

# THE SOWER.

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## EVERLASTING LOVE.

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“COME and sit by my bed awhile, Jeanie;  
there's just a little space  
Betwixt light and dark, and the fire is low  
and I cannot see your face ;  
But I like to feel I've hold of your hand, and to know  
I've got you near,  
For kind and good you've been, Jeanie, the time that  
I've been here.

“Kind and good you've been, Jeanie, when all was so  
dull and strange ;  
I was left to myself, and was not myself, and I seem'd  
too old to change,  
And I couldn't get framed to the House's ways ; it  
was neither work nor play ;  
It wasn't at all like being at home, and wasn't like  
being away.

“And the days slipt on, and the years slipt on, and  
 I felt in a kind of a dream,  
 As I used to do in the noisy school sewing a long  
 white seam ;  
 Sewing, sewing a long white seam, the whole of the  
 summer day,  
 When I'd like to have been in the open fields either  
 at work or at play.

“But now I feel as I used to feel in the summer eve-  
 nings cool,  
 When we bairns would meet at the end of the street,  
 or edge of the village pool ;  
 Or like when I've stood at the gate to wait for father  
 home from the town,  
 And held him tight by the hand, or held mother  
 tight by the gown.

“And I feel to-night as I used to feel when I was a  
 little lass,  
 When something seem'd alive in the leaves and some-  
 thing astir in the grass ;  
 And all in the room seems warm and light, and I'm  
 pleased to go or to stay ;  
 But I've got a word in my heart, Jeanie, that's call-  
 ing me away.”

“Oh, what have you seen, Nannie, have you seen a  
 blessed sight  
 Of angels coming to meet you ; have you heard them  
 at dead of night ?”

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and "Oh nothing, nothing like that, Jeanie, but what  
ong sayeth the blessed Word ?

"God speaketh once, yea, twice, unto man when  
the never a voice is heard.'

her "And He's given a word unto me, Jeanie—a word  
and a holy thought,

Of something I've never found upon earth, and some-  
thing I've always sought ;

Of something I never thought that I'd find till I  
found it in heaven above ;

Its Love He has given to me, Jeanie, His everlasting  
love !

her "I'm old, Jeanie, poor and old, and I've had to work  
hard for my bread :

It's long since father and mother died, and ye know  
I was never wed ;

s a And the most of my life's been spent in Place, and  
in places where I've been,

me- If I've heard a little talk about love, its been work  
I've mostly seen.

I'm "And in summer the days were long and light, and in  
all- winter short and cold,

Till at last I was good for work no more, for you see  
I'm getting old ;

1 a And I knew there was nothing left for me but to  
come to the House, and I cried,

em But if I was not good for work, what was I good for  
beside ?

"And still when I went to chapel and church, I  
heard of love and of love :

It was something I hadn't met with on earth, and  
that hadn't come down from above ;

It was something I'd heard of but never seen, that  
I'd wished for and hadn't found,

But I liked to hear of love and of love, it had such a  
beautiful sound.

"And I used to think, perhaps, it was meant for  
richer people and higher,

Like the little maid that sits at church beside her  
father the Squire,

For the angels that always live above, or for good  
folks after they die ;

But now it has come to me I know, it is nigh and is  
very nigh."

"Oh tell me, what have you seen, Nannie ; have you  
seen a shining light ?

Have you heard the angels that harp and sing to  
their golden harps at night ?"

"Oh Jeanie, woman, I couldn't have thought of such  
things as these, if I'd tried ;

It was God Himself that spoke to me ; it was Him  
and none beside.

"It wasn't a voice that spoke in my ear, but a word  
that came to my soul,

And it isn't a little love I've got in my heart when  
I've got the whole ;

It is peace,  
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*Just to know*  
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It is peace, it is joy, that has filled it up as a cup is  
filled to the brim ;

*Just to know that Jesus died for me, and that I am one  
with Him.*

“Its love Jeanie, that’s come to me as nigh as you’re  
now, and nigher ;

It’s love that’ll never change, Jeanie, it’s love that’ll  
never tire,

Though I’m old and I’m poor, and deaf, and dark,  
and the most of folks that I see,

Be they ever so kind, I’d weary of them, or they’d  
soon grow weary of me.

“And this isn’t the House any more—it’s home ; and  
I’m pleased to go or to stay,

I’m not a woman weary with work, or a little lass at  
play ;

I’m a child with its hand in its father’s hand, its head  
on its mother’s breast ;

It’s Christ, Jeanie, that’s bids me come to Him, and  
that’s given me rest.

“And it isn’t little, God’s given to me, though He  
kept it to the end—

Its wealth that the richest cannot buy, that the poor-  
est cannot spend ;

And I needn’t wait till I go to Heaven, for it’s  
Heaven come down from above ;

It’s love, Jeanie, God’s given to me, His everlasting  
love !”

## MARGUERITE.

IT was a summer day and the heat was oppressive, but as the day wore on and a shadow was cast upon one side of the street, I set out to make my daily round of visits.

The part of the city to which I directed my steps was toward the docks, peopled for the most part by sailors, longshoremen and laborers; rough in their ways, but generally intelligent and industrious. A number of them came regularly to our gospel meetings and I was no stranger in that quarter. I had just entered a narrow street which led to the docks when I heard myself called; I turned and saw a seaman, poorly clad, leaning against the door of a hut which had been built of old wreckage of a ship—his hard features and brutal aspect denoted a man who had lived a depraved life.

"Halloo! stop!" he shouted, in a hoarse and commanding tone. Then pointing with his finger to the clock on a church spire some distance away, he added in a jeering tone:

"I suppose you are the captain of the frigate out there, are you not?"

"Do you wish to speak to me, my friend?" I quietly replied, without reference to his rough manner or the way he had spoken.

"Not exactly," he answered, with an air of indifference, "it is the old woman in here who wants to see you; she is about ready to go and would like to be told if her passports are all right."

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"Are you speaking of your wife?" I asked, regarding him with a look of mingled indignation and pity.

"Yes, if you like it better that way. It is all about up with her, and she has been bothering me about going to look for you, but you see it is altogether too hot for a Christian to put his nose out o' doors, and then I saw you and hailed you."

"A Christian! and are you a Christian?" I said, with a look and tone that seemed to intimidate him somewhat.

"Oh, I don't take much stock in passing for one. What is a Christian? A tiresome sermon maker—the fewer the preachers in the world, the better things would go."

I made no reply, but passing on before him I entered the only room of which his house consisted. The sick woman was lying on a mattress in a sort of case fastened against the wall, much like the berths of the sailors in the cabins of the ships. She turned toward me a smiling face and held out her hand. "Blessed be God for this favor!" she said, with a feeble voice, whilst the changed expression of her features indicated the nearness of the end.

From seeing the rough and coarse husband I expected to see a woman of the same type of character, so often seen among that class of people. My astonishment, however, was great when I saw in the poor dying one an expression of sweetness, intelligence and of breeding which contrasted strangely with her sorrowful surroundings. She appeared to be scarcely thirty years of age, and I could not but

ask myself how it was that so delicate a nature had been able to unite itself to so hard and brutal a creature as her husband.

On looking at her again I recognized in her one who, although not a member of my flock, had the previous month taken the communion, and I had sought in vain her name and address.

"O, sir," she said, "it was one of my greatest desires to see you before I should die, and God has granted it. Oh, I beseech you, pray for my husband." And her looks rested upon the lighterman who, with his back against the frame of the door, heard what was said in the room although he appeared to be only occupied in following with his eyes the movements of a vessel in the harbor.

"Marguerite," said he, turning his head, "if you wished to see the pastor to ask him to pray for me, it was a useless anxiety. If there are ever any prayers to be made on my account, sir," he added, regarding me with an insolent and defiant air, "you would do well to address them to the devil."

The poor woman closed her eyes, and her lips moved silently as though she were lifting up a mute supplication to God. There was engraven upon her countenance an expression of patience and resignation which told so plainly to what a degree her heart and her piety had been exercised to endure the daily opposition of her unworthy husband.

"I don't want anything of your religion," he continued, with an oath.

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"James!"

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"Are you a man?" I asked, in a firm and serious tone.

"Well, I don't think I'm a dog," he replied, sneeringly.

"Then you have need of the christian religion and of all that it brings to men. In the whole universe there are only two orders of creatures who do not—the angels, who have never sinned and have no need of a Saviour, and the brutes, who have no souls to be saved; but the man who has sinned has need of the salvation which Christianity announces. Since you say you have no need for religion, you are either an angel or a brute."

He surveyed me with a wicked look. "You are saying things, pastor, which are very hard for a man to bear."

"You acknowledge, then, that you are a man," I replied calmly; "God commands all men to repent of their wicked course of life—the language which seems to you so hard is that of the word of God, which says that men without God are 'like the beasts that perish.'" (Ps. xlix., 12).

I saw at this moment the fists of the lighterman closing, as he was about to give vent in violence to his rage.

"James!" cried his wife, "do not strike!"

"No, no, Marguerite, do not fear; I won't fight about a passage in the bible, but people ought to go a little more softly when they pitch a stone at your head. It isn't very pleasant to hear yourself spoken of as a brute."

"Excuse me," I said to him, "I have not applied that word to you—it is you who have drawn this conclusion from my words. I merely said that a man has need of the christian religion, while only angels and brutes have not."

He was silent, and turning his back upon me began to pace the room, apparently reflecting upon what he had just heard with less of anger than of confusion.

His wife followed him with her eyes several minutes, then said to me :

"May God bless you, sir, for having spoken so plainly to him. He would have been a good husband to me if it had not been for drunkenness and wicked companions ; his great evil is that he is irreligious. Oh ! sir, when I am no more, think of him, pray for him, come to see him sometimes and speak to him. He has a soul to be saved ; his sins are not too great to have part in the pardon obtained through the sacrifice of Christ. Once he was good and kind, but the drink, the frightful drink, has changed him altogether. He is not at all what he was when we were married."

"I promise you that I shall not forget him, and I shall make it my business to look after him, which is my duty as a servant of the Lord."

"Thanks, sir, thanks."

At this moment the emotion which filled her heart choked her words. I saw the shadow of death, spreading itself over her pale and wasted features, which my presence for a little had appeared to reanimate. I kneeled beside her pallet and prayed

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earnestly to God commending to Him this soul which was about quitting its earthly abode. When I arose she opened her eyes again which seemed brilliant with a heavenly light. She smiled, and said with a tone full of assurance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth! James, my husband, come near me. I am about to leave you, let me bid you farewell."

The lighterman who had discontinued his walk during the prayer came near his wife's bed, but he continued standing, his arms crossed and affecting a profound insensibility.

"Come nearer James, look at me, give me your hand!"

He came near but with bad grace and stretched out his rude and calloused hand; still I saw that he was touched. The agonized visage of his wife seemed to reach a cord still sensitive in his hardened heart. He said nothing to the dying woman, but he looked fixedly at her; she exclaimed:

"James, farewell! I am going away, I am going to heaven, the thought of which has long sustained me in this vale of tears. I go to be with Jesus who has loved me and has opened heaven for me. I go where there is no more sin, no more tears, no more grief, no more death. The joy of that abode will endure forever, it is eternal life in the presence of God. And now, O my husband, listen to me. At the moment of death one thing sustains me, it is the glorious hope of the gospel of which my reading has so often irritated you against me, but forgive me; I do not want to utter any reproaches. Put your arms about me James."

To my surprise he leaned down upon the pillow supporting himself on one knee and put his arms about the head of his dying wife; she smiled, and placing her hand upon his head, prayed, saying:

“O Father, glorify thyself by making my husband a Christian; nothing is impossible with thee.”

In spite of the effort which the rough longshoreman made to conceal the emotion which was taking possession of him one could see the struggle that was taking place within him. However, Marguerite was sinking rapidly, her eyes were evidently losing their brightness.

“Sir, she said to me, raising with difficulty her drooping eyelids; “I wish also to say farewell to you. We shall meet again in heaven, I thank you for the teaching, and for the consolation I have received from you, and for your presence here. Dear James farewell, I cannot come back to you but you may come, where I shall be. Farewell! Oh! that it may not be an eternal farewell.”

The touching seriousness and the tenderness of Marguerite's words added to the solemnity of death which was already chilling the hand which he held, finished the work of breaking down the lighterman. Like a spring which, flowing through a rock has been suddenly set free by the blow of a pick, and the waters gush forth abundantly from the hidden source, so James' tears flowed with violence from beneath the hardened shell by which they had been so long restrained. Then Marguerite ceased speaking. I saw the great breast of her husband heaving convulsively,

and spite of tears and gasping his head upon the pillow like an infant.

How could I have countenanced such a smile, but it was the husband near death.

“James, that is why that you love me, I will come where I will, you will try to stop me.”

“Yes, Marguerite, His voice was low and

She remained motionless. We thought his eyes fixed upon the spot of returning life. He embraced her and murmured; “I am

worthy to come to you. Marguerite for I have done you. I am in religion, no longer bear with me, to live, I determine.

Suddenly, in anguish, the light shone in her eyes, her face was a heavenly radiance.

“Do you hear, James? Then she spoke faintly:

and spite of all his efforts he suddenly burst into tears and gave way to groans of anguish. Leaning his head upon the pillow of his dying wife he sobbed like an infant.

How can I describe the expression with which the countenance of the departing one was marked? She smiled, but it was a heavenly smile, and drawing her husband nearer she embraced him saying ;

“James, those tears give me joy. They show me that you love me. Oh, may God give you grace to come where I am going. Will you promise me that you will try to go to heaven ?”

“Yes, Marguerite, I promise it, may God help me !” His voice was firm although broken by emotion.

She remained some moments motionless and speechless. We thought that all was over. Her husband, with his eyes fixed upon her, watched for the slightest sign of returning life. Then bending again toward her, he embraced her again and again, and I heard him murmuring ; “What a wretch, what a brute ; I am not worthy to come near to one who is so near to God. Marguerite forgive, Oh forgive all the wrongs I have done you. I did not know that there was any reality in religion, now I see that it was that enabled you to bear with me, may God forgive me ! I am not worthy to live, I detest, I abhor myself.”

Suddenly, during this effusion of remorse and anguish, the lips of Marguerite moved : she opened her eyes, her face as before was overspread by a heavenly radiance as she cried out :

“Do you hear the music? Listen to the celestial choir !”

Then she stopped and began repeating, but indistinctly :

“What joy shall fill my soul,  
When in those courts above,  
I listen \* \* \*”

The voice failed but she presently continued :

“There robed in spotless white,  
I gaze upon His face,  
No earth born cloud to dim my sight,  
No hindrance to His grace.  
And now He calls me home  
I hear His blessed voice,”

Then she added : “Oh ! yes, Lamb of God, Jesus, my Saviour, my hope, I come to thee to be forever and ever with thee.”

She seemed absorbed by a marvellous contemplation, her hands clasped, her eyes fixed, she looked like one in a transfiguration, she did not seem to breathe ; we heard her however murmuring :

“In that heavenly land  
Eternal rest is mine,  
O Jesus Lord come take me hence.”

She said no more ; her heart had ceased to beat ; the immortal soul had taken its flight to the realms of glory, to the Saviour who loved her, and only the casket which had contained the precious jewel was left to us.

The lighterman had continued kneeling. He looked upon the face of the departed with tenderness and respect ; then after again kissing the forehead, cold in death, he arose.

“My friend,” I said to him, “you have seen how a Christian dies.”

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"Yes sir," he replied, with an energetic effort to master his tears, "and I have seen how a Christian lives. This woman was an angel of God sent from heaven to me. I see it, I understand it all now. Her piety enabled her to bear with my brutalities, I called it weakness! Sir, I am a brute. I have treated her shamefully, and she has never given me a bitter word. These lips, now closed forever, have never uttered anything but words of love, of sweetness and of truth. I hated her on account of her goodness. The holiness of her life was a continual reproach to my conscience, a living witness against me and against my wretched life."

He hurried out of the room and occupied himself with looking up and down the court-yard at the rear, while I went to seek a neighbor woman to ask if she would watch near the body and I would go and make arrangements for the burial.

On the following day, at the funeral, the husband was present, serious and deeply impressed by the service, and by all that he heard. When the first shovel full of earth resounded on the coffin, grief and remorse overcame him again. Burying his face in his hands, he leaned upon a tombstone and every one saw with surprise and sympathy the flowing tears, and heard the sobs which escaped from his breast. James D. was well known by all the residents of the locality as the most wicked man of the neighborhood, and his respectful attitude at the funeral had already excited surprise and called forth the remarks of the neighbors who were ignorant of

what had transpired by the death-bed of his wife.

From that time the Holy Spirit began His work of grace in the heart of the lighterman. His eyes were open to the hideous aspect of sin and he saw that the sinner righteously merited condemnation. He felt the misery of the slavery to which his passions had subjected him and the danger of dying out of Christ and without the assurance of the pardon of God. He had learned by the example of his wife that there is a peace which passes knowledge but that it can only be possessed by those who have been purified from their sins by virtue of the work of expiation accomplished by the Saviour.

He believed in the Lord Jesus and the same grace which brought salvation was manifested in his life, for renouncing all worldly lusts he lived thenceforth soberly, righteously and piously. Sovereign grace made of James D. a faithful Christian, serious and devoted. May every unconverted reader of this narrative; far as he may be from James D's condition, as the world judges; understand that there is nevertheless just as much need for forgiveness and salvation for them. May they come to the One who has made peace by the death on His cross; through whom God pardons and justifies the sinner who believeth in Him. In Him is eternal life. Glory be to God for the inexpressible gift to us of His Son! Glory be to the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us! Glory be to that love supreme which receives the greatest of sinners, and bestows His grace upon them.