THE COTTAGE LAMP, AN AID TO HAPPINESS IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT. JANUARY TO DECEMBER, 1859

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ANONYMOUS

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Trieste

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AN AID TO HAPPINESS

IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT; IT GIVETH UNDERSTANDING UNTO THE SIMPLE."—PSALM CXIX. 130.

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THE COTTAGE LAMP.

SAVED OR LOST?

My friends, when this little tract meets you, we shall have begun a new year; it will reach a great many of you upon new year's day; and I hope all who take in The Cottage Lamp will have opened this year with "prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving." My dear readers, it is my most earnest hope and prayer, that "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, may keep your hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ."

It is a grievous thing to think how much we need stirring up about our souls—how dead and indifferent we are about our everlasting condition—how contented we are to know nothing at all about these great things; while we labour night and day to get a living for our bodies, and keep a close account of how our worldly affairs stand, for fear we should get the wrong side of the post, and suffer loss.

In the morning of the resurrection, my friends, there will be "a great cry." We shall have risen up, most of us, on *this* new year's morning, alive, and well, and cheery; going forth to our daily business, and looking forward to lengthening days, and busier seasons. But in the morning of the resurrection there will be a great cry! Oh! think what a wail our ears will hear when *that* new year's morning dawns, and sinners wake up from their heavy sleep of carnal security to the dreadful sight of Jesus Christ coming in all His glorious majesty, to "judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." Do let us think now of what we shall feel *then*. Do let us consider a little how we shall ever bear all the horrors and terrors of that great day, which is drawing very near us, and which some of us will know a great deal about before the end of this new year. We cannot

get away from that day by refusing to think about it, and make ourselves ready for it; it *will come*—it will not tarry; every living soul will be awake, and up, and stirring, on that dreadful morning, and, oh! there will be a very great and bitter cry!

My friends, you know very well in your hearts that you are living ungodly lives—you are living lives that will not bear the searching eye of God; you would not like your neighbours to see and know *all* you are doing and thinking; you would not like a man to sit in judgment upon your walk and conversation, because we are all sharp-sighted about each others' faults, and can see a good deal more than we sometimes speak of. How then shall we bear the sifting of God, "from whom no secret is hid," and who knoweth the thoughts of our hearts, and the meaning of all our ways? You know very well that your ways will not do to be looked into; you know you are not living up to the Bible rule; and it is the greatest wonder in the whole world, that in this state people should be so little concerned about the matter. It is the devil's work this; it is his great business to keep people quiet and asleep while the house is burning over their heads, and he is robbing them of all they have.

My friends, these are not pleasant things to say or to hear; but they are still more unpleasant to feel and to know; and I want very much to stir you up to think about them while there is time to mend matters; for though it does not much signify whether you are fed and clothed on earth, it signifies a great deal whether you are saved or lost for ever; and one or the other you must be, because there is no third place to go to after death. The Roman Catholics think there is: they think there is a place called purgatory, where sins are punished, and souls cleaned up and white-washed for heaven; but I have never yet found the passage in the Bible that tells us this, and I have hunted for it from one end of Scripture to the other. It may be among the traditions of men; but in the Bible it is not; and we are now talking of what God's Word teaches, and not what men choose to say.

When the morning of the resurrection comes there will be a great cry. As in the day of Noah, when the flood came, the world will be going on just as it is now. Worldly business will be carried on; men will be working in the shop, in the forge, in the fields, in the streets, on the railroads; they will be ploughing, and digging, and threshing, and hammering, and grinding; they will be thinking of anything else in the wide world than their own souls.

But a great and sudden cry will rise up from the earth; men will rush out from the beer-houses, the play-houses, the dark unseen dens of secret wickedness, which will be all broken up, and brought to light in the twinkling of an eye! Wives, and mothers, and sisters, and friends, will rush out too, from their homes and kindred, at the sound of that dismal, piercing cry! There will be a shaking, and uprooting, among kindreds, and peoples, and nations, and tongues; there will be no thought for our friends and families at that morning's dawn; but every man will quake with fear because of his own soul! Depend upon it, terror like this will make us forget everybody and everything but the Judge, and the burning lake that yawns before us.

There are many signs in the world now that warn us that the great new year's day is at hand. The prophecies of the Bible are coming very fast indeed to pass; and one of the most wonderful of all the signs is, that the City of Jerusalem is being again inhabited, and talked about, like other great cities of the earth. For hundreds of years we never heard the name of Jerusalem, or saw it written about, except in the Bible; it lay desolate and forgotten, among the wild people that have lived in the Holy Land since the city was broken down and burned with fire. Now, the time is come for Jerusalem to awake, and shake herself from the dust. The Lord stirred up the hearts of two great sovereigns, the Queen of England and the King of Prussia, to "remember Jerusalem," and they have built a Christian, a Protestant Church upon the very place where the Temple used to stand; so that Jesus Christ, the despised Nazarene—the crucified One—is set forth, and preached, and glorified, on the very spot where he was hated, and rejected of men! Oh! my friends, this is a very great sign that the second coming of Jesus Christ is at hand; that the great new year's day is about to dawn, that "great and terrible day of the Lord;" for Jerusalem was to lie in the dust, and none were to build up her waste places, until "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

The day of our death is, indeed, the second coming of Christ to every one. Whether Jesus Christ comes to us, or we go to Him, makes no real difference to us; the great new year's day will come whichever way the Lord appoints it; but in one of these two ways only can it come, and it is a matter of very great concern to us to be ready for it when it does come. "Be ye, therefore, ready," says our Lord Jesus Christ; and if we are waiting