

four children. He was a drinking man, and made all his family miserable. As his wife truly said, "He was no husband to call a husband, and the children ran away from him when they saw him." His family were in the greatest poverty, and his wife had only a bed of straw to lie upon; for all the money went in drink.

One day this collier went from curiosity to hear another collier preach. The text was this: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

The drunkard was smitten in his heart when he heard of the love of Christ; and he prayed very earnestly to Him that He would indeed come and save him. Such prayers are never prayed in vain. Christ did come and save him. Then he who had been blind saw the folly and misery of sin; his eyes were opened, and he saw the love of Christ and the beauty of holiness. His ears were opened too, and his tongue was loosed, so that he could hear and receive the truth, and speak as he had never spoken before.

Instead of curses came forth blessings from his lips; and the little children who had in former days run away from him in fear would now come and climb on his knee, and talk to him in their pretty childish way. Lo, waters broke out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. His poor wife, whose heart must have thirsted many a time for some loving word, was no longer neglected and miserable, for the dragons of sin were driven out of her husband's soul, and the parched ground became a pool.

Perhaps you are thinking, "I am not a drunkard, I am not a bad man, but I like to be the master of my own actions. I can't give up the key of my heart to another."

In other words, you are saying, "I will not have this man to rule over me."

But, alas! if Christ does not rule over you, Satan will. Nay, even now you are in bondage to Satan unless you have given up your heart to Christ. And "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus our Lord."

Which of these two masters will you serve?

The one is a hard and cruel tyrant; the other, "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The one "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;" the other is the "Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep." The one pays you for your service with misery and death; the other gives freely eternal life to all who trust in Him.

Oh, be persuaded to give up the key of your heart to Christ. Give Him yourself, and then all things are yours—"Things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

J. B.



CONSIDER YOUR WAYS.

THIS was God's message to the people of Jerusalem. But it is His word to us, as well as to them. He would have all people to consider their ways.

We are too apt to live without thought. We fall into habits almost insensibly. One person does what he sees another do; many follow custom blindly, and numbers have no other rule than their own pleasure.

God would not have us live so. He would have us think, and think seriously. He says to us, "Consider your ways," set your heart on your ways, think about them, examine them well.

Now this is a thing, not merely to hear about, or to read about, but to do. Each person is to do it for himself, to consider his own ways; and it is a very serious and important thing. For every way has an end; there is no way that does not lead somewhere.

In order to help us to consider our ways, let us think of some questions which we may ask ourselves about them.

Has conscience anything to say against our way? Do we ourselves know, or even suspect, that our way is not a right way? How is our time passed? What are we doing on our week-days? How are we spending our Sundays? Of what kind are our pursuits, our pleasures, our companions? Has conscience anything to say against us, and does it sometimes speak?

Are our ways according to the Bible? It is very important to have a clear conscience; but conscience itself must be taught by the Word of God. It is not enough that we should do what we think to be right; we must do what God says is right. Are our ways, then, according to the Bible? With many shortcomings can we yet take that blessed book and say, "This is what I desire to follow; this is my rule, my guide, my pattern; this is how I wish and try to live?"

Another question we should ask ourselves is this—What shall we think of our ways hereafter? Whatever we may think of our ways now, are they such as we shall look back upon with comfort in time to come? Sickness and death give very different views of things from life and health. What will our present ways seem to us when eternity is near? What will our thoughts be, when we look back upon our present time, and the way in which we are spending it—upon the opportunities and means, the gifts and talents which we now have, and which we are certainly using in some way or other? What shall we think of our ways when we come to consider them as past ways?

Another solemn question may be drawn from the Bible itself. We read there of two ways, the broad way and the narrow way—the way of death, and the way of life. Our way is one or other of these. Which? This is a solemn question; and all the more so on this account, that many are in the broad way, few in the narrow. Men do not like to think this, but it is true, as true as the words of God's own truth can make it. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: