

WHAT I WAS AND WHAT I AM

I was just twenty, in the midst of all the gaiety, dissipation and profligacy that a "wild young man," with little restraint and sufficient money, could find; and I liked it well. I had been five years at it. At the age of seventeen, an adept in sin.

I had been round the world. Twice I had hairbreadth escapes from shipwreck—once on the coast of New England, where, with masts and sails gone, the ship dragged anchors for hours before the fury of a gale, till, within a mile or two of the breakers on the sandbanks, she held her ground, and we were saved; and, again, in the Southern Ocean, one night running amid the icebergs, the watchman suddenly jumped from aloft, shouting, with a fearful oath, that a "berg" was upon us; and as the helm was shifted and the ship sheered off, we ran alongside a tremendous iceberg, seeming to be miles long, and towering like a huge mountain above our masts—a moment later and we should have been dashed to pieces.

But I cared little about it.

I had been in Australia, and the little restraint which society and home influences had put upon me was there entirely laid aside. No moral force had now any effect upon me. The devil hurried me along at railroad speed. But God made me bite the dust. *"The way of transgressors is hard."* I found it so. Many a day I have starved for want of necessary food; many a weary mile have I walked without shoe to my foot; many a long, wet, wintry night have I spent on the open ground, without even a blanket or fire to warm my shivering, drenched body; but it was a 'right way' by which He led me.

After a while I came back from Australia to my native land. I had learned a lesson, but I had not learned that I was a lost sinner whom God was willing to save. Then I had another year of dissipation, and fully and deeply I plunged into every kind of wickedness that my evil nature inclined towards. Anon, the thought came across my mind, *"I am going to Hell,"* but the devil answered it for me with, "You can't help it; better have your fling now." Then down upon my knees I have gone, and besought Satan to give me all I wanted, and he should have my soul in exchange. I was a good servant to him. Every one whom I could influence I sought to lead into my own evil ways. "I'll have company in hell," I thought. Such was I at the age of twenty. Still, *God loved me*, and profligate, blaspheming young man as I was, He was going to show the riches of His grace in saving me.

One day I was suddenly told, "The Prince Consort is dead." That was God's message to me. "Dead," thought I, "how sudden!" And then, as a chill ran through my blood, there came the first serious, sober thought of my own death and of eternity. "Perhaps I may be the next—and—what then?" It was too plain for me to smooth it over with hopes. It was too horrible to dwell upon. I tried to put it away, but could not. Night came; neither drink nor amusement had banished it. And now, in the quietness of my chamber, forcibly and solemnly, as though for the first time I had heard it from God, "Hell" sounded in my ears. It was the answer I had struggled against all day. Now, like a horrible vision, it rose before my eyes. "Drink and you'll sleep," said Satan. I did so, but 'twas useless. Hell became more vivid than ever, and as each moment I tossed and rolled about, the terrible reality of my lost state pressed itself

more and more upon me. The day before I could mock at hell, joke about hell, laugh at hell; but now, as my polluted mind dwelt on the thought of *being* there, and that *forever*, it was too dreadful. I jumped from my bed, flung myself on my knees and cried out, *"What must I do to be saved?"* The hard, stubborn heart was broken—the proud, rebellious, wilful spirit was crushed down beneath a word whispered by God, and I had taken my place as a condemned sinner.

A week passed, and I, the careless, dissipated profligate, walked through the streets a wretched, broken-hearted sinner, fearing every house would topple over and crush me into hell. I saw my sins now in awful array, ready to sink me down into everlasting perdition. My soul became alive to the justness of the wrath of God against my sins. I knew not what to do. But God, who had begun the work, could finish it.

Again in that room where God's mercy had sounded that terrible word of warning, I took my Bible, and sought out in it for comfort for my troubled soul; and as I read I saw *such* words—such words as only weary sinners can tell the solid comfort of. *"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John iii. 16.) I read, and it sounded like heavenly music—soothingly upon my ears. As I thought over the words, they seemed to stand out in a fullness and plainness that was quite new to me. "If I believe, I shall never perish." "Believe what?" "That Jesus died for a world of sinners—therefore for me—for my sins." "What does God say so?" "He does." "Then I believe it." Such were my thoughts. I closed the book. I knelt down. Jesus was revealed to me as *my Saviour*. The Holy Spirit shed a new light into my heart. I saw One, who was a man, and yet the Son of God, accepting and receiving my judgment—my judgment—the visible judgment of death upon the cross, which my sins deserved.

That night, I can say, to the praise of God's abounding grace, I lay down a pardoned sinner, saved through *the Blood of the Lamb*. I saw that Jesus had suffered and died in my stead, and that thus my guilt was met and gone. I had claimed the atonement of Jesus, and with it hell had vanished from my eyes. Now, I had peace—oh! what peace—peace in the knowledge that I was *saved!*—"not by works of righteousness which I had done," but because "of His mercy He had saved me." (Titus iii. 5).

And now, reader, just a word ere you lay down this tract. Such is the way *my soul* was freed from the punishment of sin and the dread of hell. What about *your soul*, dear reader? Perhaps outwardly, you are such a sinner as I was, but that matters nothing in the question of salvation—for it is written, *"All have sinned,"* and *"the soul that sinneth it shall die."* (Ezekiel xviii. 4). And again, *all the world has become guilty* before God. (Rom. iii. 19). Thus every month is stopped. Salvation is out of the question, everything except through the Saviour of sinners. But through Him, it is sure and certain; through Him it may be yours. For "God commandeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet *sinners*, Christ died for us (Rom. v. 8); and now, *"Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."* You cannot be saved, except as a guilty, lost sinner; and as a guilty, lost sinner you must be redeemed by another than yourself. The work of redemption lies *outside* of you. The atonement, through which God can pardon your sins, was made by

Jesus on the cross. God is satisfied to accept it for you. The moment you are really satisfied with it for yourself, and thus accept it, you will have *"redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."* (Col. i. 14). But if you reject His message and trample on His love, either by trying to earn your own salvation or by utterly turning your back upon God, the fearful weight of your sins will sink you into the abyss of hell, there to spend a never-ending eternity and everlasting burnings, tortured by hopeless remorse for having rejected a Saviour so freely offered to you.

God grant, dear reader, that you may be enabled to say with me, when thinking of my former and of my present state, *"What then?—HELL! What now?—HEAVEN!—A Tract."*

AN URGENT APPEAL

I have a very special request to bring to our people at this time. I know you all have a very kindly feeling towards Eastern Nazarene College because of what it has meant to us as a movement, and therefore I feel at liberty to write as I am writing.

E. N. C. is, right now during the present few weeks, going through her greatest crisis. Movements, and even nations, have had their destinies settled at one point in their existence. If the tide goes one way, they are established; if it goes the other, they are lost. E. N. C. is at the turning of the tide. She is, as it were, waiting to be pushed either one way or the other by the two great forces centered in conflict at this college,—the forces of evil and of righteousness.

Eastern Nazarene College is not solely a Nazarene College. No partiality is shown Nazarene students over students of any other denomination. Its mission is a larger one than that. It is the only college in the east standing for Holiness and is the interest of everyone professing Holiness. It is the one college where Holiness preachers are trained, as opposed to numerous other colleges which are filling the churches of our land with proclaimers of modernistic ideas and denying the power of God to cleanse the human heart from sin. What the world needs is Holy Ghost baptized ministers and churches.

I know we have been hearing for some time of the success of E. N. C.; but success does not mean a place where one can float restfully with the tide; but a chance for greater achievements and the struggle for new accomplishments. Success comes by fighting—success is fighting. The greatest projects of all time have been started on faith. Without faith nothing is accomplished. The launching of E. N. C.'s great program which included the erection of the new Fowler Memorial Administration building, was largely a project of faith. It was a stepping out on the promises that God had given for our school. Greater faith is needed to carry on than to start. God alone can see us through; and that only by the united efforts of His people.

The great financial depression over the country is having a lot to do in hindering the program undertaken. Former avenues of income have been cut off and new ones difficult to find. If enough funds are forthcoming, the college shall go over the top; but if not,—but we won't consider it, for God never forsakes His people. God is still on the throne and His faithfulness and power are assured.

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