

# THE SOWER.

---

There "might have been" no rock for sin-stained feet,  
There "might have been" no golden mercy-seat ;  
There "might have been" no resting-place in God  
If Jesus had not shed for me His blood.

There "might have been" no Father's heart for mine  
To lean upon, no changeless Friend, divine  
To strengthen, shelter, on the pilgrim road,  
If Jesus had not brought me nigh to God.

There "might have been" no blessed life of prayer,  
With Jesus knowing, bearing every care,  
No perfect peace, no precious path of trust,  
If Jesus had not raised me from the dust.

Oh! sinner, pause, lest bye-and-bye you cry  
There "might have been" a place for me on high,  
There might have been the light of Jesu's face  
If I had hearkened to His call of grace.

There might have been the hour of perfect rest,  
There might have been a place on Jesu's breast,  
There might have been the shelter from the strife,  
If I had let His Spirit give me life.

Lest in the terror of eternity you see,  
There "might have been" His endless joy for thee ;  
And from the misery of hell's abyss  
You cry "*There might have been eternal bliss.*"

## "FULNESS OF JOY."

POOR, deformed, full of bodily suffering, living in a back street of Brighton, Rosie R— perhaps would not seem to our eyes what she was to those of God: but the perishing cage held a singing, heroic soul, and in that misshapen form beat a heart, which many an one nursed in the lap of luxury and having drank deeply of earth's unsatisfying streams, might well envy. Going into a shop one day to buy some wool I saw what looked a child, and watched her also purchase some wool.

Her head hardly reached to the top of the counter, her thin, white cheeks told of suffering, but there was a ring of gladness in the voice, and a brightness in the eyes that told of some secret source of perfect peace.

I spoke to her and found she was buying some wool to dress dolls. Her mother was a poor widow suffering from heart complaint, earning a scanty living by needle-work, and this was her only child.

Getting to know her I found she suffered from abscess in the hip, and often from ulceration of the eyes, and that her lungs were weak, and almost every winter she was laid up with bronchitis or congestion. From insufficient food her constitution was very delicate, and often the doctor thought she must pass away, but the brave sov<sup>l</sup> struggled on, singing joyously within the suffering cage, working often when she could not stand, or get out of her bed, and

of  
bu  
lit  
tin  
pr  
to  
ev  
ch  
  
loc  
dra  
a h  
of  
am  
sion  
the  
livi  
bea  
the  
whi  
ratl  
does  
mea  
in s  
joy  
intel  
pres  
that  
rock,  
ye to  
away

often too when her eyes were giving her great pain, but the thought of helping her mother and earning a little, kept the poor thin fingers active, and all the time the heart was making melody by its notes of praise to Him who notes the sparrows fall. She used to get orders for baby's shoes, and to dress dolls, and every stitch was put in with the earnestness that characterized her whole being.

I found she was eighteen years of age, but she looked a child. The thin, sharp, face, so white and drawn told of unspeakable suffering, but the peace of a heart who had found One "fairer than the children of men," who had seen and heard the "Chiefest among ten thousand," shone in the radiant expression. Poverty, suffering and care, are ugly things in themselves; but just at that time I heard of a lady living in one of the mansions of Brighton, rich, clever, beautiful, whose death-bed was so terrible that even the nurse could not stay with her during the hours in which she was passing away. Which would you rather have been, the rich man or Lazarus? Poverty does not necessarily mean Christ, neither does wealth mean *without* Christ, but He can so fill the heart that in spite of the darkest circumstances there is perfect joy in the soul, and without Him the wealth and the intellect and the beauty all crumble away in the presence of death, leaving an awful blank to the soul that sinks down into the dark waters and finds no rock, no hope, no shelter. Aye! dear ones. Choose ye to-day. It will be your own fault if you pass away in anguish and darkness, instead of living in

joy and peace of heart in spite of all surroundings, like dear Rosie R——. Many a strong brawny man has gone to the mission room to hear the precious message "Come unto Me," at her gentle, pleading request. Many a time has a weary one come back from seeing her when at her worst physically, full of joy and comfort at the wondrous praise and triumph of the heart that was drinking so deeply of the "living waters," which were indeed a well of water, "springing up," and overflowing for Him.

Surely from that poor room and that bed of suffering, He could "eat His pleasant fruits." All her garments smelt of Lebanon, of the strength of the shadow under which she sat, for He had revealed *Himself*, and her heart was more than filled, it was overflowing with joy and satisfaction. To hear God's word, to have the "Bible explained," as she called it, was her greatest joy, and next to that, music. To drag her poor suffering body upstairs and sit by the piano when she spent the day in the house, and listen to hymns, was delight indeed. And one used to feel what would it be to her to be with Him, and bye-and-bye in the body like His, to look upon His face.

Some years passed away. One heard but seldom of her, having left the town, but whenever she wrote it was from a heart full of joy and a sense of His preciousness. But a little more than a twelvemonth ago a little gift was sent her, a very trifling one, without knowing the state of her health, and the following was received:—

"DEAR, DEAR, MADAM. I now have the very great

pleasure of writing to you. I have so often thought of you and felt I should like to hear if you were well. My dear madam, we wish to thank you for your very, very great kindness to us, but we feel we never could thank you enough, for we don't know how to put our feelings into words. It has helped us so very much for mother was able to pay the rent, and the grocer, and the baker, and get several things we needed. O we do feel so grateful to you. I am sorry to say I have been very ill. I had influenza first and it has settled on my lungs. I cannot *stand* alone now, but we hope when the weather gets warmer, and I can sit out of doors that I may gain a little strength. I do hope dear madam you are feeling better. I so often think of the nice little talk we had together in your little room, I have not forgotten what you said, and I never shall. O the Lord is good and I feel His presence with me. I have still got the little book you gave me, I like it so much. Dear madam, we could never forget you for when we look round the room there is the dear chair, that I should never have had if it were not for you, and also this fur cape I have on me *now*. How very much I should like to see you, but oh! you are such a long way off. Still I have the very great pleasure of writing to you, for (if I may make so bold as to say it,) I do truly love you.

From your humble servant, *Rose R—.*"

Such was the love and such the gratitude for a very trifling gift, and three days afterwards she passed away into the presence of Him who had loved her and given *Himself* for her.

Dear ones, have you ever shown love and gratitude to God for His great love in giving "His only-begotten Son that whosoever (you and I, mind) believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Giving Him up, not to be honoured and exalted and blest with all that earth and the world could shower upon His kingly head, but to be scorned, despised, spit upon, buffeted, treated as you and I would not treat the vilest wretch under the sun. God gave Him up to all that and worse, for you. And He laid down His life. "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." (John x. 18). Not because you and I loved Him.

"Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. v. 6). Not because we saw beauty in that blessed One. No—we would have smitten Him like those cruel ones, or have denied Him like Peter, but because *He loved us*. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O God." "The counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. vi. 13).

Have you ever believed His love? Have you ever accepted it? Have you ever thanked Him for it?

Some flowers and books were sent to R. R— from the shores of the Mediterranean, but they arrived too late. The wasted form was cold and still; the joyous heart was in His presence where there is the "fulness of joy," and could she speak now she would say more earnestly than ever, "My beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand . . . . Yea! He is altogether lovely." "The Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me." "*Come and see.*"

## ETERNAL LIFE A GIFT.

---

(JOHN III.)

---

HE said, "I must fulfill my vows; must be obedient; must do my duty; and I suppose Christ must do the rest." And mark, this was in order to obtain eternal life. This man, like everybody else, seemed to think he must do something to obtain this favor, but it is not so. Eternal life is the gift of God, and must be received by faith as presented in His word. (Rom. vi. 23). Why should men make such hard terms for themselves when God does not? He had utterly failed in his three self-presented *musts*; positively shut out the desired blessing by his own terms, and had to admit it. Still, he thought he had his part to do, and that Christ had His also to do. How blind he was to the terrible fact that his own part was already only too well done, that he was "condemned already," and that Christ's was a finished work on the cross hundreds of years ago, and that He is now in glory.

He saw his mistake when pointed out, but said, "Then I suppose I must do the best I can, and trust to the end, for this is all I can do." It was still himself and his doing, no thought yet of what Christ has done. He was again told of his utter failure, and that if he could do, or obtain eternal life through his own efforts, then Christ was dead in vain. He finally gave it up, and desired to know what then

was he to do. He was told that all that was necessary was done already; and God's two "musts" were pointed out to him, viz. "Ye *must* be born again," and "the Son of Man *must* be lifted up." Man being ruined in his very nature, must have a new life and nature; but also God must have a righteous basis upon which to impart life, and this is found in the atoning death of Jesus. "Sin has reigned unto death," but now Christ is on high, grace reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. v. 21). God's first *must* has found its answer by faith. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (I John v. 1). His *second* was accomplished when the Son of Man was lifted up on the cross, "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Ah!" said he, "that puts it in a new light, and I am thankful to know it." He had been "trying" for years but was never satisfied. *Now* he knew it was all finished, God was satisfied, glorified; he had eternal life by faith in the Son of God and knew it, being assured by His own word, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." (John vi. 47).

---

Had man simplicity enough to believe the testimony of God concerning himself as lost, under sin; and His testimony concerning Christ as the Saviour, he would be pardoned on the spot; for man can only be saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE THREE WARNINGS.  

---

A YOUNG man whose course of life for several years had been so desperately wicked as to attract more than a passing notice, had been brought on three several occasions to what was thought to have been his death-bed. Three times he had solemnly declared that he was repentant, and vowed that if God would be pleased to restore his health, the remainder of his life would be consecrated to his Creator and Redeemer. Three times, God who is patient, and merciful, heard his supplications and responded to them, but alas! his fears were no sooner dispelled, and the danger passed than he returned to his sins as "The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (II Pet. ii. 22), and like the unclean spirit in the parable (Luke xi. 26) "The last state of that man is worse than the first."

Again he was brought to his bed by a prolonged and dangerous illness; the most terrible agony possessed his spirit; prayers, readings, conversations did not appear to produce either hope or consolation. One day when he was in an agony of despair, he asked one who was seated near his bed to get the members of the family to retire to their rooms and pray for him. This they at once did and he was left alone. Whilst they were all engaged in prayer, (and as it was afterwards known, *at the same moment*) these terrible words came before the mind of each: "Because I have called,—and ye refused; I have stretched

out My hand,—and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." (Prov. i. 24-26). *Instantly*, and as they said *irresistably*, they returned to the room of the patient, and as they opened the door, the same awful words: "I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;" escaped with a great cry from the lips of the dying man. In an instant all was still; the silence of death succeeded to the cry of agony, and his spirit took its flight to its eternal destiny. (Heb. x. 29-31).

Readers, these warnings are for you! Do not follow such an example of unbelief. *Now* is the day of grace for you! Do not trifle with your convictions lest you drive away from you the Holy Spirit of God; have pity upon your own souls; "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." (Is. lv. 6-7); thus you will obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. iv. 14-16).

Thus saith the Almighty: "He, that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (II Cor. vi. 2).

---

"Lord, while our souls in faith repose  
 Upon Thy precious blood,  
 Peace like an even river flows,  
 And mercy like a flood."

“DEATH—AND AFTER?”

---

THIS is the much advertised title of a book, written by one who is not a believer in the simple truths of the gospel as revealed to us in God's word. Can such an one help us? Can such an one penetrate for us the dark mystery of the future? Man, who, by searching his own heart, would find out God's secrets, comes very near the fool who says in his heart “There is no God.” (Ps. xiv. 1). “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deut. xxix. 29). Can those who doubt revelation and declare that inspiration is a myth, can they give us anything *better* than God's word? Can they give us a surer foundation for our feet than those things which are revealed?

And death—and after? Does a wicked man, holden with the cords of his sins, like to contemplate it? Does the moral and delicate woman as she glances backward over her “harmless life” of amusement and selfishness, care to face it? Will the best of lives atone for *one sin*?

Let us then look at “death, and after” in the only light that is given to us, the page of revelation, God's holy word, every word of which is pure. (Prov. xxx. 5), and that has been handed to us in “words . . . which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” (I Cor. ii

13). Death, (except for those who will be caught up alive to meet the Lord in the air) is in the future for man, for God says, "It is appointed unto men once to die. (Heb. ix. 27) there is "a time to die." (Ecc. iii. 2), and "man goeth to his long home." (Ecc. xii. 5). For all, it has its terrors—it is the king of terrors. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. xv. 26).

Many there are who go on with life and its daily duties, and refuse to look death in the face; they seem asleep as regards their danger, like the man, who in spite of his friends' warnings, laid down to sleep for the night in his boat, which he had drawn up on the sandy beach of an island in the vast river which, lower down, sweeps over the mighty Niagara Falls. It is conjectured that during the night some change of wind caused the current to set in another direction and to reach and float his boat—at all events early the following morning some spectators beheld an apparently empty boat being carried towards the rapids at the head of the falls. To their horror however, they soon saw a man rise to his feet in the frail skiff. He frantically waved his arms and hat, and—in an instant, he and his boat were gone, never to be seen again. *Too late* he awoke from his fatal sleep and faced death, from which then there was no escape.

To you dear reader this need not be said. If till this moment you have been the victim of the devil's lullaby, you may awake *now*; if hitherto you have been careless or unaware of your danger you may be

w:  
(I  
an

(B  
th  
ha  
fo  
pu  
bo  
de:  
sti  
at  
fo

San  
wa  
A  
unl  
of  
pre  
(R  
thr

warned *now*—for "*Now* is the accepted time.' (II Cor. vi. 2), and *now* you may hear God's word and live.

And how are sin and its wages death, to be escaped? (Rom. vi. 23). The Lord Jesus has suffered for sins, the just one for the unjust. (I Pet. iii. 18), and He has tasted death for us. (Heb. ii. 9). "Christ died for our sins." (I Cor. xv. 3); then a believer is not punished for his sins, for Jesus bore them in His own body on the tree. (I Pet. ii. 24). "The sting of death is sin." (I Cor. xv. 56). For the believer the sting of death, which is sin, is gone, because Jesus atoned for his sins and tasted death for him, therefore we can say: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

To a believer death is the entrance of heaven. Satan who used to have the power of death in his hands was vanquished for ever when Jesus left the tomb. A believer then should not fear death, but an unbeliever—oh how different! He may well be afraid of "death, and after." Death will land him in the presence of God, and after death comes judgment. (Rev. xx. 12). Reader, may you be saved from both through faith in the Lord Jesus.

"Lord, Thy love has sought and found us,  
Wand'ring in this desert wide,  
Thou hast thrown Thine arms around us,  
For us suffered, bled and died:  
Sing, my soul, He loved thee,  
Jesus gave Himself for me."

## WHAT A CONTRAST.

ON a bitter cold night in mid-winter I was called from my bed to go ten miles over a bleak and drifted road, to see a young man who was sinking in the deep waters of death. He was but twenty years of age. He had been a Sunday-school scholar and a church goer. He knew all about the way of salvation. But he had broken away from all these hallowed influences of earlier years—he had yielded to the enticements of evil companions, and now he was dying without hope. The messenger who came for me in haste was one of those who had helped him on the way of darkness, but he could not lead him back to the light. I bade the dying youth look to Jesus—pled with him to look, but his wild and wandering eye could see no Saviour in the darkness that was gathering around him. His despairing look and heavy groan only answered “Too late, too late!” He kept sinking, sinking till the billows of death passed over him, and no word or sign of hope come from his dying lips.

As I went back to my home in the cold starlight of that winter morning, it seemed to me as if the icy north wind that swept the frozen earth and swayed the naked branches of the trees by the roadside, took up the refrain of those sad and despairing words, “Too late, too late!”

Again, in the same city, on a summer's afternoon, I was called to visit a dying man. I walked hastily

down by the river's side, where his humble dwelling stood in the midst of noisy workshops and surrounded with all the sounds and activities of busy life. I entered his lowly room and approached his bedside with awe as well as compassion, for I felt myself to be in the company of heavenly messengers, who were waiting to conduct an emancipated soul from the bed of death to the throne of glory. I felt that I must speak fit words for a redeemed and immortal spirit to remember as the last accents of human lips in this world. And I spoke of Him who is the light of heaven and the hope of earth. The man was dying in great agony, but he could still signify, by the pressure of his hand and the glance of his eye, that in Christ was all his hope, and that beneath him were the everlasting arms. He had lost the power of speech, but he wrote upon a slate with a wavering hand words that he wished to have read. I looked earnestly at the irregular lines, but could see no meaning. One word in the middle of the sentence was larger than the rest, and he pointed to that as if it contained the meaning of the whole. Still I could not spell it out. With dying energy he seized the pencil and slowly printed, "VICTORY." It was his last effort and it was enough. I could now read the whole sentence: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the VICTORY through our Lord Jesus Christ."

And as I went from that bedside to my home, it seemed to me as if the roar of the waterfall in the river, and all the sounds of busy life around me took up the word and echoed—VICTORY. And for many

a year my fainting heart has acquired new strength at the remembrance of that word, written with a dying hand in the chamber of death—VICTORY.

---

### A GREAT SINNER AND A GREAT SAVIOUR.

---

That eminent servant of God, Martin Luther, says, "Once upon a time came the devil to me with, 'Martin Luther, you are a great sinner, you will be damned.' Stop, stop, said I; one thing at a time. It is true I am a great sinner, though you have no right to tell me so. I confess to that. What next? Therefore I shall be damned. That is not good reasoning. It is true I am a great sinner; but it is written, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,' and therefore I shall be saved, so I cut the devil off with his own sword."

It is not the greatness of thy sins, reader, that bars thy blessing; for there is a Saviour who is greater than them all! What is wanted is the seeing Him for thyself as thy great Saviour, having faith in His word. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

---

God is love; and His love has reached even to this sin-ruined world. Though men despised and hated Him, He loved them. So in the fulness of time God sent His only begotten Son into the world; and it is a saying worthy of all acceptance, that HE CAME TO SAVE SINNERS; not to condemn, but to save.