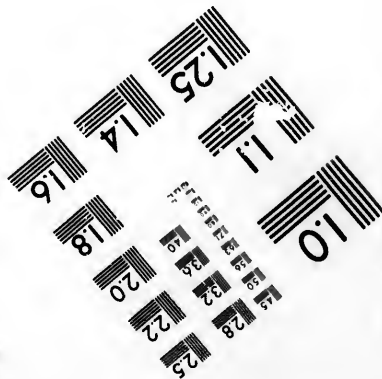
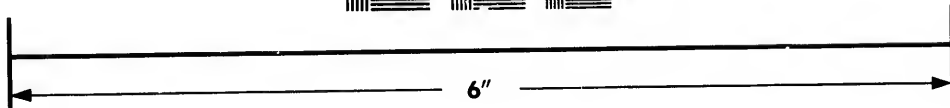
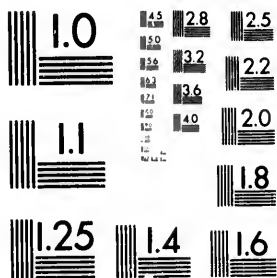


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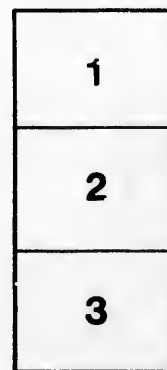
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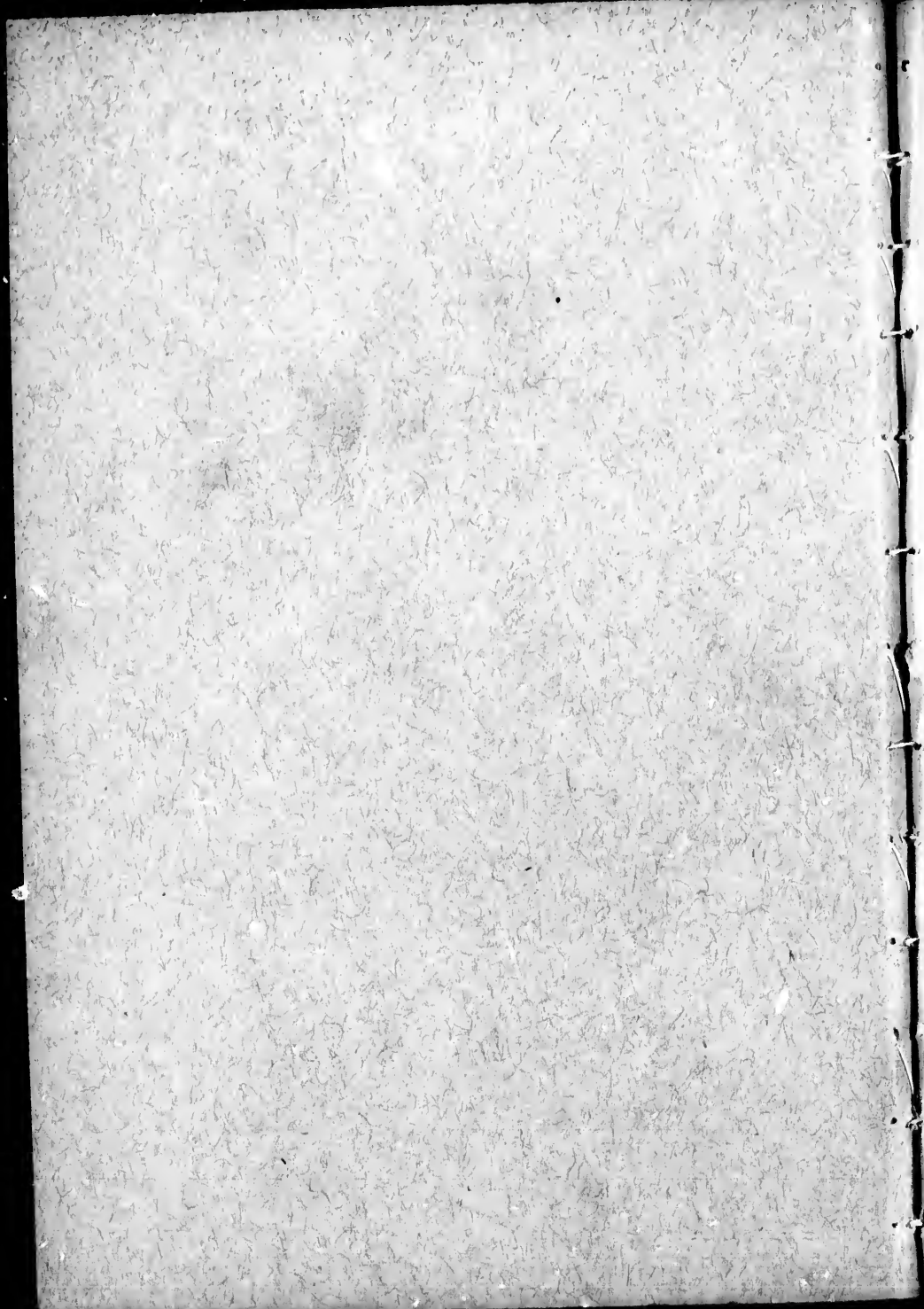
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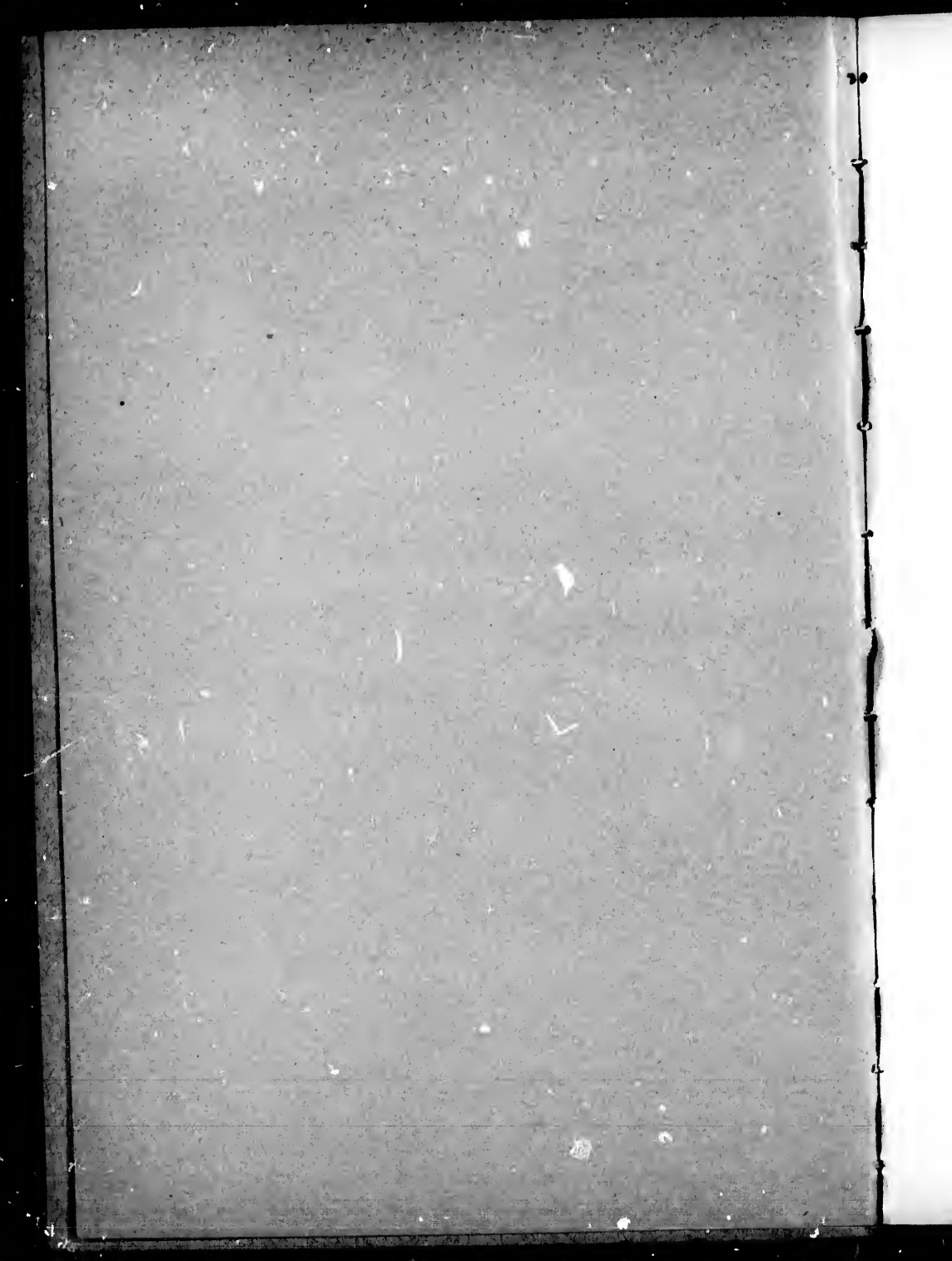


“SAVED BY HOPE.”

ROMANS VIII. 24.

BY REV. ROBERT FOWLER, M.D, M.R.C.S.E.





Voices from the Sick Room.



“SAVED BY HOPE.”

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P R E F A C E .

THE writer of the following lines having been confined to the bed of sickness for some months, was much touched with two poems of the late Thomas Hood. One, designated "I Remember, I Remember," closing with the sad and touching lines—

"I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high,
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky.
It was a childish ignorance ;
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm further off from heaven
Than when I was a boy."

The other poem is designated "Autumn," and reads as follows :—

"The autumn is old,
The sere leaves are flying,
He hath gathered up gold,
And now he is dying :
Old age, begin sighing.

"The vintage is ripe,
The harvest is heaping
But some that have sowed
Have no riches for reaping :
Poor wretch, fall a-weeping.

“The year’s in the wane,
There is nothing adorning,
The night has no eve,
And the day has no morning :
Cold winter gives warning.

“The rivers run chill,
The red sun is sinking,
And I am grown old,
And life is fast shrinking :
Here’s enow for sad thinking.”

It is deeply affecting to realise the expression of the absence of all hope from the human heart which these two poems portray ; and it is sad to think how true are these lines to all earthly things, and to all human hearts, apart from the hope which Christianity inspires.

“The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

How many human hearts, on the review of life, think Thomas Hood’s thoughts, and feel the power of his words. It is the glory of Christianity, when all earthly sources fail, to give hope in heaven above and beyond the grave, and it is the prayer and trust of the writer of the following verses to cheer and comfort some bruised and hopeless hearts with the hope that the Gospel of Jesus contains. May God bless this effort for His Son’s sake.

ROBERT FOWLER.

SAVED BY HOPE.



“FOR WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE.”

—Romans viii. 24.

WHAT human heart but feels for thee?
Consumed with inward misery,
Almost has died life's feverish dream,
Almost dried up the joyous spring.

Gone has the sparkle from the wine,
No more the song, the glowing shine
Of lamps lit in the festal hall,
The circling dancers in the ball.

The music hushed, the guests are gone,
No laugh rings round the banquet room;
All, all is silent, still and dark—
Not one is left but thy poor heart.

Thee and thy aching, saddened heart,
That mourns in loneliness apart,
And turns in thought to memory—
The days of pure and childish glee,

The sweet, sweet thoughts of precious home,
The first bright blush of early morn,
The waking up refreshed by sleep,
Thy mother's yearnings warm and deep;

And the world clad in mantle bright,
Which seemed illumed with Heaven's pure light ;
A father's and a sister's love,
A brother's presence thee did move.

All was enrobed in beauty given
Rich from thy Father, God in heaven.
How sweet the song of early bird,
The murmuring of the ocean heard,

The rustling of the jasmine leaves,
The gentle wavings of the trees,
The towering of the slender pines,
The purple grapes upon the vines,

The cooings of the turtle-doves,
The croonings of their springtide loves,
The richest odour of the flowers,
The sunshine of the brightened hours,

The throbbing heart of gushing joy,
The happiness without alloy,
No conscious guilt of foul offence,
The bliss of childhood's innocence.

Well may you grieve to see them gone,
And thou the left, the lonely one ;
Their names upon the sculptured stone,
The glory from thy life has flown.

A lamb lost in the wilderness,
Encompassed round with sore distress ;
The roaring lion prowling near,
The growling of the hungry bear ;

And gruesome thunder, muttering low,
Louder and deeper still doth grow,
Tells that the coming bursting storm
Will find thee shelterless, alone.

Like to the partridge, maketh moan,
On Bashan's mountains hunted down,
Pursued by falcon merciless,
Cruel and fierce and pitiless,

Falls fluttering, gasping on the ground—
No rescuer for her is found ;
Thy soul to this resource doth fly,
“ Would God I'd died in infancy ! ”

How little thinks the enraptured world,
Whose inmost soul is deeply stirred
To hear thy charming, tuneful song
Pour its rich melody along.

'Tis but the wailing of the harp
Wells from a bruised and bleeding heart,
Just like delicious mignonette,
Trampled beneath the crushing feet,

Which sendeth up more sweet perfume
The more 'tis crushed and trampled down.
Lost art thou ? lost, thou bleating lamb ?
Ah ! lost for evermore I am.

The past, irreparable past,
A priceless heritage, is lost ;
Sold, sold for nought that heritage :
The present one vast wilderness.

Future is girt with darkness round—
Blackness of darkness how profound !
Heaven never can approached be
By me to all eternity.

And many a heart like thine is lone,
Wishes it from this world had gone
Ere the dark days to life had come—
Days of despair and bitter moan ;

And pours the unavailing cry—
“ Would God I'd died in infancy ! ”
Poor hopeless soul, who thus art tossed,
Be sure as yet thou art not lost.

There's One descending from the Throne—
The Father's dear and only Son—
To save the lost from Heaven has come,
To bring thee to His heavenly home.

He bore a dreadful agony,
To save thee on the Cross did die ;
He conquered all thy mighty foes
When He o'er death triumphant rose.

And though His form thou canst not see,
Yet know He's very near to thee.
The tear-drop moistens in His eye,
His ear is listening to thy sigh ;

His arm's outstretched to take thee in,
He's waiting to forgive thy sin.
Oh, hear Him pleading hard with thee
That thou into His arms mayst flee.

"To you, to you a Son is given—
Ancient of days, the God of Heaven."
He is thy Saviour—He alone :
He paid with blood thy ransom down.

"Fear not, for tidings glad I bring :
To you is born in Bethlehem
A Saviour which is Christ the Lord"—
Most true this precious Gospel word.

“The wage of sin is endless death—
The gift of God eternal life.”
This is a saying grandly true
That “Jesus Christ is seeking you.”

And “worthy of acceptance this
To sinners He gives righteousness.”
Most dread and awful is the crime
When man sheds blood of brother man.

The earth that blood will not conceal,
But aye to God doth loud appeal,
And cries for vengeance on the one
Who shed that blood at God’s white throne.

That blood shall be required of him—
His hand, his soul, is steeped in sin—
It casts a horrid crimson stain,
It oceans would incarnadine.

And when the Archangel’s trump shall blow,
“Come forth, ye dead, to judgment now,”
Then shall the murderer appear,
As, dipped in blood, with shivering fear

Shall stand before the bar of God
Bathed in the gore of brother's blood ;—
Shall stand before the great white throne
Trembling and shivering, all alone.

Then shall be filled with wrath the cup,
And he shall drain and wring it out ;
Yet while on earth his life is spared
The Mediator's prayer is heard.

And if he do repent his sin
Christ's open arms will take him in :
Himself will take the dreadful cup,
And in his stead will drink it up.

His soul will wash as white as snow—
God's full forgiveness he shall know.
Look up, poor soul, to Heaven, look up,
God's Holy Book is full of hope.

Be sure of this, thy soul shall know
The love He doth to sinners show ;
The Holy Spirit from above
Shall tell thee that His name is Love.

“What must I do to gain His grace,
To find Him in this wilderness?”
Poor, sorrowing soul, 'tis only look—
A simple, earnest, child-like look,

Is all he asks to win His grace,
To find Him in this wilderness.
Go mark the blush of early dawn,
Go breathe the freshening breeze of morn,

Mark the first glowings of the sky,
And hear the songsters' minstrelsy ;
Oh, see the grass like emerald green,
Above, around an ocean stream

Of grand and glorious beauteousness—
A feast of sweetest loveliness.

What hast thou done to make this scene?—
One blade of grass? one golden gleam

Of Heaven's serene and holy light
(Which has dethroned the ebon night) ?
Has He not spread the molten sky
Like to a looking-glass on high,

And poured it forth before thy sight,
Arrayed in pure and gorgeous light?
Do you not see the mystery plain?
'Tis God's free gift to sinning man,

And all you have to do is look—
Then drink the sparkling, brimming cup.
Look at thyself—ah, couldst thou make
One single hair or white or black?

Or to thy stature He hath wrought,
Hast thou or canst thou help Him aught?
Art thou not then His work alone—
His dear, His prized, His much-loved son?

What wouldst thou do for thy own child
If, on this night so dark and wild,
He, in his childish ignorance,
Had wandered in this wilderness?

And think you He forgets His son
Lost in the wilderness, alone?
What must I do? all, all is dark,
I cannot see a single spark

Of light. The heavens are black,
 The sky is girt with adamant
 To faith's calm gaze and voice of prayer
 That adamant must disappear.

Think, think, yea think, oh, think again,
 Behold upon the Syrian plain
 The rich and sparkling canopy
 Of golden lamps enthroned on high,

And standing there a lonely man.
 What is his name? 'Tis Abraham.
 His body now is old and dead
 (Life cannot spring from out the dead).

But this he now considers not,
 Fixes his eyes on heaven's grand vault
 And hears the word of God on high:
 Behold, behold this glorious sky,

Bedeck'd with shining, sparkling gems,
 All clothed in heaven's magnificence;
 Such shall thy future offspring be,
 As numberless thy progeny—

Nations as numerous as the sand,
That circles round the ocean strand.
He listened to the mighty word—
The word of an Eternal God—

And gave Him praise, uplift his voice
In songs and thanks and raptured joys ;
Full well he knew with God the Lord
There nothing is that is too hard.

Do thou, like him, consider not
Thy soul so dead by Him forgot,
But trust the Gospel of the Lord,
The oath of a most truthful God.

But tell me, tell me, tell me when—
Thou kind and good Samaritan—
When is the time that I should look ?
“ Read for thyself the Holy Book.”

Himself has spoke the changeless word—
“ Now ” is the time to trust the Lord ;
“ Now ” is the time thou shouldst take home,
Home to thyself salvation.

Thou never canst more needy be,
Nor ever worthier to see
His face in peace, or merit grace,
Add of thy own a righteousness.

"Twill ever be salvation free,
A gift of God unwrought by thee.
It seems, it seems impossible
That I should change this wilderness,

This darkness dense, this desert vast,
For the bright brightness of His face,
For the refulgent shining light
That blinds the seraph's dazed sight
Of Heaven His home, its purity,
Its endless, vast felicity ;—
For just a look, a simple look,
Will the black darkness pass away ?
Will the forked lightning cease to play ?
And the wild storm, in full career,
Hush to a calm ? Be still the air—
Read thou again His holy Word,
The everlasting Word of God.

The dying thief exchanged the cross ;
Beside him Christ endured his curse,
And, lo ! that day his soul did rise—
With Jesus entered Paradise.

'Tis selfishness has been thy bane,
The secret root of all thy sin.
No more let feeling and thy word
Give lie to a most truthful God.

Himself hath sworn, howe'er thy sin
Hath overflowed and boundless been,
Much more His mercy shall abound—
Enfold, enwrap thee round and round.

But, ah, how thankless have I been ;
My black ingratitude to Him
Tells me I must be deep abhorred
By such a holy, holy God.

He saveth thee through faith alone,
For sake of His beloved Son.
What if, instead of unsheathed sword
To slay the enemy of God,

It pleaseth Him to load thee down
With mercies from His great white throne
Stay thou thy reasoning, give it o'er,
It grieveth Him yet more and more ;

Say to thy soul, " It is the Lord,
Be it according to His word,"
For mercy's work delighteth Him—
To pour an everlasting stream
Of boundless grace to save the lost,
The vilest, darkest, and the worst.

He'll warm thee with a close embrace,
And from this howling wilderness
Will bear thee all rejoicing home.
Angels shall give thee grand welcome,
Thy Heavenly Father clasp His son.

He'll wipe the tears from off thy face,
He'll robe thee with His righteousness,
And by His side shalt thou sit down
And share His everlasting throne.

The glory that thou mournedst as gone,
It shall again to thee return ;
With sevenfold brightness it shall shine,
And all its joy be ever thine.

Nor shall thy sin remembered be
Through all that vast eternity ;
Like to the stone by Gabriel thrown
Ten thousand thousand fathoms down,
Shall never more be found or known.

To God my Saviour glory be,
Who gave His blood to ransom me ;
To God the Father's boundless love
His Son to death which Him did move
Freely to render up for me ;
And God the Spirit, Holy One,
Who makes to me this Gospel known,
Glory for evermore shall be,
Glory to all eternity ! .



