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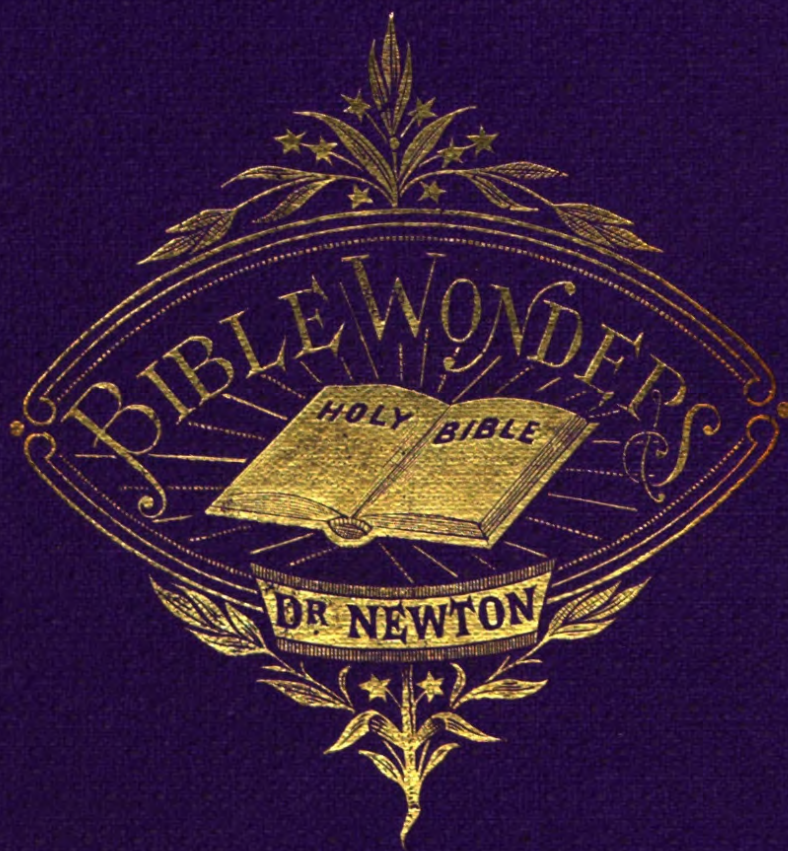
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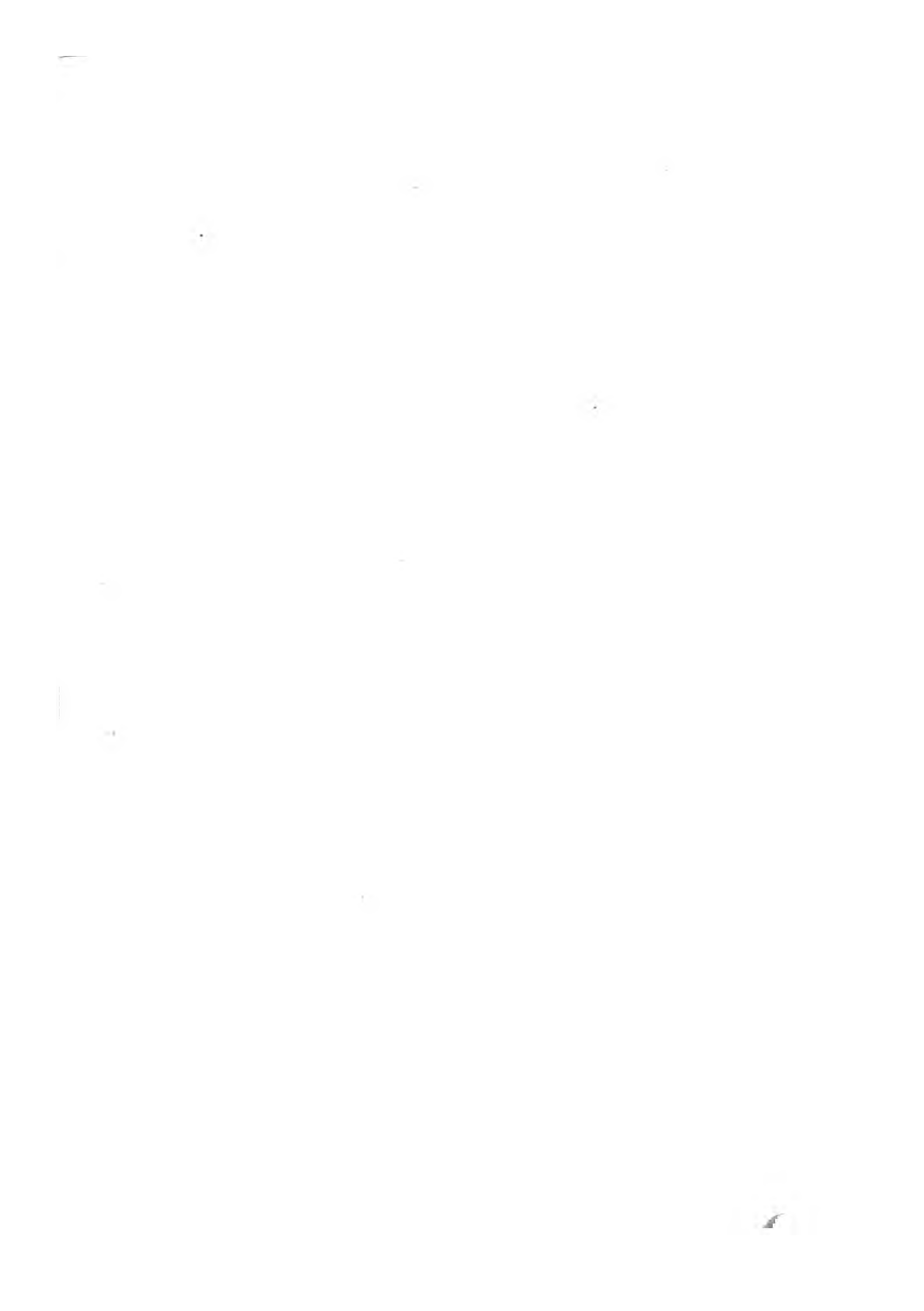
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WHEN we look through a good microscope at the leaf of a flower, or the wing of a butterfly, or a drop of water from a pond, what wonderful things we can see! And when we look through a good telescope at the moon or some of the stars, by night, what strange and startling things are set before us! Now, suppose that one of our eyes was made like a microscope, and the other like a telescope; then, as we went about, looking at the things that are near us by day, or those far off by night, what marvellous sights we should be seeing all the time! The world is full of wonders, if we only had the eyes to see them. But there are more wonders in the Bible, and greater wonders, too, than are to be found anywhere else. There are Wonders of Wisdom here, and Wonders of Love, and Wonders of Power, and Wonders of Goodness that are perfectly surprising. But we need the help of God to enable us to see these Wonders. And this is just the help

David was trying to get when he offered the prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Ps. cxix. 18.)

The attempt has been made in this book to speak of a few of these wonders, in the hope that some who read it may be led to study the Bible with more interest, and try with increasing earnestness to find out more of the wonderful things contained in it. If this result shall be secured in any case, the book will not have been written in vain.

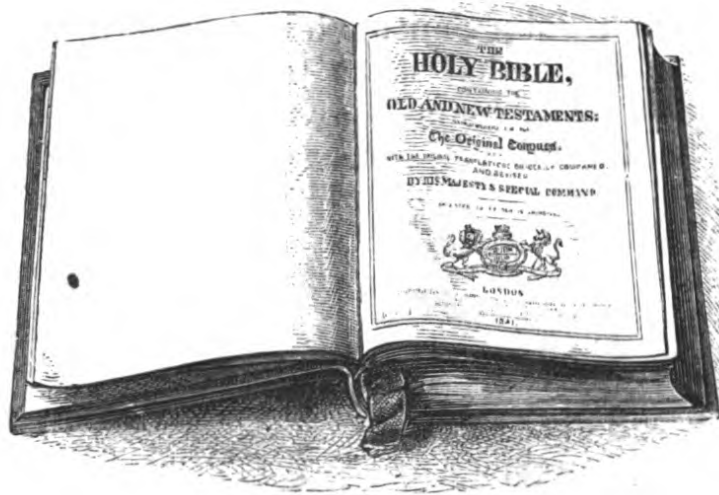




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BIBLE WONDERS.

No. I.

“Thy testimonies are wonderful.”—PSALM CXIX. 129.



WHAT is the first word in this text? “*Thy*.” To whom does this refer? To God. Suppose, now, we say *God’s*, instead of *Thy*, and then let us see how the verse will read: “God’s testimonies are wonderful.” We see, then, it is something belonging to God which is wonderful. God’s *what* are wonderful? God’s *testimonies*. Testimony means something that is said about a particular person or thing. For instance: here is a prisoner brought into court. His name is Charles Morgan. He is to be tried for stealing a pair of trousers from a

shop in Market Street, on the afternoon of Saturday, the twenty-eighth day of last month. Well, here is a witness named John Smith; he is brought into court to give his *testimony*, that is, to tell what he knows about this robbery. The counsel says to him,—

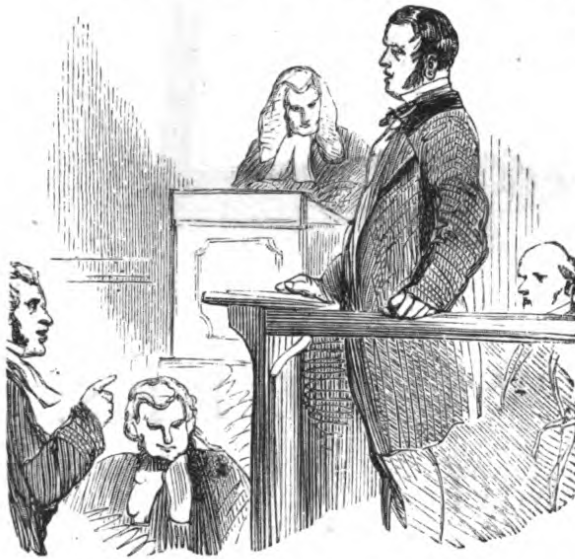
“Mr. Smith, did you ever see the prisoner at the bar—Charles Morgan—before?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Where did you see him last?”

“In such a shop in Market Street, on the twenty-eighth of last month.”

“Please tell the gentlemen of the jury what you observed on that occasion.”



“I went into the shop that afternoon,” says Mr. Smith, “to see about buying a suit of clothes. While I was there I saw this man, Charles Morgan, looking over a pile of trousers. Presently, the man who was waiting on him was called away for a few moments. Then I saw Morgan take a pair of trousers and slyly slip them under a loose coat he had on. After a while he said he believed he wouldn’t buy any to-day, and walked out of the shop. As soon as he was gone I told what I had seen, and they ran after him and caught him.”

Now *that* would be Mr. Smith’s testimony. It would be what he said about Charles Morgan and his stealing.

In the same way God’s testimonies mean what He says,—what He says about Himself, and what He says about us. God’s testimonies are found in His word,—in the Bible. There are *ten* different words in this one hundred and nineteenth Psalm used for the Bible. At one time it is called the *word* of God; then His law; then His way, His

truth, His precepts, His commandment, His judgments, His statutes, His ordinances, His testimonies. The meaning of the text, then, is that God's word, or the Bible, is a wonderful book.

I have thought it would be interesting to take up some of the wonders spoken of in this blessed book, and talk about them. We have had one course of sermons on "Bible Blessings." * Those were interesting subjects. Our last course was on "Bible Jewels." Those were interesting subjects too. And now, if we try a course on "Bible Wonders," I hope we shall find these quite as interesting and profitable as the others.

We will begin by talking about some of the wonders belonging to the Bible itself. It is a wonderful book. There are two kinds of wonders about the Bible. One kind is the *outside* wonders; the other is the *inside* wonders of the Bible. Our first sermon will be about the *outside wonders of the Bible*.

There are *three* of these outside wonders of which I wish now to speak.

The first wonder about the Bible is THE WAY IN WHICH IT WAS MADE.

It is wonderful how long a time it took to make the Bible. When men make books, it does not generally take them very long; sometimes it does. Dr. Allibone has been engaged for sixteen years on his great work, in two large volumes, called the "Dictionary of Authors." The great writer named Gibbon was twenty years in writing a history of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Dr. Adam Clarke spent twenty-six years in writing his commentary; Bancroft thirty-five on his history, and Noah Webster thirty-six on his dictionary.

* "Bible Blessings" will shortly be ready, and "Bible Jewels" is already published; both uniform with "Bible Wonders." Partridge and Co.

But what are these to the time that was occupied in making the Bible! We read that God made the world in six days. But in making the Bible He was engaged *fifteen hundred years!* Yes, from the time when Moses wrote Genesis, the first book in the Bible, till St. John wrote the Revelation, the last book in the Bible, all those long years had passed away. That was wonderful.

And then it is wonderful *how many men* were employed to write the Bible! There were Moses, and Samuel, and David, and Solomon, and Ezra, and Isaiah, and all the prophets in the Old Testament. And in the New Testament, Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John, and Paul, and Peter, and others. There were more than *thirty* persons altogether employed in this work. And it is not only the *number* of writers, but the great *difference* between them, that makes it wonderful. Some of them were learned men, as Moses and Paul; and some were unlearned, as Amos and Peter.



Some of them were kings, as David and Solomon. Some were princes, as Daniel. Some were shepherds, and some farmers, and some fishermen, and some tent-makers. And yet they all agree in what they write. How wonderful this is! How can we explain it? There is one thing about the Bible that explains it. It is this: *God did all the thinking in the Bible.* The thoughts in the

Bible are all *God's* thoughts. Those thirty men only did the writing. They wrote down just what God told them. This is the reason why they agree.

We know that this is so, not only because nobody could have found out the things in the Bible unless God had told about them, but because the Bible *tells* us that it was

made in this way. Thus St. Paul says, "All scripture is given by *inspiration* of God." (2 Tim. iii. 16.) And what is inspiration? To inspire means to *breathe into*. Suppose, when you go home from school to-morrow, your mother should say, "Come here, Johnny; I want to tell you a secret." You go up to her. She puts her lips close to your ear and whispers, "Johnny, father says if you are a good boy, till your next birthday, he'll buy you a beautiful watch." Now, while your mother is whispering those words to you, she is *breathing into your ear*, is she not? Well, that is inspiration. She is inspiring you with the thought of that beautiful watch. In this way God inspired the men who wrote the Bible. God breathed into their minds, or whispered into their ears, what they were to write. St. Peter tells us, "They spake as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. i. 21.) "*Moved*" here means *told*. They wrote just what the Holy Ghost told them.

The *time* it took to make the Bible is wonderful. So the *many men* that helped to make it is wonderful. And it is wonderful, too, *how many different parts, or pieces*, it is made of. In the Old Testament there are thirty-nine different books. In the New Testament there are twenty-seven. Thirty-nine and twenty-seven make how many? Sixty-six. The Bible is a book of sixty-six different tracts, all bound up together. And yet they are not thrown together helter-skelter, without any order. No; but they fit into each other exactly. They have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The Bible is like a beautiful piece of mosaic work. Did you ever see a piece of this kind of work? It does not mean work done by Moses. This word, *mosaic*, comes from a Greek word which means *elegant, or polished, work*. A mosaic work is a figure, or picture, of something made, not by using paints of different colours, but by putting together a great many little pieces of stone, or glass, of different colours. These works are very curious, and look very beautiful. The different-coloured pieces of stone or glass all unite together and make the picture. And just in the same way the different

books, or pieces, out of which the Bible is made, all unite together to make one beautiful picture of Jesus and his salvation.

The first wonder about the Bible is *the way in which it was made*. Remember, under this wonder, three words: the *time*, the *men*, the *pieces*.

The second wonder about the Bible is THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN PERSECUTED.

There never was any book in the world half so good as the Bible; and yet there never was any book that has been half so much opposed, and which so many persons have tried so hard to destroy. During the first three hundred years after Jesus was on earth, the Emperors of Rome—the greatest rulers in the world—tried all they could to destroy the Bible, and to keep people from becoming Christians. They got up ten long, dreadful persecutions against the Bible, and those who read it. Some of these persecutions lasted for *ten years* at a time; and during those terrible years all the power of the Roman Govern-



ment was employed to destroy the Bible. During one of those persecutions, in one single country, *one hundred and fifty thousand* Christians were cruelly put to death. Sometimes houses were filled with Christians, piles of wood were heaped up round it, and they were all burned alive together. Sometimes companies of fifties

would be tied together with ropes, and then were driven into the sea. The Roman Emperors had a great theatre built, that was large enough to hold more than twenty thousand people. It was built in the form of a circle, with seats,

like a gallery, all round, rising to the top of the high walls. In the centre of it there was a large open space, with high, strong iron railing all round. Sometimes the Emperor would have a number of Christians put into that big sort of cage, and then would let loose upon them fierce, hungry lions and tigers to tear them to pieces and eat them alive, while twenty thousand people sat round, and looked on as if it were sport. And so Christians, by the thousand,

Were butchered to make a Roman holiday.

One day, a Christian man was being led to this dreadful death. The soldier who had charge of him said,—

“ My friend, how easily you can save your life ! Why can't you give up reading that book which the Emperor has forbidden you to read, and then you needn't be food for the lions ? ”

“ I can't give up my Bible,” said he, “ because I am a Christian. Eternal life is in that book ; and lions, or no lions, I can't give up eternal life.”

The Roman Emperors tried in every way to destroy the Bible. One of them, named Diocletian, thought he had done it. He had killed so many Christians, with such horrible cruelties, and destroyed so many Bibles, that because the lovers of the Bible kept quiet for a while, and hid themselves, he thought he had made an end of them. He was so proud of this that he had a medal struck off with this motto on it : “ *The Christian religion is destroyed, and the worship of the gods restored.* ” Suppose that Emperor could come back to earth now, and see the Bible going through all the nations in the world, and the Christian religion with it, I wonder what he would think about his famous medal, and that religion which he thought he had destroyed ?

Then, hundreds of years afterwards, when the Roman Catholic Church got possession of the city of Rome, the Pope and the priests took up the old quarrel against the Bible. How strange it is that a Church, calling itself

a Christian Church, should want to destroy the Bible, and should undertake to persecute people, and put them to death for no other fault in the world but just reading the Bible! Yet this is what the Roman Catholic Church did for hundreds of years in Europe. *And this is what it would do again if it had a chance.*

It had a society called "the Inquisition." It was the most wicked and most cruel society that ever was. The meaning of the name is the *inquiring society*. And what do you suppose was the chief thing they wanted to inquire about? Why, the names of men and women who had Bibles, and read them. The officers of the Inquisition would burn all the Bibles they could get. Yes, and they would not only burn the *Bibles*, they would burn the *people* who read them whenever they could find them. When they heard of a man who was reading the Bible to his family, they would come to his house, perhaps at midnight, and would take him from his bed, and carry him away to prison. They would load him with chains, and put him in a dungeon. They would torture him in the most cruel way. They would tear his flesh with red-hot pincers. They would haul him up towards the ceiling by his hands, and kindle a slow fire under the soles of his feet.



Pope and the priests of the Romish Church tried all they could to destroy the Bible; but they could not

They would torture him in these and other horribly cruel ways to make him give up his Bible, or to mention the other persons who had Bibles. And if he refused to do this they would never let him go back to his family, but would keep him in prison and continue these tortures till he died, or was burnt at the stake. For hundreds of years the

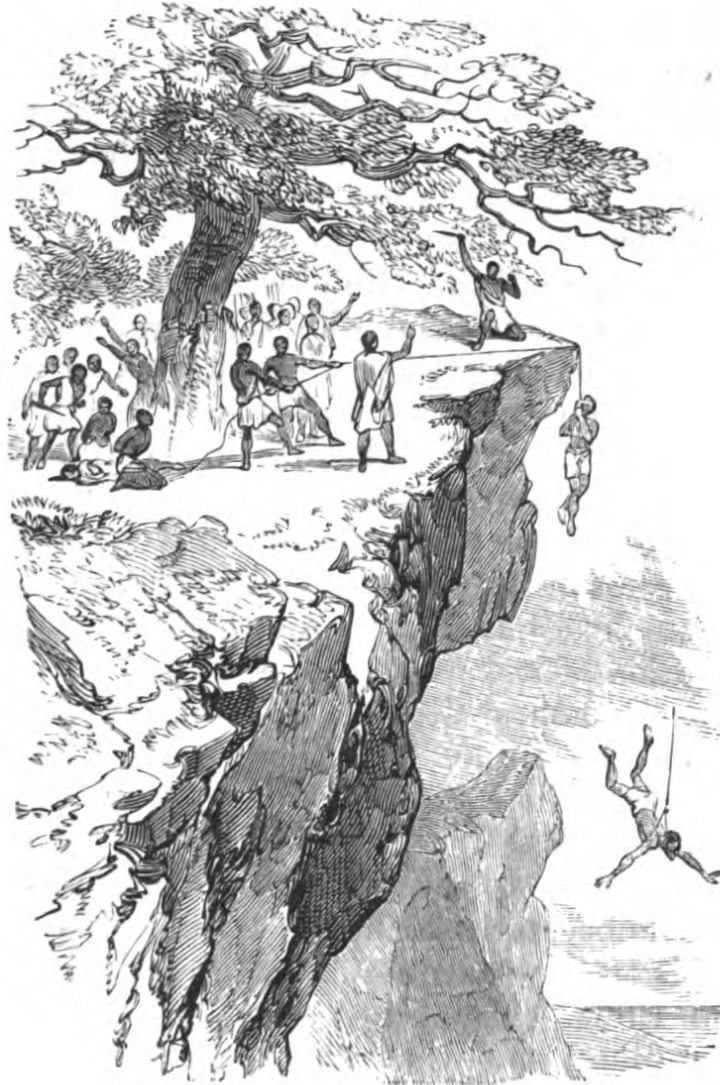
do it, because it is God's book, and he would not let it be destroyed.

It is not difficult to understand why the bishops and priests of the Romish Church have always been so much opposed to letting the people have the Bible to read for themselves. It is simply because there is so much in the Bible that is against many of their doctrines and practices.

About three hundred years ago, after Martin Luther had translated and printed the Bible for the people to read, great numbers were leaving the Romish Church and becoming Protestants. The Romish bishops were very much alarmed. They wrote a letter to the Pope, in which they said that the Bible was the cause of great trouble to them; and that the only way to prevent the people from leaving their Church was to stop them from reading the Bible. They said there were so many things in their Church that were different from what the Bible taught, that if the people were allowed to read the Bible nothing could prevent them from becoming Protestants. This was a strange confession for them to make; but still it was the truth. And here is an illustration of it.

There was an honest Roman Catholic man, who knew nothing about the Bible. Somebody gave him a Bible. He began to read it. After a while he said to his wife, "Wife, if this book is true, we are *wrong*." He went on reading the Bible. It showed him what a great sinner he was, and he became alarmed. Then he said, "Wife, if this book is true, we are *lost*." But still he continued to read the Bible. There he learned to know and love Jesus. He found out that there was another and a better way of salvation than that which the priests taught. And then he said, "Wife, if this book is true, we are *safe*." That was a blessed discovery for him to make. And if the Bible has this effect on those who read it, we need not wonder that the Romish priests have tried so hard to destroy the Bible, and stop their people from reading it.

And even in our own day this persecution of the Bible has been kept up in some places. In the Island of Madagascar, after the missionaries had established churches, and translated the Bible into the language of the island, the late queen, who was a heathen, drove the missionaries



away, and tried to destroy the Bible, and root out the Christian religion from the land. Great numbers of Christians were put in prison ; others were killed, and others punished, in different ways, to make them give up their Bibles and become heathen again.

One of the ways in which some of those Christians were put to death was very singular. In a certain part of the island there is a high mountain. At one part of the top of this mountain there is a steep precipice of several hundred feet. The foot of this precipice is made up of huge masses of broken, jagged rocks. Numbers of the Christians were taken to this place. A rope was fastened to their hands; then, one by one, they were lowered over the precipice. As they hung there, an officer of the queen comes to them; in one hand he has a sharp knife, in the other the offer of life and a pardon. "Will you give up the Bible and live?" he asks.

"Never," says the faithful servant of Jesus. Then the keen edge of the knife is drawn across that tightly stretched rope, and the lover of the Bible is plunged down that dreadful chasm, and dashed to pieces on the rocks below. They would give up their lives, but they would not give up their Bibles.

The second outside wonder of the Bible is the way in which it has been persecuted.

The third of the outside wonders of the Bible is THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN PRESERVED.

After all the efforts that have been made to destroy the Bible, the greatest wonder about it is that we have a Bible at all. It is like the bush that Moses saw at the foot of Mount Sinai. That bush kept on burning, and yet it was not consumed. Just so the Bible has been burning, for hundreds of years, in the fires of persecution, yet it has never been consumed.

A good minister—the Rev. Dr. Cumming—once used an illustration of this kind about the wonderful preservation of the Bible. Suppose there should come walking up the aisle of this church a man who had been living for eighteen hundred years,—nearly twice as long as Methuselah lived. And suppose we knew of him that he had been cast into the sea many a time, but

could not be drowned. He had been thrown to the wild beasts, but they never could devour him. He had been made to drink deadly poisons of different kinds, but they never did him any harm. He had been bound with strong chains, and locked up in prisons and dungeons, but he always managed to shake off the chains, and get out of the dungeons. He had been often hung till his enemies thought him dead, but when they cut him down he sprung to his feet, and walked away again, as well as ever. Hundreds of times they had burnt him at the stake, till there seemed to be nothing left of him; but the fires were no sooner out than he leaped up from the ashes, as well and as strong as he was before. He had been shot at, and stabbed, and cut to pieces; but the pieces came together again, like little drops of quicksilver; his wounds healed up at once, and he was none the worse for all this hacking and cutting. How strange it would seem to look on such a man! Would it not be a great wonder to find him alive and well after all that he had passed through? *It would be* a wonder indeed. Yet this is just the way we should feel towards the Bible. This is just the way in which the Bible has been treated. It has been burned, and drowned, and chained, and put in prison, and buried alive, and torn to pieces, and yet it has never been destroyed; here it is still,—the same pure, precious Bible, the same holy, blessed “Book divine” that it was eighteen hundred years ago!

When the early Christians were persecuted by the Roman emperors, they went and lived in the catacombs. These were a sort of city of the dead,—a city made up of tombs,—dug out under the ground on which Rome was built; and *there* the Bible was preserved at that time.

When the Christians were persecuted by the Roman Catholics, they went and lived among the ice and snow-covered mountains of the Alps, where their enemies could not follow them; and there the Bible was preserved. Oh, if we could only get together an account of all the curious ways in which God taught his people to preserve

their Bibles, when their enemies were trying to destroy them, what an interesting book it would make! Let me show you some of the ways in which this was done.

Before the art of printing was discovered, Bibles were very scarce, and very dear. Every Bible that was used had to be carefully written out. There were men called scribes in those days, whose business it was to do this writing. It used to take one of those men about *ten months* to write out a whole Bible. Only think of the great difference between those days and these in which we live. Then it took ten months to make one Bible, while now the British and Foreign Bible Society makes Bibles at the rate of *two a minute*. *And it is doing this all the year round*. Then, a Bible would cost nearly one hundred pounds of our money. Now we can get a Bible for tenpence, and a New Testament for twopence. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries no Bibles were to be found in the churches; and in a whole congregation perhaps only two or three families would be found who had single books of the Bible written out. One would have a copy of the Psalms; another of Job; another of Isaiah; another of the Gospel of St. John, or of the Epistle to the Romans, or of the Book of the Revelation. These they would be afraid to take to church, or to use in public, for fear the priests would get them and burn them. And so societies of young persons were formed, and each member of these societies was required to commit to memory some book of the Bible. One would commit to memory the Gospel of St. Matthew, another of St. Luke, another of St. John, and so forth. And then, when they met for worship,—not in comfortable churches, such as we have now, but upon some distant mountain-top, or, perhaps, in some retired valley or secret cave among the Alps, where their enemies would not be likely to find them,—they would sing and pray; and then the minister would call on the young man who knew the Gospel of St. John to give them the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of that book. He would stand up before the minister, and repeat the chapters from memory, beginning, “Let not your heart

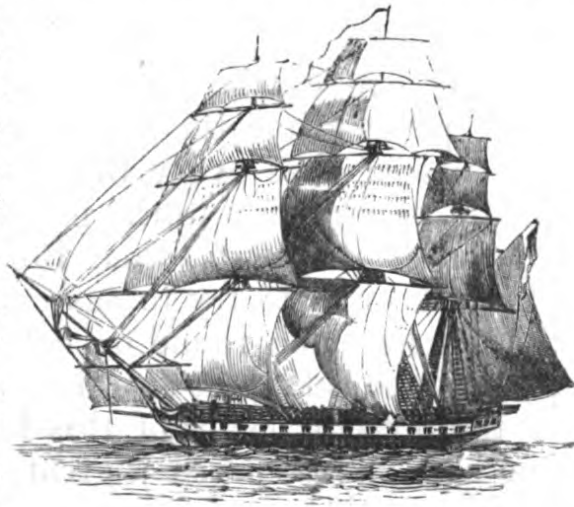
be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me." Another would be called upon to repeat the ninety-first Psalm ; and he would begin, " He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Then, perhaps, the minister would say, " Now let us have the fortieth chapter of Isaiah ;" and another would rise and begin : " Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." How interesting it is to think about this ! It was in such a way as this that they had church in those days. This was one of the ways in which the Bible was preserved before the art of printing



was known. After it came to be printed, it was preserved sometimes by being stowed away in some old library, as was the case with the one which Luther found, and which showed him how he was to be saved. And then sometimes in very curious ways the Bible was preserved. Let me mention two examples of this kind.

A long while ago there was a family, who loved the Bible, living in France. They lived at a time when the Roman Catholic priests had power there. They forbade people to read the Bible, and threatened punishment, and even death, to any who were found reading it. The father of this family felt that whatever else he had not he *must* have the *Bible* to read for himself and for his children. But he knew that unless he could hide it, it would soon be taken away from him. And he knew, too, that if he expected to keep it he must hide it in some place where the priests would not think of looking for it. If he should put it in any of the drawers, or in the cupboard, or under the bed, they would be sure to look there, and find it, and carry it off. So he got a wooden

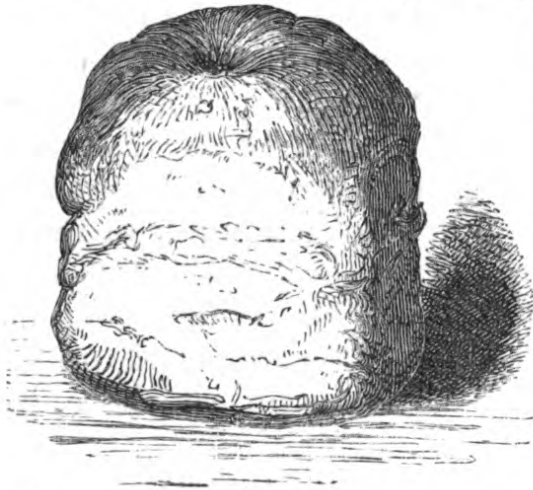
stool, with sides round the top of it ; he turned it upside-down, and fastened the backs of the Bible to the underside of the top of the stool, so that when the stool was turned up, you could open the Bible, and turn over the leaves, and read in any part of it. Then he made a sliding lid to the under part of the stool, so that the Bible might be protected both from sight and from injury ; and when that lid was pushed in there was nothing about the stool that would lead anybody to suspect what a treasure there was inside of it. It was just a common-looking wooden stool. It stood about the room, as though it was of no sort of consequence ; and anybody might sit on it, or stand on it, as they pleased. If some one, who did not know what was there, had been in that house, he would have thought it very strange to see the father of that family take that stool every morning and evening, and carefully turn it upside-down, lay it reverently on his knee, draw out the lid, and gaze very earnestly on something inside the stool. In this way they kept their Bible for years, and found comfort and happiness in reading it. The priest often came in, and searched the house, to find the Bible, but he could not. One time, when he had searched till he was tired, he came and sat down on that very stool to rest himself. And, as he sat there, he wondered where in the world the Bible could be ; but he never succeeded in finding it out. After a while the father of this family heard of America, and of the liberty-people had there to read the Bible as much as they pleased, and to worship God in any way they chose. So they all went over to that country in a ship, and took their precious Bible with them. They



loved it, and guarded it as the greatest treasure they had in their new home. And when that good father died, he handed down that Bible to his children, with a charge to keep it in remembrance of the sufferings and trials he had passed through in his native land.

That French family have long since passed away from earth; but that Bible, which was hidden in the stool, is still to be seen in the hands of their children's children. I am told that the family that now own it live in Western Pennsylvania. I wish I knew where they lived, for I should like to go some time and look at that dear old Bible.

There is a Bible in Lucas, in the county of Ohio, America, which was preserved by being baked in a loaf of bread.



It now belongs to Mr. Schebolt, who lives near Maumee City, and is a member of the Moravian Church, or the Church of the United Brethren. Mr. Schebolt is a native of Bohemia, in Austria. This baked Bible was formerly the property of his grandmother, who was a faithful Protestant Christian.

During one of the seasons when the Roman Catholics were persecuting the Protestants in that country a law was passed that every Bible in the hands of the people should be given up to the priests that it might be burnt. Then those who loved their Bibles had to contrive different plans in order to try to save the precious book. When the priests came round once to search the house, it happened to be baking day. Mrs. Schebolt—the grandmother of the present owner of this Bible—had a large family. She had just prepared a great batch of dough, when she heard that the priest was coming; so she took her precious Bible, wrapped it carefully up, and put it in the centre of

a huge mass of dough, which was to fill her largest bread-tin, and stowed it away in the oven, and baked it. The priest came and searched the house carefully through, but he did not find the Bible. When the search was over, and the danger was passed, the Bible was taken out of



the loaf, and found uninjured. That Bible is more than a hundred and fifty years old; yet it is still the bread of life—as fresh, and sweet, and good as ever.

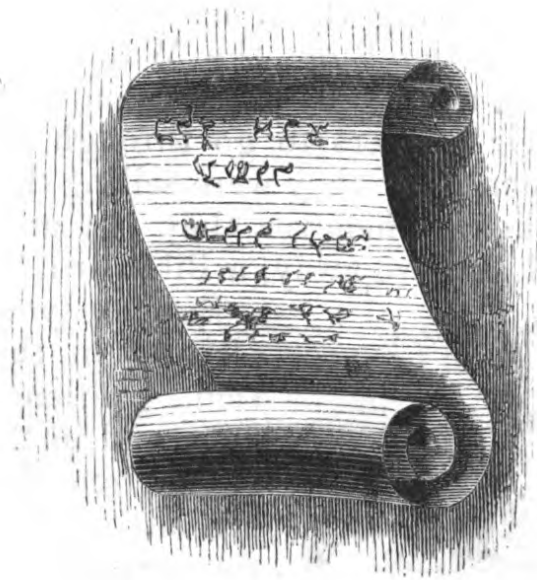
The third wonder about the Bible is *the way in which it has been preserved.*

Now, my dear young friends, if the Bible is such a wonderful book, how anxious you should be to understand more of it! How thankful you should be for your Sunday-school! Thank God for teachers who desire to help you to understand this blessed book. Read your Bible more. Commit it to memory more, and, above all, pray over it more. It is worth your while to learn all you can about the Bible. It will pay you for all your trouble.

An old negro in the West Indies was very anxious to learn to read the Bible. He lived a long way from the missionary's house, and yet he would come, whenever he had time, to learn a lesson. It was such hard work, and he made such little progress, that the missionary got tired, and told him one day that he had better give it up. "No, massa," said he, with great earnestness, "me nebbber gib it up, till me die." And then, pointing with his finger to the beautiful words which he just spelled out in John iii. 16, "God so loved the world," he said, with tears in his eyes, "It's worf all de trouble, massa, to read *dat one* verse!"

I will close with one verse from a hymn we sometimes sing, which says,—

Then let us love our Bibles more,
And take a fresh delight
By day to read their pages o'er,
And meditate by night.



No. II.

“Thy testimonies are wonderful.”

PSALM CXIX. 129.



OUR last sermon we said that God's testimonies mean the things He tells us in the Bible. The meaning of our text is that the Bible is a wonderful book. Some of the wonders of the Bible are *outside* wonders, and some are *inside* wonders. We have spoken of *three* of the outside wonders of the Bible. The first of these wonders was *the way in which it was made*. The second was *the way in which it has been persecuted*. The third was *the way in which it has been preserved*. We are still speaking of the outside wonders of the Bible.

The fourth of these wonders is the way in which it has been scattered.

It is very interesting to notice how many ways God has led His people to make use of, in order to have the Bible spread abroad. During the times when men were persecuted for reading the Bible, the Waldensian Christians, who lived in the mountains of Piedmont and Savoy, used to send out their teachers to go through the country as pedlars, and then, while they were selling the articles they carried with them, whenever they got an opportunity, they would sell, or give away, a Bible or a Testament.



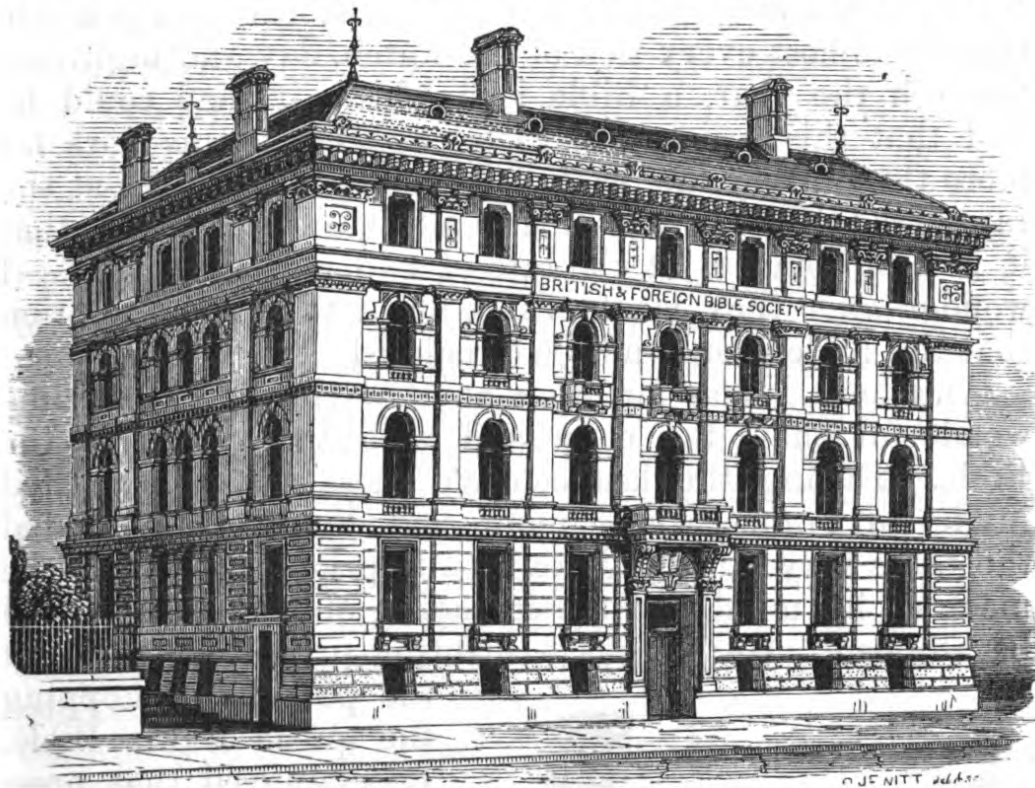
Suppose you and I were visiting in the house of a rich gentleman in those days, and in that part of the world; one day, while we are sitting in the parlour, the servant comes in, and says there is a travelling pedlar at the door, with a great variety of nice things to sell. He is told to bring the man in. Presently he enters. He opens his bundle, and spreads out his goods. He has rings, and seals, and trinkets, and veils, and lace-work, and many other things. One person buys a scarf, another buys a shawl, another some earrings, another a piece of lace, and so on. At last, the gentleman of the house says to him,—

“Have you anything more to show us?”

“Oh, yes,” says he, “I have something more valuable than anything I have shown you yet.” Then he slips his hand to the bottom of his bundle, and brings out a little book,—a copy of the New Testament. None of the persons present have ever owned one, or scarcely seen one before. “This,” says the man, “is the precious word of God.” Then he opens it, and reads a few verses, here and there, of the sweet words of Jesus. And when he sees that we are all very much interested in the book, he offers to give the gentleman of

the house a copy of the book, if he will promise not to let the priests know about it. And in that way multitudes of copies of the Scriptures were scattered abroad among people, who were anxious to have them, when no one dared venture to sell them in public.

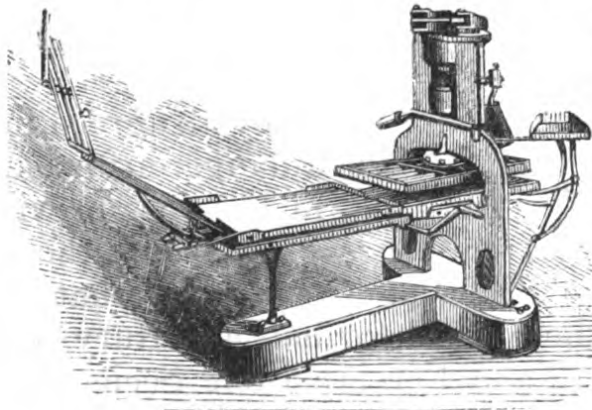
In the fifteenth century a company of Romish priests met together in Earl Street, Blackfriars, London, to talk about an edition of the Bible, which a good minister, named Wickliffe, had just had printed. They



condemned Wickliffe as a bad man ; and they all agreed in passing this resolution : “The Bible is a dangerous book. It *shall* NOT be circulated.” But God, in His wise providence, so ordered things that on *the very spot* where those priests met to destroy the Bible, and to declare that it should not be circulated, there stood for half a century the old house of “The British and Foreign Bible Society” ! To make way for a new street, the society’s old house has been pulled down, but their new and enlarged premises have been built very near to the old site. Above

is an engraving of the new premises. This noble society, of which the beloved Earl of Shaftesbury is the president, was formed for the purpose of circulating the Bible all over the world. What a wonderful thing it is that God should have caused this society to be established just in the place where those old priests met to stop the spread of the Bible, and to declare that it should not be circulated! If they could only come back to the same spot; if they could go through the Bible house and see what it is doing; if they could know that it is printing Bibles at such a rate that for almost every tick of the watch, day and night, all through the year, a Bible is finished; if they could be told that this society has been engaged in this work for more than fifty years, that it has circulated Bibles at the rate of a million a year during all those years, and that it is now doing so at the rate of two millions a year,—I wonder *what* they would think about their old resolution that the Bible should not be circulated.

And here I may mention another thing, of the same wonderful character, connected with the spread of the Bible. During the last century there was a celebrated infidel in France, whose name was Voltaire. He hated the Bible very much. Like the old priests in London, he made up his mind that the spreading of the Bible should be stopped. He bought a printing-press, to be used for



the purpose of stopping the spread of the Bible. He employed that press for printing tracts against the Bible, and used to boast that, before he died, he would destroy the religion of Jesus, and stop people from reading the Bible. After a few years, the infidel Voltaire died a

miserable death; but the Bible has kept on in its way through the world, spreading more and more. And the most

singular thing about this is that, after the death of Voltaire, the printing-press which he bought and used on purpose to stop the spread of the Bible fell into the hands of the friends of the Bible; and *that very printing-press* has since been used for the purpose of printing and circulating the Bible. How wonderful this is!

Sometimes when the enemies of the Bible have tried in some particular way to stop the circulation of it, God has made use of that very thing to spread it more and more. Here is an illustration of what I mean. More than three hundred years ago, a good man in England, whose name was Tyndall, made the first translation of the New Testament into the English language. He had to go out of England, over on the Continent, to get it printed. When it was finished it was sent to London, and offered for sale by the booksellers. The Romish Bishop of London got a law passed forbidding anybody to buy, or sell, or read the Bible. This only made the people more anxious to have the Scriptures than before. The Bishop of London employed persons to go about the city and buy up all the Bibles and Testaments they could find, that he might make a grand bonfire of them. About that time a number of persons had been condemned to death for the sin of owning and reading the Bible. Before those men were executed, the magistrate told one of them that he would pardon him and spare his life, on condition that he would tell him who it was, in the city of London, that was giving to that man Tyndall the greatest help and encouragement to print and circulate the Scriptures. After the magistrate had solemnly bound himself to keep this promise, the prisoner said,—

“Please your lordship, it is the Bishop of London. He buys up the Bibles to burn them. And then for every one he burns three or four more are printed.”

And so God made the very enemies of the Bible to help in spreading it abroad.

I might fill a whole book with anecdotes of the different wonderful ways in which God has spread the Bible in

different places. I have only time to mention one or two.

Who would ever think that God would make use of anything so wicked as slave-stealing to spread the Bible? Yet here is a case of just this kind.

Some years ago, a company of slave-catchers, in Africa, went out on their horrible business. At midnight they surrounded a village. They set fire to the huts in different places. When the frightened people ran into the fields and woods to escape the flames, the wretched men who were there seized them and made them prisoners. A little boy named Adjai was caught that night. He was separated from his mother and sisters. He was carried down to the coast, and put on board a crowded slave-ship to be carried to the island of Cuba and sold as a slave. An English cruiser captured that slaver. The slaves were carried to Sierra Leone, and put into the mission school there. Adjai soon learned to read. He became a tutor; then a teacher; then he became a Christian, and joined the Church. Afterwards he was sent to England to be educated. Then he was ordained as a minister. He went out as a missionary to his own country. His mother, who had never seen him since the night in which the slave-stealers burnt their village and stole them away, heard the Gospel from his lips and became a Christian. Afterwards he was made a bishop. And so he, who was once little Adjai—the slave-boy—is now the Right Rev. Samuel Crowther, Bishop of the Niger. He is the first coloured man, in connection with the English Church, who has been made a bishop. And now he goes up the river Niger, and far into the interior of Africa, carrying the Bible to those who have never heard of it before. How strange that God should make use of wicked slave-stealers to help in spreading the Bible!

Sometimes God makes use of the very cruelty of the heathen to spread the Bible. One night a lion crept into a hut in Africa, seized hold of a little girl, about six years of age, and carried her off. The little girl screamed.

Her parents heard her. They ran after the lion, shouting and making a great noise. After carrying her for some distance, he dropped the child and ran off. Her parents took her home. She was dreadfully wounded by the great sharp teeth of the lion. Her father thought she would die from her wounds. He talked it over with his wife, and they made up their minds the next day, according to the heathen custom, that, as she could not live, it was not worth while to have any more trouble with her. So they gave her her choice, either to be buried alive at once, or to be taken into the woods and left there. How true it is, as the Bible says, that "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty"! The little girl chose the woods, where they left her all alone, with only a little rice and water. The poor child knew that there was a missionary living not very far off. She thought she would try to crawl to his house. While she was trying to do this God sent the missionary that way. He picked her up and carried her home. He and his wife were kind to her, and took care of her. Her wounds healed, and she got well. She attended the mission school; she became a Christian, and then a teacher; and now she is helping to spread the Bible among the heathen.

The "American Bible Society" publishes more than a million copies of the Bible every year. The Bible has now been published in one hundred and seventy-eight different languages. How interesting it would be if we could see one page out of *all* these different Bibles, though we could not read them. We may, however, enjoy this pleasure, in part, by the inspection of the following verse in twenty of these languages, which we have given in the two next pages:—

And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?—Acts ii. 8.

How difficult it must be for missionaries to learn to preach in these languages!

The fourth wonder of the Bible is *the way in which it has been scattered.*

HEBREW.

וַאִיכָּרָה שְׁמֵעֲנוּ אִישׁ אִישׁ בְּמִנְדּוֹ לְשׁוֹן מוֹלְדָתָנוּ :

SYRIAC.

إِمْحَنًا مِنْ مَعْكَمِ مَنْ إِيْفَ إِيْفَ كَمْتَه وَحَسَ مَكْتَبِمِ مَنْ.

ARABIC.

فكيف يسمع منا انسان انسان لسانه الذي فيه ولدنا

PERSIAN.

پس چگونه است که ما هر یکی لغتی را که در آن متولد شده ایم
از ایشان می شنویم

TURKISH.

و نیجه بزهر برمز طوغدوغز کندو لسانمزه انلری سویلر اشدرز

HINDUSTANEE.

بولی سنقاهی پس کیونکر هر ایک هم ان مدین سے اپنے وطن کی

SANSKRIT.

तर्हि वयं प्रत्येकशः स्वस्वजन्मदेशीयभाषाभिः कथा एतेषां शृणुमः किमिदं

MAHRATTA.

आण आमच्या ज्यां बेलींत आहो जन्मलां
तींत आहो प्रत्येक कसें ऐकतोां?

BENGALL.

তবে আমরা প্রত্যেক জন আপনাদের জন্মদেশীয় ভাষাতে ইহাদের
কথা শুনিতেছি, ক কি?

TONGAN.

Bea oku fefe nai oku tau taki taha fanogo ki he e tau lea, naa tau fanau i ai?

CANARESE.

ನರೆದ ಥೆ ಂಡುಡಿ ದೆಶಭಾನು ಆದರೆ ನಮ್ಮನಮ್ಮು ಜನ್ಮಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ
ಅವರು ಮಾತಾಡುನ್ನು ನಾವು ಕೇಳುವದೇನು

TAMIL.

ರೂತ್ರ' ಕೊನುಮಪಾಣುಜ್ಜಿಗನಿಲೆಯವುಕುಲಭೇಕ, ರೂಮಿ-
ಗವರುಕುಕೇಡ್ಕಿಲೋಮೇಖತ್ರಪಪಳಿ ಯಾಯಿಲಿ ತಿ

ARMENIAN ITALIC.

Ե- ինչպէս ինչպէս ենք ինչպէս ենք ինչպէս ենք ինչպէս ենք
Ինչպէս ենք :

GREEK.

Kai pōs hēmeis akouomen ēkastos tē idia dialēktō hēmōn en hē ēgeunēthēmen ;

COPTIC.

Όπως πως άπον τεπσωτεμ φοχαι φοχαι
έμμοπ ρεν τεπασπι έταχχφον ήθητς.

RUSS, MODERN.

Какъ же мы слышимъ ихъ говорящихъ собственнымъ каждому
изъ насъ природнымъ нарѣчiemъ ?

GERMAN.

Wie hören wir denn ein jeglicher seine Sprache, darinnen wir geboren sind ?

ICELANDIC.

Þvertenn heyrum va þá hver einn sít tuúngumál, þar ver erum
june fœdder ?

IRISH.

Ánug cionar do éimh ríre nac moí a ádhó a édhó féimh aí an nuádh ríí ?

CREE.

උරු ලි වඳරුච්ච.× ච්චු වඳරුච්ච ටලව. රච්චු.ඳ.ච්ච.×, ඳ
ච්චුච්ච.ච්ච.× ?

The fifth wonder of the Bible is THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN LOVED.

There never was any book in the world that has been so much hated by its enemies, or so much loved by its friends, as the Bible. David, the king of Israel, said that God's word was to him "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb," and "more precious than gold and silver." And wherever the Bible has gone there have been some who have learned to love it just as David did. There is hardly any end to the stories that may be told for the purpose of showing how much the Bible has been loved.

Alfred the Great was one of the best kings that ever lived. It is nearly a thousand years now since the time of his reign. That was long before the art of printing was discovered. There were no copies of the Scriptures then, but such as were written out by the hand. Alfred had many trials and troubles. He had constant wars with the Danes, who overran his kingdom, and tried to take it away from him. But he loved the Bible very much; and in all his troubles he found great comfort in reading it. He copied out all the Psalms with his own hand, and carried the copy in his bosom, that he might have it at hand to read whenever he had time. Sometimes he used to get up at night, and spend a long time in reading the Bible, and praying to God that he might be able to understand it more. He loved it so much, and found so much comfort in it, that he wanted his people to become acquainted with it; and he actually began a translation of a part of the Bible into the Anglo-Saxon language—the English of that day—for the use of his people. But he died before he was able to finish it.

Lady Jane Grey was so fond of the Bible that when her parents and friends were out riding and hunting she would stay at home, and read it, rather than join them in their sports. And when some one asked her one day why she did this, she laid her hand on the Bible near her,

and smiling, said, "All other pleasures are only shadows compared to those I find in reading this blessed book."

The friends of the Bible have proved their love of it by giving up houses, and lands, and relatives, and friends, and even life itself, rather than give up the Bible.

An English vessel was wrecked at sea. A Christian sailor on board that vessel had to choose between trying to save his money or his Bible. He took his Bible, and left the money. He clung to the wreck till all but himself had perished. Then, tying his Bible round his neck with a handkerchief, he floated off on a broken piece of the wreck till he was picked up. While drifting about on that fragment of the wreck, he found a comfort in reading his Bible which all the gold and silver in the world could not have given him.

During the days of persecution a Christian man was put in prison. It was a dungeon in which he was confined; no light ever visited his dark cell, except what came through the door when the jailor brought him his meals; but, instead of employing that light to eat his meals by, he employed it in reading his Bible. And when he was asked why he did so, his reply was, "I can find the way to my mouth in the dark, but I cannot read the Bible in the dark."



A peasant living in a mud cabin in the county of Cork, Ireland, heard that a gentleman in his neighbourhood had a copy of the Scriptures in the Irish language. He asked the gentleman to let him see it. After looking at it with great interest, he asked the gentleman if he would lend it to him till he could write off a copy of it. The

gentleman said he could not get another copy, and he was afraid that this might be lost. Knowing how poor this peasant was, the gentleman asked him,—

“Where will you get the paper?”

“I’ll buy it.”

“And the pens and ink?”

“I’ll buy them.”

“And where will you find a place to write?”

“If your honour will allow me your hall, I’ll come after my day’s work is over and take a copy, a little at a time, in the evenings.”

The gentleman was so struck with this man’s love for the Bible, and the earnestness of his desire to have a copy of it, that he gave him the use of his hall, and a light, that he might get a copy of the Scriptures. The man was true to his purpose, and persevered in his work till with his own hand he had written out a copy of the whole New Testament. Afterwards a printed copy was given him in exchange for this, and the written Testament was given to the British and Foreign Bible Society, and kept by them as a proof of the love of the Irish for the Bible.

Some years ago there were two little boys, in London, who had lost both their parents. One of them was about eleven, and the other thirteen, years of age. They had been taught to love their Bible, and that precious Saviour of whom it tells. The only friend they had in the world, when their parents died, was an uncle, who lived in Liverpool. So they set off to walk, from London to Liverpool, to try to find their uncle. After walking many weary miles, they reached a place called Warrington, about twenty miles from Liverpool. With their little bundles in their hands, they went to a lodging-house, and asked for a night’s shelter. They were asked to pay for entrance; but they said they had no money. The keeper of the house saw that one of them had, in his jacket pocket, a neatly covered Bible, and offered to give him five shillings for it.

“No,” said the pale-faced boy, as the big tears started into his eyes, “we’ll starve before we’ll sell our Bible.”

The man was surprised to find the boys so decided, and, in order to try them further, he offered six shillings, and then ten shillings, to those poor, hungry boys for their book. But, with the same firmness, they clung to that precious book. "No," said they, "it has been our support and comfort all the way from London. Often, when hungry and tired, we have sat down by the roadside, and read in our Bible, and it has seemed like meat, and drink, and rest to us."

"But," said the man, "suppose, when you get to Liverpool, your uncle refuses to help you; what will you do then?"

"We'll trust that to God," said the younger of the two boys; "for in this book"—laying his hand on the Bible,—"it says, 'When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'"

The fifth wonder connected with the Bible is *the way in which it has been loved.*

The sixth and last wonder connected with the Bible is THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN STUDIED.

There is no other book in the world that has ever been half so much studied as the Bible. There is no other book that will bear to be studied as the Bible is. We can soon find out all that is in any other book; and then, as soon as we feel that it has nothing more to tell us, we get tired of it, and want a new book. I remember very well the first book I ever read all through. It was "Robinson Crusoe." I thought it was the most wonderful book that ever was. I was so much interested in it that I used to sit up at night, as late as my mother would let me, for the purpose of reading it; and then, when I went to bed, I used to lie awake and tell over to my younger brother all that I had been reading about Robinson, and his man Friday, and the savages. But suppose I should undertake to read Robinson Crusoe every morning and evening, and to preach about it as I do with the Bible, how soon I should get tired

of reading it, and should feel that there was nothing left for me to put into my sermons. And it would be just the same with "The Pilgrim's Progress," or Milton's "Paradise Lost," or any other book in the world, except the Bible. The books that men make are like wells, or little ponds of water: some are deeper than others; but yet we can take a pole, or a line, and let it down in the water, and we can soon touch the bottom. But God's book—the Bible—is like the ocean. There are some places in it where the water is so shallow that a child may wade in it with entire safety. But there are other places where the water is so deep that a giant might swim in it; and with the longest line ever let down no one can touch the bottom. In the city of London and the suburbs there are more than



a thousand ministers of the Gospel. They are engaged in reading, and studying, and preaching about the things of which the Bible tells us. Some of them have been engaged in this way for twenty, or thirty, or forty years. And yet they have never got to the bottom of it. And if they should live to be as old as Methuselah, and should keep on studying and preach-

ing about the Bible all the time, they would never get through with it. The time would never come when they could appear before their congregations and say, "We have found out all that is in the Bible. There is nothing more left now for us to preach about." But there is no other book in the world that could be read and studied and preached about in this way.

Some years ago a gentleman wanted to find out how many books had been written on the Bible. It was a hard

thing to tell, but he resolved to try. He spent a wonderful deal of time, and money, and labour in making the inquiry. When he got through, he made a list, or catalogue, of all the different works. That catalogue itself made a large volume; and how many books do you suppose were in it? More than *sixty thousand*! Only think of it! More than sixty thousand volumes written on this one book! If those volumes were all collected together, they would make one of the largest libraries in the country!

Let me give you now some striking examples of the way in which this blessed book has been studied.

A Christian Emperor, whose name was Theodosius, wrote out the whole of the New Testament with his own hand, on purpose to fix its words better in his memory. Another Emperor, of the same name, who was very much occupied in business during the day, used to spend a portion of every night in not only reading, but *studying* the Scriptures. Prince George, of Transylvania, read the whole Bible over twenty-seven times. And one of the kings of Arragon was so interested in the study of the Scriptures that he read them through, together with a large commentary, fourteen times. Sir Henry Wotten was very much engaged in public business; yet he kept the Bible always with him, that, at leisure moments, he might read a verse or two. And a French nobleman, named De Renty, used every morning to read three chapters of the Bible, on his bended knees, stopping every little while to pray that God would help him to understand it.

There was an Irish peasant who had got possession of a copy of the Bible, and was so fond of it that he spent all the leisure time he had in studying it. The Romish priest found him one day with the Bible in his hand, and asked him what warrant he had to read the Bible for himself. "Faith," says he, "and plase yer riverence, I have a *sarch* warrant. For sure and didn't the blessed Master say, '*Sarch* the Scriptures'?" (John v. 39.) And thus we see that the Bible is a wonderful book for *the way in which it has been studied*.

We have spoken now of *six* of the outside wonders of the Bible. The first wonder about it is the way in which it was *made*; the second, is the way in which it has been *persecuted*; the third, is the way in which it has been *preserved*; the fourth, the way in which it has been *scattered*; the fifth, the way in which it has been *loved*; and the sixth, the way in which it has been *studied*.

My dear young friends, let me entreat you to make a right use of your Bibles. Wonderful as this book is, it will do



you no good to have it *unless you use it properly*. You ought to use your Bible as the sailor, when at sea, uses his compass. The compass is set down before the man who stands at the helm, or rudder, to steer the ship; and he keeps looking at the compass all the time, in order to find out how he is to steer the vessel, so that he may

reach "the haven where he would be," or the place at which he desires to arrive. And just in the same way the Bible must be our compass. If we read it and study it carefully, and especially if, like David, we read it with the prayer, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law," then we shall always know what to do, and how to act. This blessed compass will always point us in the right direction. It will guide us safely through all the dangers that are before us in the voyage of life. It will lead us to Jesus, as our Friend and Saviour. He will pardon our sins. He will change our hearts, and bring us to His heavenly home at last.



No. III.

“His name shall be called Wonderful.”—ISAIAH IX. 6.



WE have spoken of some of the outside wonders of the Bible. Now we are going to open the book, and talk about some of the wonderful things that are *inside* of it. There are a great many wonders in the Bible; but, among them all, Jesus is the greatest. We must speak about *Him* before we begin to speak about anything else.

Suppose that we are in the country in the summer-time. We get up very early, one beautiful morning, and go to the window to look out upon the country.

Our window commands a view of a very charming landscape. There is a fine range of hills on one side, a large forest of trees on the other, and between them are beautiful fields, with farmhouses and gardens scattered over them. But, just as we get to the window, the sun is rising. As he gets up among the clouds, he pours over them a flood of light; and gold, and purple, and crimson, and every variety

of colour seem to be shining and sparkling there together. How beautiful, how glorious it is! The first thing we look at, as we get to the window, is the sun—the golden, glorious sun. The hills are beautiful. The forests are beautiful. The fields are beautiful. The gardens are



beautiful, with their fragrant, blooming flowers. Every thing around is beautiful; but we cannot turn aside to look at anything else, till we have stopped a good while first to look at the sun; for *that* is more beautiful than all the rest. And what the sun is among the many beauties of the landscape, Jesus is among the many wonders of the Bible. Of all its wonders, *He* is the most wonderful.

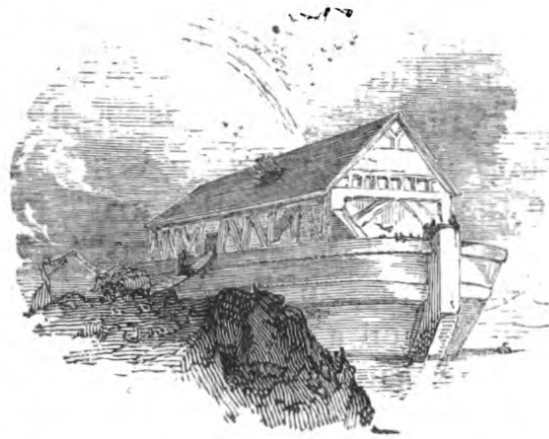
As we look into the Bible, to talk about its wonders, it is right and proper that we should begin with talking about Him who is the greatest wonder of which the Bible tells us.

Seven hundred years before He was born into our world the prophet Isaiah spoke about Him to the Jews. He told of a great many things that He was to do when He came; and he said that "His name should be called Wonderful." *The wonderful name* is the first of the *inside* wonders of the Bible. We might speak of a great many things connected with the name of Jesus, on account of which it may well be called wonderful, but we shall only speak now of *two*.

The name of Jesus is wonderful, in the first place, for its MANY MEANINGS.

Most of the other persons mentioned in the Bible had but one name, and that name had but one meaning. The first man that God made was called Adam. The meaning of that is earth, or red, referring to the dust out of which he was made. The man who built the ark had but one name; that was Noah, which means comfort. This name

was given to him because his parents thought he would be a comfort to them. The man from whom the Jewish nation sprung had but one name. At first, his name was spelt in two syllables—Ab-ram. This means the great, or high father. Then God put two more letters—the letters ha,



—in the middle of his name. This made it a name of three syllables, Ab-ra-ham. Its meaning is, “a father of many nations.” The great warrior king of Israel had but one name—David, which means beloved. He is sometimes spoken of as “the son of Jesse,” or as “the sweet singer of Israel”; but David was his only name. David’s son—the wisest king that ever reigned—had two names. He was first called Jedidiah, which means beloved of the Lord; and then Solomon, which means *peaceful*.

In our days, most persons have two or three names; but each of these has but one meaning, and that is generally a very simple one. Let us take for example one of the greatest names we have in American history—the name of George Washington. That name is known all over the world; and it deserves to be so known. When we think of all Washington did for his country, we feel that there is a great deal of meaning in his name. But

when we look at the name itself—George Washington—it means very little.—George means a farmer ; Washington is made up of three old English words;—*Wash*, or *weis*, was a word that was formerly used to mean a shallow part of a river near the sea ; *ing* was a word that meant a meadow, or low ground ; and *ton*, or *dun*, meant a hill or town. And so this great name—George Washington—only means, the farmer who lived on the meadow, or low ground, where the river was shallow and near the sea.

And it is just the same with the names of all men. They are very soon told, and have very little meaning in them. But it is very different with Jesus. He has a great number of names, and these have *many meanings*. The name commonly given to Him is Jesus Christ. Jesus means Saviour ; and Christ means anointed ; and so the meaning of this name is “the anointed Saviour.” To anoint a person, or thing, means to put oil on it. In old times, when a person was consecrated, or set apart, to be a king or priest, it was the custom to pour oil on his head.



This was called *anointing* him. We read, in the Bible, how the prophet Samuel, in this way, anointed David to be king over Israel, when he was only a poor shepherd's boy. The story is a very interesting one ; and, if you wish to read it, you may find it in 1 Samuel xvi. And,

in this way, the Bible tells us that “God hath anointed Jesus with the *oil of gladness*,” to be both a king and a priest to his people. (Heb. i. 9.) Jesus Christ—the anointed Saviour—is a very precious and beautiful name. But there are a great many other names that Jesus has, and the many meanings of them are wonderful. The whole Bible is taken up with giving us an account of the things that he has already done and suffered for us ; or of the things that he either *is* doing for us now, or *will* do

for us by-and-by. So that the Bible may be called a book of definitions of names of Jesus.

I cannot attempt to tell you all the names of Jesus found in the Bible; but I will give you a list of some of them. And, as I mention the different names, I want you all to listen, and count them over quietly to yourselves, so that, when we stop, you can tell me how many names there are. Jesus is called Jehovah; the Lord Jehovah; Jehovah of hosts; the Lord our righteousness; God; the mighty God; the everlasting God; the true God; God blessed for ever; God my Saviour; my Lord and my God; God manifest in the Flesh; Emmanuel; the great God and Saviour; the Highest; the Son of God; his dear Son; his only begotten Son; the Son of the Blessed; the Almighty; Creator of all things; Upholder of all things; Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the End; the First and the Last; the Life; Eternal Life; the Word; the Word of God; the Word made Flesh; Image of the invisible God; the Brightness of the Father's glory; the Express Image of his person; Wisdom of God; Power of God; Messenger of the Covenant; Angel of Jehovah; Angel of God; Angel of his presence; Root of Jesse; Root of David; Root and Offspring of David; Branch of Righteousness; a Righteous Branch; the Vine; the true Vine; the Tree of Life; the Bread of God; the Bread from heaven; the Bread of Life; living Bread; hidden Manna; Plant of Renown; Cluster of Camphire; Lily of the Valleys; Bundle of Myrrh; Rose of Sharon; Lamb of God; Lamb without blemish; Lamb that was slain; Lamb in the midst of the throne; Bridegroom; Good Shepherd; Jehovah's Shepherd; Great Shepherd; the Rock; my strong Rock; the Rock of ages; Rock of habitation; Rock of salvation; my Rock and my Redeemer; my Rock and Fortress; that spiritual Rock; the Rock that followed them; the Surety; the Daysman; the High-Priest; the great High-Priest; the Mercy-seat; the Mediator; the Forerunner; the Propitiation; a Ransom; Minister of the Circumcision; the Altar; the Sacrifice; the

Offering ; the Offerer ; chief Corner-Stone ; a tried Stone ; an elect Stone ; a precious Stone ; the Builder ; the Foundation ; a Stone of Stumbling ; a Rock of Offence ; Jesus ; a Saviour ; Saviour of the world ; Jesus Christ ; the Lord Jesus Christ ; Jesus Christ the righteous ; Jesus of Nazareth ; Messiah ; Christ the Lord ; the Christ of God ; the Light ; the true Light ; a great Light ; Light of the Gentiles ; the Light of men ; the Light of the world ; a Star ; the bright and Morning Star ; the Sun of Righteousness ; the Dayspring from on high ; the Just One ; the Holy One of God ; the Captain of our salvation ; the Captain of the host of the Lord ; a Commander ; a Ruler ; a Governor ; a Deliverer ; the Lion of the tribe of Judah ; an Ensign of the people ; the Author and Finisher of our faith ; Lord of the Sabbath ; Lord of lords ; King of kings ; Lord both of the dead and the living ; Lord of peace ; Lord of all ; a Prince and Saviour ; Prince of peace ; Prince of life ; Prince of the kings of the earth ; Messiah the Prince ; King of the Jews ; King of saints ; King of glory ; King of Israel ; the King in his beauty ; King of the daughter of Zion ; the Judge ; the Righteous Judge ; the Truth ; the Way ; the Life ; the faithful and true Witness ; the Wonderful ; the Councillor ; the Mighty God ; the Everlasting Father. Here we have more than one hundred and fifty different names. And these are not all. There are more still. But these are enough. When we read over these names of Jesus—so many and so different—it just seems as if the Bible were a sort of kaleidoscope. You all know what this is. And when you look through it, and keep turning it round, you know, you are all the time seeing some new form of beauty. With every movement the beads, and bits of glass, and different things in it keep changing their shape and their beauty. It seems as though you never would get tired of looking at it. And the Bible is like such a kaleidoscope. The names of Jesus, and the promises about Him, take the place of the beads and bits of glass. And as we read its pages, it is like turning the kaleidoscope. Everything in

it tells about Jesus. The names of Jesus are turning up in different forms all the time. First you think *this* is the most beautiful; then you think *that* is; till, by-and-by, you think they are all so beautiful that you cannot tell which you like best.

“His name shall be called Wonderful.” The name of Jesus is wonderful, in the first place, *because of its many meanings.*

In the second place, *the name of Jesus is a wonderful name, for the LOVE CONNECTED WITH IT.*

There are a great many wonderful things in this world, but the most wonderful of them all is—the love of Jesus. The Bible says it is “past finding out.” Sometimes we hear of persons trying to find the bottom of the sea, in places where the water is very deep; but they tell us that they get to the end of their line before they can touch the bottom. Then they say they cannot fathom that water; there are no soundings in it. This means, they cannot tell how deep it is. And the love of Jesus is just like one of those deep places in the sea. There is no such thing as sounding it. It is impossible to find the bottom of it. It never had a beginning, and it never will have an end. We see how wonderful the love of Jesus is in two things: one is in *what He did for us*; the other in *what He suffered for us.*

What Jesus did for us shows how wonderful His love is. And the best way of showing you what is meant by this is to give you one or two illustrations. When the Moravian missionaries first wanted to go and preach to the negroes in the West India Islands, they were



told that those negroes were slaves, and that their masters would not let them have any time to go to church, or to school, or to learn anything about Jesus. Then those good missionaries—Leonard Dober and his companion—said, “Well, then, if we cannot tell them about Jesus in any other way, we will go and become slaves ourselves, that we may talk to them about the wonderful love of Jesus, while we are working with them in the fields.”

How great the love was which those missionaries had for the souls of the heathen! They did not have to do this. But suppose they had done it. Then, when they had become servants, and had been working hard all day, it might well have been said that what they did for those negroes showed the greatness of their love to them.

And this illustrates what Jesus has done for us. The Bible tells us that He became a servant. “*He took upon Him the form of a servant.*” He undertook to do our work for us. He became obedient to God’s holy law. He took our place, and bound Himself to do all that God required of us. And for Jesus to come down from heaven, and live in this dark, sinful world, and obey the law for us, was ten thousand times harder than it would have been for those Moravian missionaries to have left their homes in Europe, and have gone to work as slaves in the West Indies. And that Jesus was *willing* to do this, and that He *actually did* it, shows how wonderful His love is.

Let us take another illustration. This we read about in the history of Rome. In the city of Rome there used to be a large open space, like one of our city squares. It was called the Forum. Around the sides of it the courts and public buildings were placed. About three or four hundred years before the time of our Saviour, there came suddenly—by an earthquake, no doubt—a large, deep pit, or chasm, right in the midst of the Forum. It was a very ugly thing to have in such a public place, and very dangerous. The Roman people tried to fill it up, but they could not do it. Whatever they threw into it sank right out of sight, as though there was no bottom to that

dreadful chasm. Then they went to the priests of their idol gods, as they were accustomed to do in difficult cases, that they might find out what to do. They asked the priests what they must do in order to fill up the terrible pit which had been made in the midst of the Forum. The answer which the priests gave them was that that opening would never be closed till they had thrown into it the most precious and valuable things they had in Rome. This threw the people into a great wonderment. Everybody was asking, What can this mean? Some thought it meant all the gold and silver in the city. Some thought it meant all the gems and jewels they had. Some thought this thing was meant by it, and others thought that. But they could not agree about what was to be thrown in. There was a brave young nobleman living in Rome, at that time, who was a soldier. His name was Martius Curtius. He thought a great deal about this answer which the priests had given. He used to get up at night, and go to the Forum, and walk around that deep, dark, dreadful pit to think how it could be closed. Then he said to himself, "The most precious and valuable things in the city of Rome are the arms and courage of her soldiers. *These* must be thrown in. But *all* the soldiers cannot go in. No. Some *one* must go in to represent the rest. Who shall it be? *I will do it.*"

Then he told his friends he was going to offer himself a sacrifice for the safety of the city. He was willing to throw himself into that yawning gulf. They tried to persuade him not to do so. But he would not listen to them. The day was fixed, and notice was given of it. All Rome turned out to see the strange sight. The brave soldier dressed himself in all his shining armour, as though he were going into battle. He mounted his war-horse, dressed in all its rich trappings. He had his helmet on his head, his shield on his left arm, and in his right hand his sword. He starts on a canter, along the principal street leading to the Forum. The crowds of people gaze at him, with a strange sort of silent awe, as he passes by ;

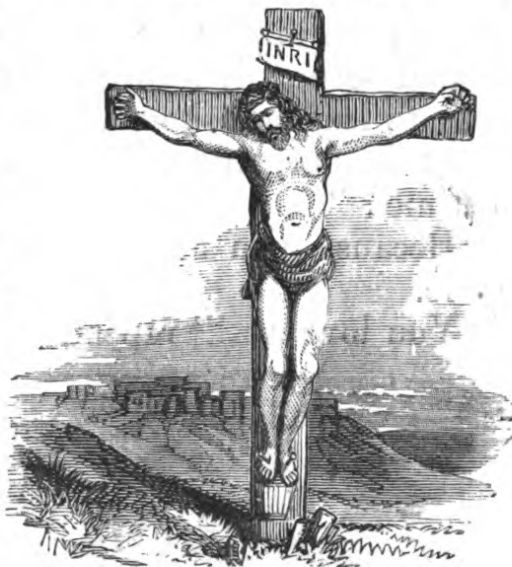
but no one speaks, no one moves. The stillness of death is over all that vast multitude. No sound is heard but the clanging of his armour, and the clatter of his horse's feet, as he hastens on his way. Now the Forum is in sight. There is the yawning pit. As he nears it, he dashes his spurs into his horse's sides. This quickens his pace into a gallop. Now he reaches the edge of the pit. He makes a mighty spring. There, for a moment, the horse and his rider hang over that dreadful gulf,—then—down they plunge—and are seen no more. The most precious and valuable things of Rome are thrown into it. The pit closes. That is the story.

How much Martius Curtius must have loved Rome to have been willing to sacrifice himself for it! And what an illustration this affords of the love of Jesus! Sin had opened a dreadful gulf, right before us, in our way to heaven. Nobody could fill it up. Nobody could get round it. Nobody could get over it. And unless Jesus had come to help us, not one of the human family would ever have got over that gulf into heaven. Jesus came down from heaven and threw Himself into this gulf. He did not close it up so that all would be saved; but He made a way, a bridge, over it, so that all who believe in Him may get over it and be saved. It showed great love in Martius Curtius to sacrifice himself for Rome. But it was for his friends, and those who loved him, that he died. Jesus died for us when we were His enemies. It shows great love when a man is willing to die for his friends; but, oh, how much more wonderful it is that Jesus was willing to die for His enemies!

What Jesus did for us shows how wonderful his love is. *And then what he suffered for us shows the same.*

Jesus lived thirty years in our world, and He was suffering for us all the time. It was not only in the Garden of Gethsemane, when bathed in that bloody sweat, and on Calvary, when they nailed Him to the cross, that He suffered. No; but every hour of His life was an hour of suffering; and every step He took, from the manger to the

cross, was a step of suffering. And there were two reasons why Jesus passed through all this suffering: one was because He was bearing the punishment of our sins; the other was to prove to us how wonderful His love for us is. There is nothing that has such power over our hearts as love. And the thought of one who really loves us suffering for our good,—oh, who can resist this?



Let me tell you of a poor drunkard who was saved from ruin by the love of a dear daughter in suffering for him. This man's name was Lee. His intemperance had broken his poor wife's heart. Before she died, Mrs. Lee told her only daughter, Millie, never to leave her father, but to be patient and kind, and try to win him back from his sinful ways. After her mother's death her father treated her with the greatest cruelty. He would swear at her, and beat her, and sometimes turn her out of the house at night. But she never left him.

One night, about eleven o'clock, a neighbour was going home. As he passed their door, he saw something on the step. He drew near, and found it was Millie. She was wet to the skin; for it was late in the autumn, and a cold rain was falling. Her father had driven her out some time before; she had sat down on the step to listen for the heavy snoring of his drunken slumbers, that she might creep back to her bed. But before she heard it she had fallen into a troubled sleep, and the rain-drops were pattering upon her. The kind-hearted neighbour took hold of her, and tried to persuade her to go home with him. But she struggled away from him, and went back to the dark and cheerless cottage. She would not leave

her father. Things went on so for weeks and months. At length her father grew less violent to his self-denying child. One day he awoke from sleep, after he had been drinking. His child was at his side, ready to lead him home. He turned to her, with a tone almost tender, and said, "Millie, what makes you stay with me?"

"Because you are my father, and I love you," said Millie.

"You love me!" repeated the wretched man, "*you love*



me!" "Love me!" he still murmured. "Millie, what makes you love me? I am only a poor, miserable drunkard. Everybody else despises me; why don't you?"

"Dear father," said Millie, as her eyes filled with tears, "my mother taught me to love you; and every night it seems, in my dreams, as if she comes from heaven, and stands by my little bed, and says, 'Millie, don't leave your father. He'll get away from the power of drink some of these days; and then, when you win him back from his evil ways, how happy you will be!'"

Even the poor drunkard's heart could not stand against such love as this. He took her up in his arms, and wept over her like a child. *That* was the turning-point in his history. From that day he became a sober man.

And so Jesus suffered for us, to show His wonderful love; and that by the power of that love He may lead us to turn from our sins, and love and serve Him. When the Gospel is preached to people they begin, after a while, to find out what it means. They see it was His love to them which brought Jesus down from heaven; it was His love to them, and not the nails of the Roman soldiers, which fastened Him to the cross. And then their hearts begin to melt. And the more they think of His wonderful love, the more sorry they feel for their sins, and the more they desire to love Him, and try to do what will please Him.

Let me mention one other illustration of the wonderful love of Jesus, as shown in what He suffered for us.

Some years ago, a Russian nobleman was travelling on special business in the interior of Russia. It was the beginning of winter, but the frost had set in early. The carriage stopped at an inn, and he asked for a fresh supply of horses, to carry him on to the next station, where he intended to spend the night. The innkeeper begged him not to go on, for there was danger in travelling so late, because the wolves were out. But the nobleman thought that he only said this in order to get him to stay with him all night. He said it was too early for the wolves, and ordered the fresh team of four horses to be put to the carriage. Then he drove off, with his wife and his little daughter inside the carriage with him.

On the box of the carriage, by the side of the driver, was a servant who had been born in the nobleman's family, to whom he was much attached, and who loved his master as he loved his own life. They glided along over the hardened snow, and there seemed no sign of danger. The moon was shedding its pale, soft light, and the road over which they were going sparkled like silver. At length the little girl said, "Father, what was that strange howl-

ing sound that I just heard?" "Oh, nothing but the wind sighing through the trees," said her father. The child shut her eyes, and was quiet; but soon she said again, "Listen, father! it is not like the wind, I think." Her father listened, and far, far away in the distance behind him, through the clear, cold frosty air, he heard a sound, the meaning of which he knew too well.

Then he put down the window, and said to his servant, "The wolves are after us; make haste. Tell the man to drive faster, and get your pistols ready." The postilion drove faster. The horses were galloping at the top of their speed; but the dreadful sounds which the child had heard came nearer and nearer. It was quite clear now that a large pack of hungry wolves had scented them out, and were in full chase after them. The nobleman tried to calm the fears of his wife and child. At last the baying of the pack was distinctly heard. So he said to the servant, "When they come up with us, you single out one and fire, and I will single out another; and while the rest are devouring them we can get on." As soon as he put down the window, he saw the pack in full cry behind, with a great dog-wolf at their head. Two shots were fired, and two of the wolves fell. The others instantly fell upon them, and greedily devoured them. In the meantime the carriage gained ground. But the taste of blood only made the savage beasts more furious, and they were soon up with the carriage again. Again two more shots were fired, and two more wolves fell, and were devoured. But again the carriage was soon overtaken, and the station-house was still far distant. The nobleman then ordered the driver to loose one of the leading horses, that they might gain time while the wolves were eating him. He did so. The poor horse rushed madly away into the forest, and the wolves after him. He was soon caught, and torn in pieces, and the wolves were after the carriage again. Another horse was sent off, and devoured like the first, and the wolves were coming up again. The carriage went on as fast as it could with the two

remaining horses ; but still the stopping-place was a good way off.

At last the servant said to his master, " I have served you ever since I was a child ; I love you as my own self. Nothing can save you now but *one* thing. Let *me* save you. I ask you only to look after my wife and little ones." Then, before the nobleman had time to prevent him, he jumped off the box into the midst of the blood-thirsty wolves. The two panting horses galloped on with the carriage, and got into the station-house just as the terrible pack were coming up to make their last attack. But the travellers were *safe*.



What a good illustration this is of the wonderful love of Jesus ! We were lost in the wilderness of sin. Satan and his wicked spirits, like roaring lions and ravenous beasts, were rushing after us to destroy us. There was none to help, and none to save, when Jesus appeared. He threw Himself into the midst of our fierce pursuers. He let Himself be torn in pieces by them, in order that we might be saved. And it is interesting to know that in the twenty-second psalm, which describes His sufferings on the cross, Jesus speaks of Himself as being surrounded by savage beasts. He speaks of wild bulls, of dogs or wolves,

of lions and unicorns all gathering round to toss, and tear, and devour Him. He was left alone in the midst of them. His friends left Him. His disciples left Him. The angels left Him. His Father left Him. How fearful it must have been! But it was necessary for our salvation that He should be thus left. *And His love for us made Him willing to be thus left.* He need not have been thus left unless He had chosen to have it so. He did it voluntarily. His love led Him to do it. How amazing that love is! How well the prophet might say of Him, "*His name shall be called Wonderful*"!

We have spoken now of two things which show how wonderful His name is:—one is *its many meanings*; the other is *the love connected with it.*

We have said that the Bible is a wonderful book. And when we open it we find that the greatest wonder in it is Jesus. His name is Wonderful. It is wonderful for its many meanings, and wonderful for its love. We read in the New Testament that when Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman governor, to be tried, Pilate asked this question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" That was a very solemn question. You have heard about Him again to-day. Now, I want each of you to ask this question, What shall *I* do with Jesus? There are two things we ought to do with Jesus. One is this: we ought to take Him for our Saviour. Suppose you are hungry, and somebody brings you bread; what ought you to do with it? Eat it. Suppose you are thirsty, and somebody brings you a cup of nice cold water; what ought you to do with it? Drink it. Suppose you are sick, and somebody brings you medicine that will cure you; what ought you to do with it? Take it. Suppose you are almost naked, and somebody brings you a good suit of clothes; what ought you to do with them? Put them on, and wear them. Yes; and when a poor lost sinner hears of Jesus, the Saviour, whose name is Wonderful, he ought at

once to take him for His Saviour. This means he should give his heart to Jesus, and trust his soul to Him to save it. And when you have taken Jesus for your Saviour, there is another thing you ought to do with Him. You ought to try to get others to take Him for their Saviour. We can do this by setting a good example at home. If those who know us see that serving Jesus makes us good and happy, they will want to serve Him too. We can do it by trying to bring into the Sunday-school those who do not go to it. And we can do it by trying to send the Gospel to those who do not know anything about Jesus. These are the things we ought to do with that blessed Saviour, of whom Isaiah said,—

“ HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL.”





No. IV.

“His name shall be called Wonderful.”—ISAIAH ix. 6.



THE name of Jesus may well be called Wonderful, on account of the two reasons of which we spoke in our last sermon. It is wonderful for *its many meanings*; and it is wonderful for *the love connected with it*.

There is another reason for which the name of Jesus is wonderful; and this is, *the blessings which it brings*. These are all wonderful. We will only speak now of *three* great blessings which Jesus brings to us, and on account of which His name may well be called Wonderful.

The first of these three blessings which Jesus brings to us is A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE.

The English coast is very rocky in some parts; and when storms beat in upon it, as they often do, it is very dangerous. Many fearful wrecks take place, and great numbers of lives are lost in this way every year. Lifeboats are kept at certain distances along the coast, in the charge of men whose duty it is, when vessels are in danger during a storm, to man the lifeboat, and go out and try to help and save poor shipwrecked sailors.

One night, some years ago, a terrible storm was raging along the coast. The sea was lashed into foam and fury by the fierce wind that was blowing. The big waves came rolling in, and breaking in thunder on the shore. Towards morning a gun was heard by the sailors on shore. They knew it was a signal of distress from some ship that was in danger. As soon as it was light they saw the vessel from which the gun had been fired. It was aground on a shoal, or sand-bank, far off from the shore. The sea was dashing furiously over it. The men were waving their hands, and making signs to those on shore to come and save them. Any one could see that the vessel would soon be broken to pieces, and all on board be lost, unless something was done to save them. The sailors on shore got their lifeboat out; but when they came to launch it, they found the wind blowing so tremendously, and the sea so frightfully rough, that they gave it up. They said it was impossible for a boat to live in such a sea, and that if they attempted to go they would all be lost before they could reach the ship. Still, there were the poor sailors. The people on shore could see the signals they were making; and occasionally the heartrending cries of their distress would come borne upon the wind. The chief sailor had an only daughter, a young girl about sixteen or seventeen years old. But, though only a girl, she had a strong arm and a brave heart. She could not bear to think that those poor men should perish without an effort to save them. She urged the men to go; she seized an oar, and said she would go herself if any one would go with her. This was too much for the men. They could not think of being

outdone by a girl. They launched the boat and manned it. That noble-hearted girl went with them. It was a



most dangerous undertaking ; but, in spite of the danger, they kept on trying. They reached the wreck, and saved the lives of all on board. That was a wonderful deliverance. Almost everybody has heard of that brave girl. Her name was Grace Darling. The Queen was so delighted when she heard the story of what this noble girl had done

that she wrote her a letter, with her own hand, thanking her for her courage in saving the lives of the poor shipwrecked sailors. And all the world has united with the good Queen in admiring and praising Grace Darling's bravery.

And this is a good illustration of the wonderful deliverance which Jesus has brought to us. Sin had swept over our world like a storm at sea, and had made a wreck of it. All the people in the world were left like sailors on a wreck which the sea was breaking to pieces. They were all in danger of being washed off, and perishing in the deep waters. *We must all* have perished unless deliverance had been brought to us. But who could bring that deliverance? Where was it to come from? All the people in the world were in the same danger. They were all clinging to the same wreck. They could not help each other. The angels in heaven could look on and pity us, but they could neither save us nor help us. Jesus was the only one who could do anything for us. And even *He* could do nothing until He consented to *die* for us. But He was willing to do this. He became a man. He suffered death upon the cross for us. And then He made a lifeboat out of His cross. He

keeps this lifeboat sailing round the wreck all the time, and He tells His servants to keep calling to those who are perishing to quit the wreck, and come on board the lifeboat and be saved. Millions have been saved in this way, and millions more may be saved *if they will*. This lifeboat never can be too full. It never can be upset or sunk. It is "able to save unto the uttermost" all who will get into it in the right way. Now this is a wonderful deliverance. This is the deliverance which Jesus brought to us; and, because He brought it, it may well be said of Him that "His name shall be called WONDERFUL."

The second blessing that Jesus has obtained for us is
WONDERFUL LIGHT.

Suppose that a dark cloud, as black as pitch, were spread over the sky all round the world. Day and night it remains through the whole year. No bright sunshine ever gets through it, and very little light. How dreadful it would be! The trees, and plants, and flowers, and grass would all die. The great thing that we should all desire, above everything else, would be to get those clouds driven away, so that we might enjoy the light and the sunshine again. And if an angel from heaven should come down, and roll those dark clouds away, and let us see the beautiful blue sky, and feel the warm beams of the sun once more, what a deliverance that would be for us, and how glad it would make us!



But this is very much like what Jesus has done for our

souls, though not for our bodies. Sin has brought just such a cloud between our souls and God. The Bible speaks of it as a dark, "thick cloud." It shuts out the light of God's face, and the sunshine of His favour from smiling upon us. This is what the Bible means when it tells us that "darkness covers the earth, and *gross* darkness the people." It means darkness, not in the outside world, which we see with our bodily eyes, but in the inside world to which our souls belong. In that world, the Bible tells us that people are sitting "in darkness and the shadow of death." That dark and dreadful shadow is caused by the cloud which sin has brought upon our souls. But Jesus has come to "blot out" this dark cloud. When we learn to know and love Him, He takes it all away, and pours light and sunshine into the soul. And it is a blessed light which Jesus gives. It can shine right down into our hearts, and make us glad, when we have nothing else in the world to be glad for. Let me tell you about a little girl who was made glad by this light.

This little girl was walking along a lane in the country



one day. She seemed very sad and sorrowful, and as she went on, with a downcast look, she said to herself, "Well,

I don't know that I was made for anything ;” and the tears trickled down her cheeks like an April shower.

“ Mother says I'm always in the way,” she continued, talking to herself, “ and Willie scolds me all the day ; perhaps I wasn't made for anything. I don't see what I was put into the world for. I wish I never had been born !” and then she sat down on a mossy bank by the side of the road.

The birds were singing round her, the grasshoppers chirping in the grass, the flowers shedding sweet perfume in the air, the little brook trickling over the stones,—all seemed to be doing something, to be made for something, except herself, she thought.

Poor little girl ! she had a sad home in that old hut, with a drunken mother and an unkind brother. The more she tried to please them the more they complained of her, till on that bright morning, when every little girl ought to have been happy, she had wandered away, feeling so sad and miserable that she did not care what became of her, or even if she never went back to her home again. Now, surely it was a very dark cloud that was spread out over all the inside world of that little girl. And any light that could break that cloud, and let the bright sunshine in upon her soul, would be a wonderful light. Let me tell you how this was done.

She was saying, in a low, sorrowful voice, “ The birds and everything were made for something ; why wasn't I ? No ; I wasn't made for anything.”

Just then a kind Christian lady was passing by, and heard what she said. The sad tone of the little girl's voice made her feel sorry for her ; and, bending over her, she said, gently,—

“ Yes, my little one, you *were* made for something. You were made to be a little angel in heaven by-and-by.”

The little girl turned her sad face towards her as if doubting what she had heard, and said, “ Mother says I wasn't made for anything.”

"But you *are*," said the lady; "you are made to be an angel in heaven."

"But where is heaven? Can I go there now?" asked the little girl.

And then the lady told her about heaven, and how Jesus left His throne of glory, and came down upon earth,



and took little children in His arms, and blessed them; and how he died a cruel death that they might go to heaven, and be as good, and as beautiful, and as happy as the angels.

And the little girl dried her tears and smiled. Her mother had never told her about God or heaven. It was the first time she had ever heard of Jesus. The thought of heaven made her forget her home.

"And can I be an angel too? Oh, how I would love to be one, and to see Jesus!" she said.

Then the lady told her she could, if she would love Jesus; and she gave her a nice little book which told her about heaven, and how she might get there; and the poor child went home feeling very happy, because she felt that she *was* made for something. When she left home that morning there was a dark cloud on her soul. There was no light or sunshine there, and that was the reason why she felt so unhappy. But Jesus had come to her and

blotted out that cloud, and caused the light which He gives to shine right down into the soul of that little girl. What a wonderful light it is which Jesus gives, that could make a poor little girl like this happy, even in the miserable home of a drunken mother!

We have seen how this light could make a little girl happy while she was living; now let me show you how it could make a little boy happy when he was dying.

A lady had a class of young boys in a Sunday-school. After the lesson was over, one day, she laid her hand on the head of one of her scholars, and said,—

“Are you afraid to die, Johnny?”

“Yes,” he said, sadly.

“Why, my child?”

“Oh, teacher,” said he, in a low voice, “because it seems, somehow, *like going into a strange house in the night, without any light.*”

“And yet, Johnny,” she said, “there have been people who were not afraid of death, but were glad and thankful to leave the world. Do you understand how it could be?”

He looked perplexed, and shook his head. Then she tried to explain it to him. She told him of the times of the martyrs, when strong men and delicate women, and even tender children, were tortured, and burnt, and devoured by wild beasts, and met death in those dreadful forms, not only willingly, but gladly—yea, joyfully—because of the love they had for Jesus, and of the light which He caused to shine into their souls. Just as the teacher finished speaking to Johnny the bell rang to close the school. This was in the summer time. The teacher left for some time, and went into the country.

When she came back it was autumn. One day, soon after her return, a note was brought to her from Johnny’s mother. She said her dear boy was very ill, and wanted to see his teacher. As soon as possible she went to the house of his parents. As she entered the room she saw a sight which she said she should never forget. The dear boy was lying in the arms of his father. His mother sat

by sobbing, and holding the hand of the dying child in her hand. Looking at Johnny's face, oh, how different it seemed from what it was when she had last seen it! All the sadness and fear which it then expressed were gone. He did not look now like one who felt as if he were going “*into a strange house at night, without any light.*” His face looked as bright as if there was a sun shining in his soul. As soon as his loving eyes met his teacher's, he cried out, “I am not afraid to die *now*, dear teacher; Jesus, who was with the martyrs, is right here,”—laying his hand on his heart,—“and he makes it *all light.*” She stooped to kiss his brow, but could not speak a word.

“Sing, father,” said he; “sing ‘*There is a fountain filled with blood.*’”

The father tried to do what the dear dying boy wished, but his strong voice failed him, and he had to stop. Then his mother took it up, and managed to get through the first verse alone. In the second verse her husband joined her. They sang the hymn through. While singing the last verse they closed their eyes. You know the words:—

Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

As they opened their eyes, on finishing this verse, they saw that Johnny's bosom was no longer heaving. He had ceased to breathe. While they were singing that last verse his gentle spirit had passed away. A sweet smile was still lingering on his face. There was light on Johnny's face. There was light in Johnny's soul. There was light on the path along which the angels bore him. And, oh, there was light in that blessed home to which they carried him! In Johnny's own words, “*Jesus was there, and it was all light.*”

The second blessing that Jesus has obtained for us is *wonderful light.*

The only other blessing that we shall now speak of, which Jesus brings, is a WONDERFUL REMEDY.

We have not much time to spare for this third blessing, but we must say something about it. We are speaking about a remedy. What is a remedy? A remedy is something that cures. If a man has the cholera, and sends to the physician for a remedy, what does he mean by a remedy? Something to cure him. Now the remedy that Jesus brings is *wonderful for its power to cure. It cures all diseases.* Did you ever hear of a medicine that could cure everything that was wrong about the body? No. Suppose you have the headache to-day. You get some medicine to cure it. To-morrow you have the toothache. Would you take the same medicine for the toothache that cured the headache? No. You would need something different. The next day you have the earache. Would you take the same medicine for that that cured the toothache? No; you would need something different for each of these complaints. If we had one medicine that would cure all the diseases of the body, *that would be a wonderful remedy.* But there never was such a remedy for the body, and there never will be.

Yet this is just the kind of remedy that Jesus brings to us for our souls. This remedy is *the grace of God.* You know the Bible compares sin to a disease. It is the disease of the soul. And as disease in the body takes a great many different forms, so does the disease of sin in the soul. But whatever it be, the grace of God, which Jesus brings, is a remedy for it, and will cure it. With one person the principal disease of the soul is anger. Well, the remedy of Jesus will cure this. With another it is pride. The remedy of Jesus will cure this. With another it is selfishness; but the remedy of Jesus will cure this. And so, no matter what the disease of any one's soul may be, the remedy of Jesus will cure it. It is a wonderful remedy, because *it cures all diseases.*

And then it is a wonderful remedy again, because *it cures*

in all places. In different countries people have to get different remedies to cure the same disease of the body. When that dreadful disease, the cholera, was going



round the world, the same remedy that cured it in one nation would not always cure it in another. But the remedy which Jesus brings us for our souls will cure them just the same everywhere. It cures the Greenlander, amidst the ice and snow of the frozen north; and it cures the Hottentot, just as well, on the burning plains of the south. In the city and in the country, in the palaces of kings and in

the huts of peasants, it has the same power to cure. It is indeed a wonderful remedy, because *it cures in all places.*

And then it is a wonderful remedy again, because *it cures at all times.* I mean by this that it never grows old or loses its power to cure. In this respect it is very different from the medicines we use for the body. Suppose your little sister was taken sick with the scarlet fever; and suppose that your mother should find in her medicine chest a bottle of medicine which had a printed label on it, on which were these words:—

CURE FOR THE SCARLET FEVER.

1769.

A bottle of scarlet fever medicine a hundred years old! Do you think the doctor would let your mother give that medicine to the sick child? No, certainly not. He would say, "Throw it away. It is spoiled. It has lost its power. It is good for nothing." But the remedy which Jesus

brings for our souls never grows old, and never spoils. It is just as good now as it was when Jesus was on earth, nearly two thousand years ago. There is one verse of that beautiful hymn which little Johnny's parents were singing as he lay dying which tells us the truth about this wonderful remedy very sweetly. It says,—

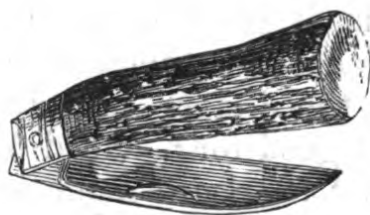
Dear dying Lamb! thy precious blood
 Shall *never lose its power*,
 Till all the ransomed Church of God
 Are saved to sin no more.

A wonderful remedy, indeed, it is which Jesus brings. We have seen that it is wonderful for three reasons: because it cures *all diseases—in all places—at all times*.

The name of Jesus may well be called wonderful on account of the blessings that He brings. These are all wonderful. We have spoken of three of these wonderful blessings. What was the first?—*A wonderful deliverance*. What was the second?—*Wonderful light*. And what was the third?—*A wonderful remedy*.

Now, my dear children, these wonderful blessings that Jesus brings are the very things that we need, above all things. We not only never can be happy, but we never can be good for anything, till we get them. See, here is a watch. What was this watch made for? To keep time. But suppose the main-spring is broken, so that it cannot keep time; what is it good for? Good for nothing. Here is a pencil. What is a pencil made for? To write with. But suppose there is no lead in it, so that it will not write; what is it good for? Good for nothing. Here is a pen-knife. What is a knife made for? To cut with. But suppose the blade is broken out, so that you cannot cut with it; what is it good for? Good for nothing. And what are *we* made for? To love and serve God. But till we come to Jesus, and get the wonderful blessings that He brings, we cannot love and serve God. And if we do not do this, what are we good for? *Good for nothing*. Yes,

this is true of us all till we come to Jesus and ask Him to give us grace to love and serve Him. Now, if you had a watch that was good for nothing, because the main-spring was broken, and it would not keep time, what would you do with it? Take it to the maker, and ask him to put a new main-spring in it. If you had a knife that was good for nothing, because the blade was broken out, and it would not cut, what would you do with it? Take it to the maker, and ask him to put a new blade in it. And if we are good for nothing, because we have wicked hearts, so that we cannot love and serve Jesus, what are we to do? Why, bring our hearts to Jesus, that He may change them and make them new. We should take up the prayer which David offered, and say each one for himself, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me!" If we offer that prayer with all our hearts, Jesus will hear and answer it. And then, when our hearts are made new, and we learn to love and serve Him, we shall understand how truly His name is called Wonderful, because of the wonderful blessings that He brings. These blessings are a *wonderful deliverance*, a *wonderful light*, and a *wonderful remedy*.





No. V.

“There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.”

DANIEL ii. 28.



DANIEL the prophet was in Babylon when he spoke these words. The King of Babylon at that time was named Nebuchadnezzar. He had just had a remarkable dream, which made a great impression on his mind at the time it took place; but when he awoke in the morning, strange to say, it had all passed away from him, and he could not remember any part of it. He knew it was something very important, and yet, if his life had depended on it, he could not tell what it was. This troubled him very much. To help him out of his difficulty, he called the wise men of Babylon together.

That city was famous for its wise men. These men spent their time in studying all about the stars, and trying to find out a great many things which other people did not understand.

As soon as the wise men came to the palace, the king told them he had had a dream in the night which troubled him very much, but he had forgotten what it was; and now he wanted them to find out what the dream was, and tell him what it meant. The wise men were very much astonished that the king should ask such a thing as this of them. They said if he would only tell them the dream they would soon find out its meaning; but that he was asking a very unreasonable thing, and a thing that nobody in the world could do, when he expected them to find out his secret thoughts in the past night, when even he himself could not tell what they were. Certainly, his demand was very unreasonable. Yet the king would not listen to them, and became very angry. He said they *must* tell him, or else he would have them all killed as a parcel of cheats. They said it was impossible for them to tell him what he wanted to know. Then he ordered the captain of his body-guard to put all the wise men to death.

Now the prophet Daniel was reckoned with these wise men. As soon as he heard of the cruel order which the king had issued, he went to the officer, and told him to go in and ask the king to give them a little time, and he would find out all about the dream, and its meaning. So the order for killing the wise men was stopped.

Then Daniel got some of his friends to join with him in earnest prayer to God, that He would show him what the dream was, and its meaning. God heard their prayers, and came to Daniel in a dream that same night, and told him all about it. Daniel was very glad, and in the morning he came in before the king, and told him both the dream which he had forgotten, and the meaning of it.

But Daniel did not try to take the credit of it to himself. He was very careful to tell the king that it was not by any wisdom of his own that he had found it out. He stood

before the king, and said, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets; and it is He who has made the forgotten dream and its meaning known to me." And this brings before us another Bible wonder. It is the *wonderful Revealer* of secrets.

A revealer is one who makes things known. A secret is something which is either not known at all, or is known only to a few. For instance, suppose you should ask me whether any persons live in the moon, or in the stars; and, if so, what sort of houses they live in, what sort of clothes they wear, or what sort of food they eat. I could not tell you. That is a secret which nobody in the world knows. God knows all about it; and He could reveal this secret if He saw fit. But He has not done this. Here again, for example, is a young man and woman who are engaged to be married. All their friends know of their engagement; but no time is fixed for the wedding. At last they make up their minds to be married on Christmas Day. That is a secret. At first it is known only to themselves. By-and-by they tell it to some of their friends. Then the secret is revealed, or made known. To reveal a secret is to make known. "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets," or makes them known.



God has revealed a great many secrets. It was once a secret how the world was made. Nobody knew anything about it; but God has revealed it in the Bible. It was once a secret what is to become of the world at last; but God has revealed it in the Bible. He has told us there that at last the world will be burned up with fire; not so as to be destroyed like a piece of paper when you burn it,

but like gold that is put into the fire to be made purer and brighter than it was before. It was a secret once how wicked men could get their sins pardoned and their hearts changed ; but God has revealed this secret, and made it known to us. And so we may well say, with Daniel, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." A wonderful revealer of secrets is God !

Our sermon to-day will be about THE WONDERFUL REVEALER. There are a great many different kinds of secrets that God reveals. I am going to speak now of secrets of only *one kind*. These are *secrets of wickedness*. People rob, and kill, and do a great many wrong things when they are alone, and they think their sin will remain a secret. But they forget that no one can ever be alone. The Bible tells us that "the eyes of the Lord are in *every place*, beholding the evil and the good." We may well, therefore, ask, in the simple but solemn words of the hymn,—

Amidst the deepest shades of night
 Can there be one who knows my way ?
 Yes ; God is as a shining light,
 And turns the darkness into day.
 If I could find some cave, unknown,
 Where human foot had never trod,
 Yet there I could not be alone ;
 On every side there would be God.

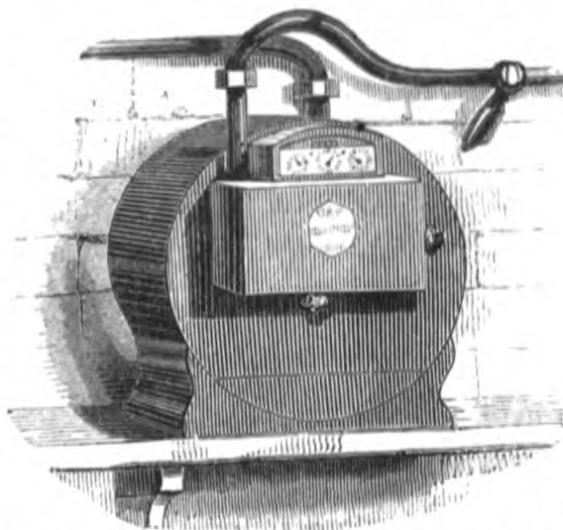
And because God is present in every place, and knows all about everything that is done, it is very easy for Him to reveal secrets. There are two ways in which God reveals, or makes known, the secrets of wickedness.

The first of these is by CONSCIENCE.

This word conscience means to *know together with*. If you go alone at night, and steal something, you know what you have done ; and there is another who *knows it together with you*. This other one is God. And God has a witness in the soul of every man, and woman, and child. This witness is conscience. Remember that *conscience is God's*

witness in the soul. Suppose you knew there was a person following you wherever you went; you could not get away from him for a moment. Suppose he could hear every word you spoke, and know every thought that came into your mind; and suppose he had a note-book with him, and was busy all the time writing down, in ink that could not be erased, every word you spoke, and every thought you had; would you not want to be very careful what you said and what you thought? Well, this is just what conscience is doing. And this witness for God is never deaf; it hears all that is said. It is never blind; it sees all that is done. And it never forgets anything it has seen and heard.

You know that in every house in which gas is burned, on a shelf down in the cellar there is an iron box called a gas-meter. Inside of that box there is a little machine that measures all the gas burned in the house. And that machine has a little dial-face, like the face of a watch; it has fingers and figures on it; and it is so arranged that, as the gas is consumed, there is a little wheel inside that keeps turning round, and makes the fingers move on the dial-face, and point to the figures, which tell how much gas has been used. And conscience is very much like this machine in the gas-meter. It keeps an exact account of all that we do. And very often when a man has been doing some wicked thing which no one knows about but God and himself, God makes his conscience accuse him and trouble him, so that he is obliged to confess what he has done. In this way the "God who is in heaven revealeth secrets." By the consciences of men He makes known the wicked things they have done.



Let me tell you a story, to show how God sometimes reveals secrets by means of the consciences of people, when they never could have been found out in any other way.



A good many years ago, in a little country town, there lived a man by the name of John Peters. He had been a blacksmith ; but, an uncle having died and left him money enough to live on without work, he had given up his trade, and had nothing to do but attend to a pretty large garden, in which he spent a great deal of time, and which he kept in the neatest and nicest condition possible. John's wife was a very ambitious woman.

When her husband got the money which his uncle had left him, she wanted him very much to sell the plain, humble cottage they had lived in ever since they had been married, and buy a handsome-looking one at the other end of the village. But John was not willing to do this. He said it would cost so much money that they would not have enough to live on, unless he went back to his work as a blacksmith, which he did not want to do now, because, since he had had the rheumatism so badly, he was not able to use the smith's heavy hammer, as he had formerly done, without great pain and suffering. His wife said she did not want him to go back to his trade again by any means ; she would be ashamed to have him do that. But she did want to get out of that poor, shabby-looking cottage where they were living. For herself she did not care if they had but one meal a day, provided they were only living in that stylish-looking

house ; for then they could look down upon their neighbours, and would have something to be proud of.

But John was a prudent, sensible man, and could not take this view of the matter. He thought it would be a very foolish thing to feel proud, and to look down on your neighbours, because you might happen to live in a little nicer house than they. And as for pinching themselves in food, and going hungry half the time, just for the sake of a little show, that was too silly to think of. And so they could not agree about it.

Now, the right thing would have been for Mrs. Peters to have given up all thought or care about that handsome cottage, and to have been content with what they had. But she would not do this. She fretted and worried about it, and made home very uncomfortable. At last the dreadful thought came into her mind that if he were only out of the way, she could buy the cottage and do what she pleased with her husband's money. *She let that thought stay in her mind*, until she thought to kill her husband, so that she might get his money and buy the handsome cottage, and live in it, and look down on her neighbours. Then her only care was to do it in such a way that it would not be likely to be found out.

Her husband had a large head of thick, bushy hair. So one night she gave him something to make him sleep heavier than usual. She had prepared a long, sharp nail. At midnight she took a hammer and drove the nail into the side of his head and killed him. Early in the morning she rose and made a great cry and lamentation. She said she found her husband lying dead at her side when she awoke. She imitated real sorrow very well ; and, as there was no appearance of violence or injury about him,—the thick, bushy hair of his head covering up the nail,—nobody suspected that she had killed him. It was supposed to have been some sudden disease of the heart from which he had died. And so he was buried. As soon as the grave closed over him she thought she was safe ; for no one was present but herself to see what she had done. But she

forgot about conscience. She forgot that "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."

Well, not long after her husband's death she bought the handsome cottage at the other end of the village. She moved into it, and lived there. Nobody in the village ever thought that she had killed her husband. And how was it to be found out? "There is a God in heaven that

revealeth secrets." Let me tell you how He revealed this.

Many years had passed away, and the sudden death of John Peters was almost forgotten. One summer a gentleman had occasion to spend a few days in this village. While there he took a walk, one afternoon, through the graveyard. The sexton was digging



a grave. He stood and watched him as he was throwing out the earth. He saw the bones of the dead mingled with the earth. Presently a skull was thrown out. It rolled down the heap of earth, and stopped just at the stranger's feet. He picked it up and looked at it. He saw a rusty nail sticking through the skull. He knew, in an instant, that that nail had killed the man in whose skull it was found. He asked the sexton if he knew whose skull that was. "Yes, sir," said he; "it was the skull of a man named John Peters, who died very suddenly some years ago, and nobody ever knew the cause of his death." Then the sexton told the story of John and his wife, and their quarrel about the cottage. The gentleman inquired if Mrs. Peters was living still. When told that she was, he asked the sexton to show him the way to her cottage, which he did. Then he took out the nail, and, wrapping it up in his handkerchief, went to the cottage and knocked at the door.

“Are you Mrs. Peters?” he asked of the person who opened it.

“That is my name, sir,” she replied.

Then, opening his handkerchief, he said, as he held out the nail,—

“Mrs. Peters, this nail was in your husband’s skull; who drove it in?”

She trembled. She turned pale. She gave a loud shriek, and fainted. They laid her on the bed; and when she came to, in great distress she confessed her crime. She was tried, condemned, and hanged. What a secret that woman’s crime was! But “there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.” He revealed this secret, or made it known, by the *conscience* of the woman. One of the ways in which God makes secrets known is by *conscience*.

Another way in which He does this is by PROVIDENCE.

We often hear it said that such a thing is done by the providence of God. This means the power that God has over all things. For example, here is a locomotive. It is on the track, the steam is up, but the engine is standing still. The engineer turns a crank, the wheels move, and on it goes. Who makes it go forward? The engineer. He turns another crank, and the wheels move again, and the engine goes backward. Who makes it go backward? The engineer. He turns that crank another way, and the engine stops again. Who makes it stop? The engineer. He can control all its wheels. He has power over all its motions. He can make it do just what he wants it to do. And



this shows us the kind of power that God has over everything in the world. The whole world is like a great engine; and God is like the engineer who controls it. He has power over all things, and can make them do just what He wants to have done. He has power over all the angels in heaven, over all the wicked spirits in hell, and over all the people in the world. He has power over all the winds that blow, and the storms that burst; over rivers, and seas, and rains, and floods; over all the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea. This is what the Bible means when it says, "*All things serve Him.*" He can make them "all work together for good to those who love Him"; and for evil to those who do not love Him. And this is what we mean by the providence of God. It is God's power over all things, to make them do what He wants them to do. And so whenever anything wrong is done, God has somebody's conscience there, like a newspaper reporter, to write an account of it, and something else which He can use, like one of the detective police, to reveal the secret, or make it known.

And when God makes things known in this way we say that *He reveals secrets by His providence.* Let me give you one or two illustrations of the way in which He does this.

The first case that I will mention is a very solemn one. It took place about twenty years ago, in a town called Schwarzstein, in Germany. A man who was known to be very wicked was accused of having stolen something. But nobody had seen him do it. There was no witness against him. He declared positively that he had not done it. And when they hesitated to believe him, because his character was so bad, he took a Bible in his hand, and, holding it up towards heaven, he said, "May the first thunderstorm that comes up strike me dead if I have stolen anything." Then he was released, because nothing could be proved against him. Two or three days after, a heavy thunderstorm passed over that town. This man was in his own house, sitting talking with several persons.

His four children and a dog were playing in the same room. Suddenly there came a sharp flash of lightning ; it struck this man dead, in the midst of his friends. No one else in the room was injured. God made the lightning His servant to punish that wicked man. And, singularly enough, the lightning struck him right in the face, entering by his mouth, which had uttered the fearful lie, and killing him instantly. And so, by this providence, God revealed the secret of that man's wickedness.



In this illustration we see how God made use of the lightning to reveal the secret wickedness of a thief, and at the same time to punish him for his sin.

I want to show you now how God made use of a little bird to reveal a secret of wickedness.

There was a musician once who had an ebony flute, with beautiful silver keys. Ebony, you know, is a kind of black wood, very hard, bearing a high polish, and used for making musical instruments. But though this flute was very beautiful to look at, and gave out very soft, rich, sweet sounds, there was one defect about it. One of the upper keys was broken, so that it could not be used. When the musician was playing a tune on his flute, and came to this broken key, he always had to skip one note, which made a discord in the music.

This musician had a friend, a tailor by trade, who was very fond of music, and often came to the musician's room to hear him sing and play, and to play a little himself, on

the ebony flute with the silver keys. One night the tailor called to see the musician, but, finding he was out, he contrived to get into the room, and stole his flute. There

was nobody there to see him, and so he felt sure that the secret of his wickedness could not be found out.

A day or two after, the tailor called on the musician again, and pretended to be very sorry to hear of his loss. He wondered who could have been so mean as to steal it, and even accused an old woman, who used to come

to the house for the purpose of sweeping out the rooms, of having taken it. She was tried for stealing the flute; but nothing could be proved against her, and so she was released.

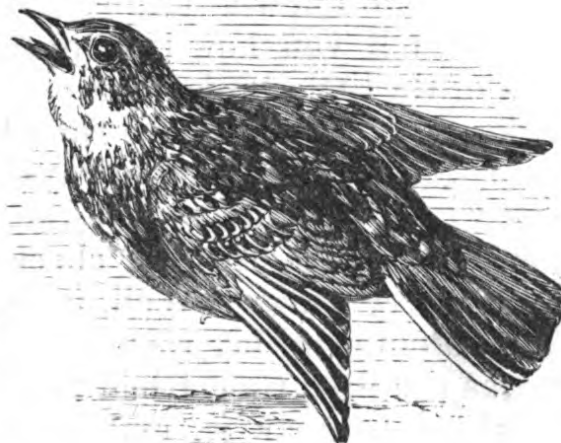
Not long after, the tailor moved away to another town. Here he could make free use of the stolen flute without the fear of its being discovered; and he did so. He had a bird of which he was very fond—a bullfinch. This is a bird something like a sparrow. It is quite common in England and the northern parts of Europe. It has a soft, pleasant voice, and when kept in a cage can be taught to sing a variety of tones. The tailor used to spend a good deal of his leisure time in teaching his bird different tunes by playing on the flute. But, as the birds can only learn by imitation, they have to copy exactly the lesson that is set them. And in teaching the bird its music-lessons from the flute, when he came to the broken key the tailor always had to skip one note. Of course the bird learned to skip that note. Well, after a while the musician had occasion to go on business to the town to which his former neighbour, the tailor, had removed. While he was there he



called on him. To entertain him during his visit, the tailor brought in his beautiful bullfinch to show him, and let his friend hear the different tunes which he could whistle and sing. The musician was very much delighted to listen to the soft, sweet voice of the bird as he sung over one tune after another. But he soon noticed that, as the bird raised its voice, it always skipped one particular note. Then he thought about his lost flute with the broken key. He found that the note the bird skipped each time was the very same note which he used to skip himself when playing on his ebony flute. The thought occurred to him that this bird had been taught to sing from lessons given on his flute. Then he felt sure that the tailor had stolen the flute. He turned to the tailor and said, "This bird skips the very same note that my flute used to skip; *now I know that you stole my flute.*" The man was taken by surprise, and confessed that he had stolen it. He gave the flute back to its owner, and learned a lesson that day, which he never forgot, on the text, "*Be sure your sin will find you out.*" And here you see how God revealed the secret of the stolen flute. He revealed it by His providence. He made use of that little bird to find out this secret.

Let me tell you another story, to show how God revealed a secret, of the same kind, by means of a little bird.

There is a very singular text in the Bible, that Solomon wrote; and the story I am now going to tell you will show the meaning of that text. These are the words of Solomon to which I refer: "A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter." (Eccl. x. 20.)



One Sunday a minister made a collection in his church

or the poor. After church was over he took the money into his study, behind the church, and counted it out. After finding out how much money there was in the collection, he put it in a drawer in his study-table, locked the door of his study, and went out to visit a sick person. When he came back he opened the drawer, and found that somebody had been there, and the money had been stolen. It seemed very strange; for the study-door was fastened, as it was when he went out; but the money was gone. "Who can have taken it?" said the minister to himself. It was very easy to ask this question, but very hard to answer it. It seemed as though it were impossible ever to find out who had stolen that money. But "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." We shall see directly how, *by His providence*, he revealed this secret, and caused the thief to be found out.

On his way home from church the minister called in to see a lady belonging to his congregation, and who lived not far from the church. In conversation with this lady he spoke of the money which had been stolen from his study, and said how glad he would be if he could only find out who had taken it.

"Well, sir," she said, "I think I can help you in that."

"I am very glad to hear that. But pray tell me how you came to know anything about it?"

"I'll tell you how it happened. You know I'm very fond of the little birds; and every spring, when they come back again from the warm countries where they have spent the winter, I'm always on the watch for them. And when they first make their appearance I love to see them, and listen to their cheerful voices when they sing their merry songs. Well, it so happened this afternoon that on entering my room I heard the voice of a jay-bird. It was the first time I had heard one this spring. I was delighted to hear it, and went to the window, which was open, that I might see the little stranger, and listen to the pleasant notes he was singing. On a branch of the tree near the window sat a beautiful blue jay. I stood a

while and looked at him, and heard him sing his sweet spring song. While I was standing there my attention was drawn towards your study, behind the church. I saw a stout boy, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, who I thought must have been after some mischief. He climbed up to the window in your study, and tried to open it; but it was fastened, and he could not get in. Then I saw him go to the church-windows on that side of the building, and try them. Several of them were fastened; but at last he found one that was not fastened; he opened it, climbed up, and entered the church in that way. I have no doubt that boy was the thief who stole your money."

When the lady described the dress and appearance of the boy, the minister said he knew him very well. He had been a scholar in the school, but had fallen into bad company, and had lately given up attending. He knew where he lived, and went directly to his mother's house. He found him in, and charged him with the theft. The boy of course denied it; but on searching him the money was found in his pocket. Then he confessed that he had climbed in at the window, and opened the study-door and the table-drawer with some old keys that he had with him.

The minister did not have him taken up and put in prison, on account of his poor old mother; but, what was better, he talked kindly and earnestly with him. He tried to show him the wickedness of his conduct, and how impossible it was to go on in sin without being found out, and having to suffer for it severely. It had a good effect upon the boy. He saw that he was in great danger of going to ruin, and he resolved to turn round and do better. He promised the minister that, if he would forgive him what he had done, he would break off his bad companions, and come regularly to school again. The minister consented, and the boy kept his promise, and by God's mercy he became a good boy.

Now this is a good illustration of the way in which the providence of God works to reveal secrets. You see how God made use of that little bird to make known the secret

of that stolen money. And to do this it was necessary that the bird should come under that lady's window just at that particular time. If he had come there half an hour later, or half an hour earlier, the lady would not have been in her room to hear him, and this secret would not have been revealed. And then it was necessary for the bird to come and sing on that side of the house; for it so happened that *that* particular window, from which the lady looked at the jay-bird, and listened to his song, was the *only window* in the house from which the minister's study could be seen. When we thus see how wonderfully God orders all things, we see how it is, as I said before, that the world is like a great engine, and God is like the engineer, who puts His hand on every wheel and spring, and controls them all, and makes them all do just what He wants to have done.

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."

God is a *wonderful Revealer*. We have spoken of two ways in which He reveals secrets: one is by *conscience*; the other is by *providence*.

And there is one very important lesson for us to learn from this subject. It is this: *Never do anything that you are not willing to have known*. When Jesus was on earth He said, "There is nothing hid that shall not be known." And the reason why everything will be known is, that "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." If a man should go and steal, right in the presence of a policeman, might he not certainly expect to be taken up? Yes. People try to get out of sight of the police when they want to steal, or do anything wrong. *But God has His police everywhere*. We never can get away from them. Then we never should do what we are not willing to have God see us do. Wherever you go, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, remember the words of the text:—

"*There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.*"



No. VI.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven.”

JOHN vi. 51.



YOU all know what bread is. It is one of the first things we learn to use when we are little children. It is a thing we are obliged to use more than almost anything else as long as we live. It is a thing, too, more important for us than most other things. There are a great many things we have which we find pleasant and comfortable, but which we could do without better than we could do without bread. It is a pleasant thing to own a fine house, and have plenty of elegant furniture in it; but we can live and be happy without such things. It is a pleasant thing to have plenty of money, so that we can buy anything we want; but we can live and be happy without having much money. It is very pleasant to have our dear parents and friends about us, who love us, and are kind to us, and try to make us comfortable; but we could live if they were

taken away; yes, and God could even make us happy without them. It is a pleasant thing to have good health and the use of our limbs, so that we can go about and do whatever we want to do; but people can live, and be happy too, without health, and even without the use of their limbs. And so there are a great many other things which may be very pleasant to have, but yet they are not necessary. But it is different with bread. This *is* necessary. It is *so* necessary that we could neither live nor be comfortable nor happy without it.

And here let me say that when Jesus speaks of bread, in our text, He does not mean only a loaf made out of flour; but what He intends is *suitable food*. It means the same thing in the Lord's Prayer, when we ask our Father in heaven to "give us this day our *daily bread*." That is a prayer for suitable food. So that when we are talking about "the living bread which came down from heaven," we can think of a loaf of good, wholesome bread; but we can think of this as representing all kinds of suitable food. And if this is what is meant by the word "bread," then we can all see, in a minute, how impossible it is to say too much about its being necessary. No one can be happy or useful, and no one can live even, without bread. And when Jesus wanted to teach us what He does for His people, and how important it is that we should know Him, and have Him for our Saviour, how kind it was in Him to compare Himself to bread! Because we are so familiar with bread, we know so much about it; and because, when we see it on our tables every day; when we handle it; when it tastes so pleasant to us if we are hungry; and when we feel it do our bodies so much good,—then we should be reminded of that blessed Saviour, who said of Himself, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven."

Here we have another of the Bible wonders. Our sermon to day is about *the Wonderful Bread*. Jesus is this wonderful bread. And I wish to speak of *three* reasons why this bread is wonderful. And each of the three

things we are to speak of about this bread begins with the letter S.

I. *This bread is wonderful, in the first place, for its power to STRENGTHEN.*

This is the natural effect of bread. This is the reason why the Bible tells us of "bread that *strengthens* man's heart." The heart here means the whole body. When we eat a piece of good, wholesome bread, every part of the body is made strong by it. Some of it goes to the head and some to the feet, some to the arms and some to the legs, some goes down even to the tips of the fingers and the ends of the toes; and wherever it goes it helps to make the body strong. Without bread—that is, without proper food—our flesh would waste away, and we should become like skeletons. All our strength would be gone. We should be unfit for any kind of work, and should soon die.

But good bread, when we eat it, puts flesh on our bones and strength into our limbs, and makes us ready and able to walk about, or work, or do anything we have to do.

But our souls must have something to eat and live upon, as well as the body. And *knowledge* is the food of the soul. The things that we learn to know and believe are what the soul feeds upon. But there is only one kind of knowledge that makes good bread for the soul, and that is the knowledge of Jesus. When we learn what the Bible teaches us about Jesus, and believe it in our hearts, then Jesus becomes "the bread of life," or "living bread," to us, and we are eating that bread. Jesus said to Peter, "*Feed my lambs.*" What He meant by this was, "Teach the children all about Me; how I was born in Bethlehem; how I taught in Jerusalem; and how I died on the cross for them, that they might be pardoned and saved." And when our teachers and ministers do this for us, then they are feeding our souls. They are taking the bread that came down from heaven, and breaking it up for us, that

we may eat it, and live, and become strong to serve Jesus. The lambs of Jesus represent the young people, and the sheep of Jesus the older people connected with our churches. Jesus wants His ministers to feed the lambs as well as the sheep. And they are both to be fed in the same way—that is, with the knowledge of Jesus, or the bread that came down from heaven. This is wonderful bread because of its power to strengthen.

You know how strong Joseph was when he would rather lose his place in Potiphar's house, and be cast into prison, than commit the sin he was tempted to commit.—It was eating this living bread which made him so strong. You know how strong David was when he was not afraid to go forth by himself and fight the great giant of the Philistines.—It was eating this bread which made him so strong. You know how strong Daniel was when he would rather be thrown into the den of the hungry lions than give up praying to God.—It was eating this living bread which made him so strong. You know how strong St. Paul was when he was willing to give up everything he had in the world rather than not love and serve Jesus; when he went all over the world preaching about Jesus; though he was stoned, and beaten with rods, and bound with chains, and put in prison for it, still he went on till they put him to death.—It was eating this living bread which made Paul so strong.

You have heard about Martin Luther. He was so strong in his heart that he stood up alone against the Pope and the Church of Rome, to fight with them. The Pope wanted to take this living bread away from the people; but Luther thought they ought to have it, and wanted to give it to everybody. The Pope tried to prevent him doing this; but Luther would not be prevented. Then the Pope tried to buy him off with money; but Luther cared nothing for the Pope's money. He would not be bought off. Then the Pope tried to frighten Luther. He threatened to have him tortured in the most dreadful way, and then burned to death. But Luther

cared no more for the Pope's threatenings than he did for his money. He said he never would stop preaching to the people about Jesus, and so keep from them the living bread. And he never did stop till he died. And God did not let the Pope kill him either. How very strong Martin Luther was! And it was eating this bread which came down from heaven that made him so.

And, if you want to be strong in heart; as Luther was; if you would be strong to resist temptation, and strong to overcome sinful tempers and habits; if you would be strong to serve God, and do good, this is the only way in which you can get this strength. You must eat this living bread; that is, you must learn what the Bible tells you about Jesus; and you must *believe* what it tells. This is what is meant by “eating the living bread;” and it is *only this* that can make your hearts strong. Jesus said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven.” This is wonderful bread! It is wonderful; in the first place, for its power to *strengthen*.

In the second place, it is wonderful for its power to SATISFY.

When you are very hungry, you know how earnestly you long to have some good bread to eat. But when you have eaten as much as you want, you are satisfied; your hunger is gone, and you feel contented and happy. And this is just the kind of feeling we have in our souls when we have eaten of this living bread. If we learn to know and love Jesus, and to believe what the Bible tells us about Him, it makes us feel perfectly satisfied and happy. And there is nothing in the world that can make us feel so but eating this living bread.

We often hear people talk about being “as happy as a king.” But this is a mistake. Kings are about the most unhappy of all men. I was reading lately about a king who began to reign when he was very young. As soon as his father died, and the crown was put on his own head, he thought he was going to have a very happy time. He

was so sure of this that he had a large silver-toned bell made, and put up in the tower of his palace. He had a rope, connected with this bell, in every room in the palace. He told his friends that he was going to ring this bell whenever he felt happy; and he said he expected they would be tired of hearing the bell ring, and he would be tired of pulling the rope. But the story says that the king lived to be an old man, and he had so many cares and troubles that he never rang the bell but once, and that was just as he was dying. Ah, that king's crown was not able to make him happy! But if he had only known and loved Jesus, and had eaten this living bread which came down from heaven, he might have rung that bell every day of his life.

There was a minister once who often used to say to his people, "God is good, and is able to make His people always happy." One time his only son—a bright, dar-



ling boy—died very suddenly. The day of his funeral came. The coffin was lowered into the grave. Another minister was there attending to the funeral. Just before he finished the service he asked the weeping father if he had anything to say. Most of his congregation were

standing round the grave. "Yes," said he, "I would like to say a few words. My friends, when I was in no trouble, you have often heard me say that God is good, and always able to make His people happy. And now, here, as I stand beside the grave of my darling boy, I can say from my heart, God IS good, and I am satisfied even in my sorrow." That minister had learned to eat of this wonderful bread, and he was feeling its power to satisfy.

But let me tell you about a Christian woman, now living a few miles from the city of Hartford, in Connecticut, in America, whose case illustrates this part of our subject better, perhaps, than anything else that could be mentioned. Her name is Chloe Lankton. She never has been well since she was a child. Since the time she was eighteen years of age she has been unable to help herself to anything. She has been lying in her bed now *for thirty-six years*, without ever being able to get up once, or to do anything for her-

self. Her poor body is wasted almost to a skeleton, by a lingering disease which no earthly physician can cure. She often suffers such dreadful pain that for night after night she can neither sleep nor rest, and for days together she can eat no food. Her family have all died since she has been lying on that bed of suffering. She has no



relative left in the world. She has no money of her own to live on. She is supported entirely by money sent to her, from time to time, by kind Christian friends, in different parts of the country, who have heard of her sufferings, and are glad to do something to help her. Now, you can hardly think it possible for any one to be in a more sorrowful condition than this. On hearing her sad story, we might any

of us say, "Poor creature! how wretched and unhappy she must be!" But it is not so at all. She never murmurs or complains. She is always patient and cheerful, and often very happy. The presence of Jesus has been a sweet support and comfort to her through all these years of suffering. If Chloe Lankton only had a bell, like the king of whom I spoke a little while ago—a bell to be rung when she was happy—there would, perhaps, be very few days in which the people in her neighbourhood would not hear the ringing of that bell. And often, in the long tedious nights, when pain prevents her from getting a wink of sleep, that bell would be heard, telling how happy she is amidst all her suffering, when she thinks of the love of Jesus, and of that blessed home which He is preparing for her, "where is *no more pain*, neither sorrow, nor crying," but "fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore." Chloe Lankton has been taught to eat of this wonderful bread that we are speaking of, and she has felt its power to satisfy. Sometimes we wonder why God lets good people have so much pain and suffering to bear. One reason why He does so, no doubt, is to show the power of this wonderful bread to satisfy His people. For if this bread is able to make those who eat it happy when they are poor and sick, when their bodies are racked with pain, when their limbs are bound with chains, when they are thrust into dungeons, and even when they are burning at the stake, then we may well say that it is wonderful bread. It is wonderful in its power to *satisfy*.

The third thing for which this bread is wonderful is its power to SAVE.

This is the special work that Jesus came to do. And this is the reason why this name Jesus was given to Him by the angel from heaven. Jesus means a Saviour. He came to "save His people from their sins." And He does this by this wonderful bread that He gives them. When we hear what the Bible tells us about Jesus, and believe it,

we are saved. This is what the Apostle means when he says that God's word—that is, what the Bible tells us about Jesus—“*is able to save our souls.*”

You know when the Israelites were on their journey from Egypt to the land of Canaan, at one place a great many poisonous serpents got in among the people and bit them. All who were bitten became very sick, and many of them died. None of the doctors could cure them. But God told Moses to make a serpent of brass, and set it upon a high pole, so that everybody might see it. Then he told

all the people to look at that serpent, and that every one who looked at it should be cured and made well.

When Jesus was on earth He told the people, to whom He was preaching one day, about this serpent. He said that this serpent represented Him-
self; He said that, just



as Moses lifted up the serpent on the pole to save the bodies of the Israelites from dying, so He Himself was to be lifted up, by being nailed to the cross, that He might save the souls of His people; and that, as the dying Israelites were saved by looking at that serpent, so dying sinners should be saved by believing in Him.

Now, I want to tell you some stories to show how God makes use of this wonderful bread, or what the Bible tells us about Jesus in order to save the souls of men.

Some time ago there was a missionary in India who had been preaching about Jesus to the people there for a long time. One day a man came to this missionary and asked him to baptize him. The missionary was glad to see this man, and had a long talk with him, to see if he was prepared to be baptized. He found out that the man

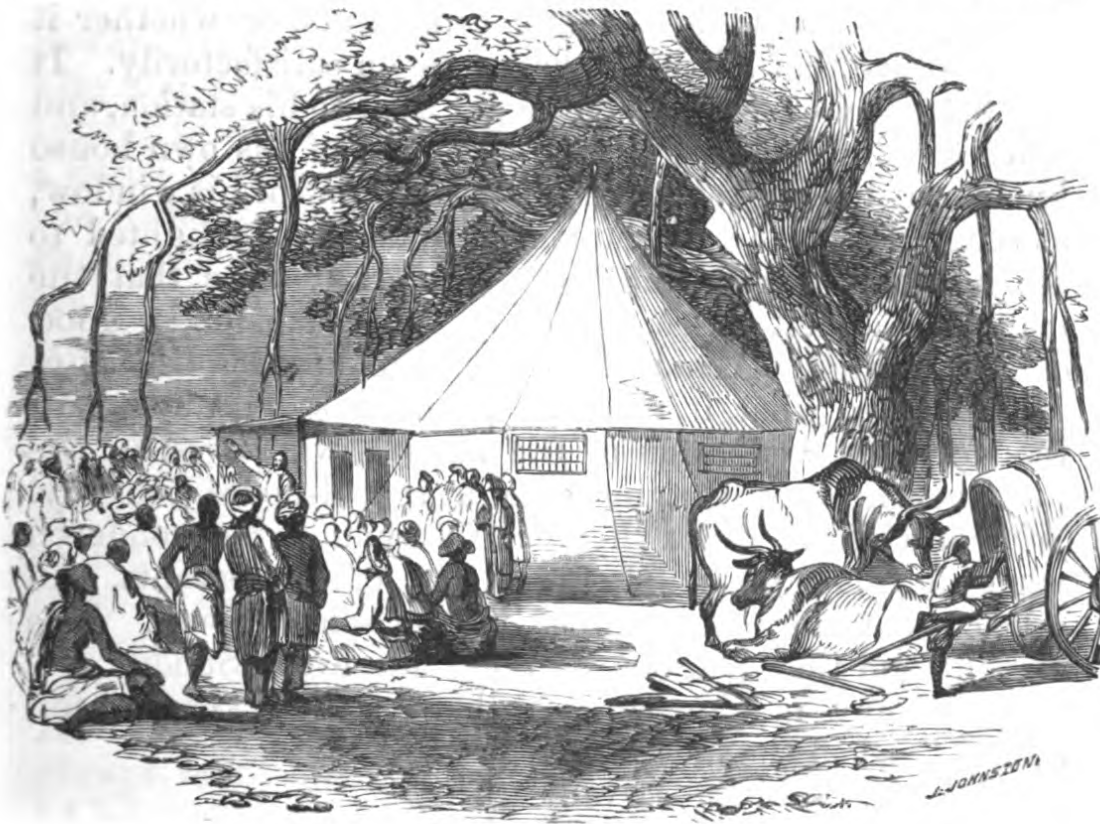
had been born and brought up as a heathen. He had been a very wicked man too. For a long time he had belonged to a band of robbers. This band used to get their living by prowling about the country, going from one village to another, and robbing and stealing wherever they could get a chance.

One night they went to a village, and broke open several houses. One of these was a house in which a Christian teacher lived. They got a great many things from these different houses. They carried them to a secret place in the woods, near the village, where they used to meet for the purpose of dividing the spoil which they had taken. They met there the next day to examine the things they had stolen the night before. Among the things which were given to this man, as his share of the plunder, was a copy of the Bible. He had never seen a Bible before. But he had heard about it. He knew it was the book out of which the Christian missionaries preached, and which told about Jesus, of whom they had so much to say. He felt curious to know what was in the book; and made up his mind that he would read it through. But, long before he had read it through, it made him feel that he was a sinner. It led him to repent of his sins, and believe in Jesus. He separated himself from the band of robbers, and began to lead a new life. The missionary was glad to hear this story of the robber. He baptized him, and the man became a member of his church, and a very useful Christian. Some time after he had become a Christian this man lent his Bible to his brother, and he became a Christian too, through reading it; and so this stolen Bible was the means of converting two heathen men to Jesus. And here we see the power of this wonderful bread to save men.

Here is another story which shows the same thing.

Some years ago an English officer had charge of a station, belonging to the Government, up among the mountains in India. Here he had a number of the native people at work for him. At one time it became necessary

for him to return to England, and be absent a long while from his post. He was far away from any missionary station, and there was no other English officer there whom he could leave in charge of his post. There was a good deal of valuable property there, besides the many people who were working for him. After considering it a great while, there was only one person he could think of leaving in his place; this was one of the natives who lived in his neighbourhood. Of course he was a heathen man,



as all the Hindoos are; but he was a very respectable man, honest and faithful, and he felt sure that everything would be safe in his care. So he made a bargain with this man to take charge of the station, and attend to the workmen while he was away. This officer was a Christian man; and one of the last things he did before he left was to give a copy of the New Testament to the person he was leaving in charge of his station. Then he went away.

He had to go to England, and to America too, before he could go back to India. More than a year passed before he could return. But at last he got through with his business, and went back to his place. When he was on his journey back he often used to wonder to himself how he would find things on his return. He wondered if the man he had left in charge had taken good care of things. He wondered if the workmen had been well attended to, and if everything had gone on properly. He wondered whether he should hear many complaints; or whether it would prove that all things had gone on satisfactorily. It was Saturday evening when he got back to his station, and when Sunday morning came no one out of his own house knew that he had returned. He looked out of his window, as soon as he got up in the morning, and was delighted to see how nice everything looked. He felt sure that the man he had left in charge of the place had taken good care of things. About ten o'clock he heard a bell ring. He wondered what it meant. Then he saw a number of the workmen, and some of the natives, who lived in the neighbourhood, gathering into a school-house near by. After a while he heard them sing a hymn. He wondered what all this meant. He called one of his servants, and asked what they were doing in the school-house. The servant said they had church there now every Sunday.

"Has any missionary been here since I have been away?" asked the officer.

"No, sir," said the servant.

"Then who started this church, and who conducts it?"

"The sahib" (this is the Indian name for master) "you left in charge of the station when you went away, sir," was the answer.

"And what do they do in church?" inquired the officer.

"They sing and pray, and then the sahib reads to them out of the New Testament, and talks to them about Jesus."

This was all very wonderful to the officer. When he

went away this man was a heathen. He hated and despised the religion of Jesus. And what had made this great change in him, in little more than a year? *It was the New Testament which the officer had given him before he left.* That Testament was full of that wonderful bread that we are talking about. When the man began to read that Testament he was eating this living bread. That Testament was a *printed* missionary. It was very quiet and silent; but it spoke to this man's heart with great power. It showed him that he was a sinner. It showed him that Jesus is the only Saviour for sinners. It led him to pray to Jesus. It taught him to love Jesus, and gave him a desire to serve Him. One of the first things he did after the return of the officer, when he was released from the charge of the station, was to go to the nearest missionary and be baptized; and now he is preaching Jesus to his countrymen. This shows us the power of this wonderful bread to *save* men.

I have only one more story to tell you about the saving power of this wonderful bread.

In a village there lived a labouring man by the name of Jones. For a number of years both he and his wife lived careless, wicked lives, without thinking about God, or trying to serve Him. After a while, however, Sally Jones, as the man's wife was called, became a Christian. Her husband had never been a kind man to her. He had always been cross and ill-tempered. After this change he became worse-tempered than ever. He used to scold her, and swear at her, and beat her on account of her religion. Some of her neighbours advised her not to live with him, and others said she ought to have him taken up, and fined, or put in prison, for his cruel treatment of her. But she would not listen to them. She bore the ill-treatment of her husband with the greatest patience; she never spoke crossly to him, but was always gentle and kind, hoping thus to show him what a good thing religion is, and persuade him to become a Christian too.

One morning, when he was going to work, Jones told

his wife to have his dinner ready for him by twelve o'clock, and said if he had to wait a minute for it when he came home, he would beat her till she could not stand. There was no occasion for him to say this, for his wife was very careful to do everything that he told her to do. He returned home about ten minutes before twelve. But the dinner was all ready, and his wife was sitting by the table reading the Bible. He went up to her with a savage look, as though he meant to hit her. But when he got near to her, he stood still a moment, and said to himself, "I wonder what's in that book, anyhow?" He could not read, but he knew the letters, and could spell a little. So he looked down on the page, and, putting his finger on the last verse of the chapter his wife had just been reading, he began to spell it out, in this way: "T-h-e—that spells 'the,' I know; w-a-g-e-s, what does that spell, Sally?" "Wages," said his wife. "The wages—o-f 'of' s-i-n 'sin' i-s 'is' d-e-a-t-h: there's another big word, Sally; what's that?" "Death," was her answer. Then he seemed frightened. He repeated the words over to himself, "The wages of sin is death," and said, "Well, if anybody ever earned those wages, I have." He ate his dinner without saying another word. After dinner he said "Good-bye" kindly to his wife. It was the first time he had spoken a kind word to her for many a day. When he came home in the evening he was quite sober, which was very unusual. The first words he spoke, on coming in, were, "Those terrible wages! Sally, is the book full of that dark side?"

"Oh, no, Tom," said his wife; "there is a bright side too, as well as a dark one. Just let me read the rest of the verse." She opened her Bible, and read, "The wages of sin is death; but *the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Then she told him

—the old, old story,
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.

He listened earnestly, and the tears were running freely down his cheeks, while his wife was talking to him. When she stopped, he sobbed out, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” Then his wife kneeled down by his side, and prayed *with* him and *for* him. He believed in Jesus, and found pardon and peace in believing. The bright side of that one verse saved him: “The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Now, you see, when that good woman explained this verse of the Bible to her husband, she was giving him a piece of this wonderful bread to eat. And eating that living bread saved his soul.

“Jesus said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven.” This is wonderful bread. There are three reasons why it is so—because of its wonderful power to *strengthen, to satisfy, to save.*

Now there are two things we ought to do with this bread. One is this,—*we ought to use it ourselves.* Bread is made to be eaten. It will do us no good if we keep it in the closet, or leave it standing on the table. Bread is of no use till we eat it. And so it is with Jesus, this wonderful bread. God gave Him to us that we might use Him. The right use to make of Jesus is to take Him as our Saviour. When we believe what the Bible tells us about Jesus, and try to love and serve Him, then we are making a right use of Him. This is one thing we ought to do with this bread,—*we ought to use it ourselves.*

And then there is another thing we ought to do with it,—*we ought to give it to others.* There are multitudes who are perishing for want of this bread. We should do all we can to send it to them. Remember what Jesus said, “Freely ye have received, freely give.”



No. VII.

“We must be born again.”—JOHN iii. 7.



HOW many changes are continually taking place about us! Look at the sky; how it changes! How dark it is at night! How bright it is by day! And as the clouds sail over it, how many changes they keep making! Look at the seasons. What changes they are making continually! Winter comes. Then the flowers all fade and die. The little birds fly away to warmer climates. The leaves drop off from the trees, and the forests look brown and bare. The rivers are frozen. Snow covers the ground, and cold, stormy winds are blowing. Then spring comes along. She thaws the rivers and melts away the snow. She breathes her warm, gentle breath over the landscape. The flowers spring up to meet her. The fields grow green, the trees put out their leaves, and the little birds come back again to sing among their

branches. Then summer ripens the grain and the fruit, and autumn brings the time for gathering them. How many



changes these seasons make! Our families are changing. Some that belong to them get married, and remove away. Some go to live in other places on account of business; while others are taken away by death. And then we change our selves, as we keep growing older. From little babies in our mothers' arms till we get to be full-grown men and women how many changes we have to go through! But, in the words of our text, Jesus speaks of one change very different from all others. He was here talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus had heard a great deal of Jesus of Nazareth, the wonderful prophet and teacher that everybody was talking about. He wanted to see and hear Him. But he was ashamed to come in the daytime, lest people should see him; so he came at night. Jesus at once began to talk to him about a change of heart—that great change which we must all pass through before we can become

true Christians. It is so great a change that Jesus compares it to being "born again." Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus meant at first. He thought He meant to say that we must become little babies again, just as when we were first born into the world. Jesus told him that *that* was not what He meant. He showed him that He was speaking of a change that must take place inside of us, and not outside—the change that takes place in us when our hearts are made new, when we learn to love Jesus, and desire to serve and please Him. And then, to show Nicodemus how important this change is, He repeated what He had said before, saying, "Ye *must* be born again."

This is a *wonderful* change. I might speak of many things for which this change is wonderful; but now I will only speak of one; *it is a wonderful change on account of its IMPORTANCE.* And there are *three* things which show the wonderful importance of this change.

It is wonderful in its importance, in the first place, because WE CANNOT BE GOOD WITHOUT IT.

Some people think that it is all nonsense to talk so much about the importance of a change of heart. They say that when we are born our hearts are not really bad, but they are like pieces of white paper with nothing written on them; and that if we are only careful not to let any ink-blots fall on them, and not let anything bad be written on them, they will be always clean and good, just like sheets of paper with nothing but beautiful writing on them. But this is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. David says (and what was true of him is true of us all), "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. li. 5.) That means that he was born with a sinful heart. So were you. So was I, and so were all people. David says again, "The wicked go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." (Ps. lviii. 3.) These passages show us that though when we are born into the world our sins do not *appear*, yet they are in us, and will

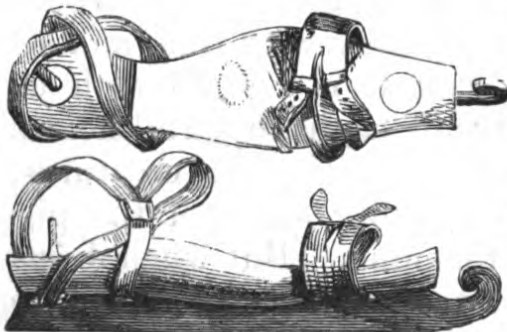
be sure to grow, by-and-by, in spite of all we can do of ourselves to prevent it. Instead of comparing our hearts, when we are born, to clean white paper, that, if we are careful, may always be kept clean, it would be more proper to compare them to beds or plots of ground in a garden. There is nothing growing in them; but there are plenty of seeds hidden away in them that will be sure to spring up and grow by-and-by. But those seeds are bad seeds. Briars and thorns and poisonous plants will be sure to grow up from them. Those seeds must be changed, and *other* seeds, *good* seeds, must be put in the place of them, or else we never can have a good garden. This shows the importance of the great change that Jesus was speaking about to Nicodemus when He said, "Ye must be born again." It is important, because we cannot be good without it. Some people say, "Oh! if children are only taught and trained properly, if they are rightly educated, and have good examples set before them, they will be sure to be good, without having their hearts changed." But this is a great mistake; we never can be good unless our hearts are changed.

The Bible tells us that when our hearts are changed, and we become Christians, "old things pass away, and all things become new." Suppose it were possible for an animal like a pig, or a dog, or a wolf, to have his own heart taken away, and a lamb's heart put in the place of it, how strange it would be! All his feelings would change. All the things that he liked and disliked would change. "Old things would pass away with him, and all things would become new." And it is just so with us when we become Christians. While we have sinful hearts we cannot do anything else than behave like sinful creatures. We can no more keep from committing sin than the pig could keep from running into the mud. But when Jesus changes our hearts and makes them holy and good like His, then, like Him, we can be good and holy too. The first reason why this change is wonderful for its importance is, that *we cannot be good without it.*

The second reason why it is wonderful for its importance is, that we CANNOT BE HAPPY WITHOUT IT.

There are a great many unhappy people in the world, and only a few who are happy. All the people in the world may be divided into these two classes—the unhappy and the happy. Now, I want to tell you two great secrets. Most people when they tell you a secret make you promise not to tell anybody else. But I do not want you to make me any such promise. You can talk about these two secrets that I am going to tell you as much as you please. The first of these secrets is about the unhappy people in the world, and *the reason why* they are unhappy. And it is a reason that refers to them all. You may travel all round the world, and wherever you find a man or woman, a boy or girl, who is unhappy, this secret will show the reason why they are unhappy. Now, the secret of unhappiness, the great reason why people are unhappy, is *the want of something which they have not got*. You can try for yourselves now, and see if this is not the true reason why people are unhappy. I am very sure it will apply to every case that you can meet with. You will never find it fail.

And now for the other secret. This refers to the happy people in the world. And the reason why they are happy is, *they have got something that they wanted*. This is the secret of being happy. And it applies to all happy people everywhere. You cannot find a happy person anywhere,



but this will be the secret of his happiness. He has been wanting something. The want of it made him unhappy; but he has got it now, and getting it makes him happy. Here is a boy who is very happy. What is the secret of it? Why, he has been wanting a pair of new skates for a long time. Now he has got what he wanted, and it makes him happy.

Here is a girl who has long been wanting a new bonnet. She has been very unhappy because she could not get it. Now she has got it, and it makes her happy. And here is a man who has long been wanting to buy a new house, which has been for sale in his neighbourhood. But he has not had money enough to buy it. This has made him unhappy. At last he has managed to get enough money. He has got the house, and it makes him happy.

And now perhaps some of you are ready to ask me a question. I have said that the second reason why this change, being born again, or having new hearts, is so important is, that we cannot be happy without it ; and yet I have been speaking of persons being made happy by such things as a new pair of skates, or a new bonnet, or a new house. You may ask me what I mean by this. I will tell you. When I say we cannot be happy without a change of heart, I mean that we cannot be *truly* happy ; we cannot be happy for ever.

Will a new pair of skates make a boy happy for ever ?—No. Will a new bonnet make a girl happy for ever ?—No. Will a new house make a man happy for ever ?—No. These things only make people happy for a little while. Then they get tired of them, and want something else ; and unless they get this thing, whatever it is, they are unhappy again.



And this is the way in which we go on through life. We get something that we wanted. It makes us happy for a little while. Then we get tired of it. We want something else, and are unhappy again. We never can be truly happy, or happy for ever, till we have *a friend who can give us everything that we need*. But Jesus is the only one who can do this for us. Yet he will not do it till our hearts are changed, and we learn to love Him. And this is the reason why I say that till our hearts are changed we cannot be happy. Till Jesus is our friend there are sure to be a great many

things that we want, but which we never can get; and this must always prevent us from being happy.

Let me tell you about a little boy who was very unhappy once. His name was Walter. He lived in the country. One night his mother had put him to bed, and had gone downstairs to see some friends in the parlour. She thought he would be asleep in a few minutes. But Walter could not go to sleep that night. The curtain was drawn aside from the window, and through the opening he could see the stars. At other times he used to love to look at them, but now they seemed to look sadly on him. He heard the sound of the waterfall up by the old mill, and though he often said its murmuring was like music, and helped him to go to sleep, yet now it was like the voices of people talking low together about him, and he wished he could stop it.

He turned his pillow over, and tried to arrange the quilt better, but it was of no use. He could not sleep. He had never been so uneasy on that bed before. What was the matter? There was *a little thorn in his pillow*. I do not mean one like those you have seen growing on thorn-bushes, but a kind which gives more pain even than they can. He had been doing wrong that day. He had committed a great sin; and it was this which made him so unhappy. *This* was the thorn in his pillow. "I ought to tell mother," he said to himself, "but I do not want to."

The waterfall kept on murmuring, and he thought he could almost hear something said about grapes and apples. The stars seemed to look in at the window still more sadly than before. Walter said again to himself, "I ought to tell mother, and I *will* tell her."

He got up from his bed, and went gently down the stairs. He tapped at the door and called his mother out. She came out, wondering to find her little boy there, when she thought he was fast asleep. He said, "Mother, will you please come upstairs?" As soon as they were back in the bedroom he said, "Mother, I am very unhappy. I promised you I would not take any more fruit at dinner-time; but after you left the table I *did* take a bunch of grapes.

and three apples, and hid them in my box in the nursery, and there they are now. I am very sorry, mother, and I want you to forgive me. I could not go to sleep because I had disobeyed you, and told a lie too."

His mother laid her hand lovingly on his head, after this confession, and told him that she freely forgave him,



and was glad he had not tried to hide his sin. This melted the poor boy down, and he threw his arms round his mother's neck and wept upon her shoulder. Then he told her he knew that he had not only sinned against her, but against his best Friend, and he could not be happy unless Jesus forgave him too. So she knelt down with him, and asked Jesus to forgive him, and to help him so that he should not sin again in this way. Then he felt happy, and soon fell asleep.

Here you see what the thorn in Walter's pillow was. It was the sin that he had committed against his mother and against his Saviour. That was what made him so unhappy that he could not go to sleep. Now let us try this case by the rule that I gave you a little while ago. One

of the two secrets that I gave you was, *the reason why people are unhappy*. I said it *was the want of something which they had not got*. Walter was unhappy. Why? He wanted something that he had not got. What was it? It was *forgiveness*. He wanted his mother to forgive him; and he wanted his Saviour to forgive him. But after his mother had left him he was happy. And what was the secret of his happiness? He *had got something that he wanted*. So you see how both of the secrets I have given you apply to this case of Walter's. And you will find these two secrets apply, just in the same way, one of them to all the unhappy people in the world, and the other to all the happy people in it. Do you think Walter ever would have been happy if he had not got the forgiveness that he wanted? Never. That thorn would always have been in his pillow. It would have made him miserable all the time.

And, oh, how many people in the world are just like Walter in this respect! *They have a thorn in their pillow*. They know they are sinners. They want forgiveness. They have not got it; and *this* makes them unhappy. No one can give it to them but Jesus. He will only give it to them when they are sorry for their sins, and believe. But when they do this they are born again; their hearts are changed, and they are happy. And so I say the second reason for the wonderful importance of this change is, that *we cannot be happy without it*.

But there is a third reason for the wonderful importance of this change. It is this, WE CANNOT GO TO HEAVEN WITHOUT IT.

And the reason is, we are *unfit*. There are two kinds of unfitness for heaven about us until we are born again; there is an *outside* unfitness, and an *inside* unfitness. The outside unfitness refers to our *dress*. The inside unfitness refers to our *hearts*. We cannot go to heaven without this wonderful change, because our *dress* is unfit. And when I speak of the dress that is unfit for heaven, I mean the

dress of our *souls*, and not of our bodies. You and I, each one of us has a soul, and yet none of us ever saw a soul. We do not know how souls look, but we know that souls have dresses; for when a door in heaven was opened to St. John, and he looked through it, he tells us that he saw the *souls* of those who had died and gone to heaven, and *they were all clothed in a particular kind of dress*. And the Bible tells us that no one is ever allowed to enter heaven who is not clothed in that way.

Suppose that you and I should go to London, and we hear that Queen Victoria is going to hold her court and have a grand reception day. On those days the Queen puts on her royal robes and her sparkling crown; and the nobility and the great people of the kingdom go in and are presented to the Queen. Well, we make up our minds that we will go to this grand reception and see the Queen and all the nobility. We get tickets of admission, but we do not know anything about the rules of the court, and so we go in our common everyday dress. We go to the palace and ring the bell. An officer, all dressed in scarlet and gold, opens the door. We present our tickets. He looks at our dress, and says, "My friends, you cannot go in." "Why not?" "Your dress is unfit. The law of the palace requires that every one who wishes to be presented to the Queen must wear a particular kind of dress. It is called the court dress. *On no account whatever can any one be allowed to enter without having that dress on.*" This is the law in the palace of earthly monarchs. And there is just such a law in the heavenly palace, of which Jesus is the great king. A particular kind



of dress is necessary before any one from our sinful world can be allowed to enter there. This dress consists of a beautiful robe that has been washed and made white in the "blood of the Lamb," Christ Jesus. These robes Jesus puts on the souls of His people when their hearts are changed, or when they are born again and become Christians. These white robes are the court dress of heaven. If our hearts have not been changed, then, instead of being clothed in this beautiful white dress, our souls can have no other clothing than "filthy rags." Just think how a poor beggar would look

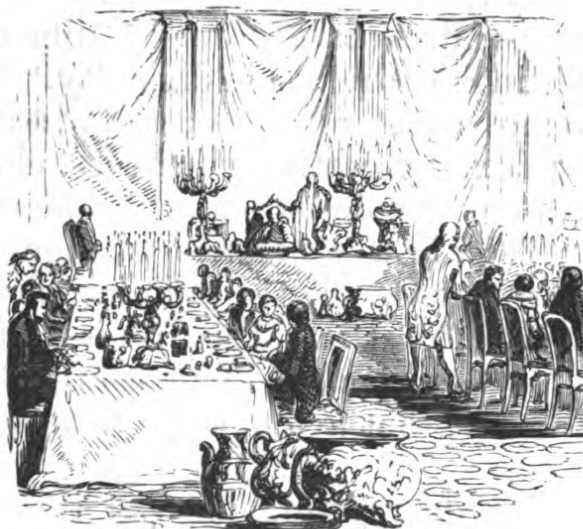


if he were picked up from the gutter, with his ragged clothes all covered with mud, and were carried into the presence of Queen Victoria and her nobility, on some grand court day! How ashamed he would feel! How everybody would try to get away from him! The darkest cellar he could find would be pleasanter to him than that bright

and brilliant court-scene. And yet such a beggar would be much more fit to be introduced to the Queen and her court than anybody out of this sinful world will ever be to go into heaven until his heart is changed, and his soul is dressed in the white robe which Jesus puts on His people. Nobody can go into heaven without this. And this is the reason why Jesus said so positively, "Ye *must* be born again." We are all unfit to go to heaven till this wonderful change has taken place. There is an *outside* unfitness. The *dress* of our souls is unfit.

And then there is an *inside* unfitness too. Our *hearts* are unfit, as well as our dress. Suppose we compare heaven to a great feast, where there is an abundance of all

good things to eat and to drink. Suppose, also, that the chief happiness of the people admitted to that feast consisted in eating and drinking the good things that are there. And suppose that you and I are allowed to go in to the feast. But suppose that we are both sick, so that the sight of food, instead of being pleasant, is really painful to us; should we be able to enjoy the feast?



No; we should be unfit for such enjoyment. There would be an *inside* unfitness in the state of our stomachs. A good appetite would be necessary to fit us for that enjoyment.

Suppose, again, we compare heaven to a concert of sacred music. All who go into the concert are expected to take part in the singing, and all who do so find that it makes them perfectly happy. And suppose that you and I get tickets of admission to this concert. We get in, but both of us are deaf and dumb. We can neither sing a note nor hear a sound. Could we enjoy the concert? Not in the least. We should be unfit for that enjoyment. There would be an *inside* unfitness that would spoil all our pleasure.

Or suppose we think of heaven as a great family. Jesus is the head of the family. The happiness of the members of this family is found in loving and serving Jesus. Suppose that you and I are brought into this family, but we do not know Jesus; we do not love Him; we do not like to serve Him. Should we be happy there? No. The state of our hearts and feelings would make us unfit to be happy there. It would be an *inside* unfitness. And so you see how true it is that till our hearts are changed we cannot go to heaven. There are two great

difficulties in the way. One of these is an outside difficulty; the other is an inside difficulty. The want of a proper dress is the outside difficulty; the want of proper feelings is the inside difficulty. These difficulties must be removed before we can go to heaven. But this can only be done by getting our hearts changed. And this is the reason why Jesus said, "Ye *must* be born again."

This is a wonderful change. It is wonderful for its importance. Three things show us how wonderfully important it is. The first is, that *we cannot be good without it*. The second is, that *we cannot be happy without it*. The third is, that *we cannot go to heaven without it*.

My dear young friends, this great change is so wonderful in its importance that we ought to attend to it at once. Before we eat, or drink, or sleep, or do anything else, we ought to try and get this change made in our hearts. This was what Jesus meant when He said, "Seek *first* the kingdom of God." Never forget these three *cannots*. Until our hearts are changed and made new we *cannot be good*—we *cannot be happy*—we *cannot go to heaven*. Then let us begin at once and try to get this change made. We cannot change our own hearts. We cannot change each other's hearts. But Jesus can change them.

There is truth in one of the hymns we sometimes sing, which says, —

'Tis *Thine*, almighty Saviour, Thine
To *form the heart anew*.

The prayer that King David offered on this subject suits us all. He said, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." If we offer that prayer aright, Jesus will hear us. He will change our wicked hearts. We shall be born again. We shall feel the wonderful importance of this change when we find that by the help He gives us we *can* be good, we can be happy, and we can go to heaven and be fit to share in all its joys.

"Ye *must* be born again!"



No. VIII.

“We must be born again.”—JOHN iii. 7.



It is a *wonderful change* that Jesus was speaking about to Nicodemus when He spoke these words. In our last sermon we spoke of it as wonderful for its *importance*. We spoke of three things which show its importance. The first was, that *we cannot be good without it*. The second was, *we cannot be happy without it*. The third was, *we cannot go to heaven without it*.

Now let us look at another thing about this change on account of which it is wonderful, and that is, ITS EFFECTS. Some changes take place that are not followed by any particular effects. For example, you and I are born in England, and are subjects of Queen Victoria. If we make up our minds to go over to America, and live in that country,

then we should become citizens of the United States. That would be a great change, in some respects. It would be a change of country, and a change of our home, or place of living; but no particular effect would follow from it. We should probably pursue the same kind of business in one country as in the other. We should have the same feelings and characters, and be just the same kind of persons, in the one country as in the other. But then other changes take place that are followed by very great effects. It is a great change when winter passes away, and spring comes; and the effects that follow it are very great. In winter the skies are cloudy, and the days are dark. Fierce winds blow; heavy storms rage; and ice, and snow, and frost prevail. The trees are bare, the birds that used to sing among their branches have disappeared, the gardens are stripped of their flowers, the fields are brown, the ground is hard, and the streams are frozen over. But when spring comes on, the effects that follow it are very surprising. The days are lengthened out, the skies are bright, the winds die



away, the storms are hushed, the sun waxes warm, and the ice and snow all melt away before it. The grass springs up, the flowers come out, the trees put forth their beautiful green leaves again, and everything looks fresh and bright. This illustrates the effects which

follow when our hearts are changed, and we are born again. And Solomon makes use of this very figure of the change of seasons, from winter to spring, in order to show the *effects* which follow when our hearts are changed and we are born again, and become Christians. And this is what he means when he says, "The rain is over and gone; the

flowers appear in the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come ; and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

Now, all that I wish to do, in this sermon, is to give you some illustrations of the effects which follow when this great change takes place. It is *wonderful in its effects*. And in seeking for our illustrations of this subject, let us suppose that we were taking a walk together. We will suppose that it is Monday, or Tuesday, or any other day in the week except Sunday. To find our illustrations, we will go among some of our mechanics, or working people, and in the works in which they are engaged, or in the trades they are carrying on, we shall find several things that will illustrate the effects that follow in the characters and lives of people when they are born again, or become Christians.

And the first place to which we go for an illustration is an ENGINE MANUFACTORY. I mean by this a place where they make locomotives, or steam-engines.

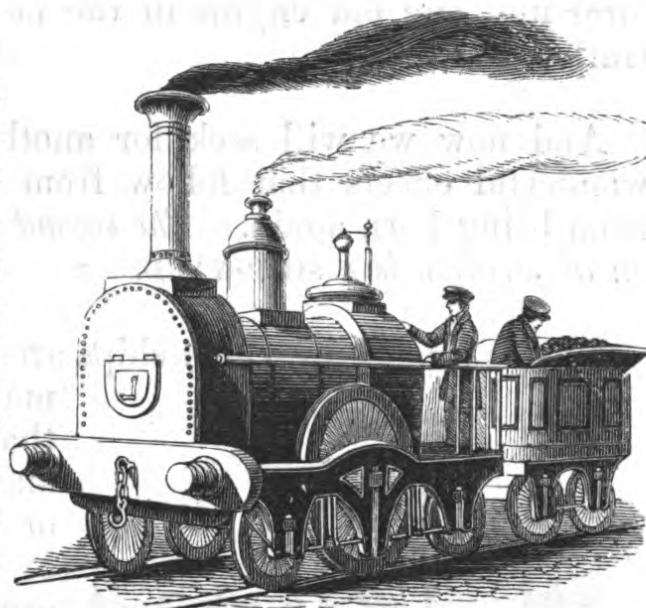
Here we find an old railway engine. It is off the rails, standing with the wheels sunk in the ground. A railway engine off the rails is good for nothing. It cannot go on the ground. There is a grate or fireplace in it, but there is no fire in it. The strong iron arm or crank that moves what are called the *driving-wheels* is broken. It is the arm or rod that keeps the wheels in motion, and makes the engine go. The boiler is burst, so that it will not hold any steam. Now, a railway engine in this condition would be a good illustration of what our condition is before we become Christians. The engine is off the rails on which it was intended to run. The rails represent the path of obedience to God's commands. That is the way along which God intended that we should move. But we do not obey God until our hearts are changed and we are born again. In that respect, therefore, we are just like an engine that has been run off the rails. The fire has

gone out in the grate. The fire in an engine is that on which all its movements depend. Steam is what moves the machinery, and fire is what makes the steam. And just what the fire is to an engine the Holy Spirit is to our souls. But while we are living in sin the Holy Spirit will not dwell in our hearts. And a heart without the Holy Spirit dwelling in it is just like the grate of an engine without any fire in it.

And then look at the driving-wheels of our old engine. The strong iron rod, or crank, which moves them, and so makes the whole engine go, is broken. But while that rod is broken the engine is of no use. The wheels cannot be made to go. That iron rod which moves the wheels in the engine represents the *will* in our souls. Just as that rod moves the wheels of the engine, and makes all the machinery go, so our will is the thing that makes us act and keeps us in motion. You know the old saying is that "where there's a *will* there's a *way*." If you have no will to a thing you cannot do it. But sin has taken away our will to serve God. And so, till our hearts are changed, and we are born again, we are just like a locomotive which has the rod to the driving-wheels broken. It cannot work.

But look again at this old engine. The boiler is burst. It can hold no steam. But steam in an engine is what does all the work. And the thing in the heart of a Christian which the steam in a locomotive represents is the love of Christ. This is what St. Paul means when he says, speaking of Christians, "The love of Christ *constraineth* us." He meant to say that the love of Christ in the hearts of Christians is the thing that stirs them up to do whatever He wants to have them do. But until we are born again, and our hearts are made new, there is no love of God in them. In this respect they are like a locomotive with a boiler that can hold no steam. And now suppose that while we are visiting this manufactory the owner, or head workman, takes the old engine in hand to repair it all through. He puts a new boiler in it. He has a new iron rod, or crank, fastened to the driving-wheels. He

takes away from the engine everything that is broken or out of order. He has the engine set fairly on the rails again. He makes a fire in the grate. The water is put into the boiler, and pretty soon there is a full supply of steam. It is a great change which has taken place in this engine. And the effects of that change are wonderful. And this is a change just like that which takes place in us when we are born again. And we see the effects of this change illustrated in the results which have followed to the engine. The engine is



on the rails again. So when our hearts are changed we are put in the way of obeying God. We are put upon the track of obedience to His commandments. A fire is kindled again in the grate of the engine. And so when our hearts are changed the Holy Spirit causes them to burn with the love of God. And as that fire kindled in the engine soon raises the steam that is necessary to start the engine and keep it in motion, so the love of God in our hearts stirs us up to serve God and do all that He wants us to do. And as when the steam is turned on from the boiler the new strong iron rod on the driving-wheels makes them go round and keeps them going, so when we become Christians God gives us a will to serve Him. He makes us not only *willing*, but *glad* to be His loving friends and followers. It is a great change which takes place in us when we are born again. The effects are wonderful. We get our first illustration of this from our visit to the manufactory, when we see an old engine, that had been run off the

rails because it was useless, put on the rails again, with its broken wheel mended, a full supply of steam on, ready, as soon as the signal is given, to start off at full speed, and fly along the road, drawing the long train of carriages after it. The old engine in the factory is our first illustration.

And now we will seek for another illustration of the wonderful effects that follow from a change of heart, or from being born again. *The second place that we go to for an illustration is A SHIP-YARD.*

This is a place in which ships are built. New ships are

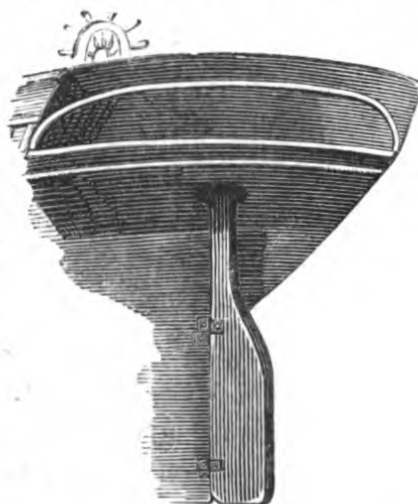


made here, and old ships that have been wrecked and injured by storms, or decayed by the water, or eaten by the worms, are repaired and made fit for use again. We walk down through the yard towards the river. There is a dock there. In this dock there is the wreck of a vessel. It is what the sailors call "an old hulk." It was once a

splendid new vessel. But it has been on a long voyage to the East Indies. The worms got into her timbers, as they often do in that warm climate. She encountered a terrible storm, in which she was almost lost. And now that old hulk, as she lies in the dock, is a good representation of the state of our souls before we are born again. Look at her. Her masts are broken; her timbers are rotten; her planks are wormeaten. Some of them look just like pieces of a honeycomb. Her sails are torn to rags. Her rigging is all down. Her rudder is lost. Her seams (that is, the spaces between her planks) are all gaping. The

water would run through them as it does through a sieve. She is not fit to go to sea. She lies in the dock, of no use to any one.

But the ship-carpenter has received orders to repair this old wreck and make her fit for sea again. So he puts her in the dry dock. This is a dock out of which the water can be taken, and in which a vessel can be propped up, so as to stand upright without any water about her, so that the workmen can get at any part of her, and do whatever may be needed. The carpenter takes out all the rotten timbers, and all the wormeaten planks, and puts new ones in their places. He puts new masts in her, new rigging, new yards, and new sails. He has a new rudder made and put in place of the old one. He has her caulked all over—that is, the openings between her planks are all filled up tight, so that no water can get in. Then he has her coppered—that is, the bottom of the vessel, or the outside part of her, which goes in the water, is all covered with sheets of copper. These are nailed tight on, so as to keep the worms from getting into the wood. Then she is painted, and looks like a new vessel. She is ready to go to sea now, and is just as good as a new vessel.



Now, it is a great change which has taken place in this vessel. And we have here a good illustration of the change which takes place in us when we are born again. When we look at a vessel like this we are speaking of, it is a sort of figure or image of ourselves. Our habits and tempers are like the timbers and planks of the vessel. Our will is like the rudder that guides and steers the vessel. Our desires or longings after God and heaven are like the sails which catch the winds, and so make the ship move along through the water. And a vessel that has been

wrecked by storms and made unfit for sea, like the old hulk that we were just speaking of, shows the effect of sin on our souls, and is a good representation of what our condition is before we become Christians. Then we have bad habits and tempers, and these are like the rotten timbers and wormeaten planks in the old hulk. Our stubborn wills are not able to guide us in the way in which God wants us to go, and so we are like a ship without a rudder. We have no love for God, and no desire to go to heaven where He is, and on this account we are like a ship whose sails have been torn to rags. But when God takes us in hand, as the carpenter did the old wreck, and causes us to be born again, a great change takes place in us. As St. Paul says, "Old things pass away, and all things become new." This change is *wonderful in its effects*, just as it was when the old hulk was turned into a new vessel. When God changes our hearts He gives us gentle, loving tempers, such as Jesus had; and this is like putting sound timbers in place of the rotten ones in an old wreck. When God changes our hearts He gives us a will to serve Him and do all that He wants us to do; and this is like putting a new rudder to a vessel that could not be steered because the rudder was broken. When God changes our hearts He makes us love Him above all things. Then we have longing desires to go to heaven, and these desires are like new sails to a vessel, that will catch the wind and carry it home to the harbour.

Now, suppose that while we are still standing on the wharf in the dockyard, we see two boys come down there. They are both going to sea; but they are going in very different vessels. One is going in a vessel that has just been refitted and made new, while the other is going in an old wreck that is not fit to go to sea. Which of these two boys might we expect would get along the best? The one in the new vessel. What would you expect to hear about the other? That he was lost at sea.

Now, let me tell you about two boys. Some years ago there was a teacher in one of our large villages, who had

two boys in his school. One of them was named Nathan Smith, and the other John Wilder. They were then about twelve years of age.

They were both in the same class; both the children of poor parents, and so would have to work for their own living. They were both clever scholars, and were pretty well-behaved boys. Neither of them had any particular natural advantage over the other. There seemed to be no special reason why one of them



should not get on as well in the world as the other. But they turned out very differently.

That teacher left the school, and removed to a distant part of the country. He lost sight of those two boys. He never heard anything of them for twenty years. Then he went to church one Sunday. A young man was ordained to the ministry on that day. The teacher thought there was something about that young man which made him feel that he had seen him before. After the service was over he went up to speak with him, when, to his great surprise and joy, he found it was his old scholar, Nathan Smith. They had a long talk about old times, and the different persons they both knew, in connection with the school.

“And now pray tell me, Nathan,” said the old teacher, “what has become of your former classmate, John Wilder?”

The smile that was playing over Nathan’s face passed off in a moment at the mention of that name. He looked very grave, and sighed heavily as he said,—

“Poor John! his history is a very sad one. He would not mind his parents; he gave up going to church or Sunday school; he fell into bad company; he learned to play

cards; he became a regular gambler. Some months ago, with two other young men like himself, he killed a man to get his money. He was tried, found guilty, and condemned to death, and *on next Friday he is to be hanged.*" Here were these two boys, who used to sit side by side on the same form: one of them is ordained on a certain Sunday to be a minister of Christ, and to preach His precious Gospel, while his classmate and companion is to be hanged, as a murderer, on the following Friday. See what it was which led to this great difference in the history of those two boys. Nathan Smith was born again. His heart was changed. He learned to love the Saviour. He was like the boy who went to sea in a new ship, strong and sound. No wonder that he did well, and had a successful voyage. John Wilder was not willing to become a Christian. He would not pray earnestly to Jesus to give him a new heart, and help him to be His faithful servant and follower. He was like the boy who went to sea in the old wrecked hulk. No wonder he came to so sad an end. My dear boys and girls, if you grow up to be men and women, and go out into the world, without having your hearts changed, you will be like sailors who go to sea in a wrecked vessel, that has sprung a leak, and has her masts broken, and her rudder lost. You may not come to the gallows, as John Wilder did, but it is just as certain as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west that you will never be safe, and never be happy, and never get to heaven. Our second illustration is from the old wreck in the ship-yard.

Now we have got through with our visit here, let us leave the ship-yard. We must have one more illustration. If there had been time we might have taken two or three more. I should like to have gone with you to the silversmith's. We might have seen him take a quantity of old silver. There are cups, and bowls, and spoons; but they look very ugly. They are all blackened, and bent, and battered, and broken. He puts them into the furnace, and melts them, and presently out of that melted silver he

makes a new tea-set, shining, and bright, and beautiful,—fit for the table of a king.

Then I should like to have gone with you to the watchmaker's. He shows us a watch, the works of which are all covered with rust, and the main-spring broken. It will not go. It is of no use. But he cleans the rust all off from the works; he puts a new main-spring in it; and now it goes, and keeps time, and is as good as a new watch.



And then I should like to have taken you to a paper-mill. Here, in one room, we see a lot of old rags. They are in little pieces, too small to be used even for patchwork. But they are thrown into the mill, and ground very fine, and mixed with water, till they become pulp; and presently we see it turned off upon a roller in the shape of beautiful, clean, white paper, just the thing for writing or drawing on. These are all great changes, and the effects that follow from them are wonderful. And we see, in these different trades that men pursue, illustrations of the wonderful effects that follow our lives and characters when our hearts are changed.

But now let us look for our third and last illustration. We must go into a garden to find this. *A grafted tree* is the illustration we are now looking for. At the lower end of this garden are several apple-trees. Some of them bear good, nice, juicy apples. But one of them bears apples so poor that they are not fit to use. The gardener cannot make up his mind what to do with this tree. Sometimes he thinks he will cut it down. Again he feels inclined to try the effect of grafting upon it. He cuts off the prin-

cipal branches of the bad old tree. Then he gets a twig from one of the best trees in his orchard. He shaves down



carefully one end of this slip. Then he makes a slit in the end of one of the branches of the bad tree. Into this slit he puts the end of the twig from the good tree. He works it gently in, as far as he wants it to go. Then he gets some of the soil of the garden, wets it till it becomes like thick mud, and makes it into a sort of clay. This he spreads all round the end of the branch into which the

twig from the good apple tree has been put, and fastens it on with a bandage. He keeps this moistened with water for a good while. At last the twig grows into the branch of the bad tree to which it had been fastened, and becomes a part of it. And then a great change takes place in that tree. The effect of this change is seen in the kind of fruit that it bears. These are not like the fruit of the bad old tree into which the graft has been made, but like the fruit of the good tree from which the twig was taken that has been grafted into the old tree. This is a great change, and it is wonderful in its effects.

Let me tell you a story about grafting. There was a gentleman, living in the State of New York, who had two sons. The elder was named George and the younger Charles. This gentleman had a garden connected with his house. Down at the end of the garden, growing out of the hedge there and overhanging the lane, was a crab-apple tree. It bore plenty of fruit, and when ripe the fruit looked very good, but it was as sour as vinegar to the taste. George and Charley used to have a good deal of fun out of this old crab-apple tree. When they had their young friends visiting them, they would often take them down to the end of the garden, at the season when apples

were ripe, and, plucking off some of the best-looking apples from the old tree, would ask them if they did not want an apple. The boys were ready enough to take them. They would eagerly take a good big bite, and George and Charley would have a good hearty laugh when they saw the wry faces the boys would make as they threw down the apples, and tried to get rid of the dreadful bitter taste left in their mouths.

After a while the father of these boys died. They grew up to be young men. George remained at home, and carried on his father's business. Charles moved away, and entered into business for himself. In making some improvements about the garden George concluded to have the old crab-apple tree grafted. He got a slip from one of the finest trees in the neighbourhood, called the "golden pippin." The apples it bore were fine, large, juicy ones, that would make your mouth water to look at them. The grafting took very well; and now every year the old crab-apple tree was yielding a fine crop of splendid golden pippins.



Well, after some years Charles came home on a visit to his brother George. It was very pleasant to him to get back to the dear old home once more. Many a long talk he and George had together over all that had taken place since they last met. George showed him all the alterations and improvements he had made about the house. Then he took him out into the garden to show him the changes that had been made there. As they were walking quietly up and down the paths, George asked Charley if he remembered the old crab-apple tree and the fun they used to have with it.

"To be sure I do," said Charley. "I never see the word crab-apple without thinking of it. Is the old tree standing yet, George?"

“Yes,” said he; and then he led the conversation off to something else, while they went walking along. Presently, without Charley’s seeing it, George plucked off one of the finest pippins from this tree and gave it to him. It was fully ripe,—a perfect beauty. Charley was feeling thirsty, and just in a condition to enjoy it. As soon as he had taken the first mouthful, he smacked his lips over it, and said,—

“Why, George, my dear fellow, I declare this is the nicest apple I ever tasted. There used not to be any such apples here; do tell me where it came from.”

“It came from the old crab-apple tree,” said George; and, pointing to the tree, he said, “See, there it is—full of them.”

Charley had never given any attention to gardening work, and so with great surprise he said, “That’s a wonderful change, George; tell me how it was done.”

“*Grafting did it*, Charley,” said George.

That grafted tree in the garden is a good illustration of what we are talking about. It is a great change that takes place when we become Christians, and wonderful in its effects. Nothing represents this better than grafting. If we compare a person to a tree, then the words he speaks, the actions he performs, and the tempers he shows are like the fruit that grows on the tree. Before we become Christians we are like crab-apple trees. All that we do is sinful in the sight of God. All the fruit we bear is sour, like the crab-apples. But when we are born again our hearts are changed, and we are like the tree that has been grafted from a good stock. And then, as St. Paul says, we “have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

Now, we have had three illustrations of the great change to which our Saviour referred when He said, “Ye must be born again”; and all these illustrations show us how *wonderful in its effects* this change is.

The first of these illustrations is *the old engine in the*

factory. The second is *the old wreck in the ship-yard.* The third is *the grafted tree in the garden.*

My dear young friends, I have preached these two sermons on the subject of this wonderful change in the hope that you may remember something that has been said, and may try to get your own hearts changed. This is the most important thing you will ever have to attend to. And the great importance of this change is just the reason why Jesus said so earnestly to Nicodemus, "Ye *must* be born again." There are a great many things that we think are important, but we learn by-and-by that we can do without them.

There was a gentleman once who was very fond of studying botany. He had made a collection of specimens of curious plants and flowers. He used to spend all his leisure time in arranging and fixing them, in reading about them, and making drawings of them. One night, while he was away from home, his house took fire, and was burnt down. His whole collection of beautiful speci-

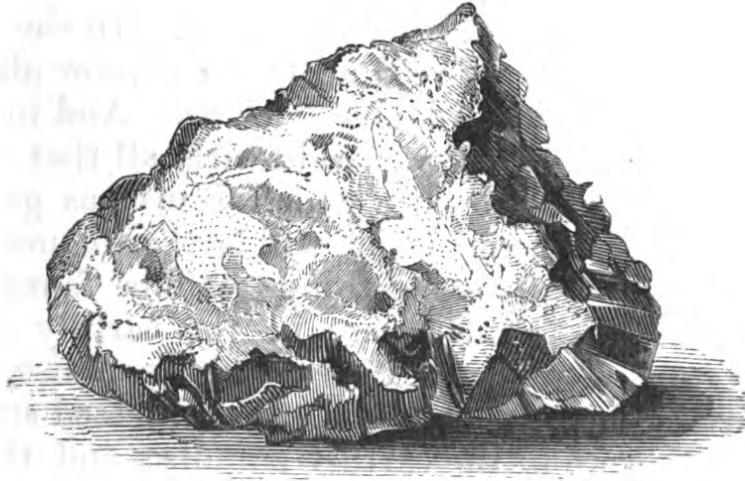


mens was destroyed. Shortly after a friend, who knew how much his heart had been set on that collection, met him in the street, and asked him what he was going to do, now that he had lost it. He quietly said, "I am going *to do without it.*" That was a very wise answer. It is a great lesson to learn *to do without things.* And it is surprising how many things we can do without. We can do without fine clothes. We can do without large houses and handsome furniture. We can do without horses and carriages. We can do without much money. We can do

without our friends and relations. We can do without even our parents; for David says, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." We can do without our hands and feet, our eyes and ears; for hundreds of persons have lost these, and yet have managed to get on. We can do without our health; for multitudes have been without it for years, and yet have been happy. But, oh, remember *we cannot do without Jesus, and the new heart that He gives!* Do not try to do without Him. Remember what was said in our last sermon. You cannot be good without these. You cannot be happy without them. You cannot go to heaven without them. Pray earnestly to Jesus to make you His friend, and give you a heart to love and serve Him. Then you will have the secret of true happiness, and, as the hymn says, you will be

Prepared for length of days,
Or fit for early death.





No. IX.

“The gold of that land is good.”—GENESIS ii. 12.



EVERY one knows what gold is. The land here spoken of was called “the land of Havilah.” This was a country far away in Asia, near the garden of Eden, in which God put our first parents, when they were created. In the chapter from which these words are taken this garden is described. Nobody in the world now ever saw it. Nobody knows even exactly where it was. But we know it was *very* beautiful. There were no thorns or briars, no ugly weeds or poisonous reptiles found there. Every sight was beautiful; every sound was pleasant; every flower was fragrant; and all the fruit growing there was wholesome and good.

What a blessed, happy place it must have been! Who would not like to have lived there? And there was gold, too, in Eden; yes, and “the gold of that land was good.”

Now, we never can enter *that* garden. But there is a better one than that, which we may enter. The garden in

which Adam first lived, and which we call Eden, or Paradise, was the figure, or image, of heaven. In the first two chapters of the Bible we read all that we know about that earthly paradise which Adam lost for us. And in the last two chapters of the Bible we read nearly all that we know about the heavenly paradise which Jesus has gained for those who love Him, and which will be their home for ever. And many of the very same things will be found in this heavenly paradise which were in the earthly paradise. The tree of life was in the earthly paradise, and it will be in the heavenly paradise too. Blessed streams of crystal water were in the earthly paradise, and there will be the same in the heavenly paradise also. Fine gold was found in the earthly paradise, and there will be fine gold likewise in the heavenly paradise; and, oh, "the gold of *that land is good.*" When St. John had seen it, he said it was "*pure gold, like unto clear glass.*" You look at the glass that covers the face of a watch, and you can see the hands and the figures on the dial-face just as well as though there were no glass there. That is what we mean when we say that glass is *transparent*; we can *see through it.* And if the golden case of a watch were like glass; if it were just as hard, and as strong, and as bright, and as shining as it is, and yet were "clear like glass"—that is, if it were transparent, so that we could see through it, just as well as we do through the glass over the face of the watch, how beautiful and how wonderful that gold would be! St. John says that *this* is the kind of gold he saw in heaven. *The gold in heaven means the grace of God.* And if anybody wants me to prove this, it is easy to do so. Jesus Himself speaks of His grace as gold when He says, "I counsel thee to buy of Me *gold* tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." (Rev. iii. 18.) "Gold tried in the fire" here means the grace of God. And so, if we take "the land of Havilah" spoken of in our text as representing heaven, and if we take the gold of heaven as representing the grace of God, then we may very well point up to heaven and say, "The gold of *that land is good.*" And

then we may put this good gold on the catalogue of the "Bible Wonders." The gold of heaven is *wonderful gold*.

There are three things about this gold which show that it is wonderful. And these three things are all connected with the word *getting*.

In the first place, THE WAY OF GETTING this gold is wonderful.

People sometimes have to go a *great distance* in order to get earthly gold. When the gold-mines in California were first discovered, there was a great rush of people from all parts of this country, who wanted to get out there and get gold. Some went by sea, all the way round Cape Horn. That was a long, cold, stormy, disagreeable, and dangerous voyage to take. But they were going for gold, and they cared nothing for the length of the journey they had to take in getting it. Other people went in waggons, or on foot across the country. It is more than two thousand miles distance from New York. What a long way that is to travel! But they were going for gold, and that made them willing. But the wonderful thing about the heavenly gold is, that no long journey is necessary in order to get it. It is not stored up, like earthly gold, in mines which can only be found in particular places. It is to be found in all countries. It may be had in all places. The church is a good place in which to seek it. So is the Sunday school. So is the room in which you sleep at night. In garrets, in cellars, in barns, and in the quiet woods, men and women and children have sought and found this heavenly gold. The soldier in his tent on the field of battle, and the sailor in the cold, dark fore-castle of the vessel, or out upon the yard-arm, while the wind was howling and the tempest bursting around him, have sought and found this gold. Men go a great distance to find the earthly gold; but the heavenly gold may be found anywhere. Wherever you are you may get this gold, if you try in the right way.

But, besides going a great distance, men often have to meet *great dangers* before they can get the earthly gold they are seeking. Some of those people who went round by

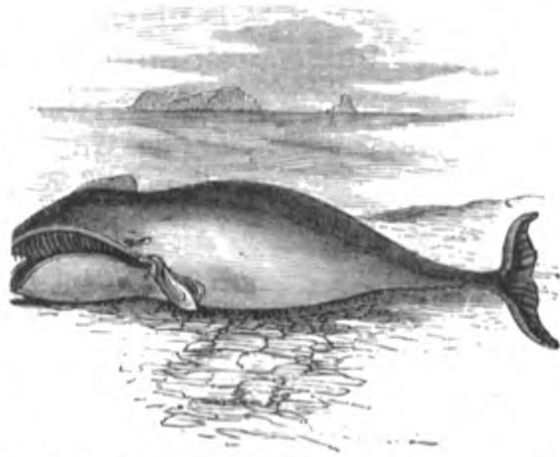


sea to California to get gold met with terrible storms. Some of them were shipwrecked and lost their lives on the way. And those who went by land met with great dangers too. Some of them lost their way in the desert plains which they had to travel over. Some got out of provisions and suffered dreadfully from hunger

and thirst. Some were robbed by the Indians. Some were overtaken by terrible storms of snow when they were crossing the mountains. Their hands and feet were frost-bitten, and many perished on the plains and on the mountains, from hunger, and cold, and sickness. But there is no exposure to danger in seeking the heavenly gold. At home, among those who love you best, you may seek it and find it. And no one can hinder or hurt you in doing this.

In getting earthly gold, men not only have to go a great distance, and meet great dangers, but often they have to *pay a great price* to get it. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, lost his situation with that good master; he lost his health too, and became a miserable leper all his days, whom no one could cure, in order to get a little gold. That was a great price to pay for it. Judas Iscariot sold his Master for a little money. Oh, what a tremendous price that was to pay for it! Benedict Arnold sold his country for a poor paltry sum of gold. He stamped his name with the dark, dishonourable stain of a *traitor*, for a little gold. How great a price he paid for it! Some men are willing to pay any price for earthly gold. Look at

the whalers. They are willing to go from home for two or three years at a time. They will sail up into the cold and stormy North Sea or Frozen Ocean. They will run the risk of being crushed to death between jarring icebergs, or of being frozen up in the North all the winter; they will meet with all sorts of trials and hardships in order to get a little gold. This is the great price they are wil-



ling to pay for it. But nothing of this kind is necessary in order to get the heavenly gold. Jesus counsels us to *buy* this gold of Him. He is the only one from whom it can be had. But the way in which Jesus sells this gold is very wonderful. If you want to buy some gold, you have to pay for it in other kinds of money just as much as the gold is worth. If you want fifty or a hundred pounds in gold, you must pay the value of that much gold in good bank-notes, or other money. That is the way in which men buy gold. But Jesus sells the heavenly gold, which He invites us to buy of Him, in a very different way from this. And it is well for us that He does. For if we could only get this gold by paying the price it is worth, we should never get it at all. The least amount of this gold is worth so much that all the money in the world would not be enough to buy it. Then what is the use of Jesus asking us to "buy" this gold of Him? There is great use in it, because of the wonderful way in which He sells this gold. He shows us what this way is, in another place, when He tells us to "come and buy wine and milk *without money and without price.*" (Isaiah lv. 1.) The "wine and milk" spoken of in one of these passages, and the "gold" spoken of in the other, all mean the same thing. They refer to the grace of God. Jesus sells this "without money and

without price." This means that He lets poor sinners, such as we are, have it free. He makes no charge. He asks no price. He gives it to them for nothing. What a strange way this is of selling that heavenly gold which is more valuable than anything else in the world!



Some years ago a young officer was making a visit at the house of a good minister, who had a church in a little country village in England. One evening, while he was there, the minister was going out to attend a cottage meeting among some of the poor people of his church. The young officer asked if he might go with him, and he went. During the meeting the minister read this

passage of Scripture about buying gold from Jesus. He told them how valuable this gold is; how rich it makes those who have it, because it will get them all they want for their souls, both now and for ever, in this world and in the world to come. Then he told them how freely Jesus sells this gold, "without money and without price." The young officer was not a Christian. He had never heard the Gospel preached in this way before. He thought it very strange. On his way home he told the minister it was silly nonsense to talk about buying a thing that was really valuable without paying anything for it. He laughed and made sport of it. The minister only pitied him, and prayed for him.

Soon after the young man joined the regiment to which he belonged and went out to India. One day, several years after this, the minister received a letter from India. It was from a friend of the young officer, and gave an account of his death. He was taken ill with the fever. He soon found that he was going to die. But he felt that he was not ready for death. His soul was poor. It wanted everything to fit him for heaven. But what could

he do? He remembered that cottage meeting. All that the good minister had said about the heavenly gold that makes the soul rich, and that Jesus sells "without money and without price," came afresh into his mind. He said to himself, "This is just what I need, and it is the only way in which I can get it." He went to Jesus in earnest prayer. He bought from Him the heavenly gold "without money and without price." It made him rich. He died a peaceful, happy death. But before he died he got his friend who nursed him to promise that he would write to the good minister, to ask his pardon for the sinful way in which he had spoken of the words he had heard in the cottage meeting, to thank him for those words, and to tell him that, far away in India, they had been the means of leading him to Jesus, and of saving his soul from death.

In getting earthly gold men often have *to go great distances, to meet great dangers, and to pay great prices.* But it is different with the heavenly gold. The first thing about this which makes it wonderful is *the way of getting it.*

The second thing that is wonderful about it is THE DESIRE of getting it.

The desire to get earthly gold often has a wonderfully bad effect; but the desire to get the heavenly gold has a wonderfully good effect. Let us see now what a bad effect the desire to get earthly gold often has on people. St. Paul calls this desire "the love of money," and he says it is "*the root of all evil.*" (1 Tim. vi. 10.) The desire to get this gold has led men to cheat, and to lie, and to steal, and to murder, and to commit all kinds of wickedness. Suppose we visit the penitentiary: we shall find it filled with prisoners of different kinds. But if we should go into the cells and talk with the prisoners, we should find that nearly all of them had been put in prison for some wrong thing which the desire of getting this gold had led them to do.

But very different results follow from the desire to get heavenly gold, of which we are speaking. Wonderful good results from this, as wonderful evil results from the other. The love of earthly gold is the root of all evil. The love of heavenly gold is the root of all good. When any one desires to get this gold, let me show you how that desire does him good. He soon finds that only Jesus can give this gold. He begins to read the Bible in order to learn what kind of persons Jesus expects those to be to whom He gives this gold. And what does the Bible say such persons should be? It tells him at once to break off from everything that is wrong, and begin to do everything that is right. If he has been proud, it tells him that he must give up pride, and learn to be humble. If he has been cross and ugly in his temper, it tells him he must overcome his bad temper, and learn to be kind, and gentle, and loving, like Jesus. If he has been in the habit of swearing, or lying, or stealing, it tells him that he must give up this habit at once. He must swear, and lie, and steal no more. Nay, the Bible goes further than this. It not only makes him better *outside*, but *inside* too. It tells him that if he even allow himself to think or feel *in his heart* anything that is wrong, he cannot get this heavenly gold. The desire to get this gold acts like a charm. It corrects everything that is wrong, and leads to everything that is right. It makes the heart new, and the thoughts new, and the feelings new, and the tempers new; and everything about it it makes holy and good. The second thing about this heavenly gold that is wonderful is the *desire of getting it*.

The third thing about this gold that is wonderful is THE RESULT of getting it.

When St. Paul would show us the bad result that often follows to people from getting earthly gold, he says it "*drowns men in destruction and perdition.*" (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Here is an incident to show how truly a man was drowned in destruction by getting gold.

Some years ago a large English East India merchant ship, named "The Kent," caught fire in the middle of the ocean. The fire was in the hold of the ship. The crew tried to put it out; but it was impossible. Then they fastened the hatches and the cabin door tight, to keep the air from getting at the fire. There was a large number of passengers on the ship, and unless some vessel should come in sight, before the flames burst through the deck, they would all be lost. After waiting anxiously for some time a vessel came in sight. It was a small brig. The captain nobly offered to stand by the burning ship, and take off all the passengers and crew. A boom, or spar, was rigged out from the stern of "The Kent" with a rope down from the end of it. The men had to go out to the end of this boom, and then slide down the rope into the boat that was waiting to receive them. But the sea was very rough, and sometimes when a man got down to the end of the rope he would find the boat not directly under him, but some distance off, and he would have to strike out and swim towards it. Nobody was allowed to take any baggage, or anything but the clothes he had on.

One of the sailors, who was waiting for his turn to go, found a lot of gold on the deck. A passenger, who could not take it with him, had thrown it out on the deck, like so much rubbish. The sailor thought he had better take the gold with him. So he got a piece of canvas, and sewed the gold up in it, and fastened it round his waist. By-and-by his turn came to get into the boat. He crawled out to the end of the boom. He slipped down the rope; but just as he reached the water a big wave had carried the boat out of his reach. He was an excellent swimmer, so he let go the rope, and struck out for the boat. But the weight of the gold was too much for him. He sank like lead in the deep waters. He got the gold—but it drowned him in destruction.

Some years ago there was a person who was a collector for a Bible Society. He had a list of the names of a number of persons in the village who were subscribers to the

Bible Society, and once a year he used to go round and collect their subscriptions. Among these names was that of



a poor widow woman, who supported herself by washing. She was about the poorest person whose name he had on his list, and yet she was one of the most liberal. For a long time she had been in the habit of giving a guinea a year to the Bible Society. But one year a rich relation of this poor washerwoman died, and left a large fortune to her. She still lived in the same village; but her humble

little cottage had been exchanged for one of the largest and finest houses in the village. After a while the time came for the Bible collector to go round and gather up his subscriptions. He knew about the change which had taken place in the circumstances of her whom he had long known as the poor washerwoman. And as he went to call on her at her new house he said to himself, "I shall get a fine large subscription from this good woman. For if, when she was a poor washerwoman and had to work hard for her living, she could give a guinea a year, how much more will she be sure to give now, when she lives in so large a house, and is so well off!" So he rang the bell, and was ushered into the handsome parlour, where he met his old friend and subscriber. He said he was glad to hear of the pleasant change which had taken place in her circumstances, and then stated that he came once more for her subscription to that best of all books—the Bible. She opened her purse and handed him *a shilling!* He looked at it with astonishment. Then he said, "My good friend, what does this mean? I cannot understand it.

When you were a poor woman, and lived on your own labour, you always gave a guinea a year to the Bible Society; and now, when you are so well off, can it be possible that you intend to give only a shilling?”

“Yes,” she said, “that is all I am willing to give now. I feel very differently about these things from what I used to do. When I was really a poor woman I gladly gave away whatever money I could spare, for I never felt afraid of being poorer than I then was. But now the fear of being poor haunts me like a ghost, and makes me all the time unwilling to spend any money, or give it away. The truth is,” she continued, “when I only had the shilling means, I had the guinea heart; *but now, when I have the guinea means, I find that I have only the shilling heart.*”

Here we see the evil that resulted to this person from getting gold. It froze all her kind feelings, and shrunk up her large and liberal heart into a tiny little selfish one. She was a rich woman when she was very poor, but a poor woman when she became very rich.

But the heavenly gold is very different from this. It is wonderful gold, because of the good it always does to those who get it. See what good it did to St. Paul to get this gold. Before getting it he was a proud Pharisee. He thought himself one of the best men living, when he was really one of the worst. He was very selfish and very cruel. He went about persecuting good innocent Christians only because they would not think in the same way that he did. He cast them into prison, and had them put to death; and he was willing to spend his whole time in this bloody work. But then he was a poor man. He had none of this wonderful gold. As soon as he got this, how rich it made him! How different from what he was before! It was like changing a lion into a lamb. He became humble, and loving, and gentle as a little child. He went up and down everywhere, not persecuting any longer, but preaching about the love of Jesus, and the wonderful blessings that He brings. He gave up his whole life to this good work. No dangers, or trials, or

difficulties could stop him. He went over mountains, and deserts, and seas, trying to save the souls of men, and get them to go to heaven with him. I suppose no mere man ever lived who did so much good as the apostle Paul; and all this resulted from his getting this wonderful gold,—the grace of God.

And this gold has been doing good in just the same way ever since, and is doing so still. Let me mention one case. It occurred in a Sunday school in this city not long since. There was a scholar in this school to which I refer, who was the worst boy in the school. His name was Bob; but, to show what sort of character he had gained for himself, he was generally spoken of as "*Bad Bob.*" He was rough and rude. He told lies, and swore, and, if he got a chance, he was ready enough even to steal. He was restless, unruly, and disobedient. He was always getting into mischief. He made so much trouble that none of the teachers in the school seemed able to manage him. He had been put out of one class after another, till he had been, in turn, in every class in the school. He was the black sheep of the flock, and the superintendent thought he should be obliged to turn him out of the school. And he was as bad at home as he was in school. His mother was a poor widow, and he was a constant plague and torment to her. But, bad as Bob was, the superintendent was unwilling to turn him out of the school. He felt sure that the only hope for him was in the school. He knew he would go to ruin if he were dismissed from the school. So he persuaded a young lady who had just taken charge of a class of boys to take him into her class. She felt very unwilling to do so; but rather than have him turned away, she concluded to try what she could do. She began by saying, "Bob, you are a new scholar in this class, and I am a new teacher. I do not know how I can get along, but I want you to help me." Then she gave him the charge of the books belonging to the class. Bob was pleased to think of having something to do, and of being a help to the teacher. He soon became interested in the

class. He grew fond of his teacher. She gained his confidence, and had no trouble in managing him. He got to be a quiet, attentive scholar. He studied his lessons carefully. He began to pray. He soon became a Christian. He got some of this wonderful gold. It changed his whole character. He was no longer spoken of as “Bad Bob,” but as “Good Bob.” From being the worst boy in the school he became the best. He was an example to all the other scholars. And the change at home was as great as the change at school. He became a real comfort to his mother, and made her home very happy. It was getting this heavenly gold that did all this good. And the good which it did for “Bad Bob” it can do for anybody else. It is doing this good all the time. And if this is the way in which it works we may well apply the words of our text to it, and say, “The gold of that land is good.” It is wonderful gold. Three things about it are wonderful. *The way* of getting it is wonderful. *The desire* of getting it is wonderful. *The result* of getting it is wonderful.

My dear friends, I want you all to get this gold. If I could tell you of a mine where you could get earthly gold by asking for it, would you not go and get some? Yes. Well, *this* gold is worth a hundred times more than that. And you can get it by asking for it. Jesus says, “*Ask, and ye shall receive.*”

One day a minister was stopping at an inn in Germany. He asked the maid-servant who waited on him if she ever prayed. She said she had scarcely time to eat, and how, then, could she find time to pray? He said he would teach her a short prayer, with just *three* words in it, and if she would



promise to use it every morning and night, when she was getting up and going to bed, on his return he would give her a sum of money. She thought that would be an easy way to get some money. So she promised to use the prayer. He then gave her these three words to repeat: "*Lord, save me.*"

For two or three weeks she went on saying the words without thinking about them; but one night, after she had said them, the thought came into her mind, "I wonder what these words mean. I wonder why that minister wanted me to say them." She began to read the Bible to see if she could find out.

About three months after, the minister stopped at that inn again. A strange girl waited on him. He asked the landlord where the girl was who waited on him before. "Oh, sir, she got to be too good to stay at an inn; and now she is living with the minister." He called at the minister's house. As soon as the girl saw him she said, "Oh, I'm so glad to see you! I shall always thank God that ever you met me, and taught me that little prayer. I do not want the money. I have found Jesus through that prayer, and this is reward enough." That girl got this wonderful gold by asking for it, and so may you. It made her happy. It saved her soul, and it will do the same for you if you seek it as earnestly as she sought it. Do this, and you will find how true the hymn is when it says,—

Oh, happy is the man who hears
Religion's warning voice,
And who celestial wisdom makes
His early, only choice.

For she has treasures greater far
Than East or West unfold;
More precious are her bright rewards
Than gems and stores of gold.



“Whosoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.”—JOHN xvi. 23.



THIS was one of the last promises Jesus made to His disciples just before His death. He wanted to say something to comfort them when He should be taken away, and so He gave them this sweet promise. He certainly could not have spoken any words better suited to give them comfort when they were sad and sorrowful. This is really a wonderful promise. We may well count it in among the wonders of the Bible.

You know that one of the great dangers about a steam-engine is the bursting of the boiler; and one of the things which causes the boiler to burst is having too little water in it. The duty of the engineer is to watch the boiler

closely, and see that it is well supplied with water. But in case he should neglect to do this, there is generally a bell attached to the engine, which is fixed in such a way that when the water begins to get too low it will ring, and tell the engineer that more water is wanted in the boiler. That is a very nice arrangement. And it seems to me that when Jesus gave us this sweet promise He was just putting a bell in our hands, and saying, "When you want Me to help you, or do anything for you, just ring this bell; and when I hear it I will come and help you." Yes, when we are praying to God we are, as it were, ringing a bell to let Him know that we want something. The engine-bell rings to remind the engineer of something that he has forgotten or neglected. But God never forgets, and never neglects anything. Jesus said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask." Then some people may say, "What is the use of telling God what we want if He knows it already?" The use is, that God *commands* us to do it. That is enough for us to know.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you."



Now, before we go any further in talking about this wonderful promise, I wish to show you that there are some limits to it. Some what? *Limits*. A limit to a promise is like a fence to a farm. Suppose you and I buy a farm of a hundred acres, about ten miles from town. We go out to see it. The person we are buying it from goes over it we say to him, "How far does the farm reach in *this* direction?" His

with us. As we are walking
"How far does the farm reach

answer is, "To yonder fence near the woods." That fence is the *limit* of the farm, or the *end* of it in that direction. And if we look at this wonderful promise, we shall find that there are some limits, or fences, to it. Let us see if we can find out what they are.

The promise says, "*Whatsoever* ye shall ask the Father, He will give it you." There must be some limit here. Suppose I should get a large empty box six feet square; that I should set it down here by the pulpit, and then kneel down and pray that God would open the windows of heaven and pour down guineas enough to fill that box. Do you think He would do it? No. Why? Because He does not want me to have that much gold.

Or suppose I should pray God to make wings grow out of my shoulders, so that I could fly up into the air, like an eagle. Would He do it? No. Why? Because He does not want me to have wings. Then one limit to this wonderful promise is, that we must ask for *what God thinks best*.

But suppose I ask God to give me grace to love and serve Him. I am sure that *that* is one of the best things I can ask for. And I am sure that God thinks so too. But suppose I ask God to give me this grace in *the name and for the sake of the angel Gabriel*. Will He give it to me? No. In whose name must I ask for it? In the *name of Jesus*. Yes. Jesus says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in *My name*." This is the second limit: in the name of Jesus.

And then there is one more limit to this promise. Suppose your little brother is lying very ill with the scarlet fever. The doctor thinks it very doubtful whether he will live. You are very much distressed about him. It will be so sad to have him die, and be buried in the cold grave. It almost breaks your heart to think of it. Well, you go up to your room, and kneel down beside your bed, and you pray earnestly that God would spare your little brother's life, and make him well again. As soon as you stop praying you say to yourself, "I do not

think God is able to do this. What is the use of my praying to Him?" Would God be likely to hear *that* prayer? No. For Jesus says, in another place, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive." Faith in God's power to do what we ask for is another limit to this promise. These are the three things that limit this promise, or fence it round. We must ask *what God thinks best, in the name of Jesus, and in faith.*

And now we are ready to go on with this wonderful promise.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you."

Solomon says, "There is a *time* for everything." There are particular times when we shall find this promise wonderful. I wish to speak of *three* of these times.

In the first place, it is a wonderful promise for TIMES OF POVERTY.

A great many of God's children are *poor* in this world.



Jesus came to "preach the Gospel to *the poor.*" The Bible tells us that "God has chosen the poor of this world, but who are rich in faith, to be heirs of His kingdom." Some of God's children are poor all their lives; while others are poor for a while, and then get to be better off. It is not because God cannot help it that any Christians are poor. He

has plenty of money to make them all rich, and He would give it to them, in a minute, if He saw it would be best for them. It is no sin, and no disgrace, to be poor. *Jesus* came to our earth as a poor man, although He owned

all the money in the world. One reason why He did this was to teach us that we need not be ashamed of being poor. But though it is no disgrace to be poor, it is often very inconvenient, and leads to a great deal of suffering; and God has given us this wonderful promise to be a comfort to us in times of poverty. Oh, how many times when God's people have been suffering from poverty they have thought of this promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you"! And when they have asked, they have received what they needed. Let me give you one or two illustrations.

"Mother, cannot I have some new boots?" said little Willie to his mother one day. "My toes are all out of these. The snow gets in, and I am so cold."

"Yes, my child, you can," said his mother, "if you will ask God to send them to you; for I have no money to get them with, and your father spends all his wages at the tavern."

"Why did I not think of that before?" said Willie. "You know we were reading this morning the promise of Jesus, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.' I will go now and ask Him." He went out of the parlour into his mother's room. She followed him softly and stood by the door in the entry. She saw him kneel down, and, covering his face with his hands, he offered this simple prayer:—

"O God, father drinks, mother has no money, my feet get cold, and I want a pair of boots. Please send me a pair, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

This was all. He repeated this childlike prayer two or three times. He believed that God would hear him. He *expected* an answer. When he came down stairs he said,—

"Mother, I am sure God will send them as soon as He gets ready."

A day or two after, a lady, who was very fond of Willie, called to take him out to walk. At first he hesitated about going; but he soon made up his mind to go, and they

started. Pretty soon the lady noticed his stockings peeping out at the toes of his boots, and she said,—

“Why, Willie, look at your feet! They will freeze. Why did you not put on a better pair of boots?”

“These are all I have, ma’am.”

“All you have! Why do you not have a better pair?”

“I am going to, just as soon as God sends them,” he said, with confidence.

The lady’s eyes filled with tears, and, leading him into a shoe shop, she said, with quivering lip, “There,



child, pick out any pair you please.” Willie was soon fitted with a nice pair of good, strong boots, and then felt very happy as he finished his walk with the kind lady. When he came home, he said, “Look, mother! God has sent my boots. Mrs. Gray’s money bought them; but God heard me

ask for them, and I think He told Mrs. Gray to buy them for me.”

Then he knelt down by his mother’s side, and said, “Blessed Jesus, I thank Thee very much for my new boots. Please make me a good boy, and take care of mother. Amen.”

Certainly Willie found out that this is a wonderful promise for times of poverty.

Here is another story to illustrate this same point of our subject.

Some years ago, in a village near Warsaw, in Poland, there lived a pious peasant, whose name was Dobry. Without any fault of his he had got behindhand with his rent. His landlord was very hard-hearted, and, although it was winter, had threatened to turn him out unless the rent was

paid. Dobry went to see him three times to tell how sick his wife had been, which had prevented him from paying the rent, and that he would pay if he would only wait a little. But he would not listen to him. He said he would come the next morning and turn him out.

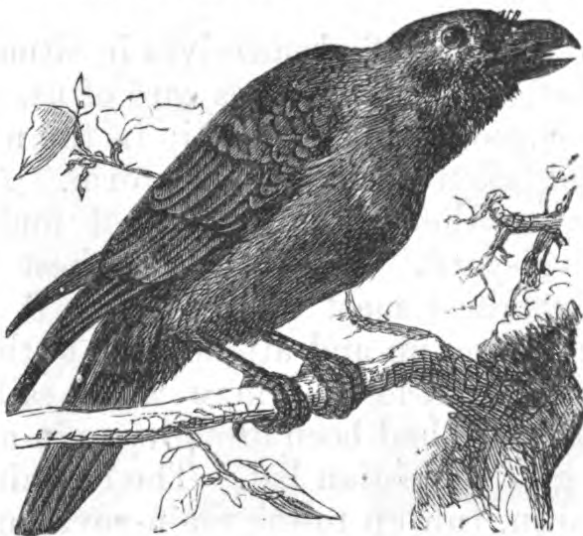
When he went home that evening, feeling very sad, Dobry gathered his family around him for prayer. He told God about their trouble, and asked Him to send them help in some way. After prayer they sang a hymn, beginning with the words,—

Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into His hands.

These are the closing lines of the last verse:—

When *Thou* wouldst all our need supply,
Who, who shall stay Thy hand?

While they were singing this last verse a gentle tapping was heard at the window. An old friend was there. It was a *raven* that Dobry's grandfather had taken out of the nest, and tamed, and then set at liberty. He often came to the cottage, and, when the door was shut, always lighted on the window-sill and tapped at the window till they let him in. Dobry opened the window. The raven then hopped in, holding in his bill a gold ring, set round with precious stones, which he laid down before Dobry. Here was an answer to their prayer that filled the hearts of all the family with gladness.



At first Dobry thought he would sell the ring, and pay his rent with the price of it; but afterwards he concluded to take it to his minister, tell him all about it, and ask him

what he had better do. He did so. As soon as the minister saw the ring he knew that it belonged to Stanislaus, the King of Poland. He took it to him, and told him the story of the poor peasant. The King was so pleased with this that he sent for Dobry, and rewarded him, so that he had plenty to pay his rent, and get food for his family through the winter. And when spring came the King had a new house built for Dobry, and gave him cattle from his own stall; and over the door of the house there was a cast-iron tablet, on which was the figure of a raven with a ring in his beak, and underneath a verse from the hymn they were singing when the raven came as God's messenger to bring them relief. And we may be sure that after that, whenever Dobry read the words of our text, he would feel it was a wonderful promise for times of poverty.

But, secondly, this is a wonderful promise for TIMES OF DANGER.

We often find ourselves in situations of so much danger that, unless God takes care of us, we must lose our lives.

Some time ago a ship in the middle of the ocean was overtaken by a sudden storm. A rope became tangled, or, as the sailors say, "got foul," up above the main royal-yard. This is the highest yard, or cross-beam, on the tallest mast of the ship. It was necessary for some one to go up and attend to it, or the mast might be broken, or the sail lost. There was a sailor-boy on board, named Jim. He had been brought up in a Sunday-school, and was a good Christian lad. The captain saw him, and cried out, "Jim, run up to the main-royal and overhaul that line."

"Ay, ay, sir," said Jim. It was a very dangerous thing, in such a storm, with the ship tossing as she was, to climb up to such a dizzy height. At the foot of the rigging Jim paused for a moment and looked down at the deck. Then he sprang into the rigging, mounted aloft as though he had been a squirrel, reached the royal-yard, overhauled the rope, and came down again to the

deck in safety. A gentleman, who was a passenger on board the ship, was standing by the captain when he gave this order. He saw Jim as he paused a moment before going aloft, and then watched him anxiously as he executed that dangerous order. And when the sails were all furled, and everything was snug and quiet, he walked up to where Jim was standing, and said to him,—

“ Jim, when the captain gave you the order to go up and overhaul that line, a little while ago, I noticed that you paused a moment at the foot of the rigging before going up. What did you do that for ? ”

“ I knew it was a dangerous thing to do, sir, and I just asked God to keep me from harm.”

That sailor-boy was feeling the preciousness of this wonderful promise in that time of danger.

A Moravian missionary to Greenland gives us the following incident, which shows how wonderfully God fulfils this precious promise to His people in times of danger :—

In the year 1849 a couple of young married Greenlanders, who were servants of Jesus, came to the mission station at Okak to get some provisions. On their way they were met by a large white Polar bear, which is one of the most fierce and dangerous of all animals. They were, of course, very much alarmed; for the man had no gun or other weapon with him to defend his own life or that



of his wife. He turned to her, therefore, and said,—

“ We can do nothing to defend ourselves from this danger but pray to God.”

So they knelt down together on the snow, and asked God to protect them if it was His will, or else take them to heaven if He had sent the bear to kill them. While they were thus engaged the bear came up to them; but to their wonder and joy he quietly passed by them, and went away. On their return from Okak, when they had nearly reached the same place, they were alarmed at seeing the same fierce creature coming up to them again. But as they had proved the power of prayer before, they knelt down again and looked up to God for help. The bear came close up to them, and smelt all round them, but never offered to hurt them, and went away. That God who delivered David out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, had heard their cry, and delivered them. They asked for protection in the name of Jesus, when they were in danger, and according to His wonderful promise God gave it to them.

In the third place, this is a wonderful promise for TIMES OF TROUBLE.

We can none of us get through this world without trouble. The Bible says, "Man is *born unto trouble* as the sparks fly upward." And it is a great blessing to know of something that will be sure to help and comfort us when troubles come upon us. I know of nothing that will do this better than this wonderful promise, if we only make a right use of it.

Let me give you one or two illustrations of this point.

Some years ago there was a great preacher in Germany, whose name was Paul Gerhard. He was an earnest Christian man, and loved to preach about Jesus, to show the people what a great Saviour He is, and that unless they repented and believed in Him, and lived according to His laws, they could not be saved. But the ruler of that part of the country (he was called the Elector of Brandenburg) did not like that kind of preaching, and he sent word to this minister that he must either stop preaching

in that way, or go out of the country. Paul Gerhard sent back this message:—"That it would be very hard for him to leave his country and friends, and go with his family among strangers, where they would have nothing to live on; but as for preaching anything else than what the Bible taught him, he would rather die than do that." So he had to leave, with his wife and little children.

At the end of their first day's journey they came into a wood, and rested for the night at a little inn they found there. He then left his family, and went alone into the dark wood to pray. It was a time of great trouble to him, and there was no one to whom he could go for help but God.

While he was praying this text of Scripture came into his mind. It seemed to him as if an angel had come and whispered it to him:—"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." (Ps. xxxvii. 5.) This gave him great comfort. "Yes," he said to himself, "though I am banished from my home and friends, and do not know where to take my wife and children for a shelter, yet God, *my* God, sees me in this dark wood. He knows all about us. Now is the time to trust in Him. He will show me through; He will bring it to pass." He was so happy in thinking on his text that he made these verses:—

"Commit thy way," O weeper,
The cares that fret thy soul,
To thine Almighty Keeper,
Who makes the worlds to roll,—

"Unto the Lord," who quieteth
The wind, and cloud, and sea;
Oh, doubt not He provideth
A footpath too for thee.

"Trust also," for 'tis useless
To murmur and forbode;
The Almighty arm is doubtless
Full strong to bear thy load.

"In Him" hide all thy sorrow,
And bid thy fears good night;
He'll make a glorious morrow
To crown thy head with light.

"*And He shall bring it*" near thee,
The good thou long hast sought :
Though now it seems to fly thee,
Thou shalt ere long be brought

"*To pass*" from grief to gladness,
From night to clearest day ;
When doubts, and fears, and sadness
Shall all have passed away.

He then went into the house. He told his wife about the sweet text that had come into his mind, and repeated to her the verses. The husband and wife knelt down together and prayed, and resolved to "commit their way unto the Lord."

After they went to bed a great noise was heard at the door of the inn. It seemed as though some important person was knocking there. When the landlord opened the door, a man on horseback was standing before it. He said, in a loud voice, "I am a messenger. I come



from Duke Christian, of Meresburg, and I am trying to find a minister named Paul Gerhard, who has just been banished from Brandenburg. Has he passed this way?"

"Paul Gerhard?" said the landlord. "Why, yes; he is here, but has just gone to bed. I cannot disturb him now."

"But you must," said the messenger. "I have a very important letter for him from the Duke; let me see him."

So the landlord went upstairs and told Mr. Gerhard, who came down to see what all this could be about.

The messenger handed him a large sealed letter; and, to his great joy, he read in it that the good Duke Christian had heard of his intended banishment, and had written

to him, saying, "Come into my country, Paul Gerhard, and you shall have a church, and people, and home, and plenty to live on, and liberty to preach the Gospel just as you please."

Then the good minister went up and told his wife, and they praised God for His love; and the next morning they started off with glad hearts and cheerful feet to their new home.

There is one more illustration I will give you.

There was a good Christian woman, a few years ago, who lived in the upper part of the State of New York. She was an elderly woman, but very active in doing good, especially in the Sunday-school cause. Her name was Mrs. H——, but those who knew her well used to speak of her pleasantly as Aunt Polly. She often met with difficulties in the good work she was trying to do; but whenever troubles came she fell back on this wonderful promise; she told God all about them, and kept on praying, till, in some way or other, she was helped out of the trouble.

One time she moved into a neighbourhood where nearly all the people were infidels. Of course there was no church and no Sunday-school. Most of the people spent their time on the Sabbath either in working, or at the tavern, or in playing ball and pitching pennies. Aunt Polly made up her mind to start a Sunday-school. The great difficulty was to find a place to hold it in. There was the village school-house, if she could only get the use of it; but the trustees she knew would not let her have it. But she resolved to try. She called on the president of the board of trustees and asked for the use of the school-house on Sundays, for the purpose of starting a Sunday-school. He said to her in a very positive way,—

"You cannot have it."

Here was a trouble for Aunt Polly; but she was not discouraged. She resolved to pray over it for a while, and then try again.

After a few days she called again, and asked for the school-house to start a Sunday-school in.

"No, Aunt Polly," said he; "I tell you, once for all, you cannot have the school-house for any such purpose."

"I think I am going to get it," said Aunt Polly.

"I should like to know how, if I do not give you the key?"

"I think the Lord is going to unlock it."

"Maybe He will," said the infidel; "but I can tell you this: He will never get the key from me."

"Well, I am going to pray over it," said Aunt Polly. "I have found out from experience" (mark Aunt Polly's experience) "that *when I keep on praying, something always gives way.*"

She went away. She waited a few days longer, and kept on praying. She called again on the trustee, and asked for the school-house. "What sort of a thing is this Sunday-school, anyhow?" asked the man.

Aunt Polly told him what it was.

"How much do you charge?"

"I charge a great deal; but *you* do not have to pay. The pay comes from my Master, Jesus. And He is going to unlock the school-house for us."

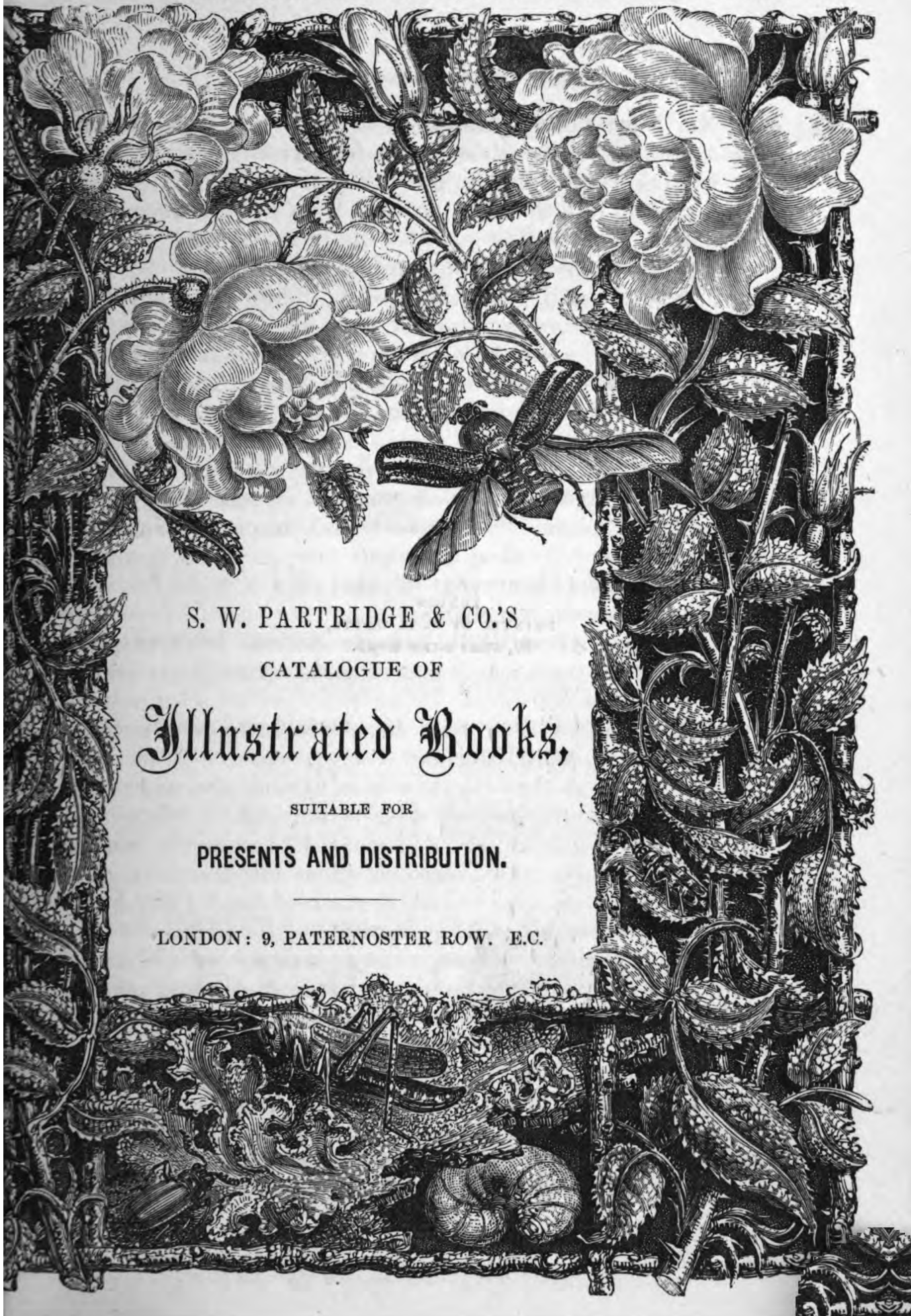
"Well, Aunt Polly," said he, "you have got the best pluck of any woman I ever saw."

The result was that the key was given; the door was opened; the Sunday-school was started. And when the other trustees got angry, and wanted to stop the work, this man opposed and overruled them all, and kept the school-house open. So you see that when Aunt Polly kept on praying, something *did* give way.

The next summer, besides a large number of children, there were thirty-six young men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five in Aunt Polly's school, and *fifteen* of them have since become Christians.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." This is a wonderful promise. We have spoken of three kinds of times for which it is wonderful. What is the first? *Times of poverty.* What is the second? *Times of danger.* What is the third? *Times of trouble.*

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