

THE SOWER.

THE WORDLESS BOOK.

A little book of four colors, Black, Red, White and Gold.

A blackened page—
“Oh ! God,” I cried,
“Is this my soul?—
Is there not one white spot
Within the whole”?—
His Spirit answered to my groan
All is corrupt from foot to crown.”

Isa. i. 6.

A crimson page—
“And is this all
For loathsome sin!—
Nothing for me to do,
Nothing to win?”—
He answered only “when I see
The blood, I will pass over thee.”

Exodus xii.

A fair white page—
“Oh ! may I dare
To hope for this !
Shall I not see and thus
His mercy miss?”—
“Complete in comeliness, which I
Have put upon thee ” was His cry.

Ezekiel xvi, 14.

A golden page—
My destiny!—
Too great, too high
For such a worm as I
Those glories lie”—
His heart rang out its mighty claim
“That they be with me where I am.”

St. John xvii, 24.

Oh! colors blend
 Within my heart,
 Wrought in and sealed by love
 In whole, not part—
 As colors hid within the sun,
 Shine through eternity as one.

ONE SACRIFICE.

“WITHOUT shedding of blood there is no remission.”

“When I see the *blood*, I will pass over you.” (Exodus xii. 13.)

“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” (St. John xix. 34.)

“The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from *all sin*.” (1 John i. 7.)

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” (Revelation v. 11-12.)

Are you sheltered by that precious blood, or is your head uncovered to death, and all sin's curse?

PEACE, PEACE, WHEN THERE IS NO
PEACE.

IF we consider the value of an immortal soul in the light of scripture, we shall not think any care or anxiety too much for its salvation. Sometimes it may be a great trial to an affectionate heart to disturb the repose of one who is apparently dying, but unprepared for death. A false peace, a false hope, has lulled the soul to sleep on the slippery brink of hell. The delusion of Satan has been successful. But, alas, the question of sin has never been raised, the holiness of God has never been thought of, the conscience has never been exercised, and God, as the judge of sin, is unknown.

When this is apparent, what is to be done? There must, unquestionably, be plain speaking, however tender the affection. It is a question of life and death—of eternal life and eternal death. We must see and bring such an one face to face with God about sin; as the Psalmist expresses it, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight; that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." It is only in such close quarters with God that the sinner can learn God's thoughts about sin, and about himself as a sinner. But those who have had the experience of such visits to sick chambers, know the difficulties and hindrances attending such work. The sleepy conscience is unwilling to be disturbed, God's estimate of sin is a most unwelcome sound;

fond but foolish friends, flattering the already deceived soul to its eternal ruin; the faithful messenger, if he ventures to say that the loved one is still unsaved, may be considered unkind, uncharitable, unfeeling, if not cruel. This, however, thank God, is not often the case.

Take one case in point: the circumstances are still fresh in my memory, though in giving details I may leave out some words and add others.

A christian friend asked me to visit her sister who was supposed to be dying of consumption, but unconverted. The widowed mother with whom she lived, was also unconverted, but both very self-righteous, very satisfied with themselves. I was well known to them by name, through the sister, and had a hearty welcome. So long as the conversation was somewhat general, we were all happy; but the mother leaving the room gave me an opportunity of speaking plainly to the daughter about the state of her soul. She was, as some would say, quite happy, she was quiet and peaceful. Thank the Lord, I said, dear S., and you know now, do you, that your sins are all forgiven—all washed away by the precious blood of Jesus? You do not doubt that now, do you, dear S.? She was now looking very straight into the fire, and evidently troubled, but did not satisfy me with her answer. In effect, I repeated the same question, looking rather anxiously for an answer. But this was new ground for the young formalist, and I saw she was troubled or nervous at being left alone with me,

though I had come on purpose to talk with her about her soul.

After shifting the subject a little, I again returned to the important question of our sins, and asked her if she did not think this was the first great question to be settled between us and God—the forgiveness of sins? That this subject brought before us so many other subjects that I should be delighted to talk to her about, such as the cross, the love of Jesus that brought Him down to die for us, and the power of His blood; but no, she gave me to understand that she did not wish to converse on these subjects, and wished her mother would come in. I assured her that I was only speaking in the truest love for her soul, for we were all alike guilty before God, and unless our sins are all forgiven through faith in the blood of Christ, we could not possibly enter heaven; that one single sin would be enough to shut her out of heaven and to shut her up in hell for ever, and nothing but the blood of Christ could cleanse them all away. Here I was interrupted with a loud scream for her mother. The mother came in at once; the daughter, in a whining voice, calling out, "I don't want Mr. — to speak to me in this way, I wish he would not speak to me any more, he makes me so unhappy." By this time the mother had her arms around her neck, soothing and patting her peevish child; but her words of consolation are never to be forgotten by me: "You should not be unhappy, my dear, you know you were so happy yesterday when Mr. H. called and read a chapter and prayed

with you, were you not? you told me you were quite happy?" "Yes mother but Mr. —— has made me quite miserable." "But you must not be miserable, my dear S., perhaps Mr. H. will call to-morrow and see you."

The rest of our conversation need not be recorded. The mother endeavored to explain to her daughter that I meant it all for good; and to apologize to me for the weakly, nervous state of her daughter. After a few words of solemn warning to both, we parted; I never saw her again.

But, oh! how can I speak of the fearful delusion? How can I sound out from the pages of "The Sower" the suitable warning voice? How can I impress on all who have to do with sick chambers and death-beds, the importance of plain and faithful dealing with the immortal soul? Graven deeply on my memory were these awful words of false consolation, "You know you were so happy yesterday when Mr. H. called and read a chapter and prayed with you." "But what," ten thousand voices in Christendom will ask, "what more, what better, could a minister do than read a chapter to the sick and offer up a prayer?" In some circumstances, we reply, nothing more, nothing better; and we are free to say, that many in their ministerial calls do much less. But in the case before us it only lulled the conscience into a deeper sleep in sin; she being still unconverted, still "dead in trespasses and sins," still unawakened as to her real state as a sinner, still ignorant of the character of God, His hatred of sin as shewn in the

work of Christ, and her need of pardon, just as much as the very chief of sinners. Close dealing with the conscience, in dependence on God, while the soul is in this state, is the visitor's only mission. Searching conversation and prayer, with texts bearing on this subject, must be his only weapons. No soul is ever serious, ever real, ever true, until it has been brought face to face with the living God, and entered in some measure into His thoughts of sin.

Were it not as a warning voice to all visitors, and for the eternal welfare of immortal souls, we should never think of bringing before the public eye such private scenes. But all false delicacy must give way when the truth of God, the glory of Christ, and the salvation of the soul are concerned. And we can honestly say, that while we cherish in our hearts nothing but love for all those to whom this paper relates, we cannot but lament over that scene with a loud and bitter lamentation. Who so loved, so trusted, so unsuspected, as a minister, and a mother? The countenance of the invalid brightens up at the sound of his footstep, and so it should be when he is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. His kindly inquiries, his familiar voice in reading and prayer, how soothing! and rightly so, when Christ is known and loved. But if the same thing be done to the unconverted, the mere formalist, or the young lady who lived in pleasure, how dangerous! But more, alas, how eternally ruinous! The only two, perhaps, in the whole world whose word she would have received

without a question, are thus used of Satan to deepen the self-delusion of her never-dying soul. To drop from a mother's arms, and from under the sound of a flattering priestly benediction into the dreary depths of hopeless woe, is so dreadful an end, that it calls for the most faithful, earnest, solemn warning. The truth however painful, must be told.

But the picture is too awful to contemplate; we cannot pursue it further. The Lord grant that it may be a warning to all mothers, ministers, preachers, pastors, and visitors, of every kind and measure. Let the first inquiry be, is thy soul saved? All further service must proceed on the ascertained fact. And much spiritual discernment is needed for this blessed work. So many deceive themselves. Numbers will say they are quite happy, just because they have never done anything very bad, and they may have taken pleasure in religious duties, in acts of charity, and in other good works. Such will readily say, that they are quite happy, and would not be afraid to die at any moment, though they have not the slightest idea of their condition as sinners, or that in God's sight they need a Saviour just as much as the drunkard or the blasphemer. This is a hard lesson for all to learn, especially for the self-righteous and the morally good; but the word of God says, "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

But what says my reader to all this? Surely thou hast learnt in glancing over these pages, that the right way is to come at once, without delay,

without hesitation, to Christ Himself, the loving Saviour of sinners. This is His own way—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Nothing can be plainer, nothing can be surer, and nothing can be more easily understood. The soul will never be deceived or disappointed that trusts in the blessed Jesus; as we read in Psalm ii, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." But there is no blessing, remember, to any soul under the whole heavens, apart from trusting in Him. He, and He alone, is the rock-foundation of the soul. Thou hast then, my dear reader, but one question to ask: Is He worthy of thy trust? Thou wilt surely answer, Yes; yes, I see He is fit to be trusted with the whole heart. Then this is faith; being satisfied of this, the heart is at rest; we straightway believe.

Henceforth let me entreat thee to maintain the most direct communion between thy soul and Himself. Read for thyself, examine for thyself, believe for thyself, trust for thyself, hope for thyself. Christianity is an intensely individual thing. All priestly confessors belong to the apostasy. Sacramental grace, or hoping to be saved by attending to the ordinances of the church, is fatal delusion. Trust not thy precious soul to the care of others; it is only safe in Christ's hands. Thou mayest accept of the service of others in so far as that will help *thee* to *Him*; but reject everything that would come between *thee* and *Him*—that would prove as the lullaby of Satan to sing thy soul to sleep unsaved.

SIN.

The Lord commanded saying, every man shall die for his own sin. (2 Chron. xxv. 4).

Thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin. (Job. x. 6).

When thou shalt make *His* soul an offering for sin He shall see His seed. (Isa. liii. 10).

He bare the sin of many. (Isa. liii. 12).

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. (St. John i. 29).

Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24).

All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii. 23).

Blessed is he whose sin is covered. (Psa. xxxii. 1).

Said *He*, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. (Heb. x. 9).

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. v. 21).

I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgression for *Mine own* sake, and will not remember thy sins. (Isa. xliii. 25).

“God who knew them laid them on Him.”

In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. (Ephes. i. 7).

Acquaint *now thyself with Him*, and be at peace. (Job. xxii. 21).

Saviour, *my sin was borne* by Thee,
I take Thy gift and I am free
Now and through all eternity.

Saved by Thy precious blood alone,
All else in heaven could not atone,
Vainly an angel's blood might flow,
In Thee alone God quenched our woe,
Oh! blessed Substitute, for me
Undone; that mighty agony!
Rise, cleansed and spotless, I am free.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

MEN will take the water of the gospel to purify Adam's children, and leave the blood on one side. But He came "Not by water only, but by water and blood;" and the blood comes out of a dead Christ—the witness of the judgment of Adam and his children, and a total breach with God.

ONLY TWENTY MINUTES.

“I will tell you the greatest vexation of my life,” said an Australian colonist to me one day.

“In the year 1849 I went up to B——when gold was being found in large quantities. There was a great rush. I discovered a very promising spot, and went in all haste to secure the claim. On my way I met an old chum whom I had not seen for years. He was in great spirits, and insisted on my returning back to have refreshments and smoke a cigar just for old friendship’s sake. Most reluctantly and with many misgivings I went with him. We had our refreshments, and parted.

“I went to secure the claim, and found myself twenty minutes too late. Disappointed and vexed, I looked out another spot, which, however, was not to my mind. The man who had secured the first claim made a handsome fortune from it in a short time. While he was turning out immense nuggets, gold almost in shovelfuls, I was breaking my tools, my health, and my heart amongst useless rubbish, till at length sick, despairing, and penniless, I gave it up and came away. It is now more than twenty years since: I have worked hard for a living; I am a poor man to this day, and shall end my days in hard work, a poor man. For a friendly chat and a cigar I lost the one opportunity of my life. That opportunity came and went in twenty minutes. When I am weary and hard pressed, the remembrance

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of that lost claim worries and maddens me. To go against ones own *judgment and interests merely to please another—what a fool!*”

Reader, your one great opportunity for eternity may come and go in twenty minutes, your stake is greater than the gold-digger's. A lost claim for heaven! Unsearchable riches lost in a moment of crisis! Your soul lost!

The loss of gold is much
The loss of health is more,
But the loss of Christ is such a loss
As no man can restore.

DEAR reader, do you trust the precious blood of Christ? God is satisfied with it as an atonement for all your sin and guilt. He has assured thee of this beyond the region of doubt by quickening, raising, and seating at His own right hand the Lamb, who, in His own blessed body on the tree, bore the sinner's doom—wrath, death and judgment. Now He is exalted and glorified, and the Holy Ghost has come down from heaven to tell thee of the blood that cleanseth, which saveth, which justifieth, which gives forgiveness of sins,—which entitles the believing sinner to glory, and clothes him with a divine righteousness; and, which is better far, exalts the marvellous grace, and exhibits and glorifies the character of the justifying Saviour-God.

THE SANDS OF TIME ARE SINKING.

READER, do you at all realize how rapidly time is passing, and how soon, how very soon the waters of forgetfulness will close over your head? In a very little while you will only be remembered here by, it may be, two or three, and every effort to recall you to the minds of many whom you now know will be in vain. "Let me see, I think I have a faint recollection of some such person as the one you speak of, but I am quite unable to recall any connecting circumstances."

I would ask you if there is not some one whose good opinion you value, whose favor you cultivate, and whose repulsion of you would be most bitter and galling, and the thought of whom arises in your mind when the Spirit of God is bringing before you, the ruined and lost condition in which you are; the inevitable consequences of your course of sin, and the pressing necessity for an immediate closing with God's offered mercy. Some one, who although exercising such an influence over your conduct and motives will soon like yourself have passed into oblivion as to this scene, and as the successive ages of ages roll on their unchanging course through an endless eternity, and you a lost soul enduring an anguish and a misery unalleviated by a single ray of mercy, your remembrance of the baneful, and as you will then see the contemptible influence which barred your way to a life of blessed-

ness here, and of unalloyed joy hereafter will but increase your mental sufferings, the poignancy of your remorse and despair.

The ninety-fifth year of this century is now on the wane; it will soon have followed its predecessors down the long vista of time. How many of them have you known? Can you point to one of these rapidly receding figures and say, That one is dear to me, for during his existence I was born again, and brought into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Or, as you thoughtfully contemplate one and another in the long procession, do you think of a time, perhaps many of them, when you felt the burden of your sins, a desire for forgiveness, and a vague hope that you might after this life of unrest and disappointment, be received into those blest abodes, and be the guest, the companion of the glorious Person who is the attraction and centre of all?

The hand now guiding the pen which makes this appeal to you, will soon have mouldered into dust, or have been changed into incorruptibility, but the mind occupied with the lines you are reading, yours and mine, will be in activity forever and ever. Oh! how can I impress you with the reality of eternity, how can I arouse you to a sense of the value of your never-dying soul! What mind can conceive, what tongue can express the tremendous issues at stake which so many, perhaps yourself, think so lightly of!

Reader, why should you trifle or dally with this question longer? Why not now, the last month of

the year, perhaps the last of your months, settle once and forever the momentous question of your soul's salvation?

Do you believe what is written in the word of God? It tells you that you are a sinner and have come short of His glory; it tells you that by the deeds of the law, by anything you could possibly do, you never can be justified; it tells you moreover that God in His love for the world gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should never perish but have everlasting life; and finally it tells of an inheritance in heaven reserved for believers which is undefiled and which fadeth not away.

THE SANDS OF TIME ARE SINKING. You have doubtless heard of those deadly quick-sands upon which the unwary traveller essaying to walk, has found himself sinking. His frantic efforts to extricate himself are unavailing, and as he sinks out of sight in the awful vortex, his shrieks for help are forever hushed in the silence of death; he perishes; a victim of his own folly. A picture of yourself, sinner.

Oh! I beseech you, lay hold of eternal life. Come to the Saviour; whosoever cometh unto Him, He will in no wise cast out, and hereafter, whether here or above, you will remember with the liveliest feelings of joy and thankfulness, the closing days of