

THE PRICELESS TREASURE,

BY W. E. HARRIS.

"But one has to give up so much to become a Christian," said Charles to Edward.

They were walking home from church together. The beautiful scenery on every hand, the river at their side, and the white-flecked, azure sky over all, led naturally from thoughts of the beauty of God's works to God's goodness, and to the question whether we ought not to love and obey so loving a Father.

"Yes, certainly there is much to give up. But is not what one receives worth the sacrifice? Did not Jesus know the value of this salvation? You remember that striking parable in which He compares our salvation to a field in which a man discovered a treasure of great value.

When he understood the value of it he made haste to sell all that he possessed in order to purchase that one field."

But, Edward, will it cost me as much as it did him? Must I give up every thing?"

"Why, yes, every thing that by giving up will help you to obtain this salvation. Every thing that hinders you from having it now. There were some things that this man possessed that he could not sell—his life, his faculties, his family perhaps—but every thing that would contribute towards his possession of the desired treasure he gladly gave up.

"How earnestly he desired it! Yet he never would have been able to obtain it if he had been obliged to pay its real value. He paid the price for an ordinary field; its owner supposed that was what he was selling; but the purchaser received many times more in value than he did or ever could pay for. With all our giving up—and this is our part, which we must do—we must not imagine that we can pay the full value of salvation. That is as far above our reach as the clouds overhead. We never could possess it at all if it depended wholly on us. But Jesus has paid the price, and God is now waiting to bestow this treasure on—well, Charles, on you. Won't you have it?"

"I have known for a long time that I ought I am ashamed of myself, now that I should look so much at what it costs me as to forget what its true value is. Yes, I will say

"All for Jesus gladly resign,
All for Jesus; He alone is mine."

DEAD! WITH A STRAW IN HIS HAND!

Some time ago, while standing at a railway station, my attention was attracted by a number of persons passing in and out of what seemed to be only an ordinary tool house. My curiosity becoming excited, I crossed the track and entered the house. There, awaiting identification, I saw the body of a man, which had been found early that morning at the foot of a steep embankment not far from the station. As I viewed the remains I discovered that in one hand there was a straw. The man evidently had grasped it while falling, in his natural endeavor to get hold of something by which to save himself. It was only a straw, and hence it was no help for him. There he lay, dead! with a straw in his hand! Since meeting with this incident, which remained in my mind and made me sad for many days, I have frequently been reminded of it as I have met with persons who were clinging to some false hope, or some trivial excuse, in place of accepting the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been often suggested to me, as I have conversed with men, and have ascertained what they are holding to for their eternal salvation, in place of that strong hand which has never lost a soul—the negative guesses of Universalism, or their mere intellectual assent to the truth, or their prayers, or their professions, or their morality, or their philanthropy or their superiority to many professing Christians—straws! mere straws! "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"—*Sel.*

The best missionaries agree that controversial preaching, while necessary on certain occasions, is not the preaching that wins souls to Christ. Among the one hundred and fifty Roman Catholics who have been united with the Presbyterian Church in Valparaiso, South America, about one-third have said that the turning-point in their religious experience took place while witnessing our celebration of the Lord's Supper. No word of controversy there! Prayers, exhortations and worship, all breathing of our deep need and unworthiness, and of the glory and beauty of Christ Jesus. Is not His promise thus fulfilled daily: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me?"—*Presbyterian Recorder.*