

THE SOWER.

A WAKE! Oh fellow sinner! Wake!
The weight of death is on thy soul!
The burden infinite of sin's uncanceled debt
Forthstretching from that dire primeval fall,
And reaching on to the abyss of *twice-told* living death
That waits for ruined man!
Awake! The shroud of night is on thy soul,
Blackness of darkness! infinite—
Still uncomprehended and unfelt though now begun,
To end (not lose its end) in that immensity of woe
Unuttered and unknown.
How shall we bid thee wake and rise, that
Christ may give thee light?

Oh! life of earth whose boast is in the grave;
Time's passing *mirage*, vision of a night,
How can man deem thee aught, and claim thee as
his all?
For thou but lull'st thy victims with sure opiates of
forge fulness,
And bidst them dream of life, while drifting down thy
fiery stream
Into the tideless ocean of eternal death.

* * * * *
Light of eternal truth shine forth, irradiate on thy
page,
And bid each opened eye, Thy glory see,
Each wakened ear the breathings of Thy quickening
voice confess,
Oh! Word of life, who bad'st the dead to rise—
Who spake the word, "Let there be light."
And darkness fled away.

ARE YOU INSURED AGAINST "JUDGMENT" AND "THE SECOND DEATH?"

RECENTLY on leaving a street car a person, to whom I had handed a gospel magazine, handed me a paper in return. It was nicely got up in small newspaper form. On looking over it I found that, whilst it contained stories, anecdotes, &c., it had been issued by a leading life insurance company, and its real object was the advertising of the said company, and also trying to induce people to insure their lives, by sundry specious arguments with which most are pretty familiar, so I will not repeat them here. My thoughts, however, took a different channel from that contemplated by the person who had handed me the paper, or who had compiled it. I thought of how man can speak of the uncertainty of life, and how death may invade a family at any time, &c., and use these arguments to try and persuade people to insure their lives, and bring before them the merits of the company of which they are agents. But what is it all at best? Merely a question of this life, or, at farthest, death. But there they stop. But, dear reader, let us go a little further. What, after that?

The word of God tells us that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this* THE JUDGMENT." (Heb. ix., 27.) It also tells us that there is a "*second death.*" (Rev. ii., 11; xx., 6-14.) The last verse quoted tells us that "the second death is the lake of fire." Now I will ask you, in true love for your soul

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have you a policy of insurance that will be a positive guarantee against those two, viz., "judgment" and the "second death"? If not, may God arouse you to a true sense of the danger that lies before you. Do you say no man can know it—there is no such thing as being certain as to that? Stay, friend, God says in His word, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; (are *you* doing that?), because he believeth not the record (same word as 'witness' above) that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John v., 9-12.) If you turn to the gospel by John, 5th chapter, you will see that the Lord there speaks of every soul having to take either life or judgment from Him. In verse 24 he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and *shall not come* into condemnation," (or "judgment," the same word as in Heb. ix., 27, above quoted.) But if you take your place (and it is your true place) before God as a poor lost sinner and believe in your heart what God says about the work of His Son, you will have the solid foundation of God's word to rest on. Heaven and earth may pass away but His word will never fail. Now what does God say about His Son? He tells us that "God commendeth His love toward us, in

that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v, 8.) That "the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purges the conscience (of him who believes) from dead works to serve the living God." (Heb. ix, 14.) That "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i, 7.) That Jesus "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; therefore, being justified by faith, we have *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. iv, 25, v 1.)

See to it, dear reader, see to it ere it be too late and the door be shut. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation. (2 Cor. vi, 2.)

If, in your heart, you are resting, and resting only, on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross for acceptance before God, when Jesus comes for His own, as He has said He will (John xiv, 3), then you will be one of those who meet Him in the air (see 1 Thes. iv, 13-17), which is the first resurrection and you will be one of those of whom it is written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." (Rev. xx, 6.)

Dear reader, is not that a policy of insurance worth having, and how miserable are all human policies of insurance alongside of it?

Have you such a policy? If you have, remember what it cost that blessed One that you might have it, without money and without price. Its perfect certainty and security resting on Him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv, 19.)

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"HAVING NOTHING, BUT POSSESSING
ALL THINGS."

ONLY a poor crippled sufferer!

But some of us would call him a hero. Not able, except by great effort, to use his poor twisted fingers; only able to stretch the poor rigid feet about an inch from him, and scarcely ever out of pain.

Not an old man, knowing the quiescence of old age, but in the prime of life, when most men enjoy using the strength of manhood, and gather round them home affections, if not home comforts. Naturally strong and vigorous, active-minded, and with intelligence beyond his birth and education, what was it to sit month after month and year after year unfit for anything—not even able to read—alone the better part of the day? What was he shut up to, think you, all those weary hours? To his own regrets, and murmuring rebellious thoughts? There was ample scope for groans and murmurs in the humble cottage room. But listen. "Well, R—how are you to-day?" "Aye! I've been thinking of the difference in the 1st Peter between the *inheritance* and the *Person*. It says of the inheritance 'wherein ye greatly rejoice,' (verses 4-6), but of *Him* 'whom having not seen ye love,' it says, 'ye rejoice with joy *unspeakable* and *full of glory*,' (verse 8). The inheritance is good, but Oh! how much more the Lord Himself."

Another time : "Jethro, you see, found the land was not enough to make him leave all, although Moses told him that it was a 'good land,' and : 'Come with us and we will do thee good.' But Rebecca heard of the *person* and she said 'I will go with this man.' Kindred and home all readily left for him whom she had not seen, but the hearing of him had won her heart."

This is what he was shut up to. Thoughts of Christ. His love and His beauty, His power and His grace. He had a world stretched out before him fairer than the world of the man whose estates and well-filled coffers, claim his thoughts and time, whose busy round is full of art and science and politics, and human applause.

A world of past, present and future.

A past wherein God's mighty purposes were unfolded in Christ Jesus. Heaven watched Him from the cradle to the cross, fulfilling all the plan of love, bruising Satan's head, and opening heaven's gates through that wondrous stooping that was, and is, beyond man's power to understand or appreciate—a past wherein his own guilt and burden rolled away, and he was satisfied, because God was satisfied in Christ, the sin-bearer. A present, wherein each day there were some to know that Christ, "liveth for His own," that the Lord Jesus in the glory was "this same Jesus" who bore his sins on the cross, and that He knew him by name, and cared for the slightest need along the pilgrim path. And he was still *satisfied*—heart and mind and spirit finding Him

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enough for all need. Even the suffering body told of physical agony borne by Him and the tender sympathy of the "great High Priest," who said, "all my bones are out of joint."

And for the future?

He would indeed be satisfied when he awoke, with "His form or image" (true rendering), when he saw that face, "more marred than any man's," and heard that voice, which cried "It is finished," call him by name. When he shall be presented to the Father with the whole of His redeemed as heir and joint heir with Him. "Without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," and shining out to the world which despised him, the radiant beauty of Christ, himself radiant in the glorious resurrection body like His own, able and fitted for service, he would indeed be satisfied, not with negatives only, "No more pain, neither sorrow, nor crying," but with the positive "They shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads," and "they shall serve Him," who then shall be of the fruit of the travail of *His Soul* and He shall be satisfied.

Two letters written by the poor tortured hands, so twisted by the rheumatism that one would think he could not possibly hold a pen, lie before me. In one he thanks for a carpet sent him, and says, "It was what I was much in need of, and received it as the Lord's loving kindness, and tender care. How real it is to be in His hands and cared for with such tender love. It is well when the mercies of the way connect our hearts with the Father ~~of~~ all mercies, for we find the opposite in those invited to the supper—

they pleaded the mercies as an excuse for not accepting the provision of grace, and I am sure there is much wisdom in God's withholding such from many of His beloved people, lest their hearts should be ormed on earth. But He did not withhold His beloved Son."

In the next letter he thanks again for some little gifts, and says: "How precious the grace that has taken us up and made us children as well as heirs, and given us the Holy Spirit, who bears witness with our spirit that we are in this blessed relationship to God, and produces in us suited affections by making known to us the love the Father has bestowed upon us. There is a tendency in our hearts to look back and dwell on the love bestowed upon us, or to look forward to the glory we are called unto, and forget the present favor in which we stand. Now I feel, if we are not looking up in the present and enjoying the love of the Father as a present reality we will be defective in our apprehension of it as displayed in the past, or what that love has called us into in the future. How increasingly precious that love becomes to us 'If God be for you,' as our souls deepen in the true knowledge of God as revealed in Christ, and to be able in simple faith to put over against all our path the fact that God is for us, and His present love towards us is that He makes all work for our good, even what may be most adverse and trying. Did we but enter more fully into this love our one desire would be that He should order all our path in His love and wisdom, thus peace passing all

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understanding would keep our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus amid this restless scene, knowing that the past is all divinely settled ; the future all divinely secured in Christ ; the present in the Father's hands, and His love bestowed upon us, carrying us with a tenderness that knows no comparison. The weather for some time past has been most trying to my poor body, and at the present time I suffer more than at any time during the winter. The heavy dews and cold cause much pain. 'We have need of patience.' 'He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.'

Not long after this he passed away full of suffering, but full of joy. A little while before the last he said, "The Lord will soon put me to sleep now." A heart so filled with Christ could not but have joy in going to be with Him.

Dear reader, do you know "this same Jesus," who could so fill and satisfy a life pent in and stunted and hindered at every point? The One who could use and bless and keep the spirit "stayed on Him," and filling life and death with Himself, make all a radiant pathway to the throne. Can you see Him in the past, present and future, and say, "This is my Beloved and this is my Friend." If Christ be for us, who can be against us? And call out to others the preciousness of His redemption and daily love.

He calls you. He would be to you all that He was to K—, and satisfy your whole being with Himself, in all His fullness, and all His worth.

THE GOSPEL FEAST.

THE thought of a feast is a common one in scripture. Thus it is said, "A certain man made a great supper and bade many." Luke xiv, 16; see also Matt. xxii, 2-4; Isa. lv, 1-2; Pro. ix, 1-5. Now what is the reason of this? It is because the idea furnishes an apt illustration of the grace of God. The man who made the great supper was not bound to make it. There was no compulsion put upon him; he was not under law in so doing; it was an act of grace only. It was the same with the number he invited. He might invite one or one hundred, for in this matter he was the sole judge. It was the same with God. It was He who spread the feast of grace. The world was open to His view and He saw that it was composed of sinners, everyone of whom was a rebel and therefore entitled to no favor. Whatever He does for them, therefore, in the way of blessing, must needs be of grace. Some men ask why an Almighty God does not save every body. It would be more to the purpose if they were to ask why He saves any body. Rowland Hill was fond of repeating the following triplet:

And when I shall die
 Receive me I cry,
 For Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why.

I agree with him. I believe "the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me," but if you ask me why, apart from grace, He did it I am dumb, for I have nothing to say excepting this—God is love.

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A certain man made a great supper *and bade many*. How many? All those who labor and are heavy laden under the burden of sin. Matt. xi, 28. Any others? All who hunger and thirst after righteousness. "Ho," cries the God of all grace, "every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters." Isa. lv, 1. "I am the bread of life," cries the Saviour, "he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John vi, 35. There is yet another class who are specially invited for "unto the poor the gospel is preached," Mat. xi, 5, and so those who have no money may freely come. Are there no others? Yes! and here are some of them. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Christ came to invite sinners to taste His gospel dainties, His bread of life, His "well of water springing up into everlasting life," and if we are so dull of comprehension as not to be able to understand whom He invites to come to His love feast He says, "And the Spirit and the bride says Come. And let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come, And *whosoever will* let him take the water of life freely. "Thus we see that the invitations of the blessed Son of God to come to the great supper are world wide, and include the whole human race.

But who gives the invitation to the feast of grace? Much depends upon that. Suppose Her Majesty the Queen was to invite any of her subjects to dine with her. That would be accounted an honor. But suppose that the invitation was slighted, that would

be accounted an insult to the Queen. But what if the invitation comes from Him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, how much greater the honor, and if slighted, how much greater the insult. Mark the language made use of in the parable of the great supper when the servants told their Lord how slightly His gracious invitation had been treated, "Then the master of the *house being angry* said to his servants go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind." The master of the house is justly indignant at the way his invitations had been received and so he turns away from those who had trifled with them, and invited others, and these the poorest and the meanest to be found in the city. The Jews and the Gentiles are here brought before us, and the Jews come first. But they slighted God's offers of grace, for being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. Alas for them ! Their hatred and contempt for the grace of God, their lofty estimate of themselves cost them dear, and for eighteen centuries they have been scattered abroad over the wide world, tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast, a proverb, a by-word, a hissing, and a contempt to all men, nor are their sufferings ended yet. Men are accustomed to say that all this was because of the fearful invocation of their forefathers in that awful hour when Jesus stood before the governor. "His blood be upon us

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and upon our children." But this is only a partial truth for had they repented of their sin even after Jesus had been raised from among the dead all would have been well. Mark the words of Peter to them after the healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple "Repent therefore and be converted, for the blotting out of your sins, *so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and He may send Jesus Christ, who was fore-ordained for you,* whom heaven indeed must receive till the times of the restoring of all things," (Acts iii, 19-21. New Translation.) Thus we see that the mercy of God still lingered over them and all that was required for restoration to the favor of God was repentance. But what will happen to this guilty nation even now if they were to repent? Let the word of God answer that question. "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespasses which they have trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto Me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumsized hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, will I remember; and I will remember the land." Lev. xxvi, 40-42. For the covenants see Gen. vii, 3-8, chap. xx, 2-5, chap. xxviii, 12, 7.

"THE LORD IS WITH ME."

SOME months ago on arriving at the — hospital I saw, by the notice in the hall, that one of the leading surgeons was to operate that morning on three different cases, and so, with a number of other students, I went to the operating theatre to see them performed. The first case having been dealt with the patient was carried to the ward, and while the second was being brought down the surgeon gave a history of the case, his diagnosis, and how he proposed to deal with it, "But, gentlemen," said he, "I am almost afraid to use the knife, as the patient is an old and feeble woman, and yet something must be done." The large tumor which was wearing her strength away was of a cancerous nature. Just then the door opened and a woman bent with age and infirmity came in supported on either side by a nurse. The surgeon went forward, and in a kindly manner, as he took her by the hand and assisted the others in placing her on the operating table, said: "Now, don't be afraid." I shall never forget her face as, with something like a smile, she replied: "Oh, no doctor, the Lord is with me," and then with a look of perfect peace of mind she submitted to the inhalation of the chloroform, and so the operation went on and with a successful result.

As I sat there and looked on the many faces around I wondered how many, if they were called upon to face such a severe operation, could have done so with such confidence as this poor old woman who in all her feebleness could boldly say, "The Lord is with me,"

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confident that to be absent from the body is but to be present with the One who died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. (1 Peter iii, 18.) Can we wonder that man should shrink from death when it is written: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix, 27.) Especially when God has given us His estimate of man, "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. iii, 10.) Education and position may give us a certain standing and our words a certain weight, in the eyes of the world, but God, "before whom all things are naked and open," has said, "there is no difference." (Rom. iii, 22.) Well may it be said: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. x, 31.) What a contrast to those who through grace, can say, "Being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. v, 1.) This alone can give security in life and boldness in death.

Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord we do persuade you, dear reader, to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ if you have not done so. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." (Isa. lix, 2), and because He saw that we could never bridge over the distance which separated Him from us He came in the person of Christ that He might reconcile the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; but He was rejected, and now it is written: "He hath made Him to be sin, for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (See 2 Cor. v. 11-21.)

INFIDEL FATHER, OR PIOUS MOTHER ?

I N the United States of America, infidelity found an active champion in the well known Colonel ———, who made an open profession of his disbelief of revealed religion. It happened that a daughter of the Colonel's, to whom he was very much attached, became ill. During the progress of her disorder Dr. ——— was one day dining with the Colonel and after dinner, having adjourned to the library, some deistical publications were introduced by the Colonel to the Doctor's notice. While they were occupied in looking at them, a servant came to announce that an alarming change had taken place in his daughter, and that his presence was required in her bedroom. Thither he went, accompanied by Dr. ———. As he approached her bedside, she shook his hand, and said, "Father, I feel that my end is drawing near ; tell me, I entreat you, am I to believe what you have taught me, or what I have learned from my mother ?" Her mother was a sincere Christian, and had spared no opportunity of instilling christian truth into the mind of the child. Her father paused a moment, he fixed his eyes on his dying child, his countenance changed, his frame seemed convulsed to its very centre, while his quivering lips could scarce give utterance to the words, "Believe, my child, what your mother has taught you." The struggle was too great, the conflict between the pride of human reason and the swelling of parental affection in the heart was more than he could bear, and even over his stubborn mind the truth prevailed.