

THE SPOILED PICTURE.

A CELEBRATED painter was employed to paint a fresco in St. Peter's at Rome, and a lofty scaffold was erected for him to work on. The painting went on until the figures and the general design of the piece began to be apparent, and by those who were admitted to see it, the work was greatly admired.

One day the artist was so engrossed in his work, and so desirous to place himself in a position to be able to grasp the subject, that he did not notice how dangerously near he was getting to the edge of his scaffold. Step after step he was going backwards, until, just as a raised foot would have taken him over, precipitating him a frightful distance to the stone floor below, a friend who was near the picture happening to notice him, in an instant spoiled his picture by dashing something against it which he had in his hand. The enraged artist rushed forward and was then shown the dreadful death he had escaped.

And is this not what God is doing continually with earnest souls, who ignorant of the perfect work which the Lord Jesus has accomplished, and anxious to commend themselves to God, are intently occupied with what appears to them to be beautiful works. And how often God in mercy comes in and spoils the picture. How many poor souls are so busy about good works that they never think of the Lord Jesus, and that the Bible says, "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved,"