

HE LOVED NOBODY.

Unhappy man! So he was. He seemed pleased with nothing. He found fault with everything. He seemed to think much of himself. He loved himself more than he loved God. He was fond of ease, yet led a life of turmoil. He did not seem to care for the cause of Christ, or for the poor, or even for his own kin. He seemed set on having his own way and will. The course of Providence was against him.

The lines of all his conduct met in himself. He had great contempt for others. Of course, he was cruel. He seemed to delight in misery. In his boyhood he tormented colts, and calves, and lambs. He loved to make pigs squeal. He pulled off the wings and legs of flies. He often made others sad. He was not tender to his little sister. He often made her weep. Her little devices to win his love were all fruitless.

He was not good to his mother. In his heart he cursed her. Out of her presence he used terms of reviling towards her. He often disobliged her. He never pitied her sorrows. When her head ached he never bathed it. If she slept he often waked her with needless noise. He finally broke her heart by his vileness.

At school he was a marplot. He would break up any game if his whims were not allowed to prevail. His occasional yielding was servile, not manly. In it he had some ulterior purpose, and that was always selfish.

He once gave something to a poor widow, but he did it in an unfeeling way. He soon boasted of his liberality. He sat up half a night with a sick man, and he often spoke of that as something to his credit. He was a stranger to genuine pity or to true benevolence. He constantly looked on his own things, and seldom on the things of others. All the fountains of kindness, sympathy, and generosity were dried up in his heart. And he was a murmurer, often finding fault with Providence.

A few times his nature seemed softened, but he soon relapsed into hardness of heart. He deceived some, who truly tried to oblige him. Of course, he never enjoyed public confidence.

His married life was full of unhappiness. He gained possession of some of his wife's wedding presents, and used them for his own gratification. He finally broke his wife's heart.

His folly was read in his very face and in all his history. None could long love him. None felt obliged to him.

He once sought public office, and certain lewd fellows of the baser sort stood up for him, but most men refused to vote for him. At one time he was worth a good deal of money, but when reverses came no one seemed to pity him. When sickness came his nurses were hirelings. The offices of love were not found in his room. They were needed, but would hardly have been welcomed. He was petulant even to the last. Sometimes he asked for mercy. I do not say that he did not obtain it. But he blamed those who had done and suffered most for him. No one ever heard him say that he had done wrong.

His death was mournful. It took place in the dead night. A small lamp shed its light on his dying eyes. He seemed apprehensive of his own departure. He left no message of kindness for any one. He had no convulsions. He swooned away, and was not seen any more among the living.

His funeral was very private, though entirely decent; a hearse and a single carriage, with four young men in it, formed the sad cortege.

The great error of his life was that he lived to himself. He was habitually selfish. God's glory, the welfare of his family, the good of his neighbours seemed never to control his life.

THE DOOR OF SALVATION.

There are those who are aroused to a sense of their sin, and are anxious for salvation, but yet who want to take salvation upon their own terms, and to patch up and make perfect what God has declared complete. From first to last God alone must be recog-

nized in the work of salvation; all our own puny efforts are as nothing at all, in so far as our title to a saved state and heaven is concerned. There are many anxious about their souls, who are indulging a laudable anxiety to be saved. But what will be the end of your seeking to attain this simply in your own strength? What is the result in most cases? For the moment such seekers go to church or chapel—they listen to the word of God with increased interest, they assimilate the principles of this or that preacher with fresh vigour, but the upshot of it all is deadness, emptiness, and decline. These are they who are seeking to enter the sheepfold, not by the door, but to climb up some other way.

What would you think of me were I to attempt to enter this beautiful hall by climbing upon the roof and dashing in one of those window-panes, when the door stood ready and open before me? Would not you call me foolish—mad? Would not you cry, "There is the door! see it!" And yet I ask, Is not that the case with many anxious souls here? There is the open door of salvation; but no, they want to *work* for salvation. But it is not required for us to work to the cross, but it is required to work *from* it. Not until we are within the sheepfold is it our privilege to "go in and out and find pasture." Not till then can we be of any service to others. Not that I wish to decry a decent life, a life of morality; but that it is only for *time*; what is its use in eternity?

There are a great many people who are happy in a kind of spiritual Berwick-upon-Tweed. The peculiarity of this town lies in the fact that it is on the borders—neither in England nor in Scotland. I pity the nationality of its inhabitants, and I pity the nationality of those who are content to live in this spiritual borderland. They give neither to God, nor to the devil, nor to themselves; their allegiance sometimes going with the Lord's children, sometimes walking with the devil's kindred; and when Sabbath comes around, just because it's "the thing," trotting into church or chapel to render an outward display, because it's respectable to appear religious. From the bottom of my heart I pity them.

Something convinces us at the outset that Jesus is the door. Have you ever thought of the force of that little word "I"? "I am the door." Take God's word and apply it to yourself. Can you say, "I am the door?" Far from it. There is nothing so contemptible as an egotistical man. The constant reiteration of the pronoun "I" makes his conversation disjointed and disagreeable. Is there such a man who would dare say *he* is the door? If there were, and he was allowed to proclaim it, though we did not contradict him, it would not be long before he contradicted himself. Apply that text to any one but Jesus, and you will find the same result.

Jesus, then, is the door. What is our relation to Him? By nature we are outside the door, ruined! lost! condemned! wanderers in the wilderness. By grace we pass through the door—are then no more condemned—no longer slaves, no longer expecting the punishment, but are ransomed, free, as those who have passed from death unto life by reason of the atonement of Jesus—the gift of God for our sakes. God has no quarrel with sinners. God is the essence of the sinner's friend, and Jesus is the exhibition of that essence. God loves us, but He hates sin, and therefore He allowed Jesus to be deserted upon the cross which caused Him to put forth that bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" in order that He might know what it was to be forsaken by God and occupy the sinner's position, who has separated himself from God, that He might take us by the hand and lead us to where his Father and our Father is seated in glory everlasting. Jesus is the door, and, firstly, He is a door of hope. We don't preach a *closed* door; we don't come to you and say there is no chance for you; but we do say this, that only by faith, and by the operation of the Spirit—and you may ask for and obtain that Spirit if you take Christ at His word—there is nothing to prevent you from being saved before you leave this hall. It is not, "I will be the door," but "I *am*," therefore, sinner, we proclaim to you a door of hope open for you, ready to receive

you, a loving Jesus, with outstretched arms of everlasting love. He is a door of security. It is said that every man's house is his castle. A man within doors is safe, and I hope we shall never cease to respect a man at home, and whether he be poor or rich, let the same privilege be accorded him. Jesus is the door of security. Within His arms you are safe, and once within them you can welcome others to the same resting-place; but not until you are inside the door can you beckon poor souls to the door of right, to the door of hope, to the door of everlasting joy. "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."—*The Earl of Kentore, in an address in London.*

A CYPRUS VILLAGE OF LEPERS.

The "Daily News" correspondent in Cyprus thus describes a visit which he paid to a village within two miles of Nicosia, exclusively inhabited by lepers, 160 in number: "The sight presented to my gaze when I reached the village was simply appalling, and it was hard to credit the reality. It seemed more like a dream begot of the weird and morbid imaginings of a Poe or a Hawthorne. Men, women, and children, into whose flesh the disease was eating its way, passed before me, and these wretched beings afforded the most ghastly spectacle. There were all stages of leprosy visible. Upon some the fatal sign had only just set its mark, while others were but little else than a living mass of corruption. The unfortunate creatures attacked become at once isolated from the community to which they belong, their property being confiscated and divided among their relatives, precisely as if the former were dead, and they are then banished into this village to endure a living death, until death itself mercifully relieves them from the curse that has befallen them. The mode in which the lepers live is almost as horrible as their condition, for the sexes, in all stages of corruption, are huddled indiscriminately together. There are about a hundred houses in the village, but all the employments of life appear to be neglected, with but one or two exceptions, and many of those who have been banished from their homes go mad. The Government of the country supports the lepers so far as the distribution of rations is concerned, but the authorities do not direct the internal arrangements of the village, this being left to the villagers themselves. One of the least afflicted lepers is permitted to come down to Nicosia, and he daily carries the Government rations to the others; beyond this they have no communication whatever with the outside world."

"TEST IT."

A servant of God, poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith, became greatly perplexed in regard to the literal rendering of the passage, "Give to him that asketh thee." "Test it," was the reply to her repeated inquiries for light. She rose from her knees resolved to make the trial. It was Saturday. Provision had been made for the Sabbath, and two dollars only left for the following week. She put on her bonnet, and went to call on a friend, whom, to her surprise, she found in deep distress. Her husband was out of work, sick, and discouraged, and the family on the verge of starvation. Could she lend her two dollars for a few days? The test was applied sooner than she expected, but with firm resolve she gave the money and went home to abide the result.

Monday came. The Sabbath provisions were exhausted and her money gone. What now was to be done? "Test it," was the reply; and she resolved to "wait upon the Lord." Just then a knock was heard at the door. She rose and opened it. A lady whom she knew inquired if she could do some work for her. She replied in the affirmative, and at the lady's request opened the bundle and stated the price, \$1.50, at which she could do it. "It is not enough," said the lady. "There are two dollars; take it, and get it done soon as you can." The door closed. Trembling and astonished, the disciple of the Lord Jesus fell upon her knees, and with a joyful shout of thanksgiving accepted God's own rendering of His Word. She was never more troubled about that passage.

Reader, if you are troubled, go and do likewise. "Test it," and see for yourself.