

THE SOWER.

“THERE IS NONE LIKE UNTO THEE.”

JER. x. 6. 7.

When conscience like a watchman
Wakens the sleeping breast,
The finished work of Jesus
Alone can give it rest ;
Only that blessed Saviour
Who died on Calvary's tree,
Can tell the guilty robber
Of “ Paradise with Me.”

Alone, for sins like crimson
He pardon can bestow,
Only the blood of Jesus,
Washes as white as snow.
He, who the cross enduring
For sinners to atone
Only can speak forgiveness,
He who is God alone.

In Him alone the leper
To heal, found power and grace—
The blind man gazed, adoring,
Upon his Healer's face.
To Him the guilty sinners
In all their ruin came,
For though the great Jehovah,
Yet Jesus is His name.

Though by the world rejected,
 To-day upon the throne,
 He sits in highest glory
 Worthy that place alone.
 Well may the heart that knows Him,
 Echo adoringly,
 Words that of old were spoken—
 "Lord there is none like Thee."

AT another time Jesus said to the pharisees, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Reader, which are you like, the pharisee or the publican? But though no one can be saved by their *so-called* good works, yet none need be lost on account of their *bad* works, but *all*—moral and immoral—may be saved by the *work* of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The holy spotless life of Jesus given up to God in death, is the only work—as well as the blessed and meritorious work—which can save our souls. And it is a finished work. Jesus said on the cross "It is finished." He said also to God the father—and Oh what joy it must have given Him to be able to say it!—"I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do." All must be brought down to the *same* level before God, with nothing good to say of themselves; and all must be saved in the *same* way, by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; then all will be able to sing the *same* sweet song throughout eternity: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood * * * to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

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THE BREAD OF LIFE.

I N the little village of Pujiant, near the old city where the popes used to have their palace, and where all around, the walls and stones speak of the early days—days before Christ—days when the Pagans brought their flowers to adorn their temples of Diana or Apollo, and other gods, the spring sunshine was making all the country radiant, and the fresh green of the newly-leaved trees, and the budding lilac, and may-blossoms were echoing the praise of hearts full of resurrection joy. But a little boy was weeping. There was a cloud on the child-heart and it hung heavily there, for there seemed no hope of any sun-rays, chasing it like the passing ones in the blue sky so easily driven out of existence and leaving no sign of their passage in the clear azure beyond.

We had gone to distribute testaments and books in this dark village where all seemed so surprised at our *giving* them anything for Christ's sake, and anything *of* Christ, for no one had evidently ever gone there before to give them the word of life.

One young woman, who could not understand what we were doing asked if we had anything for the "mode," *i. e.* the fashion for hats! But faster and faster the books went—all cried for the "libre," and one little boy ran persistently by the side of the carriage and had received some tracts and a portion of the gospel, but he clamored for "the book," and at last we found he was weeping; the tears running fast

and thick down his cheeks. For all the testaments had been given, and amid the many he had not received one.

"Why do you cry"? we asked, "you have some books, and a portion of the book."

"But I have not *the* book" he cried, looking pleadingly and tearfully at us. Only a little fellow of ten years, weeping for the bread of life—the word that tells of Him, the living Word. The little face looked drawn and anxious, and he still ran by the side of the carriage while we gave him all we could give him, tracts and papers. At last, just as we got out of the village, an old woman stopped the carriage. She had run with him, his hand tight clasped in hers, after the vehicle, and she now began to plead fast, and in earnest tones, for him.

"He wants 'the book' so much" she cried. He wants to go to mass with it. Just one for the "little boy." He did not speak a word, but stood, white and still, as though his life depended on our answer. We asked his name and address and promised he should have one by that night's post; the driver even promising to take the book to him if we wished.

They called him in the village, "the little Prussian," this nickname they said would always find him. And we found he was deaf.

What thoughts and desires of *Him*, the One who unstopped the deaf ears and dried weeping eyes to make "the book" so precious to him? What conceptions of Him, "the chiefest among ten thousand, the fairer than the children of men," had

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filled the child-heart so that his one desire and earnest longing was to read *His* words, and trace *His* footsteps from the cross to the glory, we know not—but oh! dear reader, as we saw those child-tears for “the book,” so well-known intellectually in our day, so little followed by the world, so scorned and questioned by the infidel, so criticised by modern Christians who handle it without the sanctuary, so withheld from the people in that land of France where the people cry for bread and get a stone, we thought of Jesus lifting His eyes, which fathomed the darkness of the whole world, to heaven and crying: “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”

“In *that hour* Jesus rejoiced in spirit.” And Oh! dear reader, if those tears went up to heaven in pleading for the land growing so corrupt, so hard, so hating, and so rebellious for want of the knowledge of Christ, for lack of that book which is as the hammer to the stone, and the dew to the thirsty plant, surely not in vain the boy’s heart was torn, and his face full of anguish, for the “book” which was to his young heart beyond all price. And if they pleaded *to*, they plead *for*.

They plead for the dark, the distant, those with “no hope, and without God in the world.” They plead for *you* dear, unsaved reader. They tell of a precious gift lying at your feet, of more than the wealth of nations close to your hand, of “Jesus standing,” and perhaps you know not, like Mary, that it is Jesus;

of Jesus who wept over Jerusalem because she was refusing *all* in rejecting *Him*; of Jesus who would now gather you, as He would have gathered her, to the shelter and rest of His love and power. Love to cover, and power to blot out *all* sin, till the soul He shields and cherishes is "*whiter than snow.*"

Dear reader, *for you* He sweat great drops, as it were, of blood; *for you* "the word became flesh and dwelt among us" Dwelt among us till that uplifted cross was closed around with curses and mockery; and Satan's slave testified in "seeing Jesus," this "man hath done nothing amiss." But that slave was wise and crowned and weighted with his many sins, facing eternity he let the Crucified take them and blot them out, and so passed to be *with Him* in paradise.

A few days ago in Paris I met a young lady whose life had been spared from the terrible fire. She took her young friend there, and the latter having a stall with one of the Duchess' thoughtfully said, do not you stay, you will be so tired. Only tell them at home to send my maid for me at five o'clock. Alas! when that hour came the brilliant young girl was not recognisable by her nearest and dearest.

The child wept for the book that told of *Him*.

Jesus wept o'er sin and death.

If He is now rejected, the soul must be where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Shut from the light and gladness of the Father's home,
the Father's grace.

Knowing the love *was* thine; and thine alone
rejected grace.

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ANOTHER TESTIMONY TO THE CLEANSING
BLOOD.

IN the north of Scotland a *forgiven sinner* lay dying. Say, reader canst thou write thyself down thus? A sinner forgiven, and if so a saint of God, by God's call. Yea a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ!

Like the sinner of the seventh of Luke (whose history he loved to have read to him, over and over,) he had been forgiven much, and he loved much.

Let us draw near to his bedside for a moment, and listen to the lisping stammering tongue, taking up the theme in time, that shall fill eternal ages. Deep was the sense in his soul of the grace displayed toward him. As the fond mother bends over her boy, listen to the divinely taught strain that flows from his lips, so soon to be sealed in death, and so soon again to be re-opened in resurrection glories "conqueror o'er the grave:" "Oh! Mammie, just think of your black Jamie being whiter than the snow, *all through the precious blood.*"

To one of the same craft who called to see him and who happened to say that he had been touching up some of his artistic work, and that it was undying work, his tongue, as the pen of a ready writer at once exclaimed: "Man, Davie, there *was* undying work done on Calvary's cross; the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin."

Ah! my reader, is the language of this dying one thine? Hast thou learnt the lesson of the seventh of

Luke, that thou hast no merits of thine own to plead ; that thou hast nothing wherewith to pay thy creditor ; that nought save frank forgiveness can meet thy case ? If so, thou hast been divinely taught and *now, now*, not on thy dying day but *now, this very moment*, mayest thou be given to say of and for thine own self : " In whom " (that is in God's Beloved, see Eph. i. 7) " we have redemption *through His blood*, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

This sufferer had been brought into the light, and God had shined in his heart some years before he passed through the last of his many sicknesses, but not until the earthly house was being broken up, did the light shine out again in all its own brilliancy.

And to the grace that bore with him all the while the divinely given life had lain almost dormant in his soul, he testified in words like these : " The Lord has been so good and gracious to me all the time, and has kept the little corn of wheat always alive in spite of all my sad, sad career, and now He is sifting, sifting, sifting, and *He would* have the finest of the wheat for Himself, and He will get it."

The grace that called and that bore with the called one, never giving him up, maintained him in brightness to the close. " Lord Jesus, take **THY** weary one home," being among the last utterances—himself the while in great pain and feebleness, but what a contrast to that which shall be shortly ; weariness, pain and feebleness all gone, and bearing the image of the heavenly," to take up in full eternal unmeasured

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sweetness the theme begun below: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: *for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*"

Reader, let me earnestly ask you: Will your voice join in that song up there? Remember the first few notes are learned below.

"From every kingdom of earth they come
To join the triumphal cry,
Singing: 'Worthy the Lamb that once was slain,'
But, will you be there?"

DEAR unsaved one, you are still in Satan's kingdom, where death and darkness and unbelief reign; for it is Satan that blinds your mind *lest* the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into it. (2 Cor. 4. 4.) It is Satan that takes away the word out of your heart *lest* you should believe and be saved. (Luke 8. 12.) It is Satan that bound the woman in Luke 13 for eighteen long years, and would have kept her still in her bonds had not the Lord Jesus loosed her from them. And Oh how many to-day are tied and bound by the chain of their sins. Come to Jesus, for He alone can remove your heavy burden. He will give you such a welcome, for He came here in love to destroy or undo the works of the devil. (1 John 3. 8.) May God in the riches of His grace turn you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto Himself, that you may receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith which is in Christ Jesus. (Act. 26. 18.)

TO THE MORAL AND VIRTUOUS.

THE inward thought of many, who have been kept from gross manifestations of evil, is that they are better than others whose lives openly declare them to be "publicans and sinners;" and so far as this life is concerned, they are no doubt better members of society, and fulfil their natural obligations with greater propriety and decorum. But have they any room to boast, even before men, on this account? How much less before God. Is not much of their outward propriety traceable to education, and the influence of favourable circumstances, or of kind and considerate friends? And, after all, do not the outwardly moral spring from the same sinful stock as the most profligate and profane? Have they not been conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity? (Psalm li. 5). Are not their minds at enmity against God? (Rom. viii. 7). Have they not sinful hearts, thoughts and desires? (Genesis vi. 5, vii. 21; Matthew xii. 34; Mark vii. 21-23). Yes, assuredly; for whatever difference there may be among men, "ALL [without exception] have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23).

The "natural man" can, no doubt, produce *natural* fruit in abundance; he can exhibit skill and intelligence in the things of man, and even show kindness and benevolence to his fellow-creature; but he cannot bring forth fruit *unto* GOD. (Rom. viii. 8). And, "*without faith* it is impossible to please Him." (Heb. xi. 6). Cain, the first born of Adam,

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“brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, but the Lord had not respect unto him, nor to his offering.” (Genesis iv). And why? because it *was* the fruit of the *ground*. Probably it was the best which the earth could produce, still it was the fruit of the earth which had been cursed for man's sins, and consequently could not be accepted by God as a suitable presentation by a sinner to Him who is “of purer eyes than to behold evil.”

So, they who bring their own good deeds,

Or life devoid of blame,

Will find their works accounted weeds,

And all their glory shame.

The *best* the human heart, can yield,

Is still the fruit of *nature's* field.

Abel, on the other hand, “brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.” He came before God as a *sinner*, bringing with him a *victim*, in token of the necessity of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. “By faith he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.” (Heb. xi. 4).

The sacrifice which Abel brought,

A lamb, its life and blood,

On which he had no labor wrought,

Was well received of God ;

So, they who trust in Christ alone

The Lamb who once was slain,

And nature's purest works disown,
 A welcome will obtain ;
 For God who knows a sinner's needs,
 Accepts the Lamb in lieu of deeds.

If it were possible, which it is not, for a man to keep the whole law, except in one point, that one point, that one offence, would be fatal to him. (James ii. 10). But not only is man a sinner in practice, but what is worse, he is one by nature ; and as a consequence, cannot bring forth good fruit ; for "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." (Matthew vii. 17). Hence the necessity of the work of Christ, who "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter iii. 18). "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. ix. 26). He shed His precious blood "for the remission of sins." He was made, "sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21). Having "died unto sin once," and "offered one sacrifice for sins," and thus put away that which otherwise would have been an impassable barrier to a sinner's entrance into the presence of God, He "was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and has "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," the proof to the believing soul that his sins have been put away : for He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," (Romans iv. 25).

The question for every soul then is, "What think ye of Christ?" Have you God's thoughts of Him?

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Are you taught of God to say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God?" Have you brought the offering of faith, and found acceptance in God's beloved Son? For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom men crucified, but whom God raised from the dead. (Acts iv. 10-12). The offering of works by man in unbelief cannot find acceptance with God, for how can the living God own dead works, which are all that a man "dead in trespasses and sins" can produce. No, the acceptance of a sinner is in and through Christ; and as God will not give His glory to another, neither will He *share* it with him; the glory of our salvation must be *all* His own. The offerings of Cain and Abel cannot be blended. Salvation must be by Christ *alone*. Not by Christ *and* works, but simply and solely by Christ Himself, without any addition whatever to His one full and finished work upon the cross; owned and recognized by God, who raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory at His own right hand.

Have you then, come to God? If you have, happy are ye; for nothing shall be able to separate you from "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If you have not come to Him, Oh, delay not! but while God's one and only way of salvation is proclaimed, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus find acceptance with God, and blessing in Him for ever and ever. Amen.

FREE AGENT.

THE doctrine of the free agency of man is a denial of the supremacy of God, and therefore anti-scriptural. How could man in any state be free from the obligation to obey God? It could not be for it would be morally wrong. The sin of disobedience has not released him from the authority of his Creator, but made him the servant of sin unto death (Rom. v. 12. : vi, 16). Had Adam obeyed God in the garden, clearly he would not have become subject to death; but having thus become the sport of Satan, how can he claim to be free? Nay, through sin man has passed under the sentence of death and judgment. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Death and judgment hanging over the sinner by Divine appointment, and yet man a free agent! How absurd. Are not sinners dying all around us daily? and is not the judgment of God thus certified? The free-agency of the sinner is therefore Satan's mockery.

But if there is no free-agency of man, there is forgiveness of sins freely offered. All men are commanded to repent because God has appointed the day of judgment for sinners, and judgment is assured through the resurrection of Christ, who died for all. See Acts xvii. 30-31 : 2 Cor. v. 15. Upon the ground that Christ died for all, God having raised Him from the dead, scripture declares "that through His name *whosoever* believeth in Him, shall receive

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remission of sins." Acts x. 39-43. The believer, all believers in Christ dead, risen and glorified are freely and forever pardoned through His precious blood. See 1 John i. 7.

This is better than free-agency. It is *free pardon* through grace, but in righteousness through the death and resurrection of Christ. "Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man" (Christ risen and glorified) "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him ALL *that believe* are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 38-39.

But is the believer free to do as he pleases? By no means: he is the bond-servant of Christ, his Redeemer; bought with a price, His precious blood, yet His Lord's freeman forever (1 Cor. vii. 22). This is true liberty, the liberty of grace based on the accomplished righteousness of God on the cross.

DEAR friend, if you have to do with Jesus *now* as your Saviour, you need not fear if death should overtake you. If *in Christ*, you are safe for all eternity. But *out of Christ*, unwashed, unforgiven, you will meet God as your judge, a *righteous* Judge. Think of the end, the awful end, of the *certain* rich man. *He died*, and doubtless some would have said of him as it is said of many now, "He passed away very peacefully" ignorant of the Scripture which says of the wicked "There are no bands in their death."* (Psalm 73. 4.)

FUNERALS.

“WHAT a lot of people are dying, remarked a boy to a lady who had just made a small purchase.

“Are there?”

“Yes, a funeral passes every day and sometimes two.”

“Does it make you think?”

“I should think it does.”

“After death the judgment?”

“Yes,” replied the boy with some emotion.

Another customer coming in no more could be said, and the lady left the shop praying that that precious soul might know the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ, and not come into judgment. (John v. 24).

One has often heard the remark, “we shall pass in the crowd,” but if this has proved successful for earth, it will not do to anticipate such a way of getting to heaven. Although “a lot of people are dying” every day, and all the day, each one will know himself to be laid bare to God’s all-searching eye, no concealment available. This individuality is plainly marked in scripture. In Luke xii. we read of a *certain* rich man to whom God said: “This night *thy* soul shall be required of thee.” He had to meet God *alone*, and *as* he lived *so* he died. Oh reader take warning by this and turn to the loving Saviour *to-day*. He waits to be gracious to *thee*.