

# THE CLEANER.

"Let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves."—Ruth 2; 7.

Thos. Somerville, Editor.

Brantford, July, 1895.

Vol. 10, No. 7

## THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

The state of the soul after death is a subject which deeply interests us all. The rejection of the coming again of Christ to receive the saints and to judge the earth before the end of the world, and the losing sight of the distinctive importance given to the resurrection in the New Testament, has given in the common evangelical faith and that where sound in the main, an absolute character to the vague idea of going to heaven exclusive of all other conception of happiness and glory. But Scripture spoke too plainly of the Lord's coming and the resurrection of the saints to allow the thought of going to heaven when we die to maintain the absorbing place it held in the minds of the pious. Strange to say, going to heaven is not spoken of in Scripture, unless in the one case of the thief upon the cross, going to be with Christ in paradise. Not that we do not go there; but the scriptural thought is always, going to Christ. Since He is in heaven, of course we go there; but being with Christ, not being in heaven, is what Scripture puts forward, and this is important as to the state of the spiritual affections. Christ is the object before the soul, according to the Word, not simply being happy in heaven, though we shall be happy, and in heaven. I speak of it only as characterizing our habits of thought. We are too apt to follow our own thoughts, not simply to receive the Word of God. There was a reaction, and the recovered truth of the Lord's coming and the first resurrection obtained an importance in some minds which eclipsed the going to heaven when we die, too vague and too little formally scriptural to satisfy those awakened to search the Word. It was stated that the soul sleeps—is unconscious till the resurrection, even by some who in

the main were sound in the faith; while with others, this notion carried them on to deny not only the immediate bliss of the departed, with Christ, but that we ever went to heaven, and what constitutes distinctive Christian hope. Alas! soon very many were led to deny the fundamental doctrines of the gospel.

My object now is not to enter into controversy with these last, who deny the immortality of the soul; it has been done, and done more effectually, by more than one: my object is, to give a plain scriptural statement, and proof from Scripture, that there is immediate happiness with Christ for the departed Christian. It is an intermediate state, and so, as to His position as a man, is Christ's, though He be in glory. The departing Christian waits for the resurrection of the body, and then only will he be in his final state in glory. Men speak of glorified spirits? Scripture, never. The purpose of God as to us is, that we should be conformed to the image of His Son, that He may be the first-born among many brethren. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." "As we have borne the image of the earthy, so also we shall bear the image of the heavenly."

This was exhibited for a moment when Moses and Elias appeared in glory with Christ at the transfiguration. See Rom. viii. 29; 1 Jno. iii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 49; Luke ix. 28-36. This, and to be forever with the Lord, received to Himself in the Father's house, is our eternal state of joy and glory. This latter part is seen also in the account of the transfiguration in Luke, where they enter (Moses and Elias) into the cloud, whence the Father's voice proceeded. (See also 1 Thess. iv. 17.) But this is our eternal state, when Christ shall come and receive us to Himself,