watched its quiet, ceaseless course, he told himself that surely, within those peaceful waters he should find peace, that lying white and still beneath them his heart would be beyond the strife of sin and the agony of fear. But swiftly came the words, "As that river is running onward, so surely and swiftly is your soul going to hell," and he left the bridge, realizing that life, even as it was, would be more bearable than the unknown darkness beyond.

The following Sunday evening he met the minister again, who, when he told the sin-stricken young man to call upon him in three days, had surely forgotten that "now" is God's time. But God is gracious. At the service in the chapel the young man heard the word of God, and through that word the Holy Spirit spoke rest to his soul, and he was plucked as a brand from the burning, and his sin-stained feet were set upon the Rock.

Now a new life opened upon "Honey" —for such was his nickname. The brightness of this young man was unclouded, his faith strong and full, his love and earnestness for souls, deep; and afterward, when struck down by pleurisy, unable to have even a fire in his wretched little bedroom, with his wife fast dying of consumption, too ill to nurse him, or sit with him in the fireless room, and with the prospect of four little ones to be left fatherless, motherless, and penniless, his faith looked up to his Father in heaven. He trusted in His pitifulness, and said he knew all would be well. Then, joyfully and without a shadow of care, he passed away, and in a few weeks later his wife followed him, to be "forever with the Lord."

What remains to be told? The little hovel where poor "Honey" lived is now pulled down, being unfit for habitation; three of the children are in an orphanage, and little "Bobby," the youngest, sits daily upon his granny's doorstep, looking the picture of health and happiness.

The footprints of the Lord in His compassionate seeking and tender loving-kindness are deep trodden in the little village where "Honey" lived; and, reader, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

## The Man, Christ Jesus

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THERE is a beautiful Rabbinic saying that, "In every passage of Scripture where thou findest the majesty of God, thou also findest close by, His humility." In proof of this, there is cited from the Law (Deut. 10:17, 10:8) the words, "The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords," &c., followed by, "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow"; from the Psalms (68:4, 5), "Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens by His Name JAH," followed by, "A Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows"; from the Prophets (Isa. 57:15), "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," followed by, "I dwell... with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

To the believer this unfolding of the grace of "the God of glory" is very beautiful, nor is it less precious to find on turning from the Old Testament to the New that the quotation given above holds true also of the Lord Jesus Christ. Close by His majesty thou wilt find His humility. If He is declared to be the Word who was God, we soon read, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." When it is stated that He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, it is followed by, "He made Himself of no reputation." Very blessed is this, for in this identity of character we discover the identity of Person of JEHOVAH of the Old Testament and Jesus of the New.

But our opening quotation will bear to be put in a slightly altered form: "lose by the humility of Christ thou wilt find His glory." We read that "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"; it is followed by, "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Weary and hungry in the wilderness, the object of Satan's temptation, the Tempter yet confesses Him as Son of God: "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." There is not any doubt implied in the word "if"; Satan simply assumes the fact without denying it, and calls for an exhibition of power worthy of the Person. In the Garden of Gethsemane, surrounded and bound by His captors, it was only so after the declaration of His Name "I Am" — had caused them to fall backward to the ground. Rebuffed by a poor, sinful woman at the Well of Sychar, the glory of Christ was shown as the Revealer of Secrets— the true Zaphnath Paaneah — the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

We should find this association of glory and humility to be true throughout the entire Word if we had but eyes to discern it. Generally, this glory cannot be hid. In this paper, however, we wish to follow only one branch of the subject, namely, that whenever the Lord Jesus Christ is by an inspired writer called "Man" — a name which itself, as applied to Him, speaks of a wondrous depth of humility — it is connected with glory which is peculiarly His, which none other man could by any means share with Him.

That God should become Man is surely a stupendous fact, the meaning of which our thoughts little conceive, yet nothing less than this took place when the Babe was born in Bethlehem. What is involved in those words, "He made Himself of no reputation," it will take eternity for us to learn, for the incarnation was the prelude to the cross. Yet even so, humbling Himself thus, becoming true and very man in this world — and a man of sorrows, too — it could not be otherwise than that glories should be His, which none other could have. He was Man among men, knowing weariness

and hunger and thirst as other men — yet in other ways how different!

As our review is limited to passages where the inspired writer uses the term “Man” of our Lord Jesus Christ, the whole of the Gospels and Acts are placed on one side, for in none of these do the evangelists use the word, only as reporting it from the lips of others. We may say, briefly, that its use in the historical books is much less frequent than we should imagine. It occurs in Matthew three times, in Mark twice, in Luke (the gospel of the Son of Man) six times, and, rather singularly, in John’s Gospel of the divine glory of the Son of God, it occurs twelve times. In the Acts it is once used; different word translated “man” occurs twice.

We pass on to the Epistles, and discover that in the whole of them the expression is used only four times of our Lord, and these all in the writings of St. Paul. In our English translation it may indeed be found in other passages—for instance, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as, “This [Man], because HE continueth ever,” “This [Man] when He had offered one sacrifice for sins,” &c. —but in all such passages there is no corresponding word in the original, and it is merely inserted (generally in italics) to help the sense.

We turn, then, to the four places mentioned, premising again that our only object now is to draw attention to the glories which distinguish the “second Man” from all others.

(1) Rom. 5:15: “If through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” Here, as in two other passages to be mentioned, the contrast is between Christ and Adam. By the man Adam disobedience and sin entered, and death followed in the train of the offense—all partook of this consequence of Adam’s sin: the many (which really is all) were made sinners — one only excepted, the Man Jesus Christ, and His glory it is that through Him God’s grace and the free gift in grace has abounded unto the many. By Adam, disobedience: by Christ, obedience; — by Adam, condemnation: by Christ, justification; by Adam, death: by Christ, life. And it will surely be seen that though we, believers, share in the blessings brought by “the Alan Jesus Christ,” we cannot share in the glory of bringing them — His alone that is; His, blessed be His Name! it ever will be.

(2.) 1 Cor. 15:21, 22: “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Again we have the contrast of Adam and Christ — by the former, death; by the latter, resurrection. And again we would say, this is a glory which none can share, and this distinguishes Him from every other man. By Him is resurrection; in Him is the making alive; we are those who, by and in Him, are raised and quickened.

(3,) 1 Cor. 15:47: “The first man is of the earth, earthy [i.e., ‘formed of dust,’ not ‘earthly’]; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.” Though Christ and Adam are here again contrasted, it is not (as in the two former quotations) the result of actions which form the subject of discrimination, but rather personal distinction. The passage speaks of origin. Adam’s was from the earth, and he was, as we learn in Gen. 2:7, formed of the dust of the ground. Our Lord Jesus came not from such an origin; He is not of earth, but is the Lord from heaven. Of Him only can this be said: though we, having borne the image of the earthy, shall also bear the image of the heavenly. “From heaven” is Christ’s alone, and, as we learn from another scripture, “He that cometh from above is above all.”

(4.) 1 Tim. 2:5: “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, [the] Man Christ Jesus.” This, our last passage, is the only one in which Christ is not contrasted with Adam. It is glory, not exactly personal, but pertaining to an office He has taken upon Himself—that of Mediator. There is but one Mediator, as there is but one God, and that Mediator is the Man Christ Jesus. Let us turn to the Old Testament Scripture with which it is connected. In the ninth chapter of the Book of Job, Job laments that he is brought to contend with God, and he sighs out, “He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman [or, as the Greek translation used by the apostles has it, any mediator] betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Let Him take His rod away from me, and let not His fear terrify me: then would I speak, and not fear Him; but it is not so with me.” How many, like Job, have sighed for that daysman ■ that Mediator! For, if God be approached in all His majesty and glory, how can it be otherwise than that His fear will terrify the soul? Not that it was ever thus, though soon, alas! man’s sin turned God’s glory into a consuming fire. Is there, then, no Mediator? Yes, it is answered at last, there is One who in His Person answers all Job’s desires: He can “lay His hand upon us both.” For this same epistle, which speaks of Him as Man, declares Him also God, in that great mystery of godliness — God manifested in flesh. Thus in virtue of His divine personal glory He can be with God on our behalf, and on the other hand, He can be with us, for He is truly Man, and Elihu’s words to Job are true of the Lord: “My terror shall not make thee afraid.” Although in glory now, we remember that He is the “same Jesus” who lived on earth, and we recall the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth — words like unto which none other man ever spake. There was nothing in Him to alarm the troubled heart; there was everything to attract and to win. He it was who said to the weary, “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.” God has drawn near to us, in and as Man, that He may bless us; and by that Mediator, Jesus Christ, true Man, we draw near to God.

We may not linger over this theme, blessed as it is: we are content to point out to those who love Christ this association of peculiar glories with the Lord’s name of humility — that, as “Man,” by Him come justification, and God’s gift of grace; by Him is resurrection and life from the dead, Personally He is the Lord from heaven, and to the troubled heart, trembling like Job at the majesty of God (and indeed to the saint at peace as well) He is the Mediator between God and men.

## The Eye and the Feet

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I CHANCED upon a sower, who was using for his work the simple but effective contrivance of a light wheelbarrow, upon which a narrow trough, some eight feet long, filled with seed, was placed. By an easy arrangement the motion of the wheel of the barrow set in motion a number of small wheels in the trough, by means of which the seed was driven through small holes, and so fell, like grains of sand through the waist of the hour glass evenly upon the soil. The sower was working upon a very large field, and his duty was to scatter the seed evenly over every portion of it. In order to enable him to do this, various flags were placed in a straight line along the field, and following this guiding line, he would accomplish a strip of the field the breadth of his trough.

“It is not easy to keep a straight line,” said I, and he readily assented, for what with the rough stones and broken soil of the field turning aside not only the wheel of his instrument but the feet of the sower, the task seemed difficult.

“It is done,” said he, “by fixing the eye upon the flags, and keeping one flag hiding exactly those which are behind it.”

“Let me try,” said I, and accordingly I tried to stick to the man’s simple rule, and to pay no attention to the roughness of the field, its sharp stones, and occasionally sinking soil. There was a strong temptation to turn the eye off the flags, and to cast glances upon the ground, but success to keep the straight line depended upon the faithfulness of the eye.

It was to preach to myself a sermon on faith that I begged the sower to let me try his instrument, and the effect of the flags on the course of my feet. And now, dear Christian reader, may this little incident be a practical illustration to you on these words, “Looking off unto Jesus.” Keep your eye upon Him, and He will keep your feet. Crooked walking and stumbling over the stones result from the error of seeking to walk aright in our own might, instead of by faith looking off unto Jesus.

## How the Guilty Boy Got Free

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THE following incident took place some years ago, in the city of Dublin. There were two brothers, Johnnie and Willie, with whom I was acquainted. I give the account, as well as I can remember it, as they told it to me.

One morning Willie, the younger brother, was rather unwell, and for a while it did not seem as if he would be able to attend school that day, but he became better, and it was decided that he might go. Accordingly the boys packed up their books, and Johnnie watched over his brother on the way.

There were certain rules and regulations in the school—things which the scholars, were to do, and things which they were not to do—and it was known to the boys that the master would not allow an act of disobedience to go unpunished. He had given full directions and stated distinctly what was to be done, and what was not to be done, and he would not depart from his word.

The school began, and the boys were all attentively at work. The master looked around; everything was going on well, and he was pleased. But presently a boy did the very thing which he had been told not to do — went quite contrary to the master's known desire and will! How gladly this boy would hide himself! But the master's quick eye was scanning the room, observing all that was going on. His eye rested upon the guilty boy, and he called him up.

Now, while the master and the school were looking upon the offender, Johnnie grew exceedingly thoughtful, for the guilty boy was none other than his brother Willie whom he loved very much. Johnnie thought of the punishment which Willie's offense must certainly receive. He knew it would be useless to ask the master to let his brother off; besides, the master would only be acting right in punishing little Willie, and Willie would be only receiving that which he had brought upon himself. But Johnnie kept wondering if he could get his brother free.

Presently he thought of a way by which perhaps Willie could escape.

"What, Willie get off!" does my young reader say? "How could the master keep his word, and yet the guilty boy get free?"

Johnnie knew very well that the master could not let the offense go by unpunished, and still keep to his word; but for all that he had thought of a way by which the master might maintain his position, and the act of disobedience also receive the full penalty due to it. So he went up straight to the master, acknowledged that his brother was guilty, and deserved to suffer, and then said, "My brother deserves the punishment, but, please, sir, allow me to bear it in his stead."

Now, the master was a gracious man, and was quite willing to let the boy go free, if that were possible, so he accepted Johnnie as the punishment-bearer in the stead of his brother.

Willie's freedom now depended entirely upon Johnnie's accomplishing that which he undertook to do. Should Johnnie fail, then Willie must bear the punishment. And if Johnnie would only bear part, then the remainder must come upon Willie. For him to be free, the whole must be borne.

A touching scene ensued. The guilty boy was taken from the place where he stood, and the boy who had done nothing deserving of punishment stood in his place. The boys all looked on in wonder, while the master took the rod, and stroke upon stroke fell upon Johnnie, and when the last stroke was borne, then Willie was free. The offense had received its due; it had been borne by one who did not deserve it, but who willingly stood in the place of the guilty. And he was treated as if he were himself guilty, and was dealt with as though he were the actual offender.

Thus you see how the guilty boy got free. His punishment was borne by another — by his brother who loved him, and who patiently endured it so that he might be saved from it.

I have often thought of this incident. It is an illustration of the way in which God can righteously save the sinner who believes, seeing that Christ has died.

In Christ, the beloved Son of God, we have the only One who could answer to the requirements of God, who could do anything for the sinner. He, according to the Father's will, became man, and on the cross received the full weight of the judgment due to sin, leaving nothing to be done — nothing to be borne. Hear His own words, "It is finished," and see in God's raising Him from the dead and taking Him to His own right hand in heaven, that which gives assurance that all is accomplished. He who had done "nothing amiss" suffered, the "Just for the unjust." The full amount of stripes came upon Him, for God did not lessen the judgment because His Son was the Bearer of it, but dealt with Him according to that which sin deserved.

God is now able, righteously, to save all who, believing Him, put their trust in Christ Jesus. When the sinful child of Adam, whether he be old or young, rich or poor, owns himself or herself as guilty, and accepts the cross of Christ as the only way by which he can be saved, he is free from judgment — delivered from the wrath to come. The once guilty sinner, who was afraid of God, is afraid no longer, and while he owns God's love in giving, he thinks of the love of Christ in dying. The sinner sees the question of sin has been settled. He finds pleasure in the presence of God, and as he thinks of that which he has in Christ — salvation from the consequences of sin — a place with Christ in the glory, his heart is filled with exceeding joy, and his delight is to live to Him Who loved him and gave Himself for him.

A few words more— God, Who has been true to His word in punishing sin, is, and ever will be, true to His word in saving those who believe; but He will also be true in dealing in judgment with those who believe not. For while there has been that done by which He can righteously save, yet the benefit of it only comes to those who, owning themselves sinners deserving of punishment, avail themselves of His gracious provision, whereby He is able to save now, in this, the day of grace, those who believe.

E. K.

## A Child's Memory

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YEARS ago, in the town of Kidderminster, stood a modest little chapel, which has since been replaced by a handsome edifice erected in a fashionable part of the town. The old chapel, however, has been the scene of many an outpouring of blessing, and, at the time of which I am writing, its occupants could rejoice in the ministry of a real servant of God. This minister was a great lover of children, and not only did he hold a Bible-class for these young lambs of the flock, but sought upon every occasion to win the love and confidence of all the young people and children of his congregation. Thus, when paying pastoral visits to the parents, it was frequently the custom of our minister to take one of the children upon his knees, and to coax them to tell him all their little joys and sorrows.

No wonder that one little girl, about five years of age, should almost worship such a minister, for in her home he was always spoken of with great respect, and when he called at their house, it was the delight of this little maiden to sit upon his knee and to tell him answers to his questions.

"What book did she like best?" he would inquire, and she would say, "The book about Tristian, who went on pilgrimage, and who fell into a puddle, and got dirty, but who got out again and went on his way all right. Till at last he got to the 'heavenly city, which mamma says means heaven."

The good man would smile at the prattle of little Clara, who was so fond of reading, and would encourage her to tell him why she loved her books. A stranger would no doubt have laughed outright at the curious nature of the child's reading; but Clara herself would be soberly in earnest as she enumerated for her pastor's benefit, "Jack the Giant Killer," "The Pilgrim's Progress,"

"Little Red Riding Hood," "Goody Two Shoes," "The Holy War," "Mother Hubbard," and, strangest of all for a child's choice, the "Death: a Vision," translated by Solomon Gesner.

One Sunday, little Clara was sitting as usual with her parents, listening to the words which fell from the lips of her dear pastor.

Upon that particular morning he had taken for his text these words, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." In the course of his remarks the good man would frequently exclaim — "Alas! alas! How sad! how sad!"

As little Clara listened she began to wonder if she herself were saved, and the child said to herself, "I cannot really be saved, for I do not love God, nor Jesus. It seems to me I am afraid of God knowing all I think about, and, besides, it seems so hard to be good, and so hard to love One I cannot see. Oh, dear! our pastor is saying, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God,' and I am always forgetting Him." The tears were streaming from the eyes of the little girl at the bare thought of being separated in eternity from her beloved parents, for she was certain they were saved and loved God, and here was the minister the child almost adored telling all the people that unless they were saved they could never go to heaven. How Clara was longing to be all alone, that she might seek with all her heart for this salvation!

Upon reaching home, the child sought a silent place, where, with tears, she entreated the great God to save her soul, and not let her be parted at last from her dear papa and mamma, and the minister, and all good people.

More than thirty years have passed by, and Clara is still living, but that dear minister, of whom even now Clara thinks with pleasure, that man of God, has passed to his reward, and so have the father and mother of little Clara. She herself is some day hoping to join them, where “they who sow in tears shall reap in joy,” for Clara has many years ago found the roll which Bunyan’s pilgrim had — and is a pilgrim herself, journeying on to join the company of those “who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Dear children, have you come to Jesus to save you? Remember, you may not live like little Clara, but if you come now to Jesus, He will make you fit for life, or fit for death, and He hath said in His word, “I love them that love Me, and they that seek Me early shall find Me.”

K. C. C.

## Jesus Loves Me

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“MOTHER, do let me go to the service with you,” pleaded a little girl, eight years old. But her grandmother said, “No, Edie, you must stay at home with me, for I shall be all alone!” Generally, there was nothing Edie liked better than to be with grandmother alone on a Sunday evening, for then they had what Edie called “a little meeting” all to themselves. But something was in the child’s heart, and this particular evening she begged her mother to let her accompany her. “I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me,” was her happy little witness to the Good Shepherd in answer to a Christian gentleman who spoke to her at the close of the sermon.

The next morning Edie went to school as usual, but in the afternoon she complained of not feeling very well. Edie’s kind grandmother sat with her while the mother attended, as she was obliged to do, to household duties; and many a beautiful text did she read to the dear child. Alas the doctor could do our Edie no good, and we knew that the child must soon leave us.

Edie very much wished to see her Sunday-school teacher, and when she came and spoke to her of the love of Jesus, Edie said, “I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me.”

One Lord’s day bright and well, the next with the Lord in heaven!

Dear little readers, can you say with little Edie, “I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me”?

Edie was very fond of hearing FAITHFUL WORDS read, and when you are reading it will you think that one little girl, who used to read it with you, is with the Lord Jesus? And then ask yourselves this question. “Am I ready if Jesus were to call me?”

## Idolatry in India

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NOTHING can be more opposed to the Most High and blessed God than idolatry. The existence of idols, and the worship of them, rob God of His place and glory, for it is written, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”

In India, where numerous cities are wholly given to idolatry, it is intensely sad to behold it. A lifeless block of wood, or stone, or metal, is considered as possessing vital energy. It cannot eat, yet food is presented to it; it cannot hear, yet music and singing are addressed to it. It cannot smell, yet sweet-smelling flowers are brought to it, with an idea of gratifying it; it cannot see, but lighted candles and other things are waved before it. Lest in the cold season it should suffer, the benighted heathen cover it with winter clothing. In the warm weather they fan it; and for fear the mosquitoes should bite it, the idol is shrouded in a curtain at night.

To Brahma, Vishnu, and Sheva, the Hindu triad, all manner of hideous representations are formed, as well as the myriad of other deities of their imaginative creation.

A friend of ours, in his zeal for God, and abhorrence of idolatry, not unfrequently assaulted these ugly images, and would capsize and smash them when passing through lonely villages; and where noticed by the people — as on a certain occasion when an idol of their goddess Kali was the subject of his wrath — he would turn the block over, and then address the audience somewhat in the style and language of Elijah in regard to Baal. Such treatment of their idols, however, is in general fruitless as to good result, for the enmity of the false worshippers is stirred up to rage, and finer images are supplemented for the demolished ones. The safer and surer method is to expose and displace the error by the exposition and establishment of truth. Truly unwavering faith and plodding patience is required for the giving out of “precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little;” but when God by His Spirit works through the proclamation of the gospel, men are turned from their idols to serve the living and true God; and blessed is the fruitfulness of this work.

The preaching of Christ in the cities of India is often attended with interruption. The missionary has to meet and lament the vanity and the love of wrangling of not a few. In the villages the work is comparatively easier. Now and then an exclamation of simple astonishment may be heard as the good news of God’s salvation is being drunk in, perhaps for the first time. Still, whether we consider the controversial character of discourse in the cities, or the conversational mode in the districts, Christ is preached.

To enter a village, and squat in native fashion on the ground and sing to native airs descriptive narratives of gospel truth, was no small joy to us. One hymn would picture the gospel net thrown out, catching all sort: of fish; then the assortment of good and bad as referring to the time of discriminating judgment; followed by the rejection of the vile, and the reception of the good. Another would exhort them to place no confidence in their “mud houses,” i.e., their earthly tabernacles, because of the searching storm of judgment that was coming; and then it would show

how Christ alone could be a sufficient and satisfying Refuge for the soul. The tunes were generally familiar to the mass of the hearers, and the words of these hymns are extremely simple, being composed and compiled by a converted devotee.

Are there not many in this enlightened country ready to deplore the awful darkness of heathen lands, themselves subject to bondage of as gross a nature — being slaves to the flesh, the world, and the devil— and bound in fetters of sins? Oh, friends, we beseech you to heed this solemn word of Holy Writ — “ The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.”

## A Little Child's Trouble

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WHY is this? Sunny little Ella's face bedewed with tears! Her simple, happy little countenance clouded with sorrow! Why is this? Has Ella done anything very wrong? She has been a very good child all through the day, we know. Yet little Ella is in sore trouble; and this is her grief — she knows she is not truly good in God's sight. She fears she does not really love the Lord Jesus. What is she to do?

One and another of her kind friends speak to Ella. They tell her how Jesus loves little children, For He took up the very little ones in His arms, and He blessed them, and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." But still the child weeps. Her little heart is not at rest.

Oh, God looks right into little children's hearts. He sees all that is in the heart. When we look into a room through the window we see a great deal that is in the room, but as some things are behind others, we cannot see all. But God sees all that is in our hearts — nothing is hidden from Him; and He sees into Ella's heart, and that sorrow, because she fears she is not really a lamb of Jesus' flock, is there.

"My child," said a kind friend to Ella, after she had told out her trouble, "when you think of what you are, just say to the Lord Jesus in heaven, 'Jesus died for me!'"

Then a smile lighted up Ella's face, and a rainbow shone upon her tears, as she said to herself, "Jesus died for me."

Dear children, the great God knows your hearts. Perhaps you would not be able to tell anyone quite what is in your heart, but God looks through the window right into your heart, and knows all that is there. Nothing will be ever hidden from Him. You have not to explain things to God, for He knows all things. So when you are sorry because you do not think you belong to the Lord Jesus, remember, Jesus died for sinners.

Jesus died for sinners — for little and for big. He is the Way, and as much for children as for grown-up persons. There is only one way to heaven. When you run along the road you see the old and young, the rich and poor, moving upon it. Surely never yet was a road from one place to another made only for children, and another road made only for old persons, but one road for all. So Jesus is the Way for all.

"Jesus died for me!" What wonderful words are these! He made the sky above and the pretty flowers at our feet, but His hands were nailed to the cross of wood, and on that cross He died to save our souls. Jesus is full of love and kindness: these are some of His words — "I will in no wise cast out," and He will not cast you out, for He has said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

When anyone comes to the Lord He puts happiness into the heart, which was never before known. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and Jesus gives His secret to even the little children who trust in Him, so we need not be surprised that little Ella's face showed how happy her

heart was when she was able truly to say, "Jesus died for me." Oh! what wonderful love is this, that Jesus, the Son of God, should die for a little child. May every believing child love Him more and more every day.

## A Lesson from the Garden

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EVERY plant or tree feeds upon the rain from heaven. But where is the mouth which receives the nourishment? In the root, and only in the root. Unless the water reach the mouth, the tree must die of starvation. Now at the extremity of the fibers are organs resembling sponge in their porous character, and these suck up all the nourishment that comes in their way. In large trees these sponge-like organs extend to its farthest branches, and then the foliage, which, as an umbrella, protects the fibers that would be injured by water, causes the drops of the shower to drip over the mouths of the tree.

The moisture at first ascends from the roots into the tree, in a simple state, being little more than water, but as it circulates through the leaves, it is elaborated by their own peculiar organs into sap, and then it descends again.

Now how these facts help us to see the force of the Lord's word, "I am the vine... abide in Me... without Me ye can do nothing." The branch abides in the vine and receives nourishment for every phase of its growth. The tender buds receive the sap in its simplest form, resembling milk in the animal creation; the largest shoots, the blossoms, and the fruits receive the same sap, though in different degrees of strength.

The branch abides in the vine for everything, and by the sap the vine abides in the branch, causing its life, verdure, and fruitfulness.

Our abiding in Christ and He in us is essentially practical, intimate, and simple. It really is coming to Him for nourishment every moment, dwelling in spirit continually in Him, doing the simplest things never apart from Him. This supposes a knowledge of our perfect weakness, and also our complete surrender of ourselves to Him. The branch does not periodically draw from the vine, but the vine is the one continuous source of its existence.

When we rise in the morning a day lies before us. Every hour of that day belongs to Jesus, and therefore He must be considered in everything, down to eating and drinking. This brings us to the branch dwelling in all its own emptiness in another; and then Christ abides in us; He causes the Spirit to flow forth according to the need of the day, and keeping to our figure, whether the need be the preparation of the new germs in winter, or the bursting forth of the buds in spring, or the supporting of the leaf in the summer heat, or the strengthening and filling of the ripening fruit in autumn.

"I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." Alas, how little we know Him, because we so little know the need of Him!

If we thus abide we must rest assured bore doing anything that He will be with us in doing it. Then it will be no longer with us — Is such a thing right or wrong? but — "Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do?" Thus, again, even in what we look upon as good works, visiting the sick, for instance, we must, if we abide in Christ, be assured that He directs us.

This casts us each one entirely upon Him for guidance, as we see so frequently expressed in the Psalms, "Teach me the way wherein I should walk." "Show me Thy paths." "Lead me in Thy way." "Make Thy way straight before my face." And if we really thus wait upon Him, and seek His guidance in everything, we shall abide in Him in what we do. We shall lay the path before Him, in a sense of our real felt weakness, and cry, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths."

Also, if we thus abide in Him, His words will abide in us; and the soul thus brought into divine wisdom, will so pray that whatsoever it asks can be granted. We shall ask, not ignorantly, because Christ and His words abide in us.

The beauty and glory of the vegetable kingdom is lavished upon the one short process of setting the fruit, as the gardener speaks.

The enquiries of man have not yet discovered why those organs should be adorned with such exquisite beauty of form and Color. But it is a most interesting consideration that the whole aim, if we may so speak, of nature, is to produce the flowers, and when these are produced, and the fruit formed, the task is completed, and the charm of its beauty has passed away.

Every created thing is made to show forth the glory of the Creator. "All Thy works praise Thee, O God!" God said that it was good, and He said, "Be fruitful and multiply." He did not say "live," but "be fruitful and multiply." And therefore the glory and beauty of things declared how good He had made them in their fruitfulness.

Even in a flower a Christian sees not merely something beautiful, but the beauty his God has made. When the saints are around the throne they fully rejoice in being the objects and subjects of His pleasure. "Thou art worthy... for Thy pleasure they are and were created." in heaven it will be their joy to be the creatures of Him they worship. Their happiness will consist in being just what and where God has pleased.

We learn then from this word of God to His creatures, "Be fruitful and multiply," that the happiness, and glory, and joy of the creature is in carrying out the pleasure of the Creator.

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures." Sin is, as ever, eating forbidden fruit. Again, the four living creatures rest not night nor day, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" it is the happy breathing of their existence. To cease praising would be to cease being happy. "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they shall be still praising Thee," and, blessed be His Name, He will at length bring us, where sin shall be no more — where we shall enter into the full joy of living unto God, of singing the song in the fourth as well as that in the fifth chapter of Revelation.

R.

## The Gamekeeper's Story

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THE speaker was a middle-aged man, a type of strength, and having an eye that spoke quickness and determination.

“There was no mistake about my life — I loved sin, lived in sin, and went as deep into it as any man. I believe I went as far as the devil sent me. I was not like some who are outwardly religious — no, I served sin and Satan with all my soul. And this went on for years — yes, for years. I often had my convictions, but I stifled them, or tried to do so. In the very midst of my evil life, and in the height of my enjoyment of sin, the warning would come — ‘But if you should die, what then? You know you are unprepared.’ But I heeded none of the warnings. On, on, I went in sin, and I believe no man sinned more deeply than I.

“Now I say all this about myself solely to extol the grace of God. And if my story should lead anyone to seek the salvation of his soul, and to glorify the name of Jesus, should rejoice.

“It was the death of my father that first aroused me. He was a fine hale man, in middle life, and he was cut down by sudden illness, and died almost without a warning. He never spoke after he was taken ill. His sudden death terrified me. ‘Where would you be if you died like that?’ was the question that laid hold of my soul. I have good hope about my father, but I know had I died as and when he did, my sudden death would have been sudden misery. For three months God the Spirit strove with me, and I was in horror of soul. Besides which, I was struggling to do what was already done. I was trying to work out a salvation for myself, when all the while the blessed Jesus had done the work upon the cross eighteen hundred years ago. I did not, could not see this, and was miserable. But better be miserable because of your sins, than happy in them.

“Some time after this God took away my little girl from me. She was my charm. It was in this way. She ever did what she was bidden — if I had tidied up one side of the garden, and would say, ‘Now don’t walk there,’ she never would do so, while perhaps the other children would forget. But this little one always tried to please. And she would lay her little head against my cheek, and coax up to me, or get upon my shoulder. In this way she was my charm. I don’t mean that she was a favorite, or spoiled, or anything like that; but this little one ever tried to please and to obey. But God took her. She was just six years old. This broke my heart altogether.

“The Holy Spirit showed me that Jesus had died for me. Who but God can open one’s eyes? Man cannot do it. If the most learned or eloquent preacher that ever lived spoke for a thousand years to you, he could not give you to believe in the heart. The work is all that of God the Holy Spirit. Jesus did all the work of salvation upon the cross, and God the Spirit does the work in men’s hearts. Who save God makes the people come from the villages and the lonely cottages to hear His word? He puts it into their hearts, and come they must; and He puts it into their hearts to believe on Jesus, and believe they do.

“And now I am saved, thank God. My sins are all pardoned. The precious blood which Jesus shed on the cross has washed them all away, and I know it — yes, and I rejoice in it. Is it not something

to rejoice in? People say you are excited; well, and is it not something to be excited about? What, the Son of God who made us, coming from heaven and dying upon the cross for us, and God the Holy Spirit shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts! Surely it is enough to excite us. He has not only saved me, He has poured His joy into my soul, and shall I not talk about it? People say we men are off our heads, but they know we are cool enough in business with them; but the joy of God's salvation does make us talk, I own, and talk by His grace I will.

"There is heaven or hell ahead for every one, and warn my fellow men I must. They cannot be worse than I was; they cannot have more blessings than I have. Christ died for me, Christ lives for me, and I shall be with Him and all His in glory soon.

"One thing more I will tell you. I had been converted some little time — some years but it has only been within the last few years that I have had the joy I now have. I had got slack in my soul. Well, I had to go to London for my master, and when I was there, I thought I would hear those Americans. So I got into a tramcar, and asked the man who sat by my side if I was right for the place. 'What! you — a man like you — are never going to hear those rascals?' said he; 'they are taking our money out of our country.'

"'Well,' said I, 'they have none of mine, so they cannot take that; and if you have sent them yours, that is your look-out.' So I went. What was said I do not remember, nor for that matter do I care to know; but the power of God was in the place, and as I sat, God said to me, — 'what are you doing for the Lord in—?' (my home).

"I buried my head in my hands. The wonderful love of the Lord to me in pardoning all my sins, and caring for me every day, and promising a future better than the present! and what was I doing for His name in my own home — here, I mean, in this village, and round about me where I now stand?

"One of the people came up to me after the meeting, seeing me so distressed, and began to speak of Jesus dying for sinners. He was going to lead me to Calvary.

"'Go to some one else,' said I; 'it is not that I want; I have been saved for years. But I am thinking of my native place, and the unsaved there.'

"Then I cried to the Lord, and gave myself again up to Him, to be for Him altogether, and He heard my cry, for before I left London I was the means of leading one soul to Himself.

"When I returned here I told my story in a cottage meeting, and an old man of over seventy was led that night to Jesus. And now there is a band of us, and God is saving some of the roughest and the worst-living men around us, and is filling them with joy unspeakable and full of glory." As the speaker told his story, he pointed to a group of five young men with joy upon their faces, saying, "Do you see those young men? They were all drunkards; some were poachers, and as rough a set and as wicked a lot as ever disgraced an English village; but now, you know, for you have spoken to them, God has saved them, and filled them with joy."

## Procrastination

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SOME years ago a young man whom I well knew was living in London. He mixed much in society, and, alas! drank freely. His father had run through a fortune, sold houses and land, and had also squandered his wife's allowance.

This excess was frequently brought before this young man by his mother, a most amiable lady, who suffered much from her husband's and her son's recklessness. Besides his mother, numerous friends constantly pleaded with the young man, but his usual reply was, "Well, I intend to sow all my wild oats now, and when I am twenty-four years of age, I will turn over a new leaf, give up old associates, and live quite a different life."

He was apparently of a robust constitution, and appeared as likely to live as anyone. But on the very day he had said he would become different, on this twenty-fourth birthday, he died suddenly.

He had often been reproved, but he hardened his neck, and was cut off suddenly when not prepared.

On the day he died he had not thought of his promises made so repeatedly, neither did he make any effort on that day to seek the Lord if haply he might find Him. No, he had presumed to appoint a time to turn to God, and when the day came he did not consider it, nor turn away from his evil companions and vicious life.

Young men and lads, consider this solemn warning. How frequently your dear friends, who plead with and pray for you get this kind of answer — "We are anxious to see a little life; there is plenty of time to think of the next world; we are healthy and hearty." Yes, "but boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." VICTOR.

## Take God at His Word

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SPEAKING to a young man a short time ago I said, "It is a precious thing that nothing can pluck us out of Christ's hand." He replied, "I know neither man nor devil can pluck us out of His hand, but we can pluck ourselves away for all that." "But these are the Lord's words, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand, 'and as you are only a man, you are included in the any.'"

"Oh, yes," said he; "but we can pluck ourselves away. It is only as we are looking to Him that we can keep ourselves from falling."

"We have no right to sin, and by so doing we grieve the Holy Spirit, but 'our life is hid with Christ in God,' and nothing can touch that, while as for keeping ourselves, that is impossible. We 'are kept by the power of God.'"

But all the scriptures brought forward did not convince him, and he left, saying, "That's where you and I differ."

Very different was the testimony rendered by a young girl a few weeks back. She was ill, and we had this conversation: — "Well, Rosie, have you taken God at His word?"

"Yes, I have."

"Then you are happy?"

"Yes, very happy."

"How long has this been the case?"

"Since I have been in bed — about three or four months."

She had been anxious about her soul for some time, and her godly father had spoken to her a good deal of the way of salvation.

The beautiful verse, already quoted, from the tenth chapter of St. John, is very precious to her. Not a shadow of a doubt crosses her soul that anyone or anything will ever pluck her out of Christ's hand. She is on the immovable rock. Christ shines forth in her daily life, and she, who was once so reserved, has had her mouth opened to praise Him who loved her and gave Himself for her, Reader, have you taken God entirely at His word? Do you say you know you are saved and are afraid you yet may be lost? That is only believing half what God says. Read the verse from the tenth chapter of St. John again, and take Christ at His word.

## Ungodly

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I FOUND him in a cottage one Sunday 11 afternoon, and rather abruptly questioned him as to forgiven sins. He was old, wore a smock frock, and had been reading in a large type New Testament.

“Are all your sins forgiven you?”

“I can’t say they are,” he replied in a troubled voice.

Allowing one sin per day, I made a calculation that this aged sinner had added up a considerable score.

“Let us see, one sin each day is three hundred and sixty-five in a year, and you have lived — how many years?”

“But there has been more than one each day, sir.”

“And you do not know they are forgiven?”

“Well, you see, sir, I’ve been reading this Testament, but somehow I don’t seem to understand it.”

Taking the book I turned to Romans 5, and pointed to verse 6 — “CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.”

“Whom did Christ die for?”

“Why, for all of us.”

“But was it for you? Look at this verse now. Who does that last word mean — UNGODLY? Are you ungodly?”

This name seemed to rather startle the poor fellow, and he began, like many more, to try and prove he was fairly good.

“I’m not so very bad, sir.”

Now the text does not say anything about Not-so-very-bad, so if the old man was to be known by that name he certainly was not mentioned. The Not-so-very-bads are to be found in every church and chapel, and in almost every house. But there are none of that name in heaven, nor are they spoken of in the proclamation of grace.

“You see, my friend, this verse says— ‘Christ died for the ungodly,’ so own your name, and receive the blessings obtained by that death. Ungodly is the person spoken of. Ungodly deserved to be punished because of his ungodliness, ‘for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness.’ (Rom. 1:18.) But though God hates ungodliness He loves the ungodly, and that He might show His love, Christ took upon Him the penalty of the ungodless, that the ungodly might be saved.

The wrinkled face seemed to brighten up a little as I went on to explain how, as soon as the ungodly “believeth on Him (God) that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. 4:5.) He is no longer without God and ungodly, he is no longer unrighteous or without righteousness, but God counts him to be righteous because Christ died for sinners.

The dear old seeker into the Bible lifted his hand from his knee, and brought it gently down again, as he quietly said■

“I can see that. Thank you kindly.” It was so simple that he could not help seeing it when the Spirit of God opened his eyes.

Have I another of the family of “Ungodly” listening to me? If so, let me address a few words to him. In early days God brought “in the flood upon the world of the ungodly” (2 Peter 2:5); and your life is uncertain, for the Book says, “the ungodly are like the chaff which the wind driveth away” (Psa. 1:4.); and by-and-by, when the Judge comes, it will go hard with you, for “the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment.” (Psa. 1:5.)

Are you ungodly? Then your way is a way of death, for “the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psa. 1:6), and that perishing will be with awful terror; for as all your family were destroyed in the old world, so “the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (2 Peter 3:7.) “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” (Jude 14., 15.)

Ungodly, there is hope to-day! Let me repeat the good news I took your aged namesake. “CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.”

W. L,

## A Dying Soldier's Confidence

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ON coming into barracks one morning, some years ago, I was told that Color-Sergeant S. had been taken to hospital, and was very ill.

I went to the hospital, and found him very weak. Seeing that it was probable his illness would end fatally, I asked him if he had anything to settle with reference to his family affairs. He had a wife and six children. He replied that, as he had nothing and Mrs. S. had nothing, there was nothing to settle; but evidently observing that I was very anxious about his family, he said to me, "They will all be provided for."

I said to him, "Have you no doubts of any sort?" He looked at me in a reproving manner, and replied rather sternly, "To doubt, sir, would be to dishonor God." Shortly afterward I left the ward, and found next morning that he had passed away during the night.

At the time I speak of very large sums of public money passed through the hands of the Color-sergeants, and though Color-Sergeant S.'s death was very sudden, there was no difficulty about his accounts, everything, to the smallest items, being found correct.

Of his own money I think there was but one shilling in hand for the maintenance of the family — a wife and six children — but a sum of about twenty-seven shillings was found wrapped up in a paper, with a note attached, showing that it was intended for some charitable society; receipts, too, from religious societies for moneys that he had remitted, were amongst his papers.

Seeing that something must immediately be done for the family, I placed in the officers' mess a sheet of paper, headed with a short memorandum setting forth the circumstances in which a widow and six children had been placed by the sudden death of the color-sergeant, with a view to collecting any subscriptions that those who knew this non-commissioned officer might be disposed to give.

I may here state that, owing to active service in which our forces had shortly before been engaged, such appeals had been just then more than usually frequent, and but little could therefore be expected.

However, in a very short time, there was placed in my hands a sum of over seventy pounds. I gave enough to the widow for the expenses she had to meet, and then remitted the balance to the rector of the parish, in England, where she intended to reside.

Some time afterward I wrote to this clergyman, inquiring for the family, and hinting that, if it was thought necessary, more money might probably be got.

He replied, saying that all were doing well, and took no notice of my allusion to additional funds.

From that time — several years ago — to the present, neither the clergyman nor any member of the family I was interested in ever asked for a single farthing!

It would, I think, be difficult to illustrate more forcibly how well grounded was a Christian soldier's confidence, when he assured his doubting captain that the widow and six children would "All be provided for."

MILES.

## I'se 'Fear'd I Might be Wrang

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"ARE yer ga'ing to M■, gentlemen?" enquired an old man whom we had overtaken, as he hobbled along a country road with his stick.

"Yes; and do you wish for a ride? If so, get in."

And without further ado, the old man gladly availed himself of his opportunity. After being seated a minute, he said he was "bad in rheumatics," and had just been to a doctor for it, but though he had tried all the remedies he could get, he never felt any benefit, but thought he got rather worse. We remarked, after learning the chronic nature of his complaint, that we very much feared he would get no relief in this life. "Ah," he said, "I thought yer were ga'ing to say that."

Hoping that God had directed him to us for good, we asked him, "What comes after death?" "Judgment," he replied. So we quoted the verse, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:27, 28), adding, "God is righteous as well as merciful, and He cannot judge the sinner and the substitute for the same thing, can He?"

"No," he said, "He couldn't, to be just."

"Then, for the true believer, the judgment is passed. The Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and God cannot therefore judge us again for the same thing the Lord suffered for us. He cannot exact payment twice."

"True," replied the old man, "and if we live near to God, and do the best we can, that's all God wants."

This qualification, so common to the heart, completely spoiled what the old man had said before, and thinking we might reach him through his own circumstances, we said, "The best of men are but men at the best," and then abruptly inquired, "What was it made you ask us for a ride?"

"Because I were tired and lame, and needed one."

"Well, it is those who are in the soul as you are in the body — those who know they are lost, who want salvation. You did not speak of doing the best you could to pay us for the ride, nor yet to help to get yourself along the road; you simply sat down, and allowed the horse to take you right through. And all you will think of doing when you get out, will be to thank us for the ride. Take your place as a lost and helpless sinner, receive God's salvation, and thank Him for it."

"Aye," he said, "it's a grand thing is religion and living to God. I've been lagging' nigh hand til' it for thirty year, but I'm too timorous to say I'se saved; I'se 'fear'd I might be wrang."

The poor old man seemed moved, and thanked us heartily.

There are so many like him, that we have penned this story, and earnestly ask you to take your seat as a ruined, hell-deserving sinner in the gospel chariot, and accept the salvation which the Lord Jesus Christ has purchased with His own blood.

G. B.

## Thinking About Christ

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“WHEN we think of Christ it keeps the bad thoughts out,” said a young Christian to us the other day. He “had proved the truth of His doctrine.” By occupation of heart with Christ the Christian grows practically like Him. As a measure well filled with grain has no room in it for chaff, so a heart stored with Christ is preserved from evil and folly.

## Avoid It

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“AVOID it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away;” remember these words on the chart. For how many a soul has been wrecked through not giving evil and temptation a wide berth. Sin is like a rock — a whirlpool; therefore keep as far from it as you can. There is plenty of sea-room, so avoid the danger. Give sin as wide a berth as possible.

## How to Keep Clear of the Rocks

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WE would affectionately entreat our readers to study diligently and give more earnest heed than ever to the word of God. There never was a time when it was more needed. Foundations are being shaken, and a whirlwind of confusion is gathering in the atmosphere; men are claiming to be heard on all hands, and how are their claims to be tested but by the word of the living God? The one who really feeds on the word, whose spiritual taste is thus educated, and his principles formed by it, will instantly detect what is contrary to it, and reject it. That is a remarkable passage in Isaiah 7. (speaking of the prophet's child), "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know how to refuse the evil, and choose the good." This is a true principle. The youngest child fed on what is pure and sweet turns instinctively from what is not so, and does so not from its knowledge of unpalatable food, but from being accustomed to that which is good.

How do we most readily distinguish the voice of the enemy? Is it by listening for it? Far, far otherwise. Habitual familiarity with the voice and words of Christ is the only way of becoming quick in detecting and rejecting what is contrary: "The sheep follow Him; for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

There never was a greater mistake than to suppose that by acquainting ourselves with the details of evil we are guarding against the evil of being ensnared by it. Let us earnestly seek to know from the word the Lord's path for ourselves — the strait, though narrow, one — and take care to walk in it in simple dependence on Himself. We shall thus be kept clear of every false and crooked path on the right hand and on the left, as it is written, "Concerning the works of men, by the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." (Psa. 17:4.)

We lately met with the following striking illustration of this principle: A passenger on board a Mississippi steamer was having some conversation with the pilot, who mentioned that he had been for twenty years on that line, upon which the former remarked, "Then, of course, you are well acquainted with every point of danger along the whole passage?" "Far from it," was the pilot's reply, "but I know where the deep water flows."

May we, like this man, keep in the right track, thus avoiding the unknown rocks and quicksands on which so many have been wrecked!

M. M. F.

## The Lord Himself

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A LITTLE while ago, I traveled by train to London with a friend. We had not met for two or three years until that day, and during the interval we had each passed through heavy sorrow. Each of us had known the agony of standing by the death-bed of a beloved one, and of listening for the last time to the “dear familiar voice.” We talked much of the incidents connected with those closing scenes, tears filling our eyes, and yet not “without hope,” for we were quite sure that, in each case, the object of our love had trusted in Jesus as Saviour, and had gone to be “forever with the Lord.”

When we reached Victoria Station, I had to wait more than half an hour before another train was due, which would take me on to my destination. My friend and I would then have to part. She decided to remain with me during the waiting time, and as each of us felt more disposed to walk than to sit down, we paced backwards and forwards along the busy platform, arm-in-arm, in close conversation, quite unheeding the many who passed us.

We had spoken of the illness of each of our departed loved ones, and of their present joy, and now our thoughts turned to the blessed prospect of reunion with them. We quoted various passages of Scripture, and dwelt with delight on the precious words of comfort at the end of the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians. We both felt their power, and our hearts were thrilled as we looked forward to the moment when the “dead in Christ shall rise first,” and we shall be “caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air.”

Suddenly my friend stopped, looked me full in the face, her own flushing with emotion, and said, “Is it not mean, absolutely mean of us to be talking so much of the joy of meeting our dear ones when we ought to be thinking and speaking much more of the joy of meeting the Lord? We should have had no blessing at all if Christ had not died for us. They would not have been saved if He had not died for them. Oh! I feel ashamed of myself, for indeed it is mean to be thinking so much of the blessings He has obtained for us by His death, and yet to care so little for Himself.”

These words have rung in my ears more or less ever since. My train came up in a few minutes, we said good-bye, and perhaps may never meet again on earth, but she certainly read me a lesson which I hope to remember. In the small things of life, as well as in the great ones, how apt we are to take the daily gifts of God, and thank Him, it may be, for them, while our hearts are very cold towards Him who is the Giver. Blessed is the Christian’s portion here, even in the midst of trial, but “very far better” it is to be “with the Lord.” Sweet is the hope of meeting again the loved ones who have “gone before,” but may we, who are bought with the precious blood of Christ, look forward to seeing Him as the great and crowning joy before us, that we may not be so “mean” as to think more of seeing our dear ones in glory than of seeing the Lord Himself. We do look on with intense longing to the time when we, and our loved relatives and friends who have left us, shall “meet to part no more,” but let us have our hearts so fixed on the Lord Himself that everything shall be in its proper place — the hope of His coming first, and other affections and enjoyments only secondary. Our hearts are very subtle — they easily make idols — and there is often a danger where least suspected. Let us, then, be ever on our guard, that He may reign there in the supreme way to

which He is entitled, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1:18.) H. L. T.

## A Summer's Morn and Eve

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IN a village schoolroom, one summer's I morning a few years since, two boys might have been seen sitting side by side. Rosy, healthy looking little fellows they were, and brimful of fun and mischief. Deeply absorbed in their lessons, of course, they appeared to be every moment that the master's eye rested upon them, but well he knew, and well they knew too, by experience, that many a roguish trick could be managed when his back was turned.

Had you seen them that morning, young reader, would you have supposed for one moment that death was very near to both of them, drawing nearer every hour? that, in fact, the next morning their places in school would be empty? No, indeed! you would have felt sure that such strong, sturdy boys would grow up healthy countrymen like their fathers before them. Yet that was to be their very last day at school; how solemn the thought!

Afternoon school once more over, there is evidently some little planning and settling going on between these two boys, and then, with noisy shouts and merry laughter, away they rush to their respective homes to tea, soon again to meet.

The evening wears away, and no fear is felt for some time on account of their absence, as they are known to be such fast friends that they are generally found tether. But after it has become quite dark, their parents begin to feel at first vexed, and then alarmed at their continued absence.

Night approaches, and neighbors kindly start off to aid in the search, for now the quiet little village itself is all astir about them. The two poor distracted mothers wander about through the fields and woods near, their heartrending cries sounding dismally on the night air. "Johnny, Johnny, where are you? Oh, do come to me!"

"Oh, my Willy, what has become of you? where can you be?" Oh, poor mothers! those sad cries can never be again answered by your boys.

Morning breaks, and as the day wears on the terrible truth is made known to all. Both boys have been found — but where? Lying drowned at the bottom of a small pond in the squire's park, in so retired a spot that their cries for help, if they raised any when they found themselves in danger, could not have been heard.

They had gone to the pond, without telling anyone of their intention, and having made or found a sort of rough raft or broken boat, had ventured upon it on the water, only to lose their lives!

What a dreadful contrast between the morning and evening of just that one short summer day!

Healthy, rosy, noisy, full of thoughtless life and spirits then, rushing heedlessly along in boyish strength and glee— now borne silently and sorrowfully to their homes, cold, pale, and perfectly lifeless No outbursts of heartbroken grief, no mournful words of the fathers, who had hoped soon to have had their help in earning bread for the rest of the families; no scalding tears of the mothers could rouse them again from the deep sleep of death. But oh! far, far beyond all thought of their

bodies, which would be borne soon to the village churchyard by sorrowing schoolfellows, and laid to rest there till the resurrection morn, rises the question instantly to one's mind, "Whither had their souls gone? Where are they now? Who can tell? None but God alone! He only knows. With Him we must leave the solemn question, for no human being could faithfully answer it.

Had the poor boys' parents been asked plainly, "Where do you think your boys are now?" without doubt they would have said in surprise, "Why, better off to be sure, dear lads; they were no worse than other boys; they never did much harm, and, I'm sure, always kept to their church, and said their catechism; and the Almighty is very merciful."

Indeed He is, or He would never have sent His blessed Son into the world to be the Saviour for poor lost sinners; but He is also "just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," and He accepts as clear from every charge of sin, those who believe in Jesus, and those only! None besides. No, none besides! for there is salvation in none other name.

Now, did those boys believe in Him? were their souls saved? We know not. Yet death suddenly overtook them without the slightest warning, and the place which once knew them knows them now no more forever.

Dear children, let this sad, true story speak home to your hearts and consciences. God grant that it may. If you are as suddenly called away from home and friends, are you prepared for the great change? Are your sins all forgiven? all washed away in the precious blood of Christ, so that at any time God's messenger of death would find you "ready"? God's word says, "Prepare to meet thy God." Seek the Lord while He maybe found — now, while it is called to-day! — to-morrow even may be too late, Time is short, even at the very longest, and may end at any moment, perhaps at the most unexpected time, with anyone of us; but eternity, God's great, grand, solemn eternity, will last forever and ever. It knows no end! Dear little reader, where will you spend it?

## A Fisherman's Story

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ONE Sunday afternoon I asked my friend, a godly fisherman, to tell my boys, after their Bible class, his wonderful escape from drowning, which happened on a dark January night when at sea in his fishing smack.

The boys were all attention as the good Christian sailor told them what he had felt when sudden death came so near to him in a moment.

“Boys,” he said, “when I found myself all in a moment fifteen feet under the water, I felt as comfortable in my mind as I do now while sitting talking to you. I knew it was all right with my soul, for had I sunk to the bottom, the next moment I should have been with my Saviour. Let me advise you, my boys, to seek the Lord now, and then if death should overtake you at any moment, you will have nothing to fear. A minute before our boat went down, I had no more thought of death being near than you may have this afternoon. My mate and I were out for the night fishing. It was a very dark night in January, 1883, but there was not any danger, though the sea was rough. Having taken a boat-load of sprats, we were returning to Margate heavily laden. It was about four o'clock in the morning, and very dark. When rounding the North Foreland we encountered some very heavy seas. Finding the little vessel stagger, being so heavily laden, as she met the seas, I said to my mate, ‘We must get her round, and put her head towards the land.’ I then put the helm down to stay the vessel, but neither of us anticipated any danger, when three tremendous seas came in succession and completely buried her. I was at the helm, and went down with her about fifteen feet, for she foundered helm first, the air in the forecabin keeping her bows up a few moments longer. When I came to the surface I found myself close to the bowsprit, and my mate by my side. There were about two feet of the mast out of water as the vessel went down stern foremost. I thought of my wife and family, but I had no fear of death, though it was very near then. I saw our little boat, it was about eight fathoms off from us, attached to the foundering vessel by a painter, which threatened to drag it after her beneath the surface of the water as she went down. Now, my boys, that boat I knew was my saviour from a watery grave if I could reach it. I had all my heavy clothing on, and my great fishing boots and oilskin, but I struck out for her, and I felt as though some one gave me a great shove, and in a few moments, by the help of God, I reached her, not a moment too soon. My first impulse was to detach her from the sinking vessel, which went down out of sight directly I got her loose. My mate was then swimming towards me, and calling out for me to save him, for in the darkness, while struggling in the water, he thought I had been drowned, and had given up all for lost, when seeing me in the boat he shouted to me that he was sinking. I sang out, ‘Cheer up, Harry! I will be with you in a minute;’ and I rowed alongside of him, and helped him into the boat.

“We made for Kingsgate, but as we had shipped a lot of water we prepared for the worst, and got rid of our boots, in case we might have to swim for shore, and baled out the water with them, and by God's mercy rowed safe to land. When we had beached the boat, the first thing we did was to have a prayer-meeting under the cliff, and in our humble way return thanks to our heavenly Father

who had so miraculously delivered us from a watery grave.

“And now, my boys, it strikes me that my position when I rose to the surface of the water and saw the boat, which was my saviour from being drowned, is like yours as regards your souls. What would it have availed me if I had only wished I was in the boat? So for you to hear us praying for your salvation, and for you to wish that Jesus was your Saviour is not enough. I had to strike out for the boat, and God gave me strength to reach it. And so it must be with your souls. You must go by faith yourselves to Jesus, and He will give you salvation, and then you will have no need to fear death whenever God may call von hence.”

## One Talent

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THE parable of the Talents, recorded in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, is exceedingly solemn. It shows us that a reckoning day is coming, when we shall each have to give an account of ourselves to the Master. There was a man who was traveling into a far country, and he called together his own servants, and delivered to them his goods. To their own lord, therefore, these servants stood or fell: upon them was imposed the solemn trust of doing their best, in their lord's interest, for him in his absence. Some of these servants were more fit, more capable, than others, and to them all — to "every man according to his several ability," were the talents awarded. Their lord knew the powers of "his own servants," and the greater the ability each possessed the greater was the responsibility laid upon him. "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one."

So in their lord's absence the servants went forth, and he that had the five talents traded with them, and made five more; and he that had the two did likewise, and made other two: they both doubled their lord's money. "But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money." All "received" the gift from the hand of their lord; in no case was the talent the servant's own, but a special trust committed to him: hence, the servant who had but one talent was as much under obligation to his lord as the servant who had the five.

And this is the point we would so earnestly press upon our young friends. True, there are but few of the Lord's servants who possess the five talents, but no doubt, since the servant who had the five had also the ability to use that number, it was no easier for him to gain five other talents than it would have been for the servant who had the one talent to gain one other, had the latter had as good a heart for his master as the former.

We are called to diligence according to our measure in using our gift, our talent. Make use of the one which the Lord has entrusted to you, we would say to the young Christian. So many waste life, waiting for a great gift to come to them. Use well the little, and then the Lord may give further ability. Each believer has some ability, and at least one talent. It is not necessary to be distinguished in order to be useful. One hour a week that we use for Christ is an opportunity — may we not say a talent? — for which we must give account by and by. If all God's people realized the value of such a talent as this, what great work would their collective labor effect for their Lord. Do not be carried away, beloved young Christian, with the excuse, "I am nobody, and I can do nothing for Christ." Begin with your one hour a week and by and by He will give you two, and may be five, in which to serve Him.

Sometimes we think that jealousy of the other servants led him who had but the one talent to hide his lord's money in the earth. Be that as it may it is not for any servant of Christ to stand by with folded arms and unmoved heart while others are doing the Lord's work. If we look up to the starry sky we see one star differ from another star in glory; the brightest does not displace the feeblest light, but all give forth their beauty just as the hands of their Creator have placed them in the heavens. So should it be upon this earth; each of us shining according to our measure, each in our

little corner. And oh, how small we all are!

Had the unprofitable servant known the goodness of his lord's heart, he would never have buried the talent in the earth; and let us ask ourselves why it is the Master has entrusted to us even one hour a week to use for Him. Surely, because He is so good and gracious. Who served as He: who labored, who suffered as Jesus? He has gone into the heavens, where He is now seated, but for the joy that was set before Him He endured, despising the shame. Presently He will come out from these heavens, and in His grace He would say then to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Not the gift of a cup of cold water given to a disciple in His name will be forgotten in that day. There will be no loving deed done for Him by the youngest and the humblest, which He will pass over or forget in the reckoning day. And, after all, a true heart for Christ is the needs be for us all. A good and faithful servant delights in his good and faithful Master, and uses the talent committed to him for his Master's Honor and glory.

On the reckoning day there will be a call to each who is a servant to account for the talent or talents committed to him. The talent will reappear before the Master's face; the responsibility for its use will stand out clear then. May none of us be forced to say, "Lord, behold Thy pound, which I have laid up in a napkin; or, "I was afraid, and went and hid Thy talent in the earth lo, there, Thou hast that is Thine."

Narratives from the Gospels, in the Light of Jewish Customs.

#### THE MERITS OF ABRAHAM.

WHEN, on one occasion, the Lord Jesus disputed with the Jews, they met His words, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," by saying, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man;" and when the Lord again said, "I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father," they curtly answer, "Abraham is our father."The reason of their boasting is not very evident.

Earlier than this, John the Baptist was in the wilderness of Judæa, and his strong words shook the hearts of many men. Among those who came to him were Pharisees and Sadducees, whom John charged to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Then, with much appearance of abruptness, he goes on "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," As far as the Scripture shows, the Jews had not here brought up Abraham's name; John himself did this, as though combating a well-known root of confidence. What that confidence was, we now inquire.

We must premise that creature-merit was, and is, a doctrine of Rabbinic Judaism, In other words, that it is possible for man to do something whereby he fairly earns blessing from God, and having earned, it is no act of grace for God to bestow mercies and blessings upon him — they are merited rewards, And this was held in the face of such passages as the following from the Old Testament: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." "How then can man be justified with God?" is the question more than once asked in the Book of Job; "or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"In the face of such

passages, we say, known to the Jewish doctors, a system was set up which taught that man was not evil continually; that he had righteousness which might outweigh his demerits; and that man born of a woman might show a considerable amount of cleanness. May we not ask here, Were the Rabbis alone in such doctrines? Are they not now held on every hand in the face not only of the Old Testament but also of the New, where, at the cross of Christ, we learn God's estimate of sin and man's utter ruin?

It was taught then, that "as the merits and the sins of a man are weighed at the hour of his death," (we quote the words of the Rabbis), "so likewise every year, on the festival of New Year's Day, the sins of every one that cometh into the world are weighed against his merits. Every one who is found righteous is sealed to life. Every one who is found wicked is sealed to death. But the judgment of the intermediate class is suspended until the day of atonement." That is an interval of ten days, and in those ten days, "Israel abounds in almsgiving and good works more than in all the year besides," so that all may pass out of the intermediate class to that of the righteous. One great act of merit might outweigh many sins; one great sin might overbalance many merits. False as we know all this to be, no wonder that it afforded little ease to guilty consciences, and other salves had to be sought, such as the merit of circumcision, almsgiving, the expiatory power of physical suffering and of death, prayers for the dead, etc., each of which was credited with atoning worth, yet not one could make "the conscience perfect," or give peace in the presence of God.

Amongst the many balms with which the Rabbinic Jew sought to cure his wound was the merits of the Fathers in general, and of Abraham in particular. "Everything comes to Israel on account of the merits of the Fathers," states an ancient commentary. In the service of the Jewish synagogue (a service of very great antiquity) such prayers as the following occur: "If we should be rewarded according to our works, my heart would be rent with fear. Give me strength to remember the rectitude of mine ancestors." "Regard the merits of our ancestors, who were born on this day... justify through their righteousness those who hope in Thee, O Lord, who art tremendous." "Though we have transgressed against Thee yet remember the ancient patriarchs." Of Sarah, it is said: "They depend on her merit: to be visited like her."

Of Isaac: "They depend on the ashes of him who was bound as a lamb." "May the sight of his ashes procure mercy for the remnant of his posterity!"

Of Jacob: "The strong foundation of the globe, and the great deep abyss, are not estimated in comparison with the chief foundation stone, on whose merit we depend for the acceptance of our prayer."

Of Joseph: "O remember the merit of him from whose shoulder Thou didst remove the yoke of bondage."

It is saddening to transcribe such passages, and to remember that for centuries and to this day, the poor sons of Israel have refused Him through whom alone salvation comes, and have put their trust in sinful men like unto themselves. For, true men of God as those patriarchs were, their salvation was wholly and entirely by grace; and they certainly would be the last to claim that they possessed so great an abundance of merit that it availed not only for themselves, but also for the justification of all their posterity. "The chief foundation stone," as they call Jacob, summed up his life thus: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been;" while even more striking is the

fact that Abraham — their chief tower of strength — is the very man set forth in the Scripture as an example of one justified, not by works, but by grace through faith. Abraham “believed in the LORD, and He counted it to him for righteousness,” says the Law, which words are repeated and proved in the New Testament.

We pass on to Abraham, for he, above all other of the patriarchs, was the boast of the Jew. “Father Abraham,” was an expression which fell naturally from the lips of the rich man in torments. “O remember the deeds of the Oriental, may his righteousness and rectitude plead for us!” “The fearful day of visitation is come; its dread goads all flesh; they present themselves with bended knees. O may their repentance be accounted as a burnt offering! Thou who hast formed them judgeth all their thoughts, the rich and poor are all weighed in the balance. Remember the merit of him who said, ‘Shall not He do justice?’ O remember the tenor of his prayer in judgment! ‘Ere aught was created, Thou didst purpose to ordain him the rock from whence the nation was to spring. He was as the center, the support of all creatures.” Thus runs the new year’s service from which we have already quoted.

In like manner it was held that because of God’s love to Abraham He spared Lot in Sodom, and for his sake looked kindly upon the people of the earth. “Very few men like Abraham has the sun looked upon,” says the Talmud. “He was tried with ten powerful trials,” says the synagogue service, and was found faithful in all. For this cause “remember the piety of the father of multitude,” is again the mistaken prayer. Our readers are probably not all familiar with the ten trials referred to, some of which certainly are not found in the Scripture, and are mere fables; we briefly state the first and second. When Abraham was born — (Nimrod was the reigning king) — certain wise men and magicians saw a large and brilliant star rise in the east, and consume four stars from the four quarters of the heavens. Connecting the circumstance with the birth of Terah’s child, they saw in it a sign of future evil through him, and besought Nimrod to destroy him. Nimrod endeavored to buy the child, but Terah obstinately refused to sell him, and at last, upon the choice of delivering up the young Abraham or of being destroyed with all his family, Terah substituted a slave-child born on the same day, who was slain, and Abraham and his mother were hidden in a lonely cave till the child was thirteen years old, when he came forth, a wise and accomplished man. This was the first “powerful trial.” The second was that upon breaking Terah’s idols, he was cast into a fierce furnace which consumed those who cast him in thither, but in the midst of which he walked unharmed. In fact, it is the deliverance of Shadrach and the other two Hebrew princes transferred to Abraham, and spoiled in the transference. The fable— for it is unquestionably one — probably arose in this way: “Ur” (of the Chaldees) signifies “a light” or “fire,” and Abraham’s coming out of “Ur” has been transformed to coming out of “the fire.” Yet it was upon the piety displayed by Father Abraham in these fabulous events that the Jew rested for justification, and to this day they are recited in the Jewish service.

A recent writer — himself a son of Abram — referring to ancient Jewish belief, says, “In fact, the ships on the sea were preserved through the merit of Abraham; the rain descended on account of it. For his sake alone had Moses been allowed to ascend into heaven, and to receive the Law; for his sake had the sin of the golden calf been forgiven; his righteousness had on many occasions been the support of Israel’s cause Daniel had been heard for the merit of Abraham; nay, his merit availed even for the wicked.” In its extravagance the Midrash apostrophises Abraham: “If thy children were even (morally) dead bodies, without blood-vessels or bones, thy merit would avail

for them.”

One other article of faith will be sufficient: “The wise men have said that Abraham our father sits at the door of hell [Gehinnom = Gehenna], and does not suffer any one that is circumcised to be cast into it.”

Bearing these facts in mind, we understand a little better the Jews’ boast: “We be Abraham’s seed;” we understand John the Baptist’s warning: “Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father;” while the words of St. Paul acquire a new significance if viewed as a corrective to these deluding, soul-destroying doctrines: “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abram.” And again: “If ye be Christ’s, THEN are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Jr.

## Charlotte and Louisa

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SOME years ago, when Effie was living in London, a friend wrote to her saying, "There is a poor girl named Charlotte P., who is ill in an invalid Home not far from you. The lady who sent her there would be glad if you would go sometimes and see her, for she has no friends in London, and must feel lonely." Effie went at once to the Home. She was taken into a bright, pleasant-looking sitting-room, where she was left for a time alone. The room was very simply furnished, but everything was quaint and pretty: it was like a room in an old picture. Effie had time to look about her, and to observe the little prints of saints and angels, and the bookcase full of books which Effie knew too well, for she had once been very fond of those old legends of the saints, and of story books which tell us how people find their way to heaven by baptism and by good works. After a while two Sisters of Mercy came into the room. They were pretty, gentle-looking young women, and they looked all the prettier from wearing a very simple gray dress and neat white caps. Effie asked if she might see Charlotte P., to which one of them replied, "I am sorry to refuse you, but Charlotte is too ill to talk, or to see visitors. We are very much afraid of exciting her, and have to keep her very quiet."

"What's that about, Sister Mary?" said a gentleman, who had suddenly walked in, and who was, as Effie afterward discovered, the doctor.

"The lady asked to see Charlotte P.," said Sister Mary, rather stiffly, "but I have told her it might be very bad for Charlotte to see visitors, so ill as she is to-day."

Effie felt quite awe-struck by the solemn dignity with which Sister Mary said these words. But it was not so with the doctor, who looked amused.

"Fiddlesticks!" he said; "I have just seen her. She is not a bit too ill — do her a world of good. Take the lady up there at once."

A black cloud came over Sister Mary's face, but there was no help for it, and she therefore led the way in silence up the stairs.

"There," she said, pointing to a door, "Charlotte is in bed. You can go in." And so saying, she disappeared down the stairs.

Effie opened the door and went in. There were only two people in the room, and, as only one was in bed, it was easy to know which was Charlotte. The other person was a woman who sat in front of the fire, her feet on the fender, reading a book. As her back was towards Effie, she could not help seeing the book, which was a novel. Charlotte was sitting up in bed. She was an innocent-looking girl, with a very sweet face and golden hair.

"There is no time to be lost," Effie thought, "in speaking to Charlotte about her soul, for it is very unlikely I shall ever be allowed to see her again." So, when she had asked her a few questions about her health, she said to her, "Charlotte, are you saved?"

Charlotte looked at her in silence. But the woman who was reading turned suddenly round, and fixed her great black eyes on Effie's face. She was quite young, but she looked strangely miserable.

"Since I came here," she said, "I believe that it is impossible to be saved."

"Why do you say that?" Effie asked.

"I say it," she answered, "because there are so many, many things that one has to do before one can be saved. I don't see how one can ever do them."

"What are they?" asked Effie.

"I can hardly tell you," she said. First of all, I must repent of my sins — of all — all of my sins. I must confess them, and be very, very sorry for them. Then I must leave them off, and then I must do good works, and I must pray very much. And I shall never know when I have repented enough, or prayed enough, or done good works enough to be saved. I can never, never know, and I try not to think about it." And then the poor girl put down her book, and covered her face with her hands, and began to cry.

"Who told you that you must do all those things before you can be saved?" asked Effie.

"The ladies here say so, and Mr. Black, the chaplain," she answered.

"Do you know what God has said about it?"

"No," she said, "I know only what I have told you."

"It is time then you should know what God says. I wish you very much to listen whilst I read to you what He has said. 'Be it known unto you therefore,' He says, 'that through this Man' (that is, Jesus) 'is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.' What is it you have to believe It is to believe that which really happened, namely, that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God as well as Man, bore the whole punishment of all your sins. God says, 'Christ died for our sins. Christ died for the ungodly. When we were enemies we were reconciled to God' (not by our own doings or feelings, but) 'by the death of His Son.' And God says, 'To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.' Also Jesus said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.'"

Effie read on more of these wonderful sayings of God, and the two girls listened as if for their lives.

"It seems then that God will forgive us entirely, and at once, if we go straight to Him, and believe that Jesus died for our sins," said the girl with black eyes, whose name was Louisa.

"Yes, you are quite right," said Effie, "entirely, and at once. For He is perfectly satisfied, not with your repentance, or prayers, or works, but with the work of His Son, the work done by Jesus on the Cross. He did the work to save us, and He did it perfectly. You need not think 'have I done enough?' Of course you have not, and you never can. But the question, is 'Has Jesus done enough to save me?' God says He has, and we must believe God."

After a few words more, Effie said, "Goodbye, I will come again if I can."

"Oh, don't go," said Charlotte and Louisa together. Then Charlotte whispered to Louisa, and Louisa said, "We want to ask you something more. If it is really true that God forgives us Himself, at once, and entirely, what good would Mr. Black's forgiveness do us? What can we want more than God's forgiveness?"

"Why should you want Mr. Black's forgiveness?" said Effie; "you have sinned against God, not against Mr. Black. It is God's forgiveness that we need. And when we have it, what more can we have?"

"I thought so," said Louisa. "But they tell us here that we are only forgiven when Mr. Black forgives us. Now I see that we may go straight to God Himself. That is all we want." And so Effie left them, much fearing that she would see them no more.

A few days after she went again to the Home, and was received as before by Sister Mary.

"Can I see Charlotte?" inquired Effie.

"Yes," replied Sister Mary; "you can see her. But you will be kind enough to allow me to be in the room. I have to mark the linen," she added, taking up a large basket, and a bottle of marking ink, with which she led the way to Charlotte's room.

This time it was a larger room, with other persons in it, some up, and some in bed. Amongst them was Louisa. Other Sisters were there also. The room, like all the other rooms in the Home, was bright and pretty, and so clean and comfortable that, could one have found sick people, who had only bodies and no souls, one would gladly have sent them there. Sister Mary sat down at Effie's elbow, and began her task. Effie now found she had left her Bible at home, but she saw one on a table not far off. "Sister Mary, would you kindly lend me a Bible?" she asked.

"Indeed," replied Sister Mary, rather sternly, "it is perfectly needless for you to read the Bible to Charlotte. So many ladies come here and read the Bible, more of it is quite unnecessary."

Effie, however, took the Bible from the table, and said, "I am sure you will allow me to read three verses. I do not wish to read more, and I will not stay long." She waited for a moment for Sister Mary's answer, but as she remained silent Effie read the three wonderful verses in John 3. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "There was but one way," said Effie, "for the poor dying people in the wilderness to be saved from death. The fiery serpents had bitten them, and there was no escape till God told Moses to put up the brazen serpent on the pole. Then there was a way to be saved from death — one way only. It was to look at that brazen serpent. God did not tell them to do anything but look at that. For what could they do besides? They were dying. He did not tell them to feel anything, or to ask for anything. He told them to look. And it is Jesus Himself who tells us that He was meant by that brazen serpent, and that we are meant by the dying people, and that there is one only way by which we can be saved from everlasting death, by looking to Jesus, who was lifted up on the Cross for our sins. We look, and we are saved."

At this moment some visitors came in, and Sister Mary rose to speak to them. Charlotte seized the opportunity. She leaned across the bed, and whispered to Effie, "All my sins are forgiven. I know it. I know that what they tell me here is wrong. I was taught at school how Jesus saves us, and now I am saved."

And then as Sister Mary returned to her marking, Effie took leave of her, and remarked that a cloud had settled upon her face, which was in strange contrast to the bright smile upon the face of Charlotte.

When she next went to the Home, not long afterward, the front door was opened to her by Sister Mary herself. "You cannot see Charlotte," she said at once, very decidedly. "She is dying."

Effie was surprised, for Charlotte had looked stronger and better the last time, and she could hardly believe in this sudden change. "I will come again to-morrow," she said, "and perhaps she will be able to see me then."

"I have told you she is in the very act of dying," repeated Sister Mary.

"In any case," said Effie, "I will call tomorrow. She may perhaps have revived by that time."

"It is no use to call to-morrow if she does revive," replied Sister Mary. "To-morrow is Saturday. No visitors are allowed here except on Sundays, and that is another reason too why you can't see her to-day."

"But," said Effie, "I have been here twice before. Neither time was it on Sunday, and you never said a word to me about visitors being forbidden to come on week days. I am unable to come on Sunday, but I am quite sure the Lady Superior will allow me to call to-morrow, when I tell her that Miss H. desired me to see Charlotte. Where shall I find her?"

"She is not here, she is out," replied Sister Mary.

"I will write her a note this evening, and I am sure she will give me leave to call whenever I am able to do so," said Effie. "Good-bye."

But Sister Mary did not return the goodbye. She stood with the door in her hand, as though she were meditating. "Perhaps I had better be candid with you," she said suddenly.

"By all means," replied Effie, "it is always the best plan to tell the truth."

Sister Mary then led the way with great solemnity to a small room at the end of the passage. A crucifix and two chairs were the only furniture that Effie could remember there. "It's a painful duty — but it is a duty," she began, "to tell you my real reason for forbidding you to see Charlotte. The fact is, that the last time you were here, you broke the rules of the Home, and cannot, therefore, be allowed to continue your visits."

"I am sorry I broke the rules," replied Effie. "I would not have done so had I been aware of it. But I was quite ignorant of the rules, and, therefore, I hope you will excuse it. May I ask what was the rule I broke?"

"You read the Bible," said Sister Mary. "That is entirely against the rules."

“But,” said Effie, “you remember that when I asked you for a Bible, you told me that so many ladies came to read the Bible, it was quite unnecessary that I should do so too. How then could I suppose it was against the rules?”

Sister Mary looked confused. “Suppose, after all, I let you go up this time,” she said. “Only promise me that you will not read the Bible. You may have a story-book to read to Charlotte, if you like.”

“But,” said Effie, for she felt really bewildered by this proposal, “you told me five minutes ago Charlotte is in the act of dying. You now say I may go and read her a storybook. Why should you wish me to read a story-book to a dying person?”

“I don’t want you to read a story-book,” replied Sister Mary. “I thought you wanted to read. All I ask you to promise is, that you will not read the Bible.”

“I will promise you that,” said Effie. “I can say all I have to say. I will read nothing.”

Sister Mary rose and led the way upstairs. Her hand was already upon Charlotte’s door, when she turned suddenly round, and said — “Before I let you in you must promise me one thing more. Promise me that you will not speak to Charlotte about Christ.”

For a moment Effie remained speechless. Could Sister Mary really mean this? “Promise me that,” she repeated.

“I will not promise you that,” said Effie. “What else have I to speak about to a dying person? I have nothing else to say.”

“Then you will not go in,” said Sister Mary, very decidedly. And she pointed down the stairs, meaning that Effie was to follow the direction of her finger. She then led her back to the small room with the two chairs.

Effie had now forgotten Charlotte altogether, in the thought that Sister Mary had a soul, and that this might be the one only opportunity for speaking to her of him whose name she had forbidden to the dying girl.

“Why,” she asked her, “should you desire me not to speak to a dying person of the only Saviour? Is there any other way to be saved besides believing in Jesus?”

“Of course,” said Sister Mary, scornfully, “I know as well as you do that we must believe in Jesus. But we must also do good works. And that you leave out. It is painful to me to tell you, but I believe I ought to tell you, that after you came here last time, there was what I may call a riot — yes, positively a riot — in the ward upstairs where Charlotte was. It was the day you read to them about that snake. And you said the people had only to look at the snake and be well all at once. And, when you were gone, that girl Louisa stood up and told us all to our faces that we were leading them in a wrong road, and that there was only one way to be saved, and that was just simply believing in Jesus — nothing else! And she said people who believed were saved at once— there and then! You may think what were our feelings at being preached to by a girl like Louisa. That she should take upon herself to teach us! And there is Charlotte led away by it, and thinking herself saved! And we who know Charlotte, and consider that she needs a great deal more to make her fit for heaven, can only be shocked and grieved at her presumption and pride.”

“Yet you would have me read a storybook to her in her last moments, and you, who think that she is not saved, forbid me to speak to her of the only Saviour.”

Sister Mary looked at Effie with a disdainful smile, and drawing herself up to her full height, she said, “I am quite sure that you are not at all aware what a holy house this is. Did you bat know it, you would certainly not think it necessary to come here and speak of Christ.”

“I did not know,” replied Effie, “that it is the mark of a holy place that the name of Christ is forbidden there. Is not heaven a holy place; even holier than this house? If ever we meet in heaven, do you think that there we shall speak of Him? Sister Mary, do you expect to be there one day?”

“I humbly hope I shall go there,” replied Sister Mary.

“If it is to the precious blood of Christ that we are trusting, we may know that we shall be there,” said Effie, “for the work of Christ is a perfect work. He said upon the cross, ‘It is finished.’ There is nothing more to add to it to make us fit for heaven. No repentance, no prayers, no works can be added on to His perfect work, for ‘It is finished.’ We can bring Him nothing — nothing but our sins. He gives us everything, for He Himself has won heaven for us by His precious blood, and ‘To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly’ (not the godly, but the ungodly), ‘his faith is counted for righteousness.’”

Sister Mary, who had but just spoken of her humble hope, said with an icy smile, “You speak to me just as if I had to be saved like a drunkard in the streets.”

“If you think there are two ways to be saved, one for you and one for the drunkard, Sister Mary, you have never yet known what the way is; yes, you, and the drunkards, and the thieves, and the vilest of sinners must all be saved in the same way, or not at all. It is as a vile, lost sinner that you must come to Christ, and take the same place that they do. The filthy rags of their sinfulness, and the filthy rags of your righteousness are of equal value before God. When you believe that, you will be glad to believe that the blood of Christ is that which is so precious in the eyes of God that it opens heaven to the chief of sinners.”

“I have no wish to argue with you,” was the answer of Sister Mary. She led the way to the front door, took the key from her girdle, and in another moment Effie stood alone in the square.

Poor Sister Mary! It was only a few years before that Effie had thought and spoken as she had done. She could only pity her, for she knew that she was miserable. She could remember only too well the wretchedness of the heart that has never yet been able to say, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” She saw Sister Mary only once more, and then, to her surprise, she allowed her to see Charlotte all alone, having made no further difficulties, except by telling her that she had been moved to a room up five flights of stairs, which would be very tiring for Effie to climb. Charlotte was better, and was bright and happy. She was just going to be moved to a hospital, for Sister Mary and the other Sisters were all going away for a holiday. Effie, too, was leaving London.

Some months after, she met with a Bible-woman who had been ill in a hospital. In the next bed to her, Charlotte P. had died. She said to the last that her sins were forgiven, that she was trusting in Jesus only, and that she was perfectly happy.

Effie could never find out what became of Louisa. She had left the Home before Charlotte died, quite cured. We can only hope that she has “preached” to many more lost sinners as simply and faithfully as she preached to the Sisters in the Home. For though women are not called to be preachers as men are, they have many opportunities of speaking, like the woman of Sychar, to those with whom they have to do. And if this is called preaching they may bear the reproach.

F. B.

## The Schoolmaster's Text

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THE circus had fallen into the hands of Christian workers. It was late Saturday evening when they obtained possession, and as a service was to be held on the following Sunday, much had to be done in covering some things hardly helpful to devotion, putting up texts, and arranging seats. But many and willing hands made light work, and in a short time a perfect transformation had taken place. The ladders were just being put away, and the friends going to their homes, when the good schoolmaster hurried up with a large text.

"Too late," said some; but he pleaded so hard that he gained his point.

"Do put it up somewhere; I have worked at it many days, praying over every letter. I am sure it will be blessed."

Over the door was a vacant space, and there the text was placed — white letters on a red ground—

"THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON, CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN."

The schoolmaster was satisfied, and in the darkness of the night sent up many a petition that the word of the Lord might be owned.

Sunday afternoon came, and with it the congregation at the circus. Among the visitors was a man and his wife, who stepped in to see the wonderful change in the old place. Their eyes roamed hither and thither, and their hearts, too, until at length the schoolmaster's text was noticed.

"What's that over there?" said the man; "it wasn't there before."

His wife read out the words■

"THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON, CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN."

The singing, the sermon, the service, made little impression; but the schoolmaster's text lodged.

"SIN," thought the man, "I have the experience of that in my heart and life. I have defiled myself and all around me.

'CLEANSING,' that is what I need, to have all this filth removed, and to be made pure. Is such a thing possible?" He repeated the text, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Could he be included in that little word "us"?

Sickness came suddenly upon him, and he had to leave business; in so doing he found leisure to think of these things. Sin after sin came up before his mind — sins of youth; sins of middle life; sins in secret and sins against others; sins in work, in the family, in religion; but over all stretched the blessed text■

"THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON, CLEANS US FROM ALL SIN."

Thus peace came; for blood represented punishment — and punishment cleared from guilt; so, if Christ was punished for his guilt, that punishment, or blood, cleansed all the sin that deserved punishment, and he was clear.

Two weeks after, a note was handed up, at the Sunday service in the circus, to say that that man had been buried the previous Saturday, and that his last words were■

“THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON, CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN.” (1 John 1:7)

W. I.

## The Old Railway Man

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“I WAS at my old mate’s funeral when the friends walked past the grave to take a last look,” said an old railway man to some of his comrades, “and I thought, as I looked down the hole, ‘If that were my body, where should I be now?’ And I thought, ‘I should be in hell, where no mercy ever comes!’ I felt real miserable, and the next Sunday I went to Tom’s old Room, and after hearing the preaching there, a lady said to me, ‘Do you love Jesus?’ I couldn’t tell a lie, mates. I’d drink and swear, and was rough enough, God knows; but I couldn’t tell her a lie, and I said, ‘I don’t know naught about Jesus; what should I love Him for?’ But, bless His name, He soon found me out. What a blessing He did! I should never have found Him — I didn’t know where to look.

“I thought I should have a lot of trouble with my mates, but I do thank God all things have become new.

“My old companions, fare you well;

I will not go with you to hell —

I’m going with Jesus Christ to dwell,

Will you go?’

“Will you go, dear friends — any who tigh are out of Christ? Take an old railway man’s advice, and decide to-night.

“When I took my ticket for glory, I found the fare had been paid right through by up express, for Jesus had done. All the work for me.”

## A Word to Workers in the Gospel

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ALL true gospel work is aggressive. It can be nothing else. The world is a battlefield, and God's soldiers are called to active service. The enemy is ever on the alert, and the faithful soldier dare be nothing less. Yet the self-evident fact of true gospel work being aggressive, always aggressive, gets but a small place in the souls of God's people. Probably every Christian at some time of his life lived out gospel aggressiveness — he or she sought to win souls with the soldier spirit; equally probable is it, that not one in a thousand maintains the true gospel spirit for any length of time.

Most have their practice days, but these are usually few and far between, and the work of many is often merely practice. Firing big guns is so expensive that their report is but seldom heard; but big guns, after all, do not slay as the sword, for, as in ancient warfare, the greatest slaughter falls to hand-to-hand fighting. Some eloquent teacher or mighty evangelist may at times utter his voice in our neighborhood, but, after all has been said, the great thing is to do our little work ourselves. So up to the work in village, town, and city, and whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might — put your whole soul into the work.

A Christian man was telling us the other day, that when God not long ago aroused him to the reality of the lost state of his neighbors, he first called upon the Christians he knew and asked their help. One said he had tried so often getting people to the chapel that he regarded such efforts as of no use. Others, whom he begged to open their houses or lend him their barns, only looked at him as an enthusiast. He went to the ministers near, they shrugged their shoulders; to the clergyman, who said he would consider the subject. At last the true idea entered our friend's soul — working man he is, and with little ability — but he bethought him he would trust God and try himself, and the end — though God grant it is but a beginning — was that several open sinners were brought to the Lord Jesus Christ.

What would a colonel say to the privates in the regiment who, in the day of battle, left the actual fighting to the officers, as not being the special duty of the rank and file? Thank God for good officers, but every man to the work, and to his own particular work unto which he has been called by God.

Young people often make rushes at work; steady workers get through the most work in the long run. The woman who sought her lost piece of silver swept the house and sought diligently till she found it; and such work is carried on in the power of God's Spirit. Those disciples who, guided by the Lord, were unable to draw their net for the multitude of fishes, had, before the draft, toiled all night and had caught nothing. "In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not," says the scripture. But pieces of silver are not found without search, nor fishes caught without toil, nor does the harvest arise unless the seed be sown.

Every man to his duty, and never forget the Lord has appointed to each his work, and to you, yours. Find from Him what your work is and go forward. Go forward. Look for blessing; expect better things than have heretofore been received. It is a great thing in working to have a good

heart. The more the difficulties, the more the victories. The more the enemies, the more the cause for courage. Be strong and of a good courage, and live for God and for eternity.

## Glad Tidings

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THE gospel is good news — glad tidings — God’s own best news to fallen man. Never forget that it is glad news God calls His people to tell out. “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy” (Luke 2:10), said the angel when the Saviour was born. The early believers “gladly received the word,” and “did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.” (Acts 2:41, 46.) On Philip’s preaching Christ in Samaria, “there was great joy in that city” (8:5-8.) God’s people are called to be a rejoicing people, boasting even in tribulation — more than conquerors in every affliction and over every foe. The weary, heart-sick world, with its anxieties, uncertainties, perplexities, needs joy. Tell out “the good tidings of great joy,” fellow Christian, and “rejoice and be glad.”

## The Fig Tree in the Vineyard

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A FIG TREE planted in a vineyard (Luke 13:6,7) — in the spot of all others most choice, most constantly under the owner's eye. How often had the owner of that fig tree observed its growth! how often had he looked among its branches for fruit! For three long years he had looked for, yes, "had come, seeking fruit," but in vain. Israel is "the vineyard of the Lord" (Isa. 5:1-7), and the favored tree in the favored vineyard, we cannot doubt, is the city of the Lord's most special care, Jerusalem. "When the time of the fruit drew near," the lord of the vineyard sent his son that he might receive the fruits of it (Matt. 21:33-39), and he looked to the dresser of his vineyard for fruit from his favored tree. The wall of the vineyard is now broken down, and it is laid waste, and neither "pruned nor digged," while the clouds "rain no rain upon it." It is the time of the "casting away of" Israel (Rom. 11:15-22). Long, long since the solemn word, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" has gone forth against Jerusalem, and the favored city has been overturned. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" it is a fearful thing to be cared for, nourished, warned by Him, and still to be profitless and unfruitful, yes, to be "nigh unto cursing."

Like the favored tree in the favored vineyard is the child of Christian parents in a Christian land. How many such trees are there in happy English homes! The heavenly husbandman looks to them for fruit: "Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." Of His grace are all the advantages of the Christian home, to Him must an account be rendered for all the advantages. To be the special object of the husbandman's interest, to be placed in the choicest spot in his vineyard, in no way saved the fig tree from the ax, neither will the fact of being brought up where Christ's name is revered, and where the Bible is honored, excuse any one from bearing fruit.

Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin were cities wherein most of the Lord's mighty works were done. Many a miracle was wrought in Capernaum, many a word of life fell from Jesus' lips in its streets. As the people saw the sick rise up healed from their beds, they beheld the Saviour sent from God amongst them; it was their hour to seek and to find mercy at His hands, but "they repented not." (Matt. 11:20.) Hence their mercies became their greatest woe — "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." (vs. 22.) Alas! how shall they fare who repent not, though they hear more wonderful things than did the citizens of Capernaum, for in this Christian country it is well known that Jesus not only lived and blessed men, healing their bodies and comforting their hearts, but that He died upon the cross for the chief of sinners, and that now, having risen from the dead, He lives in heaven to bless and to save.

To whom much is given, of him much is required, which great principle in the ways of God none dare overlook. Yet when the owner of the vineyard came and found no fruit upon the fig-tree, mercy was mingled with judgment. The tree was not at once cut down, rather it became the object of rewed care on the part of the dresser of the vineyard. "Lord," said he, "let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." And so it is with the reader of this page who has so often refused God's word of grace. Kindness has been heaped on kindness, love showered on love. The pitiful word is heard, "Let it

alone this year also.” One more opportunity, though no more are deserved. Judgment lingers, and mercy still stretches forth her hand.

Out of the many who read this page, these words will be last words to some! “This year also” will be the last year; the present, the last opportunity for repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. Our eternal destiny depends upon the present reception or rejection of Christ. “They repented not!” they preferred their own course, their own self-contentment. To such, the sad, sad end, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” must come. Far better to be born a heathen, and never to hear of Jesus, than to be a professing Christian in a Christian home, and to perish rejecting Him. “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.” The wise man, the religious professor, may look upon the ignorance and the cruel customs of the heathen with scorn, but it is written to such, “Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” (Rom. 2:4, 5.)

Let us not forget that the hour is near when this day of salvation must close. Even as it was with Jerusalem and the cities where the Lord’s mighty works were done, so will it be with Christendom and our own land — the opportunities for mercy will end. “The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.” (Luke 17:29, 30.) Let none presume on the mercies which surround him, but may the high privileges of a Christian’s home and surroundings lead the favored heart at once to Christ.

## A Girl of My Bible Class

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A SHORT time since, I heard that a young girl, who, for nearly five years, had been a member of my former Bible class, was dead. Nellie was always a quiet, attentive girl. On several occasions when she was alone with me, she listened with great interest to what I said about Christ, yet scarcely spoke herself. However, I had three letters from her, which convinced me that Nellie really loved the Lord Jesus. This is how she wrote: "Dearest teacher, I promise you that I will always ask Jesus to help me... I am sure God has answered all my prayers. I could not get on without my Heavenly Father's care." Having this testimony, when I heard of Nellie's death, I felt sure she had gone to be with her Saviour in heaven.

Soon after Nellie's mother wrote the following touching account of her daughter's last days: "Dear Lady, I should like you to have heard the dear child, all her thoughts were for others, not for herself, no, not to the last. I asked her several times if she was afraid, but she said she was not; on Sunday morning she prayed most beautifully for all of us. Then she held her finger up and looked up to heaven, and said she could see Jesus. 'Oh, how beautiful!' she said, and added she hoped to see Him a little clearer. She was so bright and smiling, we could not think she was going from us so soon."

Dear young friends, Nellie was only nineteen when the solemn call came to her, but she was not afraid to die. Why? Because she had taken Jesus to be her own Saviour and Friend, when she was in health, and she knew that death would only bring her into the immediate presence of Him whom she had loved and quietly striven to follow. She once told me she wished to be a Christian whilst she was young, and now, she being dead, yet speaks to all who read this paper; and I am sure Nellie would wish me, in her name, to entreat each of you to come to Christ too, whilst you are young. May this simple account of Nellie's last days on earth lead you to the same Saviour whom she loved?

"Oh, won't you be a Christian,

While you're young,

Don't think it will be better

To delay it until later,

But remember your Creator,

While you're young.

Remember, death may find you

While you're young.

For friends are often weeping,

And the stars their watch are keeping  
O'er the grassy graves where sleeping  
Lie the young!"

A.M.T

## Do You Belong to Jesus?

---

I WANT to tell you a true story, dear children, about a little boy called Spencer, of between nine and ten years old. Last summer I went to stay with his mother, and was grieved to see the dear boy looking so pale and ill. He did not care to run about and play with his brothers and sisters, but he would sit for a long time reading "Peep of Day," or "Line upon Line."

One day we were sitting together. Spencer had just shut up his book, and looking up, he said to me — "Do you think Jesus is coming soon?"

"Yes, dear, I do. Should you be ready, Spencer, if He came today?"

"Yes; I should not be afraid."

A few months after the Lord Jesus took him. He became very deaf, so it was difficult to make him hear at all; he seemed to take very little notice of anything. The Friday afternoon before he was taken, he was sitting by the fire; his mother was in the room, he said "Do you belong to Jesus, mother? I do. I want you to come to heaven some day, and all my brothers and sisters, too."

A few hours after this he became unconscious, and the Lord Jesus took him to be forever with Himself.

His mother and brothers and sisters do not mourn for dear Spencer, though they miss him so much.

Dear girls and boys, do you belong to the Lord Jesus? Can you say "He (Jesus) loved me, and gave Himself for me"? If the Lord Jesus called you, are you ready to meet Him? Have you come to Him as a helpless sinner, and asked Him to take you just as you are, and make you His child? Then you can say, as dear Spencer, "I am not afraid, I belong to Jesus." A. M. P.

## A Wordless Book

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The above is an illustration of a book without words. Some of my readers have seen such a book or card, but those who have not may say, “How could one understand a wordless book — a book without words?”

I will tell you. There are, as you see, four sorts of pages — black, red, white, and golden — and each of these pages has a meaning.

The Black Speaks of sin and death. Once there was no sin, and therefore no death, but with sin came death. All are sinners, and therefore all are naturally on the black page; but I know A number of boys and girls, as well as big people, who are on.

### THE WHITE.

Do you ask, “What is the meaning of the white page? and how came they to get from the black to the white?”

Well, as the black speaks of sin, and the condition of the sinner who is still in his sins, so the white speaks of what that same sinner is in the sight of God after he has had his sins taken away.

But you ask, “How does the sinner get from the black to the white?” or, in other words, “How does he get his sins taken away so that he is no longer on the black page?” It is all-important, my little reader, that you should know how such takes place, for the judgment must come upon all those who remain upon the black. To get from the black to the white — that is, from darkness to light, from death to life — you must know the value of that which is referred to by.

### THE RED.

The red means the blood — the precious blood of Christ. It alone can cleanse from sin and make fit for the presence of God, for no sinner who is still on the black, whose sins are not washed away, can ever dwell in that place, where there is no darkness, but where all is bright.

You could not by all your doings make yourself white — you could not cleanse yourself and fit yourself for God’s presence: there is nothing can wash away the black — that is, sin — but the blood of Jesus. “The blood of Jesus Christ” [God’s Son] “cleanseth from all sin.” How much is left if all is washed away? Why, none! No — not any. Those who believe in Jesus are “clean every whit.” They are no longer on the black, but on the white — they have “passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation” [judgment].

Now, little reader, which page are you on? Perhaps you say, “I am still on the black page, but I desire to be upon the white.” Well, I know many little girls and boys who have so expressed themselves, and some of them are now on the white. What did they do? They believed in the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse them■they believed God’s word that Christ died to save sinners, and those who believe in Him are made white.

"I know," said a little boy, "that the black page means sin; the red, the blood; and that the white means after a soul has been washed in the blood of Christ."

Yes, my little friend, a soul that is washed in the blood of Christ is white — "whiter than snow." The blood can wash all sin away, and the sinner so washed is fit to stand in the presence of God.

"I love Jesus, and have come to sing about Him," said a little one a short time ago when coming to a children's meeting. "I want to learn more about Jesus," said another; and one dear little girl said, "I have taken the text, God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,' to myself. I think it was very kind of God to give His only Son to die for such a wicked sinner as me."

Such have been the thoughts and expressions of some I know, and, though I may not know you, my little reader, or be known to you, my desire is that you too might believe the love which God has to you, in that He sent His Son to die that you might live. What the little girl meant by taking to herself the verse, John 3:16, was this — she took it as though her name was there, where you find the word "whosoever" — she took it to herself that Christ died for her. Take it to yourself, little one. It is true for you, and, believing, YOU will have everlasting life.

Well, then, we have thought of the black — sin; of the red — the precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin; and of the white — that which the believing sinner is made — and we know from the word of God that that whiteness is "whiter than snow." There now remains

#### THE GOLDEN.

Only those who are upon the white, having known the value of the red, will know the blessedness of the gold. It speaks of heaven— glory.

The souls that are washed in the blood and made white, and can rejoice now that their sins are forgiven can be happy in the presence of God; but it is not only they are saved from coming judgment, but saved to be in the glory. The Lord Jesus is coming to take His own to be with Him up there, in heaven; but should any little ones who believe pass away by death — fall asleep — they go to be with Him, and wait there till the time of the coming glory.

Remember, dear little one, if you have not believed — if you are not white — you are still on the black, and if you were to die as yet are you could not be taken to be where Christ is, but would be forever where it is all blackness; but if now you believe you will pass from the black to the white — from dead; unto life — you will be able to rejoice in your being made "whiter than snow," and be able to look forward to the being with Christ— in the, glory.

Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs.

#### THE SABBATH.

THE Sabbath law, as laid down in the Old Testament, was undoubtedly stringent. The fourth commandment, uttered amid all the solemnity of Mount Sinai, forbade all manner of work, while its observance was again and again pressed upon the people, and the sentence of death was passed upon every one who defiled that "day of holiness." In after times the breach of this law brought upon Israel the severest judgment of Jehovah. Yet the day was not one connected with gloomy

and doleful doings: the very name breathes sweetness — “Rest,” and the happy character of the day was quite discerned by the Jewish teachers of old. It was called the spouse of Israel, for, when the Sabbath had complained to God that it alone of all the days stood solitary (the others were paired), God had wedded it to Israel. Thus the tradition ran. So in every way it was sought to welcome the coming of the Sabbath. Mourning was banished, a special dress was reserved, and the best food that could be procured was placed on the table, even though it consumed the proceeds of the week’s labor, or if money had to be borrowed for the purpose, for it was held “he that borroweth for the Sabbath the Sabbath will repay him.”

The following is the legend of the Sabbath eve. “When a man leaves the synagogue for his home, an angel of good and an angel of evil accompany him. If he finds the table spread in his house, the Sabbath lamps lighted, and his wife and children in festive garments ready to bless the holy day of rest, then the good angel says, ‘May the next Sabbath, and all thy Sabbaths, be like this. Peace unto this dwelling — peace;’ and the angel of evil is forced to say, ‘Amen!’ But if the house is not ready, if no preparations have been made to greet the Sabbath — if no heart within the dwelling has sung, ‘Come, my beloved, to meet the bride, and the presence of the Sabbath let us receive,’ then the angel of evil speaks and says, ‘May all thy Sabbaths be like this;’ and the weeping angel of goodness responds, ‘Amen.’”

All this is fanciful enough, but underneath it lies the recognition of the beneficent character of the day of rest, given by God in goodness, and fruitful of good to those who observed the law respecting it. But there is another side to the story, and that a sad one — the Sabbath law as amplified by the Rabbis. By a strange perversity of mind — like certain mirrors which distort all that is reflected by them — though they held high opinions indeed of the Sabbath, they were distorted opinions, and altogether out of perspective with the teaching of the Old Testament. Thus, they assert that it redeemed the first created man from judgment; for, when he sinned on the eve of the holy day, and judgment was about to fall, the Sabbath came and said before God, “Lord of the world, in the six days of creation nothing in the world was killed, and wilt Thou begin with me? Is this my sanctification, and is this my blessing?” Therefore, by the merit of the Sabbath day Adam was delivered from the judgment of hell, and, when Adam saw the power of the Sabbath, he chanted “a psalm, or song, for the Sabbath day,” namely, Psa. 92 It was also held by one doctor that to every one who makes the Sabbath a delight an infinite inheritance is given; another promises the desire of one’s heart; and another says, “Whosoever keeps the Sabbath according to its constitutions, even though he were an idolater like Enosh, he shall be forgiven.” While Simon Ben Jochai (some of whose extravagant utterances have been quoted in previous papers) said: “If Israel would keep two Sabbaths, they should be immediately delivered.”

Probably, partly as a consequence from such notions, and partly because remembering how Israel had smarted in the past on account of their pollutions of God’s Sabbath, the Rabbis amplified the simple commands of the Pentateuch to such an extent that the Sabbath law contained in the Babylon Talmud covers 156 double pages of folio. Nor may we dismiss the matter by saying that the law as thus explained was only of man’s making, and that an Israelite might set it aside, and go back to the simple words of the written law. The Rabbis, at least, allowed no such heretical notions. They claimed most absolute submission to their decrees. They held that the ordinances of the Scribes were more precious and of more binding importance than those of Holy Scripture. “Every one who believes in Moses, our master,” say they, “and in his law, is bound to rest the

practice of the law on them (the Scribes), and to lean on them.”

There was no appeal then from the terrible “oral law” (as it was called in contrast with the “written law”), and the wonder is how any man familiar with it could be happy upon the Sabbath, lest, at any step he should unthinkingly commit a breach of its manifold prohibitions; or how one not knowing it could refrain from the unhappy question: “Have I sinned in what I have done? do I sin in what I am doing?” For the Rabbis had discussed every conceivable question, and the general sentence is this: “To rest on the seventh day from work is an affirmative precept, for it is said, ‘On the seventh day thou shalt rest.’ Whosoever, therefore, does any work annuls an affirmative and transgresses a negative precept, for it is said, ‘Thou shalt do no manner of work.’ What is meant by being guilty of doing work? If it be done voluntarily and presumptuously, the meaning is that he is liable to excision, and if there be a witness and a warning, he is to be stoned. If he did it in error, he must bring a certain sin offering.” But though this looks very much like the law of Moses, it is remotely removed from it. The question is: What is work, as meant by the Rabbis? This we shall see.

It will be remembered that one of the chief complaints against the Lord Jesus Christ was, that He had broken the Sabbath. After He had healed the impotent man at Bethesda's pool in Jerusalem, the Jews sought to slay Him, “because He had done these things on the Sabbath day.” In Galilee they condemned both Him and His disciples, the former for healing a withered man's hand — for which they sought to destroy Him — the latter for plucking ears of corn. Matt. In Peræa — for all over the country alike, the same spirit prevailed — the synagogue ruler waxed indignant, because Jesus had loosed a daughter of Abraham, who for eighteen years had been bound by Satan. Again, at Jerusalem, they condemned Him as a sinner, because on the Sabbath day He had done what no other man ever did — He gave sight to the blind. What was the reason of this deep and fierce enmity? It was not — could not be — that He had set aside God's law. No, but their miserable supplement to God's law, which could not bind Him, had been infringed, and with a zeal and pertinacity which would have been commendable in pursuit of good, they persecuted Him. Alas! that when the Lord of the Sabbath came, they knew Him not.

With reference, first of all, to the offense of the disciples: all kinds of labor connected with bread were divided into eleven heads “fathers,” as the Rabbis called them — each head or “father” having sub-divisions or “descendants.” The “fathers” were: ploughing, sowing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, sifting (selecting), grinding, sifting in a sieve, kneading, baking. By this ingenious division, the disciples' simple act might involve a number of sins. For thus says the oral law: “In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered as sifting; if she rubs the heads of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side adherences, it is sifting out fruit; if she bruises the ears, it is grinding; if she throws them up in her hand, it is winnowing.” Here are five labors, and as it is conceivable that the disciples did all these things, they were probably guilty of no less than five sins, tether with the previous sin of reaping, and were thus liable to present, in all, six sin-offerings each!

With reference to the works of the Lord, and the doctrines of the Scribes bearing on them, it was undoubtedly allowed that in cases of actual danger to life the ordinary provisions of the Sabbath law might be set aside. “The Sabbath is handed over to you, not ye to the Sabbath,” says an ancient commentary on Exodus, dealing with this point. But in the cases of healing by the Lord,

there was no prospect of death immediately ensuing; hence His acts were offences against the oral law. For so opposed were the traditions to all mercy and goodness that nothing might be done upon the Sabbath which would tend to heal. That was a fundamental principle of the oral law. No plaster might be applied unless its object was to prevent a wound getting worse, not to heal it; no broken bone might be set; all external applications were forbidden. If a person was suffering from toothache he might not gargle his mouth with vinegar, though he might use the acid with a toothbrush in the ordinary way. A later comment adds, that even gargling might be done if the vinegar were afterward swallowed; that would merely be drinking. As to the eye (with reference now to John 9), it was allowed to apply wine to the outside of the eyelid, — that came under the head of washing; to apply it inside the eyelid was sinful.

To apply spittle (which was used by the Lord to mix the clay) was absolutely forbidden, as it was commonly believed to possess medicinal virtues. As to John 5, it would be no sin to carry a living person on a pallet; to carry a dead body thus would involve guilt; to carry the pallet by itself was entirely out of the question. We may add that it was allowed to a cripple to use his crutches, or even a wooden leg.

The question we reserved, What is work in the meaning of the Rabbis? has been pretty well answered. We, however, give a few more illustrations.

On the Sabbath a woman might not look into a mirror lest she should espy a white hair, and “sin” by pulling it out; she might walk in her own court, but not in the street, with false hair, — that would be a burden. Shoes might not be scraped; false teeth might not be worn, for, should they fall out, the two sins of “lifting” and “carrying” would be committed. A radish might be dipped in salt, but it must not be suffered to remain there, — that would be making a pickle! Nor might anything be carried on the person which could be put to any practical use. Thus, two horsehairs (which might be made into a bird-trap), a scrap of clean paper (useful for a customhouse note), were not allowed to be borne, — it would involve sin. The same applied to ink enough to write two letters of the alphabet, a pebble which might be thrown at a bird, or a piece of broken earthenware with which you might stir the coals; and so on. An egg laid on the Sabbath, by a hen kept for laying, might not be eaten, but if the hen was reserved for fattening it was allowable; in such case it was considered as part of the hen dropped off!

Many of these prohibitions are very foolish, others pressed hardly, and the familiar words of the Lord, in all their sober, actual truth, rise to the mind: “They [the Scribes] bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”

## The Shepherd's Sermon

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SOME years ago, a shepherd was roving a flock of lambs along a country road in the county of Durham. As he passed a cottage a woman crossed the road to the well opposite, and, in a jocular way, said, "You might give me one of those lambs."

The shepherd, who was a Christian man, replied, "There is a Lamb — God's Lamb — and you can have Him for nothing. 'Bold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'" And he passed on.

Thank God, the word uttered had passed in — yes, right in to that woman's heart, to do a work for God and eternity. "There is a Saviour, and you can have Him for nothing!" What a wonderful word! Reader, has it ever entered your heart?

The following year the shepherd passed the same way with another flock of lambs. He had entirely forgotten the above circumstance until reminded of it by the woman, who happened to see him as he passed, and, recognizing him at once, she said to him, "Eh, man, but that was a fine word you gave me that day."

"What was that?" asked the shepherd.

"Do you not remember," she replied, "twelve months ago, as you passed here, I asked you to give me a lamb, and you told me there was a Lamb — God's Lamb — and I could have Him for nothing? I knew nothing about God's Lamb then, but I've got Him now, and I know He has taken away my sins."

How blessed! The shepherd's word had proved to be a "word in season;" and, as the Scripture says, "how good is it!" and the shepherd had "joy by the answer of his mouth." (Prow. 15:23.)

Yes, there is a Lamb — God's Lamb. "My son, God will provide Himself a Lamb," were the words of Abraham to his inquiring son, as they wended their way together to the place of death. (Gen. 22:8.) And "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," were the words of the Baptist as he pointed to Jesus on earth. (John 1:29.) And shortly afterward, at the place called Calvary, the true altar was erected, and the true victim was offered up and accepted by God to make atonement. Oh, wonder of wonders! The Son of God, here on earth, was offered up and died for ungodly sinners! Hard must be the heart that rejects such grace and love! How truly, then, were the words of Abraham fulfilled. God provided Himself a Lamb, and, as Peter tells us, "a Lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1:19.)

Reader, is this not sufficient for you and me? Could you desire more? God provided the Lamb, and His Lamb has been slain. The sacrifice has been offered and accepted. Yes, thank God, the vacant cross, the empty grave, and the occupied throne all alike attest the fact that God has been glorified by the work of Christ at the cross, and now any poor sinner can have peace and blessing by simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. If you ask, "What must I do?" I reply, "Nothing." Jesus did it all. Just receive Christ by faith, and thank God for Him. Then let your life

ever after “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” (Titus 2:10.)

## Nothing to Say on Behalf of Myself

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IN visiting from house to house in a place where I had been preaching the gospel, I came upon an aged man, who was “trying hard to get salvation,” and was doing his best. To the truthfulness of this statement his wife gave testimony, “that if ever anyone tried, he did.”

There are many, very many, like this aged man — persons who, not taking God’s word as to their condition, are trying to do something by which they hope to have a sort of claim upon God.

This aged one had been ill for some time, and as he thought of death he was awakened to thoughtfulness concerning his soul. He felt he was not in a fit state to die. He knew that he was a sinner, but he did not know that he was a lost sinner, therefore he was occupied with doing something toward the salvation. He hoped God would have mercy upon him, for he was “trying hard.” Seeing that though awakened and desiring to be saved, he did not know his condition, as a lost sinner, in the sight of Him with whom he must have to do, I read a portion of the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, beginning at the tenth verse, and ending with the words, “guilty before God,” and, after making a few remarks, I left.

The following week I made a second visit. In conversation with him I found it was still what he was doing, so I read the same portion of the word, ending with the same words, “guilty before God.”

Shortly after I visited him again, and found he was still “trying hard” — doing his best. He did not believe he was a lost sinner — helpless to do, but he hoped by continuance in the course he was pursuing, that he should, before he died, get salvation. I had spoken to him of the uselessness of his doings — had told him of Christ and what He had done, but as yet the old man was too busy with his efforts to receive the simple truth concerning the finished work of Christ as the ground, and only ground, on which God could receive a sinner; so I read as before, in Rom. 3, ending with the words, “guilty before God.”

When next I called I inquired concerning his bodily ailments, and then asked him about the state of his soul. It was with much difficulty he could reply, so feeble was he, but after an effort (pausing between the words for breath) he said, “I have nothing to say on behalf of myself.”

I was thankful to hear him express himself in this way. Hitherto it had been self and what he was doing, but God had now graciously applied the word, and at length the old man saw that he was a lost sinner “guilty before God.” “You have reached the right place now,” I replied.

There was no need now to read the Scripture I had read at other times. He had received the word as to how he stood before God, and his thoughts of “trying” and “doing” were gone. He had nothing to say now on behalf of himself, but gladly listened to the story of the grace of God, of Christ’s work all done, and of redemption accomplished.

I read in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, 38th and 39th verses, “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,” and spoke to him of the Lord Jesus as the One who

had accomplished all that was needful to be done. Through Him is forgiveness of sins; through Him justification for all who believe. Those who believe God's record concerning His Son, who have faith in Christ Jesus, are justified from all things. He listened with attention and eagerness to receive the truth, and as I continued to speak of the Scripture I read, he uttered the word "justified."

The following evening, amongst those who came to see him was a "mate" of his, to whom he said, "Just fancy, Bill, the Lord has saved a big sinner like me, and I know it."

"What about your sins!" one inquired. "They are all gone — not one left," he replied.

Of course, if they were all gone there were none left, but such was the emphatic way in which he spoke: "The Lord has saved a big sinner like me, and I know it. My sins are all gone —not one of them left." What a change! Before it had been what he was doing, now it was what God had done.

Reader, how is it with you? Are you "trying hard" and doing your best, not knowing that, as a sinner guilty before God, you can do nothing acceptable to Him Give up all such useless efforts; salvation is not of works, it is of grace. Take the place of "nothing to say on behalf of yourself." Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom is forgiveness of sins and justification from all things, and you, like the aged one spoken of in this narrative, will be able to say, "The Lord has saved me, and I know it;" and, as regards your sins, however many they may have been — hover long you may have rejected Christ, and neglected so great salvation, you will be able to say, "They are all gone — not one of them left."

R. K.

## Words of Love and Warning to the Young

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AT the request of Mrs. S., a Christian widow, we started forth one fine summer's morning to see her son, who had returned from his place of business in London very dangerously ill.

On entering his room we saw an interesting-looking young man stretched upon his bed, and tossing to and fro, his pale, pensive face expressive of great anxiety and pain. We sat down by his side, when the sun suddenly threw a blaze of light upon his face. He could not bear its light, so we rose, and gently drew the curtain to shut out its bright rays, secretly lifting up our heart to the Lord that He would arise upon the soul of this young man with healing in His wings.

We said a few words to the sufferer, hoping to discover the state of his mind, but he seemed to be in so much pain that he could not speak; so, after a short prayer, we had to leave him, with much grief, looking to the great and ever-present Physician to heal and sustain him, and to comfort his mother, who was well-nigh overwhelmed with the sorrow which had so suddenly and unexpectedly overtaken her.

On our second visit we found the young man in less pain, and soon discovered that he was suffering not only from pain of body, but from the pangs of conscience also, and that the weight of sin pressed heavily upon his spirit night and day, with the fear of coming death and judgment. We directed him at once to the one Saviour of the lost, and reminded him of His kind invitation to the weary and heavy laden to come to Him with the assurance that He would give him rest — rest from the accusations of a guilty conscience, its bondage and fear, through His own atoning blood, thus proving Himself in the experience of all who believe to be the anointed Saviour, of whom it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek He hath sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." (Isa. 61:1-3)

Before leaving him again we took up his Testament, lying by his side upon the bed, and underlined the following words with a pencil: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."

(Rom. 10:4-11.)

These words we asked him to read over and over again, praying that the Holy Spirit would give him light to see their meaning, and the fullness and freeness of the salvation there is in Christ. After a few words of prayer, in which, with much feeling, the young man joined, we departed.

The next day, on entering his room, we observed at once a great change in the expression of our young friend's face — the overwhelming anxiety and depression were gone, and the sweet light of cheerful peace and hope beamed from his eyes. He stretched forth his hand, and took hold of ours with great warmth of feeling, and to our joy we speedily discovered that, in the night, the blessed Spirit had, through the words we had marked, so anointed his eyes that he had not only seen salvation in Christ, but, embracing Him and it, had found peace, and had entered into rest. His experience was indeed a sweet illustration of the truth of God, as expressed by the poet: ■

“There is a Friend we often miss,  
E'en 'mid the light of day;  
And none so near, 'mid grief or bliss,  
Yet none so far away.  
We often look, yet do not see,  
And hear, but will not heed;  
So blunder on in mystery,  
And wonder none loth lead.  
“We seek for gold, remaining poor,  
For fame at any cost;  
Then when we count life's jewels o'er,  
Oft find the best are lost.  
We toil to build, and then confess  
Our house is but a tomb,  
And through our very weariness  
Declare we have no home.  
“This Friend once found, we find love's store,  
And pure unfailing light,  
Where beauty blossoms evermore  
With ever fresh delight.  
True peace here shows her smiling face,

And hope which never dies,  
Sweet sympathy with tender grace,  
And joy which sorrow flies.  
“Upon the lowly, broken heart  
His face will only shine,  
The light and love of Heaven impart,  
Thus show that all is thine.”

After this great deliverance, our young friend continued to linger here in much suffering and physical depression for some months, but never lost his confidence in Christ, or sense of peace with God; and, stooping down to hear his last words, when faint and feeble in the valley of death, we caught the accents of his quiet and assured confidence and joy in the prospect of future glory.

Some few days, however, before his departure he said, “It is but right that I should tell you, dear friend, to the praise of Jesus and His free grace to me, that I have brought all this affliction upon myself. When I went, a few years ago, to my situation in London yielded to temptation, and, instead of listening to the voice of conscience and being influenced by the example, prayers, and parting words of my dear mother, I yielded to the solicitations of other young men with whom I was associated during the day in business. I accompanied them night after night to scenes of pleasure and dissipation, the ultimate issue of which, and other habits of sin, was the loss of my health and the development of this fatal disease.”

A few days after, having thus unburdened his heart, desiring to the last to exalt the love and grace of Christ, he departed, breathing forth his spirit into the bosom of his redeeming Lord. As we gazed upon his young, calm face in the chamber of death we praised God for another token of His salvation and grace to sinners.

This interesting incident and illustration of the love of Christ and freeness of His grace has also an aspect of love and warning, especially to the young. And what does it say? Remember the prayers and example of your parents when you first start in life.

Do not yield to the solicitations of those who would lead you only into scenes of dissipation, temptation, and danger. Remember the solemn words, “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”

Do not neglect secret prayer and reading of the word of God.

Lean not upon your own strength or wisdom to preserve you, but seek grace constantly from Christ to keep, guide, and direct you every moment. “In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.”

Remember there is no help in doubt or despondency, and that death dwells in despair; and let a deep consciousness of sin and weakness lead you at once to trust in Christ, resting upon His finished work only for your salvation and acceptance with God, and believe that the very faith by which you do this is His best gift, and declares that He has received you. And you will realize that

such love, and peace, and liberty will flow out of this as will break the dominion of sin within, enable you to obey and follow Christ, and overcome the world, flesh, and the devil. W.P.B

## Religion Without Christ

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IN a pretty village in Sussex, a little girl of the name of M. passed the early years of her childhood. M. was blessed with kind parents, and had a very happy home, but she lacked the one thing needful. Until she was eleven years old she attended the village church regularly, but in her heart she hated the Lord's Day, and being obliged to sit still to hear a sermon which she did not understand was not very tasteful to her joyous spirit.

After her eleventh birthday she attended a Sunday-school, and heard addresses, and thus for the first time learned of the love of the Lord Jesus to poor, perishing sinners. The teacher of the Sunday-school was very kind to M., who loved her very dearly, and for her sake learned with pleasure the weekly Bible lessons. But it was only head knowledge. M.'s heart was still very far from Christ. Often after hearing impressive addresses she would weep bitterly in secret, resolving to turn over a new leaf; but turning over new leaves will never save a guilty, ruined, and lost sinner, for Jesus hath said, "Ye must be born again."

About this time the Lord began to show M. the uncertainty of human life: He took to Himself her darling little sister, who but a few days before her departure to be with Christ was in apparently good health. "Whiter than snow — yes, whiter than snow. Mother, I will be waiting at the gates for you there," were among her little sister's last words as she peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. The Lord of His garden often picks the rosebud before the rose, taking His little ones to bloom with Him forever.

Shortly after M.'s sister fell asleep she herself sickened; and, oh, how she dreaded death! Her one prayer was that she might get well again. It seemed so dreadful to lie suffering hour after hour, and day after day, with no prospect before her but a Christless eternity. She thought by praying a great many prayers she might feel a little happier; but after all praying exertions were exhausted she only felt unhappier than ever.

Never put Christ off for a bed of sickness. Such a resolve may end in you having your portion for eternity in the lake that burneth with fire — the fire that is never quenched.

God in His mercy raised up M. from her bed of sickness, but she was still unsaved. Her beloved father was at this time afflicted with a very grievous illness, and M. had to leave the home of her childhood.

Five years were then spent in trying to earn salvation, by attending church as much as possible, and trying to lead a consistent life, but still the aching void remained — M. was unsaved still. She then took up the Temperance cause, working earnestly, but found no peace for her heavy laden soul. Hearing the gospel faithfully preached, she began to see her ruined and guilty position before God, but being so full of her good works there was no room for Christ in her soul, for it is only empty vessels that the Master fills.

Very miserable was the condition of M.'s soul for many months. Alas! it was religion without Christ; it was but trying to patch and mend up self.

At length M. was brought to cast herself wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ, and she rested her weary, burdened soul on Him — to whom be all the glory forever and ever.

Putting Christ off year after year as M. did only brought her year after year of misery, and if Christ had called her from this earth then, to-day she would be in eternity and a Christless eternity, too!

## Harden Not Your Heart

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AFTER God showed me my lost, fallen state by nature, and brought me to Himself, I was subjected to much persecution from my fellow workmen. One especially always met me with taunting remarks, and did all in his power to make me uncomfortable at my work. In vain I spoke to this scoffer of death and a judgment to come, he would always turn away with a scornful laugh.

But at last came a time when God reproved him. One night he was taken suddenly ill, and death seemed to stare him in the face. Then his past life with its many sins rose up before him, and he did not know what to do. He desired to see me, and I went, thanking God that He had not allowed him to die in his sins. I was accompanied by a Christian gentleman, who lived near, and we found the poor man suffering greatly, both in mind and body.

The one who had before been my greatest persecutor was now broken down, and he said, that if ever the Lord raised him up in health and strength he would lead a different life. We showed him that good resolutions do not bring a soul any nearer to Jesus, but he clung to his own opinion, saying he would be a different man if he ever recovered. After a few weeks he seemed to gain a little strength, and was at last able to leave his bed.

A short time after his recovery this man was out with one of his friends when some funeral carriages passed by them. The one, who but lately had been at the point of death, raised his hand, and pointing to the carriages said, "I can laugh at that now." In so short a time he had forgotten the loving hand that had raised him from a sick bed, and now being in health and strength he was gradually falling back into his old ways. So, many in this world call upon God in trouble and sickness, but forget Him in prosperity and health. Soon after this event I left Glasgow, and consequently did not see this man there again.

Many years after, however, I met him not far from my home, and as I reminded him of the Lord's tender mercy in sparing his life, and of his broken promises and misspent life, he wept bitterly.

After pointing out to him Jesus, as the Lamb of God who bore all his sins on the tree, I left him, and have not seen him since, though many years have passed away.

Reader I if you are going on in your sins, with the future all a dreary blank before you, may you come now to Him, who is waiting with open arms to receive you, and is even pleading with you, saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.)

J. Sp■n.

## That Little Word “All.”

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“I COULD never tell you,” said a man to I me the other day, “what a power in my life that little word ALL has been. That word first awakened me to a sense of my lost and depraved condition before God. Then through that I got peace, rest, and joy in Him, and all the way through it has been the sheet-anchor of my soul. I will give you the verses,” he continued; “they will tell their own tale.

“(1) ‘All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ I was included in that ‘all,’ and sin could never enter heaven. Sin is punished with death, but, blessed be God, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.

“(2) ‘All we like sheep have gone astray,’ but the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Then cometh all grace, all sufficiency, all things. The human mind cannot grasp what is included in that ‘all’ things. Oh, these alls of Christ,” he exclaimed, “they are beautiful.”

Reader, are they beautiful to you? Your first need is salvation; salvation from the condemnation and power of sin; salvation through the finished work of Christ. All blessings are offered you now, free and full. Remember, there is a day coming when we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

K. R.

## Look Right on

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“LET thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.” (Prov. 4:25.) Glory is ahead, fellow Christian— look right on; “turn not to the right hand nor to the left.” Be determined — more than ever determined — by the grace of God to live for Christ, and for glory. Whatever others do, look right on, and keep right on.

## Christ Our Life

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“YOUR life is hid with Christ in God.”

(Col. 3:3.) He has gone up on high, He has entered the glory, and with Him there in God the believer's life is hidden. “Christ is our life” (vs. 4), and “He that hath the Son hath life” (1 John 5:12), and we know that the simplest, the weakest child in the faith has the Son. Every one who has come to Jesus has Him for Saviour, for Peace, for Life. “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68), says every true disciple. Now to have Christ is to have every blessing, for we are blessed, by the will of God the Father, “with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” (Eph. 1:3.) What a rich blessing it is, while the believer is on this earth, to have his life hidden with Christ in God! No harm, no enemy, no death can reach up there. Were the life entrusted to the believer for his own care and keeping he could not keep it; Satan, the world, yes, self would be more than a match for him; but the believer is blessed, and his life secure.

His life is hidden, because this is the day of Christ's rejection. To see what the life is in its glory we need translating from earth to heaven. But the life will not always be hidden, for Christ, who is concealed from the eyes of men, and who is crowned with glory in heaven, is coming again. He will appear! The shining, and the light, and the glory that is His will be seen, yea, and seen by met upon this earth. Now, this day, we have the story of the sweet, calm light of His life and ways on earth, and we behold them in the four gospels; but He is coming again, and the light of His glory shall shine upon the earth He came to earth to die; He lives to die no more: He is coming again in glory. And when He so comes His people will appear with Him: “When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” (Col. 3:4.) In that day will be manifested how glorious the life is that the true Christian has. None then will dispute the nobility, the splendor, the glory of the life. In this day the energy, the zeal, devotedness, self-sacrifice of the life are misunderstood, or misbelieved. To live for God, to serve for God, to despise the seen, and to lay hold of the unseen, are to the world but dreams, for the world knows not Christ, whom God has revealed to His people, and it sees not the hidden. But oh, how real, how blessed, is the life!

Yet while the secret things belong unto God's people, their walk and ways are patent to all. He who has set his heart and mind on things above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God, is another man from the man of the world, and as unlike him in his course as is the bird that flies through the air, from the beast that treads upon the earth. Faith soars on high; sense occupies itself with that which is below.

The pleasures of self-pleasing bring but sorrow to the believer's soul. He is bidden, on the basis of his life being hidden with Christ in God, to deny himself here. “Mortify therefore,” says the word. The carnal desire and the natural lust, he is to put to death in himself. He belongs to heaven, and is called to live like what he is — a possessor of life in Christ. The very exaltation of the believer's affections to the things above must entail in him denial of his natural evil ways.

It is impossible to fly like a bird and to go on all fours at the same moment. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (vs. 9) — not only the old man, but also his deeds. It is poor Christianity to speak of heaven and to live for earth. "Put on therefore" — again we note the divine therefore — "as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." These blessed things are of "above," where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: they savor of that place where He is; they speak of Him. And, living thus, the life gives forth its savor, in this day of His rejection from the earth, for He who fills all things is "despised and rejected of men" now, as He was eighteen hundred years ago. But He will come again, and when He comes in His glory, all who are His, shall come with Him — the life shall be seen in its glory.

## A Story About Two Lads

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VERY lovingly had Harry always cared for his little fatherless nephew, and now more so than ever, for his heart was sad about the boy, He could not hide from himself that the young feet moved less quickly and lightly than they were wont to do, as together the two lads tramped daily to and from the great mill at which they worked. There were but four years between the ages of the boys, and Harry being small and slight made the difference appear still less, yet he was almost fatherly in his protecting watchfulness over the handsome, bright-eyed Charlie, whose widowed mother had sent him to the home of her girlhood.

The summer had been one of unusual heat, and the autumn days that followed were cold, raw, and foggy, making poor Charlie's breath come short and quickly, and the cough that had been hanging about him since a chill he took from bathing when overheated, one sultry summer's day, troubled him much more, and broke his rest at night. Harry, who shared his bed, knew this better than his mother did, and noted, too, how bravely the boy pushed on, determined to get to work in spite of failing strength, lest he should become a burden to his grandparents.

"Mother, do make Charlie lie abed tomorrow; he's not fit to go to the mill. I'd rather work day and night than have him working in the state he's in."

"Very well, my lad; it shall be as you say. I'm sure he's welcome at home. You know I never want any of you to go to work when you aint fit for it."

So the next day Charlie stayed at home with his grandmother, and Harry trudged off in the cold of the early morning without him.

It was certainly no trial to Charlie to spend the day at home, for no grandmother was ever more indulgent than his, and she had a very special love for him. There, was one very strong link between the two, and that was love for the Lord Jesus Christ. They had many a little talk about Him, as the energetic grandmother bustled about the house at her many and varied duties, while the weary boy sat by the blazing, crackling fire.

"Grandmother lass," said Charlie, "I do love you, better than anyone else in all the world;" and then, after a pause, "but I love the Lord Jesus ten times better than I love you, granny. You don't mind my loving Him best, do you?"

"Nay, lad, we must all love Him best, for He loved us enough to lay down His life for us. He has done great things for us."

Charlie stayed at home day after day, but the strength did not come back to the feeble limb and the cough was no less troublesome. His grandmother was a great reader, and had some good and interesting books on the shelves which hung behind the door; these Charlie now looked over, and, having found one to suit him, sat down by the small round table near the fire, and pored over its pages.

“What’s that book you’ve got, Charlie? It seems to please you.”

“So it does, grandmother; it’s a fine book; it’s called ‘The Saints’ Rest,’”

“Rather dull and old for you, my boy, aint it? Let me reach you Robinson Crusoe; I think you’d like it better.”

“Nay, grandmother lass, there’s naught of Christ in Robinson Crusoe; leave me this one — it’s a grand book.”

And so Charlie sat on, poring over “The Saints’ Rest”; and, though the small, close print tired even his young eyes, yet his soul was comforted by the Christ of God, of whom the old book spoke.

Harry was grieved to find that his companion did not recover by having given up work, but he hoped he would yet “take a turn” when the damp, autumn fogs gave way to brighter wintry days. It was not to be, however. One dark November afternoon Charlie’s cough got so much worse that his grandmother took him up to bed, and tried, with poultices and hot drinks, to give some relief. Sorrowfully and anxiously she sat and watched by the bed of the restless, panting boy.

On Harry’s return from work that evening he was much troubled to find Charlie so suffering and feeble, but when bed-time came he lay down at his side as usual, and was soon in that dreamless, heavy slumber that fatigue and youth can only claim. Charlie still wearily moved on his pillow, begging to be raised a little higher, as the laboring breath came shorter, or asking for more bedclothes, which failed to bring warmth to the chilled limbs.

“You don’t know how queer I feel, grandmother; I’m very ill tonight; I feel so bad.”

“You do, my lad, I know you do, and I’m real sorry for you; but you must try to be patient. Think how much the Lord Jesus suffered for us, and how patient He was in it all. He bore a deal of weariness and pain for love of thee, Charlie.”

“Aye, He did, grandmother,” answered Charlie, slowly and emphatically.

When Harry awoke that dark winter’s morning it was to find himself alone, for his companion had been taken from his side. The weariness, and restlessness, and pain were over for little Charlie: he had entered that rest of the saints above of which he once delighted to read; he had gone to Him whom He loved ten times better than anyone else. It was a terrible blow to Harry when he was told that his dear nephew was really dead. Many bitter tears he shed, and very sad and white he looked as he went about with a most unwonted gravity upon his face.

On the day of Charlie’s funeral the Bible-class teacher of both lads happened to meet Harry in the street. His pale face touched her very deeply, all the more that she knew he was bearing the burden of sorrow alone, and did not know the love of God as Charlie had done. Putting her hand kindly on his shoulder, she said, “Oh, Harry, I am so sorry for you! I know how you loved dear Charlie, and how lost you must feel without him. But, Harry, Charlie is now safe, beyond all care and pain, with Jesus, who washed him from his sins in His own blood. Will you not seek the same precious Saviour, that you may be together, by-and-by, forever? Do let Charlie’s death be as the very voice of God to your soul, calling you to Christ. Don’t put it off any longer.”

The tears that had gathered in Harry's eyes ran quickly down his cheeks; he tried to speak, but words failed him, and, with a sob, he hurried away.

A few weeks rolled by, and, though there certainly was more quiet attention than usual from the lads in the Bible-class, Charlie's death did not seem to have led any of them to decision for Christ. Harry's usually buoyant spirits were recovering their tone, and rose higher at the prospect of a few days' holiday, as Christmas drew near. Just at this time the Lord, who had His own tender purpose of richest blessing for many of the young people of that village, put it into the heart of one of His servants to go down there to preach Christ. It was his first visit to the place, but the news spread quickly that a preacher, who could especially interest the young, was speaking each evening that week in a large upper room well-known to many of them.

Harry's teacher had begged her lads not to miss the Tuesday evening meeting, which was to be particularly for young people and children; but Harry, half afraid of being again awakened to the sense of his lost condition, which he had felt keenly on the occasion of Charlie's death, made up his mind he would miss as much as he could of that meeting, even while he promised to attend.

Some little gifts in money were dispensed at the mill that Tuesday, and Harry, who had received eightpence for his share, returned home in high spirits, jingling the pence in his pocket as he came in.

"How much have you got for your bonus, Harry?" asked his mother.

"Eightpence," answered the lad, giving the coppers another shake.

"That's well," said his mother; "I want a trifle badly this evening, and it will just come in handy."

"Oh! I daresay," replied Harry, roughly, "but you're not going to have 'em; they're mine, and I mean to keep 'em," And, disregarding the pained look on his mother's face, he hastily swallowed his tea, and banged out of the house.

Never before had Harry refused to give her anything he had either earned or received, and more than the want of the eightpence did the mother now feel her boy's rough refusal. She sighed very heavily as she turned to her needlework. Harry, the youngest of her large family, had ever been peculiarly dear to her, and now, as he was growing up, was his heart getting cold towards her? Perhaps the sigh turned into a prayer, for many a prayer had gone up from that loving mother for her son. She well knew that nothing but the grace of God could make him all she longed to see him.

When Harry got outside he remembered the meeting and his promise to his teacher, but, determined not to get there in too good time, he loitered about the village street, and it was not until the clock was nearing eight that he found himself at the door of the room where the preaching was going on. He pushed his way in, feeling more eager to do so when he saw what a very crowded meeting it was. Dropping into the only empty place he could see, Harry found himself side by side with his teacher. She gave him a very glad smile of welcome, and showed him, in her Bible, the Scripture being spoken on. In a very few minutes Harry's attention was fully gained, and he listened most intently as the evangelist earnestly pleaded with the young ones before him to decide that night for Christ — to accept Him as their Saviour, and own Him as their Lord. With many sweet anecdotes of His love and grace did he press the claims of Jesus on their young

hearts, and Harry's face grew very grave, and the tears slowly gathered in his eyes, while a great longing came over him to belong to Jesus, and to know himself truly His.

At the close of the address the preacher entreated any who really wished to find the Saviour to remain for further conversation and prayer. Many hurried out, and Harry would have done the same, along with some of his companions, had not his teacher laid a detaining hand on his arm, earnestly saying, "Oh! Harry, don't go; do stop and decide for Christ to-night; you know you want to be saved." Half reluctantly, he sat down among those who were not ashamed to confess they were seeking the Saviour. And many an one found Him that night, as the evangelist again simply told the story of the saving grace there is in Christ, and read, slowly and impressively, "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." (Isa. 53:6.)

Before Harry left that room he made his teacher's heart leap for joy, by saying, as he turned to her with a face beaming with peace and heavenly gladness, while tears of very happiness filled his eyes, "Oh! I see it now, I see it now — and I love Him, because He first loved me." The Good Shepherd, who had been long seeking the poor lost sheep, had found him that night, and had laid him on His shoulders rejoicing.

Harry hurried home, for it was getting late. Thrusting his hands into his pockets, as he entered the cottage, he came upon the eight pennies, that had lain there forgotten through that eventful evening. With the new found joy in his soul, and the instinct of a new life filling his heart, he gathered up the coppers, and throwing them into his mother's lap, as she sat at her work by the fireside, he exclaimed, "There, mother I've got Christ, and you may have the eight-pence!"

Then, in answer to her start of surprise, he told her the Saviour had found him that evening, and had fully satisfied his heart, and had made him so very happy, ending again with "and now I've got Christ, mother, you may have the coppers."

The mother cried for joy, and his father and sister joined in from sympathy, though hardly understanding what had happened, and Harry cried too for very gladness of heart.

Perhaps you think, dear young readers, like some boys to whom I was lately telling this story, that Harry was going to die now, as Charlie had done. No, he was not; he is living still, and grown up to be a young man, and is trying to live for Christ, who loved him and gave Himself for him. It is indeed a blessed thing to know the Saviour, if, like Charlie, you are dying; for there is nothing but blackness of darkness forever for the one who dies out of Christ. But it is most blessed, too, to know Christ for living hours, and days, and years, in this poor world, that is all so sad for the one who knows Him not.

When Harry went back to the mill, after the holidays, his companions asked him what Christmas gifts he had got. "Ah!" he answered, "I've got a present worth having, and you may each have the same, if you'll but take it." And, as they gathered eagerly round to hear what it was, he added with a bright smile, "I've got my soul's salvation from Christ's hand, — won't you come to Him and get yours?"

D. & A. C.

## A Lesson for Earth

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“BEHOLD the fowls” — look attentively at them. Observe the lilies with no mere passing glance, for these, the common sights of nature, teach deep lessons to us concerning our heavenly Father’s care. We were watching one day some scores of seagulls screaming and striving over one morsel of food, as they rose from their rest on the waves in pursuit of one of their number, which had seized its prey. And with what disappointed cries did the unsuccessful competitors for that morsel return to their waves, yet before the day was spent the birds had received their sufficiency, and each one sped to its home on the rocks satisfied, for “your heavenly Father feedeth them.”

A little seed-eating bird in a cage will go to its food store every few minutes through the day, and to keep it without food for but three or four hours would be its death. What a lesson does this fact afford of our heavenly Father’s care, as we contemplate the thousands of little songsters which people the field, the hedgerow, and the wood. They have neither storehouse nor barn— no resource but the open country and their own incessant search after the food provided for them. Our Father’s care does not imply indifference in the children, but it does demand hourly trust and constant confidence in His kindness.

The lilies of Palestine are beautiful, but they are common flowers there, The Lord did not call attention to the lilies of the garden, but to the lilies of the field — flowers most beautiful, but which grow up in their beauty without toil or labor. Flowers, “the grass of the field,” but clothed more richly by the hand of God than was ever the greatest of earth’s kings — Solomon, in all his glory, by all the skill and wisdom of man. God, for His own pleasure, has made the flowers beautiful, and the Lord would teach us from the primrose and the buttercup to trust our Father in heaven.

How the anxious thought for the morrow robs the soul of the day’s rest in our Father’s care! One secret of a happy Christian life is to be without plans for the morrow. Tell God the trouble, and then leave it with Him to provide. The bright and busy bird fulfils its little daily task unmindful of the morrow. “How much more are ye better than the fowls?” Work on then, trusting in the unvarying love and care of our Father who is in heaven. Our great lesson for earth is confidence in our heavenly Father. This lesson is not learned once and for all in life, but it is a lesson to be learned afresh every hour of every day. When free from the burden of life’s care by casting all our care upon our Father in heaven, the soul is in a state to receive the deep realities of heavenly things.

Allowing the trustful spirit, then let every energy of the soul be given to the heavenly things. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”— first, before all else. Ever make the concerns of eternity the first claim, and your Father who is in heaven will provide for the need of the passing hour. Do not earthly parents plan every good thing for their children, and expect them to trust? Also the parent looks to the child for purpose of heart as to the things the parent values most. It is as if a voice from heaven said to us, “Leave thy cares with God, and make God’s glory thy concern.”

Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs.

## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

“THE FEAST!” There was no lack of festivals — festivals Mosaic and post Mosaic — in the Jewish Calendar, but at the mention of “ha-Chag” (the Feast), the mind of a Jew would pass by the Feasts of Pentecost, of Passover, of Trumpets, of the Dedication, and of Purim, and would rest upon one in particular — the Feast of Tabernacles. It was emphatically the Feast, sometimes even so designated in the Holy Scriptures, and commonly referred to by an Israelite under that name. By Josephus it is called “the holiest and greatest feast.” It was an occasion when the Jew gave himself up unreservedly to joy, tempered though that joy was by strong religious feeling. Indeed, it passed almost into a proverb, that “he who has failed to participate in the keeping of the Tabernacle festival at Jerusalem, has failed to taste real enjoyment in this life.”

“Succoth” (i.e., “Booths”), as the festival was shortly called, came in the month Tishri— an important month in the Jewish Calendar. On the first and second days the New Year’s Feast was celebrated; on the 10th came the solemn Day of Atonement; then from the 15th to the 21st, following the repentance, confession, and atonement of “the Day,” came the joy of “the Feast.” On the 22nd was a solemn convocation, reckoned as a separate festival. There was a two-fold source of rejoicing. On the one hand, it was a harvest-thanksgiving — “a harvest home,” as we may say — when the corn and wine, the ordinary tokens of abundance and joy, being gathered in, the presence of Jehovah was sought in the place where He had set His Name. Every male must go up thither, and none might go empty-handed. Of the abundance which God had given, they were to give to Him. But more than this, it was a remembrance-feast. “Forget not all His benefits” was a sentiment woven into the law of the festival. It spoke of the release from the “house of bondage” to the liberty bond the Red Sea. It spoke of the providential care in the wilderness. It was a reminder to all generations that Jehovah had made Israel to dwell in booths when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. So, with hearts made glad by the remembrance of the past, and by the bounty and plenty of the present, the happy people would troop up to Jerusalem, from far and near, not only from the parts round about Jerusalem, but away from the most distant districts of the Holy Land, and even from the countries of the Dispersion.

The Gospel of St. John is the only one which refers to the feast by name. We read that as the feast drew nigh, the Lord Jesus was in Galilee. In Judæa, the Jews were persistently seeking to kill Him. He came to His own, and His own received Him not. Nay, even among His brethren the same unbelief prevailed. “Depart hence and go into Judæa.... If Thou do these things, show Thyself to the world.” But that was not the path of the Lord. Truly, if He had wished to win the popular applause, no time could be more favorable: Jerusalem thronged with eager, impulsive people, many of whom had heard of Him, and would fain see Him. But His time was not yet come. “Go ye up unto this feast,” is His answer; “I go not up yet unto this feast.” So He tarried, and His brethren, having no controversy with the world, left Galilee, doubtless with many other pilgrims, a happy company. They must reach Jerusalem by the 14th Tishri, to begin the feast on the morrow.

So they went, and in time the Lord followed, as it were in secret. Reaching Jerusalem, what a strange sight would greet unfamiliar eyes! The streets and courts filled with leafy booths! With branches of olive, pine, myrtle, and palm, and branches of thick [leafy] trees booths were constructed upon the roofs, in the house-courts, in the Temple-courts, in Water Gate Street, and in

the Street of the Gate of Ephraim, as in Nehemiah's time. They must (according to the traditional law) be constructed from living trees; they must not wholly exclude the sunshine, nor might they be too open. They were the chief dwellings of the week, and in them eating, sleeping, prayer, and study must be carried on.

But more, the law said, "Ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of thick [leafy] trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord seven days." These were not used to construct the booths, but were carried in the hands. The fruit of the goodly trees (said by the Rabbis to be the citron) was held in the left hand; the branches, tied together in a defined order, and termed the lulav, were held in the right. The palm ran down the center; on the one side the willow; on the other the myrtle, which (again according to the Rabbis) was the "thick" or leafy tree referred to. All persons, even children able to shake it, were bidden to carry the lulav.

The Temple services were, as always, very striking. Hundreds of white-robed priests and Levites took part in the services. At intervals the blast of silver trumpets or the chant of the Hallel filled the air. All day long the smoke of sacrifices ascended to heaven. No less than seventy bullocks, fourteen rams, and ninety-eight lambs were offered during the feast. It may have been that on the occasion referred to in the gospel there was that public reading of the Law, which the Law itself enjoined on every seventh year.

But there was another ceremony of so great importance that it gave to the feast the distinctive name of "The Feast of the Drawing of Water." At the time of the preparation of the morning sacrifices two processions were formed — the one going to the Kedron Valley, from whence they brought willow branches, to adorn the altar of burnt offering, forming a leafy canopy over it, the trumpets of the priests meanwhile sounding a joyous blast; the other procession went down with strains of music to the pool of Siloam. The most important person in this company was a priest carrying a golden ewer. This having been filled with water from the pool, they returned through a gate, which hence received the name of Water Gate, greeted there by a three-fold trumpet blast. They timed their return so as to reach the Great Altar just as the officiating priests were laying the sacrifice upon it. At the left side of the altar were two silver apertures — the one into which the wine of the drink offering was poured; the other receiving the water from Siloam. This pouring out of water was so important, that, according to Josephus, the people on one occasion pelted the high priest with their citron fruit, because, to show his contempt for the Pharisees, he had poured the water upon the ground instead of into its receptacle. It may be asked, "Is there any Scripture warrant for this rite?" None at all, but the Rabbis ever make Scripture support their doctrines and customs. Hence the Talmud says (and the words are of the deepest interest in connection with the words of Jesus and the comment of the evangelist), "Why is the name of it called 'The drawing out of water'? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said, 'With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.'"

Then came the solemn chanting of Psa. 113-118. (commonly called the Hallel) to the accompaniment of flutes. As the choir gave out the words, "O give thanks unto the Lord!" and later: "Save now, I beseech Thee, O Jehovah!" [Hosanna]; and again: "O give thanks unto the Lord" shook their lulavs towards the altar, thus giving praise "with heart, and mouth, and hands." The public service closed with a procession of priests round the altar, while again they chanted their

Hosanna.

So day after day went on, a thousand voices from Temple, sacrifices, and services speaking of the Christ who was to come. He came. In the midst of that feast Jesus went up to the Temple and taught, and though some were moved by His words, the solemn tale is one of rejection and refusal. "Thou hast a devil!" "We know this man whence He is." Did they know? They might have done so had they heeded His words; their own ceremonies might have spoken to them of Him. We cannot help wondering if the name "Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent," did not, even in their dull minds, connect itself with the reiterated utterance of the Lord, when speaking of "Him that sent" Him. But, with all their assurance, they knew nothing.

Yet the compassion of Christ could not be limited; His love could not be hemmed in, and on "the last day, the great day," He again presented Himself to the people, and gave what we may call articulate words to the voices which spake of Him. It was the seventh day, called by the Rabbis "the day of the Great Hosanna," for upon it the procession of priests went round the altar seven times, chanting the Hosanna — "Save now I" of the Hallel. On that day, too, as the people left the Temple, they saluted the altar with thanks, shook off the willow branches from it, and beat their lulavs to pieces. On that afternoon the booths were taken down, and the feast closed. On this last day the unwelcomed Messiah would once more speak, if any would but hear. With all that outward joy, were there no weary hearts, no thirsty souls? Nay, did not their very Hosanna express a want? "Send now salvation, Jehovah, I beseech Thee!" And there He stood, who alone could satisfy such weary hearts, who alone could pour floods upon him that is thirsty. And He alone was "Jehovah-Salvation." And so, doubtless when the water from Siloam was poured out, and when the prayer had again been chanted, His voice broke out with the cry: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." He gave, again we say, a voice to all that was going on around Him. As it has been well said: "He interrupted not the services, for they had for the moment ceased: He interpreted and He fulfilled them." And the evangelist, as though alluding to the meaning attached by the Jews to the outpouring, adds: "This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive."

Very briefly is the result told. Some said: "Of a truth this is the prophet"; others: "This is the Christ"; while others "refused" that "Stone" of which the very Psalm just sung, had spoken.

Nearly nineteen centuries have passed, and with the centuries have passed the glories of the Tabernacle Feast. No longer can we hear the chant of the priests. The solemn music of the silver trumpets no longer rings through the Temple courts. No longer is Jerusalem thronged with happy worshippers. The sacrifices have ceased; the glorious Temple is razed to the ground. But there still remain thirsty ones, such as then trod those courts, and, blessed be His Name, the voice of Jesus still resounds with its tidings of blessing. "If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink." Are you, dear reader, thirsty? Still are those living waters to be had, if you do but "come" and drink. Nor is the blessing merely for your own refreshment and joy; the rivers of living water (no longer a pool, like Siloam) will carry blessing to others, fulfilling that word of old: "For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

## Why do you not Become a Christian?

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TWENTY-EIGHT years have passed away since I asked the above question, a few days after the capture of Lucknow in March, 1858. Salar Bux was the jemadar or native sergeant attached to my battery, and he had agreed to teach me enough of the Hindustanee language to enable me to speak to the native followers. We were sitting together on the flat roof of a house not far from the King of Oude's palace, at the time a complete ruin. I was watching the smoke which was still ascending from the burning palace, when, happening to look down into a crevice at my feet, I observed a book, partly torn, and on examination found it to be a Bible printed in English characters, but in the Hindustanee tongue.

"Well," I said to myself, "this is lucky — the very thing I want. I can read and Salar will interpret." So we did, and, well satisfied with my first attempt, I closed the book. Then turning to Salar in a very decided manner, I put the question: "Why do you not become a Christian?"

I can remember now the quick turn round of his body, as well as his keen, intelligent look up into my face, as he simply replied "Sahib, what will you give me?"

"Just so," thought I, "always money always 'What will you give?'" But no, he seemed to read what was passing through my mind, for he quickly asked, "What religion will you give me?"

I looked the dear man in the face, and with the greatest confidence replied, "Christianity of course," and waited for his reply.

"Well, sahib," said Salar, "will you tell me what Christianity is? You know I am Mussulman — I love my religion — and, if am to give it up, I should like to have something better instead."

"Yes, certainly, Salar," said I, "and that is the very reason I have asked you to become a Christian. I know you are a strict Mussulman, but I can tell you that Christianity is much better religion."

"Yes, yes," was Salar's reply; "but before I give up my own religion for yours will you be pleased to tell me what Christianity is?"

For the first time during our conversation I was thoroughly puzzled. He very patiently waited and waited; his keen, dark eye seemed not only to read, but also to enjoy my perplexity, as, in a desperate sort of way, I replied — "Salar Bux, Christianity is Christianity." Gentle was Salar's reply: "Sahib, you do not know your own religion."

I was so vexed. Why did I ask him any questions? He could see by my flushed face that I could not give him the slightest clue to the very religion I professed and which I asked him to embrace.

Whilst I condemned his religion I was unable to explain my own, and in the kindness of his honest heart he said, "Shall I tell you what the Christianity is that I have seen amongst your soldiers? I see your soldiers go to our bazaars, get drunk, illtreat our men, and insult our women. Is that the Christianity you offer me in place of my own religion?"

I felt ashamed, and simply said, "Salar, there is a better kind than that."

But he went on to say: "The younger sons of your nobility (burra sahibs) come out to India, get good places under the Government, grow rich, and then go back to their own country at our expense. Is this the kind of Christianity you wish me to believe in?"

In desperation I said, "There is a still better kind than that."

"Well, sahib, do tell me what it is."

My ears tingled. I was completely beaten by this simple man, and therefore remained silent. At last he said, "When you can tell me of a better Christianity than I have seen professed or practiced I will consider your question," and with that remark the conversation ended in his victory and my defeat.

Yes, but why, dear reader — why was this? Simply because I was a greater unbeliever than Salar Bux, the Mussulman.

"Nonsense!" you say, "how could that be? Were you not a Christian soldier at the time?"

Yes, I was a soldier, but no true Christian; I was simply a sham, like a bad sovereign, with the Queen's head on the outside, whilst the metal was brass. I had read the dear old Bible as my first book at school — I carried it at home and on active service in the Crimea, and through the Indian Mutiny — but did that make me a Christian? When I enlisted I put myself down as a Presbyterian Christian, yet I had not one spark of divine life in my soul. Oh that I could see that Mussulman now! — yes, even now — I would hold out my hand to him, and say, "Come, dear Salar, and I will tell you now what real Christianity is." But, no; he is gone, and never till the veil of eternity is raised shall I see the man who asked me, "What is Christianity?" without my being able to tell him. Poor godless, Christless, and hopeless hypocrite that I then was!

Dear reader, my state at that time is the condition of many thousands of professing Christians at this very moment, who are in as real spiritual darkness and death as I then was. As a professing Christian I had not the shadow of excuse if I had died in my sins. Tell me, dear reader, are you now as I was then — a counterfeit Christian — or have you faith in Jesus, God's dear Son, who laid down His own spotless life in redeeming love, so that men, whether Jew or Gentile, black or white, professor or heathen, might have eternal salvation through faith in Him. A man may become a soldier, sailor, statesman, or clergyman; indeed, a man may become anything under the sun if he has the necessary qualifications, but to become a Christian is absolutely beyond the power of man; it needs the power of God.

If you have not been "born again" by the Spirit of God do not be content to sail under false colors, which may do very well with men; but oh! dear reader, when you have done with man you will have to do in grace or in judgment with the living God — the God of all grace, "who so loved the world" — of sinners black and white— "that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) J. D.

## My Saviour is Strong

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AS I stood, in company with her husband, silently gazing upon poor Mary, and waiting for her to arouse from the stupor into which she had fallen, I could scarcely refrain from asking myself, "Is it possible that there is life in that apparently unconscious form, and that this is indeed that once young and fair Mary whom I knew in days gone by?"

Poor Mary! In her youth, while her heart was yet tender, she had heard and received the truth as it is in Jesus, and for awhile her bright, beaming countenance bore witness to the deep and heartfelt joy which was then reigning within. But Mary disobeyed that solemn exhortation, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," she imprudently married a man of the world. Not a great while afterward she was overtaken by many and deep sorrows. Ere she was attacked by the painful disease which had laid her prostrate, it had grieved me much, when we occasionally met, to observe her sorrowful look, which evidenced only too clearly her unrest of soul.

A burdened and wounded conscience who can endure? The coveted object of attraction when obtained, the eagerly sought after momentary pleasure when realized, cannot possibly compensate for the loss of a good conscience, without which it is vain to hope for the enjoyment of communion with God. How essential, beloved reader, that you and I should be found "holding faith and a good conscience," lest we also, having thrust these from us, make "shipwreck concerning the faith." The Apostle Paul exercised himself, "to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward man."

My thoughts concerning Mary were interrupted by a slight movement of the poor suffering body. Her eyelids being raised, her eye, that still retained something of the natural brightness, turned towards me. Gently and tenderly I uttered a few simple words, pointing her to Him who saveth to "the uttermost" all that come unto God by Him.

Mary's days on earth were numbered. Would the Lord suffer her to remain beclouded in mind until the feeble glimmering of life was utterly extinguished? Or would He, before He called her to Himself, enable her to confess that He had restored to her the joy of His salvation? My longing desire to hear something from her own lips that should indicate that she was indeed restored, led me again to her bedside. As before, her several responses to my remarks were almost unintelligible. At length my thoughts were directed to Mal. 3:16, 17; and I made the remark that if by reason of her extreme debility she was now unable to speak of the Lord, He remembered those that "feared Him," and that "thought upon His name." It was evident she had grasped my meaning, for, with a clearness and distinctness that surprised me, she quickly responded, "My Saviour is strong."

Her subsequent remarks were as unintelligible as before, but these four words, clearly expressed, at once dissipated my anxiety. Her poor suffering body was fast succumbing to the effects of weakness and disease. Death was rapidly approaching, but, as she was passing through the valley of the shadow of death, it was then she realized that her Saviour was strong.

Verily, Mary was one of those who “have no might,” nevertheless it was given her to trust in Him who “increaseth strength” yea, and who “giveth power to the faint.” He opened her lips that her mouth should show forth His praise, before her spirit was released from its habitation, and before her poor body was brought into the dust of death.

Though Mary had herself been unfaithful in the past, she was permitted in her hour of weakness to testify to the strength of Him who abideth faithful. She had formerly wandered sadly, but now she could repose her heart’s fullest confidence in Him who had mercifully restored her soul. He would— He did — take her safely home to be with Himself forever.

It may be my reader has gone astray from following the Lord, and that even now he is mourning the loss of that comfort of love, of that overflowing heartfelt joy, and of the enjoyment of that peace, all of which were once consciously possessed. In the realization of your poverty of soul, oh! return to your “first love,” for He who is able to restore unto you the joy of His salvation shows “Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.”

## By the Brook-Side

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“OH, yes, I’ve come to Him,” said a woman, in response to the question, “Have you come to Jesus?”

The answer was given in such a way that we doubted the speaker’s sincerity. “Have you then obtained rest and assurance?”

“No, sir, I can’t say I have.”

“Then you make Jesus Christ untrue; for He says, ‘Come unto Me,’ and ‘I will give you rest.’ You say you have come, but that He has not given you the rest He promised.” We left her and passed across the fields to a few cottages standing in the open country. A brook flowed before us, and as we neared it, we met a woman of another stamp, who was carrying two buckets by means of a yoke. We reached the dipping place at the same moment, where, setting down her pails, she prepared to dip up the water for which she had come.

“Suppose,” said I, “as you returned to your house I met you, and said, ‘Have you been to the brook’ And you replied, ‘Yes, I have;’ and then I asked, ‘Have you got the water you went for?’ and you answered, ‘No, sir, I cannot say I have; we may not be certain of having it.’ Wouldn’t that seem a queer way of talking?” “It would indeed, sir.”

“Yes, so I think; but do you know, I went into a cottage just now, and the woman told me she had come to Jesus, but when I asked her if she had got rest by coming, she said she had not.”

“But I have” said my brook-side friend with an emphasis which betokened the reality of her confession.

She saw the parallel at once, and, having come to the Fountain of Life, she could sing—

“I heard the voice of Jesus say, ‘Behold, I freely give The Living Water; thirsty one, stoop down, and drink, and live.’”

And of course she could add■

“I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream; My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in Him.”

It would be poor work going to a stream and not to know that we were better for going, and it is a poor coming to Christ if we are not conscious of any blessing. His word is: “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink” (John 7:37); and coming, we realize the promise, “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the Water of Life freely.” (Rev. 21:6.)

Shall we insult Him by saying we have come, but do not know of any benefit received?

“How long have you known the Saviour?” I continued.

“Only about twelve months, and I feel now that I am nothing.”

“You needed nothing when coming to Christ, just as you need not to bring water in your pails to this brook: you have nothing, not a drop, yet you possess all the fullness of the stream. Nothing in self, everything in Him.”

Her words called to mind the beautiful lines:

“Close, close to His feet on the pathway,

All empty and frail and small,

Was an earthen vessel lying,

That seemed of no use at all;

“But the Master saw and raised it

From the dust in which it lay,

And smiled as He gently whispered,

‘My work it shall do to-day.

“It is but an earthen vessel,

But close it is lying to Me;

It is small, but clean and empty,

That is all it merle to be.’

“So forth to the fountain He bore it,

And filled it full to the brim.

How glad was the earthen vessel

To be of some use to Him!

“He poured forth the living water,

All over His lilies so fair,

Till empty was the vessel,

And again He filled it there.”

Oh for this good woman’s experience — “I feel I am nothing and have nothing!” W.L.

## Acquitted

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A FARMER who cultivated a quantity of watercress in a corner of one of his fields, had one day a man brought before him charged with stealing the cress. The poor fellow had the evidence of his guilt in his hand, and he hung his head for shame. The farmer, who was a Christian man, said: "What made you steal my cress?"

"I am sorry, sir," the man began. "I do hope you will pardon me. I have a wife and three children, and I am out of work. I've tramped all day, trying to get a job, but can't. I have no money, and the children are without bread; and when I saw the cress I thought I might sell a few pennyworths, and thus get a loaf. I do hope, sir, you will pardon me."

The farmer said, "Give me the cress," and as the man did so he placed in the hand of the culprit a half-crown, saying, "Here, take this and get bread; I forgive you."

Such unexpected kindness was too much for the poor man's feelings; he burst into tears, and, thanking the kind-hearted farmer again and again, he departed a free and happy man.

This incident illustrates the state and condition of unsaved men and women. Just as this man was guilty of taking that which was not his by right, so they have taken time, gifts, opportunities, position, and influence, as if they had a right to them, and they have used them for their own ends and purposes, thus incurring fearful guilt. They are "guilty before God." (Rom. 3:19.)

Reader, still unforgiven, pause a moment and think of your state before God; confess your transgressions. Is it not written: "He, that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. 28:13.) Again: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9,) And again: "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (Psa. 32:5.) If you take the sinner's place, and put up the sinner's plea, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," you will obtain a present and full pardon for your sins, whatever they may be.

The poor man of whom I wrote obtained money to buy bread as well as forgiveness, and God gives grace for the day as well as pardon of sin. This man obtained pardon for sin, received provision for need, and went away in peace. Even so you may get from God this moment present pardon, full provision for present and future need, and possess perfect peace with, God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

J. H. I■g.

## A Word for Parents

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A CHRISTIAN mother who, through the grace of God given her, had been most successful herself in bringing up a large family of girls and boys, once jotted down on paper the following few words, which all parents would surely do well to bear in mind: ■

“Children must, in the first place, be brought up in the fear of the Lord; then in the fear and love of their parents. They should, however, be drawn to love their parents more than to fear them, for if fear predominates, there will be a deficiency in love, but if love be greatest, there will be no lack of fear.”

Would that all believing parents walked by the same rule, ever striving to teach by their lives as much as by their lips the wholesome counsels of God’s word. In these closing days of widespread independence and lawlessness, when respect to parents is deemed by many old-fashioned and unworthy of such an age of advancement, how solemn is the responsibility resting upon us all as parents to acquire early an influence over the minds of our children which shall be, under God’s blessing, of lasting benefit to them. Jehovah’s message to His chosen people of old is still refreshing to the hearts of all His own — “I will make them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children” (Deut. 4:10); as also that sweet word, “For the promise is unto you, and to your children.” E. G.

## Peace with God

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PEACE with God! with God? Yes! ■ a creature, guilty and condemned by his misdeeds, deserving of nothing but banishment from the Divine presence for all eternity, brought by grace to be at peace with God! A convicted criminal at peace with his judge, and with the law of the land he had broken, does but give a faint idea of a man, once guilty before God, being at peace with God. Yet such is the blessed fact, and such is the gracious privilege for every single soul who believes God.

Every true Christian believes, and knows, and feels he was once guilty before God. Possibly a man's natural conscience may tell him he is guilty, for, as he reviews his past life, his misdeeds, his sins, rise up before him, and he can but own to the challenge, "Guilty, or not guilty?" — guilty. But a man's conscience does not, and never will, show him what peace with God is. This the word of God alone reveals. The Christian believes God's word, and hence he knows that by his acts, and words, and thoughts he, as a sinner, is guilty; but he knows, too, because God has said it, that he is justified by God, and therefore he has peace with God. Let conscience array before him all his sins, let memory recall the years that are past, but neither his sins nor his past life fills his soul with terror, for God has justified him, and peace with his Justifier rejoices his soul.

As we approach the great reality of peace with God, the Spirit levels down man's pride, and thus conducts us to the gracious truth. So soon as God is declared to man as the Justifier, man must needs once and forever hide his face in the dust as far as his works go. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5, 6.) Indeed, since "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," there remains no hope nor expectation for any, save in God who justifies "freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

He that works to obtain God's favor, spurns God's pardoning grace; he who labors to please God in his own strength, knows not the blessedness of God's forgiveness. Man's work to obtain Divine favor, and God's grace to man in his sins, are principles or laws so absolutely distinct that they could not approach each other for an eternity. The law of works and the law of faith are diverse principles, and as fire ascends, and water descends, there is no affinity between them. He who is seeking heaven by the law of works is on the road to a supposed eternity of self-glory. He who seeks it by the law of faith is on the way to sing forever: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!"

The following texts bring clearly forward the two principles and their results: —

"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight." (Rom. 3:20.)

"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight." (Rom. 3:20.)

"To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Rom. 4:4.)

"If by grace it is no more works." (Rom. 11:6.)

|"A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3:28.)

Boasting is excluded by the law of faith. (See Rom. 3:27.)

“To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. 4:5.)

“Otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Rom. 11:6.)

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Now every religious person in Christendom is on one side or the other of the line drawn above — on the “law of faith” or “law of works” side.

The law of faith side has —

Justification by God. (Rom. 3:26.)

God counting a man righteous. (Rom. 4:3, 5.)

The blessedness of forgiveness. (Rom. 4:6, 7, 8.)

“Peace with God.” (Rom. 5:1)

|The law of works side has—

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We have left a blank on the other side, and let such as have heart for it fill up the blank for themselves. The Christian rejoices to count out his treasures, and many more blessed things might be added to the four given above, but we confine ourselves to blessings which circle around our justification. The moment we believe, these blessings are ours, though we doubt not some of God’s people do wait for peace with God, under the impression that a peculiar feeling is to be experienced before its reception. Let us, therefore, emphasize WITH God. We are not speaking of the peace OF God keeping our hearts, but our peace with God. Since our God has justified us who believe in Jesus (ch. 3:26), since He has counted righteousness to us also (4:23, 24), and since He has forgiven us our sins (4:8), since all this blessedness is ours, and ours solely by grace, and because of the redemption there is in Christ Jesus, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Spirit of God teaches that there may be a zeal of God and yet that those actuated by it may be unsaved. “I bear them record,” says St. Paul of Israel, “that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Rom. 10:2, 3.) There may be a religious fire and a life spent in religious works, yet all the while Christ may be omitted from the energy. Like a man racing at his utmost speed on a wrong road, men who are seeking to merit heaven by their works are hastening daily further and further from that place whither they think they are going. “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Every one that believes is brought up to a standstill by the cross of Christ; he sees Jesus dying for him, bearing the penalty for him, enduring the judgment of God for him, and thenceforth every effort to make himself fit for God’s presence vanishes from his soul, and he hails Jesus as his Saviour.

Let us inquire what God seeks, from the sinner who comes to Him for salvation. We may sum this up by these words: "Every mouth stopped — guilty before God:" that is, God requires of man a solemn admission to the fact of his guilt, and submission to His righteousness. Only let the sinner own his guilt, his helplessness, his true state, and he is not far from the door of mercy. "The darkest hour is that just before the dawn," we may well say as we read Rom. 3:20, and how bright is the light that shines in verses 21-26 — God's righteousness manifested, free justification, redemption in Christ Jesus, a mercy-seat through faith in His blood set forth for sinners by God Himself, and God's own righteousness in justifying an ungodly soul who believes on Jesus, declared. What light from heaven shines here! what a day-dawn in the soul it is when God is believed! What a flood of His bright mercy and grace to poor guilty sinners illumines the soul whose heart opens to the gospel of God! The gospel— if it can be called good news — of doing, doing, doing, has not one ray of heaven's light in it; but the good news of God to guilty man blazes with His grace, and streams down into the soul, and hence we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## What Are You Thinking About?

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SHE was rapidly passing away, after some months' suffering, borne with patience and resignation, for she knew whom she believed it was always a privilege to visit her in her illness. Uniformly cheerful, she would tell of the goodness of the Lord, and how wonderful were the proofs of His fatefulness and loving kindness.

Her dying testimony is truly now the comfort of her bereaved parents. As the last night wore on, the mother reclining and watching by her daughter's side, she suddenly asked what time it was, and when told, she threw her arms round her parent, remarking that it would not be long now—that she felt a change, and it had been a hard struggle through the deep waters, but the conflict was over, and she knew she should soon be at home, adding, "Jesus is mine. Mother, meet me in heaven."

Then turning to a neighbor, who had come in to share the loneliness of the parents so soon to be deprived of their last loving child, she looked earnestly at him, and said: "Jack, what are you thinking about? Where are you going? I am going to heaven." Repeating these words and similar expressions, she waved her hand high, saying, "Meet me in heaven"; then, with a little sigh, was gone.

F. S.

## Beholding the Glory

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“BEHOLDING” — this does not mean a single act, but a lifelong engagement. Then the illuminated become illuminators — to “give out.” (2 Cor. 4:6.)

M.

## The Servant's Praise

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WE do not find the Lord commending His people for success. "It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful." "Well done, good and faithful servant." "Who then is that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall make ruler over His household?"

Misunderstood, even by our brethren, we must be content to labor on, conscious that we are in the position to which we are called by Him. What we have done will all come out at the judgment-seat of Christ, and what we have said will be re-uttered there, with God's comments upon it.

M.

## The Faithful Friend

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“YES,” said a Christian to me soon after I was converted, “I have had this Friend for eighteen long years, and I can truly say that I have never known Him to fail me once.” This was a testimony concerning the faithfulness of the One whom I had only a short time before believed on and trusted in. “What a Friend,” I thought — “what a true Friend— one to be depended upon for eighteen long years — one who never failed all that time once.” Now, thank God, I can add, too, for six long years He has been a true Friend to me, and has never failed me once.

Beloved Christian, what are your thoughts about this Friend — this One that sticketh closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24) — this Friend that never fails? Is your confidence placed in Him? Oh, think of Him up there at the Father’s right hand (Heb. 1:3), His loving heart yearning for your confidence to be placed in Him. Hark to His blessed voice speaking unto you: “Ye believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1), and, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do” (John 14:13). Why does He speak to us thus? Is it not that He yearns for our confidence to be placed in Himself alone?

## Lost Through Disobedience

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I AM going to tell you of a little girl, whom I we will call Susie, who still lives, and as she is a constant reader of FAITHFUL WORDS, it is thought best not to publish her real name. Little Susie was the eldest but one of a large family, and, we are glad to say, felt never so happy as when she could be of some use to her mother, and of course she found many opportunities for usefulness. Susie wanted to love the Lord Jesus, and often tried to please Him; but, do you know, she had one very great fault, which often led her into trouble, and caused her friends great anxiety. Susie was very self-willed, and therefore often disobedient, especially in what she considered trifling things. In giving you the history of one day's doings, we shall be able to show how one act of disobedience could cause a whole family a great deal of distress.

So I hope all children who read this will obey their parents in the least things; for the Bible says, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."

The father of Susie was a grocer in a town about one hundred miles from London. At the time of which we are writing little Susie was about five years of age, but as she had three little brothers younger than herself she thought she was almost a woman, and would sometimes inform the servant that she "thought it quite time those children went to bed" — of course not including herself. When the girl was busy Susie was sometimes allowed to hold baby, so of course she felt herself very important.

It was a very busy morning; a poor woman who sometimes helped in the sewing was stitching away vigorously. The servant was hard at work as usual, and Susie's mother was bathing baby, who was not well. All at once Susie heard her mother say to the servant, "Oh, Mary! we cannot go on for the want of some more calico, and I do not know how to spare you to get it." Then up jumped Susie, who was playing with little Herbert. "Oh! mamma, do please let me go; I went with Mary for the last, and I know the shop very well."

Her mother smiled at the sparkling eyes and excited manner of her little daughter, but looked at the child doubtfully. "My dear, I should be afraid to trust you alone, and neither Mrs. Jordan nor Mary can be spared, and your brother is at school."

"Mamma, do trust me this once. You shall see how quick I will be, and I will not go near any horses," promised the child; for Susie thought how grand it would feel to go shopping all by herself.

"If my little girl will only make haste, and not stay to look in the windows, there will be no danger," replied Susie's mother; and this little Susie promised to do, so taking her little bag, with a purse and the money, she started on her errand.

"Mamma says children should do as their father and mother tells them; and that is one way of pleasing the great God; so I will not stay on the way, but will be very good," said Susie to herself.

Susie reached the shop, paid the money, received the calico, and was starting back at a run, when something in a window attracted her attention. "Oh! what a lovely large doll," she exclaimed; "I

must just have one peep at it. What dear blue eyes and pretty hair, and what a beautiful dress! I must have my doll's next dress made like that." So Susie forgot her mother's order, not to stay looking in the windows. She intended only to have one peep and then to run on; but Susie was passionately fond of dolls, and the temptation to stay a little longer was great. Ah! dear young friends, never take even one look at a forbidden object. To do wrong one minute, makes it quite easy to do wrong half an hour; and that makes it easier to sin a day at a time; and so we may sin our life away, unless arrested by divine mercy. Always shun what are called little sins! In the sight of God, all sin is great! and no sin can be little.

After wishing that her mother could buy her the beautiful doll, Susie began to remember that she had promised her mother not to look in the windows; and here she was acting an untruth! So she started off down the first street, and ran as fast as she could for a long time, till at last she had to stop for want of breath. After resting a time, Susie started again, and did not stay, until, weary and puzzled, she sank upon a doorstep, and began to think. "I wonder where the turning is, I don't remember seeing these houses before. What if I came down the wrong street; there were two streets by the shop where that pretty doll was. Oh! dear, I wish I had not stayed to look in the window I but it does no good to sit here. Mamma wants the calico, and I must go."

So the child rose from the doorstep, where she had been sitting; but, instead of asking someone to tell her the right way, she kept walking on down the same street, staring sometimes at the people she passed, and wishing they knew how lonely she felt. But she did not like to speak to strangers, for she was timid and shy. At last, bitterly stole over her young mind the conviction that she was indeed lost, for she was getting out of the town; the houses were not nearly so close together, and looked very strange to the little girl, who peered anxiously into the face of every person she met, to see if they looked kind; for then Susie felt she could tell them she had lost her way. But to her fancy, each one looked busy, or as if thinking of something; and when the poor child tried to summon courage to speak to any one, they would pass by without so much as a look, much less a word.

And all this time, our little stray lamb was weeping quietly, and longing to get somewhere, all by herself, where she could unburden her poor broken heart. Some little reader may think Susie a very silly child, since she did not inquire the way home at once; but twenty-five years ago, children had not the freedom of manners which they have now. So poor Susie still dragged her aching legs along; her bosom was wet with the many tears which had been coursing down, when no one seemed to be looking. She was now on a common, about two miles from the town, and dropping down upon a bank, with her face hidden by her pinafore, the child gave way to a passion of sobs and tears, talking to herself all the time. "Oh! dear, dear! I shall never see them at home any more. I would ask the great God to take me back, but perhaps He would not hear; for the Bible says, 'Children, obey your parents,' and oh, mamma darling! I shall never see you again!"

This thought was too much for the already over-excited child, who now lay upon the grass, too exhausted and stupefied to know that a gentleman on horseback had stopped, and in a loud voice was asking why the child was lying there.

Hastily rising, Susie gave one look into the face of the gentleman, and in a despairing voice exclaimed, "I've lost my way, please, sir."

“Poor little dear!” replied the gentleman. “Did you come through that turnpike gate yonder? Well, then, you must go right through it, back again, and ask the first person you see to take you home. Will you?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Susie; and, added the kind gentleman as he galloped away, “I wish I could take you myself.”

The little girl walked back through the turnpike, intending to do just as the gentleman had bidden her, but the minds of the child was so bewildered by excitement, and her eyes so swollen with crying, that she could not recollect which way she had come, but wandered on again in a hopeless, aimless way for several more weary hours.

Tears seemed all gone now. Susie had not tasted food since morning, yet she felt no hunger, although already the shades of evening were beginning to fall. One only thought occupied the mind of the little wanderer, and it was a hope to find a quiet spot and there lie down and die! At last the weary child laid herself under a hedge, and tried to compose herself to some sort of rest. But her little brain was too excited, and she fell to wondering if they were looking for her at home, and visions of a cozy room, a pleasant fire, and a well-arranged tea table, passed quickly through the active mind of the little girl. She was still full of conjectures, when a woman who was carrying a basket stopped, and shaking Susie said, “Little girl what are you waiting for; isn’t it time you were at home?”

“I am lost,” said Susie sadly, with trembling lip.

“Poor little crater!” exclaimed the old woman, taking the child in her arms and gazing kindly in her face; “come with me, my little lamb.”

Susie heaved a great sigh of relief, and trusted the kind-hearted woman at once, who carried the little girl into the bar of a public-house not far distant. “Here,” said she to the landlord, “I have found this poor little child on the common; she seems to be half dead, and says she lives in K —, and has been lost since morning! Do you think anybody here would know her, or take her home?”

The child shrank behind the shawl of the woman, as all the men declared they did not know where to take her, until in the parlor they at last found a traveler, who questioned Susie, and then declared he knew her parents well. So said the kind man, “I shall take her at once, for they will be in a dreadful way.”

Susie’s heart beat high with hope as she willingly allowed the stranger to carry her, until they saw the lights of the town; then the kind man was highly amused by a request from Susie to be allowed to walk, and her telling him she knew the way now, and would not trouble the gentleman to go any farther!

My readers can guess what joy there was when the kind stranger walked into the shop belonging to Susie’s father leading the little girl by the hand. There stood her mother, half fainting with sorrow, and there also was the kind pastor, who had all the afternoon been helping to find Susie. Not one of them ever forgot that day! and on the following Lord’s Day the minister preached about finding the lost sheep: “Rejoice with me, for I have found the sheep which was lost.”

And when Susie heard him speak of the joy of angels over the repentance of a sinner, and of the joy of parents at the return of a lost child, the little girl looked up with tears and prayed that she might never be a wanderer from her Father's house above.

Dear children, we have all gone astray from God! From our birth until now we have wandered in the paths of sin, which lead to destruction. But the loving Father in Heaven has sent after us His Son, to serve and to save that which was lost! He came after us; He died to save us! and to save us from sin, and the disobedience which in us all naturally, for we are all born in sin. Jesus is the name of the Son of God, He will save all who believe what He says, and who trust themselves to Him.

We cannot take ourselves home to God, but Jesus Christ, the "Son of Man, came to seek and to save the lost!" Like the kind man who would not leave the proud little girl until he saw her safe home; so our tender faithful Jesus will never leave nor forsake us, until He has brought us safe through all the trials and difficulties of this world, until we are safe home in Heaven. Dear children, and whoever else reads this story will you let Jesus lead you home?

## Till she Find it

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“TILL she find it” — no rest, no cessation, for the object of her search is precious. Because her lost treasure was dear to her heart the woman lighted the candle and swept the house, and searched diligently. The coin described as the piece of silver was probably one of the ten which made the wreath, as we may term the ornament for the head commonly worn by women in Palestine. One piece lost, the whole would forfeit its perfect character and charm. And in accord with the custom of the East the woman would presently make known her loss to her neighbors and friends. There was no secret about it. Her loss was a real loss to her, so she searched with care and persistency till she found the piece she had lost.

By this simple incident of daily life the Lord holds our wondering hearts to meditate upon the love of God to lost sinners. Like the piece of silver, the sinner is precious — precious in the eye of God; and because of worth and value to Him is sought for. The intrinsic value of the piece of silver mentioned in the parable amounts to but a few pence, for the Lord illustrated His gracious meaning by selecting a humble incident from daily life; yet even in its small actual worth may we not read how God chooses “not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,” but “the things which are despised.”

The love of the triune God to sinners is expressed in the three parables — the love of the Son in that of the shepherd, the love of the Holy Spirit in that of the woman, and, lastly, the love of the Father. The gracious love of the Holy Spirit of God is then before us in the story of the search after the lost piece of silver, The Holy Spirit works through human hearts. He has not committed the toil of the seeking and the finding of sinners to angels. He sheds abroad in our hearts the love of God. Hence Divine love to sinners expresses itself in the earnest search after the lost, by which so many are found. Not that this alone is the subject of the parable, for, in addition to the earnest search which is recorded in the parable of the shepherd, in this before us, a candle is lighted | She lights a candle. The light of God’s truth, the light of His word, shines in the house. Perhaps, as our illustration seems to show, the light does not illumine a very large space at one time; it is made to shine for one object — to discover the specific piece of silver which was lost. And so it is in the search for souls. The light of God’s truth is, by the Spirit, brought to bear upon them, to show where they are. The light of His word is so vast that it reaches from eternity to eternity, manifests heaven and hell and the course of this world, and displays God Himself. But when the Holy Spirit brings the light of Divine truth to bear upon one soul, that light shows the sinner where he is. And it seems to the sinner as if God, exposed him and nothing else. For at such a moment nothing save God’s work in revealing the soul to itself, is the subject of contemplation.

The search for souls is a toilsome under taking! But love never grows weary. Sinners have to be sought if they are to be found. They know not their own value. Like the piece of silver, they are utterly insensible to the energy of love which labors after them. God the Spirit fills the hearts of God’s people with His desires after lost sinners; He stirs up their souls to labor after the lost. The spirit of true searching for souls is a gift of the Holy Ghost. But who shall describe the heavenly joy

of finding the lost one! Perhaps in some miserable hovel — but a piece of silver none the less because of its surroundings; perhaps in the palace, but a piece of silver all the same, though lost in the glory of this world. Oh! the joy of the finding, the divine joy of finding the once lost sinner!

So great is the joy that friends and neighbors are called to rejoice together with the woman who found the piece she had lost. “Rejoice with me,” she says. “Rejoice with Me” is a heavenly word, which those hear who are in God’s sympathies in His gospel, and who by the energy of the Spirit in them toil after souls, and delight with God in the lost being found for Him.

The woman no doubt placed the piece of silver she found together with the others; and if we might ask ourselves, “Where is the lost sinner when found put?” we should say, “He or she goes along with others to be an ornament for Christ — to be one of the ornaments for His crown!”

Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs.

#### THE SCRIBES AND THEIR TRADITIONS.

“YE have made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions.” This was the exceeding grave charge brought against the Scribes by the Lord Jesus. We are familiar with the occasion. The disciples of Jesus were eating with “common (that is to say, unwashen) hands.” The Pharisees and certain of the Scribes, seeing this, “found fault.” “Why walk not Thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders?” they ask of Jesus. And, indeed, judged by the standard which was acknowledged by these objectors, the offense of the disciples was no mean one. For, by “the traditions of the elders,” the law of this ceremonial rite is thus laid down: “Though a man should only have water enough to drink, he is to wash his hands with part of it, and then to eat, and to drink the remainder.”

Any breach of this command was compared to the guilt of committing the vilest of sins.

But the Lord Jesus, after applying to the Scribes and Pharisees Isaiah’s solemn words: “This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me,” said also to them: “Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, ‘It is Korban (that is to say, a gift), by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me’; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered.”

Briefly, the matter is this: “Korban” means “a gift,” “an offering [to God],” and, in Israel’s olden days, property declared by vow to be “Korban” went to the treasury of God, and, of course, could not be appropriated to the use of private persons. But, under “the traditions of the elders,” though the word was retained, its meaning was greatly debased, — it simply served to debar a person to whom the words of the vow might be addressed from benefiting by the property declared to be “Korban.” In the case put forward by the Lord, the effect of using the terms of the vow was this: the property would not go to the Temple treasury, but the father, however much in want, could derive no benefit from his son’s possessions, just as if it had been truly consecrated to the service of God. But the son retained his property for his own use. It is true that the command of God: “Honor thy father and thy mother,” seemed to stand in the way of thoroughly carrying out this “doctrine of

men,” but the Rabbis declared, in solemn council, that “honor of father and mother” did not invalidate such a vow, though, if the father were starving, the vow might be evaded by the son giving food, &c., to a third person, who, in his turn, could give to the father. But it is the most sober fact that God’s own command, and every prompting of natural affection as well, was, under the elders’ tradition, crushed by the vow of “Korban.” God’s word should have possessed supreme authority over the consciences of His people; it really was “rejected” (or, as the margin puts it, “frustrated”) by the traditions of men.

How, we may well ask, did these traditions of the scribes, (commonly called “the Oral Law,”) acquire such an ascendancy over the consciences of the people as to set aside the plainest commands of God?

A glance at the gospels shows what a power the Scribes were in Jewish life and history. The Scribe, though he might be a Pharisee, was more, — he had a regular position, was Rabbi — “my great one” — to him all must look for explanation and light upon the law; he must be honored more than father or mother. Thus says the oral law. “As a man is commanded to honor and fear his father, so is he bound to honor and fear his Rabbi more than his father.” And again: “Thou must consider no honor greater than the honor of the Rabbi, and no fear greater than the fear of the Rabbi. The wise men have said, ‘The fear of thy Rabbi is as the fear of God.’” And when we read the Lord’s words, that they “love greetings in the market places, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi,” our thoughts turn to that other command of theirs: “It is forbidden to a disciple to call his Rabbi by name, even when not in his presence” ; and again, “Neither is he to salute his Rabbi, nor to return his salutation in the same manner that salutations are given or returned amongst friends. On the contrary, he is to bow down before the Rabbi, and to say to him, with reverence and honor, Peace be unto thee, Rabbi!”

We ask, How did the Rabbis attain their position? According to their traditions, when God gave the law to Moses He gave also full explanations and meanings of the law by word of mouth, which were not committed to writing. These were the “oral law” as distinguished from “the written.”

Moses called Aaron into his tent, and repeated these communications. Aaron in his turn repeated them to his sons; his sons to the elders, and the elders to the people.

After the death of Moses the trust of the oral law passed to Joshua. After Joshua, Caleb and Phineas, with other elders, took up the charge, and so it was handed down through Eli to Samuel, David, and others, till the time of Ezra.

In Ezra’s days — we are still in the region of tradition — a senate or synod was formed, composed of one hundred and twenty of the leading men of the time — priests, elders, and judges. They were the Sopherim, or Scribes. This assembly — the Great Synagogue, or the Sanhedrim — besides becoming the depository of the oral law, said to have been received by Moses on Mount Sinai, set itself to gather together all the traditions and explanations of the law of God to which any value had been attached in the past. These explanations were commonly stated in the form of a rule or direction, and each separate one was called a Halachah (i.e., a rule, or canon). The whole collection was called the Mishna (i.e., “learning”), and received also the name of “The Second Law.” This is what is referred to by the term “the traditions,” or “the oral law.” At the time of the Lord Jesus these traditions were really an unwritten — an oral — law, roughly arranged into six

hundred sections. It was a point of great importance to repeat them in the very words of the previous teacher, and thus they were handed down from Rabbi to disciple, the latter in time becoming the Rabbi of a fresh generation of disciples. It needed prodigious labor and a very faithful memory to learn and to hand down such a mass of undigested traditions, increasing with every year.

There is a tendency even in the present day to attach to some human explanation of God's word more importance than to that word itself. This may be done unconsciously; but the Scribes did the same thing very willfully. At the first their words claimed only to be an explanation of the law; by-and-by they sought more glory for their words than for the law itself. "It is more punishable," says the Mishna, "to act against the words of the Scribes than against those of Scripture." And a common proverb said that the Law was like water; the Mishna (the oral directions), like wine; and the Gemara (a commentary on the Mishna), like spiced wine. The Scribes had discussed and settled the point that the oral law was more precious and more to be loved than the written — that is, they claimed for their traditions more reverence than for the word of the living God.

We must not forget that they asserted a divine origin of their words — that according to them these words had come down, through a long chain of succession, from God Himself. But in the result the succession became everything, and the weight of learned names as sanctioning some disputed point was more coveted and relied on than the authority and sanction of the Scriptures. For example: one set of men would appeal to Rabbi Hillel, the head of one school; others to Rabbi Shammai, a rival teacher; and, if both these men agreed upon any matter, there was no room for further controversy.

These were the views and claims with which the Lord Jesus Christ came into conflict in His life. Their debasing and God-dishonoring tendency is evident. "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name," says the Scripture. The oral law made that word "of none effect." And thus we understand why it was Christ set Himself against these self-constituted teachers, and uttered His solemn warning, "Beware of the Scribes!" We understand, too, something of their envious feelings, as they gathered round Him and asked, "By what authority doest Thou these things, or who gave Thee this authority to do these things?" With themselves it was indeed a question of authority — to be able to cite some former Rabbi, and in his name to propound some point of doctrine or of ceremony. But Jesus appealed to no Rabbi as His teacher; He came from God; He declared the things that He had heard from His Father. And it was this heavenly and divine authority which clothed His words, that made the people marvel at His doctrine, for He "taught not as the Scribes."

In a word, the error of the Scribes was the substitution of human authority for divine. The word of God was overruled by the word of man. But we shall sadly miss the lesson of those times if we imagine that we are beyond the reach of like influences and tendencies. It is a question we may well ask ourselves, What is the authority to which we make our appeal for doctrine and for life? Is it the word of God, or that word as explained by man? We are entangled by "the traditions of the elders" if that holy word is put down from its lawful place of supreme authority, and the explanations of some favorite commentary, or some esteemed teacher (a true gift of God as each may be), usurp its place. We thereby do not only grave dishonor to God, but the loss to our own souls is immense. We leave the light of the word — that "lamp to our feet" — for the uncertain flicker of men's rushlights; we quit the living streams for the hewn cisterns; the sweet "honey and

the droppings of the honeycombs” for unsavoury morsels. The Gospels show the complete authority which the Lord Jesus assigned to the written word; in His controversy with Sadducees, with lawyers, and with Pharisees, to that word did He make His appeal, and with it did He put to silence those who would have entangled Him. The very temptations of Satan were met by the word; yea, even upon the cross Jesus cried, “I thirst,” in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And if God’s word is loved, and honored, and obeyed by us, it will be impossible that any “traditions” or “commandments of men” shall obtain authority over us, or lead to that “rejection” of the word of God, which was so strongly censured in the Scribes by the Lord a

## The Driver

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THE other day — a day of fitful sunshine and sudden showers — the driver, near to whom we were seated, made some passing comment on the uncertain weather, and the change incidental to time and all things earthly, which led us to speak to him about his soul, and the wisdom of preparation for eternity. To our delight he proved to be a bright and earnest christian, living in simple dependence upon and communion with God, and fully alive to the danger of attempting to walk in his own strength amid the many snares which beset the path of the believer in his pilgrimage below.

“God moves in a mysterious way,” said he, “and so does the devil; I believe he’s turned religious of late years, to throw us Christians off our guard. But as well put a hop-pole on this highroad, and expect it, without any support, to stand the storm, as expect a believer to resist temptation unless God help him.”

We had some further talk with our Christian driver, and found he had been converted about four years previously.

“I was then coachman to a clergyman,” he said, “and my master liked me to go to church. I was proud of my livery, and being an old soldier, kept myself smart, and considered myself a very good sort of a fellow, attending church so regularly and the like. But one night I had a dream, in which I thought the Lord appeared to me and said, “You are not saved — not saved.” This first awoke and then alarmed me; I could not shake off the impression it produced, which made me increasingly uneasy. Just then I came to live at S■, and going one night to a gospel meeting at the Soldiers’ Institute, my convictions were deepened, and the friends there spoke with me after the meeting, and asked me plainly whether or not I was saved. I did not like this at all, and went elsewhere the following Sunday, but I felt I must visit that hall once more, and I thought if they asked me again whether I was saved, I would say yes, I was, to stop any further questioning.

But when the time came, though the answer was ready on the tip of my tongue, I couldn’t get the lie out of my mouth, the Lord’s words in my dream were still so impressed on my mind. Thank God, it wasn’t long before I could say I was saved, and these were the words from God’s book which were used to let the light into my soul. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16.)

Oh, what a day that was! I shall never forget it. It was the most splendid day of my whole life. And now everything is so different — the sea, the fields, the trees, all speak of my Father. The good old book is all I want to read now, and, though everything here will change and decay, I think of the mansions in glory and the Lord’s coming again.”

## No More Slavery

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MANY years ago I was living in Bermuda, where the greater part of the population was composed of colored people of various shades. Many of them had been slaves, and had been emancipated only some twenty years previously. A custom then prevailed on “Emancipation Day” which was very significant. The day was kept as a high festival, and hundreds of old and young made themselves little card-board houses, in each of which a light was put; and as darkness drew on, they fixed these little houses upon their heads, and went dancing through the streets till midnight, I inquired the cause. “Don’t you know?” said they. “Why, we and our forefathers were slaves; now we are free, and keep up the day of our freedom. We make the little houses and burn lights in them to show that now we have houses of our own, our own fire and lights, with perfect freedom, and so we rejoice in being free. No more slavery.”

There is also an emancipation day for another class of slaves — the slaves of folly and sin, the slaves to all that is worldly and evil. Now is the day of salvation, the day of emancipation for all that look to the Lord Jesus to set them free, and who will give to all who look to Him eternal freedom.

These poor creatures could rejoice with unbounded joy in being set free from slavery, to enjoy the merciful blessings of this world, many of them no doubt having their hearts filled with gratitude to God for His wonderful goodness and mercies to them.

How should it be with all true Christians? Should not they continually rejoice that they now become possessors of eternal life, and have the glorious mansions, eternal in the heavens, to look forward to as possessions, where there shall be no more sorrow or pain— night no more, “and they need no light of lamp, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God shall give them light”?

## Saved as a Saint or Saved as a Sinner

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SOME years ago, there lived in Russia a young man, who had an ambition which is certainly less common than most ambitions. He had a passionate desire to be a saint. There may have been several reasons for this desire. No doubt he had anxious and troubled thoughts about the great eternity which lay before him. He believed that God is a righteous Judge, and he knew that he had been guilty from time to time of sins in thought, word, and deed. This is a very different thing from knowing that one is a lost sinner. A careful gardener may remark here and there a bad, worm-eaten apple upon a healthy tree, but he does not consider for that reason that the tree is a bad one. Most people regard sin just in this way. They condemn themselves for this act or that word, but they have never truly believed that the whole tree is bad, root and branch, and that it cannot, therefore, bring forth good fruit. "Those that are in the flesh cannot please God." Is it common to believe this?

The young man had other reasons, too, for wishing to become a saint besides the desire to escape the just judgment of God by good works, and long prayers, and heavy penances. It has been said a man would rather be a great criminal than be nobody. In any case this young man thought it would be better to be a great saint than to be nobody. He read over and over again the lives of the great saints of the Eastern Church, and he looked with awe and reverence at their pictures in the churches, and in the old illuminated books of prayers and services. Yes, it would be a great thing to be remembered as they were, whilst years and centuries passed away, and to have prayers said to one, and a day dedicated to one, and to be spoken of as the holy Saint Basil or Saint Gregory, and to have one's bones, or hair, or a bit of one's coat, or a fragment of one's hair shirt kept in a jeweled golden case, and shown to crowds who would kneel before it, perhaps, a thousand years hence. But how could one become a saint? was the important question. The answer was to be found in the great volumes of the lives of the saints, and it was in those books, not in the Bible, that young Smirnoff searched for it. Had he looked in the Bible he would have found a very different answer. There it is written that Jesus sanctifies His people (that is, makes them saints) by His own blood — that we are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

In the old books of legends the answer was that which the proud heart of man will always give, whether in the Greek Church or the Roman, or amongst those who are called Protestants, but who have never known that they are lost sinners. It may be your own heart has often given this answer when you have thought "What shall I do to become at last a saint in heaven?" Yes, your heart and mine have said it. "I must do my best; I must pray, and work, and make myself worthy to have all the pardon and all the blessedness which the blood of Christ has gained."

And so Smirnoff read in the old books that the saints really did set to work most diligently to gain for themselves eternal life. They fasted and prayed; they wore hair shirts and iron belts; they gave all their goods to feed the poor or to adorn churches; they slept on the bare floor; they scourged themselves; they licked the dust from the holy pavement; they washed the feet of beggars, and

kissed their sores.

No wonder that, when Smirnoff began to follow their example, he found it a very weary labor, and, worst of all, he felt no more saintly than before. His thoughts were not holier, his heart was not purer, and his temper was not sweeter than before he began. He thought that he had deceived himself by imagining that he could become holy whilst living in this world amongst common men and women. He determined, therefore, to be a monk, and he betook himself to a strict convent near Moscow. Here he had prayers and penances to his heart's content, or rather, alas! to his heart's discontent, for he found, to his dismay, that he became no holier in the convent than in the world. He stood for hours on the cold stone pavement repeating prayers, he denied himself in sleep and food, and he beat and tortured himself all in vain. And by degrees he made another terrible discovery: not only was he himself as far as ever from being a saint, but he observed that the other monks were just as selfish, and ill-tempered, and cunning, and proud, and altogether ungodly as his old companions in St. Petersburg.

It certainly seemed a very hopeless task to become a saint. At last he came to the conclusion that to leave the convent and live by himself would be the best plan. He would then have no one to hinder or stumble him, and he could go on "doing his best" in his own way. He therefore returned to St. Petersburg, and as he was badly off, and obliged to maintain himself in some way, he opened a small shop in a back street for the sale of tobacco and cigars. So time went on, and his hopes of being a saint became very faint. He had besides to think of his business, which was not a flourishing one, and he was often in great need.

One day a little boy of ten or eleven years old came to his shop and asked for some cigarettes. When he took out his purse to pay for them, Smirnoff remarked to his surprise that he had paper money in his purse to the value of ■4 or ■5.

In a moment, like a flash of lightning, came a thought which took possession of Smirnoff as if it were the devil himself who had entered into him — "Take that money." Smirnoff felt himself utterly powerless to resist it. More than that, he felt a wild, irresistible determination to take the money, and a craving for it which was like a frenzy. He dared not take it in the little shop, where passers-by might see him. He therefore asked the boy to take a walk with him about the town. All that afternoon they walked together up the narrow streets and in the lanes and alleys where fewest passengers went by. But no nook or corner could be seen where it seemed safe to carry out his plan, and they came back to the little shop just as they started.

Then Smirnoff asked the boy to stay and have tea with him in the back shop. When he had carefully shut the door, he sprang upon the boy, and held him down while he searched his pockets. The boy, however, had no intention of losing his money without a fight for it. He kicked, and screamed, and shouted for help. It was quite clear to Smirnoff that he was on the point of being found out, for the neighbors would hear, and would all rush in to see what was happening. In this desperate moment he seized a knife that was on the table, and plunged it into the boy's throat. He had killed him!

But in his wild passion he could be glad that he had the money at last. He carried out the dead boy by the back door of the room, and hid him in a corner, waiting for the night to get rid of the body. He then washed his hands and his coat, and returned into his shop. As he opened the door from

the back shop, the front door from the street was opened also, and two policemen came in.

“Where is the boy who came into the shop with you half an hour ago?” one asked.

“There is no boy here,” replied Smirnoff; “I live here quite alone.”

“The boy was walking about the town with you,” said the policeman. “He was seen to go into the shop with you, and he has not come out since. The neighbors across the street observed this. We must search your house.”

Smirnoff now saw that it was all up with him. He rushed before the policemen into the back shop, seized a loaded pistol which he had there, and shot himself through the body. He had aimed at his heart. He fell on the floor senseless. But when the policeman lifted him they found that he was still breathing, and after some moments he was conscious.

They carried him to the prison, and there explained that having been in search of a boy who had stolen a purse, they had probably found his murderer; for the purse that was missing was in the pocket of Smirnoff. The body of the boy was meanwhile discovered. The prison doctor examined the wounds of the dying man. He said it was not impossible he should live, for the bullet had just missed his heart. But Smirnoff, with the little strength that was left him, tore off his bandages, and pushed from him the food and medicine which the doctor would have put into his mouth. “No,” he said; “I will die.”

It was just then that some one remembered the kind gentleman who lived not far from the prison, and had often come to talk with the prisoners, and to read to them the Word of God. It was not long since that this gentleman, Colonel Paschkoff, had himself come as a lost sinner to the Saviour, and had received the living water, which will most surely flow forth as a stream of life from every heart that has received it.

Colonel Paschkoff was sent for. In a few minutes he was standing in a gloomy little cell, looking with eyes of love and pity on the dying man. As he lay there, pale and livid, he seemed almost beyond the sound of God's blessed message. Colonel Paschkoff saw that no time was to be lost. He opened his Testament at the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, and he read slowly and distinctly the wonderful story which so many call “the lost sheep,” but which they should rather call the story of “the Good Shepherd,” for it is a story not of man but of God.

“Jesus,” said Colonel Paschkoff, “is that Shepherd. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Suddenly Smirnoff looked up, with a strange expression of joy. “I can be saved then” he said, “for I am lost.”

In that one moment had the soul that was dead heard the voice of the Son of God, and “behold, he lived!”

“I see it now,” he said; “I wanted to be saved as a saint, but it is because I am a sinner — a lost, lost sinner — that I can come to Jesus, for He saves that which is lost.”

And together did the Lord's messenger and the sheep that was found praise the Shepherd, and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over him who had but just before been a thief, a

murderer, and a suicide.

“You may do what you like to me now,” Smirnoff said to the doctor. “I am willing to live if God wills it.”

Then the doctor bound up his wounds, and he lay quiet and peaceful. In the midst of his deep repentance, and shame, and sorrow he had that wonderful joy and peace, which is brightest and deepest when most we see the depth of our sinfulness; for it is then we know the most, what must be the love that could save and welcome such as we are, and what was the weight of sin which the Lord Himself bore on the cross for us. We know then something of the love that passeth knowledge. No doubt this joy and peace helped in the healing of his body, for after some weeks he was well again, and his joy remained, even when he heard the sentence that was passed upon him. He was banished for life to a convict settlement at the farthest east of Siberia.

There for eight years has he been a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, by word and by work. In that distant spot, far away from lands of gospel light, Smirnoff ceases not to teach and preach, as he has opportunity, Jesus Christ, his Saviour: he is supplied with Bibles and Testaments from christian friends, and from his hands every fresh convict who arrives there receives a copy of the word of God, and he tells to lost sinners how it was that he at last became a saint. “Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost” — “Washed, sanctified, and justified.”

Truly, God has given him the desire of his heart — how far beyond all that he could ask or think? — even according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus, who speaks now from heaven in this true story to lost, lost sinners.

And now that I have told you the tale as it was told to me, does it offend you to hear of the joy and peace of one who had been so great a sinner “How could anyone dare to rejoice who had been the murderer of a poor little boy?” said some who heard the story. “Such a wretch as Smirnoff ought to have felt anything but joy, even if he could dare to hope that God had forgiven his awful wickedness.” Dear friends, when once you have yourselves been in the place of her who washed the Lord’s feet with tears, because much had been forgiven her, you will understand this — not till then — for the deepest sorrow and the deepest joy met together in the heart of that woman who was a sinner. Do you think that there is any deeper joy than the love of Christ made known to the lost, and to the vile? “She loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” Was her sin more black, or less black to her, when the love of Christ was shed abroad in her sad and weary heart? But will she ever know a deeper joy than she knew in that blessed moment when His lips said to her, “Go in peace”? Believe me, if you have not come to Him, knowing yourself as lost, as dead, as the poor murderer, of whom you have heard the story, you have never come to Him at all, or you have come as the rich, and have been sent empty away — empty of the joy which Paul knew when the Lord whom he had persecuted shone into his dark soul. Was it nothing to him, then, that he had murdered and persecuted the saints of God? Yet by his hand did God write the words I will now write afresh for you — “If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Dear friends, may you know by the Spirit shed abroad in your hearts — know in your own experience to-day, that which the thief knew on the evening of the day upon which he had reviled his dying Saviour. Was he more forgiven, more loved, more saved when he was in paradise with Christ than was Smirnoff in his prison cell, when the love of God was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost that was given to him?

But if you know none of these things, let me tell you with all the authority of God's blessed word, that Smirnoff the convict has that which you never had. When the elder son in that same fifteenth chapter of Luke was angry, and would not go in, why was it? It was because he heard the music and the dancing, and he said, "Thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." No, the feast has never been yours, because you never came to the Father as one who was dead and lost. When you do so, the depth of your joy will answer to the depth of your deep and bitter repentance— joy, not in yourself, nor even in that which God gives you in exchange for damnation, but in Christ who has loved you, with a love so wonderful, so passing knowledge. It is in Him, not in ourselves, that we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, owning ourselves to be as dead and lost in our own natural state as was Smirnoff the murderer, and therefore as being able to take our place with those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, and to whom the Lord has said, "Be glad and rejoice, and shout for joy." In that psalm — the thirty-second, you read Smirnoff's history; may you read your own!

## Jesus Is Waiting

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SUPPOSE you were very poor — half-starving, and did not know how to get any food for yourself, much less for your family; and, as you were sitting at home groaning over your misery, a neighbor came in to comfort you, and told you of some rich gentleman, who lived close at hand, and who never sent anyone away empty who came to him for relief. And suppose that you refused to believe it, even though you knew that your neighbor had once been equally wretched with yourself, but had remained rich and happy ever since he went to this gentleman for help. Now would you not be very foolish, and even wicked, if you persisted in making yourself miserable, instead of brightening up and going at once with a heart full of gratitude to your kind neighbor and of hope for the future? Certainly you would.

And yet are you sure that you are not treating Jesus in this way? You know that you are a sinner, and, perhaps, you are very unhappy, for you have a starving soul. Your christian friends tell you that they were once quite as miserable as you are, and you know that they are perfectly happy now, yet you still refuse to come to your loving Saviour, who is waiting, who is longing to forgive you everything, and make you joyful. Oh, come, dear sinner, today! Jesus Christ died on the cross for sinners. You may be freed from the burden of your heaviest sins.

But suppose that you did believe what your neighbor told you, and set off to visit the gentleman, and, as you were a long way down the street, he saw you from the door of his house, where he was standing, and came to meet you with a smile of welcome, holding out a sovereign. Would you not be mad if you still continued to be sad, and refused to take it, groaning out, "Do help me; I am so poor"?

But, oh! how many treat the Lord Jesus in a way like this, and stand begging with tears for what He is offering at this very moment! And oh! how full of marvelous love He is! He is waiting patiently. Do not grieve this love another moment. Come and take the gift of pardon to-day: to-morrow may be too late.

## An Echo from the Tomb

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A WHOLE family stood around the dying bed of an aged mother. She had been a christian for more than half a century, and now, being more than four score years of age, she lay waiting for the summons home.

One of her hands was clasped in that of a daughter, and while the suffering saint continually pulled at her daughter's hand, she repeated again and again in a dying whisper the one word, "Come."

For three days and three nights she lay thus, while the children expected every breath to be her last. Upon the third day a granddaughter, who noticed how fixedly the dying christian appeared to be looking in the direction where a daughter was standing, exclaimed, "Look, auntie, how grandma is staring at you."

"No; she is looking beyond me," replied the aunt; and added, "Oh, if your grandmother were only able to tell us what she is looking at!"

Hearing a sort of gurgling sound, the daughter bent over her dying mother, who distinctly, but with great difficulty, ejaculated, "Hev — hev — heaven!"

This word came with emphasis. She had heard what had been said — she was looking at heaven.

Soon after this, and just before she ceased to breathe, she sighed out, "Oh, come! oh, come! oh, come"

And so she is, "forever with the Lord." Yet her words still echo, "Come, oh, come!" Aged friend, will you not respond to that voice from the grave — "Oh, come"? "All things are now ready." There is no occasion to wait. Christ hath said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." So that He is ready to receive you. "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely."

Aged sinner, grown gray in the service of Satan, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

There may be one weary of the "heat and burden of the day." The sun of life is at its meridian, and the weary man stands in the thickest of the fight. Oh, weary warrior, "come" to Christ! He is the only Captain who can and will fight for you, and give certain strength for the conflict, and positive victory over your foes. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart." "Come," for in Him is rest; He is a shelter from the storm, a covert from the tempest, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Come to Jesus, you who are feeling the guilt of sin, for "His blood cleanseth us from all sin."

"Next door to death He found me,

And snatched me from the grave,

To tell to all around me

His wondrous power to save.”

And if, dear reader, like myself, you are a mariner upon life's tempestuous ocean, come for Christ is a Pilot who will safely guide to the port of eternal peace.

Oh, how sweetly does the Spirit of God call to the young, “Come!” The world is a wilderness, deceitful and false, though fair it appears to the young.

“Come to the Saviour, make no delay.”

For God has said He will guide thee by His counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory. My young friend, cry to God Say, “My Father, Thou shalt be the guide of my youth.” And He hath said, “Those who seek Me early shall surely find Me.” In finding Christ, dear young friend, you will find all that your soul requires. Perhaps you may have tried by prayers, or tears, or penance, or in some other way to save yourself. Be certain that is all in vain, for nothing but the blood of Christ can atone for sin, and no other but the Spirit of Christ can guide us to heaven. If we want Christ we may have Him.

“All the fitness He requireth

Is to feel our need of Him.”

Therefore “come”! “And let him that is athirst come.” (Rev. 22:17.) Will you come?

R. C. C.

## I, If I Be Lifted up

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THE cross draws us to Him, that He may draw us to God. A proof of the utter ruin of man is the fact that Christ does not attract his heart. He sees “no beauty” in the One who is the center of heaven’s worship — the object of the Father’s delight — that he “should desire Him.”

“Lifted up” as Son of Man — exalted now as Prince and Saviour — He is coming soon as “Lord from heaven.”

CHRIST’S PRESENT AND FUTURE — OURS.

WE find the truest comfort, in connecting the present and future of those we love who are gone from us, with the present and future of Him whom they are with, and whom we long to see — “With Me in paradise”; “them also which sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him.”

Sweet will that meeting be

With those we mourn;

Now sleeping calm in Thee

Till Thou return.

Severed ties shall be no more,

Tears and sighs for aye are o’er,

When heavenward we shall soar

To share Thy throne.

## Jesus and the Grave

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John 11.

THE Jews' thought of Mary, "She goeth unto the grave to weep there" was incorrect. No; far better, she was going to Jesus. We do not read of her either at her brother's or the Lord's grave. The grave cannot sanctify sorrow or soothe the heart as He can, who died to be its destruction.

We find Mary at His feet, weeping — Martha at His side, reasoning; for the latter saw the circumstances, the power of death — Mary, the Lord of life and power over death.

How the groans and tears of the Lord at the grave of Lazarus teach us of a great High Priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities! Yet the first words He utters after His resurrection are, "Why weepest thou?" (John 20:15.) There is no weeping in the resurrection body.

## Jesus Died!

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IT was drawing towards the close of a lovely day in May. The beams of the setting sun were gilding trees, hedges, and flowers with all the changeable beauty of evening splendor. Gold and crimson tints of loveliness rested in profusion on sea and land, as the sun sank nearer the horizon, spreading its soft, mellow radiance upon every object far and near. The sweet fragrance of early summer blossoms was pleasant and refreshing to the senses, while the soft, gentle twitter of the birds, as one by one each flew homeward to his leafy nest, seemed to speak aloud of harmony and peace. Here and there tall pine trees swayed backwards and forwards in the evening breeze, their dark green foliage now lighted up with sunset brightness.

Upon every object far and near the sunset beauty rested, continually delighting the eye with its wonderful transformations. And passing from the outer world, flooding the sick chamber with all its indescribable brightness, the sunset glory came in through the open window of a pleasant villa in the neighborhood of B —. Slowly it crept up the snowy counterpane of the bed in the corner of the apartment, till it rested at last in all its loveliness on the face of a dear little girl of eleven years old.

But the little sufferer knew nothing of its presence. Unconscious of all the wealth of light and beauty around her, little Edith lay.

But for the changing flush on her fevered cheek, and the restless, sudden, occasional movement of the weary limbs, it would have been easy to imagine that life had already passed away from her prostrate form. So changed, so altered by one short week of suffering was the little one at my side. Yes, only a few days before, brightest and merriest among her schoolfellows little Edith had been. Full of life and vivacity, she had mingled in the tasks and pleasures of her youthful companions. One short week, and how different! What had appeared, at first, but trivial indisposition, had proved to be the precursor of the disease which was now so swiftly carrying her from our midst.

Yes, it was vain now to hide the truth from our sorrowing hearts. Little Edith was dying, and we knew it at last. The fond father learned it as night after night he watched by the bedside of his little daughter, and, hoping and fearing, the tender mother, and sisters ministered to the sick child's necessities. And now, for the first time, I knew it also, sitting alone in the quiet chamber, with the soft, sweet, sunset radiance resting fully on the little unconscious face.

For a few moments head and heart were alike bowed down in the certainty of what lay before us. Yet, even as tears fell fast on the dear child's pillow, thoughts of that brighter world to which Edith was passing and the precious Saviour who would welcome her there, calmed my spirit into restfulness and peace. That the dear child, though so young, had trusted in Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, I had no doubt. Often had we read God's holy word together, and spoken of the love of Him who died to put away the sins of those who believe in Him. Yet my heart yearned to hear once again from her childish lips the assertion of the conscious possession of life and peace through the Saviour's finished work.

I looked once more at the parched, feverish lips, and marked again the deepening flush on the otherwise pallid countenance. As I watched her in silence, the gold and crimson sunlight faded slowly from the chamber, and the sun sank down behind the bank of cloud on the distant horizon. And in the stillness of little Edith's quiet chamber, the thought that it was but rising again in all the brightness of morning splendor for other dwellers of this habitable globe came to my mind.

With it, too, came to me that heart-searching question, "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?"

Daylight faded, and one by one faintly shining stars glimmered in the gathering twilight. Momentarily they grew in intensity and brightness, serving for the moment to remind me of the hand of Him who held them in their appointed course. Emphatically their very existence in that boundless firmament responded to my question, testifying aloud, "There is nothing too hard for the Lord."

Humbly and fervently I asked for some little word of testimony from the voiceless lips of the little one at my side, and God, in His love and goodness, gave me my heart's desire. As I ceased to gaze on those wonderful but, nevertheless, mysterious orbs of beauty, I found that little Edith's eyes were resting on my face with a glad look of recognition and delight. Oh! how precious were the few moments that followed this unlooked-for answer to my request!

Softly and gently I spoke to the dear little girl of the constant, unchanging love of Jesus, who had given Himself to make atonement for her sin. The silent pressure of my hand and the happy expression of her peaceful face, were proofs of how fully she assented to all that I was saying. Too ill to speak, she lay and listened.

"You are not afraid, my darling?" I said, as I kissed her marble brow, and smoothed back the long dark hair from her throbbing temples. Then only a look of wonder and surprise passed over the little sufferer's face, as in a low, feeble voice she whispered, "Jesus died!" It was all that she could say. Other words were in her mind, but utterance failed. A joyful smile rested on her peaceful face as she saw that I comprehended her meaning, and her hands clasped mine still more closely as I repeated her words. "Yes, darling," I said quietly, "'Jesus died.' Jesus died to save you from your sins. His precious blood has made you fit for His presence, and now He is the Good Shepherd — the Good Shepherd 'who gave His life for the sheep.' With His own precious blood He bought them, and they belong to Him forever. He 'gathers the lambs in His arms, and carries them in His bosom.' 'None can pluck them from His hand.' He will be with you all the way home."

A look of indescribable joy and satisfaction rested on dear Edith's face as I ceased speaking, as weary and exhausted she lay on her pillow. Not many minutes passed before the dear child again relapsed into unconsciousness; but for me it was enough. With a full heart I could thank God for that one feeble utterance — "Jesus died!" Only two simple words, yet words of untold blessing for every poor sinner who believes them.

A few days later and dear little Edith entered into rest. Just as the sun was rising again in brightness and beauty over her father's dwelling the dear little girl's happy spirit passed into the presence of Him who had died for her. Sweet and blessed it is to think of her there, as well as to tell to other dear children how she got there. For you, too, dear girls and boys, there is but one Saviour; but He is waiting to bless you. Just as He led little Edith to trust in His precious blood, so may He lead you. Young as you are, you have sinned. Hence you need a Saviour. And Jesus is

that Saviour, inviting you to come to Him to-day. Can you think lightly of such love as His? Oh, dear children, perhaps some of you can say, like little Edith, "Jesus died!" But some cannot do so. And it is for you that I write. Think of those solemn words which came so vividly to my mind as, a few days later, we laid the remains of the dear little girl in the quiet cemetery —" Be ye also ready." You may be tempted to say, "I am not ill like little Edith." No, but you cannot be sure of tomorrow. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." Just as you are Jesus waits to bless you. With all your sins you may come to Him, and be as happy as little Edith. Jesus alone can make you truly happy for time and eternity.

## Has Jesus Made You Glad?

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“I found in Him a resting-place,

And He has made me glad.”

A LITTLE boy whom I know repeated these lines over and over again to himself, then suddenly turned to his grandmother with the question, “Granny, has Jesus made you glad?” “Yes, dear, He has,” she replied.

A few minutes after he put the same question to an aunt and cousin, and, receiving the same answer, exclaimed joyfully, “Then He’s made us all glad.”

Dear reader, can you say the same?

“I think the Lord sent Miss C. to me,” said a woman the other day who had been lately converted. “I had been seeking rest a long, long time, and when she came she showed me things in such a new light — Jesus was just waiting to receive me, only I did not accept Him.”

“Yes, Mrs.■,” I replied, “the Lord knew your need, and so sent her to show you where it could be supplied.”

“Yes, miss,” she continued, “and I’m so much happier now. I know now there is no real happiness away from Christ, and, come what will, we are safe in His keeping.”

Ah she had “found in Him a resting-place,” and He had indeed “made her glad.”

After trying human cisterns, she found that “none but Christ can satisfy,” and she also found that He had been patiently waiting years for her, only she did not know it.

Has He been waiting years for you, dear reader? If so, do come to Him at once, and you will find Him a sure and safe resting-place, and He will indeed make you glad.

## Throw It Away

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“WHAT is a soul?” asked a little boy, who had been listening to his mother reading poetry to a friend.

“Something inside you that tells you when you do wrong,” was the answer.

“When I am a big man,” said the little fellow, triumphantly, “I’ll take and tear it out of me, and throw it far away.”

Dear children, the precious soul can never be got rid of, and you are so precious to the Lord Jesus that He gave His own life-blood that you might never perish. Will you say, “I will throw it away?” He, the God who made all things, asks you, “My son, give Me thine heart” (Prov. 23:26), and He will take such care of you that you “shall never perish,” neither shall any pluck you out of God’s mighty hand. (John 10:2.8.)

## Two Important Things

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IF you would get on as a christian., never forget to speak to God, and never forget to listen to what God says to you. Prayer is speaking to God, and reading the Bible is listening to what God says to you. No christian can prosper who neglects these two things.

## The Courage That Says “No.”

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A GREAT victory is won when the young christian, for the first time, is enabled to say “NO” to the world’s temptation. “By faith Moses... refused,” we read in the list of the grand deeds of faith recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews. And not only is the refusal of Moses to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, with all its splendid prospects, recorded, but also the refusal of life and liberty of others whose names we know not. “Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance.” “Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.” These great victories will never be forgotten in heaven, when this world and its glories have long passed away. The career of Moses as the man of faith commences by his saying “NO” to the pleasures of sin and the treasures and the glories of Egypt.

In like manner the great career for God of Daniel opens out to us with the record of his saying “NO” to his prospects of advancement in the court of the king of Babylon. Daniel, together with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were royal children of Judah, and captives in Babylon, and in their captivity, they were chosen for honor and advancement in the king’s palace. They were placed under the high authority of a prince who had the wealth and wisdom of Babylon at his command, to fit them for the future the king had designed for them.

Very soon came the test: they were to be fed with the king’s meat and the king’s wine, which, before being eaten and drunk in the king’s palace, was offered to the idols of Babylon. “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank.” In his inmost soul he made up his mind to fear God, and to say “NO” to the grandest of prospects that might await him. The honor and the glory of the name of Jehovah, the only and the true God, demanded that none who revered Him should partake of food openly dedicated to idols. Daniel had the courage of faith to obey God, and to leave with God all consequences.

Daniel’s resolution God-wards expressed itself courteously towards man —” He requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” And we feel sure that there was more even than respect and courtesy in him, for, as “God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs,” there surely was love in Daniel’s heart towards the prince. He appealed to Daniel, for his own life’s sake, to consider his determination, for, had Nebuchadnezzar found Daniel and his three companions’ faces wanting in ruddiness, the prince would have suffered by the loss of his head for his failure in caring for the youths.

It is ever more hard to refuse a prospect in the world which will entail loss on others than one which will entail loss upon ourselves only. Had the prince of the eunuchs said to Daniel, “You will lose your head,” that had been a far less weighty argument with Daniel’s brave spirit than that which he did advance. Daniel’s generosity and affection were both appealed to by the kind and

gentle prince who was set over him. But Daniel was firm: he placed the honor of Jehovah before the life of the prince. The steward, whom the prince had appointed to attend to Daniel's food, must surely have considered Daniel and his companions very obstinate! Now, obstinacy is no virtue — quite the contrary; but godly determination is altogether different from obstinacy! God would make a way of escape for His faithful young servants. He is a God who loves to do this. The record of Daniel's life, and the story of the fiery furnace, and the wrath of the king on that day, witness to this fact. So said Daniel and his companions: "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants." Now this was distinctly proving God: Daniel had obeyed God, and he now left the consequences with God. "And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat." May our young Christian readers never fail in the courage which says "NO" to the things God forbids, and may they, like Daniel, trust God for the result.

We may be assured that the "strange notions," the "peculiar ideas," of these young Hebrews were spoken of in the palace, and that amongst the other youths who were being brought up for great positions in Babylon, these four, who ate pulse and drank water, would be the objects of remark, perhaps of ridicule, certainly of envy. For how did God work for them? "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." Not one of their companions could have one word rightly to say against them. "And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."

Three years — the time appointed by the king for their tuition — had passed away, and all the young men stood before Nebuchadnezzar. Then came the great day for these four who had trusted in their God. "In all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm"; in all matters better than all the wise men in all his realm! And by what proportion better? Just that by which three years bore they had sought to be proved about the pulse and water — "ten times." They had asked to be proved for ten days that God might show what He would do with their countenances, and now, after three years' training the king proved these young men to be ten times better than all the wisest of his wise men!

No one who says "NO" to the world for God's sake shall fail to gain the victory.

Narratives from the Gospels, in the Light of Jewish Customs.

#### PREACHING.

THE attentive reader of the New Testament will probably conclude that public preaching was a custom familiar to the Jews. The preaching of the Lord Jesus in the synagogues referred to so frequently, and without a word to point to its being any innovation — the request sent to "Paul and his company" by the rulers of the synagogue at Antioch, that if they had any word of exhortation for the people, to "say on"— these facts point to preaching being an ordinary part of the synagogue service. Such indeed was the case. Following upon the reading from the Law and the Prophets — as will be remembered is expressly stated to have been the case in the synagogue at Antioch — came an address, if a capable Rabbi or a distinguished stranger were present. Tradition, after its

manner, traced the institution back to the appointment of Moses, and extolled it in the highest terms. The Divine Spirit rested upon the preacher, and the office entailed merit equal to the sacrifice of a burnt offering.

It is not our purpose to write at any length about the popular preacher (the Haggadist), familiar though he was in the days of the Lord Jesus. But we find no trace of him in the Gospels, while, on the other hand, the teacher of the Law is frequently met with (the Halachist), and to him learning and the traditions of the elders were all-important.

It agrees with the nature of things that a man, whose end and aim is popularity, should pass away without leaving any mark behind him. Yet ancient Jewish literature shows the Haggadist to have been a very prominent person, and states minutely the things necessary for his popularity. We cannot do better than quote a description drawn from these sources. "The type of a popular preacher was not very different from what in our own days would form his chief requisites. He ought to have a good figure, a pleasant expression, and melodious voice (his words ought to be 'like those of the bride to the bridegroom'), fluency, speech 'sweet as honey,' 'pleasant as milk and honey,' 'finely sifted like fine flour,' a diction richly adorned, 'like a bride on her wedding day'; and sufficient assurance in his own knowledge, so as never to be disconcerted. Above all, he must be conciliatory, and avoid being too personal. Moses had addressed Israel as rebellious and hard-hearted, and he was not allowed to bring them into the land of promise. Elijah had upbraided them with having broken the covenant, and Elisha was immediately appointed his successor. Even Isaiah had his lips touched with burning coals because he spoke of dwelling among a people of sinful lips. As for the mental qualifications of the preacher, he must know his Bible well, for as a bride knows properly how to make use of her twenty-four ornaments, so must the preacher of the twenty-four books the Bible. He must carefully prepare his subject — he is to 'hear himself' before the people hear him. But whatever else he may be or do, he must be attractive." As to the matter of his sermon, he was absolutely unfettered. The Scripture might indeed be referred to, but it served merely as "a golden nail on which to hang a gorgeous tapestry." It was really reduced to nothing by these preachers, as it was by the tradition-loving Scribe. Anything and everything might be worked into the address. "Parables, stories, allegories, witticisms, strange and foreign words, absurd legends, in short, anything which might startle an audience was introduced." His whole purpose was to please, amuse, and amaze his hearers. There was little or nothing for the heart. That the method was popular is proved by the saying that "the traditions" were like bread, but this popular preaching (the Haggadah), was like water, because it was more frequently required, and was more refreshing than the former.

But we do not stay over this feature of Jewish religious life; it seems to be referred to by the Apostle Paul, when he writes: "Ruse profane and old wives' fables." In the Gospels we neither hear the voice of the popular preacher nor feel his presence; he never appears as a leader; he has no power to mold events, and the showy labors passed away leaving no impression. The men are prominent in Jewish literature; they have left no mark in that enduring record, the word of God. Surely this is a grave warning to those who in any way labor in the Word. The earnest question of St. Paul applies to each: "Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." That only endures for time or eternity which is done to God.

Leaving the popular Haggadist, we turn to the teachers of the law, and find overlies in very different company. And the inquiry which we especially make is, What was their attitude towards the people — towards the poor? We have seen something of these men, their assumption of authority, their extravagant claims for the oral law of which they were the depositaries. In what relation did they stand to the mass of people? For on turning to the Gospels we are struck with this fact — indeed, it is stated as if an unusual thing — that “the common people heard Jesus gladly.” All the evangelists bear a like testimony. Matthew tells us that “great multitudes of people followed Jesus.” Mark, already quoted, says that “much people gathered unto Him.” Luke tells us that “all the people were very attentive to hear Him,” or as the margin more literally and expressively gives it, the people “hanged on Him”; and John reports the fear of the Sanhedrim: “If we let Him thus alone, all will believe on Him.” These are selections only from the very full testimony of the Gospels to the eagerness and willingness with which “the common people” heard the words of the Lord, and our question recurs, Was it customary for the people thus to hang upon their teachers? Did the Rabbis consider the so-called “lower classes” and the wants of weary hearts? for only so could they really reach the people.

There are traces in the Gospels, abundantly confirmed by ancient Jewish records of the direct opposite. There was no bond of sympathy between Rabbis and people. There were no “cords of love” between the Scribe and the unlearned man. When the officers sent by the Pharisees to take Jesus returned without Him, they owned the grace and power of Christ’s word. “Never man spake like this man.” “Are ye also deceived?” is the amazed answer. “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?” And the next remark has a terribly bitter ring about it. “But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed! Unskilled in the subtleties of Rabbinic learning they were a useless, worthless, and accursed people. For by “the law” here is not meant the law of Moses simply; some knowledge of the Scriptures abundantly appears in the people’s questions concerning the Messiah. But the Rabbis taught that if a man knew only the Scriptures, he was “an empty cistern,” unlike the instructed Scribe, who was compared to a “well-plastered pit out of which no drop of water could escape.” If a man had never studied in the schools of the wise, though his knowledge might embrace both Scripture and traditions, he was still despised — an ignoramus, a boor.

An expression of the Apostle Paul’s (himself a scholar of one of the greatest of the Rabbis, Gamaliel), points to the cause of this contempt of the poor and unlearned. “Knowledge puffeth up.” Study, learning, knowledge, were the substance and the end of a Rabbinist’s desires and ambitions. The want of souls was unheeded. And all knowledge was grouped around the law, written and oral. At the judgment seat of God, rich and poor alike will be asked (it was said) what excuse they can offer for not having studied the law. There could be nothing higher or better than this, for as the traditions laid it down: “the study of the law is equivalent to all the commandments, and the other commandments are to give way to this study.”

Learning being so extolled, it was but a step further, and that an easy one, to look down with contempt upon the unlearned. We find it so in the New Testament. The apostles, excellent as was their knowledge of the Scriptures, were, in the estimation of the rulers, but unlearned and ignorant men. Rabbi Eleazar thought that the house where the law was not studied should be destroyed. The evidence of the unlearned was inadmissible; it was forbidden to journey in their company; the very touch of their garments polluted. And the great Rabbi Hillel (whom some unbelievers think

may, as to his teaching, be compared with Jesus), laid it down that “an ignorant man cannot properly abhor sin; a peasant cannot be pious!”

We turn again from such language and thoughts to the Gospels, and ask the attention of our readers to two occasions. At the beginning of the Lord’s ministry He went into the synagogue at Nazareth, and, from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, He declared His commission. At the very head of His charter, so to speak, we find these gracious words: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor.” Yet again. When John the Baptist was cast into prison, and from thence sent his question to Jesus, “Art Thou He that should come [the coming One], or look we for another?” for answer the Lord appealed to His works — that the blind saw, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised up, and last of all, as though the climax to the whole, the great proof His Messianic claims — “to the poor the Gospel is preached,”

Here, then, is an immense difference between the preaching of the Christ and the ordinary preaching of His days. If the preaching of the popular Haggadist was fanciful and shallow, giving nothing to meet the crying need of souls, the learned preaching of the Scribe also ignored that need; it dealt only with ceremonial and outward forms, imposing burdens which could not be borne. Even the Rabbinic description of such is “they made the yoke of the law upon them heavy”; for that which they esteemed to be ignorance there was but a curse. In contrast with this came the blessed Lord. Words of mercy and grace fell from His lips; He despised none; He received all who came to Him; the poorest beggar by the wayside being heeded as much as the wealthy. And to all, whether rich or poor, was this invitation given: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He, too, had a “yoke” to give, but those who wore it would find that it was easy, and the burden He would impose was light.

May such servants of the Lord as shall read this be led much into His Spirit and love! Lord of all though He was, He took upon Him the form of a servant, and as that “servant of Jehovah,” of whom Isaiah prophesied, He knew how to speak a word in season to him that was weary. And herein He is the pattern to all His servants. And to the laboring and heavy laden, toiling beneath a burden of sin — of sin, too, against Him whose love was so great and was so painfully proved — we say that His love still remains; He has a welcome still for all who come to Him, be they rich or poor, learned or ignorant, the noble or the base ones of this world. Jr.

## The Very Best Gift

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A PLEASANT spot in the “dog watches” on a tropical evening is the fo’c’stle head. Away in the west the sun has just dipped beneath the horizon, leaving a blaze of lurid, throbbing light behind, while the down-draft from the foresail, and the cool swish of the water as it eddies from the stem, are grateful indeed after the glare and heat of the day. And how peaceful it all seems! Down in the waist of the ship some sailors are yarning on the spars, and away aft, their figures black against the evening sky, the saloon passengers are leaning listlessly over the rails.

On such an evening, as the good ship “Waipa” made her way towards New Zealand, over the long smooth swells, I found myself, with one other sailor, the sole occupants of the fo’c’stle head. It had happened that a few evenings before I had spoken to some of the men about their souls, and one of them called “Scottie” had replied, “Well, sir, I’d like to ask you a question. Are there two hells? The missionaries that come aboard all say we’re going to hell. What I want to know is, are there two hells?”

“No,” replied I, “there certainly are not two hells.”

“Well then,” said Scottie, “we’re right, sir, for we get ours here.”

Seeing that it would be vain to continue the conversation I dropped it then, hoping to get a chance to speak with Scottie alone, as I felt greatly interested in the man; and such an opportunity had now presented itself, for I had seen him on the evening in question go up on to the fo’c’stle head, and I had gone and sat down by his side.

“Well, Scottie,” I began, “you were telling me the other evening that the missionaries said you were going to hell, but I’ve got a different message to you, namely, that God loves you, 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’ — that God, in fact, is love.”

“Well, sir,” said Scottie, looking earnestly at me with his dark, restless eyes, “I can’t believe it. I can’t believe that God is love. I’ll tell you my story, and then you’ll see whether you would think it either, if you was me. When I was twenty I got married, and how I loved my wife! yes, how I loved her! But I had to go to sea; and on the homeward voyage I was thinking of her, and longing to see her again; and when our ship got in I hurried off to meet her, thinking what a happy surprise it would be, and, as I went up through the docks, an old friend met me, and told me that she was gone — that she had had a little boy and died. Oh, why did He take her when I loved her so? She was the only influence in the wide world over me for good. Why did He take her, sir? No, I can’t believe it. I can’t believe that God is love.”

Solemn indeed it was to hear this man, a swarthy, weather-beaten, bearded man of thirty-six, but looking far older, thus telling out, in the silence of that tropic evening, the story of the love of a life, and recalling the wreck of all his hopes, and one felt loth to speak in the presence of such a sorrow as this.

At last I said gently, "Scottie, you have told me a story of your life, I'll tell you one of mine. just before we were starting, my wife was about saying good-bye to our youngest boy, a little lad of three years old, and, seeing her crying, he came to his mother and stroked her hair gently with his hand, but finding that this was of no avail, but that she still wept, after a moment's thought he went away, returning shortly with his boy bricks — the most precious thing in his eyes in the world. We never knew why, but the little lad had given himself the name of "Minna," and always called himself so. Coming, then, to his mother, he put them in her lap, saying, "Minna's bricks, munner's own." Poor little chap, it was all he had, and yet he gave them to her."

The hard, set look had gradually faded from Scottie's face, and there was something soft and almost womanlike in his voice as, not leaving me to apply the moral of my tale, he replied, "I see, sir, what you mean. God has given the very best thing that He'd got to die for me."

Oh, that in an age like this, when millions are refusing God's gift, and vainly seeking to propitiate a god of their own creation by their works, religion, and morality, or, in fancied wisdom, are madly rejecting the truth in the love of it, one had a thousand tongues to cry — or rather rightly to use the one we each possess — to cry to a perishing world that God is love — that He seeks no propitiation from man; but that He, just because man was helpless to help himself, has sent His own Son to die, so that He can righteously pardon every believer in Jesus, and give them, too, eternal life.

Surely if our poor hearts are touched at the story of Scottie's or of Minna's love, the mighty love of God should break them down. And you, into whose hands these words have come, oh, listen to the voice of God beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself! It is not His heart that needs to be reconciled to you, but yours to Him — what is in His heart is fully displayed at the cross, and what was in man's, and therefore yours and mine, came out fully there too. Close, therefore, now with His gracious invitation. His oxen and His fatlings are killed, and all things are now ready — for Christ has died — and God, in tenderest grace and long-suffering, is still saying to you, "Come." May your heart truly utter the sailor's words, "God has given the very best that He had to die for me."

J. F.

## Think on These Things

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“IF there be any virtue, and if there be an praise, think on these things.” So does the Spirit of God exhort God’s people. Do not fill the mind with the unlovely, the unjust, the impure, but occupy it with whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. When little children run into a field of buttercups and daisies they do not search the banks for thistles and nettles, but fill their hands and pinafores with the flowers. Do not search out and think on evil, but fill the heart with good things, and think on them, and, se doing, the God of peace shall be with you.

## Laying Hold of One Soul

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ONE of my old workmates at St. Peter's Foundry, Ipswich, is a living witness how the power of the Lord Jesus Christ turns the scoffer and reviler of God into a true christian. George W. made a laugh at all that is of God, but two christian men, by God's grace, were determined to give him no rest until George truly repented and turned to Christ. In time God heard their united prayer, though they almost despaired of seeing their friend brought to God.

They induced George to attend religious meetings, and never did these two friends lose an opportunity of pressing home to him the words he heard. At length he began so far to change his ways as to listen attentively to the preached word, and indeed he tried to give up his besetting sin of swearing, and generally sought to do what was right. But George was trying in his own strength — he had not laid hold of Christ as his Saviour, and the result was, that the company of the workshop was too much for him, his efforts were all in vain, and he became worse than he was before.

After some time the two christian friends induced George to kneel down and pray God to grant him forgiveness, but he said he received no answer. Some months passed by, and it seemed as if he would never find Christ for his Saviour. On one Saturday night he turned to his praying friends, and, with his face deadly pale, said to one of them, "John, leave me alone, you have made me miserable. The devil has got too strong a hold on me. Oh, leave me alone."

But John secretly rejoiced, for he felt sure that mercy was not far off for his friend. The two prayed together, and then God began to open George's eyes a little, and to give him some hope for salvation. A few days after, while hearing the word of God preached, George decided that whatever happened, he would serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and God granted him pardon, and gave him the joy of his full and glorious salvation. Now he lives, rejoicing in Christ and serving the Lord, raised as it were from hell and the grave to a life of righteousness and peace.

I have written this simple but true story with the prayer that God will use it as an encouragement for young Christian workers like myself to pick out one of their friends, and then, with much earnest prayer, to seek God's grace to lead such to the Lord Jesus Christ.

J. W.

## John's Two Dreams

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I AM going to tell you, just as it was told me, of a way God saw fit to use to show a poor sinner, who could neither read nor write, his need of a Saviour.

“Just afore I knew the Lord, I had two dreams. In the first, I was walking out one day and met with a pilgrim going on his way; so we talked along together, and, of course, he soon knowed who I was, and what I was. So he says to me, ‘John, be you a sinner?’

“I says, ‘Yes, I be.’

“‘Well, then,’ he says, ‘you come along a me, and I’ll soon show you where they goes to.’

“So taking hold of my hand and shoulder, we walked on together till we came to a great built pit, bricked, and as full of fire as ever it could hold; and I saw it just in time to save me from stepping right in. And I just looked in, and I saw two men, as black as black, all chained together. And, mussy me! it frowt me so that I jumped back, shouting and screaming.

“When I went and saw our minister, I told un all about my dream; and he says to me, “Pend upon it, John, that’s a warning for you.’

“About a month after this, I had another dream. I dreamed I saw Jesus, and He called me twice. He says, ‘John! John!’ I answered un; and He says, ‘Never mind what anybody says to you, or what anybody does to you; your sins be all forgiven you.’ Then I broke out laughing so hard that it woke me up.

“So that was how I come to believe in Jesus. And He’s never failed me, though ‘tis nigh on forty years.” E. L. T.

## A Handsome Name

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IN a little cottage on a moor in Cornwall, many years ago, a few Christians were accustomed to meet weekly for prayer and praise. Sarah, the youngest daughter of the family, was much opposed to these gatherings, and absented herself when possible. The child of many prayers, she still followed the bent of her own will, and in a fit of passion left the peaceful home of her childhood, and never returned to it. A life of sorrow and privation followed this rash act. Walking from place to place, selling a few pins and needles, she gained a scanty subsistence; but ill-clothed and ill-fed, exposed to all kinds of hardships, her naturally strong constitution gave way, and consumption of the lungs was the result. It was then that those prayers in that far-off cottage were to be answered.

Several Christians called on Sarah during her long illness, and spoke faithfully to her of her state as a guilty sinner before God. The Holy Spirit's work was manifestly seen, for she became very anxious about her soul, and eagerly listened to the blessed story of redeeming love. By the grace of God she soon found joy and peace in believing the precious record, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And now the new-born soul thirsted for the sincere milk of the word.

One friend often had the happy privilege of reading to her the word of God, and once, when calling as usual, found her on her knees by the broken bedstead, "having a little talk to her blessed heavenly Father." When sorrow was expressed that she should be disturbed, she replied, "Oh, my dear, I often have a little moment or two during the day with my heavenly Jesus, and I have just been asking Him to muzzle my mouth, that I may not say one single word to grieve Him." In reply to a question she answered, "Yes, I know, I am sure that I am saved; I have the testimony of that book, though I can't read it." Another time she remarked, "What a blessing it is to wake up in the morning and think that we are the dear children of God." When the hymn was repeated, "There is a Name I love to hear," she said, "That is a sweet name — sweeter than honey! It is a handsome name," she added. On another occasion she said, "If I had two thousand tongues, I would use them all to praise the Lord; I want my very fingers to praise Him; I want the birds and trees to praise Him, too."

One day, in acute suffering, she said, "Every limb in pain, but I can thank Him for it all." She liked to place "her dear Saviour's book" under her pillow, because the name of Jesus was in it; and when wakened by her cough in the night, would feel for her Testament to have the joy of knowing she had His dear name near her. After a distressing fit of coughing, her first words were, "Bless the Lord." When a portion of the gospel by John was read to her, she said, "The Lord had such beautiful ways with Him"; and when she had counted the various names given Him in the first chapter, she exclaimed, "Praise the Lord for every one of those beautiful names."

A Christian lady who had been very kind to her, told her one day that she was going to visit a gay relative who delighted in pleasure, adding, as she spoke of the kind of amusement in store for her, "I don't want to go, but I must please my husband, and he wishes me to be present." Sarah at once replied, "Oh, yes, my lady, we must please our husbands, but we must resist the devil; and the

Bible says, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing.'" A wonderful reply from one who had never read the word of God in her life.

To the praise of that Name, so dear to her, it must be stated that when Sarah's heart had been won by "her heavenly Jesus," she did not forget her beloved relatives in Cornwall, and deeply was her grief expressed in loving letters that she had ever treated them so unkindly, and had her health permitted would have taken the long journey in order that she might see them once more, and receive the forgiving kiss.

Gradually, Sarah became weaker and weaker, till one day, during a severe fit of coughing, she broke a blood vessel, and quickly the desire of her heart was granted— to be "absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Dear reader, can you say, like poor Sarah, "I know, I am sure that I am saved"? If not, remember "the time is short"; in the twinkling of an eye the Lord Jesus may come, and then, if still unsaved, your day of grace would be over. God says, "All have sinned;" "The wages of sin is death;" "And the sting of death is sin." Wisdom's children justify God; they plead guilty, and say God is right and we are wrong; and God delights to justify those who justify Him. (Luke 7:29-35; Acts 13:38, 39) E. W.

## Self-Righteous

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ONE day I noticed an aged man coming slowly down a garden path. He could not hold his body in an upright position, so that it was a great difficulty for him to walk. As I looked on his poor bent body, I longed to speak to him of his soul; so, leaning over the garden gate, asked him if it did not cause him pain to walk about. The old man was rather deaf, and beckoned me to go into the garden.

Bending down to him, I said, "My friend, do you know the Lord?" He looked up quickly and replied, "Yes, perhaps better than you do."

Then he told me how he went to church regularly, took the sacrament, read the Bible, said his prayers, and indeed had lived for eighty-four years, and during that time had never knowingly harmed anyone.

Saddened by this self-righteous statement, I took out my Bible, and read, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20); "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10); "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12); and "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight." (Rom. 3:10.) The old man seemed a little astonished when I read, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6); but even then his confidence in himself did not forsake him, and he continued to think he should be "all right."

Reader, are you hoping to gain salvation by your works? If by them you could enter heaven, why was the Lord Jesus Christ expended on the cross? As "there is none righteous," no one can do anything which merits the favor of God. So, dear reader, "cast your deadly doings down," and come to Jesus, owning your lost condition, and He will in no wise cast you out, but will abundantly pardon, and cause you to go on your way rejoicing.

## Peace Through the Blood of the Lamb

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THE first time I spoke to Mrs. B. she told me of her own illness with the same disease from which two of her sisters had died. I promised to visit her, but deferred the visit from time to time, and her case was permitted to wait on those of others which appeared to be more urgent. Alas, how often we allow such causes of delay! However, I received a message that she was much worse, and went to see her. It was the old story. Thank God, there are two old stories! not only that of the delicate hands and face, and the hectic flush, but also the old, old story of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love — the “faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

Mrs. B. had often heard the gospel, cottage meetings having frequently been held in her mother’s kitchen, and she owned to the truth of her state by nature, and of what God says of us (Rom. 5:6), that we are not only “ungodly,” but “without strength,” and that it was while we were in this condition that Christ died for us.

It was evident that the Lord was working in her soul. The progress of disease in her body was not more manifest than the development of the Holy Spirit’s work in her, revealing to her, her own emptiness and the fullness of Christ.

On one occasion she expressed her thankfulness to the Lord for having answered her oft-repeated prayer that He would lengthen the time of her being laid aside, that she might learn in sickness, if need be, of her own need and of His grace; and she assured me that she could say, “It has been good for me that I have been afflicted,” and that the Lord had made the time of her weakness of body to be one of blessing to her soul.

The next time I called, she spoke yet more clearly of the reality of her faith in the Lord Jesus, and pressed the hand of another visitor, saying, “I do believe in Jesus.” Precious faith! “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.” (Rom. 10:9.)

On another occasion I found the mother with her dying daughter, and as soon as I was seated beside the bed she summoned her strength and, with a happy countenance, said calmly, “I have found sweet peace with Jesus.”

“I am very weak, but Jesus is with me, and He will not leave me,” were some of her last words; and to a neighbor who watched with her during her last night on earth, she said, “I do not wish to stay, I have found sweet peace with Jesus, and that is the best of all.”

Dear reader, in the hour when “no tongue can lie,” and when everything is seen in its true light, when about to enter the presence of God, my friend found her all in the person and work of Jesus, His beloved Son. May you now know Him through faith in His blood as your Saviour, confessing with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believing with the heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and you too shall be saved.

## Sound Health

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ONE sign of sound health is that we do not feel the weight of our body. A child full of life and vigor seems not to be conscious of having a body! So the Christian, when in sound spiritual health, does not think about himself, or study his feelings; he is happy in Christ.

## This Same Jesus

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Acts 1:11.

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer’s ear

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fear.”

PERHAPS you have, dear reader, though unconfessed, a real desire to be able to say, “Jesus is mine.” Let us for a few moments compare our thoughts about the Lord with the word of God. We must begin with this most wonderful fact that the Babe born so lowly, and cradled in the manger, was the Son of God. How this fact speaks to us of the love of God! “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.” (John 3:16.) We marvel at such an expression of love, but let us not attempt to fathom or reason it out, for the love of God is infinite.

The sweet story of Jesus then begins with the fact that He, “The Word, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and,” says the apostle, “we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14.) And of this One the angel instructed Joseph, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.” (Matt. 1:21) Thus we have the sequel to those words spoken four thousand years before: “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field... And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Gen. 3:14, 15.)

During all this long interval between the fall of man and the birth of Jesus, God had tried man in every possible way, but with the result of failure upon failure in every circumstance on man’s part; so that, instead of fallen man getting back to God, he only got further away. This being so, God in grace made a way to bring sinners to Himself by giving His own dear Son to die. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” (1 Peter 3:18.)

Yes, Jesus the Son of God has trod this weary scene, making Himself acquainted with grief, and becoming the Man of Sorrows. He went to the cross, and there met God concerning the terrible question of sin; and He not only settled it forever as regards those who believe, but He glorified God in the very thing that, from the fall of Adam, had caused nothing but dishonor to Him.

He did all this, but at what a cost! When we see Him in the garden, facing the terrible responsibilities He was about to undertake, when “His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground”; and when we follow Him to His mock trial, and from thence to the cross, and see Him nailed in shame and ignominy between two thieves, we have need to uncover our feet while we wonder and worship!

He who knew no sin was made sin for us! Let us think what must have been the agony of His soul when He was forsaken of God. And why forsaken? Because as the sin-bearer He must needs pass through judgment in order to become a Saviour from sin. "He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isa. 53:12.)

A friend of the writer was speaking to a man about his soul, and briefly set before him the finished work of Christ, and then, in God's name, offered him salvation through faith in His blood. The man turned round with scorn, and replied, "Nay, mister, that's over cheap for me." True, it is cheap for us — "without money and without price;" but what did it cost Him to make it so free? Oh, think of it for a few moments! Let your mind be still, and let your heart answer the question, "What am I thinking of this wondrous work?"

What does God tell us in His word respecting His Son now? "God hath highly exalted Him." (Phil. 2:9.) Yes, "this same Jesus," who was put into Joseph's tomb, was raised again by the mighty power of God (Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14), and was taken up into heaven, where He now sits — the glorified Man — at the right hand of God.

"Raised again for our justification" — His presence in the glory above is God's witness to the believer that God is satisfied with the price paid for our redemption. The whole weight of judgment has been borne by the Substitute, and the whole question having been forever settled, Jesus sits in the presence of God a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. (Acts 5:31.) Now is not that just what sinners want?

We read that when the Lord ascended to heaven, "As He went up, behold, two men stood by" His wondering disciples "in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10, 11.) This word is not yet fulfilled, but the Lord may come at any moment.

Are you prepared for His appearing?

Let us also consider this same Jesus on the day of judgment. Thus we read: "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:11-15.) Hang not back — think not that you are too bad, or too good. Oh, flee from the wrath to come!

He who said "I am the chief of sinners" is now with Jesus (1 Tim. 1:15), and there is room for you — room in the Saviour's loving heart for all who will come. He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37.) "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." (Heb. 13:8.)

## Five WhosoEVERs

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“GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16.) Here is God’s “whosoever” of love — here is a free and a full invitation to anyone who will receive it. Have you, dear reader, put your name in place of this “whosoever,” and can you say, “I believe I have eternal life. because God says it?”

“WHOSOEVER shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:21.) This “whosoever,” like the last, is for all, if they will have it. However good, however bad men may be, “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

“WHOSOEVER was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:15.) Here is the same word “whosoever” as before, but in those who are of the “whosoEVERs” of the two verses already quoted, will not be found in the “whosoEVERs” of the solemn passage. But woe to them that reject God’s well-beloved Son, for, whosoever they may be, they will be here. Not to receive eternal life? No, but to be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.”

“WHOSOEVER loveth and maketh a lie.” (Rev. 22:15.) These are found outside when those who have received Christ are within the city, having right to the tree of life.

Before God closes His book He sends out once more the loving invitation, “WHOSVER will let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17.) This is, as it were, God’s last offer of mercy. It is for you, reader, if still unsaved. Will you not come and take the water of life, which God offers “freely”? The time is short; the Lord is soon coming.

N. N.

## Little Bob's Prayer

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"WAX lights, sir? Wax lights, sir?" cried a little boy of eight or nine years of age, whose weak voice scarcely attracted attention. The bright pink spot upon each of Bobby's sunken cheeks, which became brighter as a fit of coughing checked his utterance, and as he leaned against the back of a seat to support himself, too plainly told that consumption had marked him for its own.

It was at a pretty watering-place in Lancashire that Bobby was crying "Wax lights, sir?" and many merry, happy children might be seen digging in the sand and building mimic castles to be washed away by the rising tide, with the fathers and mothers sitting near, enjoying the sea breezes, and sharing in the innocent mirth of their little ones.

"Where is your father, my boy?" asked a kind gentleman of poor little Bobby.

"I have no father or mother now," replied the boy, sadly, as soon as he could speak.

The gentleman, seeing how ill he was, made enquiries, and, finding the boy's story was true, obtained his admission into a hospital.

There Bobby remained for three weeks, without appearing to get either better or worse. On the gentleman calling to see him, the doctor told him in the boy's presence that it was a bad case of consumption — that although he could never be better, yet he might live a long time, and therefore he must be removed to the workhouse to make room for those who could be cured. These words went to poor Bobby's heart, for he had been taught to dread the workhouse, and his mother's last words were, "Trust in God, my child; try to get an honest living, and don't go to the workhouse."

That night little Bobby's heart was very sad, and about midnight the nurse saw the little fellow slide out of bed and kneel down. She listened, and heard him say, "Please, Lord Jesus, don't let me go to the workhouse."

Three times he repeated the words, and then he knelt in silence.

After a little while the nurse, being afraid lest the little boy should take cold, went to lift him into bed again, but little Bob was not there: he had gone — not to the workhouse, but to be with Jesus in heaven:

"In that beautiful place He has gone to prepare,

For all who are washed and forgiven;

And many clear children are gathering there,

For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Little Bob's prayer was answered: the Lord Jesus did not let him go to the workhouse! Now, dear children, though I should hope none of you are as poor as little Bob, you may all make a friend of Jesus, and you will find that He is always ready to hear and answer even the prayers of little

children because He loves them.

R. B. Y.

## Going Home

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I SUPPOSE, dear children, that most of you have spent happy summer days in woods or forests. What fun it is swinging on the low branches of the great trees, or playing hide and seek among the tall bracken, or trying to catch wee rabbits before they disappear with a hop, skip and a jump into their little dark homes at the foot of the mighty oaks!

Not long ago, on a bright summer's morning, a merry party started for just such a day in the old Sherwood Forest. There was the father, who did not often take a holiday, and therefore enjoyed it all the more, and the often wearied mother, and three little children. During the past week the weather had been very stormy, so that the sweet sunshine seemed doubly sweet as the bright beams glinted through the leafy branches and fell on many crimson foxgloves in the green dells.

The children were in high spirits, as you can fancy, and laughed with glee as they caught sight of the bushy-tailed squirrels springing from bough to bough, and shouted, clapping their hands to make the rabbits run the quicker into their holes. Having driven some way into the forest, they alighted, and while the father fastened the pony to a tree, the mother unpacked a basket of good things, and laid out a tempting picnic beneath the spreading branches of one of the mighty giants of the forest. When this had been done ample justice to, the father took the two elder children for a ramble through the woods, while the mother, seating herself on one of the great gnarled roots of the old tree, took out her needle-work.

The youngest of the party played contentedly at her feet for a time, but presently began trotting round the great tree, pretending that he was going quite away, and then coming round to the other side to hide his face with a merry laugh in his mother's lap.

"I'm going home," the little fellow sang each time as he left her side, and the monotonous chant only ended as he reappeared round the tree. He had started again on his little tour, and the mother was listening smilingly to the young, happy voice still shouting cheerily, "I'm going home! I'm going home!" when suddenly a terrible crash was heard, and a piercing shriek. The mother flew round the tree to find her darling boy lying crushed beneath a great limb of the mighty oak, which had been loosened by the late storm. At her agonized cry the poor father hurried to the spot with others who were within call, and they quickly removed the heavy branch, but, alas! the child was beyond the reach of human skill. The spirit had returned to God who gave it — the little one had indeed gone home.

You say, "Oh, what a sad story!" Yes, indeed, dear children, so it is; but I have not told it you only to make you sorrowful; I want it to make you thoughtful. Do not think I want to spoil your childish fun. Far from it! What I want is that you should have that which will make you really and forever happy, even in days when sorrow or death may come to you. You know Jesus came into the world to bear our sins in His own body on the cross; will you not then take Him at once as your Saviour, believe on Him with all your heart that you may have now everlasting life through Him, and be able to sing a sweeter song than did the dear little child I have been telling you about — a song that

only the redeemed can raise, as they journey along towards heaven?

D. & A. C.

## Una

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YOU love true stories. Well, this I am going to tell you is quite true, and the latter part of it happened a short time ago.

Little Una early knew and loved the Lord Jesus Christ as her own Saviour. One day, not long ago, a little friend asked her brother, in her presence, what a christian was, and whilst he was thinking over the question, she said, "I am sure, James, you know what a christian is — one who loves Jesus."

Una, as a great many little girls and boys in and around London have done, attended services for children, and at these happy gatherings she learned many beautiful hymns. When she was laid aside with a severe cold she delighted in repeating these hymns to her father and mother, one or other of whom was never absent from her cot.

This verse was one of her favorites: —

"Jesus, take this heart or mine.

Make it pure, and wholly Thine,

Thou hast bled and died for me,

I will henceforth live for Thee."

Looking up with intense earnestness a few minutes before she was taken home, she said, "Jesus, I am happy now."

I felt, dear little friends, when I looked on her sweet, calm little face, and thought of her spirit which had fled, that I would like to tell you how a little christian maid can die. Her loving Saviour wants, oh, how much I cannot tell! your young hearts. Think of the heavenly throng of which dear little Una forms one today, and ask the Lord Jesus to make you one of His little lambs also.

T. S. G.

## A Missionary Story

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DR. MOFFAT gave an address some years ago to our Sunday school, and I feel sure the young readers of FAITHFUL WORDS will be interested in reading the notes which we took of it. The aged missionary said: ■

My dear children, I want you all to hear me, but I am getting old, and my voice is not very strong. You all know I come from Africa, where lions abound, and doubtless many of you have seen lions, but they were shut up in cages, with strong iron bars. I have seen them loose in their wild state, and to see them and hear them roar near you is enough to make you tremble.

I will tell you a little story about lions. For more than fifty years I traveled a great deal in Africa, and preached very often wherever I went, telling the poor black people about Jesus. Once an African woman, who had heard of me, said to her children, "I will take you where a teacher lives," and away she went, with her boy and girl running along with her. Her little children wondered what a teacher or missionary was. They had a long way to go, and when they were about midway on their journey, the sun being very hot, and the children being tired, the mother said, "We will stop here; you rest under that tree, and don't go away, while I go and find wood and water to cook some food, and then we will go on again." When the mother came back, there were no children to be seen. She looked first one way, then another, when she saw them on a plain bond the bushes, and oh, how her heart beat! — a lion was coming towards them! She screamed to them, and ran to them as if she had wings to help her. The children had seen the lion, but supposed it to be a great calf. On reaching them, she turned them back, and said, "Flee, my children, to the bushes; it is the lion come to eat you."

The brave mother stood still, and when the lion was within ten yards of her, she looked him in the face. Then she raised her voice to the highest pitch, and holding out her fist, called the lion a rogue, a vagabond, a bloodsucker, and every bad name she could think of, and dared him to touch her. Surprised at being scolded thus, the lion couched, and after staring at her for some time, got up and walked away. So the mother and her children were saved. Was not that a marvelous deliverance and a wonderful instance of God's ever-watchful care?

My next is a sad story. A mother, with her boy, had been traveling all day in the heat of the scorching African sun. She said to her son, "We will go through the hills, as that is our nearest way;" but the boy said, "Don't go that way, mother, for I have heard there are cannibals living there." Cannibals are men who eat men and women and children. The boy's mother answered, "We will go that way; they won't see us." But they had not gone far before three men rushed out of the bushes and seized the woman. The terrified boy ran into the bushes, and hid himself in a hyena's hole. There he lay all night. In the morning, when looking about for his mother, he found her head. Away he ran, as fast as he could, all day. Towards night he met a man with a gun slung across his shoulder, and supposing he was a cannibal with a club he fell on his knees to him, and said, "Oh! pray don't eat me; see," (lifting his arms and showing his ribs) "I am nothing but bones."

The man said, "I am not going to eat you." He belonged to a missionary station, and took the boy away with him, taught him to read and write, taught him the gospel, and the boy became happy and useful.

The cruel men were more fierce than the lion!

When traveling in the wilds of Africa we get as near to the trees as we can when we halt for the night, so as to be able to climb up among the branches out of the way of the lions; and it is a rule always to make a fire to frighten them off.

On one occasion a man, whom I knew, had halted under a tree; it was dark, and he was just making a fire. He discovered a lion approaching, and you may be sure the man was up the tree in a trice. There he sat, as best he could, but having scarcely any clothes on, the branches felt very hard. It was pitch dark, and he was afraid to come down, for he thought the lion might be lying watching at the foot of the tree, which was the case. The man was very tired; he could not rest his weary head, and after waiting for a long time he fell asleep. Presently down he tumbled off the tree, and fell—where do you think? —right upon the lion! This so startled the great beast that it started up and ran off, quite as much frightened as was the man.

In Africa they do not teach the children to love and to serve God and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Among the heathen it. Africa the men lead the boys about quite naked during the coldest hours of the night of the coldest month, and whip them with switches, and, if the boys complain or run away, they are killed. The Bechuana tribe have a ceremony during which the boys are whipped with switches of a supple shrub. Men and boys engage in a kind of dance and the boys wear their sandals on their hands instead of their feet, while the men switch them till their bodies bleed. All the time the lads are obliged to look quite pleased and happy, and never even to appeal to mind the terrible lashes which scar their bodies for lifetime. This schooling is to make them hard, so as to be able to resist pain, and to be fearless warriors. The girls are disciplined, though not in quite the same way, to prepare them for hard work in the fields and in building houses.

When I first went out to Africa, there were no books among the natives, and, of course, nobody could write or read. I once asked a man to take a letter for me to Mrs. Moffat, who was residing at some distance off. He stared at me as he took the letter, and said, "Do you say it will talk to her?" I said, "Yes." He instantly arose, laid the letter upon the ground, and moved off, afraid lest it should talk to him.

On another occasion I wanted to send a letter, and, as there are no posts, it is difficult to do so, but at last I got a man to take it and also a parcel, and in the letter told Mrs. Moffat to give the man some strings of beads and buttons and plenty of food. But the man delivered the letter and not the parcel. So Mrs. Moffat said, "Where is the parcel?" He answered, "The letter tells fibs, for it could not see, as it was in the bag behind my back all the way."

Now there are in Africa Sunday schools, and thousands of children, as well as the grown-up persons who can read and sing as well as you.

I remember a sweet little child, one of our school children, who became very sick. She was sitting on her mother's knee, and said, "Mother, let us sing a hymn" — the child had taught her mother to sing "I'm a little pilgrim here." Just as they had finished the hymn the child died in her mother's

arms. I said to the mother, "What a loss!" but she answered, "I would not call her back; she has gone to Jesus — gone to heaven. She won't come back to me, but I shall go to her."

Is it not a great mercy to be taught to know that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"?

Only think of riding on an ox! One chief rode on his ox one hundred miles to hear me preach. I had a great deal of ox-riding in Africa, and I got to like it. Oxen are sure-footed animals, and easy to ride, but they will have their own way. They have very long horns, and a small rope is put through the nose as a sort of rein, but for all that, if you try to make them go a different way from that which they wish to take, they will sometimes very quickly turn you over "topsy-turvy" with their horns. I have had many a rough shaking of that description.

Though the children in Africa are not white like you, they think themselves pretty, and pretty they are to me. I love them exceedingly, and pray always to God to make them know Him, and to bring them to heaven. You know that God loves them and loves you, and that Christ died for sinners, and that all are sinners, but however much your parents and teachers may love you, they cannot save you. Remember, the Lord Jesus loves you, and died to save you, and you cannot come to Him too early.

Dear children, I am an old servant of missions, having spent the greatest part of my life in Africa. But I am not tired, and should so like to go back again to the black people. Yet I cannot expect to do this; but I wish some of you may become true missionaries some day. What a joy it will be to me if boys and girls now hearing me, when they grow up, should go to preach the Gospel in distant lands! It is a blessed work.

Narratives from the Gospels in the Light of Jewish Customs.

BY THE WELL OF SYCHAR.

IN our last paper we called attention to some of the points of difference between the Lord Jesus — "a teacher come from God"— and the Rabbis of His day. If further proof or illustration of this difference were sought, perhaps in no place could we find it more distinctly than in that familiar scene by the Well of Sychar. A strong contrast was it to the ways and thoughts of the time, and a rebuke to the Jew who would scorn a Samaritan, to the Pharisee who would loathe contact with a sinner, and to the Rabbi who was forbidden by the traditions he so highly honored to hold converse with a woman.

But there was more. The love of Christ — the love of God in Christ — is there plainly seen, and He who had come to reveal the Father speaks the first word of that revelation to the sinful woman who had refused Him a cup of water. Let us follow the story.

The Lord "left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee. And He must needs go through Samaria." Why such need? It was not simply that it was the most direct route; there was another, but a longer, road by way of Peræa, but He may have thought it well to avoid that seat of Herod's government; or, better still, the soul-want of the poor Samaritaness may have furnished the "needs-be" of His route, even as He said He must the same word] abide in Zacehæus's house. He journeys, and reaches a city of Samaria, called Sychar, where also was Jacob's Well. Wearied with His journey, "He sat thus on the well," and to the woman who came thither for water, He said,

“Give Me to drink.” It was not much to ask, but, in strange contrast to the eagerness with which Rebekah answered the request of Abraham’s servant (“Drink, my lord, ... I will draw water for thy camels also”), she replies with a question: “How is it that Thou, being a Jew askest drink of me which am a woman of Samaria?” The evangelist adds a word to account for it: “The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”

In order to rightly understand this, we must go back some time in the Bible history. During the reign of Hoshea, the Samaritans were, under God’s judgment, taken into captivity by the King of Assyria, and after the fashion of those days, the district was repopulated by various peoples, but principally by Cuthims from Cuthah. The new people were idolaters, and for their idolatry the Lord sent lions among them. This led to the king sending an instructor to teach the people “how they should fear the Lord,” but a priest who had been consecrated by such a king as Jereboam, was not likely to greatly help them, and the result of his teaching is stated in the Divine history — “they feared the Lord, and served their own gods.” In Ezra’s time, these semi-heathens claimed to be of the same faith with the returned Israelites, and asked that they might help in the rebuilding of the Temple — help firmly and rightly refused by the faithful. This strengthened, however, the rivalry already existing between Jews and Samaritans (up to the captivity a national quarrel), and the feud henceforth raged with more or less fury according to the circumstances of various times. The religious differences became fixed when the Samaritans built a rival temples at Shechem on Mount Gerizim (“this mountain,” on which according to the woman, their fathers worshipped), and, by a shameless falsification of Scripture, struck out the word “Ebal” from Deuteronomy 27:4, and substituted “Gerizim.” It added to the feud that the Samaritans were joined by some apostate priests and others from Jerusalem, who brought the Samaritan worship into greater likeness to the Jerusalem ritual, though they could not give to it the divine sanction which Jerusalem possessed, or make their worship any the less false. There was outward resemblance, but they worshipped they knew not what. So little was God really known and feared, that at the time of the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, they (calling themselves Sonians, and addressing him as God) prosed to dedicate their temple to Jupiter!

Scornful as was the manner of the Jews to the Samaritans, the latter were little better. They only were the faithful; they only kept Moses’ words. As for the prophets, they refused them, and every person or thing which might help to establish the authority of Jerusalem. Samuel was “a magician and an infidel;” Ezra was “cursed forever.” Nor did they confine their opposition to words. They defiled the Temple at Jerusalem by scattering dead men’s bones in it; they killed pilgrims journeying thither; and it will be remembered that they even refused to entertain the Lord because “His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem.” On the other hand, the Jews charged their rivals with worshipping the idol-gods which Jacob had buried under the oak at Shechem, and, what would be more keenly felt, they disclaimed all affinity with them in race or religion. In the Jews’ estimation the Samaritans were “lion-converts,” a name having scornful reference to the incident before referred to. “May I never set eyes on a Samaritan!” was their saying; and it was taught that he who hospitably entertained a Samaritan, deserved that his children should go into captivity. Even the writer of the apocryphal book, Ecclesiasticus, says: “There be two manner of nations which my heart abhorreth, and the third is no nation; they that sit upon the mount of Samaria, and they that dwell among the Philistines, and that foolish people that dwell in Sichem [Shechem].” Yet, notwithstanding all this, Samaritan food might lawfully be eaten by a Jew, so that

there is no want of harmony between the evangelist's statement as to the absence of intercourse between Jews and Samaritans, and his information that the disciples had gone into the city to buy meat. At a later time, when the jealousy had reached a higher pitch, Samaritan bread was declared to be like swine's flesh, and so was absolutely forbidden.

We return to the gospel story. In several ways — by dress, by feature, by pronunciation — the woman would know that the stranger was a Jew. "How is it that Thou... askest drink of me?" The Lord heeds not her repulse, for, however real His natural thirst, He had a yet greater — her blessing. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Very little of this did she understand. Who or what was the gift of God she knew not; she caught at the words, "living water," for it was for water that she had come thither, and the words themselves were by no means new. When Isaac dug his well at Gerar, "living water" sprang up; the bird which was killed at the cleansing of the leper was killed over "living water." In the idiom of the language it meant bright, fresh, running water, and this was all that the woman saw in it. But from whence and how was it to come? He had no vessel, and then, the well was deep. Was He greater than their father Jacob, who gave them the well?

Again the Lord answers her, with words which might well lead her thoughts from earthly to heavenly things, and again she misses everything that speaks of spiritual blessing; she thinks only of having a full water pot, and of release from the drudgery of toiling to the well. And then, abruptly, the Lord changed the current of His words. "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." And in His presence she could not speak falsely, though her words gave not the whole truth, but what was lacking the Lord supplied. It told of a life of sin and shame, and though she confessed nothing, she saw that she was in the presence of One who knew all things. Conscience at last was reached. "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet." This was an advance, that she could admit a prophet to have arisen in Judaea. And then she turns off to that hotly-fought question of the rival claims of Gerizim and Jerusalem, perhaps not so much to ward off all dealing with her conscience as we might at first imagine, as because in those days, to a heart which longed to be right with God, the place for worship was a really grave consideration. Here was a prophet — could he answer the question? On her side she had the traditions of her people; from the dust of this mountain Adam had been formed; here he had erected his first altar; here the ark had rested, and Noah had offered his burnt offerings. Here, too, Abraham had bound his son, and Jacob had seen heaven opened. Accepting, as no doubt she did, all these fictions as truth, was there not enough to support the sanctity of Gerizim as against Jerusalem?

Then came those wondrous declarations from the lips of the Lord concerning the Father and the worshippers He sought. It may seem strange that He should discourse on such high themes to a poor, sinful woman, but it is the way of His love, and the way of His wisdom. So He told of the cessation of all merely local worship; vindicated the Jewish faith against the Samaritan, thus roving the false hope which they cherished of a Messiah to arise from among themselves, and declared that the hour had then come when the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for "God is a Spirit."

As though all this seemed infinitely beyond the woman's understanding, she only answered, "I know that Messiah cometh...when He is come, He will tell us all things." And now the Lord

discovers Himself. That relation which He had withholder from the learned Nicodemus He makes to her, "I that speak unto thee am He," and she finds that beside her sits the One of whom Moses did write the Prophet whom the Lord should raise up. And in true keeping with their limited view of the Messiah, she sees only His Prophet-character: "He shall teach us all things." It was little that she knew, but, after all, the great thing is not the extent of our knowledge about the Christ, but that we receive Him. Leaving her water pot, she went to the men of the city, saying, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" And when they came to Jesus and heard His word, they, too, believed in Him, "not" (say they to the woman) "because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." So for two days He abode with them.

We cannot help recalling that name given by Pharaoh to "Father Jacob's" best loved son — "Zaphnath-Paaneah." None can say positively whether it is a Hebrew or an Egyptian name, but strangely enough (and probably there was a divine overruling in the choice of the name, however little conscious of it Pharaoh might be) in the one tongue it signifies "the Revealer of Secrets"; in the other it means "the Saviour of the world." To the woman He was indeed "the Realer," it was as though He had told her all things that she had done; to the Samaritans He was "the Saviour of the world," from among the Jews, indeed, as He had said, but like that "fruitful vine by a well," of which Jacob spoke, "whose branches run over the wall," He had brought life and blessing and joy for them, for it was not possible that His love could be restrained by any Jewish limitations.

Have we learned Him thus — as Revealer, as Saviour? Or to go back to other parts of the wealth of blessing which the story brings before us, have we received from Him the "living water" which He gives to those thirsty souls who ask of Him? Whatever "waters" we may find on earth, none can satisfy — we thirst again; but His promise is, that they who drink of the water which He will give shall never thirst, but it shall be in them a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.

## Do You Love Jesus?

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AMONGST the invalided soldiers at Netley who had been through the war in Egypt was William S. He had been stationed at Suakin, and, one night when on sentry, whilst the bullets of the enemy were falling thick, he felt, for the first time, what a terrible thing it was to be called away unprepared into eternity. As far as he knew how to do so, he prayed to God, and told Him that, if He spared him, he would give up his old ways and trust in Him. This promise was speedily forgotten, but God did not forget the soldier.

It happened that amongst the invalided men, there was one who, being convalescent, was allowed outside the hospital in the gardens. H., realizing that "the time is short," and also that the moment is near when those who are ready shall go in, and the door shall be shut, assembled, with his wife and little children, three times a day in the gardens for reading and prayer. Any of the twelve hundred invalids could, if they chose to do so, sit down upon the grass at these Bible readings and listen to the words of rest and life.

William was one of the soldiers who was not ashamed to do this; he would sit down under the trees and join in these Bible readings, and there God met him in His grace, and saved his soul. His after-life showed that he was truly converted. He knelt down at night by his cot in the ward, and, amidst much jeering and boot-throwing confessed publicly the love of Christ, who had loved him, and given Himself for him.

One of the worst persecutors he had in his ward, one who swore at him, and ill-treated him, was Arthur■; yet amidst all this persecutor's bravado, the simple fact of William's kneeling at his bed had wrought a work in the man's soul. God had His purposes of grace for the salvation of Arthur. He troubled his soul deeply, and at the close of one of the evening Bible readings, he came up and said to H., "Can you do anything for me, for I am miserable? My father, mother, sisters, and brother are all Christians, and I am the only black sheep in the family.

I leave the hospital to-morrow for my depot at Enniskillen, and I feel if I could only get what S. has got at your meetings, I could go back there a changed man."

He was invited to sit down with the rest, which, after a great deal of persuasion, he consented to do. Many of his comrades stood at a little distance under the trees, looking on, laughing and making grimaces at him.

For a long time Arthur listened as the precious word of God was read to him, but no rest, no peace, entered his soul. He wanted to feel something in himself to assure him of God's love to him. Beyond this, the knowledge of his comrades looking on and jeering, so vexed him, that he bit his lips and clenched his fists. At last he said, "I can't stand this any longer; I must 'go' for them. It's no use trying to love God"

With no little difficulty he was kept from "going." But God's ways are not as our ways, and His thoughts are not as our thoughts. Just when Arthur was so wretched that he could scarce restrain

his feelings, and a big fellow he was, H.'s wife and little children came up. Cissy, a girl of some five years of age, noticed the stranger sitting in the group, and, with a little child's instinct of pity for a sad countenance, she at once ran up to him, and, looking up into his face, said, "Do you love Jesus?"

After a moment's silence, he replied, "I am trying to, my little dear."

The child looked again into the man's sorrowful face, and then turned to her mother and father with an expression of surprise, as much as to say, How strange that anyone should try to love Jesus, who loves us so much! Turning round again to Arthur, she put her little arms round his neck, and kissed and squeezed him, saying at the same time, "Oh, Jesus loves you this much, yes, more than I can love you."

The simple words of that little child had spoken to the heart of the big soldier. Faith in the love of God had entered into his heart. He believed the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He no more tried to love Jesus, but thankfully believed the love of Jesus the Son of God to him. The tears flowed from the strong man's eyes, and coursed down his cheeks.

"We were very happy that night," an eyewitness of this joyful scene says, "as we thought that at that very moment as we sat on the green grass in the gardens of Netley Hospital there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over a precious soul saved. We sang together —

'Happy day, happy day,

When Jesus washed my sins away.'

We encouraged each other, and impressed on each other the necessity of being bold yet humble — firm yet yielding — for our Jesus, 'who hath done all things well.' Also we enjoined upon Arthur not to be ashamed to 'confess Him before men.' Then we sang again —

'Now just a word for Jesus,

Your clearest Friend, so true;

Come, cheer our hearts, and tell us

What He has done for you.

'Now just a word for Jesus

Will help us on our way:

One little word for Jesus,

Oh, speak, or sing, or pray.'

And so we parted for the night."

When the morning came there was a great longing to see Arthur, and to learn how he had confessed Christ in the ward. He said that as soon as he got in all the men began to laugh at him, and tried to joke him out of his new-found peace and happiness, but he knew the Lord was with him, so, after a struggle, he knelt down at his bed and prayed. As soon as the lights were put out,

down came an angry shower of boots at him. Some of them hit him hard, but such a present help in the time of trouble was the Lord to him, that, looking the men full in the face — that is, as far as the light shining in the room from the passage would permit — he said, “Ah, comrades, you can fling away now, for I have Christ, and you cannot take Him away from me.” He continued in prayer for these very men till it was nearing midnight.

The next day Arthur left for his depot, and not long since a bright, cheering letter was received from him, expressing his joy and peace in believing, and his deep thankfulness for the child’s simple question, “Do you love Jesus?”

## Because God Said 1t

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AFTER preaching in a village in the North of Ireland, I was asked to visit two persons who were ill, and not likely to recover. I was pleased to do so, and, accompanied by the friend to whom they were known, started at once.

The first upon whom we called, though speaking of his hope beyond the present, made no reference to Christ and His work. He was resting on an experience which he had had some twenty years previously.

We told him how vain and useless it was to rest on anything of that sort as a ground of acceptance with God, or as an evidence of being saved, and we spoke to him of Christ.

The other man whom we saw was suffering much, and it did not seem likely he would be very long upon earth. Therefore, we spoke plainly to him as to the ruin of man, and the need of a Saviour, and then asked how it was with him about his soul's salvation? He replied, he had "no hope."

The difference between the two men was very noticeable. He with whom we had been first, placed his confidence in his experience— in something he had gone through; the other man knew he was helpless and undone.

Taking out my Bible, I read that verse which has been made a blessing to many— John 3:16.

While speaking to him of "everlasting life," he said, to my surprise, "I have got it."

"What," we replied; "only a short time before you said you had 'no hope.' How, then, is it that you now speak of having everlasting life?"

"Well," he said, "you have read to me from the Bible, that whosoever believeth the Son of God hath everlasting life. I believe, and have got it. I believe, because God says it."

Now, while our object in going to him was to put before him the truth, that he might be saved through believing in Him whom God had given, yet the simple way in which the poor man received God's word was more than we expected on the moment.

"Yes," I said, "it is God who has said so, and, therefore, it is everlasting life to whosoever believeth."

Seeing the peaceful, happy way in which he accepted the glad tidings, because God had said it, and the manifested joy which was brought to his soul, we knelt down and praised God for His goodness and mercy in saving this precious soul, who, only a little while before was "without hope."

About twelve months afterward, when I was again in those parts, I heard that this man had lingered some seven months, but John 3:16 was precious to him. He had believed in the Sent One of God, and had been enabled to rejoice in God's salvation.

Reader, if you are still unsaved, you are “without hope.” You may not think so, but that does not alter the case. God says you are, and what He says is true. The one of whom you have been reading took the place of being “undone — of having in himself no hope,” for he would not rest on anything of his doings. He accepted God’s word about himself as a perishing sinner, but he also received it about the sinner’s Saviour, whom God, in love, had given. He believed the testimony concerning the Lord Jesus, and that which He had done. He received the word “Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” He believed, because God said it. Do you believe? Have you everlasting life;

R. K.

## Old Nanny's Faith

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A YOUNG minister put the following startling question to an old woman who was lying on her death-bed: "Now, Nanny, what if after all your praying, and watching, and waiting, God should suffer your soul to be lost?"

Nanny raised herself on her elbow, and laid her right hand upon the Bible which lay open before her, and quietly replied, "Ae, dearie me, is that a' the length you've got, man?" and then continued, "God would have the greatest loss. Nanny would lose her soul, but God would lose His honor and His character, for haven't I hung my soul upon His promises, and if He broke His word, He would make Himself a liar, and a' the universe would rush into confusion."

Some, possibly, would think the faith of this dying aged saint very proud and presumptuous, but, so far from this being true, we should say that, looking at it in the light of God's word, it is just the opposite of this, for what is presumption but doing that on the ground of our own opinions or fancied wisdom which God has not commanded, or believing that which He has not revealed. The spirit of this poor old christian was just the opposite of this, and was simply that of true faith and real humility — simply taking God at His word, because He commands it; and this involves the truest humility.

Old Nanny's mode of speech, therefore, was simply an expression of her utter detestation of anything, however seemingly religious it might look, either in word or spirit, which doubted the perfection of Christ's work, or the love and wisdom of God in providing it, and of His faithfulness to His promise in relation to those who trust it, as the only ground of their present and everlasting salvation. This aged saint knew full well that, whatever might fail, the faithfulness of God never could; that though heaven and earth might pass away, the word of God would endure forever.

Reader, beware of this spirit, for while it prevails and to the extent that it is supreme within, it will not only keep your soul from true peace, but it will feed pride and rob God of the glory due to His perfections, and the salvation He has provided in His Son and through His work, to save the guilty and the lost.

## God's Love in the Heart

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JAMES D. was listening one evening with joy to the gospel preached in the streets, but the hearts of others were stirred by their master, Satan, to annoy the servants of Christ. A serious disturbance followed, in which James was severely injured. He was taken home, and as his condition did not improve, after a while he was removed to an hospital.

There he lingered for about nine days, and was in an unconscious state during most of that time.

It is said that when a patient is under the influence of chloroform he will speak of what is most on his mind. A friend of the writer's once told him of a Christian woman whom he had seen under its influence. She had inhaled it with dread, but when apparently unconscious she murmured■

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

It was like this with James D. — the things of God affected him when he appeared to be quite dead to the things of the world.

The hospital to which he was taken, was an institution cared for by the Lord's people, who sought to lead the patients to Christ. One evening a visitor was singing some hymns in the ward, one of which was not very well known to the patients, so that she had to sing it almost alone. However, a strong voice, which was strange to her, joined in the chorus■

“Not my own! Oh, not my own!  
Jesus, I belong to Thee!  
All I have, and all I hope for,  
Thine for all eternity!”

Presently the visitor came to the bed where James was lying, apparently unconscious, and, addressing the watcher, she said, “Do you know the Lord Jesus?” The man replied that he had been converted a fortnight before coming to the hospital. Whilst she was speaking to this man James opened his eyes, and looked straight into her face. She said, “Is Jesus precious to you now, dear friend?”

“Yes, He is,” was the decided reply. “I feel His blood resting on my heart.”

Thinking this expression to be a strange one, the visitor was anxious to find out more about his state of soul, and said, “Then you can say all your sins have been washed away in His most precious blood?”

"I can," was the reply of James.

"And you are looking forward soon to be at home with the Lord in glory?"

But James had again become unconscious, and the watcher said it was useless saying more to him. "I think what he says is true," said the patient who was watching James, "or when you were singing he joined in the chorus." His was the strange voice the lady had heard.

Perhaps some young man will read this story. James D. was young — about twenty-six years of age — and he was strong too, but he was soon cut off. Oh, how is it with you? Are you ready to pass away from this world, or are you still careless and indifferent to eternal things! Let me pray of you, then, to come to Christ at once — come to Him by faith — and rest entirely on His finished work (John 19:30), and you will find that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), and nothing else can do that.

## Mighty to Save — Perfect in Love

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“THE Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.” (Zeph. 3:17.) Though these most gracious words relate to God’s ancient people Israel, and to what He will do for them in the coming day, we may apply their spirit to ourselves now.

The Lord is mighty to deliver from enemies; He is also mighty to take away pride, to turn the heart to Himself, and to give the grace to call upon His name. (See vss. 8, 9 and 11.) The stoutest of sinners He can and does turn to Himself, and in this His love we see His might as clearly as in the most terrible of His judgments. The Lord our God is mighty in grace, in pardoning mercy, in forgiving love, and each one of His people rejoices in this glorious truth, for by the might of the Lord he is brought to God.

“He will save.” On whichever of these three words we place the emphasis, how encouraging they are! Self has no part here. Human strength is nowhere here — the Lord will do the work. He will save. No one can withhold His arm; none can withstand, none can hinder the purpose of His grace. “He is mighty to save.” His salvation is strong like His arm. To His “so great salvation” nothing can be added, for it is perfect and complete: He will save.

Having perfectly saved His people, and beholding them so saved, our God rejoices over the subjects of His mercy. When He made this world, “God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.” He rested in the beauty of His work, and this satisfaction of God in His creation gives a conception of His delight in His work of salvation. “He will rejoice over thee with joy.” The lost ones saved shall call forth the rejoicing of our God. The Son rejoices, the Spirit rejoices, the Father rejoices over the saved one. “He will rejoice over thee with joy” we may take as the word for ourselves while reading the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke’s gospel, for the individual sinner saved is the lost sheep found; the lost piece of silver found; the lost son found, over whom the ever-blessed God rejoices with joy.

Now as God rested from His work on the seventh day, and had His pleasure in the Sabbath, so “will He rest in His love” in the Sabbath of God. In His love He will bring His people into absolute blessing, not one good thing shall they lack, and when all shall be fulfilled which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived at any time, of the good and precious things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, our God will rest in His love. There will be nothing that they can need, nothing that God will need to add to their blessing. God Himself shall repose in His love, for His love will have wrought for His beloved sons and daughters all that He Himself has conceived.

Here on earth, where sin and suffering are found, God in His love is ever working. “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” said Jesus, when He healed the sick man on the Sabbath day. God now knows no Sabbath for Himself on earth, for sin prevails and misery abounds. But in His Sabbath He will rest in His love, and this Sabbath is the grand prospect of His people — a rest

more sweet than that of paradise — more holy than the Sabbaths which Israel knew.

## An Experience of Christ's Grace

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SOME few weeks ago it pleased my loving Lord and Master to call me aside for a "little while" in the chamber of sickness to tell me more of His will, and to show me more of His preciousness. When human strength seemed almost gone, and I lay unconscious of all that was passing in the world around, I seemed to be waiting to hear His word of command, what it should be, whether "to glory" or "to service." A sweet voice from above said so lovingly, "Not now, my child, not now."

"Enough, dear Lord," I replied, and as I awoke to consciousness He told me why, in those touching words■

"Not now! For I have wanderers in the distance,

And thou must call them in with patient love."

So I had only to wait till my strength was restored, praying, "Lord, make me meet for Thy use"; but it was not to be yet — Jesus had something more to reveal to me in the sick-chamber. A relapse of suffering came upon me, and, again unconsciousness of things around ensued, and again Jesus showed me how precious He was to my soul. I was suddenly called into a place filled with a glorious light — in color and brilliancy like the setting sun; but I was not satisfied — I could not see Jesus — Jesus was not there. I was, as it were, only in the ante-chamber, and as I awoke I said, "I only shall be I 'see Him face to face' and behold His glory."

## At Home

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“HEAVEN is our fatherland, heaven is our home,” we sing, and soon we shall see the lovely home above. His own hand has decked it; His own heart has planned its delights. Eye hath not seen it, nor ear heard its songs, but it will be home, sweet home, and we shall be at home there. Already the Holy Spirit fills our hearts with joy at the prospect of its delights; soon we shall be at rest at home.

“Then no stranger, God shall meet thee,

Stranger thou in courts above!

He who to His rest shall greet thee,

Greets thee with a well-known love.”

## The Laborers in the Vineyard

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AS another year comes to its close, and thereby reminds us how soon our time for labor on earth will be over, what more appropriate subject can engage us than that of the laborers in the vineyard?

It has ever pleased God in all ages to have laborers on whom He bestows the privilege of doing His work. He called forth Noah to be a preacher of righteousness and to be a builder of the ark of salvation before the flood; He appointed Joseph, and gave him wisdom to store up corn and food in Egypt before the years of famine, so that men's lives might be preserved; and from those early days until now, God has chosen from among men laborers to do His work on the earth. There is a high honor and privilege in true service to the Lord which heaven by-and-by will reveal to us should we fail on earth to recognize the distinction. When the Holy Spirit describes the services of a high priest He tells us, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God" (Heb. 5:4); and high honor it is to be even of the humblest of the true servants of God.

"But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first" (Matt. 19:30); for some work for gain and some for love. Those who labor for love shall be first, while those who labor for reward shall be last. The arm may tire, the brain grow feeble, but love need never weary, and happy are those servants of the Lord who labor on for love to His name, who find their reward in doing His will, and their gratification in pleasing Him. When the reckoning day comes, blessed shall be these servants.

In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard the Lord tells us "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man who is an householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." The householder was on the alert. His vineyard was precious in his eyes. He saw it needed tending, and he went out early to hire laborers into it. Well indeed may a garden be called a nursery, for the gardener toils like a nurse over her charge in his solicitude for the young plants. Would that each of our christian readers saw the need of the Lord's vineyard! Once within its walls, we should think the vineyard must appeal to the true believer for loving service and lifelong toil. A good servant is he or she who studies the master's interests. The secret of true service is to know the master's mind about the work to be done. The lord of the vineyard looks for good fruit from his vines, and cultivation goes a long way to the produce of good fruit. Surely, fellow christian, you can see in your own house or neighborhood work that needs to be done. It is not everyone who is skillful enough to prune the vine, but the work of cleaning and weeding the soil lies within the reach of all who stoop low enough to do it. There is toilsome labor for you, which love to the Lord shall make easy and sweet. Will you not at once enter upon it?

The husbandman agreed with the laborers for a given sum per clay — the value of the coin called a penny, and the worth of that value according to the times of which the parable speaks, teaches us that the husbandman in the early morning offered the laborer a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. Never let anyone think that God will allow one of His servants to suffer loss in the end for serving Him. A moment before Jesus had said, "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren,

or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." The reward was secured: "Whatsoever is right I will give you." This shall surely be seen and owned when the day's work is done, though many will be surprised at the result, for there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last. The Lord will estimate His servant's work at its real value; let none dispute.

And so the day went on, and again and again the husbandman went out into the market place to seek for fresh laborers for his vineyard. Is not Jesus doing this thing this very hour? He needs laborers — laborer's, dear christian readers — not mere fancy workers, but real hearty toilers for His Name. And in the market place the laborer stood waiting for work, just as in our own hour Christians stand not knowing what to do, though the Lord's vineyard cries for laborers. No doubt the men who had been at the work from the early morning saw what a great amount of work had yet to be done, for the longer a servant of Christ toils on, the more he sees is not done. And so the call for work proceeded until the eleventh hour came; and so in this eleventh hour of our day of grace the call goes forth for workers for God in His vineyard. Happy and privileged people are they who obey the call even in the last hour of the day, though they have stood up till now "all the day idle."

Surely those who had borne the burden and heat of the day, and who murmured against the goodman of the house because they received each man his penny together with their fellows who had worked but for one hour, failed in the sense of what a privilege it is to be allowed to labor for the Lord in His vineyard. Their minds were set rather upon their reward than upon the prosperity of the vine. The first thus became last. Self had intruded itself, and the position of the old servant had destroyed in the servant the true spirit of service — laboring for love. Old servants sometimes forget their place, and they lose the servant's place by this forgetfulness. Israel grew so pretentious that it lost its favored position, as a nation being a witness for God on the earth. Israel boasted in being God's people, and forgot God, who had chosen them. Let us also beware, lest we forget that the laborer in the vineyard is called but to labor on as he is bidden. An evil eye cast upon a fellow laborer may be but the prelude to casting an evil eye upon the Lord of the vineyard Himself. From spying out the work of our fellow workers we may turn to grumbling in spirit against the ways of the husbandman.

Great is the grace that calls the laborers from their idleness to the Lord's work; but when the service of love degenerates into service for reward, let the laborer in the vineyard recall His Lord's words, "Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

## Are You Afraid to Die?

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WHILE living in a small village in one of the midland counties, I often visited the dying, showing them from God's word the way of salvation.

One day I called to see a girl about fourteen years old, whom I had often told of God's wondrous love. As I entered, she looked up with a bright smile, saying, "I am not afraid to die now!"

Soon after this she was taken seriously ill, and we knew that she could not live many days. I again called to see her, and was cheered by her bright testimony of the Saviour's love.

She said to her mother, who was in great sorrow, "Mother dear, do not weep for me, for I am going to the Saviour who did so much for me."

After again telling us what joy it would be to depart, this dear girl fell asleep in Jesus.

She could say, "I am not afraid to die," because she was trusting simply on what the Lord Jesus had done for her on the cross. She knew her sins were all forgiven, for she had read in God's word, "The blood of Jesus Christ His (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.)

Dear young reader, are you trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus? If so, you can indeed say, "I am not afraid to die, for His perfect love casteth out all my fear."

J. S■n.

## Do Not Delay

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THERE is a story told of the servants of Satan, one of whom says to sinners there is time enough, and that therefore it is not necessary to turn to God at once. Long ago I was reading a book, in which this deceit of Satan is well brought out, and I determined there and then to seek the Lord. It was a hard struggle, I assure you, for Satan does not give us up very easily; but thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, after praying for some time it came into my mind that I must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ if I would be saved.

I had tried to venture my all on Christ, and then I thought I would sit down and wait for Him to give me peace. As I was repeating the verse of the hymn■

“The dying thief rejoiced to see

That fountain in his day,

And there may I, though vile as he,

Wash all my sins away,”

I believed, and then I realized that I was saved. I shall never forget it.

There is one thing about true religion, it serves for dark and cloudy days as well as for those when all is sunshine. In the hour of affliction Christ is our comfort, for He has said, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” and this I have provide now for several years.

## Do It Now

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ONE day two Christians went to visit some sick children. They came to a little boy who was very ill. He had to be propped up with pillows all night, as he could not lie down. Miss S. spoke to him, and asked him if he knew the Lord Jesus. He said yes, he did. She next asked him if he knew why He died, and then she sat down on the bed and told the little boy the beautiful story of the Saviour's death, adding, "If you ask Him to save you, He will do it, and then, if you don't get better, He will take you to Himself."

The child was very much interested, and after a little while said, "But how? How shall I ask Him?"

She told him that the Lord could see him and hear what he said, and that he was just to speak to Him."

Then he said, "And when shall I do it? When you go away?"

"No," she said; "do it now."

And then and there the little child closed his eyes, laid his head on her shoulder, and in simple words asked the Lord to save his soul.

Dear children, do as that little boy did. Give yourselves up to the loving Saviour at once. Remember He has said, "Those that seek Me early shall find Me." Also He said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." You have often been interested in hearing about the Lord Jesus, but have you truly come to Him for your own selves? You have often wished you were really and truly among the number of His lambs; why delay longer? Come to Him now. Just as you are, speak to the Lord, and tell Him you want to be His, and He will receive you just now.

## Fanny's Conversion

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ONE Sunday morning, more than twenty years ago, a young girl, who had been brought up in strict attendance upon the means of grace, was just walking into the chapel, when the words of the opening hymn■

“God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform,”

fell upon her ears.

The maiden had heard the same words many times without more than a passing thought, but now she listened with unusual solemnity of soul. The preacher's words also fell upon ground which had already been prepared by the Spirit of God, for the girl felt herself to be a rebel against a kind and loving Father.

Many a time during the sermon the maiden said to herself, “Oh, that I were a real christian! But now God will not hear me. I have resisted so many times the strivings of His Spirit; I have shut my eyes to the requirements of His word, and now the Lord also shall ‘laugh at my calamity, and mock when my fear cometh.’” “It is mean and underhand,” thought the girl, “to come to God now in the trouble I am feeling about my dear father, when so many times my heart would not seek Him in prosperity; but, oh! if God were really my Father, and I knew myself to be His child, how it would help me to tell Him of my sorrow, and pray that He would restore my dear father.”

Fanny Fennell was the daughter of pious parents, and the subject of many strivings of the Holy Spirit, which had followed her almost from infancy; yet Fanny had lived to be more than fourteen years of age without actually accepting Christ as her Saviour.

Upon this particular morning, Fanny's father lay ill in bed, and the doctor gave little hopes of his recovery. This was the grief that burdened her soul. It was the first Lord's day of a new year, and the text announced by the minister shot through her soul like an arrow sent from God — “The fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?” Fanny was not very old, but she could recollect many who had died much younger than herself, and many more fathers who had not lived forever.

“Oh!” mused the broken-hearted girl, “What if God is angry with me for not loving and serving Him? What if the Lord is about to take my dear father away? I dare not pray, because I am not a christian, and have loved sin; and the Bible says, ‘If I regard iniquity in mine heart, the Lord will not hear me.’ It must, indeed, be blessed to be a christian, for ‘All things work together for good to them who love God.’ Oh! if only God would make me His real child, He would comfort and take care of me, even although my earthly tether were taken from me! Thus burdened, Fanny went home miserable. Never before had she realized, as now, how utterly guilty and unworthy she was in herself.

Fanny felt quite ashamed that so many years of her life had passed, and yet the great loving and living Redeemer had only been to her as a Root out of a dry ground, haying to her no beauty that she should desire Him, The pastor had been representing our long Saviour in heaven as the “Shadow of a great rock in a weary land,” as a “Refuge from the storm,” and as a “Covert from the tempest,” but Fanny had not brought her trouble to this Refuge.

Poor Fanny was miserable for three long, weary months, not because there was any necessity to wait for pardon or salvation but because the foolish girl was trying to do what was impossible — make herself better, or more worthy of the notice and mercy of God. She frequently rose at five o'clock in the morning to pray, and to read a small Testament which never left her pocket except to be carefully read. Yet all this time the girl was too proud to come to Christ just as she was.

Oh, how she tried to make herself sorry for sin, and to give up some of her naughty ways! But all in vain; too frequently would the quick, impetuous temper break out with sudden power, or the girl be plunged into despair by finding herself guilty of some other of the many faults which she had been dreaming were all destroyed.

Alas for the hope of any who think themselves clever enough to cure the fever of sin! Sin is such a dreadful disease that there is but one Physician who can cure it.

With a loving and pious mother, and a God-fearing father, one would have thought that the poor child might have unburdened her mind, but always shy and sensitive, we are sorry to say Fanny neglected to do this.

One Sunday afternoon Fanny took her Testament and a tract entitled, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” into her own room. Having made herself secure from interruption by barricading the door, she proceeded to read the tract, and the Spirit of God blessed the reading; so that she saw clearly that she must believe first, and look for the fruit of the Spirit — love, joy, peace — afterward. For she read in the tract, “It is quite as sensible to expect fruit from a tree before that tree be planted as to expect joy, or peace in the soul until the soul be first rooted in Christ; or in other words, has become a believer in Jesus.”

So resolved Fanny: “I will find some promise to believe — some word of the Lord Himself — and then I will just trust my soul upon it for all eternity.” Kneeling down, with her open Testament before her, the girl exclaimed, “Oh! here is just the word I want in the sixth chapter of the Gospel by John, and the thirty-seventh verse. Jesus says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’ This will do,” said the girl.

So, putting her finger upon the passage of Scripture, she quietly, but reverently and earnestly, addressed God in words to this effect: ■

“O Thou great God, I am a sinner, and want to be saved from my sins! Many times I have offended Thee — that I remember — and my heart is hard, and many times sin has been in me when I did not even know it. O God, in the name and for the sake of Thy Son Jesus, I come now to Thee! O God, when Thy Son was in the world He said, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’ Jesus, here I come to Thee, and will and do believe that Thou wilt not cast me out. My heart is cold, and dark, and ignorant!

I have tried to make my heart warmer and better, but cannot do it! Lord, I trust this soul of mine to Thee; I give it to Thee to be saved from the guilt and punishment of my sins, which have been atoned for by Thy death! I give my soul to be washed and cleansed by Thy blood. Thou hast said, 'Him that cometh Thou wilt in no wise cast out.' Lord, I come! I take Thee at Thy word. Lord, I believe that Thy blood cleanses from all sin, and that Thou hast saved even me!"

Having trusted her soul to Jesus, and given herself to Him, it seemed to the girl as if she could not leave off praising, and blessing, and talking to her new-found Saviour. Tears coursed down her cheeks unheeded, for they were tears of happiness, and even of rapture, as the girl found herself thanking God for pardon, for peace, and for heaven!

Love and joy sprang up in the softened heart, which was dissolved and meld by the wonderful love and compassion of the blessed Redeemer!

"Oh!" thought Fanny, "how I love the dear Lord Jesus. His word is true. He will not, He has not cast me out. And now He is mine, for time and for eternity."

Fanny could now enter into the language of Madame Guyon when she wrote,

"I love Thee, Lord!

but with no love

of mine,

For I have naught

to give;

I love Thee, Lord!

but all the love

is Thine;

For by Thy love I live.

I am as nothing, and rejoice to be

Emptied, and lost, and swallowed up in Thee."

In the trials and changes which have fallen to her lot in the more than twenty years which have since passed, she has found that the peace of God which passeth understanding, and the knowledge of the truth of the promise which came to her first in that little room, have never left her.

R. C. C.

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