

THE BUSHMAN'S GUIDE

The Way of Life

by

W. ARNOLD LONG

eBook Edition by

© Gospel Attract

2016

The Bushman's Guide



The Australian BUSHMAN'S GUIDE

In

“The Way of Life”

by

W. ARNOLD LONG

Inland Missionary for many years

and author of

"On Highways and Byways in Australia"

"Harry Foster of the Northern Territory"

"Treasure in an Earthen Vessel", etc.

Original Edition

**Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne
for transmission *by post* as a book.**

Paper Book Published by

CHRISTIAN BOOK ROOM

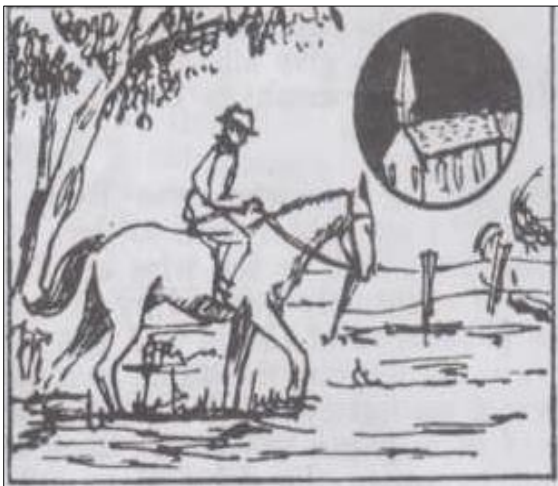
P.O. Box 95413. T.S.T., Kowloon.

Hong Kong. S.A.R. of CHINA.

Preface

One day in western Queensland, many years ago, a group of “ringers” were gathered around this writer in an earnest discussion of a topic that is often foremost in men’s minds, even when they appear not to care. There is scarcely any need to give it a name.

One of them remarked: “THERE’S NO CHURCH IN THE MURRANJI SCRUB.” We had travelled in company on a mail truck from the central parts of the Northern Territory, and were talking about aspects of life that appear in the pages of this little book. The young man who spoke was sincere. He had lived a hard life in the inland and had served in the defence of his country in World War 2.



The MurrANJI Scrub (pronounced Mur-ren-ji) lies to the west of Newcastle Waters, the approximate centre of the Northern Territory and in some ways is typical of the inland as a whole. Morally and spiritually there is more to drag people down than there is to lift them up. To live in such districts requires more than ordinary ability and stamina, and those who do so surely deserve more than ordinary appreciation and encouragement.

In the highest sphere of life no courage or resourcefulness of our own is sufficient.

We all need the inspiration, help and guidance that can only come from above. Is it possible to live a true Christian life even in the interior of Australia? To this question comes the answer from the Bible: "With God all things are possible." But how is it to be done? Those who have experienced anything of the life and strength and grace that God alone can give are duty-bound to pass it on to others.

What bushman would refuse to show a lost traveller the way to his destination or watch a comrade die of thirst or hunger while he himself had water and food?

On this principle, as a missionary for many years in the inland, the writer has felt the obligation to do much more to help fellow-travellers through life than hitherto, or

rather to point the way to the One Who is willing and able to give all the help that need. God's gifts are never meant to be monopolised by those who receive them.

The greatest missionary who ever lived, the Apostle Paul, said: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." That debt could only be paid by preaching the Gospel, the good news of Christ and His salvation. We also are in debt in the same manner to those among whom we have lived. I hope, therefore that all who read these pages will accept them as an earnest attempt to repay the debt. Many of the incidents come from our own personal experience and to the utmost of our knowledge, all of them are true, illustrations, however, are only "windows to let in the light," and these are meant to let in the light on the truth of God in terms that will be understood in the inland

CONTENT

- (1) AN APPEAL FROM HENRY LAWSON
- (2) LOST IN THE BUSH
- (3) A MAN IS LOST!
- (4) THE ONLY GUIDE
- (5) A DROVER'S LAST JOURNEY
- (6) DROVING
- (7) THE WAY OF ESCAPE
- (8) RINGERS
- (9) SAVED — AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS
- (10) INSIDE AND OUTSIDE
- (11) SAVED FROM DEATH
- (12) "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE"
- (13) SINCERITY IS NOT ENOUGH
- (14) A COLLAPSED DEFENCE
- (15) THE MASTERS BAILIFF
- (16) 2,000 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY
- (17) "CHRISTIAN NATIONS" AT WAR
- (18) A BULLOCK-DRIVER'S SECRET
- (19) THE KING'S MESSENGER
- (20) A FLASH OF JUDGMENT
- (21) HYPOCRITES
- (22) "TOO MUCH GOD"
- (23) SWEEPED AWAY
- (24) CAN WE MEET AGAIN?
- (25) ARE YOU A TRAMP* OR A TRAVELLER?
- (26) PROFIT TURNED TO LOSS

- (27) A DUST STORM
- (28) A FATAL REFUSAL
- (29) A MOONLIGHT BATTLE
- (30) THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL
- (31) IN A FLASH
- (32) A PRISONER SET FREE
- (33) A SCEPTICS DISCOVERY
- (34) CAN WE KNOW?
- (35) WHAT DO YOU KNOW?
- (36) THE HIDDEN WATER SUPPLY
- (37) THE BURNT TREE
- (38) A HOUSE BUILT ON SAND
- (39) WHAT IS FAITH?
- (40) THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE
- (41) FAITH'S OBJECT
- (42) DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?
- (43) THE SHORTEST PRAYER ON RECORD
- (44) COBB AND CO.
- (45) STURT'S DEPOT GLEN
- (46) KEPT TO THE END
- (47) "I'M COMING HOME"
- (48) A SURPRISE MEETING
- (49) A NURSE'S DISCOVERY
- (50) THE CROSS-ROADS
- (51) THE GREAT DECISION

(1)AN APPEAL FROM HENRY LAWSON

Australia's National Poet

The following lines are taken from the poem "Give Yourself a Show," written for a New Year's Eve.

"To my fellow sinners all, who, in hope or doubt, Through the Commonwealth tonight,
watch the old year out,

New Years' Resolutions are jerry-built I know,

But I want to say to you, "**Give yourself a show.**"

You who drink for drinking's sake, love for lust alone,

Thinking heaven is a myth and the world your own — Dancing gaily down to hell in
the devil's dance This I have to say to you, "Give your soul a chance."

You who drink because of shame that you think will last,

Or because of wrong done you, trouble in the past — "Nothing left to live for now,"
you will say, I know, But you have your own self left, "Give that self a show."

HENRY LAWSON is generally accepted as the writer who most truly
interpreted the spirit of Australia. He tramped and lived in the outback and

understood the trials and achievements, the weaknesses and greatness of the pioneers.

He had a deep insight into life; a great depth of feeling and gift of expression. Although a self-confessed addict of the drink, Henry Lawson knew that we are born for something greater than the life that most of us live.

In each of us there are feelings and longings that are camouflaged from one another, there are depths that only God can see. There is a hidden life within us all, a life that has tremendous possibilities for good or evil. The real personality is the soul within; it is yourself; it is YOU!

Will you heed the appeal of the great bush writer, and “Give yourself a show” or as it is also put, I “Give Your Soul a Chance”, while you read this little book?

It is meant to help you in the battle of life, to point the way to peace of mind and lasting satisfaction of heart, to introduce you to the only Friend Who can stick to you through life and death—yes, even to lead you safely through to the Home above.

You will not be sorry if you take the time to read it, and time to think about the things that matter most of all. “For what shall it profit a man,” asked the One Who knew life better than Henry Lawson or any other, “if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul” — himself?

(2)LOST IN THE BUSH

IN the Tennant Creek district of the Northern Territory, it was discovered one day that an old man was missing. He was not in his little house at the back of the township and evidently had not been there for some time.

When we were notified of this fact it was not long before we discovered that at his camp further out in the bush there was no trace of his presence. He had not been there for some weeks.

We who were living in the bush had taken it for granted that he was in the township, whilst the people there had concluded that he was camping out beyond where we were living.

A search was immediately organised. The aborigines of that district, being expert trackers and knowing the country well, were the principal searchers. Day after day the district was combed and every likely place examined but without yielding a single clue.

Rain had fallen some time previously, making any thought of tracking futile. At length the body of the old man was discovered reposing in the last sleep, under the shade of a bush. He had perished some weeks earlier having lost his way in a lonely and desolate part of the country.

Not a great while previously, in the same district, a young doctor and his wife had set out on an errand of mercy to the Rockhampton Downs Station, a distance of 100 miles on the old stock route. It was a burning summer and the car developed trouble. There was no habitation of any kind along the way. The young couple, who were in their early twenties, set out to walk, but died in each other's arms before they could reach the goal.

Later, the police, together with an Australian Inland Missionary, drove out along the same track and had the unspeakably sad task of bringing back the bodies of this bright and promising young couple.

The same inexorable country had swallowed up the lives of the doctor and his wife in the freshness of their youth, and the old man at the end of life's journey.

Hundreds upon hundreds have been lost and have perished in the inland of Australia. How many have died of thirst in that appalling loneliness no historian will ever be able to record. But one thing is certain—the moment it is discovered that someone is missing all other considerations fall into the background.

(3)A MAN IS LOST!

An awful feeling spreads abroad. Where was he last seen? What can be done? Everyone who can do so rallies to join in the search. And who would grudge any effort at such a time? Perhaps a great deal of toil and time may be spent tramping in wrong directions and in mistaken efforts. But what does that matter? A life is at stake!

"It's all in it," as the people of the bush would say.

One day when travelling in a train in Western Queensland the writer was talking to several bushmen about the things that matter most. One of them who had been drinking freely, revealed some of his troubles and bitter disappointments. Among other troubles, he had been deserted by his wife, but he did not blame her.

"There's no hope now," he said, "I'll just go on drinking 'till the end. I'm lost."

"Well, they don't get out a search party to look for the people who are living peacefully at home. It's the man who is lost that they look for! If you are lost you're

just the man that God is seeking. The Lord said that He had come “to seek and to save that which was lost.”

In the parable long ago it was the Shepherd who found the sheep, not the sheep that found the Shepherd. That sheep was lost and weak and helpless. It neither knew the way nor had the strength to find it. Then the shepherd carried the sheep back home. He not only knew the way, but to the lost sheep he was himself The Way. There was no other hope.

That is a picture of ourselves. If God does not look for us we have no chance of ever finding our own way to Him and to His everlasting Home.

In the wide spaces of Australia there are many who are wandering through life like a man lost in the bush. Somewhere, they know there is a better life, a life that answers to the deep longings of the human heart. There is a way that leads to lasting satisfaction, to genuine happiness and something that is really worthwhile.

That way is called in the Bible the “**way of peace**” and “**the way of life**”. The only alternative leads to disappointment, trouble and doom. It is called the “**way of death**”.

A man who is lost knows only too well that disappointment and death will be his portion unless somehow he finds the way to civilisation and life before it is too late, and he can never rest until he finds that way.

Can we rest until we find “the way of life” itself?

How can we find the way? That is the most important question in the world, and it is this question we are seeking to answer now.
Does anything else really matter?

(4)THE ONLY GUIDE

LONG AGO on a station in New South Wales, a squatter's little daughter was missing. When she could not be found near at hand a search party was assembled. It was led by an aboriginal who was a noted tracker. When they had progressed some distance into the bush one of the white men remarked, "That old fool doesn't know where he's leading us!"

The tracker, Micky Bell by name, heard the sneering remark and returned at once to the homestead. All day long the search continued, and through the hours of the night. But the morning brought no gleam of hope; the little girl could not be found. In vain the old tracker was asked to go again with the searchers. He had been deeply hurt and could not be persuaded. At last the mother, with tears in her eyes, begged him to go for the sake of her little child, and those tears touched his heart.

He set out over the same route again and followed the footmarks as before. Eventually he came to an abrupt halt and asked those behind to keep the mother back. The little girl had been killed and eaten by dingoes during the night! How glibly had the sneer been uttered against the despised aboriginal, but how fatal and dreadful the result! The one, who in his native element was willing and able to bring the search to a speedy and successful end, had been scorned and turned away. He would not have argued even had he been able to do so, and he would not impose his services on them. They did not want him AND THEY PAID THE PRICE.

Even so, in the midst of a lost and dying world there is One Who offers to guide us in "the of life". He has come from heaven to show us the way to the Father's House", but first to the cross where He died for our sins, and to the open gravel He arose, the Conqueror of death, and so is able to lead us also in the way of victory even over this last terrible enemy. And all the way through life he has promised to be our Guide, to show us how to live, what to do and where to go. He has promised to stand by us when all others will fail, to hold us with His invisible but all-powerful hand and keep

us from slipping into the bogs of sin and trouble and despair. He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee (Hebrews 13:5), or as it has also been rendered, "I will never, never let go your hand."

Before we turn away from Him let us think if we know of any other Guide like this. There have been many teachers; yes, but is there another who came to die for lost, condemned men and women? There were many philosophers who tried to think their way through life's problems but which of them could arise from the grave and say, "**I am the resurrection and the life**; he that believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live"? There have been many who tried to show the way but they have vanished from sight and cannot help us now. Only One has spoken after death and resurrection, saying to His followers, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world".

Such a Guide must necessarily be more than a man. He was "Immanuel, **God with us**." He was the Eternal Son of God, but He is called the "Son of Man" also. He came to live among us, to be tested and tried and to suffer as we do. He knows all about our troubles, and our helplessness; and He wants to be our Guide, our Saviour and our Friend.

If we will not believe this then we may be sure of one thing. There is no other guide to whom we may turn. If we cannot put the Bible into the hands of our children, and say, "Read this and guide your life by it, and you will never go wrong", then there is nothing else that we can give them in its place. If we cannot say, "Look to Christ and follow Him. He will never lead you astray. He will guide you all through life, even through its worst experiences and lead you into everlasting life and to an everlasting Home," then there is no one else to whom we may point them and no other guide to whom we may turn in the hour of need. Without Him all must lead to darkness, despair and death. Let us think long and seriously before we turn away from such a Guide as this.

(5)A DROVER'S LAST JOURNEY

IN a little township in Western New South Wales, a very old man once sent for visiting missionaries. He was deeply disturbed and wanted to talk to them about the things which were weighing heavily on his mind. We found that he had been a drover and could, no doubt, have told many stories of hardship and adventure from his past. But these did not concern him any longer. He had before him the greatest journey of all.

The old man was very deaf. We had to shout into his ear through an ear-trumpet to make sure that he caught every word. He said, "I've come a long way on the journey, and I haven't got much further to go. I don't know which way to go and I want to know the right way."

What message could the outside world give to a man in such a strait? Would politics or anything else of the affairs of this world be of any help or interest?

We thought of the great old words of John's Gospel and shouted down his ear-trumpet, "**Jesus said, I am the way**, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father **but by Me!**" After some conversation under difficulties we gave him an illustration: "Suppose you owed £50 at the store and I went and paid it for you and gave you the receipt. What would there be left for you to do?"

"I suppose to thank you for it."

"Yes. Now we are all in debt. We are all sinners,"

"Oh yes, we are all sinners alright."

"And God said, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die'."

“Yes.”

“We could not pay the debt ourselves, but Christ came and paid it for us. He took our place and died for us.”

“Yes.”

“And God has given us the receipt. He raised Christ from the dead and showed that He was satisfied.”

“Yes.”

“Well, now that Christ has paid the debt for us, what is there left for us to do?”

After a few minutes earnest thought, he replied, “I suppose **to thank Him for it.**”

“And did you ever do that?”

“No.”

“Well what about doing it now?”

Again there was a brief interval of silent thought. Then the snow-white head bowed low. For the first time in his life the old man Lifted both heart and voice in prayer, thanking God for sending His eternal son into the world to die for him; to pay even his debt to the uttermost and thus to set him free!

Marvellous revelation! Wonderful and blessed truth! Yet all so simple that even an old, dying drover could take it in!

Perhaps this may fall into the hands of some old bushman now, and how many such are there with no home and few friends at the end of life's wanderings? **Do not think that it is too late now.** There is an eternal Home and a loving Saviour to welcome you in. You too can do what this old drover did. Why not do it now?

(6) DROVING *

IF we were asked what man could most fittingly stand as the symbol of Australian life, the general reply would probably be “the drover”. Australia possesses approximately 14,000,000 cattle and 100,000,000 sheep and some of the biggest sheep cattle stations in the world. Although now being increasingly displaced by the cattle transport, the drover appears in every state of the Commonwealth and travels over tens of thousands of miles of stock routes, including some of the loneliest on earth.



Nobody can estimate how much Australia owes to its drovers who live perhaps the hardest and roughest life of all. Yet how little is generally known of droving is illustrated by the fact that a film of the inland was criticised because dogs were not shown working with drovers in cattle country! Many people did not realise that, while dogs are invaluable to sheep drovers, it takes horsemen to look after bullocks on a journey.

But in either case it is the drover who controls “the mob”. Neither the sheep nor the cattle have any idea where they are going or what their fate will be. They go because they are driven. They move along with the crowd and are not able to make their own destination.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

In this respect they are like the masses of men and women moving along the roads of life. Human beings, with the highest intelligence, and the noblest powers, allow themselves to be enticed or driven onward with the crowd, giving no thought to their destiny.

The road and the crowd around them fill their vision. What lies at the end of the journey is something about which they do not care to think. “Live for today and do as others do” might well be the motto of sheep and cattle — and of the majority of men and women as well.

Take, for example, **the men who drink, wasting** their money and ruining their lives. There may be various causes driving men to drink. But is it not usually that others go this way and they must go too? They have no strength to stand against the crowd.

Also if the majority are doing certain things — well, they must be right! So these men go as sheep to the slaughter and allow themselves to be dragged along without resistance.

Everybody knows that **very few gamblers** win in the long run. Most gamblers are losers. Yet the gambling fever grips them and they cannot stop even though money and possessions are gone, character is undermined and often enough the home is wrecked in the process.

A group of men, evidently bookmakers, were standing looking towards the crowds assembled for a race meeting. "What a lot of fools those people are," remarked one of them. "They think the horses are run for their benefit!"

In the boxing profession the few succeed while the majority gain little or nothing but disfigured faces; ruined bodies and stunted minds. It has been said that "the boxing profession drips with innocent blood, the blood of fools." A boy is urged on by flattering men who tell him how "game" he is. He goes on and on until at last he is "punch-drunk", and a physical wreck, a sacrifice to the greed and lust of others who will even discard and forget a champion when his heyday is past.

These are only examples of the way of the world, as any man of experience knows. There is gained by going with the crowd!

AND WHERE IS THE CROWD GOING?

It is certainly not going towards God. It is moving away from Him. It is heading for everlasting ruin. The road is wide and easy and there is plenty of company. It is "the broad road" and all the more deceiving on this account. It is a downward slide, not an upward climb.

The only other road is represented as "the narrow way" (Matthew 7:13-14). There are comparatively few on this road, but it is the best way after all, and it leads to no disappointment in the end. The world puts on a dazzling show at first. But it is a deception and never can really satisfy or fulfil its promises in the long run.

On the other hand God does not hold out any false allurements, nor does He mock any man. Again and again we are warned that "the way of life" leads through many troubles and testings. But God does promise that if we walk in His way He will bring us safely through all of life's troubles until at last we reach the Home where the storms left behind for evermore.

It is for us to decide which way we want to go.

(7)THE WAY OF ESCAPE

THE MANAGER of a cattle station had lost his wife and was stricken with sorrow. We had done our utmost to help; we had driven her as gently as possible over rough bush roads through a long and weary night, and at last she had been admitted to hospital. But it was too late. Blood-poisoning had done its fatal work and nothing that medical skill could do was of any avail. When it was all over we sat down in the old homestead and talked over many things.

When the subject of this sudden and terrible sorrow arose, the missionary of the Gospel cast around in his mind for everything that might help. One incident concerned Harry Lauder when his beloved son was killed in the First World War.

"At such a time as this", said the great singer, "a man usually goes one of three ways. Either he turns to drink, to drown his sorrow, or he gives way to despair, or else he turns to God. For myself, I have chosen the third way. I have turned to God."

We had a long conversation that night about "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort," the One Who can help when no one else can. A day or two later the cattle station manager opened the subject again. "You remember the story you told me of Harry Lauder? Well, I have thought it over and I have chosen the third way, too. I have turned to God."

At some time or other we must all face a supreme test. Which way will we turn? It is a great thing to be able to turn to God and seek the refuge of His presence in the storm. But there is something far greater than that. It is to turn to Him before the

storm breaks, so that there will be no need to look for shelter. We will be already safe and calm “under the shadow of His wings.”

(8)RINGERS

THIS term which is so common in cattle country is unknown to many who live in other districts and in some towns and cities. It refers to the men who work with cattle and applies particularly to the horsemen employed in mustering and droving.

When a “mob” of cattle is got together it must be kept together and that is more easily said than done. Some may be wild and likely to dash away into the bush in various directions. There may be a general stampede, set off by any little alarm, or by something more imaginary than real. So the horsemen ride around and around the mob, till the cattle realise that they are being constantly watched and guarded. Especially is this so at night when a rider on a “night-horse”, reserved for this purpose, circles ceaselessly round the herd.

It is because of this constant circling that the term “ringers” has been commonly applied, as it has been applied also to sheep-dogs in the past.

In the course of life we, too, need the protection and guardianship of someone greater than ourselves; Someone Who can encircle us by day and night, in joy or

sorrow, in strength or weakness, in life or death. It is of little use boasting that we can stand alone.

For long and weary years, David the great poet and King of Israel, was hunted, as he said, “like a partridge” by his enemies, living in caves or any shelter he could find. In the midst of these experience he wrote, “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them” (Psalm 34:7). When the great lessons of life were learned he was saved “out of all his troubles”.

But the ring of protection which David mentioned does not enclose everybody, because there are many who wander afar from it in the way of their own choice. A “ringer” can only look after the cattle with which he is travelling. He does not undertake to guard all those scattered through the scrub.

Even so if we wish to have the help and protection of the Almighty Keeper, we must belong to Him; we must surrender our lives entirely to His control and care. How many blame God because they fall into trouble, yet do not think of Him at other times? As an old bushmen expressed it, we must “get into His mob”, then we may look for His help day by day.

He will never fail us even in the darkest hours of life. “He that keepeth thee shall not slumber.” Around us may be sin, temptation and trouble in a thousand forms, but we are kept safe from them all when “the Lord of Hosts is with us” and we are with Him.

(9)SAVED — AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS

IN Mount Morgan, Queensland, there lived an old man who had attained the great age of 100 years. He had spent his life in self-pleasing and had no time for the things

of God; and he had been a drunkard for at least 75 years. He had also ill-treated his wife who had long since gone to be with God. Surely it would be hard to find in the world a more apparently hopeless case than this!

One night he had a dream. He saw a long, white winding road and at the end of it stood the Lord Himself. That long, winding road was his own life. The voice of God, to which he had closed his ears for a century, spoke that night and told him that he had gone his own way for a very long time. It was time he realised this and turned to God, Whose marvellous grace and patience had followed him all through the years.

So at last when all hope of a change seemed to be gone, the old man set out on the road that leads from the cross to the throne.

Unable to read on account of failing eyesight, he paid children to read the Bible to him. On their way home from school "Old Sandy" as he was known ---- (Sandy McGuinness) ---- would call in any who would read to him. Sometimes he would interrupt them and say, "Read that again." Then he would exclaim, "Well, isn't that lovely!" But the children were often more interested in the fee of sixpence which old Sandy paid for their services.

For over four more years the old man lived on, and the Book which he had disregarded for so long a lifetime, became the Bread of Life to him in those closing years. The Saviour, Whom he had scorned until all hope seemed to have departed, had won to Himself and became his truest friend.

After his own conversion some neighbours also were brought into the same new life by other of God's mysterious and wonderful ways. The old man was delighted to discover this fact. With them he found happy fellowship and they were able to help him in various ways. These neighbours (Mr. and Mrs. H. Bentley, of Walter Hall, Mount Morgan), would sometimes ask, "Well, how are you today, Sandy?"

"Oh, not very good. But I'll soon be up there in the better land. But look at you! You've got your lives before you. Isn't that wonderful? That's my one big regret — all the wasted years!"

As he became weaker in body old Sandy's eager desire for the things of God grew stronger. Does this not show, incidentally, that the life of the soul is something very different from the life of the body? Here, the one burned more brightly as the other faded away.

At last the old man lay down to rest in "the everlasting arms". His spirit had gone to join his wife in the presence of the Lord. What a great thing to have been saved through God's mercy even after a century of wasted life! Yet how much greater it would have been to have spent all those years in the service of God! How many others might the old man have brought with him into the kingdom?

The influence of every life affects others every day. We are either turning people towards God or influencing them the other way. A man may as well try to shake off his shadow as to free himself of this responsibility. "No man liveth unto himself."

Here then are the lessons of this story.

“While there’s life there’s hope.” Through the mercy of God none need despair. But what of the wasted years? They may be blotted out forever, but who can measure the loss they represent? Regrets in themselves are useless unless they lead to action without delay. Let us not waste another minute but hasten to give our all for the One Who gave His all for us.

(10)INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

THERE is an expression that is familiar to those who have lived in past years in the real “outback” of Australia and understood fully by them alone. They would speak of “going inside” when going in to the circles of towns and civilisation with all its amenities and benefits. The rest of the land further out from the railways and good roads and so many things that help constitute “life” for most people is “outside”.

(Sometimes the expressions have been reversed but this has been the more general usage in our experience.)

The far out-back is not so isolated now in the days of motor-transport and aero planes, but nevertheless it is still outside of much that some people could never do without. There are few who can be content to live in the great “outside”. Australia possesses some of the most thinly populated regions of the habitable world. Vast areas still have no constructed roads, no telegraph lines and no shops. Supplies must be ordered from distances that might span several countries in Europe.

There are problems that only the most resourceful people could overcome. The men and women of these parts can turn their hands to almost anything. When an accident occurs — and some dreadful accidents happen in the bush — it may be a considerable time before the fact is even discovered. Many heroic acts have been performed in the great “outside”, where the experience of everyday life might appal many city-dweller.

Far from shops, factories, schools, doctors and hospitals, this life is also lived afar from churches and spiritual influences. It is impossible to deny that such circumstances create an atmosphere that is indeed “outside” so far as the things of God are concerned.

OUTSIDE THE FENCES

Two old friends were spending their last days in a hospital in the Northern Territory. Both were over 70 and each had had a hard life in the back country. To one of them the missionary spoke of the life that never dies. The old man replied, “Well I’ve lived outside the fences all my life and they say that’s outside religion.”

“Perhaps it is, but it is not outside of Christ and His salvation if you will have it.”

“No, I’ve lived a hard life, and I’ll die as I’ve lived.”

“But that is a terrible risk to take when you could make sure of having everlasting life.”

“Well, I’ll take the risk.”

“But there is no need to, when God is holding out His free gift. You can have it just for the taking. “

However, all appeals were in vain. Not long afterwards I stood beside his grave and thought of all the men who, like him, lived “outside” and who have heard so little, if

anything at all, of the salvation which Christ purchased with His blood and of the measureless love which desires that none should be left outside.

Let us think of the One Who left His Home in Heaven to be an outcast in this world. It was outside of Jerusalem that He was crucified. The rulers of this world did not want Him inside, even in death; but by doing this they shut themselves out.

No man ever went so far out from this world’s society and standards as the One Who gave His life for the sins of the world. Yet it was His own world to which He came.

“He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not,” yet He could have stayed in His royal Home among the myriads of worshipping angels and in the peace and glory of God.

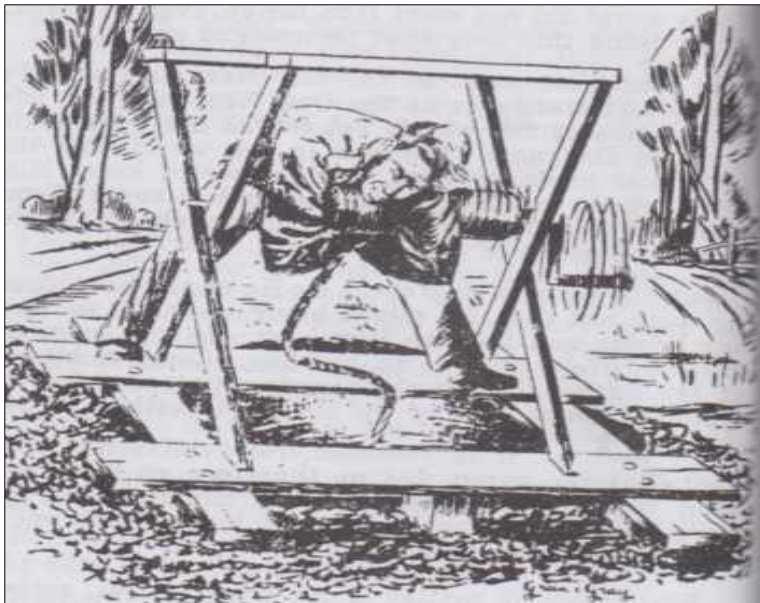
But He did not stay there as He might have done. **He went out that He might bring us in.** If we open our hearts and lives to Him here, He will open the gates of life

eternal to us, and say, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

To save us, it is recorded, He "suffered without (outside) the camp. Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:12-14).

What does it matter if we have to live, socially "outside" in this world, if we can live "inside" with God for evermore? No matter how far from God we may have lived, we may come "inside" now, and know that a royal welcome is awaiting us there.

(11)SAVED FROM DEATH



TWO MEN were once sinking a shaft, one workman above ground, the other below. The one above was winding a windlass, pulling up the iron bucket which was being loaded with earth and stones by the man working down at the bottom. When the bucket with its heavy load reached the top, a catch was slipped into place to hold the load, till the bucket could be tipped over and emptied.

Then suddenly one day a disastrous mistake occurred. The load was hauled to the surface but the man at the windlass failed to get the catch into place. Instantly the handle flew around, but almost as quickly the man acted. He flung himself on to windlass, wrapped his arms around the drum on which the cable was wound and shouted for help. His cries brought help from nearby, and the man at the bottom of the shaft was saved."

In less than two seconds he might easily have been crushed to death beneath the terrible force of the descending load and with no possibility of escape! But his mate had paid a great price that day. The flesh on his arms and body had been dreadfully lacerated as he made that supreme effort, thinking only of the man whose life depended on his success. "Greater love hath no man that this, that a man lay down his life for his friend."

Those words were spoken by One Who showed a greater love still. He came to die for His enemies! His was an unhesitating march to the cross on which He gave His life to save a doomed and dying world from the final destruction of the judgment of God against sin. You and I were in danger of being crushed for ever under the load of our own making, when the Lord from Heaven flung Himself between us and that impending doom.

Think for a few minutes of that scene long ago. There was the Man Whom the Jewish leaders hated because of His own pure life and His fearless exposing of their sin. They clamoured for His death, but the Roman Governor was sorely perplexed. He had never seen such a man and he declared before the people, "I find no fault in Him." There was something startling about the perfect calm and meekness of this prisoner, something unearthly in his manner and speech.

To add to his consternation Pilate received a note from his wife, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him" (Matthew 27:19). What could he do? He was afraid of the people. If rioting and rebellion should break out he might be held responsible.

The whole situation has been summed up in a striking manner by a great preacher of the Free Presbyterian Church, Rev. Donald Campbell, of Edinburgh, Scotland:



Yes, friends, Pilate was in a great dilemma. Here was a decision to be made, the greatest decision that this great judge of Israel had ever to make. He could either condemn Jesus of Nazareth or else release Him. Pilate could see no way out. If he released Jesus he would lose the popularity he had on other occasions gained through giving way to the Jews. However, the disciples of the Messiah could appeal to Rome, for Pilate had already testified that he could find no fault in this man. Yes, the mind of Pilate was troubled. Then a thought passed

through the mind of this great judicial character. It was this: "Surely if I deliver this man to be scourged it will have some effect on this blood-thirsty mob. Surely when they see the blood flowing from the back of their Messiah they will look upon Him and have mercy. Will they not repent when they see this sinless man suffering?"

"So Pilate delivered Jesus to be scourged. Now under Jewish law a prisoner is allowed only 39 stripes, but under the Roman law he can be given any number of stripes. Jesus was scourged under Roman conditions. But did this sight of the bleeding Saviour melt the hard hearts of the Jews? No my fellow sinners, they cried even the louder, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

"You may say that this was a terrible attitude to take up, but you take the same stand as the Jews as long as you reject the claims of the Son of God. However, Pilate now sees that the Jews are not satisfied with the scourging; they want the very life of the Son of God. The great judge then shows that popularity means more to him than justice, and despite the warnings of his wife and the warnings of his conscience he gives the order, "Deliver Him to be crucified."

"Pilate, even at the moment of giving the order, said, "I wash my hands of the blood of this innocent man," and tried to do so by washing his hands in water!

What folly! What folly! But, fellow sinners, let us remember that it is not the blood that oozed from the scourged back of Christ: it is not the blood that flowed from the crown of thorns on His brow. Paul tells us that Peace must be made "by the blood of the cross", so Pilate, under the sovereign will of God, **delivered Him to be crucified!**"

That is the very essence of our Gospel. "**Christ died for OUR sins.**" But this will be of no value to us if we do not avail ourselves of the covering of that great sacrifice. Look at the two thieves crucified on either side of Christ! Hear one of them raving and cursing and taunting the one hanging on the central cross — "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." Like most people now, he wished to be saved from his trouble but not from the cause of his trouble, sin. To him no word of pardon and peace was spoken. The Son of God was silent.

But how different the other case. Marvellous to relate, this dying thief could see what the others failed to perceive. He saw the dying Saviour as the King of Glory too. Even in his dreadful agony he rebuked the man on the other side, acknowledged his own wrong doing, and then made one short appeal for mercy, "**Lord remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.**"

To see Him as "Lord" at such a time ---- how marvellous a faith is that? With an awful death grave before him, yet to discern the eternal Kingdom of Christ ahead, surely this itself is the evidence that the Spirit of God was at work in that humbled heart and had shown him what the wise of this world cannot see.

That one hoarse cry of a dying sinner brought an immediate response from the dying Saviour: **"This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise."** Yes, there is mercy and instant salvation for those who turn to God in this way; and does this not show that, for the believing heart, death is only a passage from this world straight into the presence of God?

On the one side of the cross was salvation, pardon, peace, everlasting life. On the other side sin, rebellion, bitterness and doom. On which side do we stand? There can be no neutral ground. Shall we stand with His enemies or with those who say like Paul of old, "He loved me and gave Himself for me?"

(12)"THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE"

YEARS AGO when the writer first visited an Australian Leprosarium one striking fact appeared. ALL the patients were lepers, yet what a difference between many of the cases! Some were too far gone to ever leave that place of confinement. One of these was blind and terribly afflicted with sores and swellings and had not long to live. Another nearby did not appear to have leprosy at all. Yet the spot was there revealing the dreadful disease.

From one aspect there was a great difference between these two extremes. But from another aspect there was no difference at all. There was a difference in the **degree** of leprosy; one case was in its beginnings, while the other was far advanced. But there was no difference in **the fact** of leprosy. All in that institution alike were lepers.

Even so this world as a whole had been stricken with a plague far worse than any physical disease, and one which covers every part of the globe where human beings

live and move. We may call it by whatever name we like **but God calls it sin.** It is this plague which is the real cause of all the troubles of the world. It not only has

affected man outwardly, being revealed in his actions and speech, it has entered into the innermost recesses of his being, polluting secret thoughts and motives.

There are obviously great differences between individuals, some leading much better lives than others though outward appearances are often deceiving. The difference, however, is only in the degree of sin. The fact of sin is characteristic of the whole human race. The One Who fully knows the position has said "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22-23).

Just as those suffering from an infectious disease must be isolated for the good of the community as a whole, so in the kingdom of God it is declared, "There shall in no wise enter anything that defileth" (Revelation 21:27). The world has been quarantined outside of heaven, but for a merciful purpose, in order that all who will may be cured and fitted for a world where all is pure through and through. No doctor on earth can remove the disease of heart and mind, but God can do it. Again and again He has promised to make us clean if we come to Him acknowledging our need and genuinely trusting Him to effect the cure. He can make our hearts and minds "whiter than the snow".

(13)SINCERITY IS NOT ENOUGH

"SO LONG as a man is sincere, that is all that matters."

Thus many people have spoken, and thus also many people have perished. A man takes the wrong turning on a journey in the back-country. Instead of finding water where he expected to do so, he finds himself in a dry and waterless stretch of country. He says, "I must be on the right track and I will find it soon." He continues his search perfect sincerity and dies of thirst along the way.

A man enters into a contract without having terms set out in writing. He sincerely trusts in the word of another and he is disappointed, robbed and perhaps ruined. A man once took a drink of what he sincerely believed was water. It was spirits of salts, and he died a lingering and agonising death. Sincerity is a great thing, but in every walk of life there are illustrations of the fact that it is fatal. Imagine that sincerity alone is sufficient.

We have been endowed with intelligence, reason and judgment and are responsible to use the faculties that God has given in order that our actions should be guided aright. A man in a mental hospital sincerely and solemnly declares himself to be a piece of birdseed or a poached egg, or announces his name as Napoleon Bonaparte. Nobody would question his sincerity, but who would agree that he was right?

In the last war there were many men who were fanatical and fierce in their devotion to Hitler. They were ready to fight and die for him. Superficially they were sincere, but much more than this needed to save human life from disaster. Furthermore what often passes for sincerity will not stand a close examination. It is often the case that "the wish is father to the thought". There is another old saying that "there are none so blind as those that will not see". Many people do not arrive at a knowledge of the truth because they have a secret desire to avoid it. They fear that coming to God may involve something which would be unwelcome so they will not come. It is easy to deceive others, and in time to deceive ourselves if we desire to do so, but this does not free us of responsibility in the matter.

Do we really desire to have our lives made clean from sin? Do we really wish to find the way to God and to the "House of many mansions"? Then we will show our sincerity by doing everything possible to find the way at all cost. In such a case a great fact comes to light—God is at hand ready and eager to reveal Himself, even to those who have been far away from Him. "He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

(14) A COLLAPSED DEFENCE

A BRILLIANT Australian University student known to the writer was once charged with evading his obligations with regard to compulsory military training.

Being full of pride and self-confidence he resolved to put up a fight. To ensure success he obtained the services of some noted legal men, including a very outstanding barrister.

The magistrate, however, was a wise, experienced man and evidently knew what to expect. He addressed the accused in a fatherly manner:

"In ancient times our forefathers made laws for the good of the land."

"Yes, sir!" snapped the student with a presumptuous air.

And whether everybody agreed with them or not, it was for the benefit of the people as a whole that they should be kept."

"Yes, sir!"

"And when these laws were broken there were penalties that had to be paid."

"Yes, sir!"

"Now, in this case a law of the land has been broken."

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you. Case finished. Fined five pounds. Next case, please!"

The elaborately prepared defence had collapsed before a few simple questions which brought out **the truth!** People praise honesty and leave it to starve. So runs an old proverb. Honesty is much rarer than we are usually ready to admit. How we seek to hide our faults and bring out our virtues! "Most men will proclaim every man his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find." (Proverbs 20:6).

"I pay all my debts. I don't do anybody any harm. I do a lot of good turns." Has not this defence a very familiar ring? But God measures the world by His standard and He had said, "There is none righteous, no not one." The case is already concluded

and the verdict given, "that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19).

Had the sentence been executed at once then the whole human race must have been swept away, but there has been a stay in the proceedings of infinite justice. How did this marvellous happening come to pass? It has been by the intervention of the Judge Himself on our behalf. He "was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

He found a way to satisfy the demands of His own perfect law, and yet to extend to us a free pardon. The sword of justice was buried deep in the heart of the Saviour. He has paid the penalty that we might not be condemned but released. Do we stand ready to acknowledge the truth of the verdict and accept the offer of mercy? Or do we, like the university student, still seek to make our own defence?

(15)THE MASTERS BAILIFF

A STRANGER once knocked at the door of a house in Queensland, where two old maiden ladies were living. When one of them opened the door she was astonished to hear a gentleman announce himself as the bailiff.

"But we don't owe anything to anybody."

"Oh, yes you do, Madam. You're in debt!"

"Oh, no, we're not! We never go into debt!" "Pardon me, Madam, but you are in debt, and I'm the bailiff."

"I'll call my sister," said the agitated old lady, and brought her to the door.

"This gentleman says that he is the bailiff and we are in debt."

"Oh, no," commented this reinforcement, "We don't owe anything at all."

"Yes you do, Madam!"

“Well, to whom do you say we’re in debt?”

“You’re in debt to the One Who died for you on the Cross, and I’m the Master’s Bailiff! I’ve come to collect the debt!!”

A little later the old ladies were serving the stranger with afternoon tea in their drawing room and were listening intently to the most wonderful story in the world, the story of the One Who came from Heaven’s glory to pay the debt for all of us sinners who can never pay it for ourselves.

They took it in like little children listening for the first time to the news of a Saviour’s dying love. It was late in life, but not too late to realise what they owed to the One Who gave His all for them.

When we, too, come to realise that it is not what we do that counts for our salvation, but what Christ has done for us, when we see with faith’s enlightened eyes our debt of gratitude to Him Who paid our debt of sin, then surely we must fall down before Him and say, like “doubting Thomas” long ago, “My Lord and my God!”

(16)2,000 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY

A BUSHMAN remarked to a missionary in the Northern Territory one day, “Well, they say we’ve had two thousand years of Christianity, and what has it done?”

“Have we? It would be more like the truth to say that we have had two thousand years of the refusal of Christianity.”

The bushman laughed heartily and honestly admitted that this had “hit the nail on the head”.

Christianity, genuine Christianity, has done far more than the world realises, but it begins at the centre of trouble, the human heart. The world is made up of separate

human lives and God does not deal with us “en masse”, but individually. That brings the responsibility right home to you and me.

Never mind about your neighbour! What are doing with Christianity and with Christ?

(17)"CHRISTIAN NATIONS" AT WAR

IN the far inland when the war was in progress an old bushman said, “Just look at the Christian nations fighting while here’s Jacky in the bush, knowing nothing about Christianity and living a happy life.”

The speaker was at once challenged to name a single town that could really be called Christian, a town in which all the people were unanimously and genuinely Christian. He could not do so.

“The real truth is.” came the reply, “there are no Christian nations. Even, with the majority who profess to be Christians, it is more or less skin deep.”

Nor is there anyone in the bush or anywhere else who can live a life of perfect happiness and freedom without God.

(18)A BULLOCK-DRIVER'S SECRET

IN the North Coast districts of New South Wales a bullock-driver was once prosecuted for using obscene language. He pleaded "not guilty", but the magistrate had other ideas.

"It may be possible to be a swearless soldier, but a Biblical bullocky, never!" So the verdict went against the bullock-driver!!

But even a magistrate may be mistaken. A Queensland bullock-driver leaned a secret unknown to the men of the world. He lived a true and clean Christian life, even when driving the obstinate bullock teams. Some of his acquaintances enquired as to how he could do this. With a beautiful smile he touched his lips and pointed upward and said, "I trust".

In his own strength he could not live this for single day.

There is an old hymn, which says, "It is not try but trust."

We have our own part to play in everything, but without God we can do nothing to save ourselves or keep our lives pure. The arm of a tramcar brings power to the motors that throb underneath. Without that power they are lifeless and useless.

To trust God is to bring all the fullness of His power into a life that is otherwise weak and sinful and spiritually helpless. A little child trusts its parents for everything. Surely we can trust God just as much!

(19)THE KING'S MESSENGER

TWO VISITORS pulled into a Queensland station one day, the first driving a car, the second an old buckboard (something like a buggy). The first was on his way to Brisbane from Hughenden, travelling through Muttaborra with a Prefect car, which was to be a gift to a Mission Society for the work of God. He stopped to enquire the way and entered into conversation with a foreman who was foreman on a job demolishing a shearing shed. This foreman invited the passer-by to have a cup of tea with the men in a nearby hut. They were soon absorbed with the conversation. The visitor had once been a hopeless drunkard until reclaimed by Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. He never tired of telling others that His Saviour could do just as much for them.

Leaving the hut, the traveller met a man approaching with an old buckboard. This man was drover who had seen better days. He had practically no food with him, but possessed a bottle of vinegar, something with a little "bite" in it to help quench the

thirst that had been many times satisfied with something stronger. The old drover seemed more concerned about his horse than about himself, an attitude typical of the kind-heartedness of many a man like himself in the bush.

Giving the drover some tracts to read, the car-driver talked to him about the Gospel and urged him to hand over his Life to God. "He can do more with it than you can." But the listener made some of the usual excuses, He was too old now. He had been a drover all his life and would probably die a drover. Like many another who earned his living in this way, he had been a hard drinker.

The other man who had tried "both sides of the fence" began to tell him a story. Long ago a City Missionary went up a stairway in a house in the slums of New York. He spoke to a prostitute lying on the floor, "Madam, do you know Jesus?"

A man staggered out from another room and approached the visitor, with an appearance so menacing that the City Missionary hastily left and descended the stairs. The man followed him and caught up with him in the street.

“What was that name you mentioned?” he asked. It had been “the name that is above every name,” the name of Jesus, the friend of sinners. The man who asked the question was Jerry McAulay, afterward to become famous as the founder of a great mission for the rescue of derelicts like himself. He had been a “water rat”, thieving from ships, and at the age of 17 had been sentenced to 15 years in prison. While there he had come to hear of the Saviour and put his trust in Him, but afterward slipped back into a life drunkenness and shame.

This time the arm of God lifted him up once for all and gave him not only a transformed life made “whiter than snow”, but also gave him a life of wonderful service among others, who, like himself, had been down in the mire of sin.

Through the power of God this work, known as the Water Street Mission, saw a host of “down-and-outs” lifted from their life of degradation into a clean and useful Christian life, the life that is the only existence worth calling life, and which lasts ever.

This Mission became known all over the world. After the death of Jerry MacAulay it was carried on by the converts themselves.

The old drover was greatly moved as he listened, and at last broke down. He said, “The last time anyone put a tract in my hand was **at the Water Street Mission in New York.**”

Could anything show more clearly how God, in His mercy and wonderful love, will follow a man to the very end of life to bring him to Himself? The hand that guided him long ago to the great mission in the slums in America, guided the two men who met at the station in Queensland. The Spirit of God Who spoke through His servant in New York, prompted His servant in Australia many years afterward to tell the story of that very work in Water street where the old drover had once heard the Gospel message.

The car driver, Mr. C. H. Dowd, and his wife likewise, were once drunkards and companions in vice until they heard that most wonderful story that the world had ever known, the story of Jesus the Son of God, dying on the cross for them and rising in the power that can “save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.” Then

how marvellous the transformation! Not just a change of habits on the outside, but a new life altogether and a heart gave Himself for us”.

Mr. Dowd left the old drover that day, with a feeling of hope, a conviction that God had not spoken in vain. Shall we meet the drover in Heaven? Perhaps we cannot be sure of that, but we can make sure that we will meet with Christ there and with **all who truly love Him. If** we miss every other appointment in life let us make sure of keeping that appointment. If we have no home here we may make sure of a place in the everlasting Home.

(20) A FLASH OF JUDGMENT

TWO MEN were in a hut in the bush when a terrific storm was breaking. It was a dark night, broken only by vivid flashes of lightning. “What’s the time?” asked one of the men, but the other, standing in the doorway, could not see.

“Wait till Billy strikes another match,” he said, sneeringly referring to God.

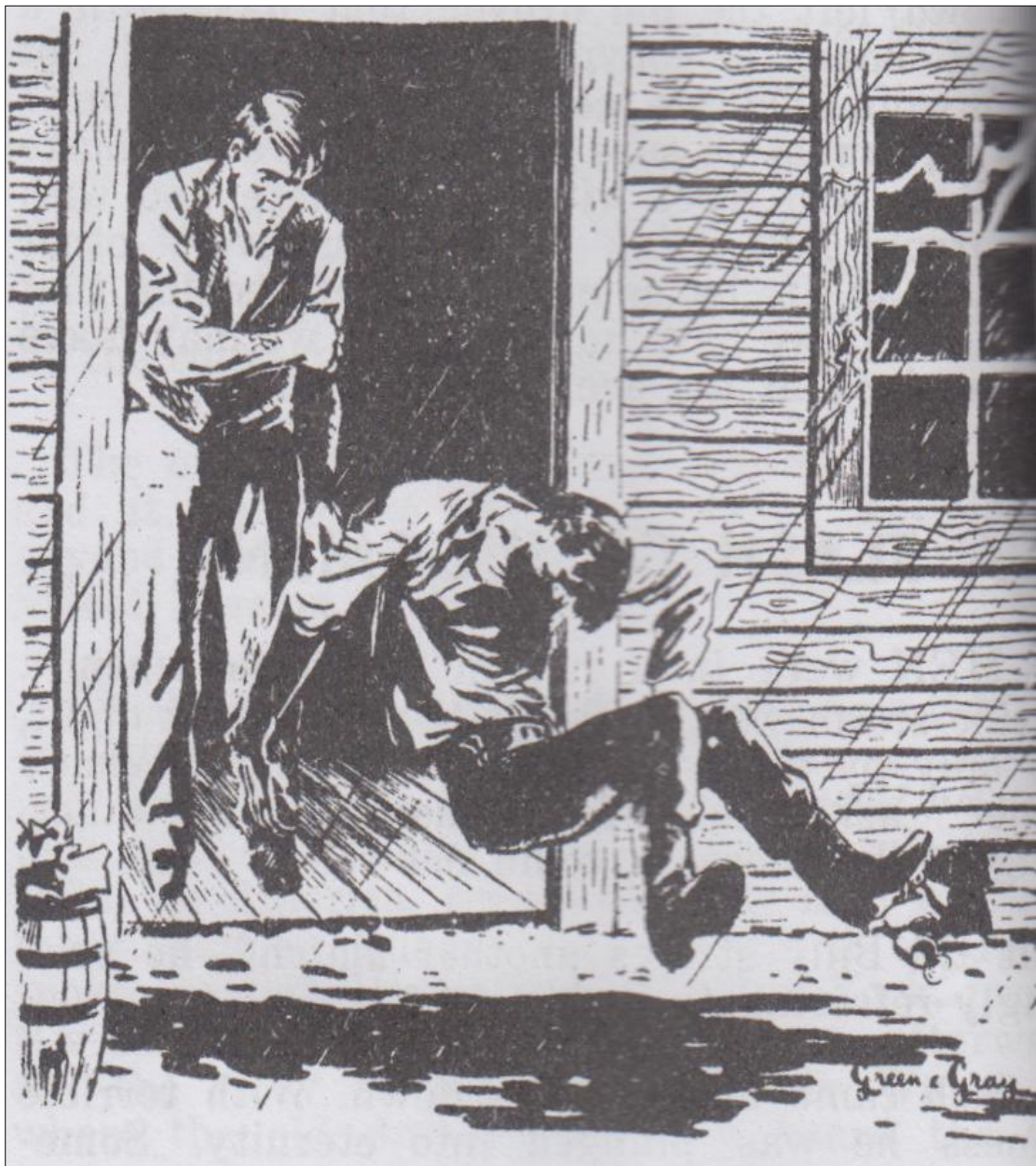
The flash came and cut him down. With terrible suddenness he was plunged into eternity. Sometimes the veil is thrust aside and the lightning that lingers around the Great White Throne darts out in judgment against the defiance of man.

But it is only occasionally that such forerunners of the day of reckoning are seen. This is the day of mercy, “the acceptable year of the Lord”. It is man’s day of opportunity. All have a chance to turn to God. His patience seems unlimited, and it is so great that it is often misjudged.

It seems as though God is doing nothing. The door is held wide open in wonderful mercy and love, but justice demands that at last the door must close. Sin cannot go on forever.

One day a man tossed two pennies in a hotel in New South Wales, near the Victorian border. “Here’s two pennies for Jesus!” he said, as though playing “two-up” with God. He had been speaking coarse and blasphemous things and the men around the bar were becoming uneasy. The hotel keeper said “We’re not saints here, but we’re not going to stand that.” He ordered the man out of the hotel.

The blasphemer mounted his horse to ride away and started towards a nearby bridge. The evening had come and the weather was threatening. A gust of wind blew a sheet of paper in front of the horse, which shied and threw the rider heavily. Striking his head on the bridge he was instantly killed. A solemn silence fell on the men who saw the death of the blasphemer. They felt that God had heard the defiant words and answered in His own way.



Yet even an act of judgment here is an act of mercy, too.

The warning may cause others to take heed and repent while yet there is time. God promises nothing for tomorrow. He says: "Behold NOW is the accepted time; behold NOW is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)

A DEADLY CALM IS OFTEN THE FORERUNNER OF A GREAT STORM

(21)HYPOCRITES

A DOCTOR in Western Queensland once received a phone call from an out-station. "Will you come and see my mate? He's sick."

"What's the matter with him—been on the bend?" (drinking).

"Yes."

"How bad is he? Is he seeing snakes?"

"No, that's just the trouble! He can't see any and there are thousands around here!"

It is easy enough to see or imagine what is wrong with other people, but what about ourselves?

At a big open-air meeting in Sydney long ago, an interjector called out, "What about David's sin?"

"My friend", said the preacher, pointing straight at the interjector, "David sinned once. How many times did you sin?"

The question of hypocrites within the professing church of God is an old one. To some it is a real stumbling block; to others just an excuse for holding back from God and continuing in sin.

Hypocrites are to be found everywhere "The Church" has no monopoly. There are hypocrites in politics, in business, and in every walk of life, but you do not stay out of business or refuse to have dealings with others on this account. You would not refuse a \$10.00 note because there are counterfeits. **Where there are counterfeits there must be something worth imitating.**

No one hates hypocrisy more than God does, and no one condemned hypocrites in more terrible terms than the “meek and lowly” Saviour. But God will deal with them when the time comes. If He should deal with them now He would have to commence the Judgment Day at once. That would mean the closing of the door of mercy, the end of the day of grace. Perhaps it might mean the end of your hopes of Heaven!

A farmer cannot plough up a whole wheat-field simply to get rid of weeds while the wheat is still growing. He would spoil the true harvest.

God is not yet ready to deal with the hypocrites, because the harvest for the future is not yet ready. He is waiting long to give every possible opportunity for repentance before the harvesting begins. Then the weeds will be “burned with unquenchable fire”. There will be no half-measures when that day begins!

In the meantime, let those who talk of hypocrites look to themselves lest they may be found in the very class — making excuses to cover their failure to listen to “the voice that speaks from Heaven” calling them to faith and repentance while the mercy of God still holds the door open wide.

(22)"TOO MUCH GOD"

IN a remote comer of New South Wales the work of God once made powerful progress. So many became Christians that gambling and other evils gave place to the singing of hymns and meetings where the people were full of happiness as they learned more of God's Word and of the new life that had become theirs. One man, however, had no interest in such things and was disturbed by all that was going on. He left and went to live far away.

“There's too much God here,” he said as he departed.

If such a man should go to Heaven, would he not want to do the same again, and at once start looking for the nearest exit? Many people have vague ideas that God would not shut anybody out, but that somehow all will arrive safely in Heaven at last. But what would be the benefit of taking into the presence of God those who have no pleasure in even thinking of him? The man mentioned above had no time for the things of God and no desire for the company of God's people. How could he be happy when shut up to them forever?

The Son of God, the crucified Saviour, meant nothing to this man on earth, and the idea of meeting Him at the throne of His power would be startling and repulsive

beyond expression. The things for which nature craved and on which his heart had been set could not be found in the “House of Many Mansions”. The thunder of its music “like the noise of many waters”, would find no echo in his heart, for like Handel’s Messiah, it is in praise of the One Who has been despised and rejected in this world.

Heaven would be hell to such a man for his heart could not be in it. There is “too much God” there for those who do not learn to love Him here. A complete change of heart is needed; new desires springing from new life within, the life that God’s spirit alone can implant, and that only in hearts that are voluntarily yielded to Him.

NOT A NEW LEAF — BUT A NEW LIFE.

(23)SWEPT AWAY

IN 1917 the town of Clermont, in Central Queensland, experienced what was probably the most disastrous flood in Australia’s history. Clermont was built in a depression near which two creeks ran together, a dangerous site, as some had pointed out. In years gone by only one of the creeks had been flood at one time. It had been remarked that should they ever be in flood together the result might be serious.

At last the warnings were fulfilled. A cloud-burst in one awful night poured down about 35 inches of rain, sending an irresistible flood sweeping through the town. An hotel building was turned completely around. Buildings disappeared in the tremendous onrush of water. A line of shops was swept away. People clinging to rooftops saw others carried past them but were unable to help. Bodies were terribly mutilated by sheets of iron and other debris, and in some cases victims were decapitated.

Sixty people lost their lives in that terrible disaster, apart from the great loss of property. One of the survivors was a girl who had exceptionally long hair. As she was

floating past a building someone grasped her flowing locks and pulled her on to a place of safety. Throughout life afterward she would not allow her hair to be cut, remembering the deliverance in that night of terror.

For years before the flood, Clermont had been thriving and all seemed well. The blow fell without warning in its overwhelming night. One day life went on as usual in that country town. The next day it presented a scene of horror unprecedented in Australia's history.

So will it be for the whole world when the blow of God's judgment will fall. All –wrong cries out for judgment, but it seems that no divine intervention will ever come. But God's purposes will have their fulfillment soon enough. Many people question why God does not stop wars and other troubles now. The fact is that there can be no half-measures when the day of reckoning begins. God must deal not only with troubles but with the causes of trouble, not only with evil but with evil-doers. That means that the door of mercy will close forever, and the wonderful opportunities of the present for repentance will take their flight.

“But as the days of Noah were, shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37-39).

When Christ comes again it will be no longer with meekness and lowliness as when He came once to die for sinners. The world has had its opportunity to repent. The day of mercy cannot be extended much longer when for the most part it is only used to sin still more against God. He will come as the righteous Judge and the rightful King. “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

What a terrific shock is in store for those whose lives have been too taken up with business pleasure to have any time for God! They will awaken when it is too late.

Many of the conditions and events of today are the very signs that the Bible gives as those which would mark the time before the coming of the Lord; the return of the Jews to Palestine; the revival of the old Roman Empire as is seen in the drawing together of those countries today; the forming of the great Northern Confederacy, the troubled condition of the world as a whole, the fear and perplexity that so dominate the hearts and minds of men in many lands.

“Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of war... for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers place. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”

Those who wish to read more of what the Bible says on these matters would do well to study the chapter from which the above passages have been taken, Matthew 24, also the third chapter of 2 Peter and the last book of the Bible, the Revelation. In many other parts there are prophecies of coming judgment, but they are unheeded by most people who do not wish to consider such a possibility.

The unheeded warnings in Clermont did not stave off the flood. Proceeding with the usual course of life as though it would continue unbroken did not save any life when the flood came. The town was afterward rebuilt on higher ground, but it was too late for those who lost their lives. We ourselves must hasten to build on higher ground if we would stand in the coming judgment. We must come to Calvary's mountain where Christ died for our sins, and then we shall be safe on the mountains of Zion, His Heavenly Home, where He reigns forevermore as the Almighty King.

(24)CAN WE MEET AGAIN?

IN the South-west of New South Wales a lovely little girl had died. Her Father was stricken with overwhelming sorrow. He had loved his little girl but had not loved God or wanted anything to do with “religion”.

Under the terrible blow he became bitter and uttered curses against God. Then suddenly an idea flashed into his reeling brain: “I wonder if I could meet my little girl again.”

He picked up a copy of the New Testament, but had no idea where to look for anything on that subject. Renewed bitterness surged through his heart and he uttered a strange, half-defiant prayer: "Oh God, if there is any God, show me if I can meet my little girl again. I'm not going to search for it! If this book doesn't fall open at the place I'm not going to bother!"

But he was dealing with a God of mercy and tender compassion.

Sometime later I saw his New Testament, a treasured possession.

Around the passage where his eye fell that day was a blue pencil line.

"The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live . . .

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in which all they that are in the graves shall hear His voice and SHALL COME FORTH..."

These are extracts from the whole passage in the fifth chapter of John's Gospel, verses 21-29. Had they appeared in letters of fire these words could not have been more radiant to the eyes that saw them with wonder in that day of darkness!

There is a light that shines from the empty grave of the risen Son of God, a light of hope and life immortal in the midst of a lost and dying world.

The dim candles of this world's light-science, philosophy, politics or pleasure last only for a little while and cannot penetrate the awful darkness of the grave and of the life beyond.

At a funeral service can we find anything to read like the majestic words of the Son of God. "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

Is it any wonder that the one who saw the answer to his bitter and defiant prayer in the hour of sorrow should have been humbled and altogether melted before such a God of "loving kindness and tender and mercy"? For years afterwards God's book was his constant companion in the town and in the bush until at last he, too, came to the borderland.

In a motor accident he was terribly hurt and did not live long. But in those last hours on earth he spoke brightly of his trust in his Saviour and earnestly recommended others to "seek Him while He may be found."

Yes, there is a resurrection day coming. God will not mock the hopes and longings that He Himself has implanted in our hearts. The injustices and the sufferings of this world demand it. Life would be altogether incomplete and unsatisfying without it. The Bible proclaims it and the Son of God has promised it.

That day will be a day of rejoicing for those who are ready, but to those who are ready but to those who will not listen to the voice of God it must come with the thunders of doom.

(25)ARE YOU A TRAMP* OR A TRAVELLER?

A TRAMP goes from place to place looking for work, sometimes driven by dire necessity, sometimes by choice, and in some cases by the bondage of habit and moral helplessness. He camps under bridges, in sheds, in hollow trees, in the "Moon and Stars Hotel, Ground Floor", anywhere and in all conditions of weather to eke out an existence. He may cover a great deal of country and endure a lot of hardship, seldom getting any genuine sympathy or help even from those who are well able to give it. But whatever the cause he is a wanderer with no special destination. He moves about, but, to use a common expression, he gets nowhere.

A traveller knows his objective. He is going to a certain place. His journey has a purpose which distinguishes it from the wanderings of the tramp. So in life there are two classes of people. First, there are the tramps who wander from day to day, from

task to task, from pleasure to pleasure with very hazy ideas, if any about the future, and no certainty that their course will lead them to the only Home that can never be broken up by death or blighted by sin and sorrow. Then there are the travellers who, through God's mercy, have found the Way of Life. Their course is set and their goal is in view.

"I'm going on a long journey," said a young man to his friend one day. "What about coming with me?" "Alright, but I'll have to get my swag."

"No, you don't need any swag on this journey!" His mate was mystified by this and other remarks. Later on he said, "I know what that journey is now," and the two joined forces on the journey to the country where a welcome is certain to all who will come.

Bishop James Montgomery, a noted hymn writer and the grandfather of Field Marshal Montgomery, once wrote:

"Here in the body pent,

Absent from Thee I roam,

Yet nightly pitch my moving tent,

A day's march nearer Home."

It has been said that there are three things necessary to constitute a man—a traveller, a starting point, a course and a destination. In the journey through life the same applies. The starting-point is the cross of Christ where sins are forgiven and rolled away. The course is the path in which God leads the way, through service which He gives and experiences which He appoints for our good and the good of others. The destination is the Home where God wants us all to come and live forever, and that is Home sweet home". If you have not started on the journey, then it is possible to begin now; to cease to be a tramp and become one of God's travellers.

(26)PROFIT TURNED TO LOSS

IN a country district of New South Wales, a man who had once been a jockey owned a large piece of land. The property was not particularly valuable, but the owner concerned an idea which might enable him to gain money by the subdivision and sale of his land.

He had been fattening turkeys to sell at Christmas time, and had also in his possession a quantity of alluvial gold. Before selling the turkeys he mixed the gold in with the bran and pollard on which they were fed.

The purchasers were astonished to find alluvial gold (in some cases up to half an ounce in weight) inside of the turkeys which they had killed for their Christmas celebrations. Naturally they drew their own conclusions regarding the land where the turkeys had been feeding. They hastened to buy what they could of this property, which surely must be fabulously rich in this alluvial gold!!

The owner gained the money which he had coveted, but found that his gains were in reality far greater losses in a way he had not anticipated. He had not broken the law of the land, nor had he even advertised his property for sale. Verbally he had not lied to anyone and seemed quite clear in the matter. But in intention and in effect he had deceived the people who rushed to buy the land from him.

In his own heart he knew that he had taken their money by false pretences and his conscience gave him no rest. Conscience has been described as the shadow of God's judgment throne on the soul. It is the witness of the One Who desires "truth in the inward parts," i.e., in the secret thought and motives as well as in all outward dealings. In this case the uneasiness over the transaction became steadily worse and increased to a fever which no doctor can cure.

As time went on, the agitation of spirit affected his mental balance, until at last the man who had so cleverly deceived others became an inmate of a mental hospital.

Years later an old friend called to see him and was greeted with a wild insane exclamation: "Good day you old scoundrel! You murdered man and his wife and five children!" Conversation was useless. The visitor was not even recognised. The reins of the mind had been dropped; reason and memory had fled.

How many human tragedies are the result of spiritual disorder! Something has been wrong morally and spiritually, and has never been put right. Is there a remedy for such troubles of mind and spirit? Yes, thank God, there is a sovereign, infallible remedy. This is the good news which the Gospel brings and it cannot be found elsewhere in the world.

But we must first admit that something has been wrong. If we will not be honest with ourselves and with God, we are like a patient hiding symptoms from a doctor. A cancer will not die because it is hidden or ignored.

The first thing is to tell God about ourselves, without attempting to hide anything. Then we have His promise that, "If we confess our sin He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (First Epistle of John 1:9)

"If we confess" — that is the key to it all.

The man to whom we have referred hid the facts of his wrong dealing and failed to bring trouble to the "Great Physician" if he had only realised it, the very fact that he was troubled was a good sign rather than a bad one.

Some have hardened themselves in wrong doing until they no longer feel any pangs of conscience, and would gloat over the gaining of money by false pretences. This man knew he was wrong but did not take the next step. He did not confess his sin to God. Perhaps he did not know God's promises of mercy and pardon and had no one to show him the way.

He may never have read for himself the assurance that if a wrongdoer turns to God from his sin, "He will have mercy upon him" and "will abundantly pardon". The cause of the trouble was allowed to remain when it might have been brought to light and removed.

God does not require us to confess our sins to any human being. This is made clear in the New Testament, particularly in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is shown that the old priesthood was done away when Christ came and died for us and rose again and ascended to the throne of God, there to be our “great High Priest” to Whom all may come. (See Hebrews 4:14-16 and chapters 7, 8 and 9). But if we are sincere in our confession to God we will not be otherwise in our dealings with those around us. If we have wronged them we will ask God for strength to go to them, tell them what happened and do what we can to put everything right.

We may not be able to think of everything, nor may we be able to rectify every detail that has been wrong. But if we bring our case to God He will soon show us the right course to follow.

“If we confess our sin” (the fact of it rather than all the details), then that sin will be at once removed from God’s records. Yet if there are special things to be confessed and put right with others we will know it in our hearts, as in the case of the man mentioned when he defrauded others in the sale of his land.

Let us remember also that knowledge brings responsibility and every delay increases our guilt and makes action harder. It may be a big thing to take the right course, but it will be worth while a thousand times over. It is the shortest cut to a life freedom and happiness in the blessing of God.

(27)A DUST STORM

ONE DAY in Central Australia, in years gone by, a red wall appeared on the western horizon. It was like a mountain range and seemed too solid and stationary to be a dust-storm. A little later it had mounted high and was towering in spectacular fashion, though too far distant for the sound of its approach to be heard.

Later still a deep, ominous roar became audible as the last touches were put towards securing the canvas tent stretched over a Mission van which had been a home on wheels in many journeyings.

There was scarcely time to shut the door and sit down inside the van when the storm struck with terrific power. In a twinkling the tent was flattened to the ground and the surrounding country was blotted out as in Egyptian night. With deafening thunder the great dust-storm swept on its way. Tree-branches were flying through the air like straws in its overwhelming onslaught.

For some time this fury continued unabated. There was nothing to do but to sit still inside the van in this unnatural night with dust penetrating ears, eyes and nostrils. The truck, which was facing directly into the storm, rocked like a cradle and seemed as though it might be swept away. At length the blast slackened and was followed a little later by a complete calm. When it was possible to look around the scene was one of desolation. It had been the worst dust-storm in those parts for over forty years.

In the very low-rainfall areas of Australia dust-storms are not infrequent visitors. There is a grandeur in their approach, and something terrifying in their fury and in the impenetrable darkness which they drop like a shroud over the land. At one moment the landscape is visible and the next it is blotted out!

Here is a picture of life from another viewpoint. How many of us would give all we possess to have the past blotted out! Life with all its faults and sins is spread before us. Memory looks back over the landscape of years, and sees much that disturbs the mind and conscience. What can we do about it?

Of ourselves we can do nothing. But God can do what we cannot. He can blot out of existence the whole expanse of life, with all that we would like to forget. He can destroy forever the years that have been wasted in sin.

In the very moment when a man turns to Him in genuine repentance, God says, as in olden times, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins." When Christ took our place on the cross He died to make this possible for us. The storm of God's wrath against sin fell on the Saviour's head, but the covering is ours if we will have it, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances (the laws of God), which was against us," blotting the sins out of existence and even out of memory!

Think of what this means! To begin life entirely anew, with the past gone forever! Can we find in anything else on earth such a boon as this? The music of heaven

rings in these words, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out as a thick cloud thy transgression, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:25).

WHAT GOD DOES WITH OUR SINS

"Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea," (Micah 7:19.)

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath **He** removed our transgressions from us," (Psalms 103:12.)

"I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins," (Isaiah 44:22.)

"Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. (Isaiah 38:17.)

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, (" Isaiah 1:18.)

"I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more," (Jeremiah 31:34.)

The sinner who comes to the cross for pardon finds that the past is blotted out of existence, out of God's records and out of His memory.

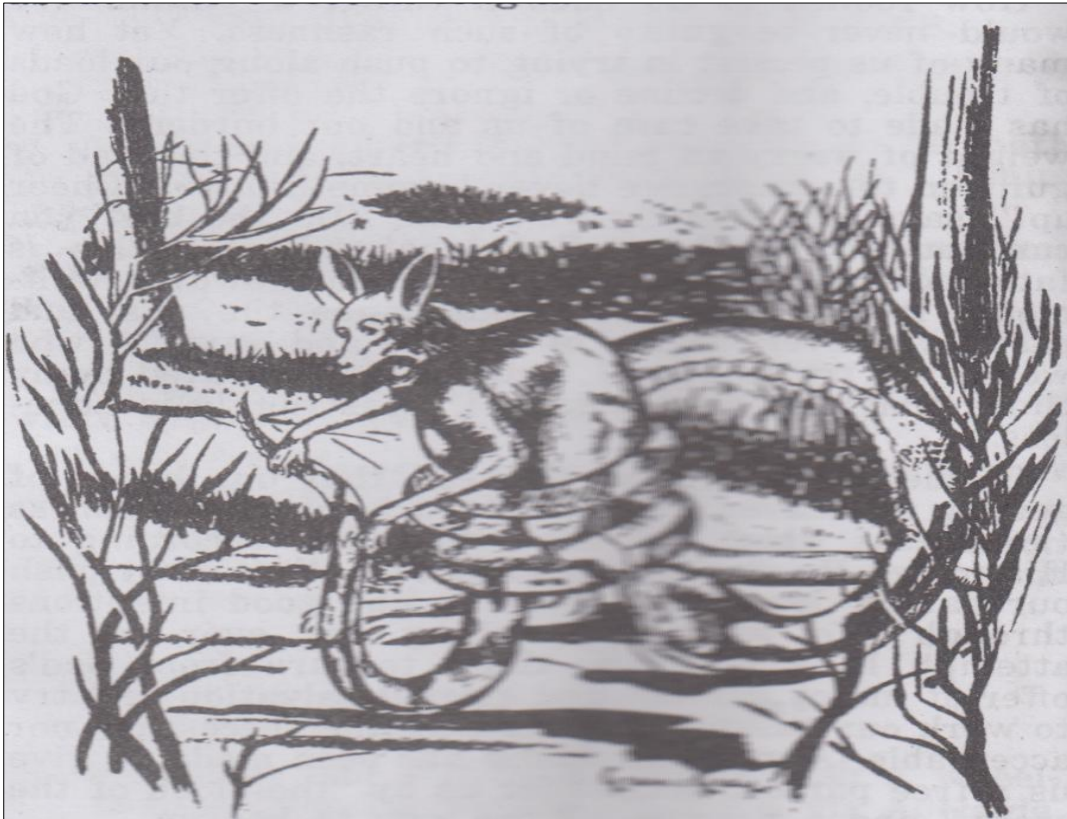
(28)A FATAL REFUSAL

SOME years ago a man set out to push a wheelbarrow from Darwin to Melbourne, via Adelaide, a distance of about 2,500 miles. The road across the continent was chiefly a bush track, winding through some very lonely stretches of bush and desert. A military highway such as that which now links Darwin and Alice Springs, had not been contemplated. About 600 miles south from Darwin a truck driver offered the traveller a ride to Alice Springs, but he preferred to push his wheelbarrow. Weeks

later, a little south of the mining township of Tennant Creek, the remains of the barrow man were discovered. He had perished not long after refusing the offered lift.

How foolish to do such a thing, we think. We would never be guilty of such rashness. Yet how many of us persist in trying to push along our loads of trouble, and decline or ignore the offer that God has made to take care of us and our burdens! The weight of worry on mind and heart, and the load of guilt on the conscience never become lighter. "Cheer up!" says Mr. Worldly-wise-man. "Do the best you can and all will be well at the end." But this is fatal advice. It is lying propaganda, however well-meant it may be. If we could undo the past and cast away every cause of trouble and anxiety, who would not try to do so? But God has declared many times that this is impossible: the struggle is hopeless.

In the **Word of God** we read that **our hopes of** getting to heaven are "**not by works of righteousness** (goodness) which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us," Titus 3:5. We cannot push our barrow load of good turns and good intentions through life without perishing forever in the attempt. It is a serious thing to turn from God's offer of mercy, pardon and eternal salvation and try to work our passage when it is neither necessary nor acceptable. A great provision has been made to give us a free pardon, bought for us by "the blood of the cross," and a passage all the way to heaven.



(29)A MOONLIGHT BATTLE

ONE NIGHT, long ago, a bushman was returning home after a day's work when he heard strange and terrible sounds near his hut.

Approaching cautiously, he was amazed to see, in the bright moonlight, a battle between a giant carpet **snake a wallaby**.

The latter was full grown and larger and more powerful than most of its kind, while

the carpet snake (a species of python) was about twelve feet in length.

The carpet snake already had some of its coils around the legs of the wallaby so that its movements were hampered, but it was fighting for life. The bushman could hear the panting breath as the combatants swayed back and forth, fell heavily to the

ground, and rose again, in terrific contest. With **every ounce of its strength the wallaby fought to** tear itself from its relentless enemy.

For a long time—it seemed about an hour—the mortal combat continued until at last the great carpet snake was on the verge of triumph. The wallaby had been fighting at a terrible disadvantage with its hind legs in the grips of those sinuous and merciless coils which gradually tightened and increased their hold.

The fight had really been hopeless from the start. **The struggle was fierce and long drawn out, but the doom of the wallaby was** virtually sealed long before the end.

The combatants however had not been aware of the presence of a spectator. Just when all seemed lost the silence of the night was shattered by the report of a gun. In a moment when its prey was about to succumb, the carpet snake fell limp to the ground. The apparent victor had become the victim.

The solitary witness of the agonising struggle had gone to his hut brought back his gun. If the wallaby could think as we do what might its thoughts have been as it limped away to life and freedom once more?

We, too, are in “the battle of life” and have a cunning, powerful and merciless enemy. He is called in the significant language of scripture, “that old serpent, the devil”. He is old in experience and is possessed of the cunning of a snake. It has been pointed out that one of his most subtle devices is to persuade people that he does not exist, like the snake which is so expert at hiding itself even under very small cover.

It is asserted that there is no master-mind behind the evil that is at work in this world. But if so, who does the damage?

“Men don’t believe in the devil now,
So of course the devil’s gone;
But simple folks would like to know,
Who carries his business on?”

He was created as a devil but as the highest of the archangels.

It was when lifted up with pride that this “Lucifer —Son of the Morning”—said: “I will be like the Most High,” and through that pride he fell as many others have done since and are still doing in our midst. This evil genius is allowed to carry on for a time to test the human race. He knows our weaknesses and how to catch us in the unguarded hour We may struggle, but our strength is no match for his.

We need a Deliverer Who is wiser and more powerful and Who can free us from those ever tightening coils of temptation and sin. “For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

But many are not aware of the danger and have not attempted to struggle. The great enemy knows this also and is content to leave them for the present. They are sleeping on his ground and are **in his power. They do not realise their need and have not looked to the One Who is Almighty. They** are simpletons or fools, however wise they may imagine themselves to be.

One day the “old serpent” will be upon them before they realise that he has been watching them all the while. To such the voice of God sounds like **a trumpet from the skies:**

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light.”

But perhaps someone who is hopelessly enfolded in the grip of sin and Satan may be reading these lines and may have already despaired of ever being free. Then remember that there has been a witness of the conflict, standing ready to respond to the first cry help. He can bring instant deliverance. We do not have to understand how He can do it. Listen to His words:

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me”
(Psalms 50:15.)

(30)THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

A COLOURED woman was in a convalescent home in New South Wales recovering from a serious malady. She had been quite often in hospital and was trembling and weak at this time. Around her were white women who were living anything but Christian lives. However, she took out her New Testament and began to read it.

In spite of many taunts she kept on until one day an apparently wealthy woman came to talk to her. This lady had been chiefly concerned with betting and other worldly pastimes and had also joined in the taunting of the coloured woman. The latter was taken completely by surprise when asked to read something from the Bible.

"I'm here to get ready for a big operation, and I might not come through it," said the lady. "You read something help me."

Trembling with nervousness and surprise, the other patient could not at first think what to read. Then she opened her New Testament at the third chapter of John's Gospel. When she had read the old story of Nicodemus, the Listener stopped her at the sixteenth verse.

"Read that again." she asked.

Still trembling, the coloured woman read the simple, but majestic words: "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

"That's what I want! Read it again."

Again and again she read it until at last the other said: "I've got it now. I can go under the operation and I will not be afraid."

Thus she entered into rest of mind and heart, and pillowed her head, as it were, on the great text. Her sins and doubts and fears were gone for evermore.

On the operating table she lay down in complete calm, knowing that all was well, as indeed was the case whether for life or death; her spirit passed away into the presence of the One Who gave it and Who had sent His Son to die that she might live, All her needs for time and eternity were covered by the sublime passage which the coloured woman had read over and over to her.

Oh, reader of this story, has it gripped you, too?

Will you read the words again and again until they sink right down into your heart and mind? What more can we want than this?

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

(31)IN A FLASH

IN THE INLAND two bushmen were once discussing their experiences with the writer. One told how he was saved from drowning some years before. Just in the moment when he was seemingly lost his whole life flashed before him, the detailed course of the years, as though spread out by an unseen hand.

The other related a somewhat similar experience. In an instant his life had been recalled and revealed to his mind's eye. It has been the testimony of others also, that, in the twinkling of an eye, the past has stood **revealed** like a landscape by a flash of lightning in a **dark**, tempestuous night.

What has caused this sudden revelation at such moments of supreme danger? Is it the mercy of **God seeking to give a** pre-view of the judgment hour so that the soul in its terrible need may look to the Saviour?

God's patience is beyond our understanding and it often seems that He is doing nothing. But He misses no opportunity to appeal to us, to warn us, and to stave off, if at all possible, the oncoming disaster.

Even at the last moment of life God will intervene to save us if we will only let Him do so. In a fleeting instant **He** will snatch us from the hand of the **destroyer** if only we will look to Him in faith. Then **we will have an experience like that of one who wrote long ago:**

***"Betwixt the stirrup and the ground,
Mercy I sought, mercy I found."***

"IF A MAN GOES TO HELL HE WILL GO OVER EVERY OBSTACLE THAT A GOD OF LOVE CAN PUT IN THE WAY."

(32)A PRISONER SET FREE

MANY YEARS AGO the governor of a gaol in New South Wales warned a Christian worker against visiting one of the prisoners. This case was a woman who was sullen, vicious and hardened. The visitor, however, called at her cell, and before long found the chief cause of the trouble.

This woman had lost her little child and refused to believe that a God of love could be so cruel as to take her little one from her.

“Could I tell you a story?” asked the visitor in kindly tones.

He told of a shepherd with a flock of sheep. They came to a valley which was stony and bare on one side but clothed with green pastures on the other side. The shepherd took the flock across the stream but one sheep with a little lamb lingered behind.

He could not persuade the sheep to come across the side where all was so much better and more beautiful. Finally he stretched across the water and gently took the little lamb from its mother and set it down on the other side. Then the sheep followed where her little lamb had gone.

While the woman was wondering what the story could mean, the stranger showed her that she was the sheep that lingered behind. The shepherd was the loving Saviour Whose calls she would not heed. It was His hand that took the little lamb across the dark stream so that the mother might follow to better land.

The poor woman burst into a flood of tears and before long found forgiveness for her sin and healing for her broken heart in the mercy and tender compassion of her Redeemer, “the Good Shepherd who “gave His life for the sheep”.

Perhaps some who read this story may have suffered a bitter and terrible loss. It may be that a mother has been taken; a father's strong hand laid low; a brother or sister removed; or a lovely little child gathered in the arms of the children's Friend.

This incident which is true, may help you to realise that God has been trying to speak to your heart to draw you to Himself. In the dark hour of sorrow, when the mind is reeling and the heart wounded beyond expression, we may hear the voice of God saying, as He said to a sinful and troubled people long ago, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3)

(33)A SCEPTICS DISCOVERY

IN a town in the coalfields of Sew South Wales, I once lived in a boarding house where there was a man who had been an infidel lecturer. He had been entirely against Christianity the Bible and God, and had spent much of his life trying to overthrow them. But the day came at last when he realised that all his unbelief had not given him peace of mind. He was restless, dissatisfied and troubled. The thought occurred to him that perhaps there might be some possibility of the Bible bring right after all!

He began to read it through from the beginning and studied it closely as he read. He was astonished at the evidence of scientific and historical accuracy which he had never seen before, and was intrigued with the wonders of its prophecy. Right through the 39 books of the Old Testament he plodded carefully; then through the first three books of the New Testament. He began to read the first chapter of the Gospel according to John. One by one he read the verses about God and His eternal Son.

"He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." The tragedy of the world's blindness was plainly revealed here.

"He came unto his own," that is to His people the Jews whom God had chosen to spread His blessing in the world. **"And His own received Him not."** Yes, this was

true enough. The rulers of Israel, in their jealousy and hatred, cast Him out and crucified Him.

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God even to them that believed on His name.”

Here at last, after weeks of careful reading, he had found something that met his individual need. “There was only one way I could prove this,” said the erstwhile sceptic, “I got down on my knees and proved it for myself. I asked Him to come into heart and to give me power to become one of sons of God.”

A shaft of light from heaven itself had penetrated his mind and heart. The rejected and crucified Saviour had found another human life ready to receive Him and to “believe on His name.” From that moment life became real life indeed — new, satisfying and everlasting. He had taken God at His word and had become one of the “sons of God”.

Many people have a vague idea that we are all the children of God, but that is certainly not taught in the Bible. We cannot **become** what we already are! The truth is that we are all like Nicodemus, who needed to be “born again.” (John 3:1-13). Nicodemus could not at first understand this at all, but the Lord Jesus explained to him that just as we are “born of the flesh” into a human family, so we must be “born of the Spirit” into God’s family. No patching up of the old life will do. We must have the new, spiritual and everlasting life that only God can give. “Ye must be born again.”

(34)CAN WE KNOW?

THE boarding house mentioned in the preceding article was kept by an old lady who had been a Christian for many years. She was a widow, whose husband had died of cancer. During all their married life they had served God together and had attended His house of worship faithfully.

Their life had been by no means an easy one and their money was earned by hard work. They had carefully saved all they could in order to live comfortably in their old age, but they were to be disappointed. The wife sat by her husband's bedside while his life was ebbing away.

One day she said, "I want to ask you something Jim. You know how we have had a hard life and how we have struggled and scraped to get together enough to retire on. And now just as we should be retiring and spending a few years in peace, God is calling you Home. Do you think it has been worthwhile trusting in Jesus? If you had to go through life again and have all these troubles over again, do you think you would go through life without the Lord? Has it been really worthwhile?"

The dying man's answer was one of those flashes of greatness that the world outside does not see. But the God Who stands concealed within life's shadows does not fail to take note. He said: "**If I** had to go through life and endure a thousand times as much trouble I wouldn't dream of going without the Lord Jesus. He is more precious to me now than He has ever been before. '**For I know Whom I have believed** and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day'."

THE WORDS OF A HERO

The last sentence was written by the greatest missionary of the ages, the Apostle Paul. He was writing from prison, and had already spent about half of his life since his conversion, in Roman prisons. He had been through almost incredible sufferings in his labours to spread the Gospel. He had been flogged, stoned, beaten with rods,

and subjected to persecution again and again. In his travels he had been in dangers of many kinds. Three times he had been shipwrecked. He had been among robbers, traitors and people who were trying to take his life by any possible means.

It is a wonder that, at this time, he was alive at all. Surely if any man would be justified in sinking into despair it would be Paul. All this and much more was behind him and just ahead was execution. He wrote, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Yes it had been a fight indeed, but it was a "good fight". There were no doubts or disappointments such as there must be for those who struggle only for what they can get for themselves. And through all the struggles of life One Friend had stood by him

and helped and cheered his way. Paul had come to know him through all the experiences of the way and now was going to see Him face to face.

Right here as he faced the last supreme test there were no doubts, no fears, no worries. He had suffered rejection, and persecution in this world, as his Master had suffered, but he said, "I am not ashamed, for **I know Whom believed** and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

Like David, centuries before him, Paul could say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for **thou art with me.**" At death, money, popularity, power, friends and loved ones, all must be left behind. How terrible it is for the man who leaves everything behind and has nothing ahead and no certainty at all as he faces that "leap in the dark!" But Paul had been walking with His heavenly Friend all the way and it was but another step with Him into the Father's house.

We, too, can come to know that Friend and learn also to say "**I know Whom I have believed**".

(35)WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

TWO young men were discussing the Bible. One spoke in scornful tones and remarked that there is not a book in the Old Testament worth reading.

"What do you think of the Book of Hezekiah?"

"Oh, that's not bad, but it's not up to much either."

The speaker had walked into a very simple trap. He did not know that there is no book of Hezekiah in the Bible! It is easy to talk about the Bible. Talk is cheap. But do we ever read it for ourselves? Would we think of passing judgment on another book without reading it?

If you have not read the Bible, why not start now? If you find some parts difficult, why not start on the simpler parts, the first four books of the New Testament for example? The Gospel according to Mark or that of John are simple and arresting and record the greatest story ever written.

Furthermore, the Spirit of God Who inspired them will help the genuine reader to discover the truth. It is His work to help those who really want to learn, and He will guide us "into all truth".

(36)THE HIDDEN WATER SUPPLY

AUSTRALIA'S great economic problem is its water supply. Most of the inland rivers run dry, as there are not great inland mountains to bring a rainfall like that of the eastern coast. Yet how little did the early explorers and settlers dream that beneath the surface of some of the most parched areas were the waters of the great artesian basins, waiting to burst upwards and to bring new life and hope and prosperity to millions of acres that would otherwise be of little value!

Nearly one-third of the continent has been blessed with this marvellous provision for the need of man. There are six large basins, covering approximately one million square miles, the largest of these bring the Great Australian Basin, 600,000 square miles in extent. While some bores are only a few feet down, the deepest is over 7,000 feet. From such a depth the water shoots upward with great force and is boiling. Thousands of miles of bore drains the water through large properties, bringing prosperity which would never have come otherwise. Great expanses of country, particularly in Western Australia, would not have been settled at all but for these life-giving waters.

Just as God has made provision for the physical needs of man, so He had made provision for the needs of the spirit. Beneath the surface of visible human life there is an inexhaustible supply of "living water", the very life of God for dying men and woman. Beside Jacob's well long ago, the Son of God said to a sinful woman, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; the water that I shall give him shall be in Him **a well of water springing up into everlasting life**" (John 4:14).

This mysterious water is like Australia's artesian reservoirs: it is a **hidden supply**. The careless, the selfish and the cynical, tramp over the surface of life without discerning the most precious gifts of God. But this supply of living water is **available for all** who really want it and who realise their need. The Lord Jesus said, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink" (John 7:37). He referred to the thirsty soul and, for such, this water is **a free gift**. God does not put a meter on the artesian water and charge by the gallon. He gives it freely, whether it is deserved or not, and

so He offers the infinitely Greater Gift. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." You do not have to beg for a gift, but only to accept it.

Furthermore, the artesian water is there in **abundance**. Some exceptional bores yield up to three million gallons a day. If you are thirsty, you may drink as' much as you will. There is plenty for all your need. God never gives things in a miserly manner. There is a mighty provision for our salvation. He will abundantly pardon. **He is "plenteous in mercy"**. He will meet all the needs of your life whatever they may be with an overflowing supply. Only come and you will find all that your heart can desire.

Then this wonderful artesian water **does not need to be pumped** to the surface. No windmills or engines are required. In fact most bores have to be regulated to prevent

waste. Only tap the supply and up comes the water! The world has to keep on pumping for its pleasures. They do not last. When the pumping ceases the supply fails. But the gift of living water not only quenches our thirst, it does so forever! It is within us "a well of water **springing up** into everlasting life." Here is something that satisfies indeed.

Above the surface the land may be drought stricken for months or years. The artesian flow on day and night, **irrespective of any conditions** that may prevail. So the life that God gives satisfy and flow on within our hearts when all world around is troubled and when it knows no way of relief from its burning thirst. Here is something that meets our need in troubles as well as in times of prosperity. The true Christian life is independent of circumstances, and can live through everything that comes — yes even through death itself! This life never dies.

When Sturt's desperate men came to the Darling River for the first time, long ago, they rushed to slake their thirst in a water-hole in the bed of the river. But alas, they had a bitter disappointment. The water was too salty to drink! A little later, Hume, a good bushman, led them to fresh water and they were satisfied at last. Have you been seeking satisfaction in the things of a dying world. Then you will "thirst again". Not only has the world no secret of lasting satisfaction; what it offers only aggravates the thirst instead of quenching it. Come, leave the paltry things of this fleeting life and accept God's offer of living water, which refreshes, satisfies, and never runs dry.

(37)THE BURNT TREE

In February, 1937, a Stinson Airliner was lost on its way from Brisbane to Sydney. It had not arrived at Lismore, its first stopping place, but the weather had been bad and people were sure they had seen it or heard its engines further south down the coast towards Sydney.

Eight days later when hope had been virtually abandoned, it occurred to a bushman, Mr. Bernard O'Reilly, in the McPherson Ranges, that perhaps the plane had crashed before reaching Lismore. On an aerial map of the ranges he drew a pencil line between the last point where he knew it had been seen, and Lismore. This line passed over four high mountain ranges, and Mr. O'Reilly decided that the plane must have crashed on the northern slopes of one of these ranges.

Then he set out alone a seemingly impossible task; to search through the great rain forests and the gorges of those ranges and imposing mountains. To anyone but a most capable bushman who had spent years in such country the task of penetrating this tangle of vines, thorns, ferns and enormous trees, forming a thick canopy overhead for miles, would have been altogether out of the question.

After camping one night in the jungle, the lone searcher stood on Mount Throakban, whose summit was almost perpetually hidden among clouds. He stood for some time in the mists, until a sudden clearing gave him a view of the tree remaining ranges on the plotted line. Amid that vast expanse of green mountains the keen eyes of the bushman saw a startling feature — a treetop which was light brown. Something had killed that tree!

It had not died branch by branch from natural causes, and no fire ever broke out spontaneously in that dripping rain-forest. Had the missing airliner struck that tree and killed it by the blaze of petrol and wreckage?

The spot eight was eight miles away by the map, but hours of difficult climbing and descending lay between. At length, when attempting to find a break in the forest, some three miles from the goal, a short, clear call sounded from the direction of the dead tree!

Three hours later, Mr. O'Reilly, who had kept silent in case he might mislead someone in those terrible mountains, gave one big "Coo-ee" call. Then the answer came from so close at hand that it caused a shock. A few minutes later, tearing a piece of vine aside for a better view, the bushman and mountaineer was confronted

with a terrible sight. There was the great tree, blackened by fire, and beneath it the charred wreckage of the plane!

There lay one of the survivors with broken leg and in a dreadful condition! The other came forward with tattered clothes and torn skin and emaciated body. These two men, with magnificent courage and endurance, had fought for life for ten days under conditions which would have appalled the strongest of men.

The plane, caught in a cyclone, had struck a tree sixty feet above the ground, kiting the two pilots and two of the passengers. A third survivor perished in an heroic attempt to reach civilisation in order to get help for his two companions.

The whole epic story of the rescue is told in Mr. Bernard O'Reilly's book, "Green Mountains". His own achievements are very modestly told, but are fit to rank among the notable deeds of heroism in Australia's history.

It is evident also that a higher hand was guiding. "Bushcraft!" wrote the hero of the day. "What a poor, overworked word that became! Any person who has studied the topography and vegetation of the McPhersons would know that no matter how thoroughly he was equipped with bush instinct, a man might search there unsuccessfully for fifty years. This fact should be noted and due credit given to my mother who was saying her prayers back home."

The one dead tree had provided the clue which meant the difference between life and death to those two survivors of the disaster. One tree in all those forest-clad mountains! It was a tree of death to some but became a tree of life to others. The roaring flames which killed it were ultimately responsible for attracting the rescuer.

Beneath that tree a drama of suffering and endurance was enacted for ten long days and nights. One man, Binstead, chose to remain with his stricken comrade rather than attempt to reach civilisation. This self-sacrifice was rewarded at length when both men were gently carried on stretchers over a path cut through those terrible mountains. Life, home and loved ones were the repayment for all the sufferings endured. What a welcome awaited them, as men brought back from the dead!

On all the panorama of this world's scenery, there stands out one tree on a hilltop. It is the cross on Calvary's mountain. On that tree the greatest deed in history was enacted when the sinless Son of God died for the sins of the world. Stretched on the cross, with burning thirst and agonies untold, the Sufferer faced the wrath of God

against sin, that you and I might be rescued for evermore. He died, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." "He was wounded for our transgressions ... and by His stripes we are healed."

The fire of God's hatred of sin has fallen on that tree, or rather, on the One who was nailed there by His hands and feet. It was a tree of death to Him that it might become a tree of life to us. It is the only place of safety for lost and dying sinners. Those who take shelter there, acknowledging their own sin and looking to Christ alone for help will never be disappointed.

In the last book of the Bible we read some of the results of Christ's death and resurrection. We see the "multitude that no man can number" of those who have come to Him for pardon and salvation on earth and now have entered into the "House of Many Mansions." In that land where there are no hospitals or cemeteries and where sorrow and sin are unknown, there are "pleasures for evermore". And there, beside the crystal river, we see "the Tree of Life... in the midst of the Paradise of God."

Do we want to gather around that Tree with these who will die no more? Then we must come to kneel before "the old rugged cross", for the Tree of Death on earth has become the Tree of Life in Heaven. Shall we surrender our lives now to the One who gave His life for us?

Shall we say, like Paul of old, "He loved me and gave Himself for me"?

(38)A HOUSE BUILT ON SAND

SOME MILES below Mount Morgan, Queensland a farm-house was built in a bend of the river Dee. It stood on a "rise", which was really a big mound of sand covered with a thin layer of soil. Behind it was a shallow depression, which once had been a watercourse. It was an attractive spot, and the owner of the house was satisfied as to the suitability and safety of the site.

"Doesn't the water ever come across here?" asked a neighbour one day. "No, not in my time." "You'll be washed out of here someday," warned the neighbour, who,

incidentally, has contributed this story. The other man, whose name was Muldoon, laughed.

"Not on your life!" he replied with complete assurance. He was a pleasant and generous man and well liked in the district. In the Easter of 1928 a married couple were staying with him and they had three lovely little children. In that Easter time the

coastal districts of Queensland and New South Wales were lashed with tremendous storms and many devastating floods resulted.

At Mount Morgan, a cloud-burst sent a roaring torrent over the dam on the River Dee and broke away some of the top of the concrete wall. The water went down the river, rushing at a pace that took everybody by surprise. The telephones were silent, for it was night, and no warnings preceded the racing flood. What ordinarily would have taken days and allowed time for flood warnings, happened in a single night. Farm-houses, towns, and townships were caught completely by surprise. Cattle perished in hundreds, cotton crops were destroyed, and altogether tremendous damage was done.

And what of the farmer who had built his house on the sand in that bend of the river? Early on the following morning some neighbours on a hill nearby endeavoured to discover how things were on that property. One climbed a tree for a better view, and then sat down speechless with horror. Another did the same and with a similar result. What had happened?

The flood waters had swept the area clean! The barn and the house had vanished. Even the heavy blocks which served for a foundation had been washed out of the ground!

And where were the family and the older man? They, too, had gone forever from that farm. One by one the bodies were found; two of the little children had their shoes on and had been at least partly dressed as in preparation for flight. But it was too late.

The warning had been lightly disregarded. The farmer had lived safely for years in that spot. No flood had ever threatened his home. Why worry about such possibilities? On the actual piece of ground where the house had been built the roaring water could not have been more than four or five feet deep. Why, then, was the house swept away?

Because it was built on sand!

You and I are the builders, and the houses we are building are our characters, with all the furniture of our hopes and wishes and thoughts and actions. We are “building for eternity”.

In the days when life goes smoothly there seems no need to bother about the foundations. “Do the best you can. “Don’t do any violent harm and all will be well in the end.”

But the first requirement in building a house is a suitable site with a good foundation. Even a palace is of no use if its foundations can be swept away by a swollen stream.

No architect or builder worth the name would be so foolish as to build in a river-bed! Yet people are building the house of life without thinking about the things that matter most of all. They are “broadminded” enough to think that almost anything will do.

An architect who is so broadminded as to sanction the erection of buildings anywhere at all would soon lose his reputation. The best that we can do, apart from God, is a pitiful mixture of good intentions and failures, virtues and sins. It is a foundation of sand which may seem right enough in fair weather, but can never stand a real test.

In fact, it has been condemned over and over again. “Not by works of righteousness (goodness), which we have done, but **according to His mercy He saved us.**” The question is, do we rest our hopes for the future on God’s mercy or our own merits? No matter how hard we try to build, if we are building on forbidden ground it will be all in vain in the end. All human life has been spoiled by sin. “There is none righteous, no, not one.”

We must shift on to better ground. We must trust for our pardon to what Christ has done for us. We must get the great question settled before we go any further with the building of life. What are our hopes of acceptance with God?

One man says, “I pay all my bills, I do good turns,” etc., and hopes that this foundation will pass the great Architect. Another says, “I cannot stand on my merits. I have failed in a thousand ways and I can never earn a place in the Kingdom of God. But I know that He is full of mercy to those who repent and turn to Him. I am trusting alone in that mercy. Christ died for sinners and I am one of them. He died for me. On

the pardon that He has bought with His life-blood, I stake all my hopes for eternity. This is the foundation on which my house is built, the ground on which I am resting, and on which I mean to rest in life or death and in the day of Judgment.”

So he sings, in the words of the old Scottish hymn:

“I stand upon His merit,

I know no other stand,

Not e’en where glory dwelleth In Immanuel’s land.”

Or again as another wrote:

“On Christ the solid Rock I stand,

All other ground is sinking sand.”

(39)WHAT IS FAITH?

FAITH is one of the commonest things in life. It is bound up with almost everything we do.

A man becomes ill and sends for a doctor. **He** does so because he believes that the doctor will **be able** to diagnose the trouble and find a remedy. **He** has faith in the doctor, who prescribes for him. **He** cannot read prescription, but he does not suspect that it may be poison. He trusts the doctor in the matter.

The prescription is made up by a chemist. The patient does not know what the chemist puts into the bottle, but he has sufficient faith to believe that the chemist will do his work thoroughly. So he takes the medicine, though he knows nothing about it, nor does he understand how it will work in his body.

He takes it by faith!

The same principle applies to still more common things. The purchase and eating of food would hardly be possible if we felt it necessary to have samples analysed before we could safely eat anything! Even then we would have to exercise faith in accepting the report of the analytical chemist. If we could not trust his word could we find anyone else on whom we could rely?

In daily work we have sufficient faith to believe that arrangements made will be carried out, wages will be paid and other conditions fulfilled week by week.

A farmer sows his seed by faith. Even though buried out of sight and apparently lost, he believes that it will amply repay him for his outlay. By faith he sees the harvest long before it is ready to be gathered in, and so by faith he spends his money and toils and waits.

By faith the fisherman casts his nets, and the prospector seeks for gold. By faith all worthwhile achievements in history have been brought to pass.

The inventor sees with his mind's eye the machine that will reduce toil or safeguard human life or speed up transport or fill some other need. Others may scoff, but the man of faith sees further than their shortsighted perception. By faith he sees the possibility and toils on, refusing to be discouraged or turned aside until at last the dream becomes a reality.

Australia has had numberless examples of magnificent faith, withstanding adversity of many kinds, persevering through droughts while sheep and cattle are dying, **pastures withering and hope fading.**

Faith has conquered the dangers and difficulties of pioneering and the subsequent trials of depression, floods, bushfires, droughts and other barriers to success.

Within the sacred circle of home-life, faith **plays** an indispensable part. The husband and wife cannot be **happy** without faith. If there is no **foundation** of trust in each other, what else is **left**?

The little new-born baby turns instinctively to **his** mother and his **infant needs are met. He does not understand** where his food comes from, but his little mind rests content because he implicitly trusts his mother.

“What man is there of you,” **asked** the **Son of God**, “whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?”

Who would disappoint the trust of a little child? And often faith rises to heights of nobility and greatness—a wife waiting for her drunken husband, tending her little ones, covering her husband’s misdeeds, is a shining example of faith and love.

(40)THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE

The lack of faith can only mean inactivity and despair in our own lives. But towards others a lack of faith can only mean mistrust. Can we wound or insult anyone more than to say, “I do not trust you,” or in other words, “You are not worthy to be trusted”?

And as without faith, it is impossible to please human beings, so also “without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him ’ (Hebrews 11:6).

What a difference it makes when you find someone who trusts you wholeheartedly! Though we may not realise it, faith is one thing for which we crave above most other things, and it is faith for which God is seeking, too.

When a man long ago had been healed of his blindness, he was put out of the presence of the rulers because he boldly spoke out for the One Who healed him. When Christ found him again, He looked past the qualities of honesty, courage and faithfulness to something deeper down, and asked “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” (John 9:35).

Here is the great question which is being asked in all mankind, the one thing that God longs to hear from each one of us. In a world that for the most part does not love or trust Him, the question comes softly and searchingly to you and me, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"—will you trust Him to be your Saviour, your Lord and your King? And on the answer to that question hang the issues of life and death, heaven and hell, for, says the Voice that never lies, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him" (John 3:36).

(41) FAITH'S OBJECT

"**IF** only a man could have faith, I believe he would be alright." The speaker was a Queenslander in a western railway train one night. He had been in many troubles and life had been a bitter disappointment. He listened to the message of a Saviour's love, but would not believe anything about God or the One Whom He had sent to be our Redeemer and Friend.

"Well, what do you want to have faith in? Do you want to have faith in yourself?"

After a pause came the reply, "Well I had a certain amount of faith in human nature, but it doesn't seem to work out somehow."

"No, and it will always be a disappointment. The Bible says, 'Put not your confidence in man!' There is only One Who will never disappoint us."

So the conversation went on. The man who had been so disillusioned with life accepted some tracts as he went out and we can only trust that he has found what every human being needs, a genuine faith in Someone Who is worthwhile trusting, and One Who never changes, Who is "the same yesterday, and today and forever."

It is not enough to have faith alone. In fact faith cannot exist alone. It is an anchor to a storm-tossed life, but an anchor must grip something if it is to be of any help in a storm.

What is the use of having faith in an airy nothing, like a drowning man clawing the air and sinking in the waves?

We need to be able to lift our weak hand of faith and place it in the grasp of a hand that is stronger and truer and that will never let us go. The word "believe" in its various forms occurs over 100 times in the Gospel according to John, but all the way



through we read of the One Who is worthy to be trusted and we are invited to put our whole confidence in Him.

So the great missionary of those days wrote, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."

(42) DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

MOST Australians know something of the Burke and Wills expedition, perhaps the most tragic story in the history of exploration in this continent. It is a story of failure through bad management and lack of bush-craft, though there was no lack of courage and endurance. The expedition was financed by the public of Victoria, who contributed £13,000

and by Government grant of £6,000. Both preparations and equipment were most elaborate, and a great send-off seemed to herald a most successful venture, but the result was bitter disappointment and loss of life.

The object was to reach the Gulf of Carpentaria, and this was practically achieved. Burke and Wills, Gray and King formed an advance party which met with the fate so well known to all readers of Australian history. Not so well known, however, is the authentic story recorded by Dr. F. W. Boreham, concerning King, whose sister, an earnest Christian, organised a prayer meeting to intercede for his safety.

Is it not deeply significant that long after the three others mentioned had perished, King was found among friendly aborigines by the rescue expedition? The only survivor was the only one who had a prayer meeting behind him!! Who knows how much the world owes to the prayers of the people of God, and to the God Who hears prayer?

Another disastrous expedition of more recent years is described in the book by Idriess, "Lasseter's Last Ride". It records an ill-fated attempt to find a gold reef in the desert. In Lasseter's diary, recovered later, is his last prayer before he died in the appalling conditions and loneliness that beset him far from home and loved ones. He prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner, and to those I leave behind." How great it is to know with complete certainty that that prayer could not have been uttered in vain. God has given His word that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

To be saved for ever is something unspeakably great, but how much better would it have been to know that Lasseter had prayed this prayer at the first instead of the last! Had he done so the whole course of his life might have been different. He may never have met the fate that overtook him, had his life been directed by the God who answers prayer.

(43)THE SHORTEST PRAYER ON RECORD

IN A HOSPITAL in Western Queensland, a returned soldier was dying. He had fought in the First World War and had spent most of the remainder of his life on the black-soil plains of the west.

After some conversation, I asked if he would like me to pray with him. He said, "I'm afraid I can't pray. I know a bit of the Lord's Prayer, but that's about all."

"Never mind, I'll pray for you."

Then after prayer at his bedside, I remarked, "There is a prayer that is easy enough for anyone to pray. When Peter (the disciple) was sinking in the waves, he cried out, **"Lord save me!"** He had no time for any more, but it brought the Lord to the rescue. If we can't say any more than that it will be enough and the Lord will hear us."

"He said, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble." If you can just pray that prayer God will hear you."

The dying man understood this perfectly. He closed his eyes and in his weakness spoke words, **"Lord save me."**

There was no doubt that he was heard. He lay back on his pillow with the "peace of God" in his heart and on his face. That peace is spoken of as "peace like a river" and it is something that this world can neither give nor take away.

At such a time there was not much of life left; strength was rapidly ebbing away. It would have been impossible to go into complicated matters, but this is where the mercy of God shines in its greatness. Provision has been made for such an hour of need.

Not long afterwards I stood beside the grave to which we committed his body, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The dying thief on the cross had little time to think or to learn or talk, but in his agony and dying weakness, he simply asked, **"Lord, remember me,** when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

He had turned in the right direction, while the thief on the other cross had turned away with bitter blasphemies and lost his chance forever. It is the heart at which God looks. He sees at once if there is any real desire there.

On the cross the dying Saviour looked toward the dying sinner and gave him an instant assurance that he would not be forgotten.

“This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.”

All the music of heaven sounded in those words. The Pearly Gates had swung open as it were, in answer to the faintest call for mercy from a dying thief.

There is no need to perish while we can look up and utter even a whisper for help.

AN UNBREAKABLE PROMISE:

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).

(44)COBB AND CO.

FOR half a century the name of “Cobb and Co.” was blazoned across a large portion of **Australia**. It represented the greatest road transport organisation the world had ever seen.

Born in the gold-rush days, about the middle of the last century, it expanded over the eastern States with its headquarters at Bathurst. The extension of railways into the interior at last caused the famous coaches to disappear, but it was not until 1924 that the last was withdrawn from the roads, in the service between Yeulba and Surat, in **Queensland**.

Originally the coach services carried passengers and gold under police escort at a time when bushrangers were a menace in various country districts. At first they carried some mail incidentally, but later became the principal means for the transmission of mails throughout the inland.

On thousands of miles of lonely bush tracks the very capable drivers took their splendid horses and vehicles through gullies and flooded streams, over plains and mountains till they became a symbol of Australian Life.



At hundreds of outback centres it was a thrilling sight to see the arrival of these coaches, when " ... lit with flashing lamps, Old Cobb and Co.'s in royal state, went dashing past the camps." In their heyday, Cobb and Co.'s were harnessing 6,000 horses a day, and travelling 100,000 miles a week.

Mr. Will Lawson relates a story of an Australian travelling by stage-coach in America. The stranger enquired of the "stage" driver: "Who made the harness?" On learning that it was made by a saddler in a town just ahead, the Australian called on the saddler and ordered 500 sets of harness. He then called at the local bank and made arrangements for the payment of the account.

A little later the saddler was requested to call at the bank to discuss his overdraft. Business prospects were not bright.

“And have you no big orders which might help?”

“No, only an order by a madman from Australia for 500 sets of harness, but he must have been mad!”

“Well,” said the banker, “he was mad enough to leave a draft here to pay for the harness when you had shipped it!”

The Australian was named Rutherford, the head of Cobb and Co. The saddler had been in difficulties, but could not believe that the great order placed with him was genuine.

It was too good to be true!

Unbelief had been keeping him in poverty until the banker convinced him that the money was at hand to cover the order given.

How characteristic this is of human nature as a whole! Unbelief is a very common thing. When “the stranger of Galilee” walked among men with the offer of pardon and a home among the palaces of the King of Heaven, He was treated as one who was mad.

Such an offer could not be true! He was, to all appearance, a man as other men. Could it be that He was the Eternal Son of God? Could it be that at His command were all the treasures of eternity? “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ how that **though He was rich**, yet for your sakes He **became poor**, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich.”

And when was He rich? Was it when He was born in the manger of Bethlehem and lay in the straw where the animals fed? Was He rich as He worked in the carpenter’s shop in Nazareth? Was He rich, when in manhood’s prime, He moved about without a home or income, when He spent nights in the mountains and had “not where to lay His head?” Was He rich in life when He had no possessions and in death was laid in a borrowed grave?

Yet He “was rich” and “became poor”. He was rich among the angels of heaven and in the light and love and gladness of the Father’s House. In His last great prayer (John 17:5) He spoke of the glory that He had with the Father “before the world was.” But the heart of God was longing that others should be made rich, too; to share with Him the splendours of the everlasting Home. And so Christ came to His sinful and

stricken creation, where riches are only fleeting dreams, for none can last more than a little while.

He came not to rob us but to enrich us for evermore. It cost Him more than we can ever know, when for our sakes **“He became poor”** and died to purchase our pardon before a just and holy God. He offers us everlasting life and all “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” **but it sounds too good to be true!**

Unbelief turns away from the offer and seeks in other avenues of life for the satisfaction that is always just around the corner. Yet the great provision is there for those who will believe and act on His word in faith.

His hand is still held out and on that hand is the nail-mark reminding us of the sincerity of His word and the greatness of His love.

“The hand that wrought wonders in days of old
Holds treasures more precious than gems or gold;
The price of redemption from sin and shame,
The gift of salvation through Jesus’ name.”

Yes, the great offer is genuine, but time is fleeting and unbelief is causing men and women everywhere to live and die in spiritual poverty when they might be heirs to all the riches of God, simply by taking Him at His word.

(45)STURT'S DEPOT GLEN

IN 1844 one of Australia's greatest explorers, Captain Charles Sturt, set out on his last journey of discovery, to find what rivers might be flowing to the northward in the centre of Australia.

He had a large and well-equipped expedition, which included fifteen men and with them 11 horses, 30 bullocks and 200 sheep. They could only move slowly from point to point where water was available.

Striking out from Adelaide they followed the Murray and Darling Rivers and then turned northwest from where the township of Menindee now stands.

Passing slowly along the stony hills of the Barrier Range, they came to the Grey Range and encamped in a gorge which Sturt called Depot Glen.

It had a good supply of water. But soon they made a terrible discovery. There was no water ahead, and a fierce summer had already dried up the water behind them. They were caught in a trap!!!

"The truth flashed across my mind," wrote Sturt, "and it became evident to me that we were locked up in that desolate and heated region ... as effectively as if we had wintered at the Pole. It was long indeed ere I could bring myself to believe that so great a misfortune had befallen us, but so it was.

"Providence had in its all-wise purposes, guided us to the only spot in that widespread desert where our wants could be permanently supplied, but had there **stayed our progress** into a region that almost appears to be forbidden ground."

For six months the party was imprisoned there in terrific heat and discomfort. The birds flew away to other parts. The leaves dropped from trees and bushes. Knife handles split and the lead fell out of their pencils. Scurvy attacked them and the water supply was at last nearly exhausted.

Then when hope seemed to have fled and despair was settling down on the apparently doomed men, there came the wonderful sound of rain, light first, but soon

a great downpour. The drought was broken and the prison of Depot Glen was opened!

But the prison had also been their salvation and the great explorer at the head of the expedition recognised the hand of God in this deliverance, first in guiding them to Depot Glen and then preventing them from going elsewhere.

If our eyes could be opened we, too, could see the signs of God's hand in our own lives, sometimes helping, sometimes halting our progress.

Surely few who read these pages can fail to see across the past years the traces of a guiding restraining hand!

A bushman whom we knew had a habit of reading in bed in his hut. Nearby on a box his tin of tobacco rested. He used to put out his hand and take the tin without looking around. One night when he was about to do this, something restrained him. He looked around first and saw a black snake coiled and ready to "receive visitors" just where he would have put his hand!

Who put that warning into his mind? Such incidents could be easily multiplied. Perhaps you, too, have been saved from disaster in a most unexpected way. You have been checked when temptation called you on to do some evil thing. Perhaps someone appeared when you did not want to see him and you were unable to do what you had purposed. It may have been a missed appointment, a sickness or accident or some other obstruction, in the chosen course. The presence of a good woman, the sight of an innocent little child, the sound of an old hymn, the memory of a mother's love, the sight of a church building or a Bible, or any of a thousand other things used to hinder designs that may have spelt disaster, death or ruin.

It may have caused annoyance or seemed a heavy blow. You may have fretted against the prison of circumstances as did the explorers in Depot Glen. But the blocking of the way may be your salvation yet, if the hand of God is in it, preventing something worse and working for the best in the end.

Perhaps you are even now in a "Depot Glen" and cannot attain your greatest desires. It seems a terrible frustration, but is it? The disappointment may be "His appointment" yet. Right where you are God is trying to show you the secrets of life and to give you what the world outside can never give.

When you have seen His hand at work and learned the great lesson it will be time for Him to lead you out of those circumstances into a larger, better life of happiness and freedom and usefulness, and life that never ends.

(46)KEPT TO THE END

IN a humble home alongside the Murray River, Australia's greatest stream, a man of middle age was lying very ill and weak. In response to a question about the Christian life, he replied, "I couldn't **keep** it."

"But you don't have to keep it. The Lord is thy Keeper! He will keep you." After some further conversation, the missionary said, "Suppose that you could see the Lord standing right here beside you and He said, 'If you will trust Me I will not only save you, I will guarantee to keep you all the way and take you safely through to heaven,' would you believe Him?"

"I suppose a man would."

"Well, that is just what He does. He has sent me to you today and He has said, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' He is here now. He says, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' and 'I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand'."

A feather may be blown about by the lightest breeze, but if I enclose it in my hand, no wind or hurricane can blow it away. You and I are like that feather. The winds of temptation, trouble and sin blow us about, first one way, then another.

But if we have given our lives to Christ He holds us in the hollow of His hand and neither man nor devil can pluck us out.

As he listened to the great promises of God the sick man's doubts and fears melted away. He entrusted himself forever to his Saviour, not only to save him from the penalty of sin, but to keep him from the power of temptation day by day. Actually he was nearer the end than he thought and before very long he was, in the words of scripture, "absent from the body and present with the Lord." The promises of God

had been kept, and he, too, had been kept, "kept by the power of God" to the last step of the journey.

Whether that journey seems short or long, it makes no difference to the ability of our Almighty Keeper. As a great writer put it, He will keep those who trust Him "to the last inch of the last yard of the last mile."

(47)"I'M COMING HOME"

MANY years ago a young lad in **New South Wales** decided to leave home and "see life" for himself. Leaving his father and mother, he set out for the north, eventually reaching Queensland. He had his fling, so far as he was able, away from what he considered the restraints of home.

With aching hearts, his father and mother determined to do all they could to trace their boy. They wrote, asking him to return, and assured him of a loving welcome. In one of the letters they sent his fare, but the money was spent on other things and the invitations to return were ignored.

At last the father set out in his buggy and drove all the way to Queensland. He succeeded at length in finding the wanderer, but the lad turned on him roughly and said, "What did you want to do this for, dad?"

The old man recoiled as from a heavy blow. He bowed his head as the tears came into his eyes. The sight of the father shedding tears was too much for the prodigal.

"That's enough for me, dad. I'm coming home."

Years later, at an open-air meeting in Sydney, a great crowd of men were listening to the preaching of the Gospel. With a powerful voice and simple direct manner, one speaker told his own story. He was the young man who once ran away. He told how he had wandered from a still more loving Father, until at last that wonderful love and patience found him.

He was broken down before God who had sought him and the Saviour died for him and said, as one long ago, "That's enough for me. I'm coming home."

The evangelist appealed to the men, many of whom were drunkards and “hard-doers”, to listen to the call of God’s everlasting love and come home. We sang together then the words of an old hymn:

“I’ve wandered far away from God,

Now I’m coming home;

The paths of sin too long I’ve trod,

Lord I’m coming home!

“I’ve wasted many precious years;

Now I’m coming home.

I now repent with bitter tears,

Lord I’m coming Home

The chorus was:

“Coming home! Coming home!!

Nevermore to roam.

By Thy grace, I will be Thine!!

Lord, I’m coming home.”

As we sang that chorus, a man took off his hat and stepped forward, saying: “That’s enough for me, too. I’m coming home.” One after another did the same. It was a stirring sight.

There is a sense in which a coming to God is always a home-coming. Man can never really be satisfied when he is wandering afar from the great Heavenly Father. A rough exterior and a careless manner often covers a restless, aching heart.

Have you, too, been wandering away from God and living a life of carelessness and sin? If so, will you, too, stop and think and turn your steps towards Home? As an old Puritan once wrote, "You can never come before you are expected." In the great old Bible story of the Prodigal Son, the father saw him "a great way off" and ran to meet

FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS (1)

(48)A SURPRISE MEETING

(Contributed by L. SCOTT.)

"CPARE ME DAYS! Fancy meeting you after all these years!!"

So came the exclamation from a "digger" from World War I. The last time I saw my friend, who greeted me in this way, was in 1917 in France, when the "big push"

started. The enemy was putting over mustard and chlorine gas shells, and our regiment was practically wiped out. Many of us were badly gassed and were shipped to England to be treated. So many of us were separated.

In one of Sydney's largest emporiums where I was employed as a shop assistant, I met my friend, who was making a purchase. Whilst wrapping up the parcel of goods, I mentioned the fact that I had been converted to God since my return from soldiering.

"You've been what?" said my friend.

"I've been converted, Charlie, and you need to be, too! Man, you don't really live until you know Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour!"

"No good to me, boy!" was his answer. I told him what a difference He makes in the life of a man who puts his trust in Him, and what a difference in the home, also in the business life, too (no shady tricks, etc.).

However, my pleadings seemed to be too much for my old "digger" friend. As a last resort I suggested to him that he should take my New Testament, which I valued very much, and asked him to read it, as it was by reading it that I found how Christ came into the world to save sinners.

So I trusted he would do the same. ("If you know of a good thing, pass it on".) He took it but did not make any promise. Among other things he told me that he was married and had two lovely children. On returning from the war he had purchased a farm at Dorrigo and was doing very well. He had been watching, longing for the sight of his boy, and God is doing the same. He has been watching all through the years and trying to bring you to Himself. Whether you are young and have life before you, or whether you are near the end of life's journey, there is no need to wait another day.

"Return O wanderer return

And seek thy father's face.

Those new desires that in thee burn

Were kindled by His grace."

A fortnight after our meeting I was reading in the "Sydney Morning Herald" about a man getting his petrol tank filled at a garage on the Dorrigo Road. While the garage man was filling the tank this man pulled out a cigarette and was lighting up when the garage man withdrew the hose. He thought it was empty, but it was not! The petrol sprayed over this poor fellow and he ran along the Dorrigo Road a living flame and perished.

I felt a little sickly on reading this account. My wife remarked, "You don't look too good. Are you well?"

Then I told her how I had pleaded with this very same fellow to accept the Saviour, but he was not at all interested. Now his opportunity had gone. God says, "My spirit shall not always strive with man."

This practical demonstration should be a warning to many men and women who are still rejecting the Saviour's pleadings.

Oh come, sinner come,

The Bride, the Spirit call,

Thus saying now to you and me That Jesus died for all.

Oh grieve not then the Spirit,

Accept Him while you can

For God has said, "My Spirit shall Not always strive with man."

Then come, sinner come!

Salvation's free for all.

It may be the last time

You'll ever hear the call.

FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS (2)

(49)A NURSE'S DISCOVERY

(Contributed by a Sister who served for five and a half years with the Australian Army. An incident from her diary.)

"VVHY aren't you asleep, Private Crozier?" asks the Night Sister as she does her round after "lights out" and patients are settled down.

"Oh, I'm alright, Sister, don't worry about me — I'll drop off soon."

"Have you any pain?"

"No."

"Would you like a hot drink?"

"No, I'm fine thanks, Sister."

Half an hour later, Private Crozier is still awake when Sister is around again, but assures her there is nothing she can do for him. He is not in pain and is quite comfortable and warm.

He watches the flicker of the torch as Sister does her regular half-hourly round of the long tented ward, and pretends to be asleep, but long experience reveals to her watchful eye and listening ear that he is not really asleep at all.

About 1 a.m. he drops off into a restless sleep.

The following night the same happening is repeated. In the shelter of the darkness and quietness of the midnight hour, when his mates around are sleeping, Sister gently asks her patient if there is anything worrying him that is keeping him awake.

Slowly, yet with a sense of relief to find a sympathetic listener, he gradually reveals the things on his heart, troubles that are concealed in the light of day by that typical “soldier toughness”—or is it

camouflage for fear of being regarded as “soft”, or not able to “take it” as the other fellow can? How many sad, lonely hearts are hidden beneath this hard exterior of toughness, even those within the same tents would never guess!

This apparently tough soldier is glad to find someone with whom to share his burden, for things are “not right at home” and being able to talk it over with one who seems to understand, helps such a lot.



“Private Crozier, have you ever talked over these problems with your Heavenly father, Who is the great Burden-Bearer? Do you ever pray about it all?”

“O yes, when things are quiet and I can get away alone at night.”

“Do you realise that we are invited to lay our burdens on the Lord Jesus Christ? And here Sister quotes some of the great Gospel texts of the Scriptures:

“Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

“Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3).

“The **wages** of sin is death, but the **gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 3:23).

How eagerly this hungry soul listened to the “Words of Life” and longed to know that “peace of God which passeth all understanding.”

“Will you, Private Crozier, accept Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour, and from now on let Him be your Burden-Bearer?”

"Yes, I confess my own sin, and accept Him as my Saviour." With this act of faith, God heard that cry, accepted him in Christ Jesus and gave him real peace of heart and mind.

But with the dawning of the day came the return of activity in the ward, with that air of "toughness" predominant among the men, the conversation as usual centering around women, beer and the "good times" ahead.

A game of cards is in progress, and, in general, a barrier is raised that hinders contact with the souls of these men and stifles the longings in their hearts for that peace that only God can give, and which is now Private Crozier's portion as he faces life anew.

My friend, turn not aside from that "still, small voice" of God's Holy Spirit as He pleads with you, in some quiet moment, maybe under cover of darkness, to "Come unto Me."

(50)THE CROSS-ROADS

You are travelling through the bush when towards evening you come to a place where two tracks lie before you. You are puzzled as to which is the right way to go. To take the wrong turn may lead you far from your destination. It may lead you into very serious trouble, perhaps even to the loss of life itself. It is impossible to go both ways. You must make your choice.

In the journey through life it may be that you are facing the cross-roads. You have read the stories of this little book and a voice from the unseen world speaks to your heart: **"Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death."** Could any words be more solemn and weighty than these? Then with all the infinite pathos of the everlasting love of God, the Spirit speaks again and says, **"Therefore choose life."**

God has done all that He can do for us. The last great step must be entirely our own. Do you hesitate and wish that you could avoid making a decision? Then it cannot be so. You are being swept forward on the ever-moving years and you will pass that parting of the ways whether you like it or not.

SOUND ADVICE FROM ADAM LINDSAY GORDON



“Look before you leap,” if you like;

But if you mean leaping, don’t look long,

Or the weakest place will soon grow stiff,

And the strongest, doubly strong.

Adam Lindsay Gordon, one of Australia's most gifted poets, was also a noted horseman. He knew from experience the reality of the line quoted. To stop and look too long at a hurdle, a fence or a creek may paralyse the nerves until it becomes impossible to make the leap. We need judgment to consider, but also courage to decide and act. Too much time given to consideration may be fatal. The difficulties grow bigger as we look at them. It will never be easier to decide for Christ than it is now.

How easily the impulse fades away when we disobey God’s voice and put off the decision! We can hear the distant thunders of doom behind the warning of the scripture: “Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart.” God never says “To morrow.” How can we be sure that we will see tomorrow? And if through God’s mercy we are spared till then, we may have lost the desire that God’s Spirit has stirred within our hearts. There is no time like the present, and that is God’s time. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain if you will heed the voice that speaks from heaven saying,

“Behold, NOW is the accepted time;

Behold, NOW is the day of salvation.”

THE GREAT DECISION

IT may help some who have come to the crossroads, and who are faced with the fatal temptation to hesitate and delay, to have a formal decision to which each one who desires can sign his or her name as in the presence of God. Just as some sign on for the service of the Sovereign in the armed forces, so we can “sign on” for the service of the King of Kings forever.

To do this we must fulfil the conditions laid down in the Word of God. We must realise that we have been living as a part of the world that is in rebellion against God, going its own way in defiance of Him. Thus our first need is for **pardon**. Without this no further step can be taken. We must have that pardon at all cost.

In the Bible we find that repentance is the first condition for pardon. We must acknowledge our sin, our just condemnation, our hopelessness to win salvation by anything that we can do. (Rom. 3:19-20.)

Together with repentance goes **faith in Christ**, the One Who died for our sins, taking our place on the cross (Romans 5:6-8). Have we taken these two great steps? If not, shall we do so now? Shall we say, “I will go to heaven even if I go alone, I will believe in Jesus even if no one else will trust Him. He is my Lord, my Saviour and my God.” If you can say that with your heart, will you sign this declaration —

“Acknowledging myself to be a sinner, I accept Christ as my own personal Saviour, for time and for eternity.”

(Signed)

(Date)

"I do believe, I will believe

That Jesus died for me:

That on the cross He shed His blood

From sin to set me free.”

Then answering to the record on earth, there is a greater record in heaven. It is God's “Book of Life” (Revelation 20:12-15 and 21:27). It is the roll of those who

believe in Christ, the only Saviour of sinners, and who belong to Him forever. Is your name written there? That is what you can make sure about now.

“He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life.” John 3:36.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

When we come to put our trust in Christ we have “passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). We begin as though we were babies, a new and endless life. But we have yet to grow and to learn. In daily life we must have food and we must have it regularly.

So now the new life needs the Word of God for its food to grow day by day. (1st Peter 2:2). We must read the Bible for ourselves, as often as we can for our instruction and encouragement. If possible, it is best to procure a Bible or at least a New Testament and take it with us wherever we go. It may help to mark the passages that are helpful for our particular needs so that we can find these easily again.

It is possible to get good helpful books, but we need to remember that there are repeated warnings in the Bible to beware of false teachers. Not all who go around selling religious books are to be trusted. It is possible to quote the Bible in such a way as to deceive people.

Again, although there may be nothing wrong with reading novels or newspapers, these things are not designed to help us in the Christian life. We need to put first whatever will strengthen us in the spiritual life. Otherwise we will be starved and weak and unable to grow and to withstand temptation. If for the time being there are no suitable books and no Bible at hand, then it may help to read over again the stories in the Bushman's Guide.

Then, as we cannot live without breathing, so we cannot live the Christian life without praying, and we are urged and encouraged to pray about everything. We can tell our Heavenly Father all that concerns us and He is pleased to have us do so. Things that cannot be told to others can be told, to Him. If we need guidance, strength, forgiveness, or help of any kind we can confidently come to God and know that He will never disappoint us. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit is given to be our teacher, our comforter and helper all the way through life. (John 16:7-15). He will teach us the

truth. He will show us how to live, how to pray, how to give thanks for all that God has done for us: He will strengthen and comfort us, and will "abide with us forever".

Lastly, we need exercise in daily life; we must have expression and use for the energies that God has given. So it is in the new life. We must do anything we can for our Lord and Saviour. He needs us to serve Him, to tell others about Him and to fight against the forces of evil. Let us at once tell others where we stand, even though we may be ridiculed or wrongly treated. (Matthew 10:32-33).

"Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven."



A HELPING HAND

It may well be that some readers of "The Bush-man's Guide" will have problems which they would like to talk over with someone able and willing to help, and in circumstances where there is no one at hand in whom they can place their confidence or to whom they can turn for sympathetic advice.

If we can put you in touch with a Christian minister or other worker in your district we will gladly do so. If not, then we may be able to help directly. If you have signed the decision form in this book, let us know and we will do anything possible to help you further. Some may like to take a Bible Study Course by correspondence. Such courses are available from various places, both in Australia and overseas.

We would be happy to arrange for any who desire to find a helpful and pleasant way of studying the greatest book in the world, the Word of God. Also there are helpful books of which we will freely send particulars to any who desire them.

Note to (6) DROVING* In recent years fleets of transports for sheep, cattle and goods, have multiplied over the Commonwealth at an almost incredible rate. The “truckies” have far outnumbered the drovers who are now a vanishing race—but not entirely. They still have valuable work to do.

Note to (25) TRAMP OR TRAVELLER* Since this was first written the tramps, the swag-men as in “Waltzing Matilda”, or bagmen as they have been frequently called, have been replaced largely by “hitch-hikers”. In some ways these are a mixture of both tramps and travellers.

The GUIDES is of a special size to fit a shirt pocket — each written in the way to meet the eye of the one’s named in the title.

Written for a special purpose — to GUIDE the reader to the ONE who said, while on earth, “I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE, NO MAN COMES TO THE FATHER BUT BY ME” (John 14:6).

In today’s society the cry from many hearts is — “WHICH WAY”? — “WHAT IS TRUTH”? “WHERE IS LIFE”? Here is the answer from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself — “I AM THE WAY — TRUTH — LIFE” — Come to Him, and in Him you will find the answer.

On Sunday 9th December 1979, for W. Arnold Long, life on this earth was over, he was with the Lord, because as a child he believed the message of the Gospel, “Christ died for our sins”, he found THE WAY — THE TRUTH— THE LIFE in Jesus Christ the Lord.

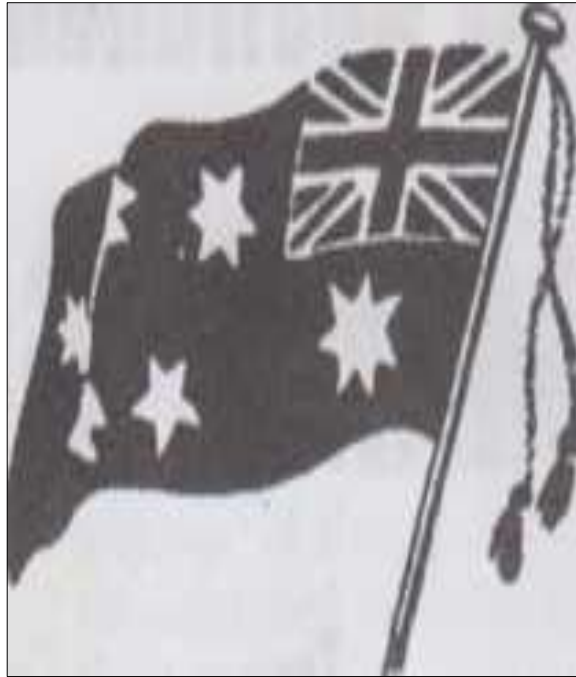
That message he consistently proclaimed by spoken and written word is still being given through continuing reprints of the BUSHMAN’S GUIDE.

The message is being spread far and wide around Australia and overseas — the message is unchanged and unchangeable — the grace of God in Jesus Christ makes men new — “God is not willing that any should perish but that ALL should come to repentance”. “The same God over ALL is rich unto ALL who call upon Him”.

W. Arnold Long



With Christian greetings:
The Long Family
P.O. Box 314 Banyo QLD 4014
Australia



The Australian

BUSHMAN'S GUIDE

W. ARNOLD LONG

All rights reserved

The Bushman's Guide

