

"HE WAS TOO LATE."

The other day, just as a railroad train had started, a man was seen at the top of his speed to overtake the carriages, and he barely succeeded in laying hold of the handle to throw himself upon the steps, when his foot missed, and he was thrown by the very violence of his motion under the wheels of the carriages, and died instantly. He was too late, and the very effort to recover his last and lost opportunity destroyed him.

Again, the other day, just as a steamer was starting from the ferry, a man was seen to rush in reckless haste to the edge of the floating pier, and thence, with all the impetus of his motion, to leap for the deck of the steamer; but even while he was leaping, the distance had enlarged, and he sunk beneath the boiling billows. He was too late, and the very recklessness of despair hurried him to his ruin. So it is with multitudes who have put off a passage in the Ark of Salvation to the last opportunity; and the last may be too late.

Not long since, a grave, respectable man, perhaps sixty years of age, stood by the railway carriages just as they were starting, undecided whether to go or not. There were friends within the carriage urging him to step in, but he kept saying, "No, not this time," and yet kept hold upon the very handle of the door, half inclined to go, and balancing between going and staying, when the motion of the carriages threw him from his balance, and before they could be stopped, he was crushed to death between them and the platform.—He was undecided up to the last moment, till it was too late, and his very indecision was the occasion of his decision. So it is in every case, with those who mean to go, but are never quite ready—not just this opportunity—till already it is the *last* opportunity, and the unhappy victim of indecision and procrastination knows it not.

Reader! Are you yet undecided in regard to the momentous concerns of the soul and eternity? Then are you leaving death itself to decide the matter for you; and if death decides for you, he decides against you. After every refusal to come to Christ, your likelihood of dying unprepared is greatly increased. Your habit of

deciding wrong is strengthened, your habit of indecision as to the right is strengthened also. The case is mightily against you, if you do not through grace break from this habit this very day. If you leave the decision to sickness to startle and impel you, the probability, nay, the almost certainty is, that you leave it to death. Take your health, and not your sickness—take your hour of life, and not of death—for going to Christ. Take to-day, for that is the direction of the Holy Ghost; and only when you obey God to the letter, are you sure of salvation.

A GOOD RECOMMENDATION.

'Sir, please don't you want a cabin boy?'

'I do want a cabin boy my lad, but what's that to you? A little boy like you ain't fit for the berth.'

'O, sir, I'm real strong. I can do a great deal of work if I ain't so very old.'

'But what are you here for? You don't look like a city boy. Run away from home, hey?'

'O, no indeed, sir; my father died and my mother is very poor, and I want to do something to keep her. She lets me come.'

'Well, sonny, where are your letters of recommendation? Can't take any boy without those.'

Here was a damper. Willie had never thought of its being necessary to have letters from his minister, or proper person, to prove to strangers that he was an honest boy. Now what should he do? He stood in deep thought, the captain watching the workings of his expressive face. At length he put his hand into his bosom and drew out his little Bible, and without one word put it into the captain's hand. The captain opened to the title page and read:

'William Graham, presented as a reward for regular and punctual attendance at Sabbath School, and for his blameless conduct there and elsewhere. From his Sunday School teacher.'

Capt. McLeod was not a pious man, but he could not consider the case before him with a heart unmoved. The little fearless child, standing humbly before him, referring him to the testimony of his Sunday School teacher as it was given in his little Bible, touched a tender spot in the breast of the noble seaman, and clapping Willie heartily on the back, he said, 'You are the boy for me; you shall sail with me; you shall sail with me; and if you are as good a lad as I think you are, your pockets shan't be empty when you go back to your mother.'