

THE SOWER.

“HO! EVERY ONE THAT THIRSTETH.”

ISAIAH LV-L.

A VOICE is heard, a voice of love,—
To each, to all, it cries,—
From One who came from joys above ;
He calls, He weeps, He dies ;
The Son of God has man become
The prodigal to win ;
And bring him to his father's home
From vanity and sin.

Ye wearied ones, ye desolate,
Ye mourning souls, attend ;
Be sins or sorrows e'er so great,
Come to the sinner's friend,
Seek not your guilt, or woes to hide,
Ye need not from His eyes !
The Holy One will not in pride
A broken heart despise.

The smitten Rock, thou thirsty soul
Gives forth its living streams ;
Thou sick one He can make thee whole,
Dark one, behold His beams !
No more, ye starving, labor spend
For that which is not bread ;
To Jesus' gracious call attend,
And ye shall all be fed.

COME TO JESUS.

I WAS standing on the footway of a crowded thoroughfare; the passers-by were hurrying along, each intent on his own business, while I paused, looking out for a hansom cab. I had an important business appointment to keep, and there was no time to be lost. As I thus stood I was startled by a voice in my ear; some one was speaking to me, and distinctly came the words, "Come to Jesus, there's no time to be lost!" I heard them, but e'er I could reply the speaker had vanished in the crowd.

What effect would these words have produced on you, reader? What echo would they have awakened in your heart? To me they had a sweet sound, and I would have gladly grasped the hand of him who uttered them, and said that I too was journeying toward the city where the name of Jesus will be chanted in heavenly songs. But another thought came as I jumped into my hansom and drove off; if there is no time to be lost in the keeping of an urgent appointment in this world, do we think with the same earnestness about the Lord's invitation to meet Him in the next? "Come to Jesus, there's no time to be lost." Think of this, reader. Jesus said "Come unto me" (Matt. xi. 28), have you come? And had those words been addressed to you in the street, what answer could you have given?"

Many hesitate and plead difficulties in the way. When Jesus was in this world He said to Peter,

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"Come," when it was far harder to obey than it can be to you. The Lord was on the water, and Peter was in the boat, yet at the word "Come," Peter descended from the boat, and "he walked on the water to go to Jesus." (Matt. xiv.) Indeed "there's no time to be lost." None can say when the door of mercy will be closed, and that blessed "Come to Jesus" uttered for the last time, and certainly you do not wish to be left outside. Oh, no. As a fisherman said a few days ago when conversing of sudden deaths, "Every one wants to be in heaven, but they forget that in order to be with God by and by, they must make acquaintance with Him now." Yes, now, for "there's no time to be lost."

Come to the Saviour, make no delay ;
 Here in His word He bids you obey ;
 Here in our midst He is standing to-day,
 Tenderly saying come !

Is there a soul reading this who cannot rejoice in Christ, who knows Him not as his portion ? Is there one who is saying my sin is too great to be pardoned ? To feel about your sin is right, but to be in despair about it is quite wrong. You are virtually saying my sin is greater than the grace of God. You will not dare to say so if you are looking at Christ. Is Christ come short ? Is grace beneath your need or above it ? Christ is the portion of every poor soul who believes on Him. The atoning work is done. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.

THE CORDS OF LOVE.

A WEEK at Folkestone ! The weather was rough and wet, but we could not stay indoors as the sea air was necessary for the one for whom we had gone. The only thing was to have a tent, and a tent we had. We were sitting in it, enjoying the shelter and cosiness the first day of our arrival, when suddenly we heard a voice saying : " Do you ladies know anything about the Master ? " And there stood our friend who let out the tents, at the door of our canvas room, strong, sturdy, bronze ; his weather-beaten face fairly shining with happiness and goodness. In answer I put the book I was reading into his hands, and after that he often came to have a chat about the love of God and the preciousness of Christ. " Yes," he said one day, " I often wish I could write down what the Lord has done for me. I was a sailor, and until I was five-and-twenty years of age I could not read a word. Then a mate and I determined to learn together, and so we got a spelling book when in port and began. At first we used to pick out short words in the newspaper for practice. We could always get hold of one of those. But one day I hunted out of my box an old bible my mother had given me, and I found in the psalms short words that I could read. I said to my mate : Look here Bill, here's just as easy words as in the newspaper. I shall read this.

" Well, the more I read, the more I began to feel my need of something ; that I was not right. And one night some time after this, I dreamt such a dream.

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I can't tell it all to you, Miss, it was too much, but I dreamt that I was there standing over the brink of hell, and oh ! the terrors and agonies I went through—

“I was just going to fall in, and there was nothing and no one to save me, when suddenly a hand, stretched out from behind, pulled me back with a strong pull. Then I woke, and the next morning we got into port, and one of them from the shore came aboard and asked us to go to a mission preaching that evening. Well, full of my dream, I went, for you may be sure I had a sort of horror all day thinking about it, and after the prayer and the singing, the gentleman gave out the text, ‘As in a dream when one waketh.’

“I felt as though I must leap off the seat, and rush back to see if it was really in the bible or not, but I managed to sit through it, and sure enough, I saw the Lord as the Saviour of sinners, and right glad I was to accept Him. Bless His name.

“I go about the beach and talks to one and another, and finds out those who know He is precious, and many of those who don't. But once there was a little missy whose parents had been down some time, and she seemed to like to come and talk to ‘old Cooky,’ as they call me, and one day she said, “Mr. Cook, I want very much to ask you a question.”

“Ask away Missy,” I said.

“Are you sure you won't be offended? We are going away to-morrow, and, oh ! I do so want to ask you before we go.”

“I won't be offended, you be sure, Missy.”

Then, she says, looking right into my face, “do you

love the Lord Jesus?" Aye! And I thought how faithful she was to the Lord. Could not I be faithful too."

And he was faithful. Day by day he went in and out, speaking here and there a word of Christ and His love. I found he and his wife had quite a large work amongst the children in the town. Love seemed to characterize his every action. Love to Christ, and the love of Christ flowing through him to other souls.

Dear reader, can you see the love of God watching over that young sailor all those years? Can you see his mother's gift lying unused in the little box, while he went on year after year doing "business in great waters;" often, doubtless, in danger and peril on the wintry sea; often in just as much danger, if he only knew it, in the summer sunshine, for all the time there was no helmet of salvation on his head, no anchor for his soul. Can you see the love of God constraining him to draw out the little book put there so long before, doubtless with many loving prayers from the mother's heart. The love showing him, through a dream, the brink on which he stood; the hell that is no fancy, no picture of dreams, but a reality for all who are out of Christ. The love preparing him for that message of Christ's finished work; the love revealing a crucified and risen Christ, drawing him from that brink to the gladness and the sunshine, not only of sins forgiven, but of being able to point other mariners on the ocean of life, to the haven he had found, the safety and the shelter he had been brought into.

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That love is over you just as strong, just as patient, just as great. Will you resist and pass on towards that terrible future, away from God, or will you yield to the words of love and be drawn to the Saviour's feet, to know and follow Him.

Years passed away. Each time I passed through Folkestone I enquired about dear C——, but could learn nothing, as it was only in passing to and from the boats that I had opportunity. But about two autumns ago the answer came; "Oh! yes, C——. He died last summer, and you never saw such a sight as the funeral with the children. And there's never a day but they don't go and put fresh flowers on his grave. He did love the children, to be sure." And, doubtless, in that day when he gladly lays his crown at the Master's feet, many of its gems will be the souls of little children sought and won by his faithful heart.

“THE TIME IS SHORT.”

I COR. VII. 29.

“The time is short”! If thou art not prepared

To hear thy summons from this earth away,

Awake, arouse thee from thy deadly sleep;

This is no time for dreaming or delay:

Haste to the Refuge. Look not back. The door

Stands open now. To-morrow, all may here be o'er!

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

X.

Joy comes in the morning.

DEAR ——— I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for your letter, which by the blessing of God has so powerfully succoured and consoled me.

I had never seen, in so clear a way, the unity of Christ and the believer. I always thought I ought to find something in myself which would make me happy. I see now that it is altogether otherwise. It is Jesus, and Jesus only, who has given me joy. It is very true what you say, that the love of Christ for us is our joy. How is it that we can so long refuse to put our confidence in this perfect Saviour, who has not waited until we have done something ourselves, but who, when we were wholly lost and ruined, without strength and without hope, came to deliver us? Is not that marvellous? We have God for our Father; He sees us as being one with Christ, and loves us with the same love with which He loves Christ. How much I can now rejoice in all this; sometimes I can say nothing but "Father," but that alone fills me with joy.

If you see Mr. ———, tell him that the Lord has mercifully taught me to rest upon the love of Christ, and to dwell in this love, which passes knowledge. I forget all my doubts and all my fears in looking to Jesus. Pray for me, that nothing may take the place of Jesus in my heart, but that I may be always filled with Himself. Affectionately yours in Him.

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SATAN'S DIPLOMACY.

“**T**HERE is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”—Prov. xvi. 22.

A way which seemeth right. Such is the way of the unsaved. Providing his business is prospering, himself well and happy, what folly it seems to tell the man of the world that at the end of his way lie “the ways of death.” Awful calamity! awaiting those of whom it is written: “Ye have set at nought all MY COUNSEL and would none of MY REPROOF. . . . They would none of MY counsel: they despised all MY reproof. Therefore shall they eat the fruit of THEIR OWN way.” What folly to speak of “annihilation” in the face of such scriptures! At the end of man’s way there still remain “the ways of death,” in which are eaten the fruits of their way. If we had no other authority for such startling statements than man’s word; yea, if they rested upon any other ground than that they are the words of God, all might disregard them. But since it is God’s warning to us, how can we disregard it with impunity? Indeed, we cannot! If God speaks we do well to heed the language He uses. Our ideas, theories, opinions, etc., must be let go, or we must expect to suffer the consequences of such daring contempt of Divine Majesty. Appearances are often illusory, and to depend upon them is dangerous, as is illustrated by the following:—

It is about four years ago that a New York firm originated and carried into practice a scheme which, as showing the desperate wickedness native to the human heart in its present sin-degraded state (what dreadful things have originated and proceeded from thence), might well humble every thoughtful man who will consider where his connections exist as God sees him.

"A remedy" was invented and then advertised in a most extensive manner as a boon to suffering humanity; as destined to wipe out of existence for those who would but use it, the sad results of the entrance of sin into this world. Pain and sickness were to give place to joy and healthful vigor; depression, discontent, etc., were no longer to be realized by its users. Its indications were almost innumerable, though especially lauded as a specific for nervous troubles, such as sleeplessness. How many there are who would esteem such a remedy as priceless to them, and grasp it with that avidity peculiar to this class of sufferers, who are ever ready to try anything which promises them relief from their distress. This preparation, however, consisted of little else than the most dreadful of narcotics, but so cleverly dispensed as to conceal their presence. And such was the peculiarity of its action, that while the patient was in reality having his system shattered by these pernicious opiates the immediate results seemed most favorable and encouraging. Under its action sleep was speedily restored, gloom and evil forebodings gave way to the most pleasing sensations of

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rest and tranquility. All would seem well at last, and fond hopes would be cherished that the long-looked-for remedy was found. But alas, how delusive! How like the effect of Satan's "remedies" for the needs of sinners! For it will not be long ere the true results of these oft-repeated draughts will become apparent. Larger doses are soon required to produce former effects; reactions occur when the "remedy" is discontinued though for ever so short a time, and the poor victim (for such he has become), at last finds himself enslaved to his fell destroyer. He has become a sure source of revenue to the originators of this diabolical scheme (their anticipated reward), but at what a cost to himself!!

Such, poor deceived unsaved one, is your condition whatever appearances may suggest. And here we have the character of all Satan's ways—**DECEPTION, FRAUD.** O, will you be one of his dupes? Do not longer rest on appearances, but seek God's testimony concerning your present state. That, and that only, is able to make you "wise unto salvation."

And let me remind you that if God warns you, it is because He Himself has provided a way of escape for you, guilty and all as you are. Jesus is God's way of escape for guilty perishing sinners. God's love for sinners brought Jesus into this world; and, (O, do consider it), He died the "just for the unjust to bring us to God." He died for our sins according to the scriptures, and was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. And now

God says, "That through His (Jesus') name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Yes! Jesus having taken the sinner's place in death, God can now in justice come out with a full pardon to every guilty sinner, who, renouncing every other "saviour," simply believes in Jesus.

Oh, that heaven and hell should more work upon men! Oh, that everlastingness should work more! Oh, how can you forbear when you are alone, to think with yourself, what is it to be everlastingly in joy or in torment? I wonder that such thoughts do not break your sleep, and that they come not into your mind when you are about your labor; I wonder how you can almost do anything else; how you can have any quietness in your minds; how you can eat, or drink, or rest, till you have got some ground of everlasting consolation. Is that a man or a corpse that is not affected with matters of this moment? that can be readier to sleep than to trouble when he heareth how he must stand at the bar of God? Is that a man or a clod of clay that can rise or lie down without being deeply affected with his everlasting estate? that can follow his worldly business and make nothing of the great business of salvation or damnation, and that when they know it is hard at hand.

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A LETTER FROM A SERVANT OF CHRIST,
NOW DEPARTED.

DEAR MR. GOVERNOR.*—You will, perhaps, recollect one who went up with you in the train from E. to D., now about a year ago, or not far from it, and be surprised, perhaps, to receive a letter from him from Canada. But though I have been much occupied—as you may suppose I did not cross the Atlantic for nothing—I have not forgotten our conversation in the train, and I crave to hear how you are getting on. We have had here the governor of the gaol fully brought to the knowledge of salvation, and to walk with the saints of God, as he still does. He would much like another employment, but awaits the Lord's leading to find him something. His dear wife—already a believer—was also led to see she ought to be more entirely separate from the world, and live more devotedly, and so she did thoroughly, and the Lord has taken her. She expected it, and was longing to go. No cloud came over her peace and joy. She suffered dreadfully and long, but no impatience was shown; all was bright, and all peace. She left four little children, charming little ones; we had them in the house where I was, to spare the nurse while she was ill. She saw them, gave them her blessing, and bid farewell, but it raised no lingering look behind. Another dear old man, only six months converted, died just after, rejoicing with all his heart. We buried both, not far apart,

*["I was speaking to him about his soul, and he asked me to write to him. He was governor of a gaol."]

under the deep, deep snow, which indeed kept the earth soft enough to be opened (for sometimes they cannot bury), committing them to Christ till the resurrection.

And, now, how would it be with you if thus called? Is all peace, and right with God? You know yourself that you need it; you know that Christ is the only way to have it. Let me add a few words as to the fullness of it. He appeared *once* in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That work is finished—it can never be added to, nor taken away from; its value does not change. But the Spirit of God works in us, to shew us our need of it, makes us to see that we are sinners, that we are *lost* in ourselves; leads us (perhaps by deep and painful convictions) to the sense that there is *no* good in us, that when even to will is present with us, how to perform that which is good we find not. We find not only that we have sinned, but that there is a law of sin in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin in our members. But when really humbled about this, and convicted in our own hearts—removing all pretensions of righteousness in ourselves—we turn to Christ, we find that He has died for this, that He has been a sacrifice for the sin, as for the sins, that burdened us—has been made sin for us, has *put it away* for us by the sacrifice of Himself.

Thus we get peace and liberty of heart before God, because the sin is put away between us and Him—

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Christ has made a full expiation. Sin does not exist as between God and us. When *He* looks on the blood of Christ, He cannot see sin in the believer, because, when Christ shed that blood He put it away. Thus we get liberty and power, too, because submitting thus to the righteousness of God ; having Christ for our righteousness, we are sealed with the Spirit, which gives us power and shews us Christ, so that we get strength and joy, and are able to glorify Him.

How is it, then, with you ? Are you still a worse prisoner than those you are watching over, or freed by the redemption that is in Christ ? Have you been brought to see that, if you refuse life through His name, you must perish ? Do you seek that you should know Him, or are you joining with His enemies—hail-fellow-well met with the world, that, to its judgment and ruin, crucified Him ? If we have His Spirit, we know that we are in Him, and all is peace, and joy, too, because we know the Son of God, and abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. I shall be glad to hear from you. May the blessed Lord, in His grace, direct your eye fixedly on Christ.

Every truly yours in Christ,

1863.

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.

MAN'S FOLLY.

MOST men listen more attentively to the world than to God. The world promiseth only impure and transitory joy, and men engage with ardour in its unholy service, but to that which is supreme and everlasting their hearts are insensible and unmoved. Even the sea exclaimeth, "Be thou ashamed, O Zidon!" because for a trifling acquisition of wealth or honor a tedious and fatiguing journey is cheerfully undertaken; but to obtain eternal life not a foot is lifted from the earth. The sordid gain of perishing riches engages the pursuit and employs the industry of all; and the most inconsiderable share of this imaginary property is obstinately and bitterly contested. For the vain expectation of a vainer possession, men dread not the fatigue of sleepless nights and restless days; but, deplorable insensibility, for unchangeable good, for an inestimable recompense for unsullied glory and endless happiness, the least solicitude and the least labor is thought too dear a purchase.

I am not told to labor,
To put away my sin;
So foolish, weak and helpless,
I never could begin.
But blessed truth—I know it!
Though ruined by the fall,
Christ for my soul hath suffered,
Yes, Christ hath done it all.