

THE GLEANER.

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

Thos. Somerville, Editor. "LET THERE BE LIGHT."

Vol. XIII. No. 1

CHRIST, THE SOUL'S TRUST.

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Psalm ii. 12.

My soul, trust HIM alone,
The Saviour of mankind ;
The atoning work is done,
No part is left behind ;
Then put thy trust in Him alone,
And say in faith that all is done.

He came the lost to save,
Came to the shameful tree ;
His precious life He gave,
To set the captive free ;
Amazing grace ! He shed His blood
That I might be brought nigh to God.

And, lo ! He rose again
Victorious o'er the grave ;
Death could not Him detain,
Proof of His right to save :
His resurrection testified
That, trusting Him, I'm justified.

Then why not simply trust
In Him whom grace has given ?
He is the sinner's boast,
None else in earth or heaven :
In Him alone salvation is,
The claim to have me trust is His.

Go on in trust, with joy,
Leave all for that blest One ;
Retain no earthly toy,
He 's enough alone ;
He all will be along the road,
And bring thee to His bright abode.

R. HUTCHINSON.

A SAILOR'S CONVERSION.

My work in our Lord's vineyard has been chiefly among sailors and fishermen, and well do I remember visiting one who through ill health had been

compelled to retire from a sea-faring life. His had been a rough and stormy life both on the ocean and at home.—A heavy sea broke over his vessel one day, sweeping the decks and hurling him with terrific force against her bulwarks, at the same time causing rupture of a blood vessel, which was followed by a lingering sickness.

While visiting in his Ice City, I went to see him. He came to the door and said, "Come in and see me, Mr. J.?"

I replied, "certainly William, with pleasure."

Having heard that he was sceptically inclined, I looked to the Lord for grace and wisdom to speak faithfully and lovingly to him as to his soul's need of Christ and His precious blood for the forgiveness of his sins.

He opened the subject himself by saying with a deep sigh, "Oh, that I knew that I was free from damnation," when I at once pointed him to the finished work of our adorable Lord and Saviour whose precious blood had made full atonement for all his sins.

The Word of God entered like a ploughshare into his soul, turning up the fallow ground and causing deep conviction of sin. It was some time before he was enabled to grasp the truth, but after further exercise of soul, he turned the eye of faith to Him who had made peace through the blood of His cross, and so passed from death unto life.

After lingering for several months, he gradually became weaker, and then calmly fell asleep in Jesus, whom he once despised and rejected, but who had been revealed to him by God's Holy Spirit as the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely One.

Sceptic, infidel, agnostic, and all un-saved ones of this age of culture, philosophy and refinement, do cease to follow the will-o'-the-wisp of your benighted intellects, and look by faith to Christ alone, who is the true wisdom and light and Saviour of poor sinful man. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—C. D. J.—A Message from God.

"WATCH WEEL"

When on a visit to a friend at Melrose, we were taken for the purpose of tract distribution, a drive to Abottsford. I was there shown round Dryburgh Abbey by a good Scotchman of more than ordinary intelligence, who was in charge of the place, and who escorted me to the tomb of Sir Walter Scott, the noted writer. On the face of a large stone in the old abbey wall, just above this tomb, is to be seen the words, "Watch weel," quite alone, and deeply engraven in large irregular-shaped ancient letters.

Generally speaking we all of course know what this short sentence means (which, in English, is "Watch well"); but curiosity rather led me to ask our guide why it was so conspicuously placed in such a public spot. He explained that it had no connection whatever with Sir Walter, as it was there long

before he was born; but that it was a motto adopted by the nobility, and extensive landed proprietors during the "Border Wars" of Scotland, centuries ago. These people, he told me, agreed to use it as a watch-word against their enemies, who were ever expected to invade their territory; and that this watch-word was intended to be always uppermost in their minds, to guard them against the possibility of surprise,

Thanking my informant for his courtesy, I remarked to him that I considered the motto an exceedingly wise one in its generation, and that if people would "watch weel" lest their worst enemy should catch them unawares, surely others should not watch less for the coming of their best Friend.

For instance, God's people should constantly have it in their hearts to "watch weel" for their Lord, who at any moment may come from God's right hand where He now is, to take them from this world of sin, sorrow, warfare, enemies, and death, to a heaven of holiness, joy, peace, light, and eternal glory with Himself, our best Friend.

This obviously touching a chord in the good man's soul led him to exclaim, "Yes, *that's* the Person I am watching for."

"But," I rejoined, "do I understand you really to mean that you are watching for the Lord Jesus from heaven, as knowing Him to be your Saviour, Sin-bearer, and best Friend?"

"I am," said he with emphasis and joy; "but I am afraid that I am not watching quite as *weel* as I ought."

Our time being up, and after mutual encouragement to "watch well" for the blessed One who *will* come and will not tarry, we wished each other farewell

Till the hour of our receiving
Promised joys with Him.

Dear Christian reader, is there nothing to help us in this? You will remember that in the very last chapter of God's eternal word the Lord Jesus says, three times over, "*I come quickly!*" Then, if our hearts miss Him as being in touch with and set upon Him, how this "watch weel" will correspondingly suit us.

If people of the world, feeling their position of danger, are wise enough to use such a watch-word, should we fall short of it? They watched to keep trouble away, but it is our privilege to watch for fulness of joy to come.—And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John iii. 3. Our longing for the Lord's return should not arise so much from a desire to be relieved from trying circumstances in which He gives grace to sustain as from a wish to be in the company of Him who has loved us, and given Himself for us. We may be quite sure that He who still loves us, and is so deeply interested in us, will not rest satisfied till He has all His own in the full unhindered joy of His own blessed presence forever.

Conscious knowledge of this necessitates patience to keep us back, so to speak, from those pleasures, rather than wishing to be clear of the trials in the midst of which it is our privilege to glorify God. Christ alone knows fully the joy set before Him and us, and He now waits in the perfection of patience for it. May our hearts be directed more into this patient waiting for Christ—watching well for His sure return.

When faith and hope shall cease,
And love abide alone.

But should any readers scan these

lines who are still strangers to the blessed heavenly hope, and are fearing the Son of Man coming to judgment, which He surely will do for souls found without God and without hope in the world, we will just quote a few Scriptures :

"The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to *watch*. Watch ye, therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, WATCH!"—Mark xiii. 34-37. "Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night; if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, COME" Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.

O sinner, ere it be too late,
Flee thou to mercy's open gate,
And join Christ's waiting band,
Trim your lamps and be ready,
Hear the midnight cry.

"Behold the Bridegroom cometh!"

J. N.—Simple Testimony.

A SERPENT AMONG THE BOOKS.

One day a gentleman in India went into his library and took down a book from the shelves. As he did so he felt a slight pain in his finger, like the prick of a pin. He thought a pin had been stuck by some careless person in the cover of the book. But soon his finger began to swell, then his arm, and then his whole body, and in a few days he died. It was not a pin among the books, but a small and deadly serpent.

Poisoned by a serpent among his books!

And is not this true of many around us to-day. Venomous serpents dwell within the covers of much of the popular literature and poison all who read.

Our Lord has said, "Take heed what ye hear," and surely we may apply this warning to our reading too. Take heed then, Christian, what you read.—Peruse nothing which will make your Bible distasteful, or which will hinder you in your prayers. Beware of all books which make light of sin or slight the Word of God, and ever seek your Lord's guidance as to the periodicals and volumes which you take to read.

"Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" is a good motto for your direction, in reading as in all else.

"A' HOOSSED AFORE THAT."

Some time ago, in visiting an aged saint, I was struck with one remark she made in the course of our conversation. We were speaking of the joy of being saved, of having and knowing present forgiveness, present salvation, present peace, (Luke vii. 48-50,) and the blessed hope of the Lord's coming back to receive us to Himself. (John xiv. 3).

Then I began to speak of the terrible time that is coming for the earth, after the saints are taken away. Such a time as never was and never will be again. Such a fearful time that "men will seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them," (Rev. ix. 6.) In this present time, men will give anything to live. At that time they will give anything to die. Such overwhelming judgments that "men shall gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pains

and their sores; and will not repent of their deeds," Rev. xvi. 10, 11. Dear unsaved reader, does it not make you tremble? Such appalling judgments looming before you, and yet trifling with your soul, and spurning the Saviour and His offers of mercy.

While speaking of the awful judgments abroad upon the earth at that time—the righteous governmental judgments of God upon poor, guilty, wretched, wilful, blinded, unrepentant man—the dear aged saint broke in with this quaint, pithy remark, "Aye, but we'll be a' hoosed afore that." How true, how precious, how expressive!

Yes, thank God, the Christians will all be taken away to be "for ever with the Lord," before ever a seal is broken, a trumpet blown, or a vial poured out, Rev. vi.-xvi. Like Enoch of old taken away before the flood came. So the Lord will take His love ones away from this doomed scene, ere those appalling judgments fall upon it.—W. E.

'PLEASURES FOR EVERMORE.'

These are the closing words of Psalm xvi. and they depict the crowning joy of the Lord as the Man who trod the earth in perfect dependence on God.—"At Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." The heart ponders what it must be to Him as the perfect and obedient Man to have reached that spot, after the scene of all His earthly toil and rejection was over. And we should remember that we share in His present portion, that is in all that He has won as man. John xvii.

But how can we be brought in any sense to understand what this is? I have no doubt that it is by the Holy Ghost alone. Hence if "pleasures for

evermore" are connected with His session at the right hand of God, I read also of what is connected for us with His exaltation there. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." In order that we might be brought to know what our present position is, as contained in the closing words of this psalm, it was necessary that the Lord should take His seat as man at the Father's right hand, and that He should thence send down to us the Holy Ghost. He has done both.

The Lord trod the earth in perfection in two ways, first as a Son, and secondly as a Servant. The Holy Ghost puts us, as both sons and servants, into Christ's place on earth. He is also the power in us for the enjoyment and carrying out of these two relationships in which we stand. And first as to sonship. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." I must know first that I am regarded (poor, feeble, as I am, and conscious only of entire weakness in myself,) as God regards Christ. I must remember that He said, "And hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me;" and again, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father," putting me thus into His own place on earth and in heaven. Thus I am fitted to the highest joy on earth, and to serve Him also until He come.

To know how Christ is regarded of the Father as the One who, faithful in all, has reached the top; to know as a son something of what His path ever was as God's Son on the earth; to know something of His path through this scene as the lowly, perfect servant of

God, all of which the Holy Ghost is here to lead us into; in a word, to be in all this joy of true Christian liberty before God; these things are to me what He would have His people know, and what is contained in those words, (may the Spirit make known to us more of the joy of them,) "At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—H. C. A.—Christian Friend.

THE APPLICATION OF THE CROSS.

The moment there is a turning from the cross (death to everything) our Lord says, "Get thee behind Me," for that is all He has. The cross makes me afraid of following Christ; but He says, if you do not take it you cannot be My disciple. The Lord judges man totally and utterly; we cannot go too deep. He brings us to this, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Then we see that before we take up the cross for ourselves, there is the cross for us. *There my sins were put away, and the old nature judged. I have died, and my life is hid with Christ in God. I am alive to God, not to Adam. That separates me from the world. Christ is my righteousness and my life up there. He has given me His Spirit, and I look down from there, in grace being an object of His favour, at what is of His hand in the creation. When I have got out of it I can look at it. Either you are letting your mind go after what the flesh likes, or you are applying the cross to it.*

Christ has been rejected, and I am dead to the world, sin, and the law, and alive to God. Our steps are feeble, but He shows us the way, and we delight in His love. Of course the Spirit reproves us if we are grieving Him. . .

How far have our hearts believed this voice of the blessed Son of God in such love, when He puts forth His own sheep, going before them, meeting the dangers and leading them in the path? How far are our hearts in truth and simplicity disposed to follow Him, to think His love not mistaken in the path He has marked out? It is real deliverance from the flesh, but we must trust His love. When my heart thoroughly trusts Christ, it is *His* cross, and *His* reproach, and it has the sweetness of Christ, and all is sweet (we may be cowards in it,) and we judge everything that hinders His leading us in the path.—J. N. D.

“ALTOGETHER LOVELY.”

There is no bliss like loving Christ,
In heaven or earth below,
It is eternal, endless life,
The Christ of God to know.

In Him the Godhead fully shone,
With heaven's own radiance bright,
And not a thought, a word, a deed,
But witnessed He was light.

The path He trod while living here,
Was one of lowliest grace,
And God the Father could in Him,
His perfect image trace.

He loved His heaven to open wide,
And speak out His delight,
And His whole soul expressed His joy
At that most rapturous sight.

Peerlessly spotless, holy Lord,
By light divine we see,
No other one can fill our hearts,
And ravish them like Thee.

THOMAS SOMERVILLE.

THAT NEVER-TO-BE FORGOTTEN
JOURNEY.

It will help us to correct our false
impressions, and discipline our hearts

to faith and patience, if we observe the fears and fluctuations of mind through which the disciples passed on the first day and evening after the resurrection. Late in the afternoon two of the number resolved to give up all further inquiry and suspense, and go home to quiet their excited and weary minds in a little village eight miles away from Jerusalem. As nearly as can be ascertained they went out of the city at its western gate, and pursued their evening walk with sad looks and heavy hearts. The path which they were to follow was one of the most dreary and desolate in all Palestine. First, they had to pass two miles over a bleak and barren level of loose stones and sun-dried earth and naked slabs of rock.

I think it must have been somewhere on this cheerless mountain ridge, at the beginning of their walk, that they saw a stranger coming up from behind with a quicker step and silently joining their company. They were so busy with their sad thoughts, and He was so gentle and courteous in His approach, that they kept on in their conversation as if they were still alone. He saw that their faces were sad and their words came forth from burdened and sorrowing hearts. He gently drew from them the cause of their grief, and in a few moments He entered into their feelings with so much earnestness, tenderness and sympathy that their hearts burned within them while He spoke. They wondered who He could be, and they expressed their wonder by silent glances at each other, while He went on with them and talked all the way.—But they did not dare to ask Him, or in any way interrupt the flow of His gracious words, while He opened to them the Scriptures, and showed them

how Christ must needs suffer and then enter into His glory.

And so the three walked on together the delighted and wondering disciples not knowing that they were listening to their lamented and risen Lord.— They hear His step upon the stony road just like their own, nothing in His dress or manner or person leads them to suspect that He can be anything else than one of the pilgrims returning from the great feast to some distant home.

Having passed over the rocky platform immediately west of Jerusalem, on what is now the Ramleh road, they turn to take their last look of the city and brush away a tear at the fresh remembrance of all they had seen and suffered there within the last few days. Then they plunge down into a narrow glen and make their way cautiously over a dreary waste of bare ledges and confused drifts of gravel and rubble stone. They cross the dry bed of a torrent, and then climb slowly up a winding and zig-zag path cut in the limestone rock to the crest of another ridge. This height is no sooner gained than they begin another descent, again to climb a long, steep and winding track over loose stones and ledges that have been worn smooth by winter rains and spring torrents and the feet of travelers for centuries.

And all the way the Divine Saviour the Son of God, who could say, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth," walks with these two men, taking as many steps as they, and talking all the while as they go up and down the steep places together. He spends more time in this long conversation with these two sad and despondent men than with all others on the

first day of His resurrection life. This mighty Conqueror of death, who had unbarred the gates of the tomb for a lost world, would thus teach us His readiness to be with us and comfort our hearts in the hardest paths we have to tread. In His risen and glorified state He is still the Son of Man, having all the sympathies and affections of the human heart. He is still as near to those who desire His company as He was before He passed through the awful transformation of the cross and the tomb.

The sun has gone down behind the gray hill-tops, and the shadows of evening have begun to deepen in the narrow valleys, and the laborers have left the terraced orchards and vineyards on the hill-sides before the two travelers reach their home, and beg the kindly stranger to go in and abide with them for the night.

He would have gone farther, and they would not have recognized their Lord had they not yielded to the impulse which His words had kindled in their hearts and urged Him to stay.— He never forces Himself upon any.— He joins the company of many who are toiling along the hard journey of life, He interests Himself in the sorrows that press them down, He warms their hearts with His words of love, but if they fail to ask Him to abide with them, He passes on and they know Him not.

It is toward evening, and the day of life is far spent with some to whom Jesus has often drawn near in the way; the shadows of evening are gathering thick around them, and yet they have never said to Him with earnest and longing desire, "Abide with us."

The humblest home becomes a palace

fit for a king when Jesus enters in to tarry there. And without Him the most splendid mansion on earth can give no rest to the weary soul. Blessed is the home and sweet is the rest of those who let no evening pass without offering the prayer to Him who walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus with the two disciples, "Abide with us."

It was only to draw forth the invitation to stay that Jesus made as if He would have gone farther. When asked He entered without delay. The three travelers sat down together in that cottage home, and the mysterious stranger continued to speak His heart burning words while waiting for the evening meal. When bread, the simple fare of the poor, was set before them, He put forth His hands to bless it. But what now so suddenly startles the wondering disciples? They see the print of the nails in the open palms, the sign and scar of the cross. And now that He speaks forth the blessing they recognize the tone, the manner, the look. It is He who hung upon the cross! It is He whose body laid in the tomb! He lives, and they have been walking with Him all the way! Now they are ready to cast themselves in wonder and worship at His feet.—But the object of His appearance and long reasoning with them by the way has been gained, and He vanishes out of their sight.

And now, that this great joy has filled their hearts, their weariness and their discouragement are all gone.—They have no thought of hunger or of rest. They must hurry back to tell their brethren in the city. The one dread horror of death is all gone since Christ is risen from the dead. They cannot wait for the morning to carry

such joyful tidings to the sorrowing band of their brethren. And well they might go for they carry tidings of the greatest victory ever gained in this world—the victory over death, the unbarring of the gates of the grave—the best tidings that human lips ever told. They could testify to a fact upon which all the hopes of man for eternity must depend.—M.

'THOMAS—CALLED DIDYMUS.'

John xx. 24.

On the evening of the first day of the week—the resurrection day, that day so big with victory—there had assembled secretly, and perhaps spontaneously, as drawn together by new bonds, a little company of men. They were the disciples of Jesus. Fear of the Jews had made them close the doors; for already diversity of religious interest began to separate the true from the false, and lead the faithful minority to seek shelter from persecution.

And as thus assembled, in the quiet hours of the evening, their hearts were free to dwell on the marvellous events of the morning. The Lord was risen. He had been seen and heard. The very Jesus whom they had seen nailed to the tree, and whose side was pierced was now actually in resurrection life.

Often had He told them that He was to die, and be raised again the third day; yet never had they accredited His words. But now His death was a fact, for He had been buried as they all could witness.

Sorrow filled their hearts, for they had lost everything. The whole scene was but a desolate waste to those whose very being was wrapped up in a living Christ.

But they hear of His having risen. The hearts lately burdened now flutter with hope. His words begin to take shape in their memories. The third day had come, and with it the report of His resurrection. Could it be true. Who is to decide ?

Hence the little meeting within doors. What an interesting meeting ! What line did their consultation take ? We are not furnished with any particulars ; but whilst engaged in wistful deliberation, and conversing together about Him, Jesus entered—stood in their midst—and said, “Peace be unto you.” Calm and calming, peaceful and peace-giving, did the risen Lord place Himself amid His assembled disciples.—How full of gracious majesty !

A few hours before these very men had all forsaken Him and fled ; yet now not a word of rebuke escapes His lips. He taunts them with no unfaithfulness ; He upbraids them with no ignorance. He forsakes them not ; but in their very midst proclaims peace to them. Yes, peace, as the result of the battle fought and the victory won ; peace made by the blood of the cross ; peace, with pardon to the believer and eternal honor to the Saviour ; peace, the fruit of the soul travail of the Son of God, and the abiding portion of all who are His. What a salvation for such a company ! What a word to burst from the lips of the risen One, as fresh from the field, He owns them as His brethren !

“And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side,” tenderly to corroborate, by tangible tokens, the veracity of His words, and evidently to identify Himself to them by proofs unmistakable.

Once more He said, “Peace be unto

you.” Then He sent them as the Father had sent Him. Then He breathed upon them, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” How rich an investiture.

Having peace, they were free now to go as His missionaries in blest occupation with His interests, and, further, possessed of His life in the power of the Holy Ghost. Such was the result of this first meeting of the disciples after the resurrection. How pregnant with fruit for all ages !

“But Thomas . . . called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.” How was that ? Why was Thomas absent at such a moment ? He had never expected that Jesus would preside there, else he surely would have been present. Was self-will at work ? Had he heard the report of the morning, and discredited it ? Was the news too good to be true ? Was the resurrection of Jesus impossible ?

Anyhow, Thomas was absent from this informal meeting of his fellow disciples, and he was the loser. He missed hearing those words of peace and of liberty. He missed seeing the hands and side. He missed that first sight of the Master, as in grace He placed Himself in the midst of His brethren. Ah, how much we may lose through a little wilful neglect ! It is oftentimes ruinous to despise meetings of true hearts just because they are small.—The Lord may select such as spheres of rich unfoldings of Himself in His word.

Well, the disciples tell Thomas that they had seen the Lord. He refuses to believe them. A mere sight of Jesus would not suffice for him. Nay, unless he could put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into the side, he would not believe. So be it. The disciples had said all they

could. It was outside their power to communicate faith to their unbelieving brother.

In such a case the help of man is vain. The perplexed and troubled soul must have to do personally, directly, and individually with God. "They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed."

Thomas, though loud and wilful, was sincere. He loved his Master, and would have died with Him in Judea, at the occasion of His raising Lazarus. His unbelief was of the head, and not of the heart. It sprang really from "cannot" rather than from "will not;" and so, after eight long days, the Lord, on the occasion of a similar assembly, bids Thomas to reach hither his finger, and behold His hand; to reach hither his hand and thrust it into His side. He bids him gratify to the full his desire, and to find every satisfaction for his greatest difficulty—to discover indeed, in those wounds, those everlasting evidences of redeeming love, the complete dissolution of the doubts of unbelief. "Be not faithless, but believing."

"Thomas answered and said, My Lord and my God."

Enough. Could patient grace or perfect love have done more? Impossible.

Oh, it is not that signs could not be given or evidences produced! They are abundant. God could accomplish any external display. But if Thomas believed by seeing, they are more blessed who believe without seeing.

Israel will do the former by and by. We are called on to the more blessed part now. Yes, we are called on to believe apart from every evidence except the written word of God. It suffices for God. Let it suffice for us.

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—J.W.S.

THE COMING EARTHQUAKES.

What is an earthquake? A leading geologist defines it as "a wave or waves of elastic compression in any direction . . . through the crust and surface of the earth." The velocity may vary from 600 feet to 900 feet per second. The result may be indescribable desolation and death. In the past Greeks and Romans viewed earthquakes with superstitious dread. We find Herodotus saying that by such protents the Deity "intimated to men the evils that were about to befall them."

A greater than the learned Greek sage prophetically declared that such phenomena would be sufficient indications of the near approach of the end; that they would characterize the closing years of the present dispensation. Our blessed Lord significantly assured us that as "the times of the Gentiles" drew to a close and His own second coming neared, there would be "earthquakes in divers places." Who will affirm that these "signs of the times" are absent? Nay, they are prominent, manifest, and universal; and especially so of late years.

An American editor might well write, "What all these things pretend we do not pretend to say, but *they are ominous.*" With this latter we fully agree; but without professing to be prophets or claiming to be honored with the prophet's mantle, we can venture to affirm that they pretend that the earth, whose "whole creation groaneth and travaileth," is rapidly nearing the hour of its emancipation and the season of a nobler humanity is swiftly approaching; the period of "redemption draweth nigh."

If the secular press is impelled to write about these things, it behooves

us all not to be indifferent to signs so significant, to voices so audible. Surely such language as the following, which emanates from no religious newspaper, is noteworthy, "If they do not show that the world is coming to an end, they certainly show that it is being shaken by some force possessed of a power sufficiently strong to shatter its solid structure. . . . Puny man is helpless before it." Is it not wise then for "puny man" to recognize the voice of the "power" which exhorts, "Prepare to meet thy God?" The Supernatural speaks through nature to man. Well for those who are able to reply, "Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Holy Scripture leads us to expect that the last great drama of the world will be a mighty shaking, Heb. xii. 26, which will be preceded by "earthquakes in divers places." Have these latter been lacking? Let us see. It is remarkable that the number of earthquakes at the beginning of the Christian era, and for some ages subsequent, were comparatively few. Before the prediction of our Lord such convulsions were few in number, as compared with what took place after its deliverance; whilst in these latter days they have become more frequent and of a wider range than was ever known before.

Previous to Christ's first advent only fifty-eight earthquakes can be counted during a period of one thousand seven hundred years. Coming to later times we find the historian recording thirty-five disastrous ones occurring between 1800 and 1865. According to the researches of Mallet there have been in Western Europe alone since the beginning of the Christian era, 2,156 earthquakes. In England there were 256 shocks experienced between the years

1700 and 1844. The year 1868 was remarkable for its earthquakes. It opened with an awful one for Formosa, which destroyed 30,000 human beings. Upwards of 200 great earthquakes are recorded as having taken place between October, 1867, and January, 1869.—Since that period tokens of the end have not been wanting.

During the present year the voice of nature has not been dumb. From various quarters of the globe it has been speaking in majestic tones. Not a month has gone by but an earthquake has been experienced in some quarter. Reports have come to us from the United States and Canada respecting them. In Iceland they have been the greatest ever known. In May, Peru was visited; and in the Leeward Islands there was great damage done, and many lives were lost. In Cairo, Egypt, there was a severe shock, and the largest buildings were shaken.—During the same month of May, Rome was visited. Shocks were also felt in the West Indies, and later on in the northern part of the American continent, while in the southern portion of Australia ninety shocks were experienced during three days. England had also a visitation. And then we have the recent calamitous earthquake at Calcutta, which wrought such disaster over a vast area; whilst a terrific shock took place at Darjeling.

Was there ever a time in the memory of man when were concentrated so many "earthquakes in divers places," in a limited portion of one year, as have been since the opening of this year of grace 1897 until now! All over the globe, as if by combined conspiracy, there has been havoc, disaster, and death. Such signs and omens will

make thoughtful men learn wisdom.— Through them the great Wisdom speaks loudly to the sons of men, and says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." God is giving us something to impress us and to arouse us from vain dreams of security and false ideas of permanency.

Rash mortals argue and imagine that "all things shall continue as they were" but heaven shatters their delusions by "shaking terribly the earth." Bold scoffers ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" The dread earthquake replies, and through it the Almighty warns, "Lo, I come quickly!" God speaks, let man attend. These great and universal earthquakes, certainly unprecedented in their number, are but the footfall, the fore-runners of the coming Lord. They are the antecedent heralds of His near approach; the precursors of His nearing glory; the monitors which forewarn. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."—W. PRESTON.— *Quiver, London.*

DIVINE LOVE.

The Lord Jesus Christ in order to fit us for heavenly association with Himself in glory, had to vindicate the claims of God's righteousness against sin and the evil that Satan had brought in. He had to be made sin, He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And taking this place of sin, He had to meet and suffer all God's righteous wrath against sin, even when He was most obedient in doing the will of God—and, still more, had to go through in submission, Satan's power and his hour of darkness before He could in victory bring us with Himself as brethren to

His Father's house, where we learn all the depths and heights of the Son's and the Father's love; and learn too what an eternal harvest of glory and delight God has reaped from this Son, who became man in the very scene of sin and blight where Satan had for a moment seemed to triumph, but where God found in Jesus, the Lord from heaven, a sweet savour and fragrance that will be precious incense to His heart for ever.

We know, when this blessed One came from heaven with the truth and goodness of God for man, how He was despised and rejected. Not a house in Bethlehem open to Him. This was man's reception of God! How different God's reception of man—of a sinner! "As many as received Him!"— Even the thief was to be with Him that day in Paradise. Those who through grace have let the Saviour into their hearts are made sons, and left for a while here in that relationship to walk as vessels having in them this eternal life, to shine before men, as sons walking in the obedience of Christ before God, and Christ so dwelling in their hearts that the fruit will be love, not in word but in deed, and in truth.— "He that loveth not knoweth not God." "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love."—J. N. D.

Faith in the value of the soul, and in its eternal ruin out of Christ, and in the lost condition of a world lying in wickedness, will give a man power in prayer.

Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith is enjoyed by him in whom He dwells, not by him who can explain it, though it be true that it must be enjoyed in order to be able to explain it.