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 JESUS NOT A HALF SAVIOUR.

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 BY
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 no. 14

“B——,” said my father to me at the breakfast table, the morning after my arrival in one of the visits annually paid to the old homestead, “do you remember your old schoolmate, H. P.?”

“Perfectly well,” was the reply; “it would take more than twenty years to efface the recollection of the most intimate friend of my childhood.”

“Well,” rejoined he, “he has one foot in the grave dying of consumption; and he is such an untamed bear that no one can approach him. Possibly you may gain access on the score of old companionship; who knows what, through God’s grace, may be the result of your visit?”

Let me here introduce to the reader the person concerning whom the above dialogue

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was held H. P. was the only son of a widowed mother, whose indulgent love proved unable to cope with the passions of a headstrong and wilful boy. Upon approaching manhood he broke away from every social restraint, and soon lost every trace of virtue. In his swift declension he not only abandoned himself to vice in its lowest associations, but took an insane pleasure in setting public sentiment at defiance, until, for years, he had some to be regarded as an outcast and an outlaw. At the age of thirteen our paths in life diverged, and now, for the first time in twenty years, they crossed again.

Toward noon, when the morning hours of exhaustion should be over, the writer turned his steps slowly to the house of his invalid friend, upon the skirts of the village. Memory yielded up its stores from the buried past, at every footfall; the lessons conned together under the master's ferrule; the wild and noisy sports at recess, upon the village-green; and the playmates of those halcyon days—some of whom, alas! were sleeping beneath the turf, over whose early graves aged mourners had too sadly wept. And now I was soon to look upon the most melancholy wreck of

all! But sombre as these reflections were, they only half prepared me to greet the spectre which slowly glided into the parlor, learning wearily upon a staff, and sinking, exhausted, even at this effort, upon the sofa by my side.

“My dear H., it grieves me to the heart to find you thus.”

“Yes, B——, we have not met for twenty years; and if you had waited a few weeks longer, you must have searched for me in the grave-yard of Old Bethel, where the solemn oaks droop with moss over the graves of a century.”

Reader, I had prayed the Lord to make me wise to win a soul, and I was burdened with my prayer. Laying the hand gently upon his knee, I said, affectionately, “H., do not be angry with me, for the sake of ‘auld lang syne,’ let me tell you what most distresses me; it is that you are half-way into eternity, and so unready to die!”

Sepulchral as his own cough was, the melancholy response: “B——, it is of no use to talk to me on the subject of religion; I am a doomed man—as sure of hell as if already shut up in its vault of fire.”

"Oh! H., my friend, how can you say so?"

"Because, B——, I am a *drunkard!* and no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." His eye flashed with an unearthly gleam, as he fiercely continued: "You do not know what sort of a drunkard I am; I carry my jug to bed with me every night—it takes the place of my wife—and I pull from it so often that it can scarcely be said to be corked at all. If I could only break the bonds of this cruel habit, there might be hope for me; but I have tried, a thousand times, in vain; I am bound, hand and foot, with its accursed chains; and there is nothing left to me but to drink and to be damned."

Was it said only to the apostles, "And it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak?" Instantly I replied to this vehement and self-accusing speech, "H., you entirely mistake the matter. What you need is a Saviour to save you from your drunkenness; He shall be called Jesus, because He shall save His people from their sins. The salvation from hell is only the result of this salvation from sin. You must come, dear H., to Jesus, as a drunkard, or not at all."

With this, we bowed together in prayer,

during which the poor emaciated frame shook with sobs, as though it would fall to pieces with the violence by which it was racked.

The interview was too exciting to be longer protracted; and during four days the writer was engrossed with a religious meeting then in progress. At its close, and just before returning to his home, he called to take a final farewell of one whom he was sure never to meet again upon earth. The same pale, wan countenance met his view as before, but now lighted up with a strange and happy radiance.

"B——, a wonderful change has passed over me since you were here, and I do not know what to make of it; it cannot be that I am a converted man?"

"I should not be in the least surprised, H., to find that you are; but tell me all about it."

"Well," he replied, "when you went away I prayed God to have mercy upon my poor soul, and all at once the shackles fell off from me and I have been full of peace and joy ever since." Pausing for a little fuller statement before committing myself to a reply, he resumed:

"B——, I am a very ignorant man—it is

many years since I have been within the walls of a Church, and I have forgotten almost everything my pious old mother taught me at her knee. But I want to tell you what I think the gospel is, and where I am wrong you will correct me." Promising to be very honest in my criticism, he proceeded: "I think then that we are all born into the world with wicked hearts, and guilty and condemned from our birth; that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save us, if we will only trust entirely in Him—but that *He won't be a half Saviour to anybody*. I must not do the best I can and then come to Him to complete what remains; but I must come at once, just so, and let Him do the whole work, from beginning to end. *He will be a whole Saviour, or none*. Is that the Gospel?"

Grasping his hand in both of mine, I replied in a voice husky with emotion, "H., if you had been a Doctor of Divinity for fifty years, you could not have put it better;" and kneeling down on the same spot where we had prayed before, we blessed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, had begotten him again unto such a lively hope."

Upon reciting the conversation to my venerable parent, I said: "With your experience and observation, so much larger than my own, would you not take this to be an illustration of Christ's word, 'he that hath heard and hath *learned of the Father*, cometh unto me?'"

"Yes," was the reply; "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are *spritually* discerned."

I returned to my distant home, rejoicing in the conviction that one who had so clearly grasped the central truth of a *whole Saviour*, must be born of God. It was, however, a grateful assurance, to learn that after three months of suffering, which yet were brighter with evidences of grace, my poor friend mounted aloft with rejoicing and song into the rest of the redeemed.



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ALL ye who pass by,
 To Jesus draw nigh;
To you is it nothing that Jesus should die?
 Our ransom and peace,
 Our surety He is:
Come, see if there ever was sorrow like His.
 The Lord, in the day
 Of His anger, did lay
 Our sins on the Lamb, and He bore them away:
 He died, to atone
 For guilt, not His own:
 The Father afflicted, for you, His dear Son.
 For sinners like me
 He died on the tree;
 His death is accepted; the sinner goes free;
 My pardon I claim;
 A sinner I am,
A sinner believing in Jesus' dear name.
 He purchased the grace
 That now I embrace;
O Father! Thou knowest He died in my place:
 His death is my plea;
 My Advocate see,
And hear the blood speak that has answered for me.
 With joy, we approve
 The plan of His love,—
A wonder to all, both below and above;
 When time is no more,
 We still shall adore
That ocean of love, without bottom or shore.

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