

"OVER-LUGGAGE."

A short time ago, I was waiting at the Stoke station, when I overheard a violent dispute about a gentleman's over-luggage. The owner of the luggage evidently wished to defraud the company; and an officer was very properly refusing to allow him to proceed until the amount was paid. I felt pleased with the manly conduct of the officer, a tall Irishman; and after the noise had subsided, I entered into the following conversation with him: I said, "Then I suppose the passenger cannot go on unless the over-luggage is paid in full. How much is it?" "Seven and sixpence," was the reply; "and it would not be right for me to take less than the full amount." "Very true," I replied; "but if a friend were to pay the full amount, would you hinder him then?" "Oh dear no, Sir! should I not be very glad to see him go along?" "And the porters all along the line, do you think they would stop him?" "Oh, not at all, Sir; he would be as welcome to travel on as though he had paid every farthing himself." "Well, now," I said, "suppose you and I were about to take a journey to-day, say from this world to the next, what about over-luggage—I mean our sins; if put on the scale of divine justice, do you really think you would pass?" "Well, now, Sir," he said, "that is what often troubles me when I come to think of dying. I go to church, you know, Sir, on Sunday, but still I fear my sins would be too heavy for me to pass on to heaven." "Then what have you towards paying the over-luggage?" "Oh, Sir, I have nothing at all, for I am a sinner." "Let me then," I said, "tell you what another has done. When God weighed our sins on the scale of divine justice, such was the weight, that the lever went higher and higher, until the price demanded was the Son of God. And blessed it is that I can tell you that God spared not His own Son; 'for God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Now just as it would not be right for you to let the passenger pass on until his over-luggage is paid to the full, neither would it be righteous if God were to allow the sinner to pass on to heaven until his sins were met to the full. But, then, also, just as it is perfectly right for you to allow the passenger to pass on when

his over-luggage has been paid for by another, how much more is God perfectly righteous in receiving the sinner, the awful weight of whose sins has been met by the death of Jesus Christ, His own beloved Son. The amount claimed by divine justice has been paid to the full. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Yes and then if called upon to take your journey to-day, you may look at the cross, and pass on to glory."

My train moved on, the man thanked me for the conversation, and God only knows whether I shall meet him amongst the redeemed above.

Well, reader, what about your over-luggage? Sinner you are, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." If God were to let you feel the real weight of only one of your sins, it would sink you in everlasting despair. Yet, strange as it may appear, I find many of my fellow-travellers who seem to think that God is far more indifferent about our sins than the railway officer was about the over-luggage. They know they are sinners, yet with some of them sin is a very light matter, and yet they expect to get into heaven somehow. They think if they begin to reform *some day*, and do the best they can, all will be right at last. Reader, if this is your state of mind, you are not far from the lake of fire.

Sometimes I meet with persons in the very opposite state of mind from this. I will tell you of one case. I was coming to Tetbury station in the omnibus. My fellow-traveller was a young person who appeared distressed in mind. After some conversation, I inquired the state of her soul. I shall never forget her reply. "It is no use; I have tried so often to give up my sins, and the world, and serve God; and I have failed every time. I only keep adding to the weight of my sins. I have given up the attempt." As she said these words, tears rolled down her face. I said, "I am glad to hear you say so." She appeared greatly surprised, and wished for an explanation. I read to her Mark ii. 1-5. I told her, the one sick of the palsy had to be let down in his entire helplessness to the very floor at the feet of Jesus. It was then, but not till then, he heard those precious words of Jesus, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." She had made this mistake; she had tried to climb a little by her best endeavors. There must be this letting down; and God had