

THE SOWER.

—♦♦♦—
DAFT ANNIE.

THE scene is in Scotland, of which I would write,
The person, a lunatic, not over bright.

Her name was daft Annie, and my present aim,
Is to show that the daft may put wise folks to shame ;
For here was a poor crazy creature who knew
And was glad to believe the bible was true,
A thing which agnostics* admit they don't know,
Thus proving their learning a vain empty show,
For to know not the truth that's most worthy of
knowledge,

Is a proof their poor souls have been starved in
the college.

For the bible you know has been given of God,
To guide us to heaven, by a heavenly road,
Even Jesus Himself, who of God is the Son,
And who for us all life eternal has won.

Yet these critics so learned are ignorant men,
Of that which concerneth them mickle to ken,
And the thoughtless scotch laddies who lived in that
day,

Were no wiser ; nor better ; nor kinder than they ;
For they teased poor daft Annie and thought it no
harm,

When they saw her with bible tucked under her arm,

*Or " know nothings " a modern sect of so-called philosophers.

For such was her custom, then loud they 'gan bawl,
 "Hoo are ye the day Annie?" such was their call.

Most patient was Annie with these foolish boys
 And her answer was this when they ceased from their
 noise :

*"What! want ye to ken hoo I am in mysel?
 I'm a puir worthless sinner just fitted for hell.
 Or want ye to ken hoo I am in the Lord?
 Oh in Him I am great, be His bless'd name adored."*

Oh Spirit taught Annie, poor, dear simple lass,
 Whom many regarded as dull as the ass
 On which the Lord rode when He entered that town
 Which hath filled the wide world with its name and
 renown.

Thou art one of the Lord's, and the Spirit of God
 Has made in thy body His wondrous abode.
 'Twas the Spirit that taught thee to know that bless'd
 truth

The comfort of age and the guide of our youth ;
 That true greatness evermore dwelleth with Him
 'Fore whom the bright glory of angels grows dim,
 Paul, Peter, with Newton and Bacon shall shine
 And Annie rejoice in the glory divine.

Oh Jesus, Lord Jesus how great is thy grace
 To give guilty sinners so wondrous a place.

PROPHECY.

MANY at the present time are interested in prophetic subjects, but for the most part the interest is in the sayings of men who are no prophets, or in the explanations by others of scriptural prophecy in such manner that their interpretations manifest them as "understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

There is much unrest abroad ; much uncertainty as to the future ; many misgivings as to whether, after all, the present state of things will go on to gradual declension until the proverbial New Zealander surveys the ruins from London Bridge ; many a sinking of heart behind closed lips as the immediate return of the Lord is spoken of.

The writer was told by a serious looking man, in a public conveyance some time since, that astronomers had found out that the star of Bethlehem was about completing its vast orbit ; would soon again be seen ; and that its appearance would indicate the return of the Son of God into the world : but all such fanciful theories are the creations of the minds of men, apart from inspired scripture ; and God now speaks through His word, not by revelation.

There are, however, many distinct fulfillments of prophecy ; many which are being fulfilled before our very eyes, and many which await fulfillment until a later day. The four great empires which successively embraced nearly all of the inhabited world are not only described with great minuteness, but in some

instances, the rulers ; their characters ; their occupations ; and in one instance the very name of the individual is recorded, ages before they were born. Israel was told of his long slavery in Egypt—later he was told that he would be carried away into captivity for his sins ; that subsequently a deliverer should arise out of Zion ; and the Lord's birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension are in one way or another largely the theme of old testament scriptures.

But there are prophecies now being fulfilled of a sufficiently startling character to arouse the most careless and thoughtless to the deepest concern as to their own place and position in the midst of circumstances which are rapidly closing in, and must soon culminate in a crisis which the world has never seen equalled, and will never see repeated.

History tells us of civil and foreign wars of the most sanguinary character—of famines, by which whole districts have been depopulated—of pestilences the most appalling and fatal in their ravages—of earthquakes—of tidal waves—of cyclones—of conflagrations—but all of these have been more or less circumscribed in their action and not often concurrent ; yet the awful judgments, now impending over the world, will exceed in severity, in extent, and in combination any, and all of those of the past, so much so that in the short period of seven years, all but a remnant of the fifteen hundred millions of the human race now peopling the earth will perish.

But some will say this cannot be in our day, seeing that the arts and sciences have spread abroad such

civilizing influences, and the realization of the universal brotherhood of man promises the blessings of peace and love— Ah! God says, “My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways.” There can be no moral improvement of that which is under condemnation, and no brotherhood between Christ and Belial.

The end of the age is rapidly approaching; the last cry has been heard, “Behold the Bridegroom”; everywhere the unwise are seen to have lamps without oil—there is no unction of the Spirit—the most awful and damnable heresies are abroad; the tares are being rapidly gathered together in bundles to be burned; the state of the professing church is admittedly very bad; many evil ones have crept in unawares; until, in a word, the present moral, social, and religious condition is exactly that which the word of God tells us we may expect to find in the last days. The actors of the great final drama are rapidly taking their places on the scene. Nations recently come up, but foretold by name two thousand five hundred years ago, are right before us. Combinations of the most unexpected character have led in a marvellous way to the developement of God’s purposes, until now without any question or doubt the end of the age is upon us, and we are on the eve of the very events which scripture is so full of.

Oh! reader where are you?

When the awful judgments overtake this wicked world, shall you be calling on rocks and mountains to fall on you and hide you from Him that sitteth on the throne?

And when the Great Assize is in session, and the Omnipotent Judge has taken His seat upon a great white throne ; a throne of perfect righteousness ; and the books are opened, and your name is called, and the deeds you have done in the body rehearsed ; your thoughts, your words, your acts, not one of which are forgotten ; what shall you do then ?

And when the awful words are heard that consign you to eternal woe, what will be your thoughts as you are hurried off to perdition ? What unavailing regrets ! What terrible pangs of remorse ! as the eternal duration of your doom rises up before your mind ! An eternity of anguish and despair !

O turn to the Lord ! O seek His face ! He is waiting now to be gracious.

To-day is the day of salvation.

Reader, if you could see some of the death-beds of the people who leave this world who have not Christ ! If you could see the throes of agony, the terror, the remorse ; conscience awakened to know that hell is a reality, that eternity is a reality, and the salvation of the soul a reality !

Could you but hear their agonized cry, " Here am I on the verge of eternity, and I have no Saviour, no peace, no forgiveness, no pardon, no security, nothing to cling to ;" and could you see them clinging to a poor human being who is a Christian, you surely would not put off your salvation to a death bed !

SAVED AT THE MOMENT OF BEING
DROWNED.

SEVERAL persons had made up a pleasure party on board a yacht. The weather was perfect. The little vessel with its light hearted freight was being rapidly driven through the waves by a fresh breeze; when suddenly, by a lurch of the yacht, two of the party were precipitated into the water. One of them perished as he could not be rescued, but the other after many unsuccessful efforts, was at length saved and got on board. At first he seemed to be dead; he could neither open his eyes or speak a word; although he had been so short a time unconscious. Little by little, however, he regained his strength and recounted with deep emotion what he had passed through.

“When I found it impossible to struggle any longer,” he said, “I sank. At the moment the water passed over my head, every circumstance, every scene, every *sin* of my past life rose up before me with intense reality.”

“In an instant this thought pierced me like a lightning flash, that I was an immortal creature upon the confines of eternity; a lost soul in the presence of God—of a holy God—I saw clearly what my fate was; I possessed the principle of immortal existence, but I was not saved. For a moment my distress was beyond all conception; beyond all ~~thought~~; beyond all expression.—Suddenly I found myself in the presence of the God whom I had never sought.”

"Ah! if those who doubt the need and the value of the divine work accomplished at the cross could be placed for a moment in the position in which I then found myself, they would doubt no longer."

"In presence of eternity, everything for the moment was lost to me, everything but the 'blood'—the blood of Christ. Near to death, my life fast ebbing away; but the seconds apparently long drawn out; I was able to lay hold of the fact that God is righteous; that I was a righteously condemned soul; but that God justifies him who believes in Jesus. These simple words: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus!' rang in my ears in all their reality. Oh! how much I realized their value! The terrible position in which I was, showed me the necessity of redemption, and that it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul; yes the blood of Christ. When I heard God say to me: 'My child take courage, thy sins are forgiven,' what repose, what peace, what joy filled my heart and seemed to take possession of my whole being through the blood which had come even to me."

"All my agony was past; it was behind me; it was there the blood of Christ had placed it. I then began to lose the power of thought, but I had first been able to lay hold of the fact that I had a divine life which united me to God Himself, a life that all the waters of the ocean could not destroy, although they might be able to swallow up my poor body—I felt that I belonged to God and that *He loved me.*"

Years have passed since this event transpired.—Time has only put its seal upon the reality of what

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this man proved at that moment. Since then his conduct, his conversation, everything connected with him has proved the reality of the salvation of God borne to his soul when he saw that he was lost; when he laid hold of what Christ was for him before God; and heard these divine and blessed words: "My child take courage, thy sins are forgiven." The labours, the sorrows and the trials of life have only served to make Christ more precious to him, in manifesting the grace and the love of Him who died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

"Reader, do you know Him?"

God's word has a hold on natural conscience from which it cannot escape. The light detects the "breaker up," though it may be hated. And so the word of God is adapted to man, though he be hostile to it—adapted in grace as well as in truth. This is exactly what shows the wickedness of man in rejecting it; and it has power thus in the conscience, even if the will is unchanged. Men resist it because it is true. Did it not reach their conscience, they would not need to take so much pains to get rid of it and disprove it. Reader, it speaks of grace as well as truth. It speaks of God's grace and love, who gave His only begotten Son that sinners like you and me might be with Him, know Him—deeply, truly, and intimately know Him, enjoy Him for ever, and enjoy Him now; that the conscience perfectly purged, might be in His presence without a cloud, without a reproach, without fear. And to be there in His love, is perfect joy.

SALVATION, PRESENT AND FINAL.

I PETER I.

IN this scripture, in order to encourage the saints—believers in the Lord Jesus Christ—in the midst of trials; the apostle brings out the character of their salvation; for it was not only present, but also final and complete. This is the character of God's salvation for the lost, but do all Christians know it thus and live in its enjoyment?

They believed in God, not merely in His existence, as perhaps all in Christendom do; nor "that there is one God," which "the devils also believe, and tremble" (James ii. 19); "but in God, that raised Him (Christ) up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (v. 21). This was its rock-foundation, immovable whatever the storms!

Their present soul-salvation was *real*, and they were rejoicing in a risen and glorified Saviour, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (v. 8, 9).

But soberness must characterize the Christian. Although grace links him in hope with the appearing of the Lord, his is an increasingly serious path, and if grace is its spring, so government is its corrective—*Obedience*, as children, is necessary. Holiness is required, for the Father is holy, and in discipline

respects not persons, even in the relationship of grace. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so *be ye* holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, "Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (v. 13-17).

As to future or final salvation, there is divine *certainty*: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (v. 5), Kept by God's power! How could this fail? The same by which Christ was raised out of death. Power, observe, *over death*, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed" (1 Cor. xv. 26). But it was through faith in Him who raised and glorified Christ. Faith, therefore, though imperishable, itself God's gift (Eph. ii. 8), and precious, must be tested, hence trials. But, can proving it, fail to result in establishing perfect confidence in Him whose power guards us at all times and in all circumstances? See Job i. 10 and xlii. 1-8.

Now, after this instruction, the trials that had tended to discourage, served the very opposite, for they were the means of proving the tender care of their God and Father who had chosen them according to foreknowledge, and set them apart by the Spirit

unto obedience after the order of Christ's, and the sprinkling of His precious blood, and was keeping them for the heavenly inheritance that fades not away. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" etc. (v. 2). See also vs. 3, 4.

Neither was the wholesome fear of the Father's government to cause alarm in view of the future, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (vs. 18-21).

"Eternal redemption," (Heb. ix. 12), and complete salvation, founded on the atonement of Christ; infinite in value, Godward; everlasting in efficacy manward; as set forth "in the scripture of truth," are our abiding blessings—but not all, for Christ is our object" (John iii-16.)

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.—
Jno. III. 16.

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CHRIST THE PROPITIATORY.

ROM. iii, 25.

THE mercy-seat was the cover of the ark in the most holy place. There God dwelt in glory. The shekinah, which marked the presence of the God of Israel, was there. And upon the mercy seat there was blood, the blood of a victim slain upon the day of atonement. On that day, one man stood forth in the midst of guilty Israel. One man confessed the sins of Israel; one man slew the victim for Israel, carried the blood into the sanctuary, and put it upon and before the mercy-seat; seven times sprinkled the blood upon it, and seven times before it. God now declares that what that type held out in prospect, the work of Jesus is, that all the substance of that which was foreshadowed in the blood-stained mercy-seat, is now true in Jesus. Think what a blessed thing that is! Not a soul but one brought the victim, and there was one victim slain for Israel, and no more. Not a soul goes in of all Israel, but one, the high priest. And he went in not merely for himself and his own house, but for Israel. The goat whose blood was shed for Israel, was so entirely distinct in the type, that, as the high priest was a mere sinner like another, he had a separate sacrifice or bullock slain for himself, and his own house. But Christ needs none; and therefore can be wholly for the sinner. How thoroughly there you have the substitute! How entirely the question is taken away from the sinner and laid upon Him that is mighty

—the only One that could meet our ruin in the sight of God! On that day the great confession was not Israel's, but the high priest's. No doubt they had been troubled and mourning before; and on that day they did afflict their souls, and did no work. But if there is one thing that, more than the law or than hell, makes sin to be thoroughly felt, it is God's judgment of it in the cross of Christ. Oh! the goodness of God who brought out all the horrors of my sin, that He might take it upon Himself in the person of Jesus and become responsible for it! If a man has to suffer for his own fault, he makes up his mind to it, and tries to harden his heart in pride, or sinks into despair. If you have to answer for your sins, you are lost forever. But what touches the heart is, another suffering for his sins. And when a soul knows that God Himself has become a man in order to suffer, that is, measured all sins in His own divine light, and brought out their true blackness—that the blessed Son of God has had it all laid upon Himself and borne its punishment—that now the blood is shed, and more than that, sprinkled upon the mercy-seat. O! what love, what truth is this! The blood of Jesus sprinkled upon the mercy-seat. And before the mercy-seat. And lo! the veil is rent, and I may enter in. What meets me there? My sins? Not one is there. The law? It is completely hidden from view. The lid of the ark—the mercy-seat itself—shuts it down. The law is, no doubt there; it is honored, and is where none can sully or gainsay. But as far as I am concerned, nothing so establishes

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the law as faith. Its claim was so sacred, and God's majesty so bound up with it, that Christ Himself must be made a curse by that very law, and suffer all the consequences of it, if He took the sinner's place. And He did! His death sanctioned the law in the most solemn manner and to the full. But Christ is also the end of the law to every one that believes. If the seal was upon the law in Christ's death, for that very reason I am completely delivered. The light of God's presence shines only upon the blood on the mercy-seat—and what does that blood speak? Has God any fault to find with it? Can He, looking at the blood of His Son, say it is not sufficient? His word is, that it cleanses from all sin. Listen, now, you who do not know what it is to have rest for your souls. God Himself speaks to you by His word. He has brought your sins before you; He has told you that all your attempts to get better are vain—that they are, in fact, but setting yourselves up against the sentence of God; your works are wicked, your nature hopelessly evil. God Himself declares, "There is no difference." And if you are resolving and labouring to improve, you are just trying to make a difference. God, I repeat, declares there is none. Oh! the hatefulness of the heart, where fruits of the Spirit have never grown. It is a wilderness indeed, full of briars and thorns. Such is man's heart in God's sight and estimate, yet His joy is that the wilderness should rejoice and blossom as the rose. But the question of sin must be settled first. I must be delivered and justified, before the

fruits can appear. How is it to be done? "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood." He points to the mercy seat. Not a single thing but the blood of Jesus is offered there. God is looking at that blood. And when in Israel the sin had been all brought out and confessed by the high priest, what was not their gladness as, from the presence of their God, he came forth the witness that all sins and iniquities had been put away? Israel did not see the blood sprinkled within—they believed it! They had been in humiliation and sorrow till then, but all was changed now. Why? Because the blood of atonement was upon the mercy-seat. And yet that was but a goat's blood. Whereas now, the Son of God has died, and His blood is before the living God—that great and only sufficient sacrifice for sin. God now proclaims throughout the wide world, the eternal efficacy of that blood for poor sinners. If there is no goodness in me toward God, there is goodness in God for me. Have I known this from God? Then I have repented. God stands to the value of that blood. Have I taken His word for it? This is faith, and there is the first place where the battle must be won. "Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Am I to look at my own heart and say now I know that my sins *are gone* and that I am a Christian, because I feel myself to be a little better than I was a year ago? The Lord preserve you from such a delusion.