

THE CONTRAST.

BY W. E. BOARDMAN.

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."



HERE are Christians of two classes in the world, not to mention others at present, both fond of the apostolic saying placed as a motto above, but very different in experience and position. They of the one class repeat only the first part of the text—the question—leaving off the answer to it. That gives the key to their experience. They of the other class repeat both question and answer, with intelligent zest. Those of the first class have come to the full and painful understanding of sin dwelling in them as a body of death—chained to them as a Roman soldier was chained for years to the Apostle Paul, and as dead bodies have been chained to living men. They have come to feel the bondage of sin, but they have not yet come to know the joys of deliverance and the sweet liberty of the children of God.

Not that they are not Christians—not that they have never been converted to God. They have been truly converted, or the name Christian would be a misnomer for them; but they have learned only that their sins are forgiven through faith in the atonement of Jesus. They have not yet learned that Jesus, through faith in his name, is the deliverer from the power of sin as well as from its penalty. They believe in the blood of Jesus as their sacrifice for sin, but they are struggling by *resolution*—with Jesus to aid it, it may be—to free them from the bondage of sin.

Perhaps they have come along so far as to see and feel that resolution, even in the strength of Christ, is a poor deliverer—that it fails ever and anon; and yet they see nothing better, and so they cry out, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

And there they stop—there their experience stops. So far they have come, but no further; while they of the second class referred to ask the question, indeed, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" but answer it in the same breath by finishing the quotation in the apostle's exulting words—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

They have learned that there is deliverance now here in this life through faith in Jesus, while the others sigh and groan in their bondage, as if there was no deliverance this side the grave. They have learned experimentally, they know, that Jesus Christ our Lord, through faith in his name, does actually deliver the trusting soul from the cruel bondage of its chains under sin now in this present time; while the others have learned, not that Jesus does