

Asleep in Peril.

Sin is an anodyne. The word of God teaches us that every sinner's state is not only one of guilt, but a state of moral slumber. Every unconverted man is—in God's sight—*asleep*. Natural sleep looks up the physical senses under its spell, and if the sleeper dreams he actually regards his visions as solid realities. So is it with the sinner; he does not recognize his fearful guilt; he no more sees himself in the mirror of God's word than a man who is fast asleep can see himself in the looking-glass held before him. He is blind to the terrors of the wrath to come, and to the claims of God and the alluring offers of heaven. You may set before a sleeper the most magnificent pictures of a Raphael, or the most terrific productions of the pencil of Dore, and they are both no more to him than a dead blank wall. So have I, and other ministers of Christ set before impenitent sinners, a hundred times, the joys of true religion and the certain, inevitable doom of sin; yet we produce no impression on them, because they are under an illusion. They feel no danger because they feel no guilt. They excuse their own selves with plausible pretexts and self-extenuations. If they do admit their sinfulness they cling to their sins; some with a promise of repentance *by and-by, and some under a vague hope that God will "not be too hard on them,"* or will give them another chance in another world. Nearly every impenitent man or woman is a dreamer. They delude themselves with the idea that they are in no danger—and yet all the while they are like the sleepers at the mast-head, liable to be hurled off in the abyss of eternal ruin!

"If," said the eloquent Addison Alexander, "you know what it is to be aroused by a heavy crash from a pleasant dream, what will it be when the long dream of life is dissolved by the blast of the great trumpet of God. It is related by a man who was on board a steamer that blew up that when the explosion occurred he was fast asleep. His first sensation was a pleasant one, as though he had been flying through the air. He opened his eyes, he was in the sea! May there not be something like this in the sensation of the sinner who dies with his soul asleep, and imagines himself soaring towards the skies, but awakens amid the roar of a lashing tempest upon the ocean of God's wrath!"

This is tremendous preaching, would to God that we heard more of it from the

pulpit of our day! Never was it more needed; for the multitudes are rocked to slumber at the mast-head by the opiate of unbelief. Some doubt the inspiration of God's Word, and so are not disturbed by its threatenings. Some doubt the existence of a hell. Some are lulling their consciences to sleep by lying promises of *future repentance*. Some are so absorbed in the money-making or the pleasure-seeking of this life that they have shut their eyes to the idea of eternity. I care not, my impenitent friend, what may be the cause of your slumber, or what may be the anodyne that Satan has used to drug you. Sin is a mocker. You are under its spell. You do not realize your terrible guilt in rejecting the Saviour, or your terrible danger in risking a "wrath to come." You cannot sleep much longer. Death will soon lose your frail hold on shroud or spar, and hurl you off, as from mast-head, into the bottomless deep! When you awake it will be too late; it will be an awakening to shame and remorse and everlasting contempt.

—Dr. T. L. Cuyler.

NOT READY FOR HEAVEN.

A poor woman, living in ignorance among the charcoal-pits of New Jersey, being very sick and about to die, was visited by some of the neighbors, who tried to comfort her, telling her to keep in good heart, that her pain would soon be over, and she would be in Heaven. She replied, "I do not feel that I want to go to Heaven, or that I should be happy there? I shall not know any one there. Here, I have not been going to church, or reading the Bible. I do not know anything about religion or the Saviour, and I shall feel strange there."

"What a volume of theology there is to be found in this poor woman's case! She felt that some preparation, some meekness, some fitness was necessary. She felt her need of a pure heart, and to be cleansed of sin. She knew nothing even of the language of Zion. Multitudes think they can live in sin, and take their sinful hearts with them to Heaven. We must be saved, delivered, cleansed from sin, if we ever hope to see God. Jesus came to save men *from* their sins, not *in* their sins. Sin is the greatest of all evils. Sin brought death into the world. Sin creates hell. Religion is not a creed, a round of outward forms and ceremonies, but it is God's plan of saving men from sin and the consequences thereof. Men must part with their sins or their God.—W. R. S.