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DAILY THOUGHTS.

BY

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EDITED BY

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NEW YORK:
DODD & MEAD, PUBLISHERS,
762 BROADWAY.
1875.

AUG 1 1915

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To
REV. G. R. HAIR,
(Professor of Theology in Wyoming Seminary, Pa.)
WHOSE INSTRUCTIONS HAVE GREATLY AIDED ME
IN MY PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY,
THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED.

J. V. D. S.

Preface.

HAVING for a long time desired to see Mr. Talmage's best thoughts collected and put in a work of this kind, and believing that such a work would better the condition of mankind, I undertook the pleasant task of compiling it. "Daily Thoughts," has been prepared for daily readings. It consists of choice selections from the writings of Mr. Talmage. The work is published with his approval. I send it forth with the earnest hope that many, by its daily perusal, may be encouraged, strengthened and blessed.

J. V. D. S.

*JANUARY FIRST.***HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

"Rejoice evermore."—1 THESS. v. 16.

TO-DAY we bow out a visitor from our door who had taken up his abode with us for a year, and to-morrow we welcome a stranger who stood on our threshold awaiting admittance. There is something marvellous in the readiness with which we turn our backs on the old year and extend our hands to the new year—as if the past were nothing and the future were everything. And yet, in truth, the past is all we have as a possession. In it alone do we find our memories, to it alone have we imparted a portion of our being. The future—we not only grasp it as an illusion and take an untried stranger to our hearts, but we really are not certain of the future at all. We take a glance retrospectively, and find much to regret, and we resolve that the future shall mend all that. And yet what are we? What is each individual character? What it seeks to be? No. What it purposes to be? Not at all. We are what we are: we are what the past has made us: we are not simply the sum of our virtues, the aggregate of our good purposes, but we are the combined sum of our virtues and our vices, our good traits and our evil ones, with their attendant train of follies, foibles, and weaknesses.

"Had I but my life to live over again!" regretfully exclaims this New Year's Day, one whose locks are whitened, and who looks back regretfully upon a misspent life which looms up, limned upon the background of wasted years. How vain, how foolish the wish! A life to be lived over again,—how

would it deepen our guilt by giving us other unimproved opportunities! But why unimproved! Because no man, had he a second chance, even with his past experience, would live a different life than he lives to-day. Think of this, and apply it to the daily life you are now living. Any man who regrets his past, and who would fain have a second trial, may find his opportunity in the future, long or short though it be, which lies before him. This, if we would but believe it, gives us all the chance we could desire. Let us improve it. Remembering that past opportunities are indeed gone, but not responsibility for the way in which that past has been used, let a high purpose and a noble endeavor characterize the new year on which we are just entering: and so it shall be a "Happy New Year" indeed: not a new year of boisterous, uninterrupted hilarity, nor a year which shall always keep the word of promise to the hope, or bring the expected blessing in the precise manner in which we look for it.

We cannot look for unalloyed happiness, and indeed there is no such thing in reality. Our greatest joys are our serious ones, and so our new year, rightly improved, let us hope, may be one not without much to regret, much which we would gladly recall, yet one upon which, when its record is completed, we can look back as a sailor looks back upon his log and marks the progress the good ship has made. So let us press forward, stumbling, halting, weary, trembling, fainting, yet—press forward: and when a few more years have completed their cycles we shall see a-down the vista of the years the pearly gates through which we shall pass out to those Amaranthine fields where the fountain ever floweth, and we shall drink in the light of a sun which no shadows pursue!

JANUARY SECOND.

GO AND TELL JESUS.

“And they went and told Jesus.”—MATT. xiii, 12.

I COMMEND the behavior of the disciples to all those *who are abused and slandered and persecuted*. When Herod put John to death, the disciples knew that their own heads were not safe. And do you know that every John has a Herod? There are persons in life who do not wish you very well. Your misfortunes are honeycombs to them. Through their teeth they hiss at you, misinterpret your motives, and would be glad to see you upset. No man gets through life without having a pommelling. Some slander comes after you, horned and tusked and hoofed, to gore and trample you; and what are you to do? I tell you plainly that all who serve Christ must suffer persecution. It is the worst sign in the world for you to be able to say; “I haven’t an enemy in the world.” A woe is pronounced in the Bible against the one of whom everybody speaks well. If you are at peace with all the world, and everybody likes you and approves your work, it is because you are an idler in the Lord’s vineyard, and are not doing your duty. All those who have served Christ, however eminent, have been maltreated at some stage of their experience. You know it was so in the time of George Whitefield, when he stood and invited men into the kingdom of God. What did the learned Doctor Johnson say of him? He pronounced him a miserable mountebank. How was it when Robert Hall stood and spoke as no uninspired man ever did speak of the glories of heaven? and as he stood Sabbath after Sabbath preaching of

these themes his face kindled with the glory. John Foster, a Christian man, said of this man: "Robert Hall is only acting, and the smile on his face is a reflection of his own vanity." John Wesley turned all England upside down with Christian reform, and yet the punsters were after him, and the meanest jokes in England were perpetrated about John Wesley. What is true of the pulpit is true of the pew; it is true of the street, it is true of the shop and the store. All who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. And I set it down as the very worst sign in all your Christian experience, if you are, any of you, at peace with all the world. The religion of Christ is war! It is a challenge to "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and if you will buckle on the whole armor of God, you will find a great host disputing your path between this and heaven. But what are you to do when you are assaulted and slandered and abused, as I suppose nearly all of you have been in your life? Go out and hunt up the slanderer? Oh, no, silly man. While you are explaining away a falsehood in one place, fifty people will just have heard of it in other places. I counsel you to another course. While you are not to omit any opportunity of setting yourselves right, I want to tell you this morning of One who had the hardest things said about Him, whose sobriety was disputed, whose mission was scouted, whose companionship was denounced, who was pursued as a babe, and spit upon as a man, who was howled at after He was dead. I will have you go unto Him with your bruised soul, and He will sympathize, and He will help. Go and tell Jesus!

JANUARY THIRD.

DEATH THIS YEAR.

"This year thou shalt die."—JER. xxviii. 16.

THIS is the first Sabbath of the year. It is a time for review and for anticipation. A man must be a genius at stupidity who does not think now. The old year died in giving birth to the new, as the life of Jane Seymour, the English Queen, departed when that of her son, Edward VI., dawned. The old year was a queen. The new shall be a king. The grave of the one and the cradle of the other are side by side. We can hardly guess what the child will be. It is only seven days old. But I prophesy for it an eventful future. Year of mirth and madness! Year of pageant and conflagration! It will laugh. It will sing. It will groan. It will die.

Is it not a time for earnest thought? The congratulations have been given. The Christmas-trees have been taken down, or have well-nigh cast their fruit. The vacation ended, the children are at school. The friends who came for the holidays have gone in the rail-train. While we are looking forward to another twelve months of intense activities, the text breaks upon us like a bursting thunderbolt: "This year thou shalt die."

The *character of our occupations* adds to the probability. Those who are in the professions are undergoing a sapping of the brain and nerve foundations. Literary men in this country are driven with whip and spur to their topmost speed. Not one brain-worker out of a hundred observes any moderation. There is something so stimulating in our climate that, if John Brown, the essayist of Edinburgh, had lived here, he would have

broken down at thirty-five instead of fifty-five ; and Charles Dickens would have dropped at forty.

There is something in all our occupations which predisposes to disease. If we be stout, to disorders ranging from fevers to apoplexy. If we be frail, to diseases ranging from consumption to paralysis. Printers rarely reach fifty years. Watchmakers, in marking the time for others, shorten their own. Chemists breathe death in their laboratories ; and potters absorb paralysis. Painters fall under their own brush. Foundrymen take death in with their filings. Shoemakers pound away their own lives on the last. Over-driven merchants measure off their own lives with the yard-stick. Millers grind their own lives with the grist. Masons dig their own graves with the trowel. And in all our occupations and professions there are the elements of peril.

In view of this, I advise that you have your temporal matters adjusted. Do not leave your worldly affairs at the mercy of administrators. Have your receipts properly pasted, and your letters filed, and your books balanced. If you have "trust funds," see that they are rightly deposited and accounted for. Let no widow or orphan scratch on your tombstone: "This man wronged me of my inheritance." Many a man has died, leaving a competency, whose property has, though his own carelessness, afterwards been divided between the administrators, the surrogate, the lawyers, and the sheriffs. I charge you, before many days have gone, as far as possible, have all your worldly matters made straight, for "*this year thou shalt die.*"

*JANUARY FOURTH.***SWIMMING FOR LIFE.**

“And He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim.”—ISAIAH XXV. 2.

YOU have noticed that when a swimmer goes out to rescue any one, he puts off his heavy apparel. He must not have any such impediment about him if he is going to do this great deed. And when Christ stepped forth to save us, He shook off the sandals of heaven, and His feet were free ; and He laid aside the robe of eternal royalty, and His arms were free ; and then He stepped down into the wave of our transgression, and it came up over His wounded feet, and it came above the spear stab in His side—aye, it dashed to the lacerated temple, the high-water mark of his anguish. Then rising above the flood, “He stretched forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim.

If you have ever watched a swimmer, you notice that his whole body is brought into play. The arms are flexed, the hands drive the water back, the knees are active, the head is tossed back to escape strangulation, the whole body is in propulsion. And when Christ sprang out into the deep to save us, He threw His entire nature in it, all His Godhead, His omniscience, His goodness, His love, His omnipotence—head, heart, eyes, hands and feet. We were so far out on the sea, and so deep down in the waves, and so far out from shore, that nothing short of an entire God could save us. Christ leaped out for our rescue, saying: “Lo ! I come to do Thy will,” and all the surges of human and Satanic hate beat

against Him, and those who watched Him from the gates of heaven feared He would go down under the wave, and instead of saving others would Himself perish ; but putting His breast to the foam and shaking the surf from His locks, He came on, on, until He is within the reach of every one. Eye omniscient, heart infinite, arm omnipotent. Mighty to save even to the uttermost. Oh, it was not half a God that trampled down bellowing Gennesaret. It was not a quarter of a God that mastered the demons of Gadara. It was not two-thirds of a God that lifted up Lazarus into the arms of his overjoyed sisters. It was not a fragment of a God who offered pardon and peace to all the race. No. This mighty swimmer threw His grandeur, His glory, His might, His wisdom, His omnipotence, and His eternity into this one act. It took both hands of God to save us,—both feet. How do I prove it? On the cross, were not both hands nailed? On the cross, were not both feet nailed? His entire nature involved in our redemption!

JANUARY FIFTH.

LOITERING.

“Neither stay thou in all the plains.”—GEN. xi.—19.

THIS text suggests that some men, having started, *loiter by the way*. They tarry in the plain. They are too lazy to get on. You know that men, in order to get on in this world, must deny themselves and work hard ; must go through drudgery, that after a while they may have luxuries. But there are some men too lazy for this life and too lazy to win heaven. If we get to heaven it will be by gathering up all the energies of our souls and hurling them ahead in one grand

persistent direction. I have seen within the past week or two people in this church start for heaven, but they loitered by the way, so that ten thousand years would not be long enough for them to get there. In mid-ocean, on the China, going out, at midnight, the "screw" stopped. "What's the matter?" everybody cried. People rushed out to see why the "screw" had stopped in mid-ocean. Something wrong, or it would not stop in the middle of the Atlantic. So it is a bad sign when men voyaging towards heaven stop half way. It is a sign of infinite peril.

I don't exactly know why Lot and his wife loitered by the way. I think Lot's wife looked back because she thought, after all, it might be a hoax—that there might be no destruction of the city, and she said to herself: "Wouldn't we feel silly if our property should be confiscated and the city stand undamaged?" Just so there are men now who say it is all talk about a judgment and a long eternity; it is all a hoax. I don't wonder that a man says that who don't believe the Bible; but if a man believe the Bible I don't know how he can say that, because this Bible declares God will turn into hell all the nations that forget Him, and will sweep with the hail of His vengeance the refuges of lies. In the peroration of His sermon on the mount, Christ told how some houses are on the rock and stand, and other houses are on the sand and fall. Oh, this modern religion of sweet oil and sugar-plums, that would make God a nerveless, inert being that the world can run over and He say nothing. My friends, while God is so merciful and patient that He will take back the most besotted wretch that ever came to Him for help, He has omnipotent indignation for those who refuse His sway and trample upon His law. Sodom must perish; sin must be crushed and the whole world acclaim the justice of God.

JANUARY SIXTH.

GOD'S BOTTLE.

"Put thou my tears into thy bottle."—PSALMS lvi. 8.

GOD keeps a tender remembrance of all your *sicknesses*. How many of you are thoroughly sound in body? Not one out of ten! I do not exaggerate. The vast majority of the race are constant subjects of ailments. There is some one form of disease that you are particularly subject to. You have a weak side, or back, or are subject to headaches, or faintnesses, or lungs easily distressed. It would not take a very strong blow to shiver the golden bowl of life, or break the pitcher at the fountain. Many of you have kept on in life through sheer force of will. You think no one can understand your distresses. Perhaps you look strong, and it is supposed that you are a hypochondriac. They say you are nervous, as if that were nothing! God have mercy upon any man or woman that is nervous! at times you sit alone in your room. Friends do not come. You feel an indescribable loneliness in your sufferings; but God knows; God feels; God compassionates. He counts the sleepless nights; He regards the acuteness of the pain; He estimates the hardness of the breathing. While you pour out the medicine from the bottle, and count the drops, God counts all your falling tears. As you look at the phials filled with nauseous draughts, and at the bottles of distasteful tonic that stands on the shelf, remember that there is a larger bottle than these, which is filled with no mixture by earthly apothecaries, but it is *God's bottle*, in which He hath gathered all our tears.

Again : God remembers all the *sorrows of poverty*. There is much want that never comes to inspection. The deacons of the church never see it. The controllers of alms-houses never report it. It comes not to church, for it has no appropriate apparel. It makes no appeal for help, but chooses rather to suffer than expose its bitterness. Fathers who fail to gain a livelihood, so that they and their children submit to constant privation ; sewing-women, who cannot ply the needle quick enough to earn them shelter and bread. But whether reported or uncomplaining, whether in seemingly comfortable parlor or damp cellar, or in hot garret, God's angels of mercy are on the watch. This moment those griefs are being collected.

JANUARY SEVENTH.

THE SCARLET LINE.

“ And she bound the scarlet line in the window.”—JOSHUA ii. 21.

BLESSED be God for this scarlet line in the window. That tells me that the blood of Christ bought that home for my soul, and I shall go there when my work is done here. And as I put my hand on that scarlet line everything in the future brightens. My eyesight gets better, and the robes of the victors are more lustrous, and our loved ones who went away sometime ago—they do not stand any more with their backs to us, but their faces are this way and their voice drops through this Sabbath air, saying, with all tenderness and sweetness : “ Come ! Come ! Come ! ” And the child that you think of only as buried—why, there she is, and it is May-day in heaven ; and they gather the amaranth, and they pluck the lilies, and they twist them into a garland for her brow,

and she is one of the May queens of heaven. Oh, do you think they could see our waving to-night? It is quite a pleasant night outdoors, pretty clear, not many clouds in the sky, quite starlight. I wonder if they can see us from that good land? I think they can. If from this window of earthly prospects we can almost see them, then from their towers of light I think they can fully see us. And so I wave them the glory, and I wave them the joy, and I say: "Have you got through with all your troubles?" and their voices answer: "God hath wiped away all tears from our eyes." I say, "Is it as grand up there as you thought it would be?" and the voices answer: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him." I say, "Do you have any more struggle for bread?" and they answer: "We hunger no more, we thirst no more." And I say, "Have you been out to the cemetery of the golden city?" and they answer: "There is no death here." And I look out through the night heavens, and I say, "Where do you get your light from, and what do you burn in the temple?" and they answer: "There is no night here, and we have no need of candle or of star." And I say, "What book do you sing out of?" and they answer: "The Hallelujah Chorus." And I say, "In the splendor and magnificence of the city, don't you ever get lost?" and they answer: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leadeth us to living fountains of water." Oh, how near it seems to-night. Their wings—do you not feel them? Their harps—do you not hear them? And all that through the window of our earthly prospects, across which stretcheth the scarlet line.

*JANUARY EIGHTH.***THE PLEASURE OF RELIGION.**

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters."—Ps. xxiii. 2.

WHERE shall I find words enough threaded with light to set forth the pleasure of religion? David, unable to describe it in words, played it on a harp. Mrs. Hemans, not finding enough power in prose, sings that praise in a canto. Christopher Wren, unable to describe it in language, sprung it into the arches of St. Paul. John Bunyan, unable to present it in ordinary phraseology, takes all the fascination of allegory. Handel, with ordinary music unable to reach the height of the theme, rouses it up in an oratorio. Oh, there is no life on earth so happy as a really Christian life. I do not mean a sham Christian life, but a real Christian life. Where there is a thorn there is a whole garland of roses. Where there is one groan, there are three doxologies. Where there is one day of cloud, there is a whole season of sunshine. Take the humblest Christian man that you know—Angels of God canopy him with their white wings; the lightnings of heaven are his armed allies; the Lord is his Shepherd, picking out for him green pastures by still waters; if he walks forth, heaven is his body-guard; if he lie down to sleep, ladders of light, angel-blossoming, are let into his dreams; if he be thirsty, the potentates of heaven are his cup-bearers. If he sit down to food, his plain table blooms into the King's banquet. Men say, "Look at that old fellow with the worn-out coat;" the Angels of God cry, "Lift up your heads, ye

everlasting gates, and let him come in." Fastidious people cry, "Get off my front steps;" the door-keepers of heaven cry, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom." When he comes to die, though he may be carried out in a pine box to the potter's field, to that potter's field the chariots of Christ will come down and the cavalcade will crowd all the boulevards of heaven.

I bless Christ for the present satisfaction of religion. It makes a man all right with reference to the past; it makes a man all right with reference to the future. Oh, these nether springs of comfort! They are perennial. The foundations of God standeth sure having this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are His." "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, who hath mercy upon them." Oh, cluster of diamonds set in burnished gold! Oh, nether springs of comfort bursting through all the valleys of trial and tribulation!

It is no stagnant pond, scummed over with malaria, but springs of water leaping from the Rock of Ages! Take up one cup of that spring water, and across the top of the chalice will float the delicate shadows of the heavenly wall, the yellow of jasper, the green of emerald, the blue of sardonyx, the fire of jacinthe. I wish I could make you understand the joy religion is to some of us. It makes a man happy while he lives, and glad when he dies.

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live:
'Tis religion can supply
Sweetest comfort when we die."

JANUARY NINTH.

THE OWL IN THE SOUL.

“Ye shall have in abomination among the fowls: the owl.”—LEVITICUS xi. 13, 16.

I TAKE the suggestion of the text, and say that one of the first unclean things the Christian needs to drive out of his soul is the *owl*. The owl is the melancholy bird of night. It hatches out whole broods of superstitions. It is doleful and hideous. When it sings, it sings through its nose. It loves the gloom of night better than the brightness of the day. Who has not slept in the cabin near the woods, and been awakened in the night by the dismal “too-hoo’ of the owl? *Melancholy* is the owl that is perched in many a Christian soul. It is an unclean bird, and needs to be driven away. A man whose sins are pardoned, and who is on the road to heaven, has no right to be gloomy. He says: “I have so many doubts.” That is because “you are lazy.” Go actively to work in Christ’s cause, and your doubts will vanish. You say, “I have lost my property;” but I reply, “You have infinite treasures laid up in heaven.” You say, “I am weak and sickly, and going to die.” Then be congratulated that you are so near eternal health and perpetual gladness. Catch a few morning larks for your soul, and stone this owl off your premises.

As a little girl was eating, the sun dashed upon her spoon; and she cried, “Oh, mamma! I have swallowed a spoonful of sunshine!” Would God that we might all indulge in the same beverage! Cheerfulness; it makes the homeliest face handsome; it makes the hardest mattress soft; it runs the

loom that weaves buttercups, and rainbows, and auroras. God made the grass black? No; that would be too sombre. God made the grass red? No; that would be too gaudy. God made the grass *green*, that by this parable all the world might be led to a subdued cheerfulness. Read your Bible in the sunshine. Remember that your physical health is closely allied to your spiritual. The heart and the liver are only a few inches apart, and what affects one affects the other. A historian records that by the sound of great laughter in Rome. Hannibal's assaulting army was frightened away in retreat. And there is in the great outbursting joy of a Christian soul that which can drive back any infernal besiegement. Rats love dark closets, and Satan loves to burrow in a gloomy soul, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! and again I say, rejoice!"

JANUARY TENTH.

TEMPTATION.

"Cast thy burdens on the Lord, and he will sustain thee."—Ps. lv. 22.

I HAVE heard men in mid life say they had never been led into temptation. If you have not felt temptation it is because you have not tried to do right. A man hopped and handcuffed, as long as he lies quietly, does not test the power of the chain; but when he rises up, and with determination resolves to snap the handcuff or break the hopple, then he finds the power of the iron. And there are men who have been for ten and twenty and thirty years bound hand and foot of evil habit, who have never felt the power of the chain, because they have never tried to break it. It is very easy to go on down with the stream and with the wind, lying on your oars; but you just turn around, and try to go against

the wind and the tide, and you will find it is a very different matter. As long as we go down the current of our evil habit we seem to get along quite smoothly; but after a while we turn around, and head the other way towards Christ and pardon and heaven, oh, then how we have to lay to the oars! You all have your temptation. You have one kind, you another, you another, not one person escaping. It is all folly for you to say to some one: "I could not be tempted as you are." The lion thinks it is so strange that the fish should be caught with a hook. The fish thinks it is so strange that the lion should be caught with a trap. You see some man with a cold, phlegmatic temperament, and you say: "I suppose that man has not any temptation." Yes, as much as you have. In his phlegmatic nature he has a temptation to indolence and censoriousness and over-eating and drinking; to sink down into a great latitude and longitude of fattiness; a temptation to ignore the great work of life; a temptation to lay down an obstacle in the way of all good enterprises. The temperament decides the style of temptation; but sanguine or lymphatic, you will have temptation. Satan has a grappling-hook just fitted for your soul. A man never lives beyond the reach of temptation. You say when a man gets to be seventy or eighty years of age he is safe from all satanic assault. You are very much mistaken. A man at eighty-five years of age has as many temptations as a man at twenty-five. They are only different styles of temptation.

No man has finally and forever overcome temptation until he has left the world. But what are you to do with these temptations? Tell everybody about them? Ah, what a silly man you would be! As well might a commander in a fort send word to the enemy which gate of the castle is least barred, as for you to go and tell what all your frailties are, and what all your temptations are. The world will only caricature you, will only scoff at you. What then must a man do? When the wave strikes him with terrific dash, shall

he have nothing to hold on to? In this contest with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," shall a man have no help? no counsel? The text intimates something different. In those eyes that wept with the Bethany sisters, I see strength and hope. In that voice which spoke until the grave broke and the widow of Nain had back her lost son, and the sea slept, and sorrow stupendous woke up in the arms of rapture, in that voice I hear the command and the promise: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee."

JANUARY ELEVENTH.

GOSPEL BELLS.

"And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt have pomegranates of blue, and bells of gold between them round about."—Ex. xxviii. 33.

GLORIOUS Gospel! It is the sweetest sound that a sinner ever heard. It is the grandest consolation that mourner ever felt. It is the mightiest hope that dying soul ever experienced.

I am glad that the first use of bells was a religious use; and hereafter the Gospel of God, to me, shall be a chime of bells; whether I hear them in the garments of the high-priest or in the cathedral tower, they shall suggest to me the gladness, the warning, and the triumph of the Gospel.

These Gospel bells, like those that adorned the high-priest's robe, are *golden bells*. Other bells are made of coarser materials, zinc, and lead, and tin, and copper; but these Gospel bells are bells of gold. There is one bell in Europe that cost three hundred thousand dollars. It was at vast expense that metallic voices were given to the towers of York, and Vienna, and Oxford. But all the wealth of heaven was thrown into this Gospel bell. No angel can count its value. Eternity

cannot demonstrate its cost. When the bell of the Russian Kremlin was being fused, the noblemen came and threw their gold into the molten mass. But when this Gospel bell was to be constructed, the Kings of Heaven, the hierarchs of eternity threw into it their crowns and their sceptres. It is a golden bell. Do you believe it? Hear it ring: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I remark further, that these Gospel bells, like those around the high-priest's garment, are bells of *invitation*. When the Jews heard the clash of those bells in the hem of the priest's robe, they knew it was an invitation to worship. That is the meaning of every church tower, from San Francisco to New York, and from London to St. Petersburg. It is "Come," "Come!" Ay, that is the most familiar word in the Bible! It seems to be a favorite word. The word "come" occurs six hundred and forty-two times in the Bible. It is—"Come to the supper;" "Come to the waters;" "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come;" through all sorrows, through all trials, through all nights of darkness, through all calamities, through all temptations, it rings out—"Come! *Come! COME!*"

JANUARY TWELFTH.

HONORABLE RETREATS.

"And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled."—
JOSHUA viii. 15.

IT is folly for a hundred men to attack ten thousand. It is the part of good generalship, sometimes, to blow the trumpet of retreat. There is no need of your trying to face certain temptations. You are foolhardy to try it. Your only safety is in flight. It is as fifty against five thousand. If

you be given to appetite, escape the presence of decanter and demijohn. If you are given to pride, go not amidst things that flatter it. If your proclivity be towards uncleanness, like Job make a covenant with your eyes, that you look not upon a maid. You know how the city of Ai was taken. Joshua's forces went up to capture it, but were miserably cut to pieces. The next time they hit upon this stratagem: The host was to advance to the city, and when the assault was made upon them, they were to fly. And so they did, until the people of Ai came out to follow them, and then, at the holding up of Joshua's spear, the retreating host rallied, and took the city. So sometimes it is as necessary to fly, as at others it is to advance. I blow the trumpet of retreat for those of you who are tempted. "Lead me not into temptation," be your morning and evening prayer. No need of your trying with one round of buckshot to meet an enemy with ammunition-wagons of grape and canister. No use in trying with a North River schooner to run down the *Great Eastern*. Washington's retreats were sometimes his grandest successes; and while God generally calls upon us to advance, at other times He bids us flee. The lion-tamer puts his head into the monster's mouth, and the people applaud; but it is a foolish thing to do. The shaggy monster after awhile forgets his placidity, and the lion-tamer puts in his head once too often.

JANUARY THIRTEENTH.

THE BIBLE IN THE PARLOR.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.—Ps. cxix. 105.

IN parlors all aflash with gaslight and gleaming mirror and blazing chandelier and candelabra, there may be Egyptian

darkness ; while in some plain room which a frugal hand has spread with hospitality and refinement, this one Lamp may cast a glow that makes it a fit place for heavenly coronations. We invoke no shadow to fall upon the hilarities of life. We would not have every song a dirge, and every picture a martyrdom, and every step a funeral pacc. God's lamp hung in the parlor would chill no joy, would rend no harmony, would check no innocent laughter. On the contrary, it would bring out brighter colors in the picture ; it would expose new gracefulness in the curtain ; it would unroll new wreaths from the carpet ; it would strike new music from the harp ; it would throw new polish into the manners ; it would kindle with light borrowed from the very throne of God all the refinements of society. Oh, that the Christ who was born in a barn would come to our parlor ! We need His hand to sift the parlor music. We need His taste to assort the parlor literature. We need His voice to conduct the parlor conversation. We are apt to think of religion as being a rude, blundering thing, not fit to put its foot upon Axminster, or its clownish hands on beautiful adornments, or lift its voice amid the artistic and refined ; so while we have Jesus in the nursery when we teach our children to pray, and Jesus in the dining-hall when we ask His blessing upon our food, and Jesus in the sitting-room when we have family prayers, it is a simple fact that from ten thousand Christian homes in this country Christ is from one end of the year to the other shut out of the parlor. Oh, that housekeepers understood that the grace of God is the greatest accomplishment, and that no seat is too luxuriant for religion to sit in, and no arch too grand for religion to walk under, and no circle too brilliant for religion to move in. If Christianity at last is to walk up the streets of heaven with seraphim and archangel, it is good enough to go anywhere where you go or where I shall go. To purify the heart, to cleanse the life, to culture the taste, to expurgate all hypocrisy and falsehood and sham, we must have the Bible in the parlor.

JANUARY FOURTEENTH.

A HONEYCOMB FOR CHRIST.

“And they gave him a piece of a honeycomb.”—Luke xxiv. 42.

WE are told, in the last chapter of Luke, that they brought a honeycomb to Jesus. He ate it. It must have been refreshing to Him after the abstinence of the grave. Is there nothing for us to bring to Jesus that will be pleasant to His taste? Were the disciples the only men who could gratify Jesus? Is the honey all gone. Will Christ accept nothing from His people now? Is it to be all *taking* on our part, without any *giving* in return for what we take?

We have a better intimation to give. Jesus says in the Canticles to the Church: “Thy lips drop as with the honeycomb.” Jesus will accept that which we bring to Him. There is as much honey now for Christ as there was in the time of the disciples. We may bring to Him the *honeycomb of prayer*. It is very sweet to the Saviour’s taste. We are apt to think only of our end of the prayer, of the blessing that comes to us instead of the blessing that goes to Christ. Prayer is not only an advantage to us, but it is an advantage to Jesus. Does it bring comfort to our souls, it takes joy to His. Is there not extreme satisfaction in this to every Christian man and woman? After we have so maltreated Jesus by our wanderings; after we have so often broken His heart, is it not a joyful consideration to know that we may come and give Him a positive exhilaration? Is all for us and nothing for Christ? If He breaks bread for the five thousand in the wilderness, shall not my Lord eat of the same loaves? If He turns water into wine, shall He have

nothing of the beverage? Aye. He says, when the banquet is spread it shall not only be a satisfaction to us but it shall be a satisfaction to Him. We are promised that not only we shall sup with Him, but that He will sup with us; He sitting down beside us in our prayer, comfort coming to our souls, positive joy and satisfaction going to His. If we make an investment, we expect a revenue from it. If the Lord Jesus Christ has given to the world pardon, peace, righteousness, and salvation, shall He get nothing in return? An earnest Christian service is very sweet to the taste of Christ. Every kind word uttered, every noble deed done, traverses the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ with a supreme satisfaction. He looks out upon the earnest, humble, honest, faithful, loving Christian, and derives from His conversation and conduct, joy unspeakable and full of glory. 'When we remember what a hard time Jesus had on earth—how He was hounded from place to place; what pain struck through His hand and His heart; how He was assailed by human venom and infernal strategy; how He went from pain to pain, from groan to groan, from darkness to darkness—shall it not be some satisfaction to us that we may bring joy to His soul by an earnest Christian behavior? The field opens before us as Christian men. There never was so much to do for Christ as there is now. He sends forth His men into the highways and the hedges. A glorious banquet has been spread. He tells you and me to go out and invite the people to come to it. Oh, that now we might bring the honeycomb of a grateful service? that every day and night of our lives might be an exhibition of the goodness and mercy of God; that we might go everywhere telling what God has achieved for our souls!

We are glad to know that though our work on earth is so imperfect, and the joy we bring to the heart of Christ is so limited, we shall at last render a glorious service. When they shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, a great multitude that no man can number, standing around about the throne, there will be a

circle of martyrs and apostles, a circle of all the redeemed, a circle of the loved ones who have died in Jesus! Oh, that will be the anthem of redeemed! That will be the Sabbath of the ages, and the trees of the heavenly wood, like the forests of Ephraim, shall drop with honey, and Jesus, like Jonathan of old, may dip his sceptre into it.

JANUARY FIFTEENTH.

THE OPEN DOOR.

“I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.”—*JOHN x. 9.*

AT Long Branch or Cape May, some summer day, you may have stood on the beach, and seen a man go down into the breakers to bathe. He went out further and further, until you became anxious about him. You wondered if he could swim. You shouted to him, as he advanced in the water: “Come back! come back! You will be lost! you will be lost!” He turned around, waved his hand, and shouted, “No danger,” and still went on; until, after a while, a wave, with great undertow, swept him out—his corpse the next day washed up on the beach. So I see young men going down into the waves of sin—deeper and deeper, further from God, and further; and I stand on the beach to-night, and cry the warning: “Come back! You will be lost! you will be lost!” Some not heeding the warning, will jeer at the alarm and go ahead; ill, after a while, the wave of God’s indignation will sweep them off, and sweep them down forever.

There may be some who have ventured into sinful courses, who would like to return. You feel that there is but little hope I will tell you of a daughter who went from home into the paths of sin. After many months of wandering, she resolved

one night to go home to her mother's house. It was after midnight when she arrived at the house. She supposed that the door would be locked; but, putting her hand on the latch, the door opened. She asked her mother why it was that the door, after midnight, was unlocked. Said her mother: "That door has never been locked since you went away. I have given orders that, by day and night, it should be unfastened, for I was sure that you would come back; and when you came, I did not want you to be hindered a minute." So I have to tell you that the door of God's mercy is ever unlocked. By day and by night it stands open for your coming. Though your sins were as scarlet, they shall be as snow. Though they were red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Though you may be polluted with all crimes and smitten of all leprosies, and fired by the most depraved passions, and have not heard the Gospel invitation for twenty years, you may have set upon your brow, hot with infamous practices and besweated with exhaustive indulgences, the flashing coronet of a Saviour's forgiveness.

Who is it that cometh yonder? Methinks I know his steps. Methinks before this I have seen the rags. Look, all ye people of God! Out of all the windows of heaven let the angels watch! A prodigal returning! Let us go out and meet him. Welcome back again to thy long-forsaken God. The dead is alive again! The lost is found!

"Pleased with the news, the saints below
 In songs their tongues employ;
 Beyond the sky the tidings go,
 And heaven is fill'd with joy.

"Nor angels can their joy contain,
 But kindle with new fire;
 The sinner lost is found! they sing,
 And strike the sounding lyre."

*JANUARY SIXTEENTH.***THE FAMILY MANSION.**

“In my Father’s house are many mansions.”—JOHN xiv. 2.

ALMOST every family looks back to a homestead—some country-place where you grew up. You sat on the door-sill. You heard the footstep of the rain on the garret-roof. You swung on the gate. You ransacked the barn. You waded into the brook. You threshed the orchard for apples, and the neighboring woods for nuts ; and everything around the old homestead is of interest to you. I tell you of the old homestead of eternity. In my Father’s house are many mansions. When we talk of mansions, we think of Chatsworth, and its park, nine miles in circumference, and its conservatory, that astonishes the world ; its galleries of art, that contain the triumphs of Chantrey, Canova, and Thorwaldsen ; of the kings and queens who have walked its stately halls, or, flying over the heather, have hunted the grouse. But all the dwelling-places of dukes, and princes, and queens, are as nothing to the family mansion that is already awaiting our arrival. The hand of my Lord Jesus lifted the pillars, and swung the doors, and planted the parks. Angels walk there, and the good of all ages. The poorest man in that house is a millionaire, and the lowliest a king, and the tamest word he speaks is an anthem, and the shortest life an eternity.

It took a Paxton to build for Chatsworth a covering for the wonderful flower, *Victoria Regia*, five feet in diameter. But our Lily of the Valley shall need no shelter from the blast, and in the open gardens of God shall put forth its full bloom, and

all heaven shall come to look at it, and its aroma shall be as though the cherubim had swung before the throne a thousand censers. I have not seen it yet. I am in a foreign land. But my Father is waiting for me to come home. I have brothers and sisters there. In the Bible I have letters from there, telling me what a fine place it is. It matters not much to me whether I am rich or poor, or whether the world hates me or loves me, or whether I go by land or by sea, if only I may lift my eyes at last on the family mansion. It is not a frail house, built in a month, soon to crumble, but an old mansion which is as firm as the day it was built. Its walls are grown with the ivy of many ages, and the urns at the gate-way are abloom with the century-plants of eternity. The Queen of Sheba hath walked its halls, and Esther, and Marie Antoinette, and Lady Huntingdon, and Wilberforce, and Cecil, and Jeremy Taylor, and Samuel Rutherford, and John Milton, and the widow who gave two mites, and the poor man from the hospital—these last two perhaps outshining all the kings and queens of eternity.

JANUARY SEVENTEENTH.

THE ANGELS GRASP.

“The men laid hold upon his hand.”—GEN. xix. 16.

THE text suggests *urgency on the part of all those who would induce people out of their sins*. Why was not the angel more polite? Why did not he coolly and formally invite Lot and his wife to leave that city? The angel, so far from that, seized hold of him, pulled him out, pushed him on with irresistible force. The angel was in earnest. Oh, does not the world, looking upon us and seeing our coldness, come to the conclusion that we do not believe what we say? If

unpardoned men were in such peril as the Bible says they are, and we believe it, would we be such precisionists, so cold, and stolid, and unemotional? Suppose a blind man were on a rail-track, and you saw a train coming, would you go up to him and say: "My dear friend, a machine commonly called a locomotive, invented by James Watt, is making very rapid revolutions towards the place where you are, and unless you change your course of pedestrianism, it will be soon decided which of the two is the stronger?" Would you do that? Ah, no; men are not so stolid about temporal peril. You would cry: "*Get out of the way! The cars are coming!*" And yet when it is spiritual danger we use so much circumlocution, and so much caution, and come with so timid a tread towards the place where men are imperilled, that they actually don't believe we think there is peril, although there are spiritual and eternal disasters coming on in long trains flying as swiftly as the hours, swiftly as the minutes, swiftly as the seconds, ready to crush forever. If we realized it, would not we stamp our foot, and cry: "man immortal, look out for eternity!"

If there be no danger in rejecting Christ, we might as well drop our anxiety; but if there is danger, let us cry the alarm. The world knows at this day that we who profess the faith of Christ, standing in our prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, and pulpits, act as if religion were a fiction. Oh, for something of the urgency of the angel that came to Lot; not coolly discussing with him the chemical properties of the storm that was coming, but laying hold of him with both hands, pulling him on, pushing him out, and crying with an emphasis that must have sent him at the top of his speed: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

*JANUARY EIGHTEENTH.***DOUBTING.**

“Neither be ye of doubtful mind.”—LUKE xii. 29.

DOUBTS and fears have in our day been almost elected to the parliament of Christian graces. Some consider it a bad sign not to have any doubts. Doubts and fears are not signs of health, but festers and carbuncles. You have a valuable house or farm. It is suggested that the title is not good. You employ counsel. You have the deeds examined. You search the record for mortgages, judgments, and liens. You are not satisfied until you have a certificate, signed by the great seal of the State, assuring you that the title is good. Yet how many leave their title to heaven an undecided matter! Why do you not go to the records and find out? Give yourselves no rest, day or night, until you can read your title clear to mansions in the skies.

Christian character is to come up to higher standards. We have now to hunt through our library to find one Robert M'Cheyne, or one Edward Payson, or one Harlan Page. The time will come when we will find half a dozen of them sitting in the same seat with us. The grace of God can make a great deal better men than those I have mentioned. Christians seem afraid they will get heterodox by going too far. They do not believe in Christian perfection. There is no danger of your being perfect for some time yet. I will keep watch, and give you notice in time, if you get too near perfection for the safety of your theology. One-half of you

Christians are simply stuck in the mud. Why not cut loose from everything but God? Give not to Him that formal petition made up of "O's" — "O Lord!" this, and "O Lord!" that. When people are cold, and have, nothing to say to God, they strew their prayers with O's!" and "Forever and ever, Amen," and things to fill up. Tell God what you want, with the feeling that He is ready to give it, and believe that you will receive, and you shall have it. Shed that old prayer you have been making these ten years. It is high time that you outgrew it. Throw it aside with your old ledgers, and your old hats, and your old shoes. Take a review of your present wants, of your present sins, and of your present blessings. With a sharp blade cut away your past half-and-half Christian life, and with new determination, and new plans, and new expectations, *launch out into the deep.*

JANUARY NINETEENTH.

BREAD FOR FAMINES.

"To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria."—2 KINGS vii. 1.

I LEARN from the scene in Samaria *how God provides bread to stop a famine.* If God had opened the gate that morning, and but a few loaves of bread had come in, it would have been a mercy. But lo! the flour *pours* in. Every possible vehicle is employed in bringing it. What is in that pail? Flour. What is in that sack? Flour. What is piled up in the markets? Flour. So common that it is cheap. A peck for five shillings!

You know that all the nations are famine-struck by sin. They are dying for bread. Here comes through the gates a glorious supply—not one loaf, but an abundance for all, par-

don for all, strength for all, sympathy for all! Will you have this bread that came down from heaven, and which if a man eat he shall never hunger?

God stopped Samaria's famine, not with coarse meal, but the text says *fine flour*; so the Bread of Life, with which God would appease our hunger, is made of the best material. It is not the ground-up coarse cobs of morality, mingled with a little grace, but it is a fine Gospel—an unadulterated Gospel—a pure Gospel. Jesus was fine in His life, fine in His sympathies, fine in His promises. It means no coarse supply when Jesus offers Himself to the people, saying, "I am the Bread of Life." "Fine flour for a shekel!"

Effort has been made to feed those spiritually dying with the poesies of rhetoric, and the sugar-plums of spiritualism, and the confectionery of sentimentalism. Our theology has been sweetened, and sweetened, and sweetened, until it is as sweet ipecacuanha, and as nauseating to the regenerated soul. What the people need is *Bread*—just as God mixes it—unsweetened, plain, homely, unpretending, yet life-sustaining bread. That you must have, oh, dying soul. Better the smallest crumb of this that ever fell from the Master's table than everything the world can give you.

JANUARY TWENTIETH.

CHRIST'S INDUSTRY.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—JOHN v. 17.

THE spirit of Christ was *the spirit of work*. There was not a lazy moment in all His life. Whether he was talking to the fishermen on the beach, or preaching to the sailors on the deck, or addressing the rustics amid the mountains, or spending the summer evenings in the village, He was always

busy. Hewing in the carpenter's shop. Helping the lame man to walk without any crutch. Curing the child's fits. Providing rations for a hungry host. Always busy, He was. The hardy men that pulled out the net from Gennesaret, full of floundering treasures ; the shepherds who hunted up the grassy plots for their flocks to nibble at ; the shipwright thumping away in the dock-yards ; the wine-makers of En-gedi dipping up the juice from the vat and pouring it into the goat-skins—none were half so busy as He whose hands and head and heart were all full of the world's work. From the day on which He stepped out from the caravansery of Bethlehem to the day when He set His cross in the socket on the bloody mount, it was work, work, work all the way. It is not so with us, not so with you, not so with me. We want the burden to be light if we are to carry it, the church pew soft if we are to sit in it, the work easy if we are to perform it, the sphere brilliant if we are to move in it, the religious service short if we are to survive it. On the way to heaven, rock us, fan us, sing us to sleep, dandle us on the tips of your fingers, hand us up out of this dusty world towards heaven on kid gloves and under a silken sunshade! Let the martyrs who waded the flood and breasted the fire get out of the way while this colony of tender footed Brooklyn Christians come up to get their crown! Oh, for more of that spirit which starts a man heavenward, determined to get there himself and take everybody else with him! Busy in the private circle, busy in the Sabbath-school, busy in the Church, busy everywhere for God and Christ and heaven. O Christian soul, what has Jesus done against thee that thou hast betrayed Him! Who gave thee so much riches that thou canst afford to despise the awards of the faithful? At this moment, when all the armies of earth and heaven and hell are plunging into the conflict, how can you desert the standard?

*JANUARY TWENTY-FIRST.***THE BEARER OF INIQUITIES.**

“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”—Is. liii. 6.

I AM glad the prophet did not waste any time in telling us who he meant by “Him.” It is Him of the manger. Him of the bloody sweat. Him of the crucifixion agony, Him of the resurrection throne. “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Says some one: “That is not generous. Let every one bear his own burdens.” And there is something in that. If I owe a debt, and I have money to pay it, and I come to you and ask you to cancel my obligation, you would be right in saying to me: “Pay your own debts.” If I am walking along the street with you, and we are both hale and hearty, and I want you to carry me, you are right in saying: “Walk on your own feet.” But suppose you and I were in a regiment together, and I were fearfully wounded in the battle, and I fell unconscious at your feet with gun-shot fractures and dislocations, five bullets having struck me at once—you would say to your comrades: “Here, this man is helpless. Let us carry him out to the ambulance; let us take him out to the hospital.” And you would take me up in your arms, and I would be a dead weight, and you would beckon to the corps of the ambulance: “Bring your wagon around this way, and take this man up to the hospital.” You would put me in the ambulance, and you would have done your duty. Would it have been mean to let you carry me then? You certainly would not have been so unkind as not to carry me. Now, that is Christ

to the soul. If we could pay our spiritual obligations we might go up to God and say: "Lord, there is so much debt, and here I have the means with which to cancel it. Now cross it all out." The debt is paid. But the fact is we are pierced through and through with the sabres of sin. We have gone down under the hot fire, and we are helpless and undone. We will die on the field unless some help comes to us. God sends His ambulance, yea, He dispatches his only son to carry us out and bind up our gashes and take us home. "On Him, on Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all." Oh, my friends, we were a dead weight in Christ's arms; all our sins about us; all our chains on us. If Christ raises us at all it will not be by the tips of the fingers, it will not be with one arm; it will be by getting down one on knee and putting around us His omnipotent arms and throwing all the energy of His Godhead into one dead lift, that He will raise us up to honor and glory and immortality. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND.

THE ODOROUS GARMENTS OF CHRIST.

"All thy garments smell of myrrh."—Ps. xlv. 8.

YOUR curiosity is to know why the robes of Christ are odorous with myrrh. This was a bright leaved Abyssinian plant. It was tri-foliated. The Greeks, Egyptians, Romans and Jews bought and sold it at a high price. The first present that was given to Christ was a sprig of myrrh thrown on his infantile bed in Bethlehem; and the last gift that Christ ever had was myrrh pressed into the cup of his crucifixion. The natives would take a stone and bruise the tree, and then there would

exude a gum that would saturate all the ground beneath. This gum was used for purposes of merchandise. One piece of it, no larger than a chestnut, would whelm a whole room with odors. It was put in closets, in chests, in drawers, in rooms, and its perfume adhered almost interminably to almost anything that was anywhere near it. So, when in my text I read that Christ's garments smell of myrrh, I immediately conclude the exquisite sweetness of Jesus. I know that to many He is only like any historical person. Another John Howard. Another Frederick Oberland. Another Confucius. A grand subject for painting. A heroic theme for a poem. A beautiful form for a statue. But to those who have heard His voice and felt His pardon and received His benediction, He is music and light and warmth and thrill and eternal fragrance. Sweet as a friend sticking to you when all else betray. Lifting you up while others try to push you down. Not so much like morning-glories, that bloom only when the sun is coming up, nor like "four o'clocks," that bloom only when the sun is going down; but like myrrh, perpetually aromatic, the same morning, noon, and night, yesterday, to-day, forever.

There is no name like His for us. It is more imperial than Cæsar's, more musical than Beethoven's, more conquering than Charlemagne's, more eloquent than Cicero's. It throbs with all life. It weeps with all pathos. It groans with all pain. It stoops with all condescension. It breathes with all perfume. Who like Jesus to set a broken bone, to pity a houseless orphan, to nurse a sick man, to take a prodigal back without any scolding, to illuminate a cemetery all ploughed with graves, to make a queen unto God out of the lost woman of the street, to catch the tears of human sorrow in a lachrymal that shall never be broken? Who has such an eye to see our need, such a lip to kiss away our sorrow, such a hand to snatch us out of the fire, such a foot to trample our enemies, such a heart to embrace all our necessities? I struggle for.

some metaphor with which to express Him. He is not like the bursting forth of a full orchestra ; that is too loud. He is not like the sea when lashed to rage by the tempest ; that is too boisterous. He is not like the mountain, its brow wreathed with the lightnings ; that is too solitary. Give us a softer type, a gentler comparison. We have seemed to see Him with our eyes and to hear Him with our ears and to touch Him with our hands. Oh, that to-day He might appear to some other one of our five senses. Aye, the nostril shall discover His presence. He comes upon us like spice gales from heaven. Yea, His garments smell of pungent, lasting, and all pervasive myrrh.

JANUARY TWENTY-THIRD.

PRAYER THE MIGHTIEST OF ALL REMEDIES.

“ I have heard thy prayer ; Behold, I will heal thee. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.—2 KINGS xx. 5, 7.

LUXURIOUS living is not healthy. The second generation of kings and queens, and lords and princes, is apt to be brainless and invalid. The second crop of grass is almost always short. Royal blood is generally scrofulous. You will not be surprised, then, to hear that King Hezekiah had disorders which broke out in a carbuncle, virulent and deathful. The Lord told him he must die : he did not want to die. He turned his face to the wall, so that his prayer would not be interrupted, and cried to God for his life. God heard the prayer and answered it, saying, “ Behold, I will heal thee.” But there was human instrumentality to be employed. This carbuncle needed a *cataplasm*, which is a poultice. Your old mother, who doctored her own children in the time when physicians were not as plenty as they are now, will tell you

that the very best poultice is a fig, and that was what was used upon the carbuncle of King Hezekiah. The power of God, accompanied by this human instrumentality, cured the king. I want to tell you that prayer is the mightiest of all remedies, and the allopathic, and homœopathic, and the eclectic schools will yet acknowledge it. Here are two cases of sickness precisely alike: the same kind of medicine is given to both of them, and in the same quantities. The one patient recovers and the other does not. Why? God blesses the one remedy, and does not bless the other. Prayer has helped many a blundering doctor through with a case that would have been otherwise completely unmanageable. There is such a thing as Gospel hygiene, as Christian pharmacy, as divine *meteria medica*. That is a foolish man who, in case of sickness, goes only to human resources, when we have these instances of the Lord's help in a sick-room. Before you call the doctor, while he is there, and after he goes away, look up to Him who cured Hezekiah. Let the apothecary send the poultice, but God makes it draw. Oh! I am glad to have a doctor who knows how to pray. God send salvation to all the doctors! Sickness would be oftener balked, death would oftener be hurled back from the door-sill, if medical men came into the sick-room, like Isaiah of the text, with a prescription in their hands, and the word of the Lord in their mouths.

*JANUARY TWENTY-FOURTH.***FOLLOWING OTHERS.**

“Be ye not conformed to this world.”—ROM. xii. 2.

WE judge of what we ought to have by what other people have. If they have a sumptuous table, and fine residence, and gay-turn out, and exquisite apparel, and brilliant surroundings, we must have them, irrespective of our capacity to stand the expense. We throw ourselves down in despair because other people have a seal-skin coat, and we have an ordinary one ; because others have diamonds, and we have garnets ; because others have Axminster, and we have Brussels ; because others have lambrequins, and we have plain curtains. What others have we mean to have anyhow. So there are families hardly able to pay their rent, and in debt to every merchant in the neighborhood, who sport apparel inapt for their circumstances, and run so near the shore that the first misfortune in business or the first besiegement of sickness tosses them into pauperism. There are thousands of families moving from neighborhood to neighborhood, staying long enough in each one to exhaust all their capacity to get trusted. They move away because the druggists will give them no more medicine, and the butchers will afford them no more meat, and the bakers will give them no more bread, and the grocers will furnish them with no more sugar until they pay up. Then they suddenly find out that the neighborhood is unhealthy, and they hire a cartman, whom they never pay, to take them to a part of the city where all the druggists and butchers and bakers and grocers will be glad to see them

come in, and sending to them the best rounds of beef, and the best coffee, and the best of everything, until the slight suspicion comes into their brain that all the pay they will ever get from their customer is the honor of his society. There are about five thousand such thieves in Brooklyn. You see I call it by a plain name, because when a man buys a thing that he does not expect to pay for he is a thief.

There are circumstances where men cannot meet their obligations. It is as honest for some men to fail as it is for other men to succeed. They do their best, and through the misfortunes of life they are thrown, and they cannot pay their debts. That is one thing ; but when you go and purchase an article for which you know there is no probability of your ever making recompense, you are a villain !

JANUARY TWENTY-FIFTH.

THE UNFAITHFUL NINE.

“ Were there not ten cleansed ? but where are the nine.”—LUKE xvii. 17.

THERE are ten lepers going to be inspected by the health officer at Jerusalem, when, by one flash of miraculous power from the heart of Christ, their sores dry up ; their feet, that could not touch the ground without pain, become transient ; their faces, which were written all over with hieroglyphics of cancer and elephantiasis, become the pictures of intelligence and health. Oh, how thankful they will be ! They will clap their hands, and they will say : “ Where is Christ ? I must rush into His presence with loud acclaim. I must tell everybody about this cure. If Christ has never had a bed to sleep on, then I will prepare Him a pillow ; if He has never had a home, then I will build Him a house. What can I do

for this physician that has cured my leprosy." No, they go on; only one of the ten turns back to give God the glory. No wonder that while Jesus lovingly acknowledged the grateful behavior of the one man, He flung his disapprobation and indignation at all the rest, crying: "Were there not ten cleansed? *but where are the nine?*" Well, it is just so now: in all the churches there is a great number of ingrates who have been changed by the grace of God, who have been cured of the leprosy, but have never dared to say so. Privately ask them: "Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Yes." Privately say to them: "If you were to die to-night where would you go?" "To heaven." Privately say to them: "Have you been cured of your spiritual diseases?" They would say: "Yes, I think I have." Publicly they have never said anything about it. When communion day arrives, here and there one comes back, and in the presence of men, angels, and devils espouses the cause of Christ publicly, but the rest go the other way. So that every pastor on communion-day may wave his hand over the table, and say: "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"

These spiritual defaulters are playing hide and seek in religion. They are trying to smuggle their souls into heaven. Cleansed of the leprosy, they are ashamed or afraid to tell who their doctor was; skulking in and out amid excuses which will stand them neither on the death-bed nor in the day of judgment. Oh, that after Christ has done so much for them, they should do so little for Christ. Christ took their leprosy; they are not willing to take His name. Oh, the ingratitude, the perfidy, the abhorrent iniquity of that man who has been changed by the grace of God, but does not say so.

*JANUARY TWENTY-SIXTH.***A MORE CONVENIENT SEASON.**

“Not yet, go thy way for this time ; when I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee.”—ACTS xxiv. 25.

DELILAH sheared the locks of Samson ; Salome danced Herod into the pit ; Drusilla blocked up the way to heaven for Felix ; and unless some of you repent, you shall likewise perish. Yet when I present the subject, I fear that some of you will say : “ Not quite yet. Don’t be so precipitate in your demands. I have a few tickets yet that I have to use. I have a few engagements that I must keep. I want to stay a little longer in the whirl of conviviality—a few more guffaws of unclean laughter, a few more steps on the road to death, and then, sir, I will listen to what you say. ‘ Go thy way for this time ; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.’ ” Do you know that your boat is on the edge of the maelstrom, and that the foam on the wave is the frothing lip of the destroyed ; and that the gleam in the water is the glaring eyeballs of the banished ; and that the roar of the wave is the groan of the damned ? Oh ! I know that it is a great deal easier, when you are in a boat, to pull ahead the same way you are going ; but if you see that you are within a few yards of the vortex, and that this may be your last hour—aye, your last moment, you had better turn around in the boat, you had better clutch with both hands the handles of the oars, as with a death grip, and putting the blades down into the black waters, pull for your eternal life, crying, “ Lord, save me, I perish ! ” Can you not offer such a prayer, O man ! long wandering away from your God ? Who is that I see running up and down in the prison-

house of the lost, now trying to break through this gate, and failing, turning around and rushing to the other gate, and beating against it, and in despair crying, "Let me get out?" Who is it? Some soul that cannot give up his indulgences; some soul that is bound hand and foot by the powers of darkness; some soul that has a darling sin that he cannot sacrifice, and who says to me, when I present the great themes of God and eternity to his soul: "Not yet; go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

JANUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH.

SHUT IN THE ARK.

"The Lord shut him in."—GEN. vii. 16.

OH, the perfect *safety* of the ark! The surf of the sea and the lightnings of the sky may be twisted into a garland of snow and fire—deep to deep, storm to storm, darkness to darkness; but once in the ark, all is well. "God shut him in."

There comes upon the good man a deluge of financial trouble. He had his thousands to lend; now he cannot borrow a dollar. He once owned a store in New York, and had branch houses in Boston, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. He owned four horses, and employed a man to keep the dust off his coach, phaeton, carriage, and curricule; now he has hard work to get shoes in which to walk. The great deep of commercial disaster has broken up, and fore, and aft, and across the hurricane-deck, the waves struck him. But he was safely sheltered from the storm. "*The Lord shut him in!*" A flood of domestic troubles fell on him. Sickness and bereavement came. The rain pelted. The winds blew. The heavens are aflame.

All the gardens of earthly delight are washed away. The mountains of joy are buried fifteen cubits deep. But, standing by the empty crib, and in the desolated nursery, and in the doleful hall, once aring with merry voices, now silent forever, he cried: "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "*The Lord shut him in.*" All the sins of a lifetime clamored for his overthrow. The broken vows, the dishonored Sabbaths, the outrageous profanities, the misdemeanors of twenty years, reached up their hands to the door of the ark to pull him out. The boundless ocean of his sin surrounded his soul, howling like a simoom, raving like an euroclydon. But, looking out of the window, he saw his sins sink like lead into the depths of the sea. The dove of heaven brought an olive-branch to the ark. The wrath of the billow only pushed him towards heaven. "*The Lord shut him in!*"

JANUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH.

JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON.

"So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon."—
JEREMIAH xxxviii. 13.

THE story of how Jeremiah got out of the dungeon you may not fully understand. He had sunk in the mire well up towards his neck. There was a black man by the name of Ebed-melech who went to the king and plead for the deliverance of Jeremiah. Having obtained the king's permission, Ebed-melech, with others went to lift the prophet out. No door was to be opened, but the prophet is to be raised bodily out of the pit. Ebed-melech knows that a rope around the prophet's body will hurt him without some padding placed under the rope. Ebed-melech finds, under

the "safe," in the palace, a few rags that he takes with him to the pit, and throws them in. Jeremiah puts on these rags under his arms, then fastens the rope around his own body, and Ebed-melech begins the work of resurrection. We think without any hurt or abrasion the prophet is lifted out of the prison.

Now we may not literally have ever been incarcerated, but who has never by reason of spiritual depression been cast into a dungeon. Depressed physical health sometimes does this work. Overwork or indigestion has left some of you in the mire. You think God has forsaken you, and your title to heaven has been forfeited, and every thing looks dark. My friend, you want a dose of medicine, or a few days' rest. We think as soon as your body gets right your soul will be right. But we cannot tell what put you in the dungeon. We simply know that some of you are there. We would rather take the place of Ebed-melech, and try to pull you out.

Notice how kindly and gently that man helped Jeremiah. He did not jerk him out, or lift him out by the hair of the head, but, having provided rags for the arms-pits, he gently and carefully hoisted him. In like manner let us help lift the depressed brother that may be in the mire. Let us all lay hold and give him a lift. Let us tell him the cheerful promises of God. Let us sing him a few glad songs. Let us tell how God has delivered us, and is willing to help him.

We think one of the chief works of the Church is to imitate Ebed-melech in hoisting good people out of the dungeon. Do not be rough with them. Do not scold them. Ebed-melech did not throw the rags at the prophet's head. He dropped it in to be put under the arm pits. All sarcasm in such cases is out of place. Do not bruise the man with a harsh rope. You will be in the dungeon yourself some time, and will know the worth of gentleness.

Oh, for sympathy among Christians, for a multiplication of Ebed-melechs! Let us bear each other's burdens, sooth

each other's sorrows, open each other's dungeons. The Church is not so much in need of "sons of thunder" as "sons of consolation."

JANUARY TWENTY-NINTH.

AFFLICTION A FORGE.

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted."—Ps. cxix. 71.

GOD'S children, in time of prosperity, when the sun shines warmly upon them, unbuckle the robe of their Christian graces and let them hang loosely about them; but when trouble blows a north-easter, then they wrap around them their Christian graces, and tighten the girdle. Troubles may come to us, thick as the locusts and frogs of Egypt, but they will only make sin—that old Pharaoh—let God's people go.

The dark cloud may hover over us, but the cross of Christ will be the lightning-rod that will take the bolt out of it. You have seen people invalids, and after awhile, under some tremendous stroke of disease, their entire temperament seemed changed, and they came out of that sudden sickness strong men. So it is with many of those going along invalids in the Christian life—very weak in the service of God. After they have passed through some great disaster, that disaster having been sanctified to their souls, they become strong men in Christ Jesus. These Christians, who are swarthy now—do you know how they got their swarthinness? It was by sweltering at the forge of affliction. Their battle-axe was dull enough until it was sharpened on a grave-stone.

"Amidst the various scenes of ills,
 Each stroke some kind design fulfils;
 And shall I murmur at my God,
 When sovereign love directs the rod?"

“Peace, rebel thoughts! I’ll not complain,
 My Father’s smiles suspend my pain;
 Smiles that a thousand joys impart,
 And pours the balm that heals the smart.”

JANUARY THIRTIETH.

CHRIST BOUGHT US.

“Ye are bought with a price.”—1 COR. vi. 20.

GENERAL FISK says that he once stood at a slave-block where an old Christian minister was being sold. The auctioneer said of him, “What bid do I hear for this man? He is a very good kind of a man; he is a minister.” Somebody said “twenty dollars” (he was very old and not worth much); somebody else “twenty-five”—“thirty”—“thirty-five”—“forty.” The aged Christian minister began to tremble; he had expected to be able to buy his own freedom, and he had just seventy dollars, and expected with the seventy dollars to get free. As the bids ran up the old man trembled more and more. “Forty”—“forty-five”—“fifty”—“fifty-five”—“sixty”—“sixty-five.” The old man cried out “*Seventy.*” He was afraid they would outbid him. The men around were transfixed. Nobody dared bid; and the auctioneer struck him down to himself—done—done!

But by reason of sin we are poorer than that African. We cannot buy our own deliverance. The voices of death are bidding for us, and they bid us in, and they bid us down. But the Lord Jesus Christ comes and says, “I will buy that man; I bid for him my Bethlehem manger; I bid for him my hunger on the mountain; I bid for him my aching head; I bid for him my fainting heart; I bid for him all my wounds.” A voice from the throne of God says, “It is enough! Jesus has

bought him." Bought with a price. The purchase complete. It is done.

"The great transaction's done ;
I am my Lord's, and He is mine.
He drew me, and I follow'd on,
Charm'd to confess the voice divine."

Why, is not a man free when He gets rid of his sins? The sins of the tongue gone ; the sins of action gone ; the sins of the mind gone. All the transgressions of thirty, forty, fifty, seventy years gone—no more in the soul than the malaria that floated in the atmosphere a thousand years ago ; for when my Lord Jesus pardons a man He pardons him, and there is no half-way work about it.

JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST.

THE BITTERNESS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

"All thy garments smell of myrrh and *aloes*."—Ps. xlix. 9.

THERE is some difference of opinion about where these aloes grew, what is the color of the flower, what is the particular appearance of the herb. Suffice it for you and me to know that aloes mean bitterness all the world over ; and when Christ comes with garments bearing that particular odor, they suggest to me the bitterness of a Saviour's sufferings. Were there ever such nights as Jesus lived through—nights on the mountain, nights on the sea, nights in the desert? Who ever had such a hard reception as Jesus had? A hostelry the first, an unjust trial in oyer and terminer another, a foul-mouthed, yelling mob the last. Was there a space on His back as wide as your two fingers where He was not whipped? Was there a space on His brow an inch square where He was

not cut of the briers? When the spike struck at the instep, did it not go clear through to the hollow of the foot? Oh, long, deep, bitter pilgrimage! Aloes! aloes!

John leaned his head on Christ; but who did Christ lean on? Five thousand men fed by the Saviour; who fed Jesus? The sympathy of a Saviour's heart going out to the leper and the adulteress; but who soothed Christ? Denied both cradle and death-bed, He had a fit place neither to be born nor to die. A poor babe, a poor lad, a poor young man! Not so much as a taper to cheer His dying hours; even the candle of the sun snuffed out. Oh, was it not all aloes? Our sins, sorrows, bereavements, losses, and all the agonies of earth and hell picked up as in one cluster and squeezed into one cup, and that pressed to His lip until the acrid, nauseating, bitter draught was swallowed with a distorted countenance and a shudder from head to foot, and a gurgling strangulation. Aloes, aloes! Nothing but aloes!

All this for Himself? All this to get the fame in the world of being a martyr? All this in a spirit of stubbornness, because he did not like Augustus? No, no. All this because He wanted to pluck you and me from hell. Because He wanted to raise you and me to heaven. Because we were lost and He wanted us found. Because we were blind and He wanted us to see. Because we were serfs and He wanted us manumitted. Oh, ye in whose cup of life the saccharine has predominated; oh, ye who have had bright and sparkling beverages, how do you feel towards Him who in your stead and to purchase your disenfranchisement took the aloes, the unsavory aloes, the bitter aloes?

*FEBRUARY FIRST.***WATCH.**

“Watch ye.”—1 COR. xvi. 15.

HOW long it takes you to lock up your store at night. You put your valuables in the safe, you shove the door shut, you turn the lock, you try it afterwards to be sure it is fastened, you bolt and rebolt your doors. You have a watchman, perhaps, at the store. You charge the police when they go up and down, once in a while to look in. In addition to that, perhaps, you have a burglar alarm, so that the opening of a window or a door in the night, with a great rattle, will wake up the watchman.

Would to God that we were as wise in regard to spiritual burglaries. There are a thousand temptations around about our soul ready to blow it up; ready to blast it; ready to shove the bolt and steal the infinite and immortal treasure. The apostle says: “What I say unto one, I say unto all—watch!” That is, look out for burglars. Here comes a thief stealing our Christian belief, and it is very easy to lose it, but it is not so easy to get it back again. Let it once be gone, and all the detectives on earth cannot fetch it back. Alas for the man who once believing in Christianity now rejects it! He tries to be satisfied, and he tries to make you believe he is satisfied; but the most doleful thing on earth is a religion without Jesus Christ in it. If there are any spies at the door of your heart, if any of those burglars are trying to break in the windows of your soul, you had better fly at them with infinite vehemence, and ask the Lord God to help you in the arrest.

Here is another trying to break in and steal your patience. It puts something explosive in your temper and tries to blow it up. Here you have a casket of diamonds made of days and hours and months of precious time. Oh, how many burglars there are around trying to steal those diamonds.

“ My soul, be on thy guard,
 Ten thousand foes arise,
 And hosts of sin are pressing hard
 To draw thee from the skies.
 Ne'er think the victory won,
 Nor once at ease sit down,
 Thine arduous work will not be done
 Till thou hast got thy crown.”

FEBRUARY SECOND.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM.

“ And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom.”—MATT. xvi. 22.

LAZARUS was carried up to the bosom of Abraham, one of the glorious old prophets. I suppose Abraham happened to meet him at the gate. And so, after death, we will be greeted into glory. Our departed friends will be at the door. They have been waiting for our coming. Count up their number if you can. Your father is there. Your mother is there. Your children are there. Your old neighbors are there. Many of the friends with whom you used to attend church, or do business, are there. They have been dead these five, ten, or twenty years, and have been waiting within the veil. There is no clock in heaven, because it is an everlasting day; yet they keep an account of the passing years, because they are all the time hearing from our world. The angels flying through heaven report how many times the earth has turned

on its axis, and in that way the angels can keep a diary ; and they say it is almost time now for father to come up, or for mother to come up. Some day they see a cohort leaving heaven, and they say, "Whither bound?" and the answer is, "To bring up a soul from earth ;" and the question is asked, "What soul?" And a family circle in heaven find that it is one of their own number that is to be brought up, and they come out to watch, as on the beach we now watch for the sail of a ship that is to bring our friends home. After a while the cohort will heave in sight, flying nearer and nearer, until with a great clang the gates hoist, and with an embrace, wild with the ecstasy of heaven, old friends meet again.

Away with your stiff, formal heaven ! I want none of it. Give me a place of infinite and eternal sociality. My feet free from the clods of earth, I shall bound the hills with gladness, and break forth in a laugh of triumph. Aha ! aha ! We weep now, but then we shall laugh. "Abraham's bosom," in the text, means that Heaven has open arms to take us in. Now we fold our arms over our heart, and tell the world to stand back, as though our bosom was a two-barred gate to keep the world out. Heaven stands not with folded arms, but with heart open. It is "Abraham's bosom."

FEBRUARY THIRD.

GOING HEAVENWARD.

"And shall let the living bird loose into the open field."—LEV. xiv. 7.

I NOTICE that this bird when it was loosened *flew away*. Which way did it go? When you let a bird loose from your grasp, which way does it fly? Up. What are wings for? To fly with. Is there anything in the suggestion of the

direction taken by that bird to indicate which way we ought to go ?

“ Rise my soul, and stretch thy wings,
 Thy better portion trace ;
 Rise from transitory things
 To heaven, thy native place.”

We should be going heavenward. That is the suggestion. But I know that we have a great many drawbacks. You had them this morning, perhaps. You had them yesterday, or the day before ; and although you want to be going heavenward, you are constantly discouraged. But I suppose when that bird went out of the priest's hands it went by inflections—sometimes stooping. A bird does not shoot directly up, but *this* is the motion of a bird. So the soul soars towards God, rising up in love, and sometimes depressed by trial. It does not always go in the direction it would like to go. But the main course is right. There is one passage in the Bible which I quote oftener to myself than any other : “ He knoweth our frame, and He remembereth that we are dust.”

There is a legend in Iceland which says that when Jesus was a boy, playing with His comrades one Sabbath day, He made birds of clay ; and as these birds of clay were standing upon the ground, an old Sadducee came along, and he was disgusted at the sport, and dashed the birds to pieces ; but the legend says that Jesus waved His hand above the broken birds, and they took wing and went singing heavenward. Of course that is a fable among the Icelanders ; but it is not a fable that we are dust, and that, the hand of divine grace waved over us once, we go singing towards the skies.

FEBRUARY FOURTH.

WE FIGHT NOT ALONE.

"Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."—HEB. xii. 1.

YOU fight in an arena, around which circle, in galleries above each other, all the kindling eyes and all the sympathetic hearts of the ages ; and at every victory gained there comes down the thundering applause of a great multitude that no man can number. "*Being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.*"

On the first elevation of the ancient amphitheatre, on the day of a celebration, sat Tiberius, or Augustus, or the reigning king. So, in the great arena of spectators that watch our struggles, and in the first divine gallery, as I shall call it, sits *our King, one Jesus*. On His head are many crowns ! The Roman emperor got his place by cold-blooded conquests ; but our King hath come to His place by the broken hearts healed, and the tears wiped away, and the souls redeemed. The Roman emperor sat, with folded arms, indifferent as to whether the swordsman or the lion beat ; but our King's sympathies are all with us. Nay, unheard-of condescension ! I see Him come down from the gallery into the arena to help us in the fight, shouting until all up and down His voice is heard : "Fear not ! I will help thee ! I will strengthen thee by the right hand of my power !"

They gave to the men in the arena, in the olden time, food to thicken their blood, so that it would flow slowly, and that for a longer time the people might gloat over the scene. But

our King has no pleasure in our wounds, for we are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, blood of His blood.

“In all the anguish of our heart,
The Man of Sorrows bore a part.”

FEBRUARY FIFTH.

COLDNESS.

“The love of many shall wax cold.”—*MATT. xxii. 2.*

IT is a simple fact that we have very few specimens of eminent Christian character in our day. We are apt to be contented with being just about what our fellows are. If they have gained fifteen degrees of spiritual life, we want just fifteen degrees and no more. We look at some man moderately consistent in the Church of God, and we say, “If I could only have his faith, I would be satisfied; If I could only have his consecration to God, that would do.” And we struggle on a little until we come to that plane, and stop and seat ourselves in some prayer-meeting, and look around and find ourselves about as good as the ordinary run. We need, my Christian brethren, to recognize the fact that there is all around about us in this day a depressed religious atmosphere. There are no persons in the Church of God at this day, if there ever have been, whom we can afford to copy. I remember very well, when at school, if the master made a mistake in the copy plate, I made the same mistake all the way down on every line, to the bottom of the page. And depend upon it, when we attempt to copy any man’s Christian character, we copy all the slips, all the faults, and all the deficits. There is only one great example, and that is the example of Jesus Christ, so perfect that it is beyond all criticism, and the

nearer we come to that the nearer we come to a thorough consecration to God.

I will say that if there were in your employ in the store a boy so unfaithful to your interests as we have been to our Master, you would not have patience with him for a single week. After the first day you would have discharged him. You would have said to such an one: "You have no regard for my interests. I am certain that you can never faithfully serve me with your ideas of what is right in a store." Yet God has sent us out in the world. He has offered us the largest wages; He has told us our chief business is to serve Him; and yet at what a very poor rate we have gone on in His service. I think the very first thing to do is to explore our own spiritual beggary. I think the Church of Christ will never march to a higher standard of Christian character until it finds out its own leanness in its present condition. Oh! for more faith and consecration. Instead of being satisfied when we have come up beside those who are just ordinary Christians in the Church, we must surpass them in our spirit of zeal, and in our faithfulness of service.

FEBRUARY SIXTH.

PRUDENCE.

"Woe unto them that are prudent in their own sight."—ISAIAH V. 2, 1.

O CHILD of God, arouse! We have apotheosized Prudence and Caution long enough. Prudence is a beautiful grace, but of all the family of Christian graces I like her the least, for she has been married so often to Laziness, Sloth and Stupidity. We have a million idlers in the Lord's vineyard who pride themselves on their prudence. "Be prudent,"

said the disciples to Christ, "and stay away from Jerusalem;" but He went. "Be prudent," said Paul's friends, "and look out for what you say to Felix," but he thundered away until the ruler's knees knocked together. In the eyes of the world, the most imprudent men that ever lived were Martin Luther, and John Oldcastle, and Bunyan, and Wesley, and Knox. My opinion is that the most imprudent and reckless thing is to stand still. It is well to hear our commander's voice when he says "Halt!" but quite as important to hear it when he says "Forward!" This Gospel ship, made to plough the sea at fifteen knots an hour, is not making three. Sometimes it is most prudent to ride your horse slowly and pick out the way for his feet, and not strike him with the spurs; but when a band of Shoshonee Indians are after you in full tilt, the most prudent thing for you to do is to plunge in the rowels and put your horse to a full run, shouting, "Go 'long!" until the Rocky Mountains echo it. The foes of God are pursuing us. The world, the flesh, and the devil are after us; and our wisest course is to go ahead at swiftest speed.

When the Church of God gets to advancing too fast, it will be time enough to use caution. No need of putting on the brakes while going up hill. Do not let us sit down waiting for something "to turn up," but go ahead, in the name of God, and *turn it up*. The great danger to the Church now is not sensation, but stagnation. Oh that the Lord God would send a host of aroused and consecrated men to set the Church on fire, and to turn the world upside down!

FEBRUARY SEVENTH.

TOUCHED WITH OUR INFIRMITIES.

“Touched with the feeling of our infirmities.—HEB. iv. 15.

THERE is no warmer Bible phrase than this: “*touched with the feeling of our infirmities.*” The Divine nature is so vast, and the human so small, that we are apt to think that they do not touch each other at any point. We might have never so many mishaps, the Government at Washington would not hear of them; and there are multitudes in Britain whose troubles Victoria never knows; but there is a Throne against which strike our most insignificant perplexities. What touches us, touches Christ. What annoys us, annoys Christ. What robs us, robs Christ. He is the great nerve-centre to which thrill all sensations which touch us who are His members.

He is touched with our *physical* infirmities. I do not mean that He merely sympathizes with a patient in collapse of cholera, or in the delirium of a yellow fever, or in the anguish of a broken back, but in all those annoyances that come from a disordered nervous condition. In our excited American life sound nerves are a scarcity. Human sympathy in the case we mention amounts to nothing. Your friends laugh at you and say that you have “the blues,” or “the high strikes,” or “the fidgets,” or “the dumps.” But Christ never laughs at the whims, the notions, the conceits, the weaknesses of the nervously disordered. Christ probably suffered in the same way, for He had lack of sleep, lack of rest, lack of right food, lack of shelter, and under this His finely strung temperament must have become (as we say) *nervous*.

He is also touched with the infirmities of our *prayers*. Nothing bothers the Christian more than the imperfection of his prayers. His getting down on his knees seems to be the signal for his thoughts to fly every-whither. While praying about one thing he is thinking about another. Could you ever keep your mind ten minutes on one supplication? We never could. While you are praying your stove comes in, your kitchen comes in, your losses and gains come in. The minister spreads his hands for prayer, and you put your head on the back of the pew in front, and travel round the world in five minutes.

Christ knows how much you have resisted, and how thoroughly we are disordered of sin, and He will pick out the one earnest petition from the rubbish and answer it. To the very depth of His nature He sympathizes with the infirmity of our prayers.

He is touched with the infirmity of our *temper*. There are some who, notwithstanding all that is said or done to them, can smile back. But many of you are so constructed, that if a man insults you, you either knock him down or wish you could. While with all resolution and prayer you resist this, remember that Christ knows how much you have been lied about, and misrepresented, and trod on. He knows that though you said something that was hot, you kept back something ten times hotter. He takes into account your explosive temperament. He knows that it requires more skill to drive a fiery span than a tame roadster. He knows how hard you put down the "brakes," and is touched with the feeling of your infirmity.

Christ also sympathizes with our poor efforts at doing good. Our work does not amount to much. We teach a class, or distribute a bundle of tracts, or preach a sermon, and say, "Oh, if I had done it some other way!" Christ will make no record of our bungling way if we did the best we could. He will make record of our intention, and the earnestness of our attempt.

FEBRUARY EIGHTH.

TRY HIM.

"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good."—Ps. xxxiv. 8.

I N the last day it will be found that Hugh Latimer, and John Knox, and Huss, and Ridley were not the greatest martyrs, but Christian men who went up incorrupt from the contaminations and perplexities of Wall Street, Water Street, Pearl Street, Broad Street, State Street, and Third Street. On earth they were called brokers, or stock-jobbers, or retailers, or importers ; but in heaven, *Christian heroes*. No fagots were heaped about their feet ; no Inquisition demanded from them recantation ; no soldier aimed a pike at their heart ; but they had *mental* tortures, compared with which all physical consuming is as the breath of a spring morning.

I find in the community a large class of men who have been so cheated, so lied about, so outrageously wronged, that they have lost their faith in everything. In a world where everything seems so topsy-turvy, they do not see how there can be any God. They are confounded, and frenzied, and misanthropic. Elaborate arguments to prove to them the truth of Christianity, or the truth of anything else, touch them nowhere. Hear me, all such men. I preach to you no rounded periods, no ornamental discourse ; but I put my hand on your shoulder, and invite you into the peace of the Gospel. Here is a rock on which you may stand firm, though the waves dash against it harder than the Atlantic, pitching its surf clear above Eddystone Light-house. Do not charge upon God all these troubles of the world. As long as the

world stuck to God, God stuck to the world ; but the earth seceded from His government, and hence all these outrages and all these woes. God is good. For many hundreds of years He has been coaxing the world to come back to him ; but the more He has coaxed, the more violent have men been in their resistance, and they have stepped back and stepped back until they have dropped into ruin.

Try this God, ye who have had the blood-hounds after you, and who have thought that God had forgotten you. Try Him, and see if He will not help. Try Him, and see if He will not pardon. Try Him, and see if He will not save. The flowers of spring have no bloom so sweet as the flowering of Christ's affections. The sun hath no warmth compared with the glow of His heart.

FEBRUARY NINTH.

IS THERESA RESURRECTION ?

“Marvel not at this ; for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth.”—*JOHN* v. 28, 29.

I KNOW there are a great many people who do not accept this because they cannot understand it ; but, my friends, there are two stout passages—I could bring a hundred—but two swarthy passages that are enough, and one David will strike down the largest Goliath. “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth.” The other swarthy passage is this : “The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall arise first.” Oh, there *will* be such a thing as a resurrection. You ask me a great many questions I cannot answer about this resurrection. You say, for instance : “If a man's body

is constantly changing, and every seventh year he has an entirely new body, and he lives on to seventy years of age, and so has had ten different bodies, and at the hour of his death there is not a particle of flesh within him that was there in the days of his childhood — in the resurrection, which of the ten bodies will come up, or will they all rise?" You say: "Suppose a man dies and his body is scattered in the dust, and out of that dust vegetables grow, and men eat the vegetables, and cannibals slay these men and eat them, and cannibals fight with cannibals until at last there shall be a hundred men who shall have within them some particles that started from the dead body first named, coming up through the vegetable, through the first man who ate it, and through the cannibals who afterwards ate him, and there be more than a hundred men who have rights in the particles of that body—in the resurrection how can they be assorted when these particles belong to them all? Who will be who?" You say: "There is a missionary buried in Greenwood, and when he was in China he had his arm amputated—in the resurrection, will that fragment of the body fly sixteen thousand miles to join the rest of the body?" You say: "Will it not be a very difficult thing for a spirit coming back in that day to find the myriad particles of its own body, when they may have been scattered by the winds or overlaid by whole generations of the dead—looking for the myriad particles of its own body, while there are a thousand million other spirits doing the same thing, and all the assortment to be made within one day?" You say: "If a hundred and fifty men go into a place of evening entertainment, and leave their hats and overcoats in the hall, when they come back it is almost impossible for them to get the right ones, or to get them without a great deal of perplexity. And yet you tell me that myriad myriads of spirits in the last day will come and find myriads and myriads and myriads of bodies." Have you any more questions to ask? any more difficulties to suggest? any more

mysteries? Bring them on! Against a whole battalion of skepticism I will march these two champions; "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth." "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." You see I stick to these two passages. Who art thou, oh fool, that thou repliest against God? Hath He promised, and shall He not do it? Hath He commanded, and shall He not bring it to pass? Have you not confidence in His omnipotence? If He could, in the first place, build my body after it is torn down, can He not build it again?

FEBRUARY TENTH.

OUR DEAR STILL OURS.

"Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth."—LUKE viii. 52.

I CONSOLE you with the divinely sanctioned idea that your departed friends are *as much yours now as they ever were*. I know you sometimes get the idea in your mind, when you have this kind of trouble, that your friends are cut off from you, and they are no longer yours; but the desire to have all our loved ones in the same lot in the cemetery is a natural desire, a universal desire, and, therefore, a God-implanted desire, and is mightily suggestive of the fact that death has no power to break up the family relations. If our loved ones go away from our possession, why put a fence around our lot in the cemetery? Why the gathering of four or five names on one family monument? Why the planting of one cypress-vine so that it covers all the cluster of graves? Why put the husband beside the wife and the children at their feet? Why

the bolt on the gate of our lot, and the charge to the keepers of the ground to see that the grass is cut and the vine attended to and the flowers planted? Why not put our departed friends in one common field of graves? Oh, it is because they are ours. That child, O stricken mother! is as much yours this morning as in the solemn hour when God put it against your heart, and said as of old, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." It is no mere whim. It is a divinely planted principle in the soul, and God certainly would not plant a lie and He would not culture a lie. Abraham would not allow Sarah to be buried in a stranger's grounds, although some very beautiful ground was offered him a free gift; but he pays four hundred shekels for Machpelah, the cave, and the trees overshadowing it. That grave has been well kept, and to-day the Christian traveller stands in thoughtful and admiring mood, gazing up Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah are taking their long sleep of four thousand years. Your father may be slumbering under the tinkling of the bell of the Scotch kirk. Your brother may have gone down in the ship that foundered off Cape Hatteras. Your little child may be sleeping on the verge of the flowering western prairie; yet God will gather them all up, however widely the dust may be scattered. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to think that we will be buried together. When my father died, and we took him out and put him down in the graveyard of Somerville, it did not seem so sad to leave him there, because right beside him was my dear, good, old, beautiful, Christian mother, and it seemed as if she said: "I was tired, and I came to bed a little early. I am glad you have come; it seems as of old." Oh, it is a consolation to feel that when men come, and with solemn tread carry you out to your resting-place, they will open the gate through which some of your friends have already gone, and through which many of your friends will follow. Sleeping under the same roof, at last sleeping under the same sod. Then at the trumpet of the

archangel to rise side by side, shaking themselves from the dust of ages. The faces that were ghastly and fixed when you saw them last all aflush with the light of incorruption. The father looking around on his children, and saying, "Come, come, my darlings, this is the morning of the resurrection." Mrs. Sigourney wrote beautifully with the tears and blood of her own broken heart :

"There was a shaded chamber,
 A silent and watching band,
 On a low couch a suffering child
 Grasping her mother's hand.
 But 'mid the gasp and struggle,
 With shuddering lips she cried,
 "Mother, oh, dearest mother,
 Bury me by your side."
 One only wish she utter'd,
 As life was ebbing fast,
 "Sleep by my side, dear mother,
 And rise with me at last."

FEBRUARY ELEVENTH.

OBJECTIONS TO THE RESURRECTION MET.

"Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth."—JOHN v. 28, 29.

THE objector says, Suppose a man be eaten up by cannibals, how can his body be brought back? I answer, there is no proof that the earthy part of the human body ever can be absorbed in another body. I suppose God has power to keep these bodies everlastingly distinct. But suppose that a part of the body was absorbed in another body—could not God make a substitute for the part that had been

absorbed in another body? The resurrected part of a good man would rather have a substituted portion of body given it than that part of the body which a cannibal had eaten and digested.

But the objectors say that a man's body entirely changes every seven or ten years, so that a man at seventy years of age has had seven distinct bodies! At the last day, this idea would imply that the man should have seven heads, and fourteen feet, and other parts of the body corresponding! But we answer that the Bible distinctly states that it is the body that goes down into the grave that will come up again, and not those portions that for many years were being sloughed off.

But come, let us get out of this. I stood on the top of the Catskills one bright morning. On the top of the mountain was a crown of flashing gold, while all beneath was rolling, writhing, contorted cloud. But after a while the arrows of light, shot from heaven, began to make the glooms of the valley strike tent. The mists went skurrying up and down like horsemen in wild retreat. The fogs were lifted, and dashed, and whirled. Then the whole valley became one grand illumination; and there were horses of fire, and chariots of fire, and thrones of fire, and the flapping wings of angels of fire. Gradually, without sound of trumpet or roll of wheel, they moved off. The green valleys looked up. Then the long flash of the Hudson unsheathed itself, and there were the white flocks of villages lying amid the rich pastures, golden grain-fields, and the soft, radiant cradle of the valley, in which a young empire might sleep.

So there hangs over all the graves, and sepulchres, and mausoleums of the ages a darkness that no earthly lamp can lift; but from above the Sun of Righteousness shines, and the dense fogs of skepticism having lifted, the valleys of the dead stand in the full gush of the morning of the resurrection.

FEBRUARY TWELFTH.

AWAKE! AND CALL UPON YOUR MOTHER'S GOD.

“What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God.”—JONAH i. 6.

“**W**HAT meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.” If you have a God, you had better call upon Him. Do you say “I have no God?” Then you had better call upon your father’s God. When your father was in trouble, who did he fly to? You heard him, in his old days, tell about some terrible exposure in a snow-storm, or at sea, or in battle, or among midnight garroters, and how he escaped. Perhaps twenty years before you were born, your father made sweet acquaintance with God. There is something in the worn pages of the Bible he used to read which makes you think your father had a God. In the old religious books lying around the house, there are passages marked with a lead-pencil—passages that make you think your father was not a godless man, but that on that dark day when he lay in the back room dying, he was ready—all ready. But perhaps your father was a bad man—prayerless, and a blasphemer, and you never think of him now without a shudder. He worshipped the world or his own appetites. Do not then, I beg of you, call upon your *father’s* God, but call on your *mother’s* God. I think she was good. You remember when your father came home drunk late on a cold night, how patient your mother was. You often heard her pray. She used to sit by the hour meditating, as though she were thinking of some good, warm place, where it never gets cold, and where the

bread does not fail, and staggering steps never come. You remember her now, as she sat, in cap and spectacles, reading her Bible Sunday afternoons. What good advice she used to give you! How black and terrible the hole in the ground looked to you when, with two ropes, they let her down to rest in the graveyard! Ah! I think from your looks that I am on the right. Awake, O sleeper, and call upon thy mother's God.

FEBRUARY THIRTEENTH.

DO GOOD.

"But to do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."—HEB. xiii. 16.

JOHAN BRADFORD said he counted that day nothing at all in which he had not by pen or tongue done some good. If a man begin right, I cannot tell how many tears he may wipe away, how many burdens he may lift, how many orphans he may comfort, how many outcasts he may reclaim. There have been men who have given their whole life in the right direction, concentrating all their wit and ingenuity, and mental acumen, and physical force and enthusiasm for Christ. They climbed the mountain, and delved into the mine, and crossed the sea, and trudged the desert and dropped, at last, into martyrs' graves, waiting for the resurrection of the just. They measured their lives by the chains they broke off, by the garments they put upon nakedness, by the miles they travelled to alleviate every kind of suffering. They felt in the thrill of every nerve, in the motion of every muscle, in every throb of their heart, in every respiration of their lungs, the magnificent truth: "no man liveth to himself." They went through cold and through heat, foot-blistered, cheek-smitten, back-scourged, tempest-lashed, to do their whole duty.

That is the way they measured life—by the amount of good they could do. Do you know how old Luther was, how old Richard Baxter was, how old Philip Doddridge was? Why, you cannot calculate the length of their lives by any human arithmetic. Add to their lives ten thousand years and you have not expressed it—what they have lived or will live. Oh, what a standard that is to measure a man's life by! There are those who think they have only lived thirty years. They will have lived a thousand—they have lived a thousand. There are those who think they are eighty years of age. They have not even entered upon their infancy, for one must become a babe in Christ to begin at all.

Now, I do not know what your advantages or disadvantages are, I do not know what your tact or talent is, I do not know what may be the fascination of your manners or the repulsiveness of them; but I know this: there is for you, a field to culture, a harvest to reap, a tear to wipe away, a soul to save. If you have worldly means, consecrate them to Christ. If you have eloquence, use it on the side that Paul and Wilberforce used theirs. If you have learning, put it all into the poor box of the world's suffering. But, if you have none of these—neither wealth nor eloquence, nor learning—you, at any rate, have a smile with which you can encourage the disheartened, a frown with which you may blast injustice, a voice with which you may call the wanderer back to God.

*FEBRUARY FOURTEENTH.***CHRIST MADE ALL THINGS.**

“All things were made by him.”—JOHN i. 3.

BY Him were all things made that are made. He made Galilee as well as hushed it. He made the fig-tree as well as blasted it. He made the rock as well as rent it. No wonder He could restore the blind man, for He first made the optic nerve and retina. No wonder that He could give hearing to the deaf man, for He first set the drum of the ear. No wonder He could cure the withered arm, for He made bone and strung the muscle. He flung out of nothing the first material out of which the world was formed. He set spinning around the first axle and drove the first pivot, and hung to the throne the first constellation. The eighteen millions of suns in the Milky Way are eighteen million coursers of fire, by Christ's hand held to their path as they fly up the steeps of heaven. The comet of 1811, that was one hundred and thirty-three million miles long, answered the bit of light, and by His hand was turned anywhither. Jesus shepherds all the great flock of worlds. All these doves of light flew out of His bosom. Christ set one leg of the compass at the foot of the throne, and swung the other around to mark the orbits of the worlds. Standing to-night in the observatory of Mount Zion, I take a telescope mightier than that of Herschel or of Ross—namely, the Word of God—and I see impressed on nearest and farthest star, I AM THE ALPHA!

It is exciting to see a ship launched. The people gather in a temporary gallery erected for their accommodation. The

spectators are breathless, waiting for the impediments to be removed, when down the ship rushes with terrific velocity, the planks smoking, the water tossing, the flags flying, the people huzzaing, bands of music playing. But my Lord Jesus saw the ship of a world launched with its furnaces of volcano, and flags of cloud, and masts of mountain and walking-beams of thunderbolt, while moving stars shouted and the orchestras of heaven played, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty."

FEBRUARY FIFTEENTH.

OPEN YOUR DOORS.

"This day is salvation come to this house."—LUKE xix. 9.

IF you looked out of your window and saw me going up your front steps, you would not wait, but go yourself to open the door. Will you keep Jesus standing on the outside, His locks wet with the dews of the night? This day is salvation come to thy house. The great want of your house is not a new carpet, or costlier pictures, or richer furniture—it is Jesus!

Up to forty years men work for themselves; after that, for their children. Now, what do you propose to leave them. Nothing but dollars! Alas! what an inheritance! It is more likely to be a curse than a blessing. Your own common sense and observation tell you that money, without the divine blessing, is a curse. You must soon leave your children. Your shoulders are not so strong as they were, and you know that they will soon have to carry their own burdens. Your eyesight is not so clear as once; they will soon have to pick out their own way. Your arm is not so mighty as once; they

will soon have to fight their own battles. Oh! let it not be told on judgment day that you let your family start without the only safeguard—the religion of Christ. Give yourself no rest until your children are the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. Your son does just as you do. He tries to walk like you, and to talk like you. The daughter imitates the mother. Alas! if father and mother miss heaven, the children will. What an awful wreck! A whole family going down in one terrific rush—into an unknown eternity! Crash! Crash! Crash!

Oh! let Jesus come into your house. Do not bolt the hall door, or the parlor door, or the kitchen door, or the bedroom door against Him. Above all, do not bolt your heart

FEBRUARY SIXTEENTH.

TEMPEST TOSSED.

“ Being exceedingly tossed with a tempest.”—Acts xxvii. 18.

SOME years ago a man, leaving his family in Massachusetts, sailed from Boston to China to trade there. On the coast of China, in the midst of a night of storm, he made shipwreck. The adventurer was washed up on the beach senseless—all his money gone. He had to beg in the streets of Canton to keep from starving. For two years there was no communication between himself and family. They supposed him dead. He knew not but that his family were dead. He had gone out as a captain. He was too proud to come back as a private sailor. But after a while he choked down his pride and sailed for Boston. Arriving there, he took an evening train for the centre of the State where he had left his family. Taking the stage from the depot, and riding a

score of miles, he got home. He says that, going up in front of the cottage in the bright moonlight, the place looked to him like heaven. He rapped on the window, and the affrighted servant let him in. He went to the room where his wife and child were sleeping. He did not dare to wake them for fear of the shock. Bending over to kiss his child's cheek, a tear fell upon the wife's face, and she wakened, and he said, "*Mary!*" and she knew his voice, and there was an indescribable scene of welcome, and joy, and thanksgiving to God.

I know that many of you are sea-tossed, and driven by sin in a worse storm than that which came down on the coast of China, and yet I pray God that you may, like the sailor, live to get home. In the house of many mansions your friends are waiting to meet you. They are wondering why you do not come. Escaped from the shipwrecks of earth, may you at last go in! It will be a bright night—a very bright night as you put your thumb on the latch of that door. *Once in*, you will find the old family faces sweeter than when you last saw them, and there it will be found that He who was your *father's* God, and your *mother's* God, and your *children's* God, is your *own most blessed Redeemer*, to whom be glory in the Church throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

FEBRUARY SEVENTEENTH.

CHEERFULLY PAY YOUR DEBTS.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."—2 COR. ix. 7.

THERE are two ways of paying an indebtedness—to the law and to the creditor. If we owe and do not pay it, what is done? The matter is put into the hands of an attorney; a summons is sent; a declaration is filed; judgment is declared

in the case ; execution is issued ; and the sheriff goes forth and gets on the auction-block, and he cries, "*Going ! Going ! Gone !*" The debt is collected by force. Then there is another way of paying a debt. We take up the bill and say, "This bill is due. Here is the money." The one payment is made *cheerfully*, the other by the *force of the law*. the other by punishment

God collects His bills in both ways. There are hundreds of business men, Christian men, in New York city, who have gone down, for the simple reason, as I believe, that they did not give to God that which belonged to Him. They did not give Him any percentage at all, or such a very small percentage that the Lord God collected His own bills by fire, by storm, or by death. Two men I knew very well, some years ago, on the streets of New York. They were talking about the matter of benevolence. One said to the other, "You give too much. I will wait until I get a large pile of money, and then I will give." "No," said the other, "I will give as God prospers me." Hear the sequel. The former lives in New York city to-day, dollarless ; the latter gathered two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. I believe that the reason why many people are kept poor is because they do not give enough. If a man gives in the right spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Church, he is *insured* for time and for eternity. The Bank of England is a weak institution compared with the bank that any Christian man can draw upon. That man who stands by Christ, Christ will stand by him. Mark that : *the man who stands by Christ will find Christ standing by him.*

FEBRUARY EIGHTEENTH.

THE ALABASTER BOX.

“A woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.”—LUKE vii. 37.

THIS woman made her offering to Christ. What offering have you to make to Jesus? She brought an alabaster-box, and she brought ointment. Some of you have been sick. In the hours of loneliness and suffering, you said, “Lord Jesus, let me get well this time, and I will be consecrated to thee.” The medicines did their work; the doctor was successful; you are well. What offering have you to make to the Lord Jesus who cured you? Some of you have been out to Greenwood, not as those who go to look at the monuments and criticise the epitaphs, but in the procession that came out of the gate with one less than when you went in. And yet you have been comforted. The grave-digger’s spade seemed to have turned up the flowers of *that* good land where God shall wipe away the tears from your eyes. For that Jesus who so comforted you and so pitied you, what offering have you to make? Some of you have passed without any special trouble. To-day at noon, when you gathered around the table, if you had called the familiar names, they would have all answered. Plenty at the table, plenty in the wardrobe. To that Jesus who has clothed and fed you all your life-long, to that Jesus who covered Himself with the glooms of death that He might purchase your emancipation, what offering of the soul have you to make?

*FEBRUARY NINETEENTH.***GOD GIVES AND TAKES AWAY.**

"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."
—JOB i. 21.

GOD has His own way of taking apart a family. We must get out of the way for coming generations. We must get off the stage that others may come on, and for this reason there is a long procession reaching down all the time into the valley of shadows. This matter of emigration from time into eternity is so vast an enterprise, that we cannot understand it. Every hour we hear the clang of the sepulchral gate. The sod must be broken. The ground must be ploughed for resurrection harvest. Eternity must be peopled. The dust must press our eyelids. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." This emigration from time into eternity keeps three-fourths of the families of the earth in desolation. The air is rent with farewells, and the black-tasselled vehicles of death rumble through every street. The body of the child that was folded so closely to the mother's heart is put away in the cold and the darkness. The laughter freezes to the girl's lip, and the rose scatters. The boy in the harvest field of Shunam says: "My head, my head," and they carry him home to die on the lap of his mother. Widowhood stands with tragedies of woe struck into the pallor of the cheek. Orphanage cries in vain for father and mother. Oh, the grave is cruel! With teeth of stone, it clutches for its prey. Between the closing gates of the sepulchre, our hearts are mangled and crushed. Is there any earthly solace? None. We come to the ob-

sequies, we sit with the grief-stricken, we talk pathetically to their soul ; but soon the obsequies have passed, the carriages have left us at the door, the friends who stayed for a few days are gone, and the heart sits in desolation listening for the little feet that will never again patter through the hall or looking for the entrance of those who will never come again—sighing into the darkness. Ever and anon coming on some book or garment, or little shoe or picture, that arouses former association, almost killing the heart. Long days and nights of suffering that wear out the spirit, and expunge the bright lines of life, and give haggardness to the face, and draw the flesh tight down over the cheek-bone, and draw dark lines under the sunken eye, and the hand is tremulous, and the voice is husky and uncertain, and the grief is wearing, grinding, accumulating, exhausting. Now, what are such to do? Are they merely to look up into a brazen and unpitying heaven? Are they to walk ablasted field unfed of stream, unsheltered by overarching tree? Has God turned us out on the barren common to die? Oh, no! no! no! He has not. He comes with sympathy and kindness and love. He understands all our grief. He sees the height and the depth and the length and the breadth of it. He is the only one that can fully sympathize.

As long as he remembers Lazarus' grave He will stand by you in the cemetery. As long as He remembers His own heart-break, He will stand by you in the laceration of your affections. When He forgets the foot-sore way, the sleepless nights, the weary body, the exhausted mind, the awful cross, the solemn grave, then He will forget you, but not until then.

FEBRUARY TWENTIETH.

TOWARD EVENING.

“It is toward evening.”—LUKE XXIV. 29.

ONE of your children has lately become a favorite. The cry of that child strikes deeper into the heart than the cry of all the others. You think more about it. You give it more attention, not because it is any more of a treasure than the others, but because it is becoming frail. There is something in the cheek, in the eye, and in the walk, that makes you quite sure that the leaves of the flower are going to be scattered. The utmost nursing and medical attendance are ineffectual. The pulse becomes feeble, the complexion lighter, the step weaker, the laugh fainter. No more romping for that one through hall and parlor. The nursery is darkened by an approaching calamity. The heart feels, with mournful anticipation, that the sun is going down. Night speeds on. *It is toward evening.*

You have long rejoiced in the care of a mother. You have done every thing to make her last days happy. You have run, with quick feet, to wait upon her every want. Her presence has been a perpetual blessing in the household. But the fruit-gatherers are looking wistfully at that tree. Her soul is ripe for heaven. The gates are ready to flash open for her entrance. But your soul sinks at the thought of separation. You cannot bear to think that soon you will be called to take the last look at that face, which, from the first hour, has looked upon you with affection unchangeable. But you see that life is ebbing, and the grave will soon hide her from your

sight. You sit quiet. You feel heavy-hearted. The lights fading from the sky. The air is chill. *It is toward evening.*

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIRST.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EARTH AND HEAVEN.

"We also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."—HEB. xii. 1.

I HAVE no sympathy, I need not say, with the poisonous and damning ideas of modern spiritualism ; but what I mean is the theory set forth by the apostle, when he says : " We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses." Just as in the ancient amphitheatre there were eighty or one hundred thousand people looking down from the galleries upon the combatants in the centre, so, says Paul, there is a great host of your friends in all the galleries of the sky, looking down upon our earthly struggles. It is a sweet, a consoling, a scriptural idea. With wing of angel, earth and heaven are in constant communication. Does not the Bible say : " Are they not sent forth as ministering spirits to those who shall be heirs of salvation ? " And when ministering spirits come down and see us, do they not take some message back ? It is impossible to realize, I know, the idea that there is such rapid and perpetual intercommunication of earth and heaven ; but it is a glorious reality. You take a rail train, and the train is in full motion, and another train from the opposite direction dashes past you so swiftly that you are startled ; all the way between here and heaven is filled with the up trains and the down trains—spirits coming—spirits going—coming—going—coming—going. That friend of yours who died last summer—do you not suppose he told all the family news about you in the good land to the friends who are gone ? Do you suppose that when there are

hundreds of opportunities every day for them in heaven to hear from you that they ask about you? that they know your tears, your temptations, your struggles, your victories? Aye, they do. Perhaps during the last war you had a boy in the army, and you got a pass and you went through the lines and you found him, and, the regiment coming from your neighborhood, you knew most of the boys there. One day you started for home. You said: "Well, now, have you any letters to send? any messages to send?" And they filled your pockets with letters, and you started home. Arriving home, the neighbors came in, and one said: "Did you see my John?" and others: "Did you see George?" "Do you know anything about my Frank?" And then you brought out the letters and gave them the messages of which you had been the bearer. Do you suppose that angels of God, coming down to this awful battle-field of sin and sorrow and death, and meeting us and seeing us and finding out all about us, carry back no message to the skies? Oh, there is consolation in it! You are in present communication with that land. They are in sympathy with you now more than they ever were, and they are waiting for the moment when the hammer-stroke shall shatter the last chain of your earthly bondage, and your soul shall spring upward; and they will stand on the heights of heaven and see you come; and when you are within hailing distance your other friends will be called out, and as you flash through the pearl-hung gate, their shout will make the hills tremble; "Hail! ransomed spirit, to the city of the blessed."

*FEBRUARY TWENTY-SECOND.***THE BEST STORE LAMP.**

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet.”—Ps. cxix. 105.

THE Bible is the best *store lamp*. Blessed is the merchant who under its glow reads his ledger, and transacts his business, and pockets his gains, and suffers his losses. It may be well to have a fine sky-light, to have a magnificent glassed show-window, by night to have bronzed brackets spouting fire in a very palace of merchandise ; but if you have not this eternal lamp you had better quit keeping store. What is the reason so many who started in merchandise, with good principles, and fair prospects, and honorable intentions, have become gamblers and defrauders and knaves and desperadoes and liars and thieves? They did not have the right kind of a store lamp. Why is it, in our day, merchandise is smitten with uncertainty, and three-fourths of the business of our great cities is only one huge species of gambling, and society is upturned by false assignments, and two-third acts, and repudiations, and imperilled trust-funds, and fraudulent certificates of stock, and wild schemes in railroads without any track, and banks without any capital, and cities without any houses, and joint-stock companies without any conscience? And why are ten thousand of our business men ridden with a nightmare enough to crush Hercules and Prometheus? It is the want of a right kind of store lamp. What ruined the merchant princes of Tyre, that great city of fairs and bazaars and palaces ; her vessels of trade, with cedar masts and embroidered sails and ivory benches, driven by fierce blasts on Northern

waters, and then dropping down on glassy Indian seas ; bringing wine from Helbon, and chariot cloths from Dedan, and gold and spices from Rahmah, and emerald and agate from Syria ; her waters foaming with innumerable keels ; her store-houses bursting with the treasures of all nations—that queen of cities, on a throne of ivory and ebony, under a crown of gold and pearl and diamond and carbuncle and chrysoprase ? The want of a right kind of store lamp. If the principles of religion had ruled in her trade, do you suppose that dry-rot would have sunk the ships, and that vermin would have eaten up her robes, and that God's mills would have ground up the agate, and that fishermen would dry their nets on the rocks which once were a-quake with the roar and tread of a great metropolis ? Oh, what thrones have fallen, what monuments have crumbled, what fleets have sunk, what statues have been defaced, what barbarisms have been created, what civilization retarded, what nations damned, all for the want of the right kind of a store lamp. Men of business ! take your Bibles with you to-morrow morning. Place them in your store or shop. Do not be ashamed if anybody at noon finds you reading the Scriptures. It is safe always to do business by its teachings.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-THIRD.

JESUS OUR SONG.

“The Lord is my song.”—Ex. xv. 2.

QUICK music loses its charm for the aged ear. The school-girl asks for a schottisch or a glee ; but her grandmother asks for “Balerma” or the “Portuguese Hymn.” Fifty years of trouble have tamed the spirit, and the keys of

the music-board must have a solemn tread. Though the voice may be tremulous, so that grandfather will not trust it in church, still he has the psalm-book open before him, and he sings with his soul. He hums his grandchild asleep with the same tune he sang forty years ago in the old country meeting-house. Some day the choir sings a tune so old that the young people do not know it ; but it starts the tears down the cheek of the aged man, for it reminds him of the revival scene in which he participated, and of the radiant faces which long since went to dust, and of the gray-haired minister leaning over the pulpit, and sounding the good tidings of great joy.

I was one Thanksgiving-day in my pulpit, in Syracuse, New York, and Rev. Daniel Waldo, at ninety-eight years of age, stood beside me. The choir sang a tune. I said, "I am sorry they sang that new tune ; nobody seems to know it." "Bless you, my son," said the old man, "I heard that seventy years ago !"

There was a song to-day that touched the life of the aged with holy fire, and kindled a glory on their vision that our younger eye-sight cannot see. It was the song of salvation—Jesus, who fed them all their lives long ; Jesus, who wiped away their tears ; Jesus, who stood by them when all else failed ; Jesus, in whose name their marriage was consecrated, and whose resurrection has poured light upon the graves of their departed.

*FEBRUARY TWENTY-FOURTH.***BEARING THE CROSS.**

"Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—LUKE
xiv. 27.

THERE was a company of rough men together at one o'clock at night, and a man says: "My wife is a Christian, and if I should go home at this hour, and order her to get us an entertainment, she would get it with good cheer, and without one word of censure." They laughed at him, and said she would not. They laid a wager, and started for his home, and they knocked at one or two o'clock in the morning. The Christian wife came to the door, and her husband said: "Get us something to eat! get it right away!" She said: "What shall I get?" And he ordered the bill of fare, and it was provided without one word of censure. After his roistering companions had gone out of the house, he knelt down and said: "Oh, forgive me! I am wicked; I am most wicked. Get down and pray for me!" and before the morning dawned on the earth, the pardon of Christ had dawned on that man. Why? His wife was a thorough Christian. He could not resist the power of her Christian influence. And you, in your family are to take up the cross, and follow Jesus, and you are to bring them all in—husband, wife, father, mother, brother, and sister—if you can only take up the cross and follow Jesus. But I see how it is with many of you. You are willing to feel favorable to Christ, but as to making any demonstration in His behalf, as to announcing yourself before the world in His behalf, you will not take a single step. And so my text, like

a gate with a hundred bolts, bars you out from peace on earth and glory in heaven. I simply state what I believe to be a fact, that there are hundreds and hundreds of people to-day unconverted, simply because they have not made up their minds to follow Christ publicly, and have not the manliness and womanliness to say, open and above board, in presence of men and angels, "Forever and forever, I am the Lord's. He bought me by His blood, and He shall have my ransomed spirit." No; they have not done that. They have been lurking around the kingdom of God, hoping to crawl in when no one was looking, forgetful of the fact that Christ has said; "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple."

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIFTH.

ONE MORE LOOK AT SIN.

"Look not behind thee."—GEN. xix. 17.

SOMETIMES people surrender their religious impressions because *they want to take one more look at sin*. They resolved that they would give up sinful indulgences, but they have been hankering for them ever since, thirsty for them, and finally they conclude to go into them. So there is a man who, under the influence of the Spirit, resolved he would become a Christian, and as a preliminary step he ceases profanity. That was the temptation and the sin of his life. After a while he says: "I don't know as it's worth while for me to be curbing my temper at all times—to be so particular about my speech. Some of the most distinguished men in the world have been profane. Benjamin Wade swears, Stephen A. Douglas used to swear, General Jackson swore at the battle of New Orleans,

and if men like that swear, I can, and I am not responsible anyhow for what I do when I am provoked." And so the man who, resolving on heaven, quits his profanity, goes back to it. In other words, as the Bible describes it, "the dog returns to its vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire."

But says a man: "I will for Christ give up sharp practices in business. I once was fraudulent; I will cease to be fraudulent, even respectably fraudulent." But the time passes on, and one day he wakes up and says: "I find that men in my branch of business overreach. I don't know why I should be blamed if sometimes I should overreach. Besides that, it is impossible to be severely honest in this day, and a man must make a living. Religion may do very well for the church, but it doesn't work in the store." So the man goes back to his old sharp practices in business, forgetful of the Bible warning: "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so riches got by fraud; a man shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool." O my friends, there are ten thousand witcheries, which after a man has started for heaven, compel him to look back.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SIXTH.

GETTING INTO TROUBLE.

"And the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship."—ACTS xxvii. 30.

THESE shipmen got Paul out of Fair Havens into the storm; but as soon as the tempest dropped upon them, they wanted to go off in the small boat, caring nothing for what became of Paul and the passengers. Ah me! human nature is the same in all ages. They who get us into trouble

never stop to help us out. They who tempt that young man into a life of dissipation will be the first to laugh at his imbecility, and to drop him out of decent society. Gamblers always make fun of the losses of gamblers. They who tempt you into the contest with fists, saying: "I will back you," will be the first to run. Look over all the predicaments of your life, and count the names of those who have got you into those predicaments, and tell me the name of one who ever helped you out. They were glad enough to get you out from Fair Havens, but when, with damaged rigging, you tried to get into harbor, did they hold for you a plank or throw you a rope? Not one. Satan has got thousands of men into trouble, but he never got one out. He led them into theft, but he would not hide the goods or bail out the defendant. The spider shows the fly the way over the gossamer bridge into the cobweb; but it never shows the fly the way out of the cobweb over the gossamer bridge. I think that there were plenty of fast young men to help the prodigal spend his money; but when he had wasted his substance in riotous living, they let him go to the swine-pastures, while they betook themselves to some other new-comer. They who take Paul out of Fair Havens will be of no help to him when he gets into the breakers of Melita. Hear it, young man, hear it!

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH.

SHAM CHRISTIANS.

"Because thou art lukewarm, I will spue thee out of my mouth."—REV. iii. 16.

IF a religious society have a thousand members, eight hundred of them are sound asleep. If it have five hundred members, four hundred are lethargic. If the Christians can rally—that is, the professed Christians—for communion day,

and succeed in not dropping the wine cup, how many of them are satisfied? If it be a choice between Christ and the world, the world has it. You know it as well as I do. If a religious meeting be on a certain night, and on that same night there be an extraordinary operatic entertainment, or a social gathering, or a literary club, or a political meeting, or a Free Mason society, or an Odd Fellows association, you know which they go to. God there fairly demonstrating that while such professed Christians pretend to be on His side, they are really on the other side ; for there is a point-blank issue between Christ and the world, and the world has it. You know very well whether you are a professed Christian or not ; you know very well that the dividing line between the Church and the world to-day is—like the equator, or the arctic or antarctic circle—an imaginary line, and that there are men and women sworn of God who sit discussing infinitesimal questions : “ Shall we dance? Shall we play cards? Shall we go to the theatre? Shall we attend the opera?” while there are five hundred millions of the race going down to darkness unwarned. These sham Christians will go on, occasionally taking a little religion with the tip end of their fingers, sauntering on lazily towards the bar of Christ, until they come in front of God’s swift revolving mill, and find themselves to be “ the chaff which the wind driveth away.” Oh, how much dead-wood we have in all our Churches. The day of judgment will make a fearful thinning out among professed Christians. I suppose it will be found on that day that there are hundreds of thousands of men who have their names on the Church books who really made religion a second-rate or third-rate thing ; living for themselves, unmindful of God and the salvation of the race, and then tumbling over the embankment where Judas went, and Achan went, and where all those shall go who do not make religion the primordial thing—the first and the last matter of the soul. O worldly professor of religion, vacillating professor, idle professor, tremble before God to-day. Do you

not know that if you die as you are, all the communion tables at which you have ever sat will lift up hands of blood, crying for your condemnation? And your neglected Bible, and your prayerless pillow, will cry, "Go down! go down! . You pretended to have religion, but you had none."

FEBRUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH.

A ROYAL NAME.

"How excellent is Thy name in all the earth."—PSALMS viii. 1.

WHEN we see a descendant of some one greatly celebrated in the last century, we look at him with profound interest. To have had conquerors, kings, or princes in the ancestral line gives lustre to the family name. In our line was a King and a Conqueror. The Star in the East with baton of light woke up the eternal orchestra that made music at His birth. From thence He started forth to conquer all nations, not by trampling them down, but by lifting them up. St. John saw Him on a white horse. When He returns, He will not bring the nations chained to His wheel, or in iron cages; but I hear the stroke of the hoofs of the snow-white cavalcade that bring them to the gates in triumph.

Our family name takes lustre from the star that heralded Him, and the spear that pierced Him, and the crown that was given Him. It gathers fragrance from the frankincense brought to His cradle, and the lilies that flung their sweetness into His sermons, and the box of alabaster that broke at His feet. The Comforter at Bethany. The Resurrector at Nain. The supernatural Oculist at Bethsaida. The Saviour of one world and the Chief Joy of another. The storm His frown. The sunlight His smile. The spring morning His breath.

The earthquake the stamp of His foot. The thunder the whisper of His voice. The ocean a drop on the tip of His finger. Heaven a sparkle on the bosom of His love. Eternity the twinkling of His eye. The universe the flying dust of His chariot-wheels. Able to heal a heart-break, or hush a tempest, or drown a world, or flood immensity with his glory.

MARCH FIRST.

THE TRUMPET CALL.

“For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.” — *CoR. xv. 52.*

WE, who are the soldiers of Christ, cannot always be marching and fighting. The evening will come. The shadows will gather, and we must go to the white tents of the grave. There we shall sleep soundly. But the night will pass along, and the first thing we will hear will be the trumpet-call sounding the reveille of the resurrection; and we will come up and fall into a long line of light, the sword of Christian conflict gleaming in the unsetting sun. The roll shall be called, and we shall answer to our names; and then we will go to the morning repast of heaven—manna for the bread, and wine pressed from the ripest clusters of heaven for the beverage, and a lamb, from the whitest flock that ever pastured on the eternal hills, to complete the viands, and Christ for the chief banqueter, and ten thousand kings, and princes, and conquerors for guests.

Well, our bodies can afford to lie a little while in the tent of the grave, if for them at last is to sound such a glorious reveille. Tell it to all the graveyards of the land. Speak it to all the bone-strewn caverns of the deep: “The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and

we shall be changed ; for this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruption must put on incorruption, and then shall be brought to pass the saying that was written, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

If this be so, what is the use of making such a fuss about death? It will only be a pleasant sleep for us. If this be so, why be inconsolable about the graves of our dead? They only sleep. When they were here and you went into their bedrooms at night, and their eyes were closed, and they spake not a word, you were not worried. You said: "Poor thing! she is tired, and I am glad she is asleep." So now, as you go by their resting-place, worry not because they answer you not. They are tired. They are very tired. They only sleep. The morning cometh, and the reveille of the resurrection. I cannot think of it with any calmness or composure. I break down under the avalanche of joy. Oh, for some pen plucked from the wing of an archangel, that I might write the gladness! Oh, for some harp of heaven, that I might strike the joy!

MARCH SECOND.

DORCAS.

"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple, called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."—Acts ix. 36.

THIS woman was a representative of all those women who make garments for the destitute, who knit socks for the barefooted, who prepare bandages for the lacerated, who fix up boxes of clothing for Western missionaries, who go into the asylums of the suffering and destitute, bearing that Gospel which is sight for the blind, and hearing for the deaf, and which makes the lame man leap like a hart, and brings

the dead to life, immortal health bounding in their pulses. What a contrast between the practical benevolence of this woman and a great deal of the charity of this day! This woman did not spend her time idly planning how the poor of Joppa were to be relieved; she took her needle and relieved them. She was not like those persons who sympathize with imaginary sorrows, and go out in the street and laugh at the boy who has upset his basket of cold victuals, or like that charity which makes a rousing speech on the benevolent platform, and goes out to kick the beggar from the step, crying: "Hush your miserable howling!" The sufferers of the world want not so much theory as practice; not so much tears as dollars; not so much kind wishes as loaves of bread; not so much smiles as shoes; not so much "God bless you!" as jackets and frocks. I will put one earnest Christian man, hard working, against five thousand mere theorists on the subject of charity. There are a great many who have fine ideas about church architecture who never in their life helped to build a church. There are men who can give you the history of Buddhism and Mohammedanism, who never sent a farthing for their evangelization. There are women who talk beautifully about the suffering of the world, who never had the courage, like Dorcas, to take the needle and assault it.

MARCH THIRD.

GENTLENESS.

“Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”—ROM. viii. 9.
 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.”—2 TIM. ii. 24.

THE spirit of Jesus was a *spirit of gentleness*. I know that sometimes He made wrathful utterance against the hypocrite and the Pharisee; but for the most part His words and his demeanor were gentle and loving and kind and patient and inoffensive and pleasant. When you consider the fact that He had an omnipotence with which He might have torn to pieces the assailers of His character, it makes His gentleness seem more remarkable. Little children, who always shy off from a rough man, rushed into His presence and clambered on Him, until people had to tell them to stand back. Invalids, so sore with disease that they shuddered to have any one come near them, asked Him to put His hand on their wounds; it was so very soothing. There was not a mother with so sick and delicate a babe that she was afraid to trust it in the Saviour's arms. His footstep was so gentle it would not wake up the faintest slumberer. Some rough people hustled a bad woman into His presence, and said: “Denounce her now. Blast her. Kill her.” Jesus looked at her, and then looked at the assailants, and said: “Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.” When a blind man sat by the wayside making a great ado because he had no vision, the people told him to hush up—that he was bothering the Master; but Christ came where he was and said to him, “What wilt thou that I do unto thee?” Gentleness of voice. Gentleness of hand.

Gentleness of foot. We all admire it though we may not have it. The rough mountain bluff, the great scarred headland, loves to look down into the calm lake at its feet; the stormiest winter loves to merge into the sunshiny spring, and the most impulsive and precipitate nature must be attracted by the gentleness of Christ. The calmness of his look shamed boisterous Gennesaret into placidity. How little of that gentleness you and I have! Let us confess it. It is a tendency of out-door life to stroke our dispositions the wrong way. The thunder of the world's scorn sours the milk of human kindness. The treachery, the extortion, the ignobleness of mean men take the smoothness out of our nature, and we become suspicious, and hypercritical, and stuck all over with nettles, and frowns come to the brow, and harshness to the voice, and bluntness to the manners. What an utter and almost universal lack of gentleness!

MARCH FOURTH.

DARKNESS BANISHED FROM THE GRAVE.

“I am the resurrection and the life.”—JOHN ii. 25.

YOU know that the ancient Egyptians used to keep lights burning in the tombs of their dead. These lights were kept up for scores, even hundreds of years. Friends would come from generation to generation and put oil in the lamps, and it was considered a disaster if those lamps went out. You and I will some day go down into the house of the dead. Some have looked upon it as an unknown land, and when they have thought of it, their knees have knocked together and their hearts fainted. There were whole generations of men that had no comfort about death, no view of the eternal world, and

whenever they brought their friends and put them away into the dust, they said, without any alleviation: "This is horrid, this is horrid." And it was. The grave is the deepest, ghastliest pit that a man ever looks in, unless the lamp of God's word flashes into it. For whole ages men thought that the sepulchre was a den where a great monster gorged himself on human carcases. "I will put an end to that," said Jesus of Nazareth; "I will with mine own voice go down and make darkness flee;" and as he stepped out from the gate of heaven, all the graveyards of earth cried: "Come! come!" And He came down, bringing a great many beautiful lights, and above this babe's grave He hung a light, and over this mother's tomb He hung a light, and over this wife's grave he hung a light, and over all the sleeping places of the Christian dead He hung a light. Then He uttered His voice, and it ran along under the ground from city to city, and along under the sea from continent to continent, until mausoleum and sarcophagus and sepulchre throbbed with the joy—"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

O ye bruised souls! O ye who have been cutting yourselves among the tombs! O ye who have been sowing seed for the resurrection day! O ye of the broken heart! I come out to-day and put in your hand this glorious Gospel lamp. It will throw a glow of consolation over your bereft spirit. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "They that sow in tears will reap in joy."

*MARCH FIFTH.***GONE ASTRAY.**

“All we like sheep have gone astray.”—Is. liii. 6.

I HAVE studied the habits of sheep, and I know they lose their way sometimes by trying to get other pasture, and sometimes by being scared with the dogs. There are many of you who have been looking for better pasture. You have wandered on and wandered on. You tried business successes, you tried worldly associations, you tried the club-house. You said that the church was a short commons, and you wanted to find the rank grass on the bank of distant streams, and to lie down under great oaks on the other side of the hills. Have you found the anticipated pasture that was to be so superior? How are you getting on now in the club-house? What did they do for you in the way of comfort when the baby died? Did they make up for the flaxen hair and the blue eyes and the dimpled cheeks? Were not the plain Christian man and the plain Christian woman who came in and sat up nights with your darling of more solace than all worldly associations? Did all the convivial songs you ever heard give you such peace as the song those people sang in your bereaved home? the very words that your little child had learned to sing in the Sabbath-school :

“There is a happy land
Far, far away ;
Where saints in glory stand
Bright, bright as day ”

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Where saints in glory stand
Bright, bright as day ”

Did you find comfort in your business associations? Did the grass grow very thick around about your insurance office, or your broker's shop, or your retail store, or your importing establishment? God help the man that has nothing but Wall Street to comfort him! Your business, instead of soothing you, exasperated you, and wore you out, and left you limp as a rag, and made you mad. You got money, but you got no peace; and so far from getting a fit pasture for a starving nature, you found none of it in the world; and the further you went, the more blasted the heath and the sharper the rocks and the thicker the nettles. They insulted you with garbage when you wanted bread. Their flatteries were like the lick of a lion's tongue, which takes off the flesh that it licks.

MARCH SIXTH.

JEWEL SETTING.

"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—MALACHI iii. 17.

THE lapidary gets the gems in the right shape, gathers them on his table, and then puts them into head-bands, or hilts of swords, or into crowns. The opening day comes, and the people come in, and the work is displayed before them. Well, the Lord Jesus will gather up His people, and before the assembled universe their splendor shall shine forth. That will be the great jewel setting. Christians often tremble at the thought of that day. It is to be a day of fire, and thunder, and mountain crash; and yet not terrifying to God's dear children. Amid the multitudes of the redeemed there will not be one pale cheek, not one fluttering heart. The thunders that pound the hills will be no more frightful than the beating of a gong that

calls you to a banquet. The soul, rising up on that day, will wrap around it the resurrection robe, and the rocking of the earth, in its death-convulsion, will seem as gentle to it as the swaying of a bough from which a robin springs into the heavens.

Oh! it will be a wedding day—the Church on earth married to the Church in heaven; but instead of human lips to solemnize the ceremony, the archangel's trump will proclaim the banns. Instead of orange-blossoms, there will be the fragrance of burning spice-isles. Instead of the light of chandelier and candelabra, there will be the bonfire of a consuming world. What a day that will be! The marriage of the king's son, when God the Father will take this star of a world, and set the sparkling gem on His Son's right hand, saying, "Thine is the kingdom!" When Christ shall step out from the heavens and take by the hand the Church, which is the Lamb's wife, that will be "the day in which He makes up His jewels."

MARCH SEVENTH.

LOOKING BACK.

"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven."—LUKE ix. 62.

I REMARK that many surrender their religious impressions because, like the man in this text, they *do not want to give up their friends and connections*. The probability is that the majority of your friends are unchristian. You do not want to turn your back upon them. You do not, by your action, want seemingly to condemn their behavior; and so the wife waits for the husband to come to Christ, and so the husband waits for the wife to come to Christ, and they neither come. One in life! One in death! One in the loss of the soul! And so, there are children who do not come because parents do not

come. They say: "If religion were really anything particular, father would attend to it. If religion were anything very important, I am sure my mother would attend to it. They stay out of the kingdom and I will stay." Ah, it was not so with the serving maid in the house of Naaman the leper. Amid all the grand surroundings that were hostile to religion, she maintained her faith in God, and through her instrumentality her master was cured of the leprosy. But I need not go to history to find instances where men have maintained the faith of the Gospel, notwithstanding the most bitter hostilities. Go to that cabinet warehouse, go to that machine shop, go to that dry-goods store, and you will find men faithful to Christ, while all around is jeering and caricature. But there are some who cannot serve God alone. They resolve to start heavenward; but one good round of laughing scorn at the supper-table ends all their religious impressions. They want to get to heaven: but they cannot endure the domestic opposition, the social opposition. They put their hand to the plough and say: "Witness ye men and angels, this day I take Christ and start for heaven;" but to-morrow they look back. Down at the club-house one day, they say: "Where is Mr. so-and-so? I have not seen him here for four or five weeks." "Oh," says some one, "he is attending religious meetings." After a while the new convert goes amid these old associates, and when they see him coming, they say: "Oh, here comes our Christian. How solemn he looks! Mighty good he has got to be, hasn't he? Come now, you're a Christian, they tell me, just get down here and pray for us and whistle one of your old church tunes. What! ashamed to do it? I thought you were a hypocrite. You like sin just as well as you ever did." Oh, to stand that bombardment, to be thrown out of old companionship, to be tabooed and caricatured and pointed at, is like cutting off the right arm or plucking out the right eye, and you cannot stand it. Triumph over those influences, many have. Go down under them, many do.

MARCH EIGHTH.

THE GREAT TRUMPET.

“The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish.”—
ISAIAH xxvii. 13.

MY text says: “The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish.” This Gospel trumpet is not, in its material, like other trumpets. It is not made from horn of ram or ox, nor has it been shaped in an earthly foundry. God furnished the material for this trumpet, twisted it, attuned it, bestowed it. He made two trumpets—one for heaven, and John heard its blast above Patmos. He made the other for the earth, and He hung it in the Church. Simon Peter put that trumpet to his lips, and all the docks and shipping of Galilee heard it. Luke took it, and, forgetting the medicines of his apothecary shop, he went everywhere to blow it. Paul took it, and made Philippian dungeons ring, and Corinthian palaces echo, and Christendom resound with the harmonies of the resurrection. A trumpet, God-made, heaven-manufactured, yet needing no giants to use it, but suited to faint lips, and trembling hand, and feeble lung; so that sick Edward Payson, leaning against the pulpit, might hold it, and Frederick Robertson, worn out with ulcers and spinal complaints, might breathe through it, until the fashionable hearers at Brighton watering-place trembled and believed.

This Gospel trumpet is great in its *power*. On a still night you may hear the call of a brazen trumpet two or three miles; but this is so mighty that it is not only heard from heaven to earth, but it is to arrest the attention of all nations. Men

with physical hearing all gone catch the first strain of it. Men buried half a century in crimes have heard it. It is the power of God unto salvation. Amidst the rush of a cavalry troop, going perhaps a mile in three minutes, Saul heard it, braced himself in the stirrups, and reined in his charger on the road to Damascus. In a custom-house, amidst the chink of coin, and the shuffle of feet, and the dispute of merchants at the high tariffs, Matthew answered its mighty call. Men have put their fingers in their ears to keep out the sound, but have been compelled to hear it. At its blast, walls fall, and thrones upset, and nations leap from barbarism to civilization. There is no force in the shock of musketry, or in the boom of cannonade, as compared with the pealing forth of this great Gospel trumpet. Oh! that the Eternal God might speak through it now! That all the people might rise up into the freedom of the Gospel!

This trumpet is great in its *sweetness*. In some musical instruments there is noise, and crash, and power, but no fineness of sound. Others can not only thunder but weep, and whisper, and woo. Like that is the Gospel trumpet! In all tenderness, and sweetness, and sympathy, it excels.

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ears!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears.”

*MARCH NINTH.***CHASTISEMENT.**

“Despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.”—*HEB. xii. 5.*

I ONCE went through an axe factory, and I saw them take the bars of iron and thrust them into the terrible furnaces. Then besweated workmen with long tongs stirred the blaze. Then they brought out a bar of iron and put it into a crushing-machine, and then they put it between jaws that bit it in twain. Then they put it on an anvil and there were great hammers swung by machinery—each one a-half ton in weight—that went thump! thump! thump! If that iron could have spoken, it would have said: “Why all this beating? Why must I be pounded any more than any other iron?” The workmen would have said: “We want to make axes out of you, keen, sharp axes—axes with which to hew down the forest, and build the ship, and erect houses, and carry on a thousand enterprises of civilization. That’s the reason we pound you.” Now, God puts a soul into the furnace of trial, and then it is brought out and run through the crushing-machine, and then it comes down on the anvil and upon it, blow after blow, blow after blow, and the soul cries out: “O Lord, what does all this mean?” God says: “I want to make something very useful out of you. You shall be something to hew with and something to build with. It is a practical process through which I am putting you.” Yes, my Christian friends, we want more tools in the Church of God; not more wedges to split with. We have enough of these. Not more bores with which to drill; we have too many bores. What we really want is keen,

sharp, well-tempered axes, and if there be any other way of making them than in the hot furnace, and on the hard anvil, and under the heavy hammer, I do not know what it is. Remember that if God brings any kind of chastisement upon you, it is only to make you useful. Do not sit down discouraged, and say: "I have no more reason for living. I wish I were dead." Oh! there never was so much reason for your living as now. By this ordeal you have been consecrated a priest of the most high God. Go out and do your whole work for the Master.

MARCH TENTH.

ASHAMED OF CHRIST.

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my word, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels."—MARK viii. 38.

WHIS text intimates that the tide is going to turn after a while. The same feeling which some men now have towards God, God will have towards them. "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my word, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in his glory, and of the Father, and of the holy angels." Oh, the contrast between Christ's first coming and His last coming! Instead of a cross, a throne. Instead of moaning cattle stretching out their mouths towards the new-born babe, it will be all heaven falling into line of procession; trumpets sounding, banners flying, archangels shouting, thunders beating their drums in the grand march of the judgment! Hark! to the rush of the wings. He comes—the King, the Conqueror, the Judge! Roll back, ye clouds! Fall, ye mountains! Flame, ye seas! Burn, O world! He comes! "Every eye shall see Him, and they also which

pierced him shall wail because of him, and the sun become black as sackcloth of hair, and there was a great earthquake." He comes! He will cry through all the earth and the sea: "Gather together those people who are ashamed of me. Fetch up their bodies from the graves. Fetch up their souls from the dungeons. Gather them together." And as He looks at the long array of blanched faces, he will be ashamed of them. He will remember their cowardice. He will say: "These are the people who were ashamed of me. These are the people who by their comrades and friends were kept away from heaven, and these are the people who lost their souls. I am ashamed of them, of their sin and cowardice. They cannot sit with my people. They cannot share my royalty. Out with them! Executioners, bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness. They despised me. Now, I despise them. Away with them forever!" And as the soul goes trudging on into the eternal bondage, the burning words of this text will strike its appalled vision, and the shutting gate of heaven and the opening gate of darkness will echo and re-echo the dirge: "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my word, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when He cometh in His own glory, and His Father, and of the holy angels."

MARCH ELEVENTH.

ANKLE DEEP

"Launch out into the deep."—LUKE v. 4.

THERE is no book in the world that demands so much of our attention as the Bible. Yet nine-tenths of Christian men get no more than ankle deep. They think it is a good sign not to venture too far. They never ask *how* or

why; and if they see some Christians becoming inquisitive about the deep things of God, they say: "Be careful; you had better not go out so far from shore." My answer is: The farther you go from shore the better, if you have the right kind of ship. If you have mere worldly philosophy for the hulk, and pride for a sail, and self-conceit for the helm, the first squall will destroy you. But if you take the Bible for your craft, the farther you go the better; and, after you have gone ten thousand furlongs, Christ will still command: "*Launch out into the deep.*" Ask some such question as "Who is God?" and go on for ten years asking it. Ask it at the gate of every parable; amidst the excitement of every miracle; by the solitariness of every patriarchal threshing-floor; amidst the white faces of Sennacherib's slain turned up into the moonlight; amidst the flying chariots of the Golden City. Ask *who Jesus is*, and keep on asking it of every Bible lily, of every raven, of every star, of every crazed brain cured, of every blind man come to sunlight, of every coin in a fish's mouth, of every loaf that got to be five loaves, of every wrathful sea pacified, of every pulseless arm stretched forth in gratulation; ask it of His mother, of Augustus, of Herod, of the Syrophœnician woman, of the damsel that woke up from the death-sleep; of Joseph, who had Him buried; of the angel, posted as sentinel at His tomb; of the dumb earth, that shook, and groaned, and thundered when He died.

MARCH TWELFTH.

CHAMELEONS.

“These also shall be unclean to you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the *chameleon* and the snail.”—LEVITICUS xi. 29, 30.

THERE is some difference among good men as to the name of this creeping thing which God pronounced unclean, but I shall take the opinion which seems best suited to my purpose. The chameleon is a reptile, chiefly known by its changeableness of color, taking the color of the thing next to it, sometimes brown, sometimes red, and sometimes gray, but always the color of its surroundings, a type of that class of Christians who are now one thing in religious faith, and now another, just to suit circumstances; always taking their color of religious belief from the man they are talking to. They go to Boston, and are first-rate Unitarians. “Jesus was a good man, but nothing more.” They go to Princeton, and they are Trinitarians, almost willing to die for the divinity of Jesus. Among the Universalists, they refuse the idea of future punishment; and going among those of opposite belief, announce that there is a hell with a gusto that makes you think they are glad of it. Drive out that unclean chameleon from your soul. Do not be ever changing the color of your faith.

My friends—Liberal Christianity, falsely so-called, believes in nothing. God is anything you want to make Him. The Bible to be believed in so far as you like it. Heaven a grand mixing up of Neros and Pauls. The man who dies by suicide in his right mind in 1872, beating into glory by ten years the Christian man who dies a Christian death in 1882, the suicide

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proving himself wiser than the Christian. Oh, my friends, let us try to believe in *something*.

MARCH THIRTEENTH.

NOT FORSAKEN.

“I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.”—JOSHUA i. 5.

THERE sometimes comes a period in one's life when he feels forsaken. There has been such a period in your life. You said, “Everything is against me. The world is against me. The Church is against me. No sympathy; no hope. Everybody that comes near me thrusts at me. I wonder if there is a God, anyhow!” Everything seems to be going slipshod and at hap-hazard. There does not seem to be any hand on the helm. Job's health fails. David's Absalom gets to be a reprobate. Martha's brother dies. Abraham's Sarah goes into the grave of Machpelah. “Woe worth the day in which I was born!” has said many a Christian. David seemed to scream out in his sorrow, as he said: “Is His mercy clean gone forever? And will He be favorable no more? And hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?” Job, with his throat swollen and ulcered until he could not even swallow the saliva that ran into his mouth, exclaims: “How long before thou wilt depart from me, and leave me alone, that I may swallow down my spittle?” Have there never been times in your life when you envied those who were buried? when you longed for the grave-digger to do his work for you? I have seen such days. Oh, the faithlessness of the human heart!

Sometimes the mother-bird goes away from the nest, and it seems very strange that she should leave the callow young.

She plunges her beak into the bark of the tree, and she drops into the grain-field, and into the chaff at the barn-door, and into the furrow of the ploughboy. Meanwhile, the birds in the nest shiver, and complain, and call, and wonder why the mother-bird does not come back. Ah! she has gone for food. After a while there is a whirr of wings, and the mother-bird stands on the edge of the nest, and the little ones open their mouths, and the food is dropped in ; and then the old bird spreads out her feathers, and all is peace. So, sometimes, God leaves us. He goes off to get food for our soul ! and then He comes back after a while to the nest, and says, " Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it ;" and He drops into it the sweet promises of His grace, and the love of God is shed abroad.

MARCH FOURTEENTH.

THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM.

" Oh, that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate."—2 SAM. xxiii. 15.

DAVID had known hundreds of wells of water, but he wanted to drink from that particular one, and he thought nothing could slake his thirst like that. And unless your soul and mine can get access to the Fountain open for sin and uncleanness, we must die. That fountain is the well of Bethlehem. It was dug in the night. It was dug by the light of a lantern—the star that hung down over the manger. It was dug not at the gate of Cæsar's palaces, not in the park of a Jerusalem bargain-maker. It was dug in a barn. The camels lifted their weary heads to listen as the work went on. The shepherds, unable to sleep, because the heavens were filled with bands of music, came down to see the opening of the

well. The angels of God, at the first gush of the living water, dipped their chalices of joy into it, and drank to the health of earth and heaven, as they cried, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Sometimes in our modern barns the water is brought through the pipes of the city to the very nostrils of the horses or cattle ; but this well in the Bethlehem barn was not so much for the beasts that perish as for our race ; thirst-smitten, desert-travelled and simoon-struck. Oh, my soul, weary with sin, stoop down and drink to-day out of that Bethlehem well. "As the hart panteth for the water-brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Oh, bring me water from that well ! Little child, who hast learned of Jesus in the Sabbath-school, bring me some of that living water. Old man, who fifty years ago didst first find the well, bring me some of that water. Stranger in a strange land, who used to hear sung, amidst the Highlands of Scotland, to the tune of "Bonnie Doon," "The Star, the Star of Bethlehem," bring me some of that water. Whosoever drinketh of that water shall never thirst. "Oh, that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

MARCH FIFTEENTH.

THE SHEPHERD'S CREEK.

"I am the good shepherd."—JOHN X. 11.

THIS was a rod with a curve at the end, which, when a sheep was going astray, was thrown over its neck ; and in that way it was pulled back. When the sheep were not going astray, the shepherd would often use it as a sort of a crutch, leaning on it ; but when the sheep were out of the way, the crook was always busy pulling them back. All we,

like sheep, have gone astray ; and had it not been for the Shepherd's crook, we would have fallen long ago over the precipices

Here is a man who has been making too much money. He is getting very vain. He says : " After a while I shall be independent of all the world. Oh, my soul, eat, drink, and be merry." Business disaster comes to him. What is God going to do with him? Has God any grudge against him? Oh, no. God is throwing over him the shepherd's crook and pulling him back into better pastures. Here is a man who has always been well. He has never had any sympathy for invalids ; he calls them coughing, wheezing nuisances. After a while sickness comes to him. He does not understand what God is going to do with him. He says, " Is the Lord angry with me ?" Oh, no. With the shepherd's crook he has been pulled back into better pastures. Here is a happy household circle. The parent does not realize the truth that these children are only loaned to him, and he forgets from what source came his domestic blessings. Sickness drops upon those children, and Death swoops upon a little one. He says, " Is God angry with me ?" No. His shepherd's crook pulls him back into better pastures. I do not know what would have become of us if it had not been for the shepherd's crook. Oh, the mercies of our troubles ! You take up apples and plums from under the shade of the trees, and the very best fruits of Christian character we find in the deep shade of Christian trouble.

*MARCH SIXTEENTH.***A WARM NEST.**

“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust.”—Ps. xci. 4.

YOU have noticed, when a bird returns from flight, how gently it stoops over the nest. The young birds are not afraid of having their lives trampled out by the mother-bird. The old whip-poor-will drops into its nest of leaves, the oriole into its casket of bark, the humming-bird into its hammock of moss—gentle as the light. And so, says the Psalmist, He shall cover thee with His wing. Oh, the gentleness of God! But even that figure does not fully set it forth; for I have sometimes looked into the bird’s nest and seen a dead bird—its life having been trampled out by the mother-bird. But no one that ever came under the feathers of the Almighty was trodden on.

Blessed nest! warm nest! Why will men stay out in the cold, to be shot of temptation and to be chilled by the blast, when there is this divine shelter? More beautiful than any flower I ever saw are the hues of a bird’s plumage. Did you ever examine it? The blackbird, floating like a flake of darkness through the sunlight; the meadow-lark, with head of fawn, and throat of velvet, and breast of gold; the red flamingo flying over the Southern swamps, like sparks from the forge of the setting sun; the pelican, white and black—morning and night tangled in its wings—give but a very faint idea of the beauty that comes down over the soul when on it drop the feathers of the Almighty. Here fold your weary wings! This is the only safe nest. Every other nest will be destroyed.

The prophet says so: "Though thou exalt thyself like the eagle, and set thy nest among the stars, yet will I bring thee down, saith the Lord of Hosts."

MARCH SEVENTEENTH.

THE JUDGMENT DAY.

"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."—ROM. xiv. 10.

THE Mogul of Turkey used to be weighed once a year. On the opposite side of the scales first was put silver, then gold, then jewels, and then the gold and the jewels were thrown among the people. My friends, the day comes when you and I must be weighed in scales of a different character—weighed not against the gold and the jewels of this world; but weighed by the law of the eternal right and the eternal wrong.

Painters have tried to sketch that day but always fail. It is easy to sketch a city on fire, but not a universal conflagration. It is easy to sketch an earthquake that destroys a town, but not that which destroys the hemispheres. All the mountains falling. All the seas boiling. All the stars dropping. All the heavens rolling. All the earth vanishing. Angels flying. Graves bursting. Dead rising. Thrones hoisting. God coming. The apostle Peter speaks of that day as "a great noise." The slide of an avalanche deafens the ear; but what will it be when the Himalayas and Alps and Mount Washington tumble into the dust. A thunder storm reaches only five, ten or fifteen miles; but what will it be when all around the earth the artillery of God shall be unlimbered? The whoop of the wind; the blare of the trumpets; the chorus of the saved; the groans of the banished; the cry of wild beasts frightened

from their lair, not knowing which way to jump ; the clangor and the vociferation and the echo and re-echo of earth and heaven and hell—these will be the great noise the apostle speaks of.

I do not know in what place of the earth the congregation will assemble for that great assize. Three or four summers ago I thought I saw a place fit to be the great judgment hall of the last day. We had been riding through Tête Noire pass, Switzerland, through rocky desolation, until at last we came upon a scene which I never expected to witness until I beheld the last day. I said to my companion : “ This looks to me as if it might be the judgment hall for the last day.” In this valley there is room for nations—a great amphitheatre. On these ledges of rocks, gallery upon gallery—first, second, third, fourth, tenth gallery of rocks—room for angels, cherubim, seraphim, archangel. That sunlighted cliff, the point from which the righteous shall rise. That midnight cavern, the place from which the wicked shall depart. While amid all that surrounding upheaval of rock and forest, a vast boulder cushioned with moss rose higher and higher until we were overwhelmed with the height and the majesty of the spectacle, and I thought that might be the throne on which the Judge is to sit. And then there came rolling through my mind the words of Bishop Heber :

“ The Lord shall come ! the earth shall quake,
The mountains to their centre shake,
And, withering from the vault of night,
The stars withdraw their feeble light.

While sinners in despair shall call,
‘ Rocks, hide us ! mountains, on us fall ! ’
The saints ascending from the tomb,
Shall sing for joy, ‘ The Lord is come ! ’ ”

But I do not pretend to tell you where the judgment hall of the last day will be ; but there will be a place of judgment

where we will have to meet God and answer for this day ; for what we say, for what we hear ; answer for all the opportunities we have had or might have had ; answer for all resistances of the Holy Ghost ; answer for all sick-bed vows broken ; all death-bed warnings slighted ; all Sabbaths, and Bibles, and communion-tables despised. For every year we will have to give answer ; every month, every hour, every moment of our life we will have to give answer ; and it will be under the scrutiny of that God who has seen us, and watched us, and knows all about us. Will we be ready for such a scrutiny under the eye of the all-seeing God ?

MARCH EIGHTEENTH.

ESCAPING SAFE TO LAND.

“ They escaped all safe to land.”—ACTS xxvii. 44.

THERE did not seem to be much chance for Paul getting out of that shipwreck, did there ? They had not, in those days, rockets with which to throw ropes over foundering vessels. Their life-boats were of but little worth. And yet, notwithstanding all the danger, the text says that Paul escaped safe to land. And so it will always be with God’s children. They may be plunged into darkness and trouble, but by the throne of the Eternal God, I assert it, “ they shall all escape safe to land.”

Sometimes there comes a storm of commercial disaster. The cables break. The masts fall. The cargoes are scattered over the sea. Oh ! what struggling and leaping on kegs, and hogsheads, and corn-bins, and store-shelves ! And yet, though they may have it so very hard in commercial circles, the good, trusting in God, all come safe to land.

Wreckers go out on the ocean's beach, and find the shattered hulks of vessels ; and on the streets of our great cities there is many a wreck. Mainsail slit with banker's pen. Hulks abeam's-end on insurance counters. Vast credits sinking, having suddenly sprung a leak. Yet all of them who are God's children shall at last, through His goodness and mercy, escape safe to land. The Scandinavian warriors used to drink wine out of the skulls of the enemies they had slain. Even so God will help us, out of the conquered ills and disasters of life, to drink sweetness and strength for our souls.

MARCH NINETEENTH.

HYPOCRITES.

"Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath."—JOB xxxvi. 13

YOU must know the incident mentioned in the history of Ottacas, who was asked to kneel in the presence of Randolphus I. ; and when before him he refused to do it, but after a while he agreed to come in private when there was nobody in the king's tent, and then he would kneel down before him and worship ; but the servants of the king had arranged it so that by drawing a cord the tent would suddenly drop. Ottacas after a while came in, and supposing he was in entire privacy, knelt before Randolphus. The servants pulled the cord, the tent dropped, and two armies surrounding looked down on Ottacas kneeling before Randolphus. If we are really kneeling to the world while we profess to be lowly subjects of Jesus Christ, the tent has already dropped, and all the hosts of heaven are gazing upon our hypocrisy. God's universe is a very public place, and you cannot hide hypocrisy in it.

Going out into a world of delusion and sham, pretend to be no more than you really are. If you have the grace of God, profess it; profess no more than you have. But I want the world to know that where there is one hypocrite in the Church there are five hundred outside of it, for the reason that the field is larger. There are men in all circles who will bow before you, and who are obsequious in your presence and talk flatteringly, but who all the while in your conversation are digging for bait and angling for imperfections. In your presence they imply that they are everything friendly; but after a while you find they have the fierceness of a catamount, the slyness of a snake, and the spite of a devil. God will expose such. The gun they load will burst in their own hands; the lies they tell will break their own teeth.

MARCH TWENTIETH.

THE CLOSE OF A BANQUET.

“In that night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, slain.”—DAN. v. 30.

YOUNG man, if you had looked in upon the banquet in the first few hours, you would have wished you had been invited there, and could sit at the feast. “Oh! the grandeur of Belshazzar’s feast!” you would have said; but you look in at the close of the banquet, and your blood curdles with horror. The King of Terrors has there a ghastlier banquet; human blood is the wine, and dying groans are the music. Sin has made itself a king in the earth. It has crowned itself. It has spread a banquet. It invites all the world to come to it. It has hung in its banqueting-hall the spoils of all kingdoms, and the banners of all nations. It has gathered from all music. It has strewn, from its wealth, the tables, and floors, and

arches. And yet how often is that banquet broken up ; and horrible is its end ! Ever and anon there is a handwriting on the wall. A king falls. A great culprit is arrested. The knees of wickedness knock together. God's judgment, like an armed host, breaks in upon the banquet ; and that night is Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.

Here is a young man who says, "I cannot see why they make such a fuss about the intoxicating cup. Why, it is exhilarating ! It makes me feel well. I can talk better, think better, feel better. I cannot see why people have such a prejudice against it." A few years pass on, and he wakes up and finds himself in the clutches of an evil habit which he tries to break, but cannot ; and he cries out, "Oh, Lord God ! help me !" It seems as though God would not hear his prayer ; and in an agony of body and soul he cries out, "It biteth like a serpent, and it stingeth like an adder." How bright it was at the start ! How black it was at the last !

MARCH TWENTY-FIRST.

FIGHTING LIONS.

"I have fought with beasts at Ephesus."—1 COR. xv. 32.

THE fact is, that every Christian man has a lion to fight. *Yours* is a bad temper. The gates of the arena have been opened, and this tiger has come out to destroy your soul. It has lacerated you with many a wound. You have been thrown by it time and again, but in the strength of God you have arisen to drive it back. I verily believe you will conquer. I think that the temptation is getting weaker and weaker. You have given it so many wounds that the prospect is that it will die, and you shall be victor, through Christ. Courage,

brother! Do not let the sands of the arena drink the blood of your soul!

Your lion is the passion for strong drink. You may have contended against it for twenty years; but it is strong of body and thirsty of tongue. You have tried to fight it back with broken bottle or empty wine-flask. Nay! that is not the weapon. With one horrible roar he will seize thee by the throat and rend thee limb from limb. Take *this* weapon, sharp and keen—reach up and get it from God's armory: the Sword of the Spirit. With that thou mayest drive him back and conquer!

But why specify, when every man and woman has a lion to fight. If there be one who has no besetting sin, let him speak out, for him have I offended. If you have not fought the lion, it is because you have let the lion eat you up. This very moment the contest goes on. The Trajan celebration, where ten thousand gladiators fought, and eleven thousand wild beasts were slain, was not so terrific a struggle as that which at this moment goes on in many a soul. That combat was for the life of the body: this is for the life of the soul. That was with wild beasts from the jungle: this is with the roaring lion of hell.

MARCH TWENTY-SECOND.

CHRIST'S MAGNETISM.

"A great multitude followed him."—JOHN vi. 2.

IMAGINE Christ standing in the streets of Jerusalem. A man descended from high lineage is standing beside him, and says, "My father was a merchant prince; he had a castle on the beach at Galilee. Who was your father?" Christ answers, "Joseph, the carpenter." A man from Athens is standing there unrolling his parchment of graduation, and

says to Christ, "Where did you go to school?" Christ answers, "I never graduated." Aha! the idea of such an unheralded young man attempting to command the attention of the world! As well some little fishing village on Long Island shore attempt to arraign New York. Yet no sooner does He set His foot in the towns or cities of Judea than everything is in commotion. The people go out on a picnic, taking only food enough for a day, yet are so fascinated with Christ that, at the risk of starving, they follow Him out into the wilderness. A nobleman falls down flat before Him, and says, "My daughter is dead." A beggar tries to rub the dimness from his eyes, and says, "Lord, that my eyes may be opened." A poor, sick, panting woman presses through the crowd, and says, "I must touch the hem of His garments." Children, who love their mother better than any one else, struggle to get into His arms, and to kiss His cheek, and to run their fingers through His hair, and for all time putting Jesus so in love with the little ones that there is hardly a nursery in Christendom from which He does not take one, saying, "I must have them; I will fill heaven with these; for every cedar that I plant in heaven I will have fifty white lilies. In the hour when I was a poor man in Judea they were not ashamed of me, and now that I have come to a throne I do not despise them. Hold it not, oh, weeping mother! lay it on my warm heart. Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

*MARCH TWENTY-THIRD.***MAKE YOUR HOME HAPPY.**

“Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with thy child?”—2 **KINGS**
iv. 26.

HOW many bright domestic circles have been broken up by sinful pleasuring! The father went off, the mother went off, the child went off. There are to-day the fragments before me of a great many blasted households. Oh, if you have wandered away, I would like to charm you back by the sound of that one word “home.” Do you not know that you have but little more time to give to domestic welfare? Do you not see, father, that your children are soon to get out into the world, and all the influence for good you are to have over them you are to have now? Death will break in on your conjugal relations, and alas, if you have to stand over the grave of one who perished from your neglect!

I saw a wayward husband standing at the death-bed of his Christian wife, and I saw her point to a ring on her finger, and heard her say to her husband, “Do you see that ring?” He replied, “Yes, I see it.” “Well,” said she, “do you remember who put it there?” “Yes,” said he, “I put it there,” and all the past seemed to rush upon him. By the memory of that day when, in the presence of men and angels you promised to be faithful in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health; by the memory of those pleasant hours when you sat together in your new home talking of a bright future; by the cradle and the joyful hour when one life was spared and another given; by that sick-bed, when the little one lifted

up the hands and called for help, and you knew he must die, and he put one arm around each of your necks and brought you very near together in that dying kiss ; by the little grave in Greenwood that you never think of without a rush of tears ; by the family Bible, where, amidst stories of heavenly love, is the brief but expressive record of births and deaths ; by the neglects of the past, and by the agonies of the future ; by a judgment day, when husbands and wives, parents and children, in immortal groups, will stand to be caught up in shining array, or to shrink down into darkness ; by all that, I beg you to give to home your best affections. I look in your eyes to-day, and I ask you the question that GEHAZI asked of the Shunamite : " Is it well with thee ? Is it well with thy husband ? Is it well with thy child ? " God grant that it may be everlastingly well.

MARCH TWENTY-FOURTH.

SWIFT STARS.

" They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."—DAN xii. 3.

CHRISTIAN workers will shine like the stars in *swiftness of motion*. The worlds do not stop to shine. There are no fixed stars save as to relative position. The star most thoroughly fixed flies thousands of miles a minute. The astronomer, using his telescope for an Alpine stock, leaps from world-crag to world-crag, and finds no star standing still. The chamois hunter has to fly to catch his prey, but not so swift is his game as that which the scientist tries to shoot through the tower of the observatory. Like petrels in mid-Atlantic, that seem to come from no shore, and be bound to no landing-place—flying, flying—so these great flocks of worlds rest not

as they go—wing and wing—age after age—for ever and ever. The eagle hastes to its prey, but we shall in speed beat the eagles. You have noticed the velocity of the swift horse under whose feet the miles slip like a smooth ribbon, and as he passes, the four hoofs strike the earth in such quick beat your pulses take the same vibration. But all these things are not swift in comparison with the motion of which I speak. The moon moves fifty-four thousand miles in a day. Yonder, Neptune flashes on eleven thousand miles in an hour. Yonder, Mercury goes one hundred and nine thousand miles an hour. So, like the stars, the Christian worker shall shine in swiftness of motion. You hear now of father, or mother, or child sick one thousand miles away, and it takes you two days to get to them. You hear of some case of suffering that demands your immediate attention, but it takes you an hour to get there. Oh the joy when you shall, in fulfilment of the text, take starry speed, and be equal to one hundred thousand miles an hour. Having on earth got used to Christian work, you will not quit when death strikes you. You will only take on more velocity. There is a dying child in London, and its spirit must be taken up to God: you are there in an instant to do it. There is a young man in New York to be arrested from going into that gate of sin: you are there in an instant to arrest him. Whether with spring of foot, or stroke of wing, or by the force of some new law, that shall hurl you to the spot where you would go, I know not; but this text suggests velocity. All space open before you, with nothing to hinder you in mission of light, and love, and joy, you shall shine in swiftness of motion as the stars for ever and ever.

*MARCH TWENTY-FIFTH.***NO REMISSION WITHOUT BLOOD.**

“Without shedding of blood is no remission.—HEB. ix. 22.

SIN is such an outrage on God's universe that nothing but blood can atone for it. You know the life is in the blood, and as the life had been forfeited, nothing could buy it back but blood. What was it that was sprinkled on the door-post when the destroying angel went through the land? Blood. What was it that went streaming from the altar of ancient sacrifice? Blood. What was it that the priest carried into the holy of holies, making intercession for the people? Blood. What was it that Jesus sweat in the garden of Gethsemane? Great drops of blood. What does the wine in the sacramental cup signify? Blood. What makes the robes of the righteous in heaven so fair? They are washed in the blood of the Lamb. What is it that cleanses all our pollution? The blood of Jesus Christ, that cleanseth from all sin.

I hear somebody saying, “I do not like such a *sanguinary* religion as that.” Do you think it is very wise for the patient to tell the doctor, “I don't like the medicine you have given me?” If he wants to be cured, he had better take the medicine. My Lord God has offered us a balm, and it is very foolish for us to say, “I don't like that balm.” We had better take it, and be saved. But you do not oppose the shedding of blood in other directions and for other ends. If a hundred thousand men go out to battle for their country, and have to lay down their lives for free institutions, is there

anything ignoble about that? No, you say; "glorious sacrifice rather." And is there anything ignoble in the idea that the Lord Jesus Christ, by the shedding of His blood, delivered not only one land, but all lands and all ages, from bondage, introducing men by millions and millions into the liberty of the sons of God? Is there anything ignoble about that?

MARCH TWENTY-SIXTH.

NO SEED SOWN, NO HARVEST TO REAP.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him,"—Ps. cxxvi. 6.

THERE is a barren field on an autumn day just wanting to be let alone. There is a bang at the bars, and a rattle of whiffle-trees and clevices. The field says, "What is the farmer going to do with me now?" The farmer puts the plough in the ground, shouts to the horses, the coulter goes tearing through the sod, and the furrow reaches from fence to fence. Next day there is a bang at the bars, and a rattle of whiffle-trees again. The field says, "I wonder what the farmer is going to do now." The farmer hitches the horses to the harrow, and it goes bounding and tearing across the field. Next day there is a rattle at the bars again, and the field says, "What is the farmer going to do now?" He walks heavily across the field, scattering seed as he walks. After a while a cloud comes. The field says, "What, more trouble!" It begins to rain. After a while the wind changes to the north-east, and it begins to snow. Says the field, "Is it not enough that I have been torn, and trampled upon, and drowned? Must I now be snowed under?" After a while, Spring comes out of the gates of the South, and warmth and gladness come with it. A green scarf bandages the gash of the wheat-field,

and the July morning drops a crown of gold on the head of the grain. "Oh!" says the field, "now I know the use of the plough, of the harrow, of the heavy foot, of the shower, and of the snow-storm. It is well enough to be trodden, and trampled, and drowned, and snowed under, if in the end I can yield such a glorious harvest." "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

When I see God especially busy in troubling and trying a Christian, I know that out of that Christian's character there is to come some especial good.

MARCH TWENTY-SEVENTH.

THE ALMOND-TREE IN BLOSSOM.

"The almond-tree shall flourish."—Ec. xii. 5.

SOLOMON was giving a full-length portrait of an aged man. By striking figures of speech, he set forth his trembling and decrepitude, and then comes to describe the whiteness of his locks by the blossoming of the almond-tree. It is the master-touch of the picture, for I see in that one sentence not only the appearance of the hair, but an announcement of the beauty of old age. The white locks of a bad man are but the gathered frosts of the second death, but "a hoary head is a crown of glory" if it be found in the way of righteousness. There may be no color in the cheek, no lustre in the eye, no spring in the step, no firmness in the voice, and yet around the head of every old man whose life has been upright and Christian there hovers a glory brighter than ever shook in the white tops of the almond-tree. If the voice quiver, it is because God is changing it into a tone fit for the

celestial choral. If the back stoop, it is only because the body is just about to lie down in peaceful sleep. If the hand tremble, it is because God is unloosing it from worldly disappointments to clasp it on ringing harp and waving palm. If the hair has turned, it is only the gray light of heaven's dawn streaming through the scant locks. If the brow, once adorned by a luxuriance of auburn or raven, is smitten with baldness, it is only because God is preparing a place to set the everlasting crown. The falling of this aged Christian's staff will be the signal for the heavenly gate to swing open. The scattering of the almond blossoms will only discover the setting of the fruit. Elijah's flaming equipage was too tame for this ascending spirit. The arms of Jesus are grander than bounding horses of fire!

MARCH TWENTY-EIGHTH.

EASTER.

"He is not here, but is risen."—LUKE xxiv. 6.

THERE is a sweet significance in the fact that it was in a garden-tomb that the bruised form of the Redeemer, white and cold, stamped with the seal of death, was laid to its three-days' rest. And sweet is the thought, that His first steps, when He rose in kingly might from the couch in the rock, were taken in a garden. Earth keeps the precious memory sacred, and ever as returns the festival which Christian hearts have always been prompted to hold in honor of the resurrection, her fields and forests break into bloom, and her gardens awake from their winter trance to smile in the beauty of the spring. There are fearless little flowers peeping up in out-of-the-way places, lifting their frail brave heads against

the pitiless blasts of spring ; there is the stir and tremble of quickening life in the hearts of the trees, and green leaves are unrolling themselves in satin smoothness and delicacy of coloring, and lilies and azaleas in their stainless purity arise like virgins robed to meet the bridegroom. Nature in her vernal hope seems full of rejoicing, and each of her many resurrections is a tribute to the glory of the great resurrection of Him that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore.

What are the Easter lessons to us? Subjects of a conquering Lord who yet calls us not servants but friends, shall we not work for Him with greater zeal and more conscious fidelity in days to come, than in the past? Shall we not take it to our hearts that He is living and present, not absent and dead? He is ours and here. Sometimes we talk about our Jesus as if He had once been with us, but as if now in the serenity of heaven, He had removed to an infinite distance. We make of our Saviour an abstraction, and our teachings of Him fall on the hearts that hear, like icicles, and glance off hard, glittering and cold. Not so, dear friends, Jesus the Christ is to-day,

“ No dead fact stranded on the shore
 Of the oblivious years,
 But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
 A present help is He.
 And faith has still its Olivet,
 And love, its Galilee.
 The healing of His seamless dress
 Is by our beds of pain,
 We touch Him in life's throng and press.
 And we are whole again.”

Let us talk of our Master, and work for Him as if He were here, and close to us. In our prayers let us press near and take hold of the hand that was pierced. Let us ask that angels may roll the barriers of unbelief away from all our

hearts, and so, on the "stepping-stones of our dead selves," let us mount to things higher and nobler.

The Easter comforts are as many as the Easter lessons. Our darlings that have gone from our arms to lie in narrow beds in the dark chilly ground shall not always lie there. The Lord is risen! That little babe who nestled a few brief bright days in your bosom, and then faded like a fragile flower and passed away leaving your life in shadow, shall rise. That beloved friend whose soul was twin to yours, is not gone into the vast darkness of an unknown world. He shall rise. There will be a glorious Easter morning by-and-by, and though tears must fall and hearts must ache, there is balm for every sorrow, and ease for every pain. This new Easter day we clasp hands and wish each other joy because, as we often sing,

"We are on our journey home
Where Christ our Lord has gone;
We shall meet around His throne
In the New Jerusalem."

MARCH TWENTY-NINTH.

OUR BODIES WILL BE GLORIOUS.

"It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory."—1 COR. xv. 43.

THE bodies of the righteous will be glorious. The most perfectly-formed body, indeed, is a mere skeleton to what it would have been had not sin come. God's model of a face, of a hand, of a foot, of a body, we know not. If, after an exquisite statue has been finished, you should take a chisel and clip it, and clip it, and set the statue in an out-of-door exposure, its beauty would nearly all be gone. Yet the human body has been clipped, and blasted, and battered for thousands of years. Physical defects have been handed down from

generation to generation for six thousand years, and we have inherited all the bodily infelicities of all the past. But when God takes the righteous out of their graves, he will re-fashion and improve, and adorn according to the original model, until the difference between a gymnast and the emaciated wretch in the lazaretto is not so great as that between our present bodily structures and our gloriously resurrected forms. There you will see the perfected eye, out of which, by the waters of death, has been washed the last trace of tears and study. Then you will see the perfected hand—the knots on the knuckles of toil untied. No more stoop of the shoulders from burden-bearing and the weight of years; but all of us erect, elastic—the life of God in all the frame. The most striking and impressive thing on earth now is a human face. Yet it is veiled in the black veil of a thousand griefs. But when God, on the resurrection morn, shall put aside the veil, I suppose that the face of the sun in the sky is dull and stupid compared with the outflaming glories of the countenances of the saved. I suppose that when those faces shall turn to look toward the gate or up toward the throne it will be like the dawn of a new morning on the bosom of everlasting day.

MARCH THIRTIETH.

THE DEAD BIRD.

“And the priests shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water.”—*LEV. xiv. 5.*

THERE is nothing more suggestive than a caged bird. In the down of its breast you can see the glow of southern climes; in the sparkle of its eye you can see the flash of distant seas; in its voice you can hear the song it learned in the wildwood. It is a child of the sky in captivity. Now the

dead bird of the text, captured from the air, suggests the *Lord Jesus, who came down from the realms of light and glory.* He once stood in the sunlight of heaven. He was the favorite of the land. He was the King's son. Whenever a victory was gained, or a throne set up, He was the first to hear it. He could not walk *incognito* along the streets, for all heaven knew Him. For eternal ages He had dwelt amid the mighty populations of heaven. No holiday had ever dawned on the city when He was absent. He was not like an earthly prince, occasionally issuing from a palace heralded by a troop of clanking horse-guards. No; He was greeted everywhere as a brother, and all heaven was perfectly at home with Him.

But one day there came word to the palace that an insignificant island was in rebellion, and was cutting itself to pieces with anarchy. I hear an angel say, "Let it perish. The King's realm is vast enough without the island. The tributes to the King are large enough without that. We can spare it." "Not so," said the prince, the King's son; and I see Him push out one day, under the protest of a great company. He starts straight for the rebellious island. He lands amid the execrations of the inhabitants, that grow in violence until the malice of earth has smitten Him, and the spirits of the lost world put their black wings over His dying head, and shut the sun out. The hawks and vultures swooped upon this dove of the text, until head, and breast, and feet ran blood—until, under the flocks and beaks of darkness, the poor thing perished. No wonder it was a bird that was taken and slain over an earthen vessel of running water. It was a child of the skies. It typified Him who came down from heaven in agony and blood to save our souls. Blessed be His glorious name forever!

*MARCH THIRTY-FIRST.***OPPRESSING THE POOR.**

“ He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoreth him hath mercy on the poor.”—*PROV. xiv. 31.*

POVERTY to a certain extent is chastening ; but after that, when it drives a man to the wall, and he hears his children cry in vain for bread, it sometimes makes him desperate. I think that there are thousands of honest men lacerated into vagabondism. There are men crushed under burdens for which they are not half paid. While there is no excuse for criminality, even in oppression, I state it as a simple fact that much of the scoundrelism of the community is consequent upon ill-treatment. There are many men and women battered and bruised and stung until the hour of despair has come, and they stand with the ferocity of a wild beast which, pursued until it can run no longer, turns round, foaming and bleeding, to fight the hounds.

There is a vast underground New York and Brooklyn life that is appalling and shameful. It wallows and steams with putrefaction. You go down the stairs, which are wet and decayed with filth, and at the bottom you find the poor victims on the floor, cold, sick, three-fourths dead, slinking into a still darker corner under the gleam of the lantern of the police. There has not been a breath of fresh air in that room for five years, literally. The broken sewer empties its contents upon them, and they lie at night in the swimming filth. There they are, men, women, children ; blacks, whites ; Mary Magdalen without her repentance, and Lazarus without his God ! These are “ the dives ” into which the pickpockets and the thieves go,

as well as a great many who would like a different life but cannot get it. These places are the sores of the city, which bleed perpetual corruption. They are the underlying volcano that threatens us with a Caraccas earthquake. It rolls, and roars, and surges, and heaves, and rocks, and blasphemes, and dies. And there are only two outlets for it ; the police court and the Potter's Field. In other words, they must either go to prison or to hell. Oh, you never saw it, you say. You never will see it until on the day when these staggering wretches shall come up in the light of the judgment throne, and while all hearts are being revealed, God will ask you what you did to help them.

APRIL FIRST.

THE CROWN OF THORNS.

"When they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head."—**MATT. xxvii. 29.**

JESUS was wonderful in His sorrows. The sun smote Him, and the cold chilled Him, the rain pelted Him, thirst parched Him, and hunger exhausted Him. Shall I compare His sorrow to the sea? No ; for that is sometimes hushed into a calm. Shall I compare it with the night? No ; for that sometimes gleams with Orion, or kindles with Aurora. If one thorn should be thrust through your temple, you would faint. But here is a whole crown made from the *Rhamnus* or *Spina Christi*—small, sharp, stinging thorns. The mob made a cross. They put down the long beam, and on it they fasten a shorter beam. Got Him at last. Those hands, that have been doing kindnesses and wiping away tears—hear the hammer driving the spikes through them. Those feet, that have been going about on ministrations of mercy—battered against the cross. Then they lift it up. Look ! look ! look ! Who will help Him

now? Come men of Jersualem—ye whose dead He brought to life; ye whose sick He healed: who will help Him seize the weapons of the soldiers? None to help! Having carried such a cross for us, shall we refuse to take our cross for Him?

“Shall Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No; there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.”

You know the process of ingrafting. You bore a hole into a tree, and put in the branch of another tree. This tree of the cross was hard and rough, but into the holes where the nails went there have been grafted branches of the Tree of Life that now bear fruit for all the nations. The original tree was bitter, but the branches ingrafted were sweet, and now all the nations pluck the fruit and live forever.

APRIL SECOND.

A BLACK FROST.

“Having no hope and without God.”—*EPH. ii. 12.*

YOU have noticed that some trees, at the first touch of the frost, lose all their beauty; their leaves stand withered, and uncomely, and ragged, waiting for the northeast storm to drive them into the mire. The sun shining at noon-day gilds them with no beauty, Ragged leaves! Dead leaves! No one stands to study them. They are gathered in no vase. They are hung on no wall. So death smites many. There is no beauty in their departure. One sharp frost of sickness, or one blast off the cold waters, and they are gone. No tinge of hope. No prophecy of heaven. Their

spring was all a-bloom with bright prospects ; their *summer* thick foliaged with opportunities ; but October came, and their glory went. *Frosted!* In early autumn the frosts come, but do not seem to damage vegetation. They are light frosts. But some morning you look out of the window and say, "There was a *black* frost last night," and you know that from that day everything will wither. So men seem to get along without religion, amid the annoyances and vexations of life that nip them slightly here and nip them there. But after a while death comes. It is a *black* frost, and all is ended.

Oh! what withering and scattering death makes among those not prepared to meet it! They leave everything pleasant behind them—their house, their families, their friends, their books, their pictures, and step out of the sunshine into the shadow. They hang their harps on the willow, and trudge away into everlasting captivity. They quit the presence of bird, and bloom, and wave, to go unbeckoned and unwelcomed. The bower in which they stood, and sang, and wove chaplets, and made themselves merry, has gone down under an awful equinoctial. No funeral bell can toll one-half the dolefulness of their condition. *Frosted!*

APRIL THIRD.

A CHANGE OF HEART,

"I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh."—
EZEKIEL xi. 19.

AH! it is no insignificant process, this change of heart. It is a change from black to white, from down to up, from the highway to hell to the highway to heaven—the whole nature made over again.

Scene the First: Paul, the persecutor. He says, "Kill that

man ; he loves Christ. Whip that woman ; she believes in Jesus. Open the prison-doors, and get ready the sharp knives, and we will put an end to Christ's religion. Bring up my horse—fetch up a troop of horses, and let us down to Damascus and exterminate this religion. Mount and away ! ” I hear the quick clatter of the swift hoofs as they dash off.

Scene the Second : Paul's back bared to the scourge, and the blood running. For whom ? For Jesus. Paul on the floor of the Mamertine Prison, his feet fast, and the cold shivering through his agonized body. For whom ? For Jesus. Paul standing before the rulers, making a speech that would have thrilled another audience into tumults of approval, yet interrupted, scoffed at, coughed down, charged with being crazy, and sentenced to die. For whom ? For Jesus.

Scene the first : John Bunyan. Born of a low gypsy woman, himself vulgar and blasphemous, shocking the ears of those only ordinarily polluted, reprovèd even by an abandoned woman.

Scene the Second : John Bunyan, from the wicket-door of the prison looking towards the “delectable mountains,” and pointing the whole world up to the gate of the Celestial City. What was this change in John ? A change of heart.

APRIL FOURTH.

CHRISTIAN HAND SHAKING.

“Give me thine hand.”—2 KINGS x. 15.

THERE has been too great a distance between pulpit and pew—a great gulf fixed. The heart of the preacher and the heart of the hearer have not struck each other in pulsation. We come down out of our studies, where we have

had a grand time with Archbishop Leighton and Jeremy Taylor, and the people come up out of their stores, and shops, and homes, and we have known too little of each other. The distance has been so great that our arms are not long enough. Nothing would be more preposterous than for a preacher to stand at an elevation of five or six feet, and behind a barricade four feet through, crying, "*Give me thy hand!*" Daniel Webster said that one of the best evidences of the divinity of our holy religion was the fact that it had lived, notwithstanding the clumsy architecture of the pulpit.

Men use common sense in everything but in religion. The counsellor at the bar stands before the jury with his person unhid ; but when the teacher of religion comes out to talk to the people on a plain platform, without any desk before him, Christians quote the Psalmist, and say, "The Lord hath no pleasure in the *legs* of a man." When one merchant wishes to talk to another merchant, he does not say, "Wait until I can get behind this dry-goods box." But you wrap us in gowns, and lay us out in white cravats, and hide us behind boards, as though *we* were a separate race, and a minister were useful just in proportion as you cover him up, and as though we belonged to a different order of beings, instead of being sinners like yourselves, and beggars at the door of mercy. We have used the Gospel as though it were a "swamp-angel gun" that could shoot six miles, instead of reaching up into God's armory and taking the two-edged sword, and with it going down among men, striking down their sins, hip and thigh, with great slaughter.

Come, now, and let us get near to each other in a plain, loving, Christian talk. My brother! my sister! my child!
"*Give me thy hand!*"

*APRIL FIFTH.***BACKSLIDING.**

“But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.”—GEN. xix. 26.

I HAVE to remark that the vast majority of those who once saw their duty and started heavenward, but have looked back, never start again. There is nothing short of the thunders of the last day that will rouse them, and that will be too late. I think out of every hundred cases there are not more than one or two that ever start heavenward again. I do not know that there is more than one out of a thousand. Having started and stopped they stop forever, so far as religious impressions are concerned. Misfortunes come—no divine alleviation for them. Sickness comes—no divine physician for them. Death comes—no divine warmth to take off the chill, or heavenly lamp to illumine the darkness. They die, crying: “No hope!” and plunging down into bottomless depths, the winds whistle it: “No hope!” and destroyed spirits re-echo it: “No hope!” and everlasting ages hand it on to everlasting ages;—but there is no hope. They started, they stopped, they looked back, and that ended their opportunities for salvation. But, as I have just now remarked, there are exceptions to the rule, and I preach, this morning, to those exceptions. I want to tell those who have begun to seek after God, but have surrendered their religious impressions, of a Saviour’s compassion and the bleeding cross of a dying Jesus:

“Sinful soul, what hast thou done?
Crucified the eternal Son.”

Oh, how could you look back? Did you not know it was a fearful hazard? that the death angel might smite you? that the door might shut? that the spirit might fly away and leave you undone and desolate? Oh, what a mercy that God spared you; that when you looked back God did not look back; that when you stopped praying, God did not stop beseeching; that the blood of the atonement upon which you put your ungrateful foot, did not cry out in vengeance against your soul! I look upon you with amazement. I thrill with horror at the risk you ran. I feel as if to-day I must with unwonted earnestness lay hold that soul, lest the mandate from the throne go forth: "Cut him down! why cumbereth he the ground?" O God! spare him another hour. Hold back the decree. Knock once more at the iron gate of his soul. Fly, messenger of salvation, and make quick work ere it be too late. But why should I, my brother, plead with you about your duty when you know it better than I can tell you? Ministers of religion may get some novelty of expression and some originality of illustration; but after all, we feel that we are announcing the same old truths that have been ringing through the Church of Christ for ages. Indeed, we dare preach no other doctrine, for the apostle says: "If any one, though he be an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." Yes, my friends, you know all this story. You will not in the last great day be able to plead ignorance. You know if you diè out of Christ you die forever. You know that the days of your probation on earth are so uncertain that nothing can be more uncertain. You know that in proportion as the soul's opportunities for salvation have been numerous and elevated, its last account will be stupendous. You know that beyond the margin of this life there is another life—a glorious heaven or an awful hell, and that towards one of those destinies you are speeding swifter than the lightning! You know all that. You know it so well that you can never say you did not know it.

APRIL SIXTH.

TRUST HIM.

“Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you.”—1 PETER v. 7.

GOD has promised to take care of us. The Bible blooms with assurances. Your hunger will be fed ; your sicknesses will be alleviated ; your sorrows will be healed. God will sandal your feet, and smooth your path, and along by frowning crag and opening grave sound the voices of victory and good cheer. The summer clouds that seem thunder-charged really carry in their bosom harvests of wheat, and shocks of corn, and vineyards purpling for the wine-press. The wrathful wave will kiss the feet of the great Storm-walker. Our great Joshua will command, and above your soul the sun of prosperity will stand still. Bleak and wave-struck Patmos shall have apocalyptic vision, and you shall hear the cry of elders, and the sweep of wings, and trumpets of salvation, and the voice of Hallelujah unto God forever.

Your way may wind along dangerous bridle-paths, and amid wolf's howl and the scream of the vulture, but the way still winds upward till angels guard it, and trees of life over-arch it, and thrones line it, and crystalline fountains leap on it, and the pathway ends at gates that are pearl, and streets that are gold, and temples that are always open, and hills that quake with perpetual song, and a city mingling forever Sabbath, and jubilee, and triumph, and coronation.

“Let Pleasure chant her siren song,
 'Tis not the song for me :
 To weeping it will turn ere long,
 For this is Heaven's decree.

But there's a song the ransom'd sing,
 To Jesus their exalted King,
 With joyful heart and tongue,
 Oh, that's the song for me!"

Courage, my brother! The father does not give to his son at school enough money to last him several years, but, as the bills for tuition, and board, and clothing, and books come in, pays them. So God will not give you grace all at once for the future, but will meet all your exigencies as they come. Through earnest prayer, trust Him.

APRIL SEVENTH.

WEIGHING CHRISTIANS.

"Thou most upright, dost weigh the just."—Is. xxvi. 7.

YOU ask, "how, if we repent and come to God, will we at last be weighed?" Yes! yes! There is no escape from the scrutiny. The wicked have been tested and driven away in their wickedness. Now let the righteous get on to the balances. "Oh!" you say, "let me off; I cannot stand the test." Get in, ye righteous! "What, with all my sin?" No time to discuss that matter. The bell of judgment is tolling. The balances are adjusted—get in you must. All your opportunities of being better and doing more good are placed on one side of the scales, and you get in on the other. You are too light to budge the balances in your favor. On your side are spread all the kind words you ever spoke, and all the Christian deeds you ever did. *Too light yet!* On your side are put all your prayers, all your repentance, all your faith. *Too light yet!* Come and get on this side—Paul, Luther, Baxter, Payson, and Doddridge—and help the Christian bear down the

scale. *Too light yet!* Get on this side, all ye martyrs who went through fire and flood—Wickliffe, Ridley, and Latimer. *Too light yet!* Come, angels of God, and get on the scales, and see if ye cannot turn the balances in favor of the saints; for the judgment is ending, and let not the righteous be banished with the wicked. *Too light yet!* Place on this side all the sceptres of light, and all the palm-branches of triumph, and all the thrones of glory. *Too light yet!* But at this point Jesus, the Son of God, steps up to the balances. He puts one scarred foot on the Christian's side of the scales, and they tremble and quiver from top to bottom. He puts both feet on, and down go the scales on the Christian's side with a stroke that sets all the bells of heaven a-chiming! This Rock of ages is heavier than any other weight.

But, O Christian! you may not get off so easily. I place on the opposite scale all the sins that you ever committed, and all the envies, and hates, and inconsistencies of a lifetime, but altogether they do not budge the scales. Christ, on your side, has settled the balances forever. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Go free! go free! Sins all pardoned, shackles all broken, prison-doors all opened. Go free! go free! Weighed in the balance, and *nothing* wanting!

APRIL EIGHTH.

A BAD INHERITANCE.

“Let every man take heed how he buildeth.”—1 Cor. iii. 10.

THERE are coming up a vast multitude of children in this country who have, from the day of their birth, a thirst for strong drink. Whether it be developed in early life or not, it is there—they have inherited it. Right along the

ancestral line, how often goes the river of death! It seems as if their cradle is rocked by the rum fiend. The father sits down to make his will. He says: "In the name of God, amen! I bequeath to my children my houses and lands, and all my property. Share, and share alike, they must. Hereto I affix my hand and seal, in the presence of witnesses." But that father may at the same time be making a will that he does not recognize. He may be really saying: "In the name of Disease, and Appetite, and Death, amen! I bequeath to my children my thirst for strong drink. My tankards shall be theirs, my condemnation shall be theirs. In the ruin that I have wrought for them, let them share, and share alike. Hereto I put my hand and seal, in the presence of all the astonished host of heaven and all the jubilant harpies of hell." He does not know that he is making two wills at the same time. There are young men in this house to-day who have had two inheritances: one an inheritance of dollars—they have nearly spent that; the other an inheritance of thirst for strong drink—they have not spent that.

In addition to this, there is coming up from the lower haunts of society an uncouth throng of children who have been familiar with the odors of the whiskey jug and the ale-pitcher from the time they started into life. In every fibre of their soul they feel the sting of parental indulgences, and while your children to-day will be in the Sabbath-school singing, "Hosanna," there will be a vaster multitude—vaster by millions and millions—of little children, barefooted, imbruted in their countenances, filthy and uncombed, who will be singing the song of the drunkard. Their swaddling clothes were torn off the winding sheet of death. Their toy in infancy was a gin-bottle. They were baptized from the laver of woe. Obscene songs were their lullaby. Their inheritance has been a father's curse and a mother's beastliness. Are you surprised that they turn out badly? Aye, if one out of ten thousand turns out anything but badly, you ought to be surprised.

*APRIL NINTH.***VICARIOUS SUFFERING.**

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins.”—1 PETER iii. 18.

I WAS reading this morning of a sailor who had just got ashore, and was telling about his last experience at sea. He said: “The last time I crossed the ocean, we had a terrific time. After we had been out three or four days, the machinery got disarranged and the steam began to escape, and the captain gathering the people and the crew on deck, said: ‘Unless some one shall go down and shut off that steam and arrange that machinery at the peril of his life, we must all be destroyed.’ He was not willing to go down himself. No one seemed willing to go. The passengers gathered at one end of the steamer waiting for their fate. The captain said: ‘I give you a last warning. If there is no one here willing to imperil his life and go down and fix that machinery, we must all be lost.’ A plain sailor said: ‘I’ll go sir,’ and he wrapped himself in a coarse piece of canvas and went down, and was gone but a few moments, when the escaping steam stopped and the machinery was corrected. The captain cried out to the passengers: ‘All saved! Let us go down below and see what has become of the poor fellow.’” They went down. There he lay dead. Vicarious suffering! Died for all! Oh, do you suppose that those people on the ship ever forgot, ever can forget that poor fellow? “No!” they say, “it was through his sacrifice that I got ashore.” The time came when our whole race must die unless some one should endure torture, sorrow and shame. Who shall come

to the rescue? Shall it be one of the seraphim? Not one. Shall it be one of the cherubim? Not one. Shall it be an inhabitant of some pure and unfallen world? Not one. Then Christ said: "Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God:" and He went down through the dark stairs of our sin, and wretchedness, and misery, and woe, and He stopped the peril, and He died that you and I might be free. Oh, the love, oh, the endurance, oh, the horrors of the sacrifice! Shall not our souls this morning go out towards Him saying: "Lord Jesus Christ, take my soul. Thou art worthy to have it. Thou hast died to save it."

APRIL TENTH.

DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"—NUM. xxiii. 10.

WE do not want any Bible or argument to prove that we have to quit this scene after a while. There may be worldly alleviations in the last hour. A man may have accumulated property, or have a generous life insurance, and he may be able to say to those whom he is leaving behind: "Keep things just as they are. Send the boy to college as though I had lived. There will be dividends large enough to meet all expenses." That is very well for those whom you leave behind; but one moment after you have quit life, where will *your* residence be? I am supposing that your last hour has come. Leaving this life, suppose you have made no preparations? The ship is sinking and no life-preserver. The darkness is coming on and no torch. Everything going out of your grasp—bonds and mortgages going—everything going, swimming away from the eye, swimming away from the

ear, swimming away from the touch. That is one side—everything going. On the other side, what is coming? No inheritance coming. No bright angels coming. No heaven coming. God there meeting the unpardoned soul. The immortal soul is starting! Stand back now and let it swing off! It flies! Away! away! No open window to receive it. No outspread arms of Jesus to welcome it. He dies without repentance and goes to a world without hope.

I bless God that there are many who in their last hours have found joy and peace. So it was with Lady Huntington. As she went out of this life, she said: "I will go to my Father to-night." So it was with Alice Lucey. In her last moments she said: "My God, I come flying to thee." So it was with John Pawson as he closed his eyes in death and said: "*Precious Jesus.*" So it was with John Bradford, who cried out: "If there is such a thing as going to heaven on horseback, this is it." But alas for some who in that hour have gone away broken down, into darkness. So it was with the French athlete, able to wrestle down every gymnast, but in his last moment crying out: "O death, if thou wert a man, how soon I would throw thee!" So it was with Voltaire, who said he would give the doctor half his fortune if he could only have another six months of life. So it was with Altamont in his closing moments, when he looked up and said: "O thou blasphemed but most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from Thy frown!"

APRIL ELEVENTH.

LOSS AND GAIN.

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”
—MATT. xvi. 26.

THIS world is a property, with which everybody who has taken it as a possession, has had trouble. Now, between my house and this church, there is a reach of land which is not built on. I ask what is the matter, and they reply that everybody who has had anything to do with that property got into trouble about it. It is just so with this world ; everybody that has had anything to do with it, as a possession, has been in perplexity. How was it with Lord Byron? Did he not sell his immortal soul for the purpose of getting the world? Was he satisfied with the possession? Alas, alas, the poem graphically describes his case when it says :

“ Drank every cup of joy,
Heard every trump of fame ;
Drank early, deeply drank,
Drank draughts which common millions might have quenched.
Then died of thirst, because there was no more to drink.”

Oh yes, he had trouble with it, and so did Napoleon. After conquering nations by the force of the sword, he lies down to die, his entire possession the military boots that he insisted on having upon his feet while he was dying. So it has been with men who had better ambition. Oh yes, this world is a cheat. Talk about a man gaining the world ! Who ever gained half of the world? Who ever owned a hemisphere? Who ever gained a continent? Who ever owned Asia? Who ever

gained a city? Who ever owned Brooklyn? Talk about gaining the world? No man ever gained it or the hundred-thousandth part of it. You are demanding that I sell my soul, not for the world, but for a fragment of it.

Now, let us look at the other property—the soul. We cannot make a bargain without seeing the comparative value. The soul! How shall I estimate the value of it? Well, by its exquisite organization. It is the most wonderful piece of mechanism ever put together. Machinery is of value in proportion as it is mighty and silent at the same time.

Machinery that roars and tears soon destroys itself; but silent machinery is often most effective. Now, so it is with the soul of man, with all its tremendous faculties—it moves in silence. Judgment without any racket, lifting its scales; memory without any noise, bringing down all its treasures; conscience taking its judgment-seat without any excitement; the understanding and the will all doing their work. Velocity, majesty, might; but silence—silence. You listen at the door of your heart. You can hear no sound. The soul is all quiet. It is so delicate an instrument that no human hand can touch it. You break a bone, and with splinters and bandages the surgeon sets it; the eye becomes inflamed, the apothecary's wash cools it; but a soul off the track, unbalanced, no human power can re-adjust it. When one sweep of its wing it circles the universe, and over-vaults the throne of God.

I calculate further the value of the soul by the price that has been paid for it. For that immortal soul, the richest blood that was ever shed, the deepest groan that was ever uttered, all the griefs of earth compressed into one tear, all the sufferings of earth gathered into one rapier of pain and struck through His holy heart. Does it not imply tremendous value?

I argue also the value of the soul from the home that has been fitted up for it in the future. One would have thought that a street of adamant would have done. No, it is a street of gold. One would have thought that a wall of granite would

have done. No, it is the flame of sardonyx mingling with the green of emerald. One would have thought that an occasional doxology would have done? No, it is a perpetual song.

A soul so bought, so equipped, so provided for, must be a priceless soul, a majestic soul, a tremendous soul.

APRIL TWELFTH.

AMUSEMENTS.

“ And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the clean and unclean.”—Ez. xlv. 23.

YOU can judge of the moral character of any amusement by its *healthful result*, or by its *baleful reaction*. There are people who seem made up of hard facts. They are a combination of multiplication tables and statistics. If you show them an exquisite picture, they will begin to discuss the pigments involved in the coloring. If you show them a beautiful rose, they will submit it to a botanical analysis, which is only the *post-mortem* examination of a flower. They have no rebound in their nature. They never do anything more than smile. There are no great tides of feeling surging up from the depths of their soul, in billow after billow of reverberating laughter. They seem as if nature had built them by contract, and made a bungling job out of it. But, blessed be God, there are people in the world who have bright faces, and whose life is a song, an anthem, a pæan of victory. Even their troubles are like the vines that crawl up the side of a great tower, on the top of which the sunlight sits, and the soft airs of summer hold perpetual carnival. They are the people you like to have come to your house; they are the people I like to have come to my house. If you but touch the hem of their garments, you are healed.

Now, it is these exhilarant and sympathetic and warm-hearted people that are the most tempted to pernicious amusements. In proportion as a ship is swift, it wants a strong helmsman; in proportion as a horse is gay, it wants a stout driver; and these people of exuberant nature will do well to look at the reaction of all their amusements. If an amusement sends you home at night nervous, so that you cannot sleep, and you rise up in the morning, not because you are slept out, but because your duty drags you from your slumbers, you have been where you ought not have been. There are amusements that send a man next day to his work bloodshot, yawning, stupid, nauseated; and they are wrong kinds of amusement. There are entertainments that give a man disgust with the drudgery of life, with tools because they are not swords, with working aprons because they are not robes, with cattle because they are not infuriated bulls of the arena. If any amusement sends you home longing for a life of romance and thrilling adventure, love that takes poison and shoots itself, moonlight adventures and hairbreadth escapes, you may depend upon it that you are the sacrificed victim of unsanctified pleasure. Our recreations are intended to build us up; and if they pull us down as to our moral or as to our physical strength, you may come to the conclusion that they are in the class spoken of by my text as obnoxious.

APRIL THIRTEENTH.

A HIGHER LIFE POSSIBLE.

“With God all things are possible.”—*MATT. xix. 26.*

A MAN was once talking to Brunel, the famous engineer, about the length of the railroad from London to Bristol. The engineer said, “It is not very great. We shall have, after a while, a steamer running from England to New York.”

They laughed him to scorn ; but we have gone so far now that we have ceased to laugh at anything as impossible for human achievement. Then, I ask, is anything impossible for the Lord? I do not believe that God exhausted all His grace in Paul, and Latimer, and Edward Payson. I believe there are higher points of Christian attainment to be reached in the future ages of the Christian world. You tell me that Paul went up to the tiptop of the Alps of Christian attainment. Then I tell you that the stork and crane have found above the Alps plenty of room for free flying. We go out and we conquer our temptations by the grace of God, and lie down. On the morrow, those temptations rally themselves and attack us, and by the grace of God we defeat them again ; but, staying all the time in the old encampment, we have the same old battles to fight over. Why not whip out our temptations, and then forward march, making one raid through the enemy's country, stopping not until we break ranks after the last victory. Do, my brethren, let us have some novelty of combat, at any rate, by changing, by going on, by making advancement, trading off our stale prayers about sins we ought to have quit long ago, going on toward a higher state of Christian character, and routing out sins that we have never thought of yet. The fact is, if the Church of God—if we, as individuals, made rapid advancement in the Christian life, these stereotyped prayers we have been making for ten or fifteen years would be as inappropriate to us as the shoes, and the hats, and the coats we wore ten or fifteen years ago. Oh for a higher flight in the Christian life, the stork and the crane in their migration teaching us the lesson !

“Dear Lord, and shall we ever live,
At this poor dying rate—
Our love so faint, so cold to thee,
And thine to us so great?”

APRIL FOURTEENTH.

HARD ROWING.

“The men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not.”—JONAH I. 13.

AS those Mediterranean oarsmen trying to bring Jonah ashore were discomfited, I have to tell you that they were not the only men who have broken down on their paddles, and have been obliged to call on the Lord for help. I want to say that the unavailing efforts of those Mediterranean oarsmen has a counterpart in the efforts *we are making to bring souls to the shore of safety and set their feet on the Rock of Ages.* You have a father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or child, or near friend, who is not a Christian. There have been times when you have been in agony about their salvation. A minister of Christ, whose wife was dying without any hope in Jesus, walked the floor, wrung his hands, cried bitterly, and said, “I believe I shall go insane, for I know she is not prepared to meet God.” And there may have been days of sickness in your household, when you feared it would be a fatal sickness; and how closely you examined the face of the doctor as he came in and scrutinized the patient, and felt the pulse, and you followed him into the next room, and said, “There isn’t any danger, is there, doctor?” And the hesitation and the uncertainty of the reply made two eternities flash before your vision. And then you went and talked to the sick one about the great future. Oh, there are those here who have tried to bring their friends to God! They have been unable to bring them to the shore of safety. They are no nearer that point than they were twenty years ago. You think you have got

them almost to the shore, when you are swept back again. What shall you do? Put down the oar? Oh, no! I do not advise that; but I do advise that you appeal to that God to whom the Mediterranean oarsmen appealed—the God who could silence the tempest and bring the ship in safety to the port.

APRIL FIFTEENTH.

THE GREAT ENEMY.

“Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes drink in the morning.”—ECCLES. x. 16.

WHAT was it that drove back your armies in the last war so often? Were your sons and fathers cowards and poltroons? No! It was because so often drunkenness sat in the saddle. What are those graves on the heights of Fredericksburg, as you pass down to Richmond? Was it the sword or the bottle that slew them? The bottle! for that day drunkenness rode in some of the stirrups, leading forth your sons and fathers to death. Dissipation in all the high circles as well as the low. A trial in the courts ever and anon reveals the fact that Impurity walks in robes, and dances under the palatial chandelier, and drowns on the damask upholstery. Sin is tolerable, if it is only rich. Stand back and let the libertine go by, for he rides in a three-thousand-dollar turn-out. The Congressional galleries are thrilled by the appeals of men who on the following night fulfil what Solomon said, “He goeth after her straightway, as an ox to the slaughter and as a fool to the correction of stocks, until a dart strike through his liver.” Meanwhile, political parties are silent, lest they lose votes; and newspapers are quiet, lest they lose subscribers; and ministers of the Gospel are still, lest some affluent pew-holder should be disgusted.

But God's indignation gathers like the fiery flashes around the edges of a blackening cloud just before the swoop of a tornado. His voice sounds through this country to-day, in the words of the text: "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes drink in the morning." Oh, the land groans to be delivered! It sweats great drops of blood! It is crucified—not between two thieves, but between a thousand, while the nations ride past, wagging their heads and crying, "Aha! aha!"

APRIL SIXTEENTH.

HEAVEN MEASURED.

"And he measured the city with the reed."—REV. xxi. 16.

THE Bible says that one day an angel went out and measured heaven. He took a golden rod. I see that rod flashing in the light of the sun that never sets. With it the angel measured all along by the gates, all along by the towers, and all along by the foundations—a hundred miles, five hundred miles, a thousand miles, fifteen hundred miles around—so the Bible intimates. What a city! London and New York are villages compared with it. Though the account be *figurative*, what a heaven God has ready for us! But that heaven spoken of in the Bible was heaven before the improvements. It is a grander place now; for the great and good souls of the last eighteen hundred years have gone in since then. Excepting Jesus, the best part of our heaven has been made up within the last thirty years, since our friends have been going in.

In the great park of the universe we may walk; and we shall want not one thing for all eternity. No sickness will pale the cheek. No discord will strike the ear. No shadow

will darken the path, save under the palm-trees, through which sifts the golden light of eternal summer. Jesus will be there; and all the good will be there. O land of light, and love, and joy! A land where the redeemed of the Lord come with songs upon their head. A land where— I fail! I break down under the thought! I cannot express it! “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for those who love Him.” Is not a salvation that opens such a gate, and rouses such an anthem, and consummates such a friendship, a *great* salvation?

APRIL SEVENTEENTH.

FOOLS FOR TIME, FOOLS FOR ETERNITY.

“I trust in thy word.”—Ps. cxix. 42.

THERE are many who come to this book *as skeptics*. They marshal passage against passage, and try to get Matthew and Luke in a quarrel, and would have a discrepancy between what Paul and James say about faith and works; and they try the account of Moses concerning the Creation by modern decisions in science, and resolve that in all questions between the scientific explorer and the inspired writer they will give the preference to the geologist. These men—these spiders, I will say—suck poison out of the sweetest flowers. They fatten their infidelity upon the truths which have led thousands to heaven, and in their distorted vision prophet seems to war with prophet, and evangelist with evangelist, and apostle with apostle; and if they can find some bad trait of character in a man of God mentioned in that Bible, these carrion crows caw and flap their wings over the

carcass. Because they cannot understand how the whale swallowed Jonah, they attempt the more wonderful feat of swallowing the monster whale of modern skepticism. They do not believe it possible that the Bible story should be true which says that the dumb ass spake, while they themselves prove the thing possible by their own utterances. I am amused beyond bounds when I hear one of these men talking about a future life. Just ask a man who rejects that Bible what heaven is, and hear him befog your soul. He will tell you that heaven is merely the development of the internal resources of a man; it is an efflorescence of the dynamic forces into a state of ethereal and transcendental lucubration, in close juxtaposition to the ever-present "was," and the great "to be," and the everlasting "No." Considering themselves wise, they are fools for time, fools for eternity.

APRIL EIGHTEENTH.

A KING DYING.

"My God, why hast thou forsaken me."—*MATT. xxvii. 46.*

A KING dying! You remember, when the last Czar of Russia was in his fatal sickness, that bulletins were every hour dispatched from the palace, saying, "The king is better," or "The king is worse," or "The king is delirious," or "The king rested easier through the night," or, "The king is dying," and "The king is dead." The bells tolled it, the flags signalled it, the telegraphs flashed it. Tell it now to all the earth and to all the heavens—Jesus, our King, is sick with His last sickness. Let couriers carry the swift dispatch. His pains are worse; He is breathing a last groan; through His body quivers the last anguish; the King is dying; the King

is dead! Ye who come around about the cross, look out how you tread in what you see beneath. It is royal blood. It is said that the Unitarians make too much of the humanity of Christ. I respond that we make too little. If some Roman surgeon, standing under the cross, had caught one drop of the blood on his hand and analyzed it, it would have been found to have the same plasma, the same disk, the same fibrin, the same albumen. It was unmistakably *human* blood. It is a *man* that hangs there. His bones are of the same material as ours. His nerves are sensitive like ours. If it were an angel being despoiled I would not feel it so much, for it belongs to a different order of beings. But my Saviour is a *man*, and my whole sympathy is aroused. I can imagine how the spikes felt—how hot the temples burned—what deathly sickness seized His heart—how mountain, and city, and mob swam away from His dying vision—something of the meaning of that cry for help that makes the blood of all the ages curdle with horror; “My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?”

APRIL NINETEENTH.

RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION.

“Be ye angry, and sin not.”—Eph. iv. 26.

PERHAPS it is a disposition to anger that you have to contend against; and perhaps, while in a very serious mood, you hear of something that makes you feel that you must swear or die. I know of a Christian man who was once so exasperated that he said to a mean customer, “I cannot swear at you myself, for I am a member of the Church; but if you will go down stairs my partner in business will swear at you.” All your good resolutions heretofore have been torn to tatters by ex-

plosions of temper. Now there is no harm in getting mad if you only get mad at sin. You need to bridle and saddle these hot-breathed passions, and with them ride down injustice and wrong. There are a thousand things in the world that we ought to be mad at. There is no harm in getting red hot if you only bring to the forge that which needs hammering. A man who has no power of righteous indignation is an imbecile. But be sure it is a *righteous* indignation, and not a petulance that blurs, and unravels, and depletes the soul.

There is a large class of persons in mid-life who have still in them appetites that were aroused in early manhood, at a time when they prided themselves on being a "little fast," "high livers," "free and easy," "hail fellows well met." They are now paying in compound interest for troubles they collected twenty years ago. Some of you are trying to escape, and you will—yet very narrowly, "as with the skin of your teeth." God and your own soul only know what the struggle is. Omnipotent grace has pulled out many a soul that was deeper in the mire than you are. They line the beach of heaven—the multitude whom God has rescued from the thrall of suicidal habits. If you this day turn your back on the wrong and start anew, God will help you.

APRIL TWENTIETH.

PARDON FOR ALL SIN.

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John i. 7.

CIRCUMSTANCES aggravate sins. If a child does wrong, not wittingly, you excuse it; but when we do wrong, we know it. Every time a sin is committed, conscience tolls a funeral bell. We may laugh, and pretend not

to hear it, but hear it we must. Our sins are against warnings and reproofs, and doubly aggravated. This man's sins are more heinous than the transgressions of that man, because he had a better bringing up. Here is a man who, twenty years ago, kneeled at a Methodist altar. He went a while on the road to heaven, but then got tired, and put off in another direction. Where he has been since he began to backslide, he and his God only know. This I do know, he is wretchedly unhappy. There is no such nest of scorpions this side of hell as the heart of the backslider. He is the last man that ever returns. The publicans and the harlots come in before him. Where, O man ! is that family altar that you once lifted ? Where is the closet of prayer that you once frequented ? Are you as happy now as you used to be ? Your common sense teaches you that the man who came to Christ, and heard the full expression of God's love, and then went away to betray the Lord, must drink the bitterest gall, and the thunders that at last drive him away will roll and crash with all the accumulated wrath of God omnipotent ; and yet to-night my text sweeps a circle of pardon around all these accumulated sins. Fire may not be able to burn them out ; hoofs may not be able to trample them out ; hammers may not be able to pound them out ; but here is blood that will wash them out. Come ! come ! I take you with my right hand, while with my left I catch the warm blood that gushes from the heart of Christ and pour it over your soul, and lo ! the blackness of your sin is gone for ever. Oh that the red hand of Christ would rub all our sins away.

APRIL TWENTY-FIRST.

CHRIST WILL COMFORT YOU.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”—*MATT. v. 4.*

OH! when a man has trouble, he needs friends. When a man loses property, he needs all those of his acquaintances who have lost property to come in with their sympathy. When bereavement comes to a household, it is a comfort to have others who have been bereaved come in and sympathize. Give me thy hand a minute, and let us have a good talk about our troubles. God is not going to let you go under. He will explain, after a while, so satisfactorily that it will take an eternity to express your admiration of His wisdom. You often talk about God as your Father. I know something better than that: God is a Mother. “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” With some troubles you never think of going to your father. His hand is too hard; his word too rough. You go to your mother. Oh, the tenderness of the divine sympathy!

In an Episcopal church in Chamounix I saw in a hymn-book these words:

“My God, my Father, while I stray
Far from home, in life’s rough way,
Oh! teach me from my heart to say,
Thy will be done!

“If thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize—it ne’er was mine—
I only yield thee what was thine:
Thy will be done!

“Renew my soul from day to day;
Blend it with thine, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say
Thy will be done!

“Then, when on earth I breathe no more,
The prayer, oft mixed with tears before,
I'll sing upon the happier shore,
Thy will be done!”

We shall, after a while, have done chewing these bitter herbs, and will then sit down at the King's banquet.

When a panorama is to pass before an audience, the artist darkens the room in which they sit, so that the picture may be more fully seen; so God darkens our place on earth, puts out this light, and that light, and the other light, that then He may pass before our souls the splendors and glories of the better land. The darkness here augments the light there.

APRIL TWENTY-SECOND.

NEVER BORROW TROUBLE.

“Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”—*MATT. vi. 34.*

THE habit of borrowing trouble is wrong, because the present is sufficiently taxed with trial. God sees that we all need a certain amount of trouble, and so He apportions it for all the days and years of our life. Alas for the policy of gathering it all up for one day or year! Cruel thing to put upon the back of one camel all the cargo intended for the entire caravan. I never look at my memorandum-book to see what engagements and duties are far ahead. Let every week bear its own burdens.

The shadows of to-day are thick enough, why implore the

presence of other shadows? The cup is already distasteful, why halloo to disasters far distant to come, and wring out more gall into the bitterness? Are we such champions that, having won the belt in former encounters, we can go forth to challenge all the future?

Here are business men just able to manage affairs as they now are. They can pay their rent, and meet their notes, and manage affairs, as gold now is at 112; but how if it should shoot up to 120, or fall to 105? Go to-morrow and write on your day-book, on your ledger, on your money-safe, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Do not worry about notes that are far from due. Do not pile up on your counting-desk the financial anxieties of the next twenty years. The God who has taken care of your worldly occupation, guarding your store from the torch of the incendiary and the key of the burglar, will be as faithful in 1871 as in 1861. God's hand is mightier than the machinations of stock-gamblers, or the plots of political demagogues, or the red right arm of revolution, and the darkness will fly and the storm fall dead at His feet.

APRIL TWENTY-THIRD.

CHRIST, GOD AND MAN.

"I and my father are one."—JOHN x. 30.

YOU want things logical and consistent, and you say, "How could Christ be God and man at the same time?" John says Christ was the Creator: "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made." Matthew says that He was omnipresent: "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Christ declares His own eternity: "I am Alpha and Omega." How

can He be a lion, under His foot crushing kingdoms, and yet a lamb licking the hand that slays Him? At what point do the throne and the manger touch? If Christ was God, why flee into Egypt? Why not stand His ground? Why, instead of bearing the cross, not lift up His right hand and crush His assassins? Why stand and be spit upon? Why sleep on the mountains, when He owned the palaces of eternity? Why catch fish for His breakfast on the beach in the chill morning when all the pomegranates are His, and all the vineyards His, and all the cattle His, and all the partridges His? Why walk when weary, and His feet stone-bruised, when He might have taken the splendors of the sunset for His equipage, and moved with horses and chariots of fire? Why beg a drink from the wayside, when out of the crystal chalices of eternity He poured the Euphrates, the Mississippi, and the Amazon, and dipping His hand in the fountains of heaven, and shaking that hand over the world, from the tips of His fingers dripped the great lakes and the oceans! Why let the Roman regiments put Him to death when He might have rode down the sky followed by all the cavalry of Heaven, mounted on white horses of Eternal Victory? You cannot understand. Who can? You try to confound me, I am confounded before you speak.

APRIL TWENTY-FOURTH.

CHRIST IS WONDERFUL IN HIS VICTORIES OVER NATURE.

“His name shall be called wonderful.”—Is. ix. 6.

THE sea is a crystal sepulchre. It swallowed the *Central America*, the *President*, and the Spanish Armada as easily as any fly that ever floated on it. The inland lakes are fully as terrible in their wrath. Recent travellers tell us that

Galilee, when aroused in a storm, is overwhelming ; and yet that sea crouched in His presence and licked His feet. He knew all the waves and the wind. When He beckoned, they came. When He frowned, they fled. The heel of His foot made no indentation on the solidified water. Medical science has wrought great changes in rheumatic limbs and diseased blood, but when the muscles are entirely withered no human power can restore them, and when a limb is once dead, it is dead. But here is a paralytic—his hand lifeless. Christ says to him, "Stretch forth thy hand!" and he stretches it forth.

In the Eye Infirmary, how many diseases of that delicate organ have been cured! But Jesus says to one *born* blind, "Be open!" and the light of heaven rushes through gates that have never before been opened. The frost or an axe may kill a tree, but Jesus smites one dead with a word.

Chemistry can do many wonderful things, but what chemist, at a wedding, when the refreshment gave out, could change a pail of water into a cask of wine?

What human voice could command a school of fish? Yet here is a voice that marshals the scaly tribes, until in the place where they had let down the net and pulled it up with no fish in it, they let it down again, and the disciples lay hold and begin to pull, when by reason of the multitude of fish the net broke.

APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH.

JESUS CONQUERED.

“ And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”—*MATT. XV. 27.*

I SEE in my subject *Jesus conquered by a human soul*. That woman said, “ Take this disease away from my daughter.” Christ responded to her, “ It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and cast it to dogs.” Then she roused her soul into an acuteness of expression seldom equalled by poet or painter, or orator or satirist, when she said, “ Yea, Lord, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” Then He turned, and flung pardon and healing and help into her soul with the words, “ O woman ! great is thy faith ; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” I have talked to you sometimes of Jesus, the conqueror. Listen now about Jesus, the conquered. You have seen Him on the white horse of victory, all heaven following Him on white horses, in His right hand the drawn sword of universal dominion ; the moon under His feet, the stars His tiara ; the sun only the rocket shot up in the signal service of His great host ; burning worlds only the bonfires of His victory. But now see Him surrender—faith, humility, and prayer triumphant.

There are some things which are impossible for Christ : He cannot break His oath ; He cannot despise the humble ; He cannot resist the cry of faith. Heaven sheathes its sword. It seems as if the prayer of the Syro-phœnician woman has conquered Omnipotence. The cavalry troop that John saw coming down the hills of heaven fall back. Behold the victories of

prayer! History tells us of Queen Caroline, who, in 1820, tried to get into Westminster Abbey, at the coronation of George IV., her offended husband. With six shining bays, and in a carriage of state, she rode up to the door. She tried this door; no admittance. She tried another door; they demanded tickets. She came to another door, and said, "Surely you will not keep out your queen;" but they said, "We have no orders for your admittance." So she mounted her carriage and rode away in derision. Let me say that the attempt to get into the temple of Christ's mercy will be fruitless if we come with pride and come in pomp.

APRIL TWENTY-SIXTH.

THE ROCK'S SHADOW.

"As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Is. xxxii. 2.

ISAIAH, who lived and wrote in a scorching climate, draws his figure from what he had seen and felt when he represents God as the *shadow of a great rock in a weary land!*

Many people have found this world a desert-march. They go half consumed of trouble all their days. But glory be to God, we are not turned out on a desert to die. Here is the long, cool, certain, refreshing shadow of the Lord.

A tree, when in full leafage, drops a great deal of refreshment; but in a little while the sun strikes through, and you keep shifting your position, until, after a while, the sun is set at such a point that you have no shade at all. But go in the heart of some great rock, such as you see in Yosemite or the Alps, and there is everlasting shadow. There has been thick shade there for six thousand years, and will be for the next six thousand. So our Divine Rock, once covering us, always

covers us. The same yesterday, to-day, and forever! always good, always kind, always sympathetic? You often hold a sunshade over your head passing along the road or a street; but after a while your arm gets tired, and the effort to create the shadow makes you weary. But the rock in the mountains, with fingers of everlasting stone, holds its own shadow. So God's sympathy needs no holding up from us. Though we are too weak from sickness or trouble to do anything but lie down, over us He stretches the shadow of His benediction.

“Rock of ages! cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in thee:—
 Let the water and the blood,
 From the riven side which flowed,
 Be of sin the double cure
 Cleanse me from its guilt and power.”

APRIL TWENTY-SEVENTH.

DO THE BEST YOU CAN.

“She hath done what she could.”—MARK xiv. 8.

CHRI^ST asks no impossibilities. That woman brought an alabaster-box. What was it to Jesus? Why, He owns all the fragrance of earth and heaven; but He took it. He was satisfied with it. If it had been a wooden box, He would have been just as well satisfied, had it been the best one she could bring. I hear some one say, “If I only had this, that, or the other thing, I would do so much for God.” In the last day it may be found that a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple gets as rich a reward as the founding of a kingdom, and that the sewing-girl's needle may be as honorable in God's sight as a king's sceptre, and that the grandest eulogium that was ever uttered about any one was, “She hath done what she could.”

There she sits at the head of the Sabbath-school class, and she says, "I wish I understood the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew. I wish I had more faculty for instruction. I wish I could get the attention of my class. I wish I could bring them all to Christ." Do not worry. Christ does not want you to know the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew. Do as well as you can, and from the throne the proclamation will flame forth, "Crown that princess ; she hath done what she could."

There is a man toiling for Christ. He does not get on much. He is discouraged when he hears Paul thunder, and Edward Payson pray. He says, "I wonder if I will ever join the song of heaven." He wonders if it would not look odd for him to stand amidst the apostles who preached, and the martyrs who flamed. Greater will be his wonder on the day when he shall find out that many who were first in the Church on earth are last in the Church of heaven, and when he sees the procession winding up among the thrones of the sorrowing ones, who never again shall weep, and the weary ones, who never again shall get tired, and the poor, who never again shall beg, and Christ, regardless of all antecedents, will put upon the head of His disciples a crown made from the gold of the eternal hills, set in with pearl from the celestial sea, inscribed with the words, "He hath done what he could."

APRIL TWENTY-EIGHTH.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

"God giveth songs in the night."—Job xxxv. 10.

JOHAN WELCH, the old Scotch minister, used to put a plaid across his bed on cold nights, and some one asked him why he put that there. He said, "Oh, sometimes in the night I want to sing the praise of Jesus, and to get down and pray ;

then I just take that plaid and wrap it around me, to keep myself from the cold." Songs in the night! Night of trouble has come down upon many of you. Commercial losses put out one star, slanderous abuse put out another star, domestic bereavement has put out a thousand lights, and gloom has been added to gloom, and chill to chill, and sting to sting, and one midnight has seemed to borrow the fold from another midnight to wrap itself in more unbearable darkness; but Christ has spoken peace to your heart, and you can sing,

" Jesus, lover of my soul,
 Let me to thy bosom fly,
 While the billows near me roll,
 While the tempest still is high.
 Hide me, oh, my Saviour! hide
 Till the storm of life is past,
 Safe into the haven guide;
 Oh, receive my soul at last."

Songs in the night! Songs in the night! For the sick, who have no one to turn the hot pillow, who have no one to put the taper on the stand, no one to put ice on the temple, or pour out the soothing anodyne, or utter one cheerful word—yet songs in the night! For the poor, who freeze in the winter's cold, and swelter in the summer's heat, and munch the hard crusts that bleed the sore gums, and shiver under blankets that cannot any longer be patched, and tremble because rent-day is come and they may be set out on the sidewalk, and looking into the starved face of the child and seeing famine there and death there, coming from the bakery and saying in the presence of the little famished ones," Oh! my God, the flour has gone up." Yet songs in the night! songs in the night!

*APRIL TWENTY-NINTH.***GOD WILL EXPOSE HYPOCRISY.**

“ And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep.”—1 SAM. xv. 14.

HERE Saul pretends he has fulfilled the divine commission by slaying all the beasts belonging to the Amalekites, and yet at the very moment he is telling the story, and practicing the delusion, the secret comes out, and the sheep bleat and the oxen bellow.

A hypocrite is one who pretends to be what he is not, or to do what he does not. Saul was only a type of a class. The modern hypocrite looks awfully solemn, whines when he prays, and during his public devotion shows a great deal of the whites of his eyes. He never laughs, or, if he does laugh, he seems sorry for it afterward, as though he had committed some great indiscretion. The first time he gets a chance, he prays twenty minutes in public, and when he exhorts, he seems to imply that all the race are sinners, with one exception, his modesty forbidding the stating who that one is. There are a great many churches that have two or three ecclesiastical Uriah Heeps.

When the fox begins to pray, look out for your chickens. The more genuine religion a man has, the more comfortable he will be ; but you may know a religious impostor by the fact that he prides himself on the fact that he is uncomfortable. A man of that kind is of immense damage to the Church of Christ. A ship may outride a hundred storms, and yet a handful of worms in the planks may sink it to the bottom. The Church of God is not so much in danger of the cyclones

of trouble and persecution that come upon it as of the vermin of hypocrisy that infest it. Wolves are of no danger to the fold of God unless they look like sheep. Arnold was of more damage to the army than Cornwallis and his host. Oh, we cannot deceive God with a Church certificate.

APRIL THIRTIETH.

PREJUDICE AGAINST MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

“And when he had taken the book, the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps.”—REV. iv. 48.

SOME have a great prejudice against musical instruments ; and even among those who like them, there is an idea that they are unauthorized. I cannot share in such prejudices, when I remember how God has honored them. I love the cymbals, for Israel clapped them in triumph at the Red Sea. I love the harp, for David struck it in praising the Lord. I love the trumpet, for we are told that it shall wake the dead. I love all stringed instruments and organs ; for God demands that we shall praise him on stringed instruments and organs. There is in such music much to suggest the higher worship ; for I read that “when he had taken the book, the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them *harps* ;” and “I heard the voice of the harpers harping with their harps,” and “I saw them that had gotten the victory from the beast standing on the sea of glass, having the *harps* of God.”

You say that all this is figurative. Then I say, *prove* it. I do not know how much of it is literal, and how much of it is figurative. Who can say but that from some of the precious woods of earth and heaven there may not be made instruments of celestial accord. In that worship David may take the harp,

and Habakkuk the shigionoth ; and when the great multitudes shall, following their own inclinations, take up instruments sweeter than Mozart ever fingered, or Schumann ever dreamed of, or Beethoven ever wrote for, let all heaven make ready for the burst of stupendous minstrelsy, and the roll of the eternal orchestra !

There is a cathedral in Europe with an organ in each end. Organ answers organ, and the music waves backward and forward with indescribable effect. Well, my friends, the time will come when earth and heaven will be but different parts of one great accord. It will be joy here and there ! Jesus here and Jesus there ! Trumpet to trumpet ! Organ to organ ! Hallelujah to hallelujah !

MAY FIRST.

HOME-SICK FOR HEAVEN.

“ Sing praises to God, sing praises : sing praises unto our King.”—Ps. *xlvii.* 6.

THE Sultan of Turkey took thirty thousand Persian prisoners in battle ; and the sultan decreed that those thirty thousand prisoners must die, for they had fought against him. Before the day of execution came, one of those Persians, who was a musician, came out and played sweetly upon the flute ; and the sultan heard him, and said, “ Play that again ;” and he played it again. And after awhile the sultan’s heart was melted, and he said, “ Let that man go free ! Let them *all* go free—the thirty thousand ! Put not one of them to death !” But, oh ! the harp of Gospel song has delivered, not thirty thousand, but a hundred thousand men, who were condemned to eternal death ! It was through that agency that they were brought to the Lord Jesus Christ. I was told by an Englishman that when the English army lay around Sebastopol, one evening the

bands of music, seated on the battlements, played "Home, Sweet Home;" and he said that there was a great sob went all through the army. They were home-sick. How many have been made home-sick for heaven by some such song as this:

" Jerusalem, my happy home !
 Name ever dear to me !
 When shall my labors have an end,
 In joy and peace in thee ? "

People have been trying to write the histories of the tunes and of the hymns. They cannot do it. The history of "Ariel," of "Colchester," of "Dundee," of "Duke Street," of "Coronation"—why, it would be the history of the Church of God, with all its joys, and sorrows, and triumphs! They have been the rounds of the ladder on which souls have mounted into heaven. They have been the chariots that halted not until they stopped at the gate of the eternal King! Oh! how often it has been that the hand of heavenly song and the hand of earthly song have joined each other, and on the two hands immortal souls have been lifted into glory!

I do not know what they sing in heaven; but two or three times the gates got opened, and snatches of the tunes I have heard. I think, when we stand around the throne of God on high, with joined hands, we will think of how, on earth, we sang "Loving Kindness;" and I think that when all the crowns of glory come down at the feet of Christ, we will recall "Coronation;" and some soul, just come into heaven, not having yet learned the tune, will sing the old tune—the old hymn it learned on earth—it will do very well for heaven:

" All hail the power of Jesus' name !
 Let angels prostrate fall ;
 Bring forth the royal diadem,
 And crown him Lord of all. "

*MAY SECOND.***JESUS ABIDING WITH US.**

“Abide with us: for it is toward evening.”—LUKE xxiv. 29.

THE request of the text is appropriate for some, for with them it is toward the evening of old age. They have passed the meridian of life. They are sometimes startled to think how old they are. They do not, however, like to have others remark upon it. If others suggest their approximation toward venerable appearance, they say, “Why, I am not so old, after all.” They do, indeed, notice that they cannot lift quite so much as once. They cannot walk quite so fast. They cannot read quite so well without spectacles. They cannot so easily recover from a cough, or an occasional ailment. They have lost their taste for merriment. They take a tamer view of life than that which they first entertained. They are surprised at the quick passage of the year, and say that it only seems but a little while ago that they were boys. They are going a little down hill. There is something in their health, something in their vision, something in their walk, something in their changing associations, something above, something beneath, something within, to remind them that it is *toward evening*.

The great want of all such is to have Jesus abide with them. It is a dismal thing to be getting old, without the rejuvenating influence of religion. When we step on the down-grade of life, and see that it dips to the verge of the cold river, we want to behold some one near who will help us across it. When the sight loses its power to glance and gather up, we

need the faith that can illumine. When we feel the failure of the ear, we need the clear tones of that voice which, in olden time, broke up the silence of the deep with cadences of mercy. When the axe-men of death hew down whole forests of strength and beauty around us, and we are left in solitude, we need the dove of divine mercy to sing in our branches ; when the shadows begin to fall and the day is far spent, we need to supplicate the strong and beneficent Jesus in the prayer of the villagers—" Abide with us."

MAY THIRD.

PAUL'S FALL.

" And he fell to the earth."—ACTS ix. 4.

I LEARN from this scene that a *worldly fall sometimes precedes a spiritual uplifting*. A man does not get much sympathy by falling off a horse. People say he ought not to have got into the saddle if he could not ride. Those of us who were brought up in the country remember well how the workmen laughed when, on our way back from the brook, we suddenly lost our ride. At the close of the war, when the army passed in review at Washington, if a general had toppled from the stirrups it would have been a national merriment. Here is Paul on horseback—a proud man, riding on with Government documents in his pocket, a graduate of a most famous school in which the celebrated Dr. Gamaliel had been a professor, perhaps having already attained two of the three titles of the school—Rab, the first ; Rabbi, the second ; and on his way to Rabbak, the third and highest title. I know from his temperament that his horse was ahead of the other horses. But without time to think of what posture he should take, or without any consideration for his dignity, he is tum-

bled into the dust. And yet that was the best ride Paul ever took. Out of that violent fall he arose into the apostleship. So it has been in all the ages, and so it is now.

You will never be worth anything for God and the Church until you lose fifty thousand dollars, or have your reputation upset, or in some way, somehow, are thrown and humiliated. You must go down before you go up. Joseph finds his path to the Egyptian court through the pit into which his brothers threw him. Daniel would never have walked amidst the bronzed lions that adorned the Babylonish throne if he had not first walked amidst the real lions of the cave. And Paul marshals all the generations of Christendom by falling flat on his face on the road to Damascus. Men who have been always prospered may be efficient servants of the world, but will be of no advantage to Christ. You may ride majestically seated on your charger, rein in hand, foot in stirrup, but you will never be worth anything spiritually until you fall off.

MAY FOURTH.

ABUNDANCE.

“Jesus saith unto them, fill the water-pots with water.”—JOHN ii. 7.

“Draw out now and bear unto the governor of the feast.”—JOHN ii. 8.

I LEARN from this miracle that Christ *does things in abundance*. I think a small supply of wine would have made up for the deficiency. I think certainly they must have had enough for half of the guests. One gallon of wine will do ; certainly five gallons will be enough ; certainly ten. But Jesus goes on, and he gives them thirty gallons, and forty gallons, and fifty gallons, and seventy gallons, and one hundred gallons, and one hundred and thirty gallons of the very best wine.

It is just like Him ! doing everything on the largest and most generous scale. Does Christ, our Creator, go forth to make leaves, He makes them by the forest-full ; notched like the fern, or silvered like the aspen, or broad like the palm ; thickets in the tropics, Oregon forests. Does He go forth to make flowers, He makes plenty of them ; they flame from the hedge, they hang from the top of the grape-vine in blossoms, they roll in the blue wave of the violets, they toss their white surf into the spiræ—enough for every child's hand a flower, enough to make for every brow a chaplet, enough with beauty to cover up the ghastliness of all the graves. Does He go forth to create water, He pours it out, not by the cupful, but by a riverful, a lakeful, an oceanful, pouring it out until all the earth has enough to drink, and enough with which to wash.

Does Jesus, our Lord, provide redemption, it is not a little salvation for this one, a little for that, and a little for the other ; but enough for all—"Whosoever will, let him come." Each man an oceanful for himself. Promises for the young, promises for the old, promises for the lowly, promises for the blind, for the halt, for the outcast, for the abandoned. Pardon for all, comfort for all, mercy for all, Heaven for all.

MAY FIFTH.

ALL THINGS ADAPTED TO OUR NEEDS.

"Thou art good and doest good."—Ps. cxix. 68.

GOD has adapted everything to our comfort and advantage. Pleasant things for the palate. Music for the ear. Beauty for the eye. Aroma for the nostril. Kindred for our affections. Poetry for our taste. Religion for our soul. We are put in a garden, and told that from all the trees

we may eat, except here and there one. He gives the sun to shine on us, and the waters to refresh us, and food to strengthen us ; and the herbs yield medicine when we are sick, and the forests lumber when we would build a house, or cross the water in a ship. The rocks are transported for our foundation ; and metals upturned for our currency ; and wild beasts must give us covering ; and the mountains must be tunnelled to let us pass ; and the fish of the sea come up in our net ; and the birds of the air drop at the flash of our guns ; and the cattle on a thousand hills come down to give us meat. For us the peach-orchards bend down their fruit, and the vineyards their purple clusters. To feed and refresh our intellect, ten thousand wonders in nature and providence—wonders of mind and body, wonders of earth and air and deep, analogies and antitheses ; all colors and sounds ; lyrics in the air ; idyls in the field ; conflagrations in the sunset ; robes of mist on the mountains ; and the grand march of God in the storm.

But for the *soul* still higher adaptation : a fountain in which it may wash ; a ladder by which it may climb ; a song of endless triumph that it may sing ; a crown of unfading light that it may wear. Christ came to save it—came with a cross on His back ; came with spikes in His feet ; came when no one else would come, to do a work which no one else would do. See how suited to man's condition is what God has done for him ! Man is a sinner ; here his pardon. He has lost God's image ; Christ retraces it. He is helpless ; Almighty grace is proffered. He is a lost wanderer ; Jesus brings him home. He is blind ; and at one touch of Him who cured Bartimeus, eternal glories stream into his soul. Jesus, I sing Thy grace ! Cure of worst disease ! Hammer to smite off heaviest chain ! Light for thickest darkness ! Grace divine ! Devils scoff at it, and men reject it, but heaven celebrates it !

*MAY SIXTH.***DANGER OF SUCCESS.**

"The prosperity of fools shall destroy them."—PROV. i. 32.

I HAVE known men, before their success, kind and humble, and loving and genial, and useful and obliging, and positively Christian, who, after their success, became hard and cruel, and overbearing and infidel. A man wants the grace of Christ at that crisis to keep him rightly balanced. Joseph was as much a Christian in Pharaoh's court as in the dungeon. Daniel forgot not God amid the roystering excesses of the Babylonian palace. Queen of Sheba bowed down before the King of Heaven amid the glitter of gold and the perfume of gardens of frankincense. A man can be as good walking upon Axminster as though he lived on the floor of a shanty. There has been many a man who has ridden through in magnificent equipage on earth, and at death got out of his carriage only to mount the chariots of salvation, in glory sweeping through the streets of heaven. It is all nonsense for men to talk against money as though it had no uses. I wish I had five millions. But, success in life of any sort must be accompanied by the grace of God, or it is ruin. It was Solomon that said, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." And where there are one hundred men who can stand trouble, there is not one man that can stand success. I have seen men coming to sudden fortune get into their equipage and dash on faster and faster, and they lashed the steeds: it was eight miles an hour, and ten and twenty miles an hour, and a thousand miles an hour, and then they roused up and saw that they were drawn on

by fiery hoofs of eternal disaster, that came down clattering on the pavements of hell. The Israelites got along tolerably well when they were hungry, and when they were thirsty, and when they were smitten in the desert ; but after a while they wanted something more worthy of mastication, and they asked for meat, and the Lord sent a great flock of quails, and they darkened the heavens, and they fell all around about the encampment, and the people said, "Ah, now what a fine time we shall have !" and they ate of these quails, and they ate and they died. They got through with the hardship and the hunger, but not so with the prosperity. And I see scores of men who are going on in life, now persecuted and tried and set upon, and they are maintaining their Christian character ; but give them a little brilliant success and they are gone. It is not the troubles of life that slay men. It is the quails ! it is the quails !

MAY SEVENTH.

THE POWER OF A GOOD EXAMPLE.

"Take yourselves an ensample."—2 THESS. iii. 9.

A CHILD, coming from a filthy home, was taught at school to wash its face. It went home so much improved in appearance that its mother washed *her* face. And when the father of the household came home, and saw the improvement in domestic appearance, he washed *his* face. The neighbors happening in, saw the change, and tried the same experiment, until all that street was purified, and the next street copied its example, and the whole city felt the result of one school-boy washing his face. That is a fable, by which we set forth that the best way to get the world washed of its sins and

pollution is to have our own heart and life cleansed and purified. A man with grace in his heart, and Christian cheerfulness in his face, and holy consistency in his behavior, is a perpetual sermon ; and the sermon differs from others in that it has but one head, and the longer it runs the better. There are *honest* men who walk down Wall Street, making the teeth of iniquity chatter. There are *happy* men who go into a sick-room, and, by a look, help the broken bone knit, and the excited nerves drop to a calm beating. There are *pure* men whose presence silences the tongue of uncleanness. The mightiest agent of good on earth is a consistent Christian. I like the Bible folded between lids of cloth, of calf-skin, or of morocco, but I like it better when, in the shape of a man, it goes out into the world—a Bible illustrated. Courage is beautiful to read about ; but rather would I see a man with all the world against him confident as though all the world were for him. Patience is beautiful to read about ; but rather would I see a buffeted soul calmly waiting the time of deliverance. Faith is beautiful to read about ; but rather would I find a man in the midnight walking straight on as though he saw everything. Oh ! how many souls have been turned to God by the charm of a right example.

MAY EIGHTH.

BY AND BY WE SHALL KNOW AT ALL.

“ Now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”—
1 COR. xiii. 12.

I SEE every day profound mysteries of Providence. There is no question we ask oftener than *Why?* There are hundreds of graves in Greenwood and Laurel Hill that need to be explained. Hospitals for the blind and lame, asylums for

the idiotic and insane, almshouses for the destitute, and a world of pain and misfortune that demand more than human solution. Ah! God will clear it all up. In the light that pours from the throne, no dark mystery can live. Things now utterly inscrutable will be illumined as plainly as though the answer were written on the jasper wall, or sounded in the temple anthem. Bartimeus will thank God that he was blind; and Lazarus that he was covered with sores; and Joseph that he was cast into the pit; and Daniel that he denned with lions; and David that he was driven from Jerusalem; and that sewing-woman that she could get only a few pence for making a garment; and that invalid that for twenty years he could not lift his head from the pillow; and that widow that she had such hard work to earn bread for her children. You know that in a song, different voices carry different parts. The sweet and overwhelming part of the hallelujah of heaven will not be carried by those who rode in high places, and gave sumptuous entertainments; but pauper children will sing it, beggars will sing it, redeemed hod-carriers will sing it, those who were once the offscouring of earth will sing it. The hallelujah will be all the grander for earth's weeping eyes, and aching heads, and exhausted hands, and scourged backs, and martyred agonies.

MAY NINTH.

DYING WITH HOPE.

"The righteous hath hope in his death."—PROV. xiv. 32.

TH**ERE** are two things that I do not want to bother me in my last hour. The one is, my worldly affairs. I wanted all those affairs so plain and disentangled that the most ignorant administrator could see what was right at a glance, and

there could be no standing around about the office of the surrogate devouring widow's houses. The other thing I do not want to be bothered about in my last hour, is the safety of my soul. God forbid that I should crowd into that last, feeble, languishing, delirious hour questions momentous enough to swamp an archangel! The saddest thing on earth is a death-bed, with a wasted life standing on one side of it, and an overshadowing eternity standing on the other side of it, and no Jesus Christ anywhere in the room. Pull from under my head that pillow stinging with thorns, and put under it the hand of Jesus, on which many of my loved ones have died. Though the pillow may seem to the world as hard as the rock on which Jacob slept, still there will be let down to that Christian death-pillow a ladder reaching into the Heaven, an angel on the lowest rung, an angel on the top rung, and an angel on every rung between, so that the soul ascending may mount upward, stepping from wing to wing into the skies. But the commonest thing in the world is for a man to die without hope. How we all were stunned when last summer, or last spring, the *Atlantic* struck a rock near Newfoundland; but hark to the crash of ten thousand immortal shipmates! If you have ever slept in a house on the prairie, where in the morning, without rising from your pillow, you could look off on the landscape, you could see it miles away, clear to the horizon: it is a very bewildering scene. But how much more intense the prospect, when from the last pillow a soul looks back on life, and sees one vast reach of mercies, mercies, mercies unimproved, and then gets upon one elbow, and puts the head on the hand to see beyond all that, but seeing nothing beyond but mercies, mercies, mercies unimproved. The bells of sorrow will toll through all the past, and the years of early life and mid-life wail with a great lamentation.

*MAY TENTH.***A DELUGE OF SORROW.**

“Man is but of few days, and full of trouble.”—Job xiv. 1.

THE earth is covered with the *deluge of sorrow*. Trouble ! trouble ! The very first utterance when we come into the world is a cry. Without any teaching, we learn to weep. What has so wrinkled that man's face ? What has so prematurely whitened his hair ? What calls out that sigh ? What starts that tear ? Trouble ! trouble ! I find it in the cellar of poverty, and far up among the heights on the top of the crags ; for this also hath gone over the tops of the highest mountains. No escape from it. You go into the store, and it meets you at your counting-desk ; you go into the street, and it meets you at the corner ; you go into the house, and it meets you at the door. Tears of poverty ! tears of persecution ! tears of bereavement !—a deluge of tears ! Gathered together from all the earth, they could float an ark larger than Noah's.

But the glorified, looking up to the bow that spans the throne, shall see that the deluge is over. No shivering wretch on the palace-step ; no blind man at the gate of the heavenly temple, asking for alms ; no grinding of the screw-driver on coffin-lid. They look up at the rainbow, and read, in lines of yellow, and red, and green, and blue, and orange, and indigo, and violet, “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God

shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Thank God for the glory spanning the throne!

In our boyhood we had a superstition that at the foot of the rainbow there was a casket of buried gold; but I have to announce that at the foot of this rainbow of heaven there is a box made out of the wood of the cross. Open it, and you find all the treasures of heaven.

MAY ELEVENTH.

FORGIVE AND FORGET.

"Be ye kind, one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—*EPH.* iv. 32.

AFTER everybody else has cast a man off, God comes to the rescue. God leaps to take charge of a bad case. After all the other doctors have got through, the heavenly Physician comes in. Human sympathy at such a time does not amount to much. Even the sympathy of the Church, I am sorry to say, often does not amount to much. I have seen the most harsh and bitter treatment, on the part of those who professed faith in Christ, toward those who were wavering and erring. They tried on the wanderer sarcasm, and Billingsgate, and caricature, and they tried tittle-tattle. There was one thing they did not try, and that was forgiveness. A soldier in England was brought by a sergeant to the colonel. "What," says the colonel, "bringing the man here again! We have tried everything with him." "Oh, no," says the sergeant, "there is one thing you have not tried. I would like you to try that." "What is that?" said the colonel. Said the man, "*Forgiveness.*" The case had not gone so far but that it might take that turn, and so the colonel said, "Well, young man, you have done so and so. What is your excuse?" "I have

no excuse, but I am very sorry," said the man. "We have made up our minds to forgive you," said the colonel. The fears started. He had never been accosted in that way before. His life was reformed, and that was the starting-point for a positively Christian life. Oh! Church of God, quit your sarcasm when a man falls! Quit your irony, quit your tittle-tattle, and try forgiveness. God tries it all the time. A man's sin may be like a continent, but God's forgiveness is like the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, bounding it on both sides.

MAY TWELFTH.

A SWIFT MESSENGER.

"Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."—Is. xv. 24.

YOU telegraph from England to New York, and the message gets here at six o'clock in the same morning. In other words, it seems to arrive here five hours before it started. Like that is prayer. God says, "*Before they call, I will hear.*" To overtake a loved one on the road, you may spur up a lathered steed until he shall out-race the one that brought the news to Ghent; but a prayer shall catch it at one gallop. A boy running away from home may take the midnight train from the country village, and reach the sea-port in time to gain the ship that sails on the morrow; but a mother's prayer will be on the deck to meet him, and in the hammock before he swings into it, and at the capstan before he winds the rope around it, and on the sea, against the sky, as the vessel plows on toward it. There is a mightiness in prayer. George Müller prayed a company of poor boys together, and then he prayed up an asylum in which they might be sheltered. He turned his face toward Edinburgh and prayed, and there came a thousand

pounds. He turned his face toward London and prayed, and there came a thousand pounds. He turned his face toward Dublin and prayed, and there came a thousand pounds. The breath of Elijah's prayer blew all the clouds off the sky, and it was dry weather. The breath of Elijah's prayer blew all the clouds together, and it was wet weather. Prayer, in Daniel's time, walked the cave as a lion-tamer. It reached up, and took the sun by its golden bit, and stopped it. We have all yet to try the full power of prayer. The time will come when the American Church will pray with its face toward the west, and all the prairies and inland cities will surrender to God ; and will pray with face toward the sea and all the Islands and Seas will become Christians.

MAY THIRTEENTH.

PERNICIOUS HABIT AND ITS CURE.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging."—Ps. xx. 1.

"Thou will cast all their sins into the bottom of the sea."—MICAH vii. 19.

I DO not believe that it is necessary to be a teetotaller in order to be a Christian (although I wish all were teetotalers) ; but I do say that a man who is excessive in the use of strong drink cannot love Christ. He will not dispute with you the supremacy of the bottle. The appetite is to-day the mightiest barrier against God. There are men here who would rather brave eternity, unpardoned, than give up their bondage. They have been throwing up this embankment of evil habit for five, ten, or twenty years, until it is very high and very great. Temperance societies, grand as they are, will not capture it. Christ, the Son of God, alone can take the fortification. This night He beats mightily against it. Some years ago when the cholera was raging in New Orleans, a steamer

near nightfall put out from the city, laden with passengers escaping from the pestilence. The steamer had been but a little while out when the engineer fell at his post with cholera. The captain, in despair, went up and down among the passengers, asking if there were any one who could act as engineer. A man stepped out, and said that he was an engineer, and could take the position. In the night the captain was awakened by a violent motion of the steamer, and he knew that there was great peril ahead. He went up, and found that the engineer was a maniac ; that he had fastened down the safety-valves ; and he told the captain that he was the emissary of Satan, commissioned to drive that steamer to hell. By some strategy, the man was got down in time to save the steamer. There are men engineered by maniac passions, sworn to drive them to temporal and everlasting destruction. Every part of their nature trembles under the high pressure. Nothing but the grace of Almighty God can bring down those passions, and chain them. A little while longer in this course, and all is lost.

Whatever be the form of evil habit, Christ is able fully and finally to deliver that man. Though he be eaten up with dissipations ; though he be sunk to the lowest depths of shame ; though every physical, mental, and spiritual force be crippled, Christ will make him a whole man, and lift him to usefulness and respectability here, and to glory hereafter.

I have heard men spoken of as so far gone that they could not be rescued. I denounce the horrible infidelity. The Lord's arm is omnipotent ; and the worst wretch that ever crawled into the ditch would no more puzzle or confound God than the case of the most elegant and polished sinner that ever came to Him.

MAY FOURTEENTH.

PAUL'S BILL OF FARE FOR IDLERS.

"If any would not work, neither should he eat."—2 THESS. iii. 10.

WHEN the French nobleman was asked why he kept busy when he had so large a property, he said, "I keep on engraving so I may not hang myself." I do not care who the man is, you cannot afford to be idle. It is from the idle classes that the criminal classes are made up. Character, like water, gets putrid if it stands still too long. Who can wonder that in this world, where there is so much to do, and all the hosts of earth and heaven and hell are plunging into the conflict, and angels are flying, and God is at work and the universe is a-quake with the marching and counter-marching, that God lets His indignation fall upon a man who chooses idleness? I have watched these do-nothings who spend their time stroking their beard, and retouching their *toilette*, and criticising industrious people, and pass their days and nights in bar-rooms and club-houses, lounging and smoking and chewing and card-playing. They are not only useless, but they are dangerous. How hard it is for them to while away the hours. Alas! for them, if they do not know how to while away an hour, what will they do when they have all eternity on their hands? These men for a while smoke the best cigars, and wear the best broadcloth, and move in the highest spheres; but I have noticed that very soon they come down to the prison, the almshouse, or stop at the gallows. I am in favor of the restoration of the old-fashioned whipping-post for just this one class of men who will not work; sleeping at

night at public expense in the station house ; during the day, getting their food at your door-step. Imprisonment does not scare them. They would like it. Blackwell's Island or Sing Sing would be a comfortable home for them. They would have no objection to the alms-house, for they like thin soup, if they cannot get mock-turtle. I propose this for them : on one side of them put some healthy work ; on the other side put a raw hide, and let them take their choice. I like for that class of people the scant bill of fare that Paul wrote out for the Thessalonian loafers : " If any work not, neither should he eat." By what law of God or man is it right that you and I should toil day in and day out, until our hands are blistered and our arms ache and our brain gets numb, and then be called upon to support what in the United States are about two million loafers? They are a very dangerous class. Let the public authorities keep their eyes on them.

MAY FIFTEENTH.

ONE GREAT ECCLESIASTICAL HARMONY.

" One Lord, one faith, one baptism."—*EPH. iv. 5.*

WHEN a man knocks at our church door, if he comes from a sect where they will not give him a certificate, we say : " Come in by confession of faith." While Adoniram Judson, the Baptist, and John Wesley, the Methodist, and John Knox, the glorious old Scotch Presbyterian, are shaking hands in heaven, all churches on earth can afford to come into close communion : " One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Oh, my brethren, we have had enough of Big Bethel fights—the 14th New York regiment fighting the 15th Massachusetts regiment.

Now let all those who are for Christ and stand on the same side, go shoulder to shoulder, and the church, instead of having a sprinkling of the divine blessing, go clear under the wave in one glorious immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I saw a little child once, in its dying hour, put one arm around its father's neck, and the other arm around its mother's neck, and bring them close down to its dying lips, and give a last kiss. Oh, I said, those two persons will stand very near to each other always after such an interlocking. The dying Christ puts one arm around this denomination of Christians, and the other arm around that denomination of Christians, and He brings them down to His dying lips, while He gives them this parting kiss: "My peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you."

"How swift the heavenly course they run,
Whose hearts and faith and hopes are one."

I heard a Baptist minister once say that he thought in the millennium it would be all one great Baptist Church; and I heard a Methodist minister say that he thought in the great millennial day it would be all one great Methodist Church; and I have known a Presbyterian minister who thought that in the millennial day it would be all one great Presbyterian Church. Now I think they are all mistaken. I think the millennial Church will be a composite Church; and just as you may take the best parts of five or six tunes, and under the skilful hands of a Handel, Mozart or Beethoven, entwine them into one grand and overpowering symphony, so I suppose, in the latter days of the world, God will take the best parts of all denominations of Christians, and weave them into one great ecclesiastical harmony, broad as the earth and high as the heavens, and that will be the church of the future.

*MAY SIXTEENTH.***"GOD'S WRATH UPON SABBATH BREAKERS.**

"Ye bring wrath by profaning the sabbath."—*NEH.* xiii. 18.

WHERE are the men who twenty years ago were Sabbath-breakers, and who have been Sabbath breakers ever since? Without a single exception, you will tell me, they have come either to financial or to moral beggary. I defy you to point out a single exception, and you can take the whole world for your field. It has either been a financial or moral defalcation in every instance. Six hundred and forty physicians in London petition Parliament, saying: "We must have the Sabbath obeyed. We cannot have health in this city and in this nation unless the Sabbath is observed." Those in our own country have given evidence on the same side. The man who takes down the shutters of his store on the Sabbath takes down the curse of Almighty God. That farmer who cultures his ground on the Sabbath-day raises a crop of neuralgia and of consumption, and of death. A farmer said, "I defy your Christian Sabbath. I will raise a Sunday crop." So he went to work and plowed the ground on Sunday, and harrowed it on Sunday, and he planted corn on Sunday, and he reaped the corn on Sunday, and he gathered it into the barn on Sunday. "There," he says, "I have proved to you that all this idea about a fatality accompanying Sabbath work is a perfect sham. My crop is garnered, and all is well." But before many weeks passed the Lord God struck that barn with His lightnings, and away went the Sunday crop.

*MAY SEVENTEENTH.***SANCTIMONIOUSNESS.**

“If ye loved me, ye would rejoice.”—*JOHN xiv. 28.*

I HAVE no faith in a religion made up of equal parts of wormwood, vinegar, and red pepper. If the religion that is presented to us be a depression, we will get along better without it. If it be a joy, let it shine out from your face, and from your conversation. If a man comes to my house to talk of religion with lugubrious countenance, and manner full of snuffle and dolorousness, I feel like saying to my wife, “You had better lock up the silver before he steals something.” I have found it an invariable rule that men who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, priding themselves at the same time on their sanctimoniousness, always turn out badly. I never knew an exception. While those who are the most consistent, the most useful, and the most consecrated, have perfume in their conversation, and heaven in their faces.

The happiest Christians that I have ever known have been persons from sixty to eighty years of age. By that time people get over the shams and pretences of society, and have no longer any patience with anything like imposture in religion. O Christian! how dare you be gloomy? Is not God your Father? Is not Jesus Christ your Saviour? Has not your path all through life been strewn with mercies? Are you insensible to the fact that there are glories awaiting you in the better land?—doxologies of celestial worship, eternal chorals, tearless eyes, songs that resound under arches of strength,

and hosannas that clap their hands at the foot of the throne? Is it nothing to you that all the hills of heaven are radiant with the faces of those who have gone up from you, and who are waiting for your coming, ready to keep with you eternal holiday?

MAY EIGHTEENTH.

A PASS-WORD TO ENTER HEAVEN.

“Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—*MATT. vii. 21.*

THERE will be a pass-word at the gate of heaven. A great multitude come up and knock at the gate. The gatekeeper says, “The pass-word.” They say, “We have no pass-word. We were great on earth, and now we come up to be great in heaven.” A voice from within answers, “I never knew you.” Another group come up to the gate of heaven and knock. The gatekeeper says, “The pass-word.” They say, “We have no pass-word. We did a great many noble things on earth. We endowed colleges, and took care of the poor.” The voice from within says, “I never knew you.” Another group come up to the gate of heaven and knock. The gatekeeper says, “The pass-word.” They answer, “We were wanderers from God, and deserved to die; but we heard the voice of Jesus—” “Ay! ay!” says the gatekeeper, “that is the pass-word! Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, and let these people come in.” They go in and surround the throne, jubilant forever!

Ah! do you wonder that the last hours of the Christian on earth are illuminated by thoughts of the coming glory?

Light in the evening. The medicines may be bitter. The pain may be sharp. The parting may be heart-rending. Yet,

light in the evening. As all the stars of this night sink their anchors of pearl in lake, and river, and sea, so the waves of Jordan shall be illuminated with the down-flashing of the glory to come.

The dying soul looks up at the constellations. "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear?" "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

MAY NINETEENTH.

THE KING'S BUSINESS REQUIRES HASTE.

"The king's business required haste."—1 SAM. xxi. 8.

IN the city of Basle, Switzerland, it was the custom to have all the clocks of the city an hour ahead of time, for the following reason: Once an enemy was moving upon the city, and their stratagem was to take the city at twelve o'clock (noon), but the cathedral clock, by mistake, struck one instead of twelve; and so the enemy thought that they were too late to carry out the stratagem, and gave up the assault, and the city was saved; and therefore it was arranged that for many years the clock struck one when it was twelve, and twelve when it was eleven. Oh, man and woman of God, engaged in Christian work, *set your clocks on*, if you want to save the city! Better get to your work too early than come too late. *The king's business requires haste.*

We are exercising a fatal deliberation. We sit calmly in church, meditating about how to save the world. Meanwhile six millions of people will die this year. You might start the millennium next year; but it would do them no good. What

you do for them you will have to do within a twelvemonth. What you do for some of them, you have to do this month—ay, this week!—ay, this day! Have you never heard that a neighbor was sick, and said to yourself, “I must go and talk with him about his soul, for I know he is not prepared to leave the world.” But that day you were busy, and the next you were busy, and the third day you went to see him. You pulled his door-bell; a servant came out, and you said, “How is he to-day?” The answer was, “*He is dead!*” You say, “It cannot be possible! How long has he been dead?” She answers, “Five minutes.” God have mercy upon that Christian man who comes to do his work five minutes too late. *The king’s business requires haste.*

MAY TWENTIETH.

NO BOOK LIKE THE BIBLE.

“What a word is this.”—LUKE iv. 36.

LET Voltaire come on with his acute philosophy; and Hume with his scholarship; and Chesterfield with his polished insinuations; and Gibbon with his one-sided historical statements; and Shaftesbury with his sarcasm; and Hobbes with his subtlety; and Blount and Bolingbroke with their armed hostility—yea, come on, Platonic philosophers, and German infidels, and Boston transcendentalists, and all ye helmeted sons of darkness—I charge upon you with a regiment of mountain shepherds and Galilee fishermen. Forward, ye inspired men, to the strife! Steady! Take aim! Fire! Their ranks waver! They break! They fly! Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!

I want no better proof of the divinity of this Book than

the fact that it has withstood this mighty and continuous attack, and come down to us without a chapter effaced, or a parable riddled, or a miracle injured, or a promise scarred. No other book could have lived an hour in such a sea; no other force could have stood under such cross-fire. This Book to-day is foremost. In philosophy, it is honored above the works of Descartes, Bacon, Aristotle, and Socrates. In history, it wins more respect than Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. In poetry, it far outshines the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the *Æneid*, the *Inferno*, and *Paradise Lost*. It has been published in more than two hundred languages. The earth quakes with the quick revolution of its printing-press. The best art has come to the illustration of its pages, to the adornment of its lids, to the setting of its type. Its scenes of glory and promise blossom on every wall, and thrill through the music of the oratorio and orchestra.

If infidelity is as successful in the next fifty years, in its war against the Bible, as it has been in the past fifty, the year 1950 will see the Bible in the possession of every man on the earth who has a hand to hold it. One wave of this Book above the throne of tyranny, and they shall fall; above the temples of superstition, and they shall crumble; above the wilderness, and it shall bloom like the garden of the Lord. Thou Prince of Books, we hail thee to thy coronation! the wheeling earth thy chariot! the bending sky thy triumphal arch! the great Heavens one star-studded cloud-striped banner!

“How precious is the Book divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine
To guide our souls to heaven.

“This lamp through all the tedious night
Of life shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day.”

*MAY TWENTY-FIRST.***HUMAN ACHIEVEMENTS PASSING AWAY.**

“The world passeth away.”—JOHN ii. 17.

THE bridge, that taxed the brain of the architect, no more crosses the stream ; but the romantic school-boy sits on the crumbling abutments making rhymes about the mutation of all earthly things. To the structure that once caused the millwright many sleepless nights, the farmer no more brings his grist. The old wheel, broken and covered with weeds, no more dashes the mountain stream to foam. The fine house, that overshadowed all the others on the block, now crumbles ; the small window-panes, and old-time roof, and outlandish stairs, seeming in sorrow to say, oh for those days when people passing here would exclaim, “Who lives there ?” Many of the books that were popular in the libraries forty years ago are gone now—gone down into the cellar, gone into the garret, or stand begging on the book-stand on the street corner, or sleep their last sleep in the antiquarian’s library. Not knowing where they tread, the Tennysons, and Longfellows, and Bancrofts, walk over the graves of historians and poets, taking by storm the libraries of the world ; mounting up on ladders of shelves until they plant their batteries of light and truth on the very heights of knowledge. The great libraries at the Vatican, and in Munich and Dresden, are only the Westminster Abbeys in which royal books have been buried. The tooth of Time is gnawing away at reputations that it was supposed could never be damaged or lost. Book-

worms are boring down through the passage that was expected to be immortal, while those old ambitious authors or their spirits seem wandering up and down the aisles of the national library, unable to find their way out into the sunlight, with skeleton fingers fumbling the venerable pages, with trembling voice seeming to say, "Gone and forgotten!" The old philosophers, who spent much of their time in tinkering with electricity, are mostly forgotten, while Morse lassoes the lightning, and Cyrus W. Field with it lashes fast two hemispheres. Time follows right after Old Mortality, but with sharper chisel and stronger hand, battering to pieces the monuments, and the sarcophagus, and the Pyramids.

MAY TWENTY-SECOND.

A JOURNEY WE MUST ALL TAKE.

"I go the way of all the earth."—1 KINGS ii. 2.

A BUSINESS man in Philadelphia went home one afternoon, lay down on the lounge, and said, "It is time for me to go." He was very aged. His daughter said to him, "Are you sick?" He said, "No; but it is time for me to go. Have John put it in two of the morning papers, that my friends may know that I am gone. Good-by;" and as quick as that, God had taken him.

It is easy to go when the time comes. There are no ropes thrown out to pull us ashore; there are no ladders let down to pull us up. Christ comes, and takes us by the hand, and says, "You have had enough of this; come up higher." Do you hurt a lily when you pluck it? Is there any rudeness when Jesus touches the cheek, and the red rose of health whitens into the lily of immortal purity and gladness?

By-and-by we shall be gone. If all are saved—as I hope they will be—I see them entering into life. Some have had it hard ; some have had it easy. Some were brilliant ; some were dull. Some were rocked by pious parentage ; others had their infantile cheeks scalded with the tears of woe. Some crawled, as it were, into the kingdom on their hands and knees, and some seemed to enter in chariots of flaming fire. Those fell from a ship's mast ; these were crushed in the Avondale disaster. They are God's singing-birds now. No gun of huntsman shall shoot them down. They gather on the trees of life, and fold their wings on the branches ; and, far away from frosts, and winds, and night, they sing until the hills are flooded with joy, and the skies drop music, and the arches of pearl send back the echoes.

“ Behold the saints, beloved of God,
Wash'd are their robes in Jesus' blood ;
Brighter than angels, lo ! they shine,
Their glories splendid and sublime.

“ Through tribulation great they came ;
They bore the cross and scorned the shame :
Now, in the loving temple bless'd,
With God they dwell ; on Him they rest.

“ While everlasting ages roll,
Eternal love shall feast their soul,
And scenes of bliss, forever new,
Rise in succession to their view.

“ Oh ! what a grand, exalted song,
When every tribe and every tongue,
Redeem'd by blood, with Christ appear,
And join in one full chorus there !

MAY TWENTY-THIRD.

LEFT-HANDED MEN.

“The Lord raised them up a deliverer. Ehud the son of Gera, a man left handed.”—
JUDGES iii. 15.

I LEARN from this subject, *the power of left-handed men.* There are some men who, by physical organization, have as much strength in their left hand as in their right hand ; but there is something in the writing of this text which implies that Ehud had some defect in his right hand, which compelled him to use the left. Oh, the power of left-handed men ! Genius is often self-observant, careful of itself, not given to much toil, burning incense to its own aggrandizement ; while many a man with no natural endowments, actually defective in physical and mental organization, has an earnestness for the right, a patient industry, an all-consuming perseverance, which achieve marvels for the kingdom of Christ. Though left-handed as Ehud, they can strike down a sin as great and imperial as Eglon.

I have seen men of wealth gathering about them all their treasures, snuffing at the cause of a world lying in wickedness, roughly ordering Lazarus off their door-step, sending their dogs, not to lick his sores, but to hound him off their premises ; catching all the pure rain of God's blessing into the stagnant, ropy, frog-inhabited pool of their own selfishness—right-handed men, worse than useless—while many a man, with large heart and little pulse, has, out of his limited means, made poverty leap for joy, and started an influence that over-

spans the grave, and will swing round and round the throne of God, world without end. Amen.

Ah me, it is high time that you left-handed men, who have been longing for this gift, and that eloquence, and the other man's wealth, should take your left hand out of your pockets. Who made all these railroads? Who set up all these cities? Who started all these churches, and schools, and asylums? Who has done the tugging, and running, and pulling? Men of no wonderful endowments, thousands of them acknowledging themselves to be left-handed, and yet they were earnest, and yet they were determined, and yet they were triumphant.

MAY TWENTY-FOURTH.

THE UNCLEAN HEART.

"From all your filthiness, will I cleanse you."—Ez. xxxvi. 25.

THE Bible is either a truth or a lie. If it be a lie, cast it out and shut up your churches. If it be true, listen to Paul in Ephesians, where he says, "We are by nature children of wrath;" to Jeremiah, who says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" to Moses, who says, "The imagination of a man's heart is evil from his youth;" to the Psalmist, who says, "They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy."

I only take the Bible imagery when I say that your heart, unchanged, is a sepulchre, reeking and stenchful with corruption. Water cannot wash it off. Fire cannot burn it. Sin has cursed you through and through. The mire has been rubbed into the soul. It is a leprosy. People who had that disease in the olden time put bandages over their mouths as they walked in the street, and cried "Unclean?" And if we could

realize our moral defilement as we advance, we would cry, "Make room for the leper! room!" The Arabs have a fable that once a camel came to the door of a tent and thrust in his nose; not being resisted, he thrust in his feet; there being no hinderance, he came half way in; after a while he got all the way in; the Arab said to the camel, "This tent is too small for two." Then the camel said to the Arab, "If that be so, you had better leave." So sin comes into the heart farther and farther, until it takes full possession. Byron and Shelley wreathed sin with garlands, but I tear off the flowers from the skeleton, and hold out before you the reeking Death's-head. Oh, how sin has trampled and scarred your soul! It is a black, a horrible, a damning thing. It is not satisfied until it has pushed the soul into an eternal prison-house, and slammed shut the door, and shoved the bolts, and turned the locks of an everlasting incarceration. A heart under such unclean sorcery, how it must appear to God's all-searching eye! He sees it through and through. The darkness cannot hide it. Years cannot erase it.

MAY TWENTY-FIFTH.

LIGHT IN OLD AGE.

"At evening time it shall be light."—Zec. xiv. 7.

THE text shall find fulfilment in the *time of old age*. It is a grand thing to be young—to have the sight clear, and the hearing acute, and the step elastic, and all our pulses marching on to the drumming of a stout heart. Mid-life and old age will be denied many of us, but youth—we all know what that is. Those wrinkles were not always on your brow. That snow was not always on your head. That brawny

muscle did not always bunch your arm. You have not always worn spectacles. Grave and dignified as you now are, you once went coasting down the hill-side, or threw off your hat for the race, or sent the ball flying sky-high. But youth will not always last. It stays only long enough to give us exuberant spirits, and broad shoulders for burden-carrying, and an arm with which to battle our way through difficulties. Life's path, if you follow it long enough, will come under frowning crag and across trembling causeway. Blessed old age, if you let it come naturally. You cannot hide it. You may try to cover the wrinkles, but you cannot cover the wrinkles. If the time has come for you to be old, be not ashamed to be old. The grandest things in all the universe are old. Old mountains ; old rivers ; old seas ; old stars, and an old eternity. Then do not be ashamed to be old, unless you are older than the mountains, and older than the stars.

Now men and women will lie! They say they are forty, but they are sixty. They say they are twenty, but they are thirty. They say they are sixty, but they are eighty. How some people will lie!

Glorious old age, if found in the way of righteousness! How beautiful the old age of Jacob, leaning on the top of his staff ; of John Quincy Adams, falling with the harness on ; of Washington Irving, sitting, pen in hand, amid the scenes himself had made classical ; of John Angell James, to the last proclaiming the Gospel to the masses of Birmingham ; of Theodore Frelinghuysen down to feebleness and emaciation devoting his illustrious faculties to the Kingdom of God. "At evening time it shall be light."

MAY TWENTY-SIXTH.

SLAY THE FOE.

“Wilt thou hunt the prey?”—JOB xxxviii. 39.

THERE are great monsters of iniquity prowling all around about the community. Shall we not in the strength of God go forth and combat them? We not only need more heart, but more backbone. What is the Church of God that it should fear to look in the eye any transgression? There is the Bengal tiger of drunkenness that prowls around; and instead of attacking it, how many of us hide under the church-pew or the communion-table! There is so much invested in it we are afraid to assault it; millions of dollars in barrels, in vats, in spigots, in corkscrews, in gin-palaces with marble floors and Italian-top tables, and chased ice-coolers, and in the strychnine, and the log-wood, and the tartaric acid, and the *nux vomica*, that go to make up our “pure” American drinks. I looked with wondering eyes on the “Heidelberg tun.” It is the great liquor-vat of Germany, which is said to hold eight hundred hogsheads of wine, and only three times in a hundred years it has been filled. But, as I stood and looked at it, I said to myself, “That is nothing—eight hundred hogsheads. Why, our American vat holds five million two hundred thousand barrels of strong drinks, and we keep two hundred thousand men with nothing to do but to see that it is filled.” Oh! to attack this great monster of Intemperance, and the kindred monsters of fraud and uncleanness, requires you to rally all your Christian courage.

Through the press, through the pulpit, through the platform you must assault it. Would to God that all our American Christians would band together, not for crack-brained fanaticism, but for holy Christian reform !

MAY TWENTY-SEVENTH.

THE NEGLECT OF SALVATION.

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.”—HEB. ii. 3.

SUPPOSE on your way home, a runaway-horse should dash across the street, or between the dock and the boat you should accidentally slip, where would you be at twelve o'clock to-night or seven o'clock to-morrow morning? Or for all eternity where would you be? I do not answer the question. I just leave it to you to answer. But suppose you escape fatal accident. Suppose you go out by the ordinary process of sickness. I will just suppose now that your last hour has come. The doctor says, as he goes out of the room, “Can't get well.” There is something in the faces of those who stand around you that prophesies that you cannot get well. You say within yourself, “I can't get well.” Where are your comrades now? Oh! they are off to the gay party that very night. They dance as well as they ever did. They drink as much wine. They laugh as loud as though you were not dying. They destroyed your soul, but they do not come to help you die. Well, there is father and mother in the room. They are very quiet, but occasionally they go out into the next room and weep bitterly. The bed is very much dishevelled. They have not been able to make it up for three or four days. There are four or five pillows lying around, because they have been trying to make you as easy as they could. On one side of your bed are all

the past years of your life—the Bibles, the sermons, the communion tables, the offers of mercy. You say, “Take them away.” Your mother thinks you are delirious. She says, “There is nothing there, my dear, nothing there.” There *is* something there. It is your wasted opportunities. It is your procrastinations. It is those years you gave to the world that you ought to have given to Christ. They are there, and some of them put their fingers on your aching temples, and some of them feel for the strings of your heart, and some put more thorns in your tumbled pillow, and you say, “Turn me over;” and they turn you over, but alas! there is a more appalling vision. You say, “Take that away!” They say: “There is nothing there—nothing there.” There is—an open grave there; the judgment is there; a lost eternity is there. Take it away! They cannot take it away. You say, “How dark it is getting in the room!” Why, the burners are all lighted. Your family come up one by one and tenderly kiss you good-by. Your feet are cold, and the hands are cold, and the lips are cold, and they take a small mirror and they put it over your mouth to see if there is any breathing, and that mirror is taken away without a single blur upon it; and they whisper through the room, “She is gone.” And then the door of the body opens and the soul flashes out. Make room for the destroyed spirit. Down! down! down! Shove back that door! Lost! Let it come in to its eternal residence. Woe! woe! No cup of merriment now, but the cup of the wrath of Almighty God. The last chance for heaven gone. The door of mercy shut. The doom sealed. The blackness of darkness forever! Voltaire is there. Herod is there. Robespierre is there. The debauchees are there. The murderers are there. All the rejectors of Jesus Christ are there. And you will be there unless you repent.

MAY TWENTY-EIGHTH.

PRAYER A SHARP SICKLE.

“The harvest of the earth is ripe.”—REV. xiv. 15.

PRAYER is one of the sharpest of sickles. What does God do with our prayers? Take them up on the battlements of heaven and throw them away? No. What do you do with the presents given you by your friends? You keep them sacred. Will God be less regardful of that which we present to Him in prayer? Prayer is not a certain number of “ohs,” and “ahs,” and “forever and forever, amens.” God directs us to ask for what we want. Away with all the meaningless rigmaroles that people sometimes call prayer. By prayer Elijah pulled down the showers. By prayer John Knox shook Scotland. On the coast of Scotland, one stormy night, a woman came to the house of her pastor, and said to the minister, “Rise, and pray for my husband, for he is on the sea in a storm.” The Christian wife and her pastor knelt down and prayed for the salvation of the sea-captain. Sure enough, at that very hour the vessel was tossed upon the angry seas. The ship plunged in the wave, and it seemed as if it would never come up again; but it righted, and came to the top of the wave. It plunged again, and for a long while the captain thought it would never rise; but it began to shake itself from the wave, and again bounded the sea. The third time it went down, and all hands on board gave up the last hope. But again it mounted. As it came out of the foaming billows, the captain

said to his crew, "*Lads, surely there was some God's soul on the land praying for us to-night, or we would never have come up out of that.*" Prayer is a mighty influence. It is a strong and sure sickle. Let us all lay hold of it.

MAY TWENTY-NINTH.

HEAVEN'S REUNIONS.

"Then face to face."—1 COR. xiii. 12.

WE get very imperfect ideas of the reunions of heaven. We think of some festal day on earth, when father and mother were yet living, and the children came home. A good time that! But it had this drawback—all were not there. That brother went off to sea and never was heard from. That sister—did we not lay her away in the freshness of her young life, nevermore in this world to look upon her? Ah! there was a skeleton at the feast; and tears mingled with our laughter on that Christmas-day. Not so with heaven's reunions. It will be an uninterrupted gladness. Many a Christian parent will look around and find all his children there. "Ah!" he says, "can it be possible that we are all here—life's perils over? The Jordan passed, and not one wanting? Why, even the prodigal is here. I almost gave him up. How long he despised my counsels! but grace hath triumphed. All here! all here! Tell the mighty joy through the city. Let the bells ring, and the angels mention it in their song. Wave it from the top of the walls. *All here!*"

No more breaking of heart-strings, but face to face. The orphans that were left poor, and in a merciless world kicked and cuffed of many hardships, shall join their parents, over whose graves they so long wept, and gaze into their glorified

countenances forever, face to face. We may come up from different parts of the world, one from the land and another from the depths of the sea ; from lives affluent and prosperous, or from scenes of ragged distress ; but we shall all meet in rapture and jubilee, face to face.

MAY THIRTIETH.

AN ETERNAL REIGN.

“They shall reign for ever and ever.”—REV. xxii. 5.

AS when the factory band slips at nightfall from the main wheel, all the smaller wheels slacken their speed, and with slower and slower motion they turn until they come to a full stop ; so this great machinery of the universe, wheel within wheel, making revolution of appalling speed, shall, by the touch of God’s hand, slip the band of present law, and slacken, and stop. That is what will be the matter with the mountains. The chariots in which they ride shall halt so suddenly that the kings shall be thrown out. Star after star shall be carried out to burial amid funeral torches of burning worlds. Constellations shall throw ashes on their head, and all up and down the highways of space there shall be mourning, mourning, mourning, because the worlds are dead. But the Christian workers shall never quit their thrones—they shall reign forever and ever. If, by some invasion from hell, the attempt were made to carry them off into captivity from heaven, the souls they have saved would rally for their defence, and all the angels of God would strike with their sceptres, and the redeemed, on white horses of victory, would ride down the foe, and all the steep of the sky would resound with the crash of the overwhelmed cohorts tumbled headlong out of heaven.

Safe forever—all Christian workers. No toil shall fatigue them ; no hostility overcome them ; no pain pierce them ; no night shadow them. Forever the river of joy flows on ; forever the jubilee progresses. The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

MAY THIRTY-FIRST.

THERE IS A HELL.

“ The wicked shall be turned into hell.”—Ps. ix. 17.

NOT having intellect enough to fashion an eternity of my own, I must take the theory of the Bible. I believe there is a hell. If I had not been afraid of hell, I do not think I should have started for heaven. You say, I will not be scared in that way. “ I will not be affrighted by any future punishment.” You are quite mistaken. I can frighten you half to death in five minutes. As you are walking along the streets, let me pull down the house-scaffolding, weighing two or three tons, about your head, and you will look as white as a sheet, while your heart will thump like a trip-hammer. Now, if it is ignoble to be affrighted about a falling scaffold, is it not ignoble to be affrighted by a threat from the Omnipotent God, who with one stroke of his right hand could crush the universe ? You ask how God, being a father, could let us suffer in the future world ? I answer your question by asking how God, being a father, can let suffering be in this world ? Tell me why He allowed that woman to whom I administered the holy sacrament this afternoon, to have a cancer ; tell me why children suffer such pain in teething, the lancet striking such torture in the swollen gums. You fail to explain to me suffer-

ing in the present time ; be not surprised if I fail to explain to you suffering in the future. On the way to reject the doctrine of future punishment, men begin by rejecting the idea of *material fire*. In a few years, while they admit future punishment, they deny that it is *eternal*. A few years after that they cast out the whole idea of future punishment, and let all the thieves, pickpockets, and debauchees of the universe go into glory. As far as I can understand the modern popular theory of future punishment, it is that a man goes down and sits on a hard-bottomed chair a little while, and after he gets tired of roughing it, goes up to rest on cushions in glory.

JUNE FIRST.

BUILDING BABELS.

“ Let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven.”—GEN. xi. 4.

WE laugh at the children of Shinar for trying to build a tower that could reach to the heavens ; but I think, if our eyesight were only good enough, we could see a Babel in many a door-yard. Oh, the struggle is fierce. It is store against store, house against house, street against street, nation against nation. The goal for which men are running is chairs, and chandeliers, and mirrors, and houses, and lands, and presidential equipments. If they get what they anticipate, what have they got? Men are not safe from calumny while they live, and, worse than that, they are not safe after they are dead ; for I have seen swine root up grave-yards. One day a man goes up into publicity, and the world does him honor, and people climb up into sycamore-trees to watch him as he passes, and, as he goes along on the shoulders of the people, there is a waving of hats and a wild huzza. To-morrow the

same man is caught between the jaws of the printing-press and mangled and bruised, and the very same persons who applauded him before cry, "Down with the traitor! down with him!"

Belshazzar sits at the feast, the mighty men of Babylon sitting all around him. Wit sparkles like the wine, and the wine like the wit. Music rolls up among the chandeliers; the chandeliers flash down on the decanters. The breath of hanging gardens floats in on the night air; the voice of revelry floats out. Amidst wreaths, and tapestry, and folded banners, a finger writes. The march of a host is heard on the stairs. Laughter catches in the throat. A thousand hearts stop beating. The blow is struck. The blood on the floor is richer hued than the wine on the table. The kingdom has departed. Belshazzar was no worse, perhaps, than hundreds of people in Babylon, but his position slew him. Oh, be content with just such a position as God has placed you in.

JUNE SECOND.

CHRISTIAN STRATEGY.

"Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—*MATT. x. 16.*

YOU know what strategy is in military affairs. Now I think it is high time we had this art sanctified and spiritualized. In the Church, when we are about to make a Christian assault, we send word to the opposing force when we expect to come, how many troops we have, and how many rounds of shot, and whether we will come with artillery, infantry, or cavalry, and of course we are defeated. There are thousands of men who might be surprised into the kingdom of God. We need more tact and ingenuity in Christian work.

It is in spiritual affairs as in military, that success depends in attacking that part of the castle which is not armed and intrenched.

For instance, here is a man all armed on the doctrine of election ; all his troops of argument and prejudice are at that particular gate. You may batter away at that side of the castle for fifty years and you will not take it ; but just wheel your troops to the side gate of the heart's affections, and in five minutes you capture him. I never knew a man to be saved through a brilliant argument. You cannot hook men into the kingdom of God by the horns of a dilemma. There is no grace in syllogisms. Here is a man armed upon the subject of the perseverance of the saints ; he does not believe in it. Attack him at that point, and he will persevere to the very last in not believing it. Here is a man armed on the subject of baptism ; he believes in sprinkling or immersion. All your discussion of ecclesiastical hydrophathy will not change him. I remember, when I was a boy, that with other boys I went into the river on a summer day to bathe, and we used to dash water on each other, but never got any result except that our eyes were blinded ; and all this splashing of water between Baptists and Pedobaptists never result in anything but the blurring of the spiritual eyesight. In other words, you never can capture a man's soul at the point at which he is especially intrenched. But there is in every man's heart a bolt that can be easily shoved. A little child four years old may touch that bolt, and it will spring back, and the door will swing open, and Christ will come in.

*JUNE THIRD.***A NEVER FAILING WELL.**

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” — JOHN. iv. 14.

WHEN we pour the water from the pitcher into the glass, we have to be careful, or the glass will overflow, and we stop when the water has come to the rim. But when God, in summer, pours out showers, He keeps pouring on and pouring on until the grass-blades cry, “Enough!” and the flowers, “Enough!” and the trees, “Enough!” but God keeps pouring on and pouring on, until the fields are soaked, and the rivers overflow, and the cisterns are all filled, and the great reservoirs are supplied, and there is water to turn the wheel, water to slake the thirst of the city, water to cleanse the air, water to wash the hemisphere. Abundance! And so with this glorious Gospel. Enough for one; enough for all. Thousands have come to this fountain, and have drunk to the satisfaction of their souls. Other thousands will come; and yet the fountain will not be exhausted.

Just after the battle of Antietam, with some of the other members of the Christian Commission, I went down to help look after the wounded; and on the afternoon of a very hot day, I came to a pump of water. I saw a soldier, with musket, guarding the pump. I put out my cup, and he filled it about a quarter full with water. I said; “Why do you not fill my cup?” He replied: “Water is scarce! Here is a great army, and we do not know where to get water after this

is gone ; and I have orders to give no more than that." What a poor supply for a thirsty man on a hot day ! But, glory be to God ! that in this Gospel fountain there is water enough for all the armies of the earth, and for all the armies of heaven. You cannot drink it dry. O ye *tempted* soul ! come and drink of this blessed promise : " You shall not be tempted above that you are able, and that from every temptation God will bring a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." O ye *bereaved* soul ! come and drink of this blessed promise : " All things work together for good to those who love God." " Your light afflictions are only for a moment, and they work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Abundance of supply !

" Ye wretched, hungry, starving poor,
Behold the royal feast !
Where Mercy spreads her bounteous store
For every humble guest.

" See ! Jesus stands with open'd arms ;
He calls ; He bids you come :
Sin holds you back, and grief alarms,
But still there yet is room."

JUNE FOURTH.

GOD'S WAY NOT MAN'S WAY.

" Man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps."—PROV. xvi. 9.

GOD'S way is different from man's way, but it is always best ! Take, for instance, the composition of the Bible. If we had had the writing of the Bible, we would have said, " Let one man write it. If you have twenty or thirty men to write a poem, or make a statute, or write a history, or make an argument, there will be flaws and contradictions." But

God says, "Let not one man do it, but forty men shall do it." And they did, differing enough to show there had been no collusion between them, but not contradicting each other on any important point, while they all wrote from their own standpoint and temperament ; so that the matter-of-fact man has his Moses ; the romantic nature his Ezekiel ; the epigrammatic his Solomon ; the warrior his Joshua ; the sailor his Jonah ; the loving his John ; the logician his Paul. Instead of this Bible, which now I can lift in my hand—instead of the Bible that the child can carry to school this afternoon—instead of the little Bible the sailor can put in his jacket when he goes to sea—if it had been left to men to write, it would have been a thousand volumes, judging from the amount of ecclesiastical controversy which has arisen. God's way is different from man's, but it is best, infinitely best.

So it is in regard to the Christian's life. If we had had the planning of a Christian's life we would have said, "Let him have eighty years of sunshine, a fine house to live in ; let his surroundings all be agreeable ; let him have sound health ; let no chill shiver through his limbs, no pain ache his brow, or trouble shadow his soul." I enjoy the prosperity of others so much, I would let every man have as much money as he wants, and roses for his children's cheeks, and fountains of gladness glancing in their large round eyes. But that is not God's way. It seems as if a man must be cut and hit and pounded just in proportion as he is useful.

*JUNE FIFTH.***RICH PASTURE.**

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.”—PSALMS XXV. 14.

THE old shepherds used to take the sheep upon the mountains in the summer, and dwell in the valleys in the winter. The sheep being out-of-doors perpetually, their wool was better than if they had been kept in the hot atmosphere of the sheep-cot. Wells were dug for the sheep, and covered with large stones in order that the hot weather might not spoil the water. And then the shepherd led his flock wherever he would ; nobody disputed his right. So the Lord our Shepherd has a large pasture-ground. He takes us in the summer to the mountains, and in the winter to the valleys. Warm days of prosperity come, and we stand on sun-gilt Sabbaths, and on hills of transfiguration ; and we are so high up we can catch a glimpse of the pinnacles of the heavenly city. Then cold wintry days of trouble come, and we go down into the valley of sickness, want, and bereavement, and we say, “Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow ?” But, blessed be God, the Lord’s sheep can find pasture anywhere. Between two rocks of trouble a tuft of succulent promises ; green pastures beside still waters ; long, sweet grass between bitter graves. You have noticed the structure of the sheep’s mouth ? It is so sharp that it can take up a blade of grass or clover-top from the very narrowest spot. And so God’s sheep can pick up comfort where others can gather none. “The secret of the Lord is

with them that fear him." Rich pasture, fountain-fed pasture, for all the flock of the Good Shepherd.

"The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets."

JUNE SIXTH.

REVOLUTION.

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither."—Acts xvii. 6.

THERE is a wild, bellowing mob around the house of Jason, in Thessalonica. What has the man done so greatly to offend the people? He has been entertaining Paul and his comrades. The mob surround the house and cry, "Bring out those turbulent preachers! They are interfering with our business! They are ruining our religion! They are actually turning the world upside-down!" The charge was true; for there is nothing that so interferes with sin; there is nothing so ruinous to every form of established iniquity; there is nothing that has such tendency to turn the world upside-down, as our glorious Christianity. The fact is, that the world now is wrong-side up, and it needs to be turned upside-down in order that it may be right-side up. The time was when men wrote books, entitling them "Apologies for Christianity." I hope that day has passed. We want no more apologies for Christianity. Let the apologies be on the part of those who do not believe in our religion. We do not mean to make any compromise in the matter. We do not wish to hide the fact that Christianity is revolutionary, and that its tendency is to turn the world upside-down.

Our religion has often been misrepresented as a principle

of tears, and mildness and fastidiousness ; afraid of crossing people's prejudices ; afraid of making somebody mad ; with silken gloves, lifting the people up from the church-pew into glory, as though they were Bohemian glass, so very delicate that with one touch it may be demolished forever. Men speak of religion as though it were refined imbecility ; as though it were a spiritual chloroform that the people were to take until the sharp cutting of life were over. The Bible, so far from this, represents the religion of Christ as robust and brawny—ransacking and upsetting ten thousand things that now seem to be settled on firm foundations. I hear some man in the house say, "I thought Religion was *Peace*." That is the final result. A man's arm is out of place. Two men come, and with great effort put it back to the socket. It goes back with great pain. Then it gets well. Our world is horribly disordered and out of joint. It must come under an omnipotent surgery, beneath which there will be pain and anguish before there can come perfect health and quiet. I proclaim, therefore, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ—**REVOLUTION !**

JUNE SEVENTH.

CHRIST'S LAST HOUR.

" Father forgive them : for they know not what they do."—LUKE xxiii. 34.

CHRIST'S sufferings were augmented by the fact that He foresaw them. For thirty-three years He was dying. The last horror hung over Him at the sea-side, at the wedding, and everywhere. He knew that every pulse's beating took Him nearer to the last throb of anguish. He saw the walls shutting in around Him, the circle of fire contracting, the vise screwing up. When He fled away from Herod, He knew that

at last He would be captured. He went into court knowing that the verdict would be against Him. There was an upright piece of wood and a transverse piece of wood that hung over Him by day and by night—the shadow of a cross.

The final year came. It was His birthday. It was Christmas. He was thirty-two years old. I hear Him saying, "This is my last year. What a thirty-two years! Trouble all the way! Betrayed! Cast out! Poor! Full of pain! But a few more months, and I will go up to my death-hour. The tree is growing on which I shall be spiked. The hammers are forged that will some day smite me fast. The military are drilled for my execution." My hearers, if Christ's death had been a sudden surprise, it would not have been so awful. But it was a long-expected anguish.

The last hour of Christ was the focus to which the woes of time and of eternity converged. Heaven frowned from above. Hell rode up from beneath. I hear the click of the hoofs of the cavalry troop as they ride out toward the fatal hill. I hear the buzz, and hum, and roar, and blasphemy of a great mob. They have cornered him at last! Put those women out of the way! It is no place for women! Do not let His mother see this! Take her away! This spectacle would kill her! Put out all the candles of the sky. The spears are sharp, and they plunge them. The heavens are burdened with woe, and they thunder. Unlifted darkness—save as a flash of lightning reveals the eye of God, peering through the gloom to see what they are doing with His well-beloved Son. Methinks the thrones of heaven shiver at the deed. He has been hanging there five hours and fifty minutes. What next? Whom will the Omnipotent Sufferer first consume with his curse? Will He not take His right hand from the nail, and hurl everlasting fury upon His crucifiers? Wait a moment. Listen! I am sure He will speak! Yes, He speaks: "*Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.*"

*JUNE EIGHTH.***BE JOYFUL.**

“Serve the Lord with gladness.”—Ps. c. 2.

I HAVE heard it said that we ought to live as though each moment were to be our last. I do not believe that theory. As far as preparation is concerned, we ought always to be ready ; but we cannot always be thinking of death, for we have duties in life that demand our attention. When a man is selling goods, it is his business to think of the bargain he is making. When a man is pleading in the courts, it is his duty to think of the interests of his clients. When a clerk is adding up accounts, it is his duty to keep his mind upon the column of figures. He who fills up his life with thoughts of death, is far from being the highest style of Christian. I know a man who used often to say at night, “I wish I might die before morning !” He is now an infidel.

But there are times when we can and ought to give ourselves to the contemplation of that solemn moment when, to the soul, time ends and eternity begins. We must go through that one pass. There is no roundabout way, no by-path, no circuitous route. Die we must ; and it will be to us a shameful occurrence, or a time of admirable behavior. Our friends may stretch out their hands to keep us back, but no imploration on their part can hinder us. They might offer large retainers, but Death would not take the fee. The breath will fail, and the eyes will close, and the heart will stop. You may hang the couch with gorgeous tapestry ; what does Death

care for bed-curtains? You may hang the room with the finest works of art ; what does Death care for pictures? You may fill the house with the wailings of widowhood and orphanage ; does Death mind weeping?

This ought not to be a depressing theme. Who wants to live here forever? The world has always treated me well, and every day I feel less and less like scolding and complaining ; but yet I would not want to make this my eternal residence. I love to watch the clouds, and to bathe my soul in the blue sea of heaven ; but I expect, when the firmament has been rolled away as a scroll, to see a new heaven, grander, higher, and more glorious.

JUNE NINTH.

QUESTIONS WE CANNOT ANSWER.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be."—1 JOHN iii. 2.

PAUL, I suppose, had the most satisfactory view of heaven, and he says : "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." It is like looking through a broken telescope : "Now we see through a glass darkly." Can you tell me anything about that heavenly place? You ask me a thousand questions about it that I cannot answer. I ask you a thousand questions about it that you cannot answer. And do you wonder that Paul was so glad when martyrdom gave him a chance to go over and make discoveries in that blessed country?

I hope some day, by the grace of God, to go over and see for myself ; but not now. No well man, no prospered man, I think, wants to go now. But the time will come, I think, when I shall go over. I want to see what they do there, and I want to see how they do it. I do not want to be looking

through the gates ajar forever. I want them to swing wide open. There are ten thousand things I want explained: about you, about myself, about the government of this world, about God, about everything. We start in a plain path of what we know, and in a minute come up against a high wall of what we do not know. I wonder how it looks over there? Somebody tells me it is like a paved city—paved with gold; and another man tells me it is like a fountain, and it is like a tree, and it is like a triumphal procession; and the next man I meet tells me that it is all figurative. I really want to know, after the body is resurrected, what they wear and what they eat; and I have an immeasurable curiosity to know what it is, and how it is, and where it is. Columbus risked his life to find this continent, and shall we shudder to go out on a voyage of discovery which shall reveal a vaster and more brilliant country? John Franklin risked his life to find a passage between icebergs, and shall we dread to find a passage to eternal summer? Men in Switzerland travel up the heights of the Metternhorn with alpine stock and guides and rockets and ropes, and getting halfway up stumble and fall down in a horrible massacre. They just wanted to say they had been on the tops of those high peaks. And shall we fear to go out for the ascent of the eternal hills which start a thousand miles beyond where stop the highest peaks of the Alps, and when in that ascent there is no peril?

JUNE TENTH.

THE FIRST SORROW.

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts.”—EPH. iii. 17.

I KNOW when our last war was over some people came back without a scratch or a scar, but that is not so in the

great battle of life: we get wounded in the hands, and wounded in the feet, and wounded in the head, and wounded in the heart. No man escapes. But now what are you going to do with your first sorrow? My young brother, the way you get through your first sorrow will decide whether you can endure the other sorrows of life. It is the first blow that sends men to drinking to drown their troubles, or that knocks the fire out of them until the rest of their days they go cowed down. Who is that weigher in that large commercial establishment? He once owned the store. Who is that underling in that great manufacturing establishment? He once owned the factory. When the first sorrow came he fell, having no grace to sustain him, and he never rose up, never will rise.

Perhaps your first trouble may be bereavement. God sometimes comes and takes a lamb out of the fold. Have you ever noticed how often God takes the first-born. I have seven brothers and sisters, all of whom lost their first-born. We want the grace of God to comfort us when bereavement comes to the house that erst was full of laughter and sunny looks and greetings at the door, and kisses by little hands flung from the window as you went down the stairs, and everything is changed, and the doves cry in the nest because the hawk swoops, and the pulses flutter and the cheek fades, and the eyes close, and the heart stops. To put away garments that never will be worn again, and toys that never again will strew the carpet, and to go with a sense of suffocation in the throat through deserted halls which once rang with childish merriment—O God, who can stand that? Only those who have Thy help. Young man, when your first trouble comes, be it of business or of bereavement, you will want Christ.

Now you are hale and strong. You look as if you could leap and jump and wrestle and row, as though you could battle your way through; but after a while you will be sick.

You will be told that you must stay in, and your door will be shut against the world. There will be two watchers at the pillow, and the night will be hot and nervous and restless. The morning will come and you will be worse, and the lattice will be turned. They will silence the footsteps on the stairs with a "h-u-s-h!" You will be very sick, and there will be doubt expressed as to whether you will ever get well; and in your dreams you will hear the dash of waters, and you will make up your mind it is the breaking of the waves of the Jordan against your pillow; and you hear a sound at the gate, and you will think, why that is the pawing of the hoof of the pale horse. Oh, then you will want the great Physician to come in and stand by you and say, "Young man, fear not, I am with thee; whether you live or die, all is well."

JUNE ELEVENTH.

WRESTLING WITH GOD.

"And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."—GEN. xxxii. 24.

JACOB found in the morning that this strange personage was not an enemy, but a God-dispatched messenger, to promise prosperity for him and for his children. And so many a man, at the close of his trial, has found out that he has been trying to throw down his own blessing. If you are a Christian man, I will go back in your history, and find that the grandest things that have ever happened to you have been your trials. Nothing short of scourging, imprisonment, and shipwreck could have made Paul what he was.

When David was fleeing through the wilderness, pursued by his own son, he was being prepared to become the sweet singer of Israel. The pit and the dungeon were the best

schools at which Joseph ever graduated. The hurricane that upset the tent and killed Job's children prepared the man of Uz to write the magnificent poem that has astounded the ages. There is no way to get the wheat out of the straw, but to thresh it. There is no way to purify the gold, but to burn it. Look at the people who have always had it their own way. They are proud, discontented, useless, and unhappy. If you want to find cheerful folks, go among those who have been purified by the fire. After Rossini had rendered *William Tell* the five hundredth time, a company of musicians came under his window in Paris and serenaded him. They put upon his brow a golden crown of laurel-leaves. But amidst all the applause and enthusiasm, Rossini turned to a friend and said, "I would give all this brilliant scene for a few days of youth and love." Contrast the melancholy feeling of Rossini, who had everything that this world could give him, to the joyful experience of Isaac Watts, whose misfortunes were innumerable, when he says :

" Then let our songs abound,
 And every tear be dry ;
 We're marching through Immanuel's ground,
 To fairer worlds on high."

JUNE TWELFTH.

NO PEARL CAN BE A DIAMOND.

" Let us not be desirous of vain glory envying one another."—GAL. v. 26

LET not a Christian man envy another Christian man's experience. You open the king's casket, and you see jewels of all sizes, shapes, and colors. The king says to the sultan, who has come to visit him : " That is a topaz ! That is an amethyst ! That is a pearl ! That is a koh-i-noor ! " So

God's jewels are very different—different in history, different in taste, different in education, different in preference. Do not worry because God made you different from others. Do not worry because you don't have the faith of that man, or the praying qualities of this, or the singing qualities of another. It were as unwise as for a cornelian to blush deeper because it is not a diamond, or a japonica to fret all the color out of its cheek because it is not a rose. God intended you to be different.

The trouble is that you are not willing to be ordinary gold ; you want to be gold of twenty-four carats. You see some extraordinary Christian man, and you say, "If I could only be such a man as that ! You don't know his history. Some distance below Niagara the water is placid ; it says nothing about the rapids writhing among the rocks and the fall of one hundred and sixty-four feet. So there are Christian experiences floating placidly before you. You envy this experience, but you don't realize the fact that that man has gone through many rapids of temptation, and may have had a violent fall.

It seems easy to be a general on some triumphal occasion. The arches are sprung, the flowers are scattered, the brass bands play, and the people huzza, as he comes back from the war. Oh ! what an easy thing to be a general ! But you forget the nights of peril—you forget the carnage, the thirst, and the hunger, and the wounds, and the long march, and that he plucked the garland of victory out of the stiff hand of death. And so there are Christians now going on in the triumph of experience, and you envy them, forgetful of the fact that there was many a Waterloo of temptation and trial they were obliged to fight. Be content with such Christian experience as God may see fit to give you.

JUNE THIRTEENTH.

COME INTO THE ARK.

“Come thou and all thy house into the ark.”—GEN. vii. 1.

THE text invites you to bring your family. “Come thou and all thy house.” That means your wife and your children. You cannot drive them in. If Noah had tried to drive the pigeons and the doves into the ark, he would only have scattered them. Some parents are not wise about these things. They make iron rules about Sabbaths, and they force the catechism down the throat, as they would hold the child’s nose and force down a dose of rhubarb and calomel. You cannot drive your children into the ark. You can draw your children to Christ, but you cannot coerce them. The Cross was lifted, not to drive, but to draw. “If I be lifted up, I will *draw* all men unto me.” As the sun draws up the drops of morning dew, so the Sun of Righteousness exhales the tears of repentance.

“Come thou and all thy house into the ark.” Be sure that you bring your husband and wife with you. How would Noah have felt if, when he heard the rain pattering on the roof of the ark, he knew that his wife was outside in the storm? No; she went with him. And yet some of you are on the ship “outward-bound” for heaven; but your companion is unsheltered. You remember the day when the marriage-ring was set. Nothing has yet been able to break it. Sickness came, and the finger shrank, but the ring staid on. The

twain stood alone above a child's grave, and the dark mouth of the tomb swallowed up a thousand hopes ; but the ring dropped not into the open grave. Days of poverty came, and the hand did many a hard day's work ; but the rubbing of the work against the ring only made it shine brighter. Shall that ring ever be lost ? Will the iron clang of the sepulchre-gate crush it forever ? I pray God that you who have been married on earth may be together in heaven. Oh ! by the quiet bliss of your earthly home ; by the babe's cradle ; by all the vows of that day when you started life together, I beg you to see to it that you both get into the ark.

JUNE FOURTEENTH.

A GREAT MULTITUDE.

“I beheld a great multitude which no man could number.”—*REV. vii. 9.*

I THINK we have but little idea of the number of the righteous in heaven. Infidels say, “Your heaven will be a very small place compared with the world of the lost ; for, according to your teaching, the majority of men will be destroyed.” I deny the charge. I suppose that the multitude of the finally lost, as compared with the multitude of the finally saved, will be a handful. I suppose that the few sick people in the Brooklyn City Hospital to-day, as compared with the hundreds of thousands of well people in the city, would not be smaller than the number of those who shall be cast out in suffering compared with those who shall have upon them the health of heaven. For we are to remember that we are living in only the beginning of the Christian dispensation, and that this whole world is to be populated and redeemed, and that ages of light

and love are to flow on. If this be so, the multitudes of the saved will be in vast majority.

Take all the congregations that have to-day assembled for worship. Put them together, and they would make but a small audience compared with the thousands and tens of thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, and hundred and forty and four thousands that shall stand around the throne. Those flashed up to heaven in martyr-fires; those were torn limb from limb by Romish inquisitions; those tossed for many years upon the invalid-couch; those fought in the armies of liberty, and rose as they fell; those tumbled from high scaffoldings, or slipped from the mast, or were washed off into the sea. They came up from Corinth, from Laodicea, from the Red Sea bank and Gennesaret's wave, from Egyptian brick-yards, and Gideon's threshing-floor. Those, thousands of years ago, slept the last sleep; and these are this moment having their eyes closed, and their limbs stretched out for the sepulchre.

A general, expecting an attack from the enemy, stands on a hill and looks through a field-glass, and sees, in the great distance, multitudes approaching, but has no idea of their numbers. He says, "I can not tell any thing about them. I merely know that there are a great number." And so John, without attempting to count, says, "A great multitude that no man can number."

JUNE FIFTEENTH.

A RADICAL CHANGE.

"Ye must be born again."—JOHN iii. 7.

THERE must be an infinite and radical change in every man's heart, or he cannot come within ten thousand miles of heaven. There must be an earthquake in his soul,

shaking down his sins, and there must be the trumpet-blast of Christ's resurrection bringing him up from the depths of sin and darkness into the glorious life of the Gospel. Do you know why more men do not come to Christ? It is because men are not invited that they do not come. You get a general invitation from your friend: "Come round some time to my house and dine with me." You do not go. But he says, "Come around to-day at four o'clock, and bring your family, and we'll dine together." And you say, "I don't know as I have any engagement: I will come." "I expect you at four o'clock." And you go. The world feels it is a general invitation to come around some time and sit at the great Gospel feast, and brother, come to Christ; come now—come now!" How was it that in the days of Daniel Baker and Truman Osborne, and Nettleton, so many thousands came to Jesus? Because those men did nothing else but invite them to come. They spent their lifetime uttering invitations, and they did not mince matters either? Where did John Bunyan's pilgrim start from? Did he start from some easy, quiet, cozy place? No; if you have read John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," you know where he started from, and that was the *City of Destruction*, where every sinner starts from. Do you know what Livingstone, the Scotch minister, was preaching about in Scotland when three hundred souls, under one sermon, came to Christ? He was preaching about the human heart as unclean, and hard, and stony. Do you know what George Whitefield was preaching about in his first sermon, when fifteen souls saw the salvation of God? It was this: "Ye must be born again." Do you know what is the last subject he ever preached upon? "Flee the wrath to come." Oh! that the Lord God would come into our pulpits, and prayer-meetings, and Christian circles, and bring us from our fine rhetoric and profound metaphysics, and our elegant hair-splitting, to the old-fashioned well of Gospel Invitation.

*JUNE SIXTEENTH.***JESUS IN THE LAST EXTREMITY.**

“In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.”—**MATT.**
xiv. 25.

IN a Christian home, in Poland, great poverty had come, and on the week-day the man was obliged to move out of the house with his whole family. That night he knelt, with his family, and prayed to God. While they were kneeling in prayer, there was a tap on the window-pane. They opened the window, and there was a raven that the family had fed and trained, and it had in its bill a ring all set with precious stones, which was found out to be a ring belonging to the royal family. It was taken up to the king's residence, and for the honesty of the man in bringing it back he had a house given to him, and a garden, and a farm. Who was it that sent the raven tapping on the window? The same God that sent the raven to feed Elijah by the brook Cherith. Christ in the hour of extremity!

You mourned over your sins. You could not find the way out. You sat down and said, “God will not be merciful. He has cast me off ;” but in that, the darkest hour of your history, light broke from the throne, and Jesus said, “O wanderer, come home. I have seen all thy sorrows. In this, the hour of thy extremity, I offer thee pardon and everlasting life!”

Trouble came. You were almost torn to pieces by that trouble. You braced yourself up against it. You said, “I will be a Stoic, and will not care ;” but before you had got

through making the resolution, it broke down under you. You felt that all your resources were gone, and then Jesus came. "In the fourth watch of the night," the Bible says, "Jesus came walking on the sea." Why did He not come in the first watch? or in the second watch? or the third watch? I do not know. He came in the fourth, and gave deliverance to His disciples. Jesus in the last extremity.

JUNE SEVENTEENTH.

GOOD NEWS.

"Joseph is yet alive."—GEN. XLV. 26.

LIKE those that came from the Egyptian palace, the King's wagons bring us *good news*. Jacob had not heard from his boy for a great many years. He never thought of him but with a heart-ache. There was in Jacob's heart a room where lay the corpse of his unburied Joseph, and when the wagons came, the king's wagons, and told him that Joseph was yet alive, he faints dead away. Good news for Jacob! good news for us! The King's wagons come down and tell us that our Joseph-Jesus is yet alive; that he has forgiven us because we threw him into the pit of suffering and the dungeon of shame. He has risen from thence to stand in a Palace. The Bethlehem shepherds were awakened at midnight by the rattling of the wagons that brought the tidings. Our Joseph-Jesus, sends us a message of pardon, of life, of heaven; corn for our hunger, raiment for our nakedness. Joseph-Jesus is yet alive!

I go to hunt up Jesus. I go to the village of Bethany and say, "Where does Mary live?" They say, "Yonder, Mary lives." I go in. I see where she sat in the sitting-room. I

go out where Martha worked in the kitchen, but I find no Jesus. I go into Pilate's court-room, and I find the judges and the police and the prisoner's box, but no Jesus. I go into the Arimathean cemetery, but the door is gone, and the shroud is gone, and Jesus is gone. By faith I look up to the king's palace; and behold! I have found him! Joseph-Jesus is still alive! Glorious religion, a religion made not out of death's-head and cross-bones and undertaker's screw-driver, but one abounding with life and sympathy and gladness. Joseph is yet alive.

"I know that my Redeemer lives,
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead.
He lives, my ever-living Head!

"He lives to grant me daily breath.
He lives, and I shall conquer death.
He lives, my mansion to prepare,
He lives, to bring me safely there.

"He lives, all glory to His name,
He lives, my Jesus still the same;
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives!"

JUNE EIGHTEENTH.

GRACE AND SALT.

"Salt is good."—LUKE xiv. 34.

I REMARK, that grace is *like salt in abundance*. God has strewn salt in vast profusion all over the continents. Russia seems built on a salt-cellar. There is one region of that country that turns out ninety thousand tons in a year. England and Russia and Italy have inexhaustible resources in this respect. Norway and Sweden, white with snow above, white

with salt beneath. Austria, yielding nine hundred thousand tons annually. Nearly all the nations rich in it—rock-salt, spring-salt, sea-salt. Christ, the Creator of the world, when He uttered our text, knew it would become more and more significant as the shafts were sunk, and the springs were bored, and the pumps were worked, and the crystals were gathered. So the grace of God is abundant. It is for all lands, for all ages, for all conditions. It seems to undergird everything. Pardon for the worst sin, comfort for the sharpest suffering, brightest light for the thickest darkness. Around about the salt lakes of Saratoy there are ten thousand men toiling day and night, and yet they never exhaust the roots of the mountains, the saline water supplies the aqueduct. This water is brought to the surface, and is exposed in tanks to the sun for evaporation, or it is put in boilers mightily heated, and the water evaporates, and the salt gathers at the bottom of the tank—the work is completed, and the fortune is made. So with the grace of God. It is to be profoundly sought after. With all the concentrated energies of body, mind, and soul we must dig for it. No man stumbles accidentally on it. We need to go down to the very lowest strata of earnestness and faith to find it. Superficial exploration will not turn it up. We must strive, and implore, and dig until we strike the spring foaming with living waters. Then the work of evaporation begins; and as when the saline waters are exposed to the sun, the vapors float away, leaving nothing but the pure white salt at the bottom of the tank, so, when the Christian's soul is exposed to the Sun of Righteousness, the vapors of pride and selfishness and worldliness float off, and there is chiefly left beneath pure white holiness of heart. Then, as in the case of the salt, the furnace is added. Blazing troubles, stirred by smutted stokers of darkness, quicken the evaporation of worldliness, and the crystallization of grace.

JUNE NINETEENTH.

FURIOUS DRIVING.

"The driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously."
—2 KINGS ix. 20.

BY the flash of that one sentence we discover Jehu's character. He came with such speed, not merely because he had an errand to do, but because he was urged on by a headlong disposition, which had won him the name of a reckless driver, even among the watchmen. The chariot plunges until you almost expect the wheels to crash under it, or some of the princely party to be thrown out, or the horses to become utterly unmanageable. But he always goes so; and he becomes a type of that class of persons to be found in all communities, who in worldly and in religious affairs may be styled *reckless drivers*.

To this class belong all those who conduct their worldly affairs in a headlong way, without any regard to prudence or righteousness. You have no right to shut the door of your office or store against the principles of our holy religion. That minister of Christ does not do his whole duty who does not plainly and unmistakably bring the Gospel face to face with every style of business transaction. Many a man sits in his pew on Sunday night, and sings "Rock of Ages," and rolls up his eyes very piously, who, on coming out at the close of the service, shuts the pew-door, and says, "Good-by, Religion; I will be back next Sunday!" A religion that does not work all the week, as well as on Sunday, is no religion at all.

When I see in the community men with large incomes but larger outgoes, rushing into wildest undertakings, their pockets filled with circulars about gold in Canada, and lead in Missouri, and fortunes everywhere, launching out in expenditures to be met by the thousands they *expect* to make, with derision dashing across the path of sober men depending upon their industry and honor for success, I say, "*Here he comes, the son of Nimshi, driving furiously!*"

When I see a young man, not content gradually to come to a competency, careless as to how often he goes upon credit, spending in one night's carousal a month's salary, taking the few hundred dollars given him for starting, in the purchase of a regal wardrobe, ashamed to work, anxious only for display, regardless of his father's counsel, and the example of the thousands who, in a short while, have wrecked body, and mind, and soul in scheming or dissipation, I say, "*Here he comes, the son of Nimshi, driving furiously.*"

JUNE TWENTIETH.

CHRIST THE LIFE-BOAT.

"The son of man is come to save that which was lost."—MATT. xviii. 11.

DID you ever hear of Lionel Luken? He was the inventor of the insubmergible life-boat. All honor is due his memory by seafaring men, as well as by landsmen. How many lives he saved by his invention. In after days that invention was improved, and one day there was a perfect life-boat, the *Northumberland*, ready at Ramsgate. The life-boat being ready, to test it the crew came out and leaped on the gunwale on one side to see if the boat would upset; it was impossible to upset it. Then, amid the huzzas of excited thousands, that

boat was launched, and it has gone and come, picking up a great many of the shipwrecked. But I have to tell you to-night of a grander launching, and from the dry-docks of heaven. Word came up that a world was beating on the rocks. In the presence of the potentates of heaven the life-boat of the world's redemption was launched. It shoved off the golden sands amid angelic hosanna. The surges of darkness beat against its bow, but it sailed on, and it comes in sight to-night. It comes for you, it comes for me. Soul! soul! get into it. Make one leap for heaven. This is your last chance for life. Let that boat go past, and there remains nothing but fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary.

I am expecting that there will be whole families who will get into that life-boat. In 1833 the *Isabella* came ashore off Hastings, England. The air was filled with sounds—the hoarse sea-trumpet, the crash of the axes, and the bellowing of the tornado. A boat from the shore came under the stern of the disabled vessel. There were women and children on board that vessel. Some of the sailors jumped into the small boat and said: “Now give us the children.” A father who stood on deck took his first-born and threw him to the boat. The sailors caught him safely, and the next, and the next, to the last. Still the sea rocking, the storm howling. “Now,” said “the sailors, the mother;” and she leaped, and was saved. The boat went to the shore; but before it got to the shore the landsmen were so impatient to help the suffering people that they waded clear down into the surf, with blankets and garments and promises of help and succor. I have hope that a great many families are going to be saved, and saved all together. Give us that child for Christ, that other child, that other. Give us the mother, give us the father, the whole family. They must all come in.

*JUNE TWENTY-FIRST.***PREPARE TO DIE.**

“Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die.”—Is. xxxviii. 1.

HAVE regard to the suggestion of the text, because your life may unexpectedly terminate. We are trading on a borrowed capital of years that may in a moment be called in. There is no map of the great future into which we are travelling. No explorer has been ahead, and come back to tell how it is. Each one feels his way along the path, not knowing what moment a devouring lion may come from the jungle. There are so many ways of getting out of life; by fall, by slip, by assassination, malaria, by over-exertion, by insidious disease, by misplaced railroad switch, by rotten bridge, by fractious horse, by falling wall. No man goes when he expected, nor as he expected. Suddenly the pulses stop drumming the life-march. Suddenly the curtain falls and the lights are put out. We change worlds quicker than I can drop this handkerchief from one hand into the other. At one tick of the watch we are in time; the next we are in eternity. What if we die before we are ready! What if, with all our sins unforgiven, we rush into the presence of the omnipotent God, before whom sin is utterly loathsome! Can you imagine the chill of that moment, or the horror of that undoing? What! twenty, thirty, forty years to repent in, and yet not have attended to it. Beyond the dead-line there is no rectification of blunders. In the grave there is no place to pray. Those who founder here founder forever. I do not want you

to fear death. I want you to be prepared for it. The rider on the pale horse spurs on his steed, and in a moment he may be pounding at the gate for admittance. What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. Do it now.

“Hasten sinner to be blessed
Stay not for the morrow’s sun :
Lest perdition thee arrest,
Ere the morrow is begun.”

JUNE TWENTY-SECOND.

ALL FOR US.

“Christ suffered for us.”—1 PETER ii. 21.

AN artist in his dreams saw such a splendid dream of the transfiguration of Christ that he awoke and seized his pencil, and said, “Let me paint this and die.” Oh, I have seen the glories of Christ! I have beheld something of the beauty of that great sacrifice on Calvary, and I have sometimes felt I would be willing to give anything if I might just sketch before you the wonders of that sacrifice. I would like to do it while I live, and I would like to do it when I die. “Let me paint this and die?” He comes along, weary and worn, His face wet with tears, His brow crimson with blood, and He lies down on Calvary for you. No, I mistake. Nothing was so comfortable as that. A stone on Calvary would have made a soft pillow for the dying head of Christ. Nothing so comfortable as that. He does not lie down to die; He stands up to die; His spiked hands outspread as if to embrace a world. Oh, what a hard end for these feet that have travelled all over Judea on ministries of mercy! What a hard end for those hands that have wiped away tears and bound up

broken hearts! Very hard, oh dying Lamb of God! and yet there are those here this morning who do not love Thee. They say, "What is that all to me? What if He does weep, and groan, and die, I don't want Him." Lord Jesus Christ, they will not help Thee down from the cross! The soldiers will come, and they will tear Thee down from the cross, and put their arms around Thee and lower Thee into the tomb; but *they* will not help Thee. They see nothing to move them. Oh, dying Christ! turn on them Thine eyes of affection now, and see if they will not change their minds!

"Believers now behold the man!
The man of grief condemned for you,
The Lamb of God for sinners slain,
Weeping to Cavalry pursue."

JUNE TWENTY-THIRD.

CHRIST IS OUR ALL IN REDEMPTION.

"Christ is all in all."—COL. iii. 11.

CHRI**S**T is everything in the great *plan of Redemption*. We are slaves; Christ gives deliverance to the captive. We are thirsty; Christ is the river of salvation to slake our thirst. We are hungry; Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." We are condemned to die; Christ says, "Save that man from going down to the pit; I am the ransom." We are tossed on a sea of troubles; Jesus comes over it, saying, "It is I, be not afraid." We are in darkness; Jesus says, "I am the bright and the morning-star." We are sick; Jesus is the balm of Gilead. We are dead; hear the shrouds rend and the grave hillocks heave as he cries, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he

live." We want justification ; " Being justified by faith, we have peace with God *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" We want to exercise faith ; " Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I want to get from under condemnation ; " There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." The cross—He carried it. The flames of hell—He suffered them. The shame—He endured it. The crown—He won it. Heights of heaven sing it, and worlds of light to worlds of light all round the heavens cry, " Glory, glory ! "

" Christ is my Hope, my Strength and Guide ;
 For me He bled, and groaned and died :
 He is my Sun to give me light,
 He is my soul's supreme delight.

" Christ is the source of all my bliss,
 My wisdom and my righteousness,
 My Saviour, Brother, and my friend ;
 On Him alone I now depend."

JUNE TWENTY-FOURTH.

PLENTY OF WATER IN HEAVEN.

" The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water."—REV. vii 17.

I AM glad to know that while earthly cities may sometimes run short of a supply of water, the New Jerusalem will never lack plenty of water. Have you ever thought minutely of that promise of the Bible that " there will be *living fountains* in heaven ? " Not such as we see in our city parks, sprinkling only a faint baptism on the air, but commensurate with the great city of heaven. On every street, before every mansion, around the

temple of God and the Lamb, *living fountains of water*. Flowing through that great city, with trees of life in immortal leafage, on either bank, there will be a river. London has a river running through it, but that is the filthy Thames. Paris has a river running through it, but that is the unclean Seine. Venice has water running through it, but that is disturbed by the filthy gondoliers. Babylon of old had a river running through it, yet that was the beslimed Euphrates. But, blessed be God, no scum or filth shall pour into the river that flows through the Eternal City. God hath made every drop of that water bright, and clear, and beautiful. The righteous, robed in white and garlanded, sit on its banks, and watch its tides, and hear the roll of its waters forever and forever. No unhealthy mist hovers over that river; no malaria rises from its surface; no blaspheming crew put their oars into that water. They who "shine as the stars forever" shall look down into the glassy wave, and have their faces reflected. The thrones and temples on either bank of that river will bridge it with their shadows. In it the trees of life will dip their branches. Breezes from off the hills of Amaranth will ripple the waves. I suppose you have seen sheep and lambs go down to the river to drink. Hark! I hear the voice of the sheep and lambs of heaven now coming down from the hills, coming down to the river of heaven to drink, led on by one snow-white Lamb, at whose bleat all the flocks follow. Hear the bleating-of that one white Lamb! And as the angel of God, standing on one of the banks of the river, under the tree of life, looks down, and sees that one white Lamb leading all the great flock of the redeemed, he takes his harp from the willows by the water-courses and strikes this beautiful strain, softer than leaves' rustle or humming-bird's trill: "*The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water.*"

*JUNE TWENTY-FIFTH.***CHRIST TO THE RESCUE.**

“Lo, I come.”—HEB. x. 9.

WHEN the world broke loose, the only hand swung out to catch it was that of Jesus. At Long Branch, on the beach, on a summer's day, hundreds of people are sporting; but suddenly some one cries, “Look there! A man is drowning.” Out of hundreds, perhaps there is only one strong swimmer. He plunges in, and brings the man safely ashore. On the beach of heaven, one day, there sat myriads of immortals, merry with a great gladness; but the voice of one of the immortals cried out, “See there! A world is drowning! To the rescue! Where are the wreckers? Launch the life boats! Who will go?” Angels did not dare venture. Heaven itself stands helpless before the scene. It knows how to wave a palm or shout in a coronation, but not how to take out of the floods a drowning world. Jesus bounds from the throne, and throws His robe on one side, His crown on the other. Swift as a roe on the mountains, He comes down over the hills. The shining ones stand back as He says, “Lo! I come.” Amid the wrathful surges He beats His way out to the dying world; and while, out in the deep waters, with bloody agony He wrestled with it, and it seemed for a little while uncertain whether it would take Him down or He would lift it up, those on the beach trembled, and in a hour grew ages older; and when at last, in His great strength, He lifted it in His right hand and brought it back, there went up a hosanna

from all the cloud of witnesses. He began the work, and He shall complete it. Ring all the bells of earth and heaven to-day in honor of Christ.

JUNE TWENTY-SIXTH.

JESUS OUR ALL IN TIME OF TROUBLE.

“Christ is all in all.”—COL. iii. 11.

CHRI^ST is everything to the Christian *in time of trouble*. Who has escaped trouble? We must all stoop down and drink out of the bitter lake. The moss has no time to grow on the buckets that come up out of the heart's well, dripping with tears. Great trials are upon our track as certain as hound pack on the scent of deer. From our hearts in every direction there are a thousand chords reaching out binding us to loved ones, and ever and anon some of these tendrils snap. The winds that cross this sea of life are not all abaft. The clouds that cross our sky are not feathery and afar, straying like flocks of sheep on heavenly pastures; but wrathful and sombre, and gleaming with terror, they wrap the mountains in fire, and come down baying with their thunders through every gorge. The richest fruits of blessing have a prickly shell. Life here is not lying at anchor; it is weathering a gale. It is not sleeping in a soldier's tent with our arms stacked; it is a bayonet-charge. We stumble over grave-stones, and we drive on with our wheel deep in the old rut of graves. Trouble has wrinkled your brow, and it has frosted your head. Falling in this battle of life, is there no angel of mercy to bind our wounds? Hath God made this world with so many things to hurt and none to heal? For this snake-bite of sorrow, is there no herb growing by all the brooks to heal the

the poison? Blessed be God that in the Gospel we find the antidote! Christ has bottled an ocean of tears. How many thorns he hath plucked out of human agony! Oh! He knows too well what it is to carry a cross, not to help us carry ours. He knows too well what it is to climb the mountain, not to help us up the steep.

“Christ is my king to rule and bless
And all my trouble to redress;
He’s my salvation and my all,
Whate’er on earth shall me befall.”

JUNE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

FADING.

“We all do fade as a leaf. . . Is. lxiv. 6.”

LIKE the leaf we fade, *to make room for others.* Next year’s forests will be as grandly foliated as this. There are other generations of oak leaves to take the place of those which this autumn perish. Next May the cradle of the wind will rock the young buds. The woods will be all a-hum with the chorus of leafy voices. If the tree in front of your house, like Elijah, takes a chariot of fire, its mantle will fall upon Elisha. If, in the blast of these autumnal batteries, so many ranks fall, there are reserved forces to take their place to defend the fortress of the hills. The beaters of gold leaf will have more gold leaf to beat. The crown that drops to-day from the head of the oak will be picked up and handed down for other kings to wear. Let the blasts come. They only make room for other life.

So when we go, others take our spheres. We do not grudge

the future generations their places. We shall have had our good time. Let them come on and have their good time. There is no sighing among these leaves at my feet because other leaves are to follow them. After a lifetime of preaching, doctoring, selling, sewing, and digging, let us cheerfully give way for those who come on to do the preaching, doctoring, selling, sewing, and digging. God grant that their life may be brighter than ours has been! As we get older, do not let us be affronted if young men and women crowd us a little. We shall have had our day, and we must let them have theirs. When our voices get cracked, let us not snarl at those who can warble. When our knees are stiffened, let us have patience with those who go fleet as the deer. Because our leaf is fading, do not let us despise the unfrosted. Autumn must not envy the Spring. Old men must be patient with boys. Dr. Guthrie, the other day, stood up in Scotland and said, "You need not think I am old because my hair is white; I never was so young as I am now." I look back to my childhood days, and remember when, in winter nights, in the sitting-room, the children played, the blithest and the gayest of all the company were father and mother. Although reaching fourscore years of age, they never got old.

JUNE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

PARDON FOR THE GREATEST SINNERS.

"Jesus came to save sinners."—TIM. i. 15. "Wash ye, make you clean."—IS. i. 16.

WHEN the last war had passed, the Government of the United States made proclamation of pardon to the common soldiery in the Confederate army, but not to the chief soldiers. The Gospel of Christ does not act in that way.

It says pardon for all, but especially for the chief of sinners. I do not now think of a single passage that says a small sinner may be saved, but I do think of passages that say a great sinner may be saved. If there be sins only faintly hued, just a little tinged, so faintly colored that you can hardly see them, there is no special pardon promised in the Bible for those sins ; but if they be glaring, red like crimson, then they shall they be as snow. Now, my brother, I do not state this to put a premium upon iniquity. I merely say this to encourage that man in this house who feels he is so far gone from God that there is no mercy for him. I want to tell him there is a good chance. Why, Paul was a murderer ; he assisted at the execution of Stephen ; and yet Paul was saved. The dying thief did everything bad. The dying thief was saved. Richard Baxter swore dreadfully ; but the grace of God met him, and Richard Baxter was saved. It is a vast laver. Go and tell everybody to come and wash in it. Let them come up from the penitentiaries and wash away their crimes. Let them come up from the alms-houses and wash away their poverty. Let them come up from their graves and wash away their death. If there be any one so worn out in sin that he cannot get up to the laver, you will take hold of his head and put your arms around him, and I will take hold of his feet, and we will plunge him in this glorious Bethesda, the vast laver of God's mercy and salvation.

“O'er sins unbounded as the sand
And like the mountain's for their size
The seas of sovereign grace expand ;
The seas of sovereign grace arise.”

*JUNE TWENTY-NINTH.***SWINGING FALSE LANTERNS.**

“There shall be false teachers among you.”—2 Peter ii. 1. “Take heed that no man deceive you.”—Matt. xxvi. 4.

IT is not many years ago indeed that vagabonds used to wander up and down the beach, getting vessels ashore in the night, throwing up false lights in their presence and deceiving them, that they might despoil and ransack them. All kinds of infernal arts were used to accomplish this. And one night, on the Cornish coast, when the sea was coming in fearfully, some villains took a lantern and tied it to a horse, and led the horse up and down the beach, the lantern swaying to the motion of the horse, and a sea captain in the offing saw it, and made up his mind that he was not anywhere near the shore, for he said, “There is a vessel—that must be a vessel, for it has a movable light,” and he had no apprehension until he heard the rocks grating on the ship’s bottom, and it went to pieces, and the villains on shore gathered up the packages and the treasures that were washed to the land. And I have to tell you that there are a multitude of souls ruined by false lights on the beach. In the dark night of man’s danger, Universalism goes up and down the shore, shaking its lantern, and men look off and take that flickering and expiring wick as the signal of safety, and the cry is, “Heave the main topsail to the mast ! All is well !” when sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. So there are all kinds of lanterns swung on the beach—philosophical lanterns, educational lan-

terns, humanitarian lanterns. Men look at them, and are deceived, when there is nothing but God's eternal light-house of the Gospel that can keep them from becoming castaways. Once, on Wolf Craig Light-house, they tried to build a copper figure of a wolf with its mouth open, so that the storms beating into it, the wolf would howl forth the danger to mariners that might be coming anywhere near the coast. Of course it was a failure. And so all new inventions for the saving of man's soul are unavailing. What the human race wants is a light bursting forth from the cross standing on the great head-lands—the light of pardon, the light of comfort, the light of heaven. You might better go and destroy all the great light-houses on the dangerous coasts—the Barnegat light-house, the Fastnet Rock light-house, the Sherryvore light-house, the Longship's light-house, the Holly-head light-house—than to put out God's great ocean lamp—the Gospel. Woe to those who swing false lanterns on the beach till men crash in and perish.

JUNE THIRTIETH.

ALL FOR THE BEST.

“ All things work together for good to them that love the Lord.”—ROM. viii. 28.

THE world of finance seems to have no God in it. You cannot tell where men will land. The affluent fall ; the poor rise. The ingenious fail ; the ignorant succeed. An enterprise opening grandly shuts in bankruptcy, while out of peat dug up from some New England marsh the millioraire builds his fortune. The poor man thinks it is *chance* that keeps him down. The rich man thinks it is *chance* which hoists him, and they are both wrong. It is so hard to realize

that God rules the money-market, and has a hook in the nose of the stock-gambler, and that all the commercial revolutions of the world shall result in the very best for God's dear children. My brethren, do not kick against the divine allotments. God knows just how much money it is best for you to have. You never lose unless it is best for you to lose. You never gain unless it is best for you to gain. You go up when it is best for you to go up, and go down when it is best for you to go down. Prove it, you say. I will. Romans, viii. 28: "All things work together for good to them that love God."

You go into a factory, and you see twenty or thirty wheels, and they are going in different directions. This band is rolling off this way, and another band another way; one down and another up. You say, "What confusion in a factory." Oh, no! All these different bands are only different parts of the machinery. So I go into your life, and see strange things. Here is one providence pulling you one way, and another in another way. But they are different parts of one machinery by which He will advance your present and everlasting well-being. Now you know that a second mortgage, and a third or fourth mortgage, is often worth nothing. It is the first mortgage that is a good investment. I have to tell you that every Christian man has a first mortgage on every trial and on every disaster, and it must make a payment of eternal advantage to his soul. How many worriments it would take out of your heart if you believed that fully. You buy goods, and hope the price will go up, but you are in a fret and fever for fear the price will go down. Why do you not buy the goods, using your best discretion in the matter, and then say, "O Lord, I have done the best I could; I commit this whole transaction into thy hands." That is what religion is good for, or it is good for nothing.

JULY FIRST.

MORNING IS COMING.

“Then shall light break forth as the morning.”—Is. lviii. 8.

IT is early yet in the history of everything good. Civilization and Christianity are just getting out of the cradle. The light of martyr-stakes, flashing all up and down the sky, is but the flaming of the morning: but when the evening of the world shall come, glory to God's conquering truth, it shall be light. War's sword clanging back in the scabbard; intemperance buried under ten thousand broken decanters; the world's impurity turning its brow heavenward for the benediction, “Blessed are the pure in heart;” the last vestige of selfishness submerged in heaven-descending charities; all China worshipping Dr. Abeel's Saviour; all India believing in Henry Martyn's Bible; aboriginal superstition acknowledging David Brainard's piety; human bondage delivered through Thomas Clarkson's Christianity; vagrancy coming back from its pollution at the call of Elizabeth Fry's Redeemer; the mountains coming down; the valleys going up; “holiness” inscribed on horse's bell, and silk-worm's thread, and brown-thrasher's wing, and shell's tinge, and manufacturer's shuttle, and chemist's laboratory, and king's sceptre, and nation's Magna Charta. Not a hospital, for there are no wounds; not an asylum, for there are no orphans; not a prison, for there are no criminals; not an alms-house, for there are no paupers; not a tear, for there are no sorrows. The long dirge of earth's lamentations has ended in the triumphal march of redeemed

empires, the forests harping it on vine-strung branches, the waters chanting it among the gorges, the thunders drumming it among the hills, the ocean giving it forth with its organs, trade-winds touching the keys, and Euroclydon's foot on the pedal. I want to see John Howard when the last prisoner is reformed ; I want to see Florence Nightingale when the last sabre-wound has stopped hurting ; I want to see William Penn when the last Indian has been civilized ; I want to see John Huss when the last flame of persecution has been extinguished ; I want to see John Bunyan after the last pilgrim has come to the gate of the celestial city ; above all, I want to see Jesus after the last saint has his throne, and begun to sing Hallelujah !

JULY SECOND.

A COMFORTING TEXT.

"Thou doest good."—Ps. cxix. 68.

YOU have noticed that there are a good many new ways of comforting. Your father dies. Your neighbor comes in, and he says, "It is only a natural law that your father should die. The machinery is merely worn out ;" and before he leaves you he makes some other excellent remarks about the coagulation of blood, and the difference between respiratory and nitrogenized food. Your child dies, and your philosophic neighbor comes, and for your soothing tells you that it was impossible the child should live with such a state of mucous membrane ! Out with your chemistry and physiology when I have trouble, and give me a plain New Testament ! I would rather have an illiterate man from the backwoods who knows Christ, talk with me, when I am in trouble, than the

profoundest worldling who does not know Him. The gospel, without telling you anything about mucous membrane or gastric juice or hydrochloric acid, comes and says, "All things together work for good to those who love God," and that if your child is gone, it is only because Jesus has folded it in His arms, and that the Judgment-day will explain things that are now inexplicable. Oh! let us dig out this Gospel-well of comfort. Take away the stoicism and fatality with which you have been trying to fill it.

"It shall be well, let sinner know,
With those who love the Lord,
His saints have always found it so,
When resting on His word.

"Peace then ye chastened sons of God,
Why let your sorrows swell!
Wisdom directs your Father's rod,
His word says, It is well."

JULY THIRD.

JESUS LIVES.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth."—Job xix. 25.

THE thunders in the dome of heaven never tolled so dolefully as when they rang out to the world the news, "King Jesus is dead!" When a king dies, the whole land is put in black: they shroud the pillars; they put the people in procession; they march to a doleful drum-beat. What shall we do now that our King is dead? Put blackness on the gates of the morning. Let the cathedral organs wail; let the winds sob; let all the generations of men fall in line, and beat a funeral-march of woe! woe! woe! as we go to the grave of our dead King.

In Philadelphia they have a habit, after the coffin is deposited in the grave, of the friends going formally up and standing at the brink of the grave and looking in. So I take you all to look into the grave of our dead King. The lines of care are gone out of his face. The wounds have stopped bleeding. Just lift up that lacerated hand. Lift it up, and then lay it down softly over that awful gash in the left side. He is dead! He is dead!

Eight hundred years after Edward I. was buried, they brought up his body, and they found that he still lay with a crown on his head. More than eighteen hundred years have passed, and I look into the grave of my dead King, and I see not only a crown, but "on his head are many crowns." And, what is more, he rising. Yea, he has risen! Ye who came to the grave weeping, go away rejoicing. Let your dirges now change to anthems. He lives! Take off the blackness from the gates of the morning. He lives! Let earth and heaven keep jubilee. He lives! *I know that my Redeemer lives.*

JULY FOURTH.

PRAISE HIM.

"I will praise Thee, O Lord."—Ps. ix. 1.

WE owe to Christ the best of all our affections. If there is anybody on earth you love better than Jesus, you wrong Him. Who has ever been so loving and pure and generous? Which one of your friends offered to pay all your debts, and carry all your burdens, and suffer all your pains? Which one of them offered to go into the grave to make you richer? Tell me who he is, and where he lives, that I may go

and worship him also. No, no, you know there has never been but one—Jesus—and that if he got his dues, we would bring to Him all the gems of the mountains, and all the pearls of the sea, and all the flowers of the field, and all the fruits of the tropics, and all the crowns of dominion, and all the boxes of alabaster. If you have any brilliancy of wit, bring it ; any clearness of judgment, any largeness of heart, any attractiveness of position, bring them. Away with the cheap bottles of stale perfume, when you may fill the banqueting-hall of Christ with exquisite aroma ! Paul had made great speeches before, but he made his best speech for Christ. John had warmth of affection in other directions, but he had his greatest warmth of affection for Christ. Robert M'Cheyne was weary before, but he worked himself to death for Christ. Jesus deserves the best word we ever uttered, the gladdest song we ever sang, the lovingest letter we ever wrote, the healthiest day we ever lived, the strongest heart-throb we ever felt.

“Glory to God on high ;
 Let Heaven and earth reply ;
 Praise ye His name !
 His love and grace adore.
 Who all our sorrows bore ;
 And sing forevermore,
 Worthy the Lamb.”

JULY FIFTH.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS COME SUDDENLY.

“The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.”—Ex. xiv. 27.

THE Red Sea was divided. The Egyptians tried to cross it. There could be no danger. The Israelites had just gone through ; where they had gone, why not the Egyptians ?

Oh! it was such a beautiful walking-place! A pavement of tinged shells and pearls, and on either side two great walls of water—solid. There can be no danger. Forward, great host of the Egyptians! Clap the cymbals, and blow the trumpets of victory! After them! We will catch them yet, and they shall be destroyed. But the walls begin to tremble. They rock! They fall! The rushing waters! The shriek of drowning men! The swimming of the war-horses in vain, for the shore! The strewing of the great host on the bottom of the sea, or pitched by the angry wave on the beach—a battered, bruised, and loathsome wreck! Suddenly destruction came. One-half hour before they could not have believed it. Destroyed; and without remedy.

I am just setting forth a fact, which you have noticed as well as I. Ananias comes to the apostle. The apostle says: "Did you sell the land for so much?" He says, "Yes." It was a lie. Dead! as quick as that! Sapphira, his wife, comes in. "Did you sell the land for so much?" "Yes." It was a lie; and quick as that she was dead! God's judgments are upon those who despise Him and defy Him. They come suddenly.

The destroying angel went through Egypt. Do you suppose that any of the people knew that he was coming? Did they hear the flap of his great wing? No! No! Suddenly, unexpectedly, he came.

JULY SIXTH.

TRUST NOT IN RICHES.

"Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God."—1 TIM. vi. 17.

MY text is appropriate for all *those whose fortunes have perished*. If a man lose his property at thirty or forty

years of age, it is only a sharp discipline, generally, by which later he comes to larger success. It is all folly for a man to sit down in mid-life discouraged. The marshals of Napoleon came to their commander, and said, "We have lost the battle, and we are being cut to pieces." Napoleon took his watch from his pocket, and said, "It is only two o'clock in the afternoon. You have lost the battle, but we have time enough to win another. Charge upon the foe!" Though the meridian of life has passed with you, and you have been routed in many a conflict, give not up in discouragement. There are victories yet for you to gain. But sometimes monetary disaster comes to a man when there is something in his age, or something in his health, or something in his surroundings, which make him know well that he will never get up again. In 1857 it was estimated that for many years previous to that time, annually, there had been thirty thousand failures in the United States. Many of those persons never recovered from the misfortune. The leaves of worldly prosperity all scattered—the day-book, and the ledger, and the money-safe, and the package of broken securities crying out, "The summer is ended." But let me give a word of comfort in passing. The sheriff may sell you out of many things, but there are some things of which he cannot sell you out. He cannot sell out your health. He cannot sell out your family. He cannot sell out your Bible. He cannot sell out your God. He cannot sell out your heaven! You have left more than you have lost.

*JULY SEVENTH.***A WIDE DOOR.**

“I am the door of the sheep.”—*JOHN x. 7.*

THE door of the ancient ark was in the side. So now it is through the side of Christ—the pierced side, the wide-open side, the heart side—that we enter. Aha? the Roman soldier, thrusting his spear into the Saviour’s side, expected only to let the blood out, but he opened the way to let all the world in. Oh, what a broad Gospel to preach! If a man is about to give an entertainment, he issues one or two hundred invitations, carefully put up and directed to the particular persons whom he wishes to entertain. But God our Father makes a banquet, and goes out to the front door of heaven, and stretches out His hands over land and sea, and, with a voice that penetrates the Hindoo jungle, and the Greenland ice-castle, and Brazilian grove, and English factory, and American home, cries out, “Come! for all things are now ready!” It is a wide door! The old cross has been taken apart, and its two pieces are stood up for the door-posts, so far apart that all the world can come in. Kings scatter treasures on days of great rejoicing. So Christ, our King, comes and scatters the jewels of heaven. Rowland Hill said that he hoped to get into heaven through the crevices of the door. But he was not obliged thus to go in. After having preached the Gospel in Surrey Chapel, going up toward heaven, the gate-keeper cried, “Lift up your heads, ye ever-

lasting gates, and let this man come in !” The dying thief went in. Richard Baxter and Robert Newton went in. Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, may yet go through this wide door without crowding. Ho ! every one— all conditions, all ranks, all people !

JULY EIGHTH.

CHRISTIANS DIE IN LIGHT.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”—REV. xiv. 13.

I HAVE seen many Christians die. I never saw any of them die in darkness. What if the billows of death do rise above our girdle, who does not love to bathe ? What though our lights do go out in the blast, what do we want of them when all the gates of glory swing open before us, and from a myriad voices, a myriad harps, a myriad thrones, a myriad palaces, there dash upon us “Hosannah ! Hosannah !”

“Throw back the shutters and let the sun in,” said dying Scoville M’Collum, one of my Sabbath-school boys.

You can see Paul putting on robes and wings of ascension as he exclaims, “I have fought the good fight ; I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith.”

Hugh M’Kail went to one side of the scaffold of martyrdom and cried, “Farewell sun, moon, and stars ! farewell all earthly delights !” Then went to the other side of the scaffold and cried, “Welcome, God and Father ! Welcome, sweet Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the covenant ! Welcome, death ! Welcome, glory !”

A minister of Christ in Philadelphia, dying, said, in his last moments, “*I move into the light.*”

They did not go down doubting, and fearing, and shivering,

but their battle-cry ran through all the caverns of the sepulchre, and was echoed back from all the thrones of heaven, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" Sing, my soul, of joys to come.

JULY NINTH.

GOD'S WORD IS GOOD FOR MAN.

"The word of the Lord is good."—2 **KINGS** **xx.** 19.

PEOPLE say, "Religion is very good for women, it is very good for children, but not for men." But we have in the roll of Christ's host, Mozart and Handel in music; Canova and Angelo in sculpture; Raphaël and Reynolds in painting; Harvey and Boerhaave in medicine; Cowper and Scott in poetry; Grotius and Burke in statesmanship; Boyle and Leibnitz in philosophy; Thomas Chalmers and John Mason in theology. The most brilliant writings of a worldly nature are all aglow with Scriptural allusions. Through senatorial speech and through essayist's discourse, Sinai thunders, and Calvary pleads, and Siloam sparkles.

Samuel L. Southard was mighty in the court-room and in the Senate Chamber; but he reserved his strongest eloquence for that day when he stood before the literary societies at Princeton Commencement and plead for the grandeur of our Bible. Daniel Webster won not his chief garlands while he was consuming Hayne, nor when he opened the batteries of his eloquence on Bunker Hill, that rocking Sinai of the American Revolution; but on that day, when, in the famous Girard Will case, he showed his affection for the Christian religion, and eulogized the Bible. The eloquence and the learning that have been on the other side came over to our

side. Where is Gibbon's historical pen? Where is Robespierre's sword? Captured for God. "There is none like that; give it me!"

"What a mercy, what a treasure
We possess in God's own word
When we read with sacred pleasure
Of the love of Christ our Lord.

"That blest word reveals the Saviour
Whom our souls so deeply need,
Oh, what mercy, love, and favor,
That for sinners Christ should bleed."

JULY TENTH.

ONLY ONE WAY.

"There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—ACTS iv. 12.

SAYS some one, "Why could not God have made more ways to heaven than one?" I do not know but He could have made half a dozen. I know He made but one. You say, "Why not have a long line of boats running from here to heaven?" I cannot say, but I simply know that there is only one boat. You say, "Are there not trees as luxuriant, as that on Calvary?—more luxuriant, for that had neither buds nor blossoms; it was stripped and barked?" Yes, yes, there have been taller trees than that and more luxuriant; but the only path to heaven is under that one tree. Instead of quarrelling because there are not more ways, let us be thankful to God there is one—one name given unto men whereby we can be saved—one laver in which all the world may wash. So you see what a radiant Gospel this is I preach. I do not know how a man can stand stolidly and present it,

for it is such an exhilarant Gospel. It is not a mere whim or caprice ; it is life or death ; it is heaven or hell. You come before your child, and you have a present in your hand. You put your hands behind your back and say, "Which hand will you take? In one hand there is a treasure, in the other there is not." The child blindly chooses. But God our Father does not do that way with us. He spreads out both hands, and says, "Now this shall be very plain. In that hand are pardon, and peace, and life, and the treasures of heaven ; in *that* hand are punishment, and sorrow, and woe. Choose, choose for yourselves!" "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

"Thou art the way; to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek
Must seek Him, Lord, in Thee."

JULY ELEVENTH.

WE OWE GOD FOR OUR FAMILIES'.

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?"—LUKE xvi. 5.

WHERE did you get your families from? "God setteth the solitary in families." Have you a companion who is kind, gentle, sympathetic, helpful—sympathetic with all your joys and sorrows? Was it good luck or the merry sleigh-ride that gave her to you? No. Proverbs xix. 14: "A good wife is from the Lord." Have you children round about your table? Have they eyesight, when so many have been born blind? Have they hearing, when so many have been born deaf? Can they talk and sing, when so many have been born

dumb? Have they the use of leg and foot, when so many have been born cripples? Who gave you those glad, healthy, romping children? How much will you take for them? If I should offer you^e the Kohinoor diamond for one, Chatsworth Park for another, and ten millions of dollars for another, you would laugh me to scorn! You would not sell the eldest one, because it is the first-born; you would not sell the youngest one, because it is the youngest and the pet; nor this one, because it is the very image of its father; nor that one, because it looks like its mother; nor this one, because it has always been sick, and you especially love it; nor that one, because it is so healthful that you could not think of giving it up. I do not want you to give them up. I only want you, if gold, and diamonds, and all the earth cannot buy them, to think of the magnitude of the question. I ask you, standing in your family group, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Ah! He gave them to you.

JULY TWELFTH.

WAKING UP TOO LATE.

"So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea."—JONAH i. 15.

IF, instead of sleeping, Jonah had been on his knees confessing his sins from the time he went on board the craft, I think that God would have saved him from being thrown overboard. But He woke up too late. The tempest is in full blast, and the sea, in convulsion, is lashing itself, and nothing will stop it now but the overthrow of Jonah.

So men sometimes wake up too late. The last hour has come. The man has no more idea of dying than I have of drooping down this moment. The rigging is all white with

the foam of death. How chill the night is! "I must die," he says, "yet not ready. I must push out upon this awful sea. but have nothing with which to pay my fare. The white caps! the darkness! the hurricane! How long have I been sleeping? Whole days, and months, and years. I am quite awake now. I see everything, but it is too late." Invisible hands take him up. He struggles to get loose. In vain. They bring his soul to the verge. They let it down over the side. The winds howl. The sea opens its frothing jaws to swallow. The lightnings hold their torches at the soul's burial. The thunders toll their bells as he drops. Eternal death catches him. He has gone forever. And while the canvas cracked, and the yards rattled, and the ropes thumped, the sea took up the funeral dirge, playing, with open diapason of midnight storm, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

JULY THIRTEENTH.

THE BIBLE TRUE FROM THE BEGINNING.

"Thy word is true from the beginning."—Ps. cxix. 160.

I SHALL take *all* of the Bible or none. Men laugh at us as if we were the most gullible people in the world for believing in the genuineness of the Scriptures; but there can be no doubt that the Bible, as we have it, is the same—no more, no less—as God wrote it. As to the books of the New Testament, the great writers of the different centuries give complete catalogues of their contents. Polycarp, Ignatius, Clemens Romanus, in the first century, give a catalogue of

the New Testament books ; Tertullian, Justin Martyr, in the second century ; Cyprian and Origen in the third century ; Augustine, Jerome, and Eusebius, in the fourth century. Their catalogues of the different books of the New Testament silence the suggestion that any new books could have been stealthily put in. How many books are on this stand ? You say three—two Bibles and a hymn-book. There are twenty men here taking a list of these books. Would it be possible for any man to come on to this platform and lay a new book on this stand and you not know it ? Neither was it possible for anybody to put an additional book into this New Testament when all the Christian world was watching.

As to the books of the Old Testament, Christ sanctioned them by commending them to the Jews. If any part of the Old Testament had been uninspired, Christ would have said, "Search the Scriptures, all except that book of Jonah," or "Search the Scriptures, excepting the book of Esther." When Christ commends the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures to the people, He affirms its genuineness. There never could have been any interpolations in the Bible, for the Jews were constantly watching, and there were men whose lifetime business it was to attend to the keeping of the Scriptures unadulterated.

JULY FOURTEENTH.

WEIGHING A FORMALIST.

"Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know mine integrity."—Job xxxi. 6.

HERE comes a formalist, who gets on the scales—a man whose religion is made up of genuflections, postures, and outward proprieties. Brother, what is that you have in

your pocket? He says it is a *Westminster Assembly Catechism*. What is it you have in that other pocket? He says that it is the *Heidelberg Catechism*. What is that you have under your arm? He says it is a church record. What are those books that I see scattered around on your side of the scales? He says they are *Calvin's Institutes*. My brother, we did not come here to weigh books, however good they may be. We want on this scale nothing but your soul. Your orthodoxy won't save you. Men have gone to hell with a Catechism in each pocket. The forms of religion are only the scaffolding for putting up the spiritual house. Alas! if you have mistaken the scaffolding for the temple itself. "But I cross myself ever so many times," you say. That will not save you. "But I give liberally to the poor." That will not save you. "But I read a chapter every night before I go to bed." That will not save you. "But I sit at the communion-table." That will not save you. "But my name is down on the Church book." That will not save you. "But I have been a professor of religion for thirty years." That will not save you. I place on your side of the balance all the edicts, all the religious counsels, all the communion-tables that were ever built, and on the opposite side of the balance I put this hundred-pound weight: "*Having the FORM of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such turn away.*"

JULY FIFTEENTH.

WATCH FOR MISFORTUNE AND YOU WILL HAVE IT

"Have faith and doubt not."—MATT. xxi. 21.

I PLANTED two rose-bushes in my garden; the one thrived beautifully, the other perished. I found the dead one on the shady side of the house. Our dispositions, like

our plants, need sunshine. Expectancy of repulse is the cause of many secular and religious failures. Fear of bankruptcy has upturned many a fine business, and sent the man dodging among the note-shavers. Fear of slander and abuse has often invited all the long-beaked vultures of scorn and backbiting. Many of the misfortunes of life, like hyenas, flee if you courageously meet them.

How poorly prepared for religious duty is a man who sits down under the gloom of expected misfortune! If he pray, he says, "I do not think I shall be answered!" If he give, he says, "I expect they will steal the money." Helen Chalmers told me that her father, Thomas Chalmers, in the darkest hour of the history of the Free Church of Scotland, and when the woes of the land seemed to weigh upon his heart, said to his children, "Come, let us go out and play ball or fly kite," and the only difficulty in the play was that the children could not keep up with their father. The M'Cheynes and the Summerfields of the Church who did the most good cultivated sunlight. Away with the horrors! they distill poison; they dig graves; and if they could climb so high, they would drown the rejoicings of heaven with sobs and wailing.

You will have nothing but misfortune in the future if you sedulously watch for it. How shall a man catch the right kind of fish if he arranges his line, and hook, and bait to catch lizards and water-serpents? Hunt for bats and hawks, and bats and hawks you will find. Hunt for robin-redbreasts, and you will find robin-redbreasts.

*JULY SIXTEENTH.***VICTORY THROUGH CHRIST.**

"Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 COR. xv. 57.

I BLOW the trumpet and call up all the sins of your past life. I wave them here from the past. I stamp them up from beneath—gather them into companies of hundreds ; into regiments of thousands ; into battalions of ten thousands. We have a host vaster than that of Xerxes. Let the largest of the hundred sins be captain over the company. Let the largest of the thousand iniquities be colonel over the regiment. Let the swarthiest transgression of your lifetime be general over all the host. Together let them wheel, and march, and fire. How the couriers of death dash up and down the line ! How the great batteries of woe belch forth the sulphurous smoke of hell, and boom with the cannonading of eternal destruction ! The host of thy sins innumerable, marching on to capture thy soul. One man against a million armed iniquities. Who can go forth and meet them ! We must fall back and fall down. Are there no allies to help ? In all the round of God's universe, is there no one to take our part ?

Arise, ye seas, and whelm the host ! Strike, ye lightnings, and consume the foe !

But the wave strikes the beach, and falls back crying "No help in me !" The lightning sheathes itself in the black scabbard of the midnight cloud, and says "No help in me !" But yonder I see a white horse in hot haste coming this way.

Make room for the courier. He swings his sword. Good news! good news! The Captain of Salvation comes to the rescue. Fall back, my sins! fall back, my sorrows! Allies of light and love, to arms! to arms! The host of our sins scatter in defeat, and our delivered soul shouts "Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

JULY SEVENTEENTH.

YOU CANNOT TRUST THE WORLD.

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."—Ps. cxviii. 8.

THE very world that now applauds will soon hiss. That world said of the great Webster, "What a statesman! What wonderful exposition of the constitution! A man fit for any position." That same world said, after a while, "Down with him! He is an office-seeker. He is a sot. He is a libertine. Away with him!" And there is no peace for the man until he lays down his broken heart in the grave at Marshfield. While Charles Matthews was performing in London, before immense audiences, one day a worn-out and gloomy man came into a doctor's shop, saying, "Doctor, what can you do for me?" The doctor examined his case and said, "My advice is that you go and see Charles Matthews." "Alas! alas!" said the man, "I myself am Charles Matthews." Jeffrey thought that if he could only be judge, that would be the making of him; got to be judge, and cursed the day in which he was born. Alexander wanted to submerge the world with his greatness; submerged it, and then drank himself to death because he could not stand the trouble. Burns thought he would give everything if he could win the favor of courts and princes; won it, and amid the shouts of a great entertainment,

when poets, and orators, and duchesses were adoring his genius, wished that he could creep back into the obscurity in which he dwelt on the day when he wrote of the

“Daisy, wee modest, crimson-tipped flower.”

Napoleon wanted to make all Europe tremble at his power ; made it tremble, then died, his entire military achievements dwindling down to a pair of military boots which he insisted on having on his feet when dying.

JULY EIGHTEENTH.

A BROTHER'S BLOOD.

“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”—Is. i. 18.

IF you saw an entire stranger maltreated, and his life oozing away on the pavement, you would feel indignant ; but if, coming along the street, you saw a company of villains beating out the life of your own brother, the sight of his blood would make you mad. You would bound into the affray. At the peril of losing your own life, you would rush in, saying, “You vagabonds ! this is my brother. I dare you to touch him again !” You would fight until you fell dead beside him. That is your brother, maltreated on the cross. They spit on Him, and slapped Him in the face. How do you feel about that ! What are your emotions as you hear the falling of the blood upon the leaves beneath—drip, drip, drip ? Do you not feel as though, with supernatural power, you could rush upon the mob ? Do you not feel as if, standing close, with your back against Him, and with one good sword in your hand, and a cry to God for help, you could hew down the desperadoes that assailed Him ? But you cannot help. The blood rushes from the victim, and there He hangs—your dead brother.

What is worse—shall I tell it?—*you* slew Him! I charge it, first upon myself, and then upon all ye who hear me to-night, the awful crime of fratricide. His blood is on our hands. Bring me a laver, quick! that I may wash it off. Show me the pool where I may be cleansed of the terrible stain. Here it is. I have found it. It is the fountain opened for all sin; and though sin were as scarlet, it shall be as snow.

JULY NINETEENTH.

CHRIST IN THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE.

“I will fill this house with glory.”—HAGGAI ii. 7.

AS religion comes in at the front door, mirth and laughter will not go out of the back door. It will not hobble the children's feet. John will laugh just as loud; and George will jump higher than he ever did before. It will steal from the little ones neither ball, nor bat, nor hoop, nor kite. It will establish a family altar. Angels will hover over it. Ladders of light will reach down to it. The glory of heaven will stream upon it. The books of remembrance will record it; and tides of everlasting blessedness will pour from it. Not such a family altar as you may have seen, where the prayer is long and a long chapter is read, with tedious explanation, and the exercise keeps on, until the children's knees are sore, and their backs ache, and their patience is lost, and for the seventh time they have counted all the rungs in the chair; but I mean a family altar such as may have been seen in your father's house. You may have wandered far off in the paths of sin and darkness; but you have never forgotten that family altar, where father and mother knelt, importuning God for your soul. **That is a memory that a man never gets over.** There will be a

hearty, joyful family altar in every domestic circle. You will not have to go far to find Hannah rearing her Samuel for the temple, or a grandmother Lois instructing her young Timothy in the knowledge of Christ, or a Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus gathered in fraternal and sisterly affection, or a table at which Jesus sits, as at that of Zaccheus, or a home in which Jesus dwells, as in the house of Simon the tanner. The religion of Jesus Christ, coming into the domestic circle, will overthrow all jealousies, all janglings ; and peace, and order, and holiness will take possession of the home.

JULY TWENTIETH.

THE GREAT PASS.

“ Is the young man Absalom safe ? ” 2 SAM. xviii. 32.

THE great pass in a young man's life when he needs divine help is *when he chooses his occupation or profession*. It is a serious moment when a young man gets through with his schooling, and perhaps leaves his father's house and says : “ Now, what shall I be ? ” Mechanism opens before him a score of trades, and professional life opens before him seven or eight callings. He must choose between these and must choose aright, for if he make a mistake here, he is gone. He may, making a wrong choice, saunter on through the world ; but his life will be useless and his every step a failure. I have a friend who started life in merchandise. Then he went into the medical profession. After a while he crossed over into specific surgery. Then he entered the ministry. Then he became a soldier in the army. After that he entered the ministry again, and is now a surgeon. Oh ! if he had only had God at the start to tell him what to do. There are tens of thousands of men who

get on the wrong track, and they never are able to correct the mistake. They are in the law when they ought to be doctoring the sick, or they are filling the pulpit when they ought to be ploughing corn. We want some fine occupation or some neat and elegant trade, and we start out with that determination, when, instead of having for the chief question how beautiful our apparel may be in that occupation, or how white our hands, the only question ought to be: "For what did God fit me?" There are five hundred businesses in life; but there is only one business for which you are fitted, young man; and if you blunder on without any divine help in your choice of an occupation or profession, four hundred and ninety-nine chances to one, you will get the wrong business. Your father will want you to do one thing, your mother will want you to do another thing, your sisters will want you to do another thing, while you yourself will not be quite decided as to whether you have endurance enough for this, or education enough for that, or tact for the other thing. Ah! that is the time when a young man needs the grace of God to help him. God fashioned your body, and He knows your physical endurance. He constructed your mind, and He knows for what profession you have the most acumen. Go, therefore, to Him, and say: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" God will tell you, and He will tell you rightly. Blunder here, and you have blundered forever. I know a score of men who have been ruined for both worlds simply because they got into the wrong kind of business.

*JULY TWENTY-FIRST.***THE MONKEY NOT THE FATHER OF THE HUMAN RACE.**

“God created man in his own image.”—GENESIS i. 27.

HOW much is your *Bible* worth? Scientific men are trying to show us, through the newspapers and through philosophic papers, that our race is descended from the monkey. But we, who believe in God's Word, read there that God made man in His own image, and not in the image of a monkey. Get out of my way with your damnable Darwinian theories! Scientific men cannot understand the origin of this world. We open our Bibles, and we feel like the Christian Arab, who said to the skeptic, when asked by him why he believed that there was a God, “How do I know that it was a man instead of a camel that went past my tent last night? Why, I know him by the tracks.” Then, looking over at the setting sun, the Arab said to the skeptic, “Look there! that is not the work of a man; that is the *track* of a God.” We have all these things revealed in God's Word. Dear old book! My father loved it. It trembled in my mother's hand when she was nigh fourscore years old. It has been under the pillow of three of my brothers when they died. It is a very different book from what it once was to me. I used to take it as a splendid poem, and read it as I read John Milton. I took it up sometimes as a treatise on law, and read it as I did Blackstone. I took it as a fine history, and read it as I did Josephus. Ah! now it is not the poem; it is not the treatise on law; it is not the history. It is simply a *family album* that I

open, and see right before me the face of God, my Father ; of Christ, my Saviour ; of heaven, my eternal home.

JULY TWENTY-SECOND.

DISOBEYING GOD.

• “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it ; for their wickedness is come up before me.”—*JONAH* i. 2.

GOD says to Jonah, “You go to Nineveh.” He says, “No, I wont. I’ll go to Tarshish.” He starts for Tarshish. The sea raves, the winds blow, and the ship rocks. Come, ye whales, and take this passenger for Tarshish. No man ever gets to Tarshish whom God tells to go to Nineveh. The sea would not carry him ; it is God’s sea. The winds would not waft him ; they are God’s winds. Let a man attempt to do that which God forbids him to do, or to go into a place where God tells him not to go, the natural world as well as God is against him. The lightnings are ready to strike him, the fires to burn him, the sun to smite him, the waters to drown him, and the earth to swallow him. Those whose princely robes are woven out of heart’s strings ; those whose fine houses are built out of skulls ; those whose springing fountains are the tears of oppressed nations—have they successfully cheated God ? The last day will demonstrate—it will be found out on that day that God vindicated not only His goodness and His mercy, but His power to take care of His own rights and the rights of His Church, and the rights of His oppressed children. Come, ye martyred dead, awake ! and come up from the dungeons where folded darkness hearsed you, and the chains like cankers peeled loose the skin, and wore off the flesh, and rattled on the marrowless bones. Come, ye martyred dead, from the stakes where

you were burned, where the arm uplifted for mercy fell into the ashes, and the cry of pain was drowned in the snapping of the flame and the howling of the mob ; from valleys of Piedmont and Smithfield Square, and London Tower, and the Highlands of Scotland.

“When we cannot see our way,
We should trust and still obey ;
He who bids us forward go,
Will instruct the way to know.”

JULY TWENTY-THIRD.

CHRIST'S EXCELLENCY.

“Now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face.”—1 COR. xiii. 12.

BY image, and sweet rhythm of expression, and startling antitheses, Christ is set forth—His love, His compassion, His work, His life, His death, His resurrection. We are challenged to measure it, to compute it, to weigh it. In the hour of our broken enthrallment, we mount up into high experience of His love, and shout until the countenance glows, and the blood bounds, and the whole nature is exhilarated : “I have found him !” And yet it is through a glass, darkly. We see not half of that compassionate face. We feel not half the warmth of that loving heart. We wait for death to let us rush into His outspread arms. Then we shall be face to face. Not shadow then, but substance. Not hope then, but the fulfilling of all prefigurement. That will be a magnificent unfolding. The rushing out in view of all hidden excellency ; the coming again of a long-absent Jesus, to meet us—not in rags, and in penury, and death, but amid a light, and pomp, and outbursting joy such as none but a glorified intelligence could experience. Oh, to gaze full upon the brow that was lacerated,

upon the side that was pierced, upon the feet that were nailed ; to stand close up in the presence of Him who prayed for us on the mountain, and thought of us by the sea, and agonized for us in the garden, and died for us in horrible crucifixion ; to feel of Him, to embrace Him, to take His hand, to kiss His feet, or to run our fingers along the scars of ancient suffering ; to say : this is my Jesus ! He gave Himself for me. I shall never leave His presence. I shall forever behold His glory. I shall eternally hear His voice. Lord Jesus, now I see Thee ! I behold where the blood started, where the tears coursed, where the face was distorted. I have waited for this hour. I shall never turn my back on Thee. No more looking through imperfect glasses. No more studying Thee in the darkness. But, as long as this throne stands, and this everlasting river flows, and those garlands bloom, and these arches of victory remain to greet home heaven's conquerors, so long I shall see Thee, Jesus of my choice ; Jesus of my song ; Jesus of my triumph—forever and forever—face to face ! ”

JULY TWENTY-FOURTH.

KING UNIVERSAL.

“ God is King of all the earth.”—Ps. xlvii. 7.

CHRIST is our King, King of glory, King of Zion, King of saints, King over all the earth, King over heaven. He is a King that shall never die. Where is Louis XIV. ? *Dead!* Where is Richard III. ? *Dead!* Where is Ferdinand ? *Dead!* Where is Peter the Great ? *Dead!* At the door of the grave lies a whole sheaf of sceptres. Death sits in the palace of the sepulchre, and the potentates of earth are His

cup-bearers ; and, as the old blind monarch staggers around his palace, ever and anon he trips on some new fallen coronet. They sat up Charlemagne in his grave, and put a crown on his pulseless temples, and a sceptre in his lifeless hand ; yet that could not bring back his kingdom. But our Emperor lives. He existed before the world was made. He shall continue after it is burned up. *King Immortal !*

The French Government thought itself rich in having so many palaces—" St. Cloud," and the " Tuileries," and the " Versailles," and the " Palais Royal," and the " Luxembourg ;" but our King has the whole earth for His palace—the mountains its picture-gallery ; the ocean its fountain ; the sun its chandelier ; the midnight heavens its candelabra ; illimitable forests its park ; the glories of the sunrise and sunset, the tapestry about the windows ; the storms, the lightning-hoofed coursers dashing up and down the heavens ; all the glories of the land and sea and sky His wardrobe ; all the flowers of the field His conservatory ; all the fish of the sea His aquarium ; all the birds of the spring morning His orchestra. But better than all these, the hearts of His people on earth, and of His saints in heaven, are the palaces in which He delights to reign. *King universal !*

"Hark! ten thousand harps and voices
Sound the note of praise above ;
Jesus reigns, and heaven rejoices
Jesus reigns, the God of love :
See He sits on yonder throne,
Jesus rules the world alone."

JULY TWENTY-FIFTH.

CHRIST ONLY CAN SAVE.

“Lord, save me.”—MATT. xiv. 30.

WHEN the Eternal Spirit flashes upon us our condition, we try to save ourselves. We say, “Give me a stout oar for my right hand, give me a stout oar for my left hand, and I will pull myself into safety.” No. A wave of sin comes and dashes you one way, and there are plenty of rocks on which to founder, but seemingly no harbor into which to sail. Sin must be thrown overboard, or we must perish. There are men in this house, in all these galleries, who have tried for ten years to become Christians. They believe all I say in regard to a future world. They believe that religion is the first, the last, the infinite necessity. With it, heaven! Without it, hell! They do everything but *trust* in Christ. They make sixty strokes in a minute. They bend forward with all earnestness, and they lay back until the muscles are distended, and yet they have not made one inch in ten years towards heaven. What is the reason? That is not the way to go to work. You might as well take a frail skiff, and put it down at the foot of Niagara, and then head it up towards the churning thunderbolt of waters, and expect to work your way up through the lightning of the foam into calm Lake Erie, as for you to try to pull yourself through the surf of your sin into the hope, and pardon, and placidity of the Gospel. You can not do it in that way. Sin is a rough sea, and long-boat, yawl, pinnace, and gondola go down unless the Lord deliver ;

but if you will cry to Christ and lay hold of divine mercy, you are as safe from eternal condemnation as through you had been twenty years in heaven.

“Come ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore ;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power.”

JULY TWENTY-SIXTH.

NOTHING GLOOMY ABOUT CHRISTIANITY.

“Rejoice in the Word, O ye righteous.”—Ps. xxxiii. 1.

I THINK the children of God have more right to laugh than any other people, and to clap their hands as loudly. There is not a single joy denied them that is given to any other people. Christianity does not clip the wings of the soul. Religion does not frost the flowers. What is Christianity? I take it to be, simply, a proclamation from the throne of God of emancipation for all the enslaved ; and if a man accepts the terms of that proclamation, and becomes free, has he not a right to be merry? Suppose a father has an elegant mansion and large grounds. To whom will he give the first privilege of these grounds? Will he say, “My children, you must not walk through these paths, or sit down under these trees, or pluck this fruit. These are for outsiders. They may walk in them.” No father would say anything like that. He would say, “The first privileges in all the grounds, and all of my house, shall be for my own children.” And yet men try to make us believe that God’s children are on the limits, and the chief refreshments and enjoyments of life are for outsiders, and not for His own children. It is stark atheism. There is no innocent beverage too rich for God’s child to drink, there is no

robe too costly for him to wear. There is no hilarity too great for him to indulge in, and no house too splendid for him to live in. He has a right to the joys of earth ; he shall have a right to the joys of heaven. Though tribulation, and trial, and hardship may come unto him, let him rejoice. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, and again I say, rejoice."

JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH.

GIVE TO THE LORD AND YOU WILL GET IT ALL BACK.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you : good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."—LUKE vi. 38.

IF a man buy railroad stock, it may decline ; if a man invest in a bank, the cashier may abscond ; if a man go into partnership, his associate may sink the store. Alas ! for the man who has nothing better than "greenbacks " and Government securities ! God ever and anon blows up the money-safe, and, with a hurricane of marine disaster, dismantles the merchantmen, and from the blackened heavens he hurls into the exchange the hissing thunderbolts of His wrath. People cry up this investment and cry down the other ; but I tell you there is no safe investment save that which is made in the bank of which God holds the keys. The interest in that is always being paid, and there are eternal dividends. God will change that gold into crowns that shall never lose their lustre, and into sceptres that shall forever wave over a land where the poorest inhabitant is richer than all the wealth of earth tossed up into one glittering coin ! So if I stand this morning before men who are now of small means, but who once were greatly prospered, and who in the days of their prosperity were benevolent, let me ask you to sit down and count up your investments. All the loaves of bread you ever gave to the hungry—

they are yours yet ; all the shoes you ever gave to the bare-footed—they are yours yet ; all the dollars you ever gave to churches, and schools, and colleges—they are yours yet ; Bank-clerks sometimes make mistakes about deposits ; but God keeps an unfailing record of all Christian deposits ; and though on the great judgment there may be a “run” upon that bank, ten thousand times ten thousand men will get back all they ever gave to Christ—get all back, heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

JULY TWENTY-EIGHTH.

MINGLE SONG WITH WORK.

“ I will sing and give praise.”—Ps. lvii. 7.

THE most serious undertaking of a bird's life is this annual travel from the Hudson to the Amazon, from the Thames to the Nile. Naturalists tell us that they arrive there thin, and weary, and plumage ruffled, and yet they go singing all the way ; the ground, the lower line of the music, the sky, the upper line of the music, themselves, the notes scattered up and down between. I suppose their song gives elasticity to their wing, and helps on with the journey, dwindling a thousand miles into four hundred. Would God that we were as wise as they in mingling Christian song with our every-day work ! I believe there is such a thing as taking the pitch of Christian devotion in the morning, and keeping it all the day. I think we might take some of the dullest, heaviest, most disagreeable work of our life, and set it to the tune of “Antioch” or “Mount Pisgah.”

It is a good sign when you hear a workman whistle. It is a better sign when you hear him hum a roundelay. It is a

still better sign when you hear him sing the words of Isaac Watts or Charles Wesley. A violin chorded and strung, if something accidentally strike it, makes music, and I suppose there is such a thing as having our hearts so attuned by divine grace, that even the rough collisions of life will make a heavenly vibration. I do not believe that the power of Christian song has yet been fully tried. I believe that if you could roll the "Old Hundred" doxology through Wall Street, it would put an end to the panic! I believe that the discords, and the sorrows, and the sins of the world are to be swept out by heaven-born hallelujahs. Some one asked Haydn, the celebrated musician, why he always composed such cheerful music. "Why," he said, "I can't do otherwise. When I think of God, my soul is so full of joy."

JULY TWENTY-NINTH.

GOD'S WAY'S ALL RIGHT.

"Just and true are thy ways."—Rev. xv. 3.

HERE is a man who says, "That doctrine cannot be true, because things do go so very wrong." I reply, It is no inconsistency on the part of God, but a lack of understanding on our part. I hear that men are making very fine shawls in some factory. I go in on the first floor, and see only the raw material, and I ask, "Are these the shawls I have heard about?" "No," says the manufacturer; "go up to the next floor; "and I go up; and there I begin to see the design. But the man says, "Do not stop here, go to the top floor of the factory, and you will see the idea fully carried out." I do so, and having come to the top, see the complete pattern of an exquisite shawl. So in our life, standing down on a low level of

Christian experience, we do not understand God's dealings. He tells us to go higher up if we would know. We go up higher and higher, until we begin to understand the divine meaning with respect to us, and we advance until we stand at the very gate of heaven, and there see God's idea all wrought out—a perfect idea of mercy, of love, of kindness. And we say, "Just and true are all thy ways." It is all right at the top, all right at the bottom. Remember, there is no inconsistency on the part of God, but it is only our mental and spiritual incapacity.

Some of you have been disappointed. Vacations are apt to be disappointments, but, whatever have been your perplexities and worriments, know that "man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." It has been so in my own life. This summer I started for the Adirondacks, but landed in Liverpool. I studied law, and I got into the ministry. I resolved to go as a missionary to China, and I staid in the United States. I thought I would like to be in the East, and I went to the West: all the circumstances of my life, all my work, different from that which I expected. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

JULY THIRTIETH.

THE NEW SONG.

"And they sang a new song."—Rev. v. 9.

THIS new song of heaven was not composed because heaven had nothing else to do, but Christ, in memory of cross and crown, of manger and throne, of earth and heaven, and wrought upon by the raptures of the great eter-

nity, poured this from his heart, made it for the armies of heaven to shout in celebration of victory, for worshippers to chant in their temple services, for the innumerable home circles of heaven to sing in the house of many mansions. If a new tune be started in church, there is only here and there a person that can sing it. It is some time before the congregation learn a tune. But not so with the new song of heaven. The children who went up to-day from the waters of the Ganges are now singing it. That Christian man or woman, who, a few minutes ago, departed from this very street, has joined it. All know it—those by the gate, those on the river-bank, those in the temple. Not feeling their way through it, or halting or going back, as if they never before had sung it, but with a full round voice they throw their soul into this new song. If some Sabbath-day a few notes of that anthem should travel down the air, we could not sing it. No organ could roll its thunder. No harp could catch its trill. No lip could announce its sweetness.

Oh! the new song! Gather it all up! Multiply it with every sweetness! Pour it into every harmony! Crown it with every gladness! Belt it with every splendor! Fire it with every glory! Toss it to the greatest height of majesty! Roll it to the grandest cycle of eternity!—and then you have but the faintest conception of what John experienced when, amidst the magnificence of apocalyptic vision, he heard it—the new song!

*JULY THIRTY-FIRST.***EVERLASTING WATER.**

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.”—Ps. xlvii, 4.

HOW different you feel after you get a glass of cool water or after you have plunged into the bath? On a hot summer day there is nothing that so soon brings you back from a bad temper or a disturbed spirit, and puts you into a happy frame of mind and body as cold water. Blessed be God for water! I love to hear it fall in the shower and dash in the cascade, and to see it rush from the ice-pitcher into the clear glass. Hand around this nectar of the hills and drink, all of you, to the praise of Him who brewed it among the mountains. Thank God for water! Clear water! Bright water! beautiful water! But I have to tell you there is a better refreshment even than that. There was a time when you were hounded of convictions. Sinai thundered. The wrath of God cried, “Fly!” Justice cried, “Fly!” Your own fears cried, “Fly!” Mercy said, “Come! Come!” and you plunged like a hart into the water-brooks, and out of that flood your soul came up cool, and clean, and radiant; and you looked around and said: “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.” There came a time of perplexity in your heart. You lost your property. The gold eagles took wings and flew away. Death, like a black hawk, swooped upon the family brood, and the children were gone. You measured your life

from groan to groan, from loss to loss, from tear to tear. You said from your distressed spirit, "Oh! that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest." From the depths of your fevered soul you call out: "Has God forgotten to be gracious? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies against me?" As when you have been walking in a thick wood on a hot summer day you heard the dash of fountains and your spirit was cheered; so, while you were listening for the answer, the promise of God dropped cool, and fresh, and sparkling from the Throne: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God." You rejoiced at the thought of the fountain. Your fevered soul thrilled with the cool touch, and you cried: "Eureka! Eureka! I have found it. Water! Cold water! Bright water! Everlasting water! bursting from the throne!"

AUGUST FIRST.

REAPING THE HARVEST.

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."—
JOHN iv. 35.

ONE of the sickles with which this harvest is to be reaped is the *preaching of the Gospel*. This sickle may have a handle of rosewood, and be adorned with precious stones, but it is worth nothing if it does not bring down the grain. A sermon on "Consider the Lilies" may be very beautiful, but it must have more than flowers in it to save the people. We might preach the natural sciences from our pulpits, but Agassiz could beat us at that. We might, Sabbath by Sabbath, present come philosophic essays, but Ralph Waldo Emerson could beat us at that. But he who by faith and prayer takes

hold of the Gospel sickle, however weak his natural arm, shall see deep swaths of golden grain all ready for the angel sheaf-binders. We went down on our knees to swing this sickle, and fifty souls were gathered. We swung it again, and one hundred souls were gathered. Everything depends upon our going down on our knees. The husbandman in the grain-field swinging the scythe does not stand upright, but stoops to his work, and, in order to readily bind the sheaf, puts his knee upon it. So in this Gospel harvest we cannot stand straight up in the pride of our rhetoric, and metaphysics, and erudition. We must stoop to our work. We must put *our knee* upon it, or the harvest will never be tossed into the garner of the Lord. Peter swung the sickle on Pentecost Day, and three thousand sheaves were gathered. Baxter swung it at Kidderminster, and McCheyne at Dundee, and multitudes saw the salvation of God. In 1857, the Christian people of this country went to work with the sickle, and two hundred and eighty thousand souls were saved. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! It is a mighty Gospel!

AUGUST SECOND.

SHIPWRECKED.

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a *castaway*.”—1 COR. ix. 27.

BY talking with sailors I have heard that sometimes ships come to this calamity by the *sudden swoop of a tempest*. For instance, a vessel is sailing along in the East Indies, and there is not a single cloud on the sky; but suddenly the breeze freshens, and there are swift feet on the ratlines, and the cry is: “Way, haul away there!” but before they can

square the booms and tarpaulin the hatchways, the vessel is groaning and creaking in the grip of a tornado, and falls over into the trough of the sea, and broadside rolls on to the beach and keels over, leaving the crew to struggle in the merciless surf. Cast away! cast away! And so I have to tell you that there are thousands of men destroyed through the sudden swoop of temptations. Some great inducement to worldliness, or to sensuality, or to high temper, or to some form of dissipation, comes upon them. If they had time to examine their Bible; if they had time to consult with their friends; if they had time to deliberate, they could stand it; but the temptation came so suddenly—a euroclydon on the Mediterranean, a whirlwind of the Carribean. One awful surge of temptation, and they perish. And so we often hear the old story, “I hadn’t seen my friend in a great many years. We were very glad to meet. He said I must drink, and he took me by the arm and pressed me along, and filled the cup until the bubbles ran over the edge, and in an evil moment all my good resolutions were swept away, and to the outraging of God and my own soul, I fell.” Or the story is, “I had hard work to support my family. I knew that by one false entry, by one deception, by one embezzlement, I might spring out free from all my trouble; but the temptation came upon me so fiercely I could not think. I did wrong, and having done wrong once, I could not stop.” Oh, it is the first step that costs; the second is easier, and the third, and on to the last. Once having broken loose from the anchor, it is not so easy to tie the parted strands. How often it is that men perish for the reason that the temptation comes from some unexpected quarter. As vessels lie in Margate Roads, safe from southwest winds; but the wind changing to the northeast, they are driven helpless and go down. Oh that God would have mercy upon those upon whom there comes the sudden swoop of temptation, that they perish not, becoming for this world and the world to come, cast away! cast away!

AUGUST THIRD.

CHRIST THE A AND Z OF THE BIBLE.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega."—REV. i. 8.

CHRIST is the A and the Z of the Bible. Here is a long lane, overshadowed by fine trees, leading up to a mansion. What is the use of the lane if there were no mansion at the end? There is no use in the Old Testament except as a grand avenue to lead us up to the Gospel Dispensation. You may go early to a concert. Before the curtain is hoisted, you hear the musicians tuning up the violins, and getting ready all the instruments. After a while the curtain is hoisted, and the concert begins. All the statements, parables, orations, and miracles of the Old Testament were merely *preparatory*, and when all was ready, in the time of Christ, the curtain hoists, and there pours forth the Oratorio of the Messiah—all nations joining in the Hallelujah chorus.

Moses, in his account of the creation, shows the platform on which Christ was to act. Prophets and apostles took subordinate parts in the tragedy. The first act was a manger and a babe; the last a cross and its victim. The Bethlehem star in the first scenery shifted for the crimson upholstery of a crucifixion. Earth, and heaven, and hell the spectators. Angels applauding in the galleries, devils hissing in the pit.

Christ is the Beginning and the End of the Bible.

In Genesis, who was Isaac, bound amid the fagots? Type of Christ, the Alpha. In Revelation, what was the water of life? Christ, the Omega. In Genesis, what was the ladder

over Jacob's pillow? Christ, the Alpha. In Revelation, who was the conqueror on the white horse? Christ, the Omega. In Exodus, what was the smitten rock? Christ, the Alpha. In Revelation, who was the Lamb before the throne? Christ, the Omega.

AUGUST FOURTH.

THE TAX-GATHERER'S RESTORATION.

'And Zaccheus said, if I have taken anything by false accusation, I restore fourfold.'
 —LUKE xix. 8.

A NOTICE that this tax-gatherer accompanied his surrender to Christ with the restoration of property that did not belong to him. He says, "If I have taken anything by false accusation, I restore fourfold." That is, if I have taxed any man for ten thousand dollars when he had only five thousand dollars of property, and put in my own pocket the tax for the last five thousand, I will restore to him fourfold. If I took from him ten dollars, I will give him forty dollars. If I took from him forty dollars, I will give him one hundred and sixty dollars.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been sent to Washington during the past few years as "*conscience money*." I suppose that money was sent by men who wanted to be Christians, but found they could not until they made restitution. There is no need of our trying to Come to Christ as long as we keep fraudulently a dollar or a farthing in our possession that belongs to another. Suppose you have not money enough to pay your debts, and, for the sake of defrauding your creditors, you put your property in your wife's name. You might cry until the day of judgment for pardon, but you would not get it without first making restitution. In times

of prosperity it is right, against a rainy day, to assign property to your wife ; but if, in time of perplexity, and for the sake of defrauding your creditors, you make such assignment, you become a culprit before God, and you may as well stop praying until you have made restitution. Or suppose one man loans another money on bond and mortgage, with the understanding that the mortgage can lie quiet for several years, but as soon as the mortgage is given, commences foreclosure—the sheriff mounts the auction-block, and the property is struck down at half price and the mortgagee buys it. The mortgagee started to get the property at half price and is a thief and a robber. Until he makes restitution of them there is no mercy for him.

AUGUST FIFTH.

LOOKING FOR JESUS.

“The man Christ Jesus.”—1 TIM. ii. 5.

THE first one that a soul entering heaven looks for is Jesus. The great populations of heaven seek Him out, follow Him over the hills, and shout at His chariot-wheel. Passing along those streets, spirits blessed cry out to one another, “Look ! that is Jesus.” Methinks that if the hosts of heaven go forth in some other realm to fight, their battle-cry is “Jesus.” Jesus on the banners. Jesus in the song. At His feet break the doxologies. Around His throne circle the chief glories. Where the white Lamb of heaven goes, there go all the flocks. The first tree in the heavenly paradise Jesus planted. The first fountain He struck from the rock. The first pillar of light He lifted. At heaven’s beginning—Christ, the Alpha. Then travel far on down the years of eternity,

and stop at the end of the remotest age, and see if the song has not taken up some other burden, and some other throne has not become the centre of heaven's chief attractions. But no; you hear it thrummed on the harps, and poured from the trumpets, and shouted in universal acclaim, Christ, the Omega.

Now, what is this glorious One to you, my hearer? Have you seen Him? Have you heard His voice? Have you walked this earth, and never seen in the bent grass where His feet had just been? Of all the stars in the midnight heavens, has not one pointed you to where He lay? Trudging on across this desert with thy burden of sins, have you ever made the camels kneel? Is this one, the First and the Last of heaven, nothing to thee? Poor wanderer, without Christ, what of thy death-hour? What of the judgment day? What of eternity?

AUGUST SIXTH.

A CANE TO LEAN UPON.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Ps. xxiii. 4.

ALAS! to have aches and pains, and no Christ to soothe them. I want to give you a cane better than that you lean on. It is the cane that the Bible speaks of when it says, "Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." I want to give you better spectacles than those you now look through. It is the spiritual eyesight of divine grace. Christ will not think that you are in the way. Does your head tremble with the palsy of old age? Lay it on Christ's bosom. Do you feel lonely now that your companions and children are gone? I think Christ has them. They are safe in His keeping. Very soon He will take you where they are. I take hold of your arm as

any son would take hold of the arm of a father, and try to lead you to a place where you can put down all your burden. Go with me. Only a little while longer, and your sight will come again, and your hearing will come again, and with the strength of an immortal athlete you will step on the pavement of heaven. No crutches in heaven ; no sleepless nights in heaven ; no dim eyes in heaven ; no cross looks for old people. Dwelling there for ages, no one will say, "Father, you know nothing about this ; step back ; you are in the way !"

Oh, how many dear old folks Jesus has put to sleep ! How sweetly He has closed their eyes ! How gently folded their arms ! How He has put His hand on their silent hearts and said, "Rest now, tired pilgrim. It is all over. The tears will never start again. Hush ! hush ! So he gives his beloved sleep." I think the most beautiful object on earth is an old Christian—the hair white, not with the frosts of winter, but with the blossoms of the tree of life. I never felt sorry for a Christian old man. Why feel sorry for those upon whom the glories of the eternal world are about to burst.

AUGUST SEVENTH.

GO FORTH IN THE NAME OF GOD.

"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield : but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts.—1 SAM. xvii. 45.

THERE are religious pedlers who go around making a business of displaying their whole stock of wares in the most obtrusive manner. It is no time, while an accountant is puzzling his brain with a long line of figures, to ask him "how his account stands with God ;" or stop the sportsman on the playground, while running between the hunks, and ask "whether, in a religious sense, he is running the race set before him."

We want tact and adaptation for this work. Some Christians try to catch a whale with a fly-rod of hornbeam, and fling a harpoon at a salmon.

How few laymen dare to grapple a sharp infidel! A wily unbeliever would take many a Christian and twist him around his little finger, or hook him to death with the horns of a dilemma, or batter his life out with the ninth chapter of Romans. Can it be that our religion is such a weak, beggarly, unreasonable, pusillanimous thing, that at the first assault it should run like the Northern troops at Big Bethel?

We want private Christians to know how they may stand their ground, or go forth with the vehemence of the Bible-dwarf when he accosted the giant, saying, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." Let me get my sling out! Three times I swing it around my head, and down thou goest; O giant!

AUGUST EIGHTH.

MICAH'S DRUM-BEAT.

"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."—MICAH ii. 10.

THIS was the drum-beat of a prophet who wanted to arouse his people from their oppressed and sinful condition; but it may just as properly be uttered now as then.

Bells, by long exposure and much ringing, lose their clearness of tone ; but this rousing bell of the Gospel strikes in as clear a tone as when it first rang on the air.

As far as I can see, your great want and mine is *rest*. From the time we enter life, a great many vexations and annoyances take after us. We may have our holidays, and our seasons of recreation and quiet, but where is the man in this house, come to seventy years of age, who has found entire rest? The fact is that God did not make this world to rest in. A ship might as well go down off Cape Hatteras to find smooth water as a man in this world to find quiet. From the way that God has strewn the thorns, and hung the clouds, and sharpened the tusks ; from the colds that distress us, and the heats that smite us, and the pleurisies that stab us, and the fevers that consume us, I know that He did not make this world as a place to loiter in. God does everything successfully ; and this world would be a very different world if it were intended for us to lounge in. It does right well for a few hours. Indeed, it is magnificent ! Nothing but finite wisdom and goodness could have mixed this beverage of water, or hung up these brackets of stars, or trained these voices of rill, and bird, and ocean—so that God has but to lift his hand, and the whole world breaks forth into orchestra. But, after all, it is only the splendors of a king's highway, over which we are to march on to eternal conquests.

*AUGUST NINTH.***UNENDING REST.**

“ There remaineth a rest to the people of God.”—*HRB.* iv. 9.

WHERE I see one family circle that is unbroken, I see three or four that have been desolated. One lamb gone out of this fold ; one flower plucked from that garland ; one golden link broken from that chain ; here a bright light put out, and there another, and yonder another. With such griefs, how are you to rest? Will there ever be a power that can attune that silent voice, or kindle the lustre of that closed eye, or put spring and dance into that little foot? When we bank up the dust over the dead, is the sod never to be broken? Is the cemetery to hear no sound but the tire of the hearse-wheel, or the tap of the bell at the gate as the long processions come in with their awful burdens of grief? Is the bottom of the grave gravel, and the top dust? No! no! no! The tomb is only a place where we rap our robes about us for a pleasant nap on our way home. The swellings of Jordan will only wash off the dust of the way. From the top of the grave we catch a glimpse of the towers glinted with the sun that never sets.

O ye whose locks are wet with the dews of the night of grief ; ye whose hearts are heavy, because those well-known footsteps sound no more at the doorway, yonder is your rest ! There is David triumphant ; but once he bemoaned Absalom. There is Abraham enthroned ; but once he wept for Sarah.

There is Paul exultant ; but he once sat with his feet in the stocks. There is Payson radiant with immortal health ; but on earth he was always sick. No toil, no tears, no partings, no strife, no agonizing cough, no night. No storm to ruffle the crystal sea. No alarm to strike from the cathedral towers. No dirge throbbing from seraphic harps. No tremor in the everlasting song ; but rest, perfect rest, unending rest.

AUGUST TENTH.

FORWARD IS THE COMMAND.

“Go forward.”—EXOD. xiv. 15.

IT is high time that we stopped trying to be so poetic about our religion. There is no poetry in saving this world. Away with your blank verse and dithyrambics. Sin is filth ; Satan is an arch-villain ; death is rottenness ; and if you are going to try to help save this world, you had better put aside your Hervey's *Meditations Among the Tombs* and Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy*, and lay hold of the work, forgetting everything but the judgment day. Ah ! my friends, it is high time that we stopped putting on so much stress on little things, and standing on the proprieties. If we cannot save the world in one way, then let us save it in another. Here is a city to be besieged. An army comes up. It demands surrender. No surrender is made. It sits down there for months, and starves out the town, or, by a very slow besiegement, overcomes it. Now, my friends, if this world is ever to be saved for God, it will not be in that way. It will not be taken by siege. It will be taken by storm. All the time that we have been delaying in this matter, the forces of darkness have been strengthening. We cannot cut off their supplies. They

are stronger now than they were ten years ago. They are stronger now than they were one year ago. You cannot starve them out. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will, after a while, come as a mighty Leader, and He will say: "Stop this slow besiegement. There are the fortresses; take them, and have done with it!" And with every spur in the flanks, and every sword flashing in the down-stroke, and the hosts of God leaping on the parapets of sin, the legions of darkness will hear the command of their Leader, "*Fall back!*" and the bugles of hell will sound a retreat.

AUGUST ELEVENTH.

THE DOOR IS SHUT.

"Because I have called and ye refused, I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh."—PROV. i. 24.

I HAVE known parents who had five children in heaven—all of the lambs in the fold, but they themselves outside of the kingdom. With some the voice of God has been ineffective. Sermons innumerable; hymns and psalms innumerable; solemn providences innumerable; and yet they have trampled on all these influences, and are no nearer the kingdom now than they would have been had they lived in Ethiopia, and never seen a missionary. Shall I tell them they have an immortal soul? They know it. Shall I tell them that the judgment is coming? They know it. I fear they will be lost. They will appear at the last day with none to defend them. All the sermons will plead against them; all the Bibles will plead against them; all their religious advantages will plead against them. God will say, "Because I called, and ye refused, and stretched out my hand, and no man regarded me, therefore I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear

cometh." The door of mercy will not always stand open. It has begun to close. It moves faster and faster upon its hinges. It swings closer, and soon the announcement will be made that *the door is shut!*

All those splendid trappings that you have on now death will tear off, and you will go into eternity stark naked. Will you take that deathless spirit and toss it away forever? See! the ground on which you stand is crumbling away. Very soon you and I will be in judgment. "Behold! He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him; and they also which pierced Him shall wail because of Him." "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that the judgment."

AUGUST TWELFTH.

MEDALS OF ETERNAL VICTORY.

"Well done, good and faithful servant."—MATT. xxv. 21.

IN 1855, when some of the soldiers came back from the Crimean war to London, the Queen of England distributed among them beautiful medals, called Crimean medals. I think of it just now, as I recently had a book presented me representing that beautiful Crimean medal. Galleries were erected for the two Houses of Parliament and the royal family to sit in. There was a great audience to witness the distribution of the medals. A colonel who had lost both feet in the battle of Inkermann was pulled in on a wheel-chair; others came in limping on their crutches. Then the Queen of England arose before them in the name of her Government, and uttered words of commendation to the officers and the men, and distributed these medals, inscribed with the four great

battle-fields, Alma, Balaklava, Inkermann and Sebastopol. As the Queen gave these to the wounded men and the wounded officers, the bands of music struck up the national air, and the people with streaming eyes joined in the song:

“God save our noble Queen!
 Long live our gracious Queen!
 God save the Queen!”

And then they shouted, “Huzza! huzza!” Oh, it was a proud day for those returned warriors! But a brighter, better, and gladder day will come, when Christ shall gather those who have toiled in His service, good soldiers of Jesus Christ. He shall rise before them, and in the presence of all the glorified of heaven He will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” and then He will distribute the medals of eternal victory, not inscribed with works of righteousness which we have done, but with those four great battle-fields, dear to earth and dear to heaven, *Bethlehem! Nazareth! Gethsemane! Calvary!*

AUGUST THIRTEENTH.

A SHRED OF YOUR MOTHER'S RELIGION.

“Turn ye from your evil ways.”—2 KINGS xvii. 13.

I SAW an account the other day of a little boy who was to be taken by a city missionary, with some other boys, to the country to find homes. He was well clad, and had a new hat given him; but while the missionary was getting the other children ready to go, this boy went into a corner and took the hat he had thrown off, and tore the lining out of it. The missionary said, “What are you doing with that hat? You don't want it. What are you tearing the lining out of it

for?" "Ah!" said the boy, "that was made out of mother's dress. She loved me very much before she died, and I have nothing to remember her by but the lining." And so the boy tore it out and put it in his bosom. Oh! would you not like to have one shred of your mother's religion to remember her by? Do not her prayers clamor for an answer this morning? Do you not see her hold her withered hands stretched out from the death-bed, begging you to come to God and be at peace with Him? Would you not like to have the purity of your mother? Would you not like to have the comfort she felt in dark days? Would you not like to have some of that peace which she had in her last moments, when she looked up through her spectacles at you, and said she must go away, for Jesus called her, and you said, "Mother, we can't spare you;" and the outcry of grief was answered by a long breath that told you it was all over? Oh, my God! let not mother be on one side and father on the same side, and loved ones on the same side of the throne, and I be on the other side. If we are this morning on the wrong side, let us cross over—let us cross over now. Blessed Jesus, we come, bruised with sin, and throw ourselves in the arms of Thy compassion!

AUGUST FOURTEENTH.

BRING YOUR CHILDREN TO CHRIST.

"And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, and brought him unto the house of the Lord."—1 SAM. i. 24.

YOU may have noticed that when the chaffinch or the stork or the crane starts on its migration, it calls all those of its kind to come too. The tree-tops are full of chirp, and whistle, and carol and the long roll-call. The bird does not start off alone. It gathers all of its kind. Oh, that you

might be as wise in this migration to heaven, and that you might gather all your families and your friends with you! I would that Hannah might take Samuel by the hand, and Abraham might take Isaac, and Hagar might take Ishmael. I ask you if those who sat at your breakfast-table this morning will sit with you in Heaven? I ask you what influences you are trying to bring upon them, what example you are setting them? Are you calling them to go with you? Ay, ay, have you started yourself? I say it in all love. I could not stand here in any other spirit and say this. I ask you what the prospects are that you will be united families in heaven? I have heard of whole families saved, and so have you. I suppose there is such a thing also as a whole family lost. Father lost, mother lost, sons and daughters lost, the estate of wretchedness going down from generation to generation, the tide of blackness deepening and swiftening into wilder rapids and mightier plunges of despair. Impenitent father, impenitent mother! if you reject Christ, and your children come up to years of discretion, and through your influence reject Him and are lost, it will be your fault. Oh, if there should come through the darkness of the lost world words from their own lips, saying, "Father, you never invited me to Christ; mother, your example led me away from Jesus, and I am lost; you got me here; you cannot get me out!"

AUGUST FIFTEENTH.

WATER WITHOUT PRICE.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money."—
ISAIAH lv. 1.

ON this hot Sabbath, after the cows break through the alders into the meadow to drink, how much do they

pay for that which they drink? The humming-bird drinks from the wine glass of the honeysuckle. How much is it a glass? There is a tax on the city water, but no tax upon the great rivers that roll in perpetual volume to the sea. How much will the world pay for all the showers that this summer refreshed the corn-fields? Nothing. It is free; and so is this glorious Gospel. It is free in its pardon, hope, and salvation to all who will accept it. Here is a man who says: "I will pay for it, or I will not have it. I am an independent man; and I will give so much to have my soul redeemed. I will endow a college; or I will establish a school; or I will build a church, and in that way purchase my salvation!" Or he says: "I will do some grand, good works; and God, I know, will accept them." God says: "Away with your good works, as a purchase for salvation! Take this Gospel for nothing, or never take it. It is free."

When the Freedmen's Bureau went, after the war, to the South, they gave loaves of bread to the people; and when the people came up, the question was not asked whether they were white or black, or whether they had fought *against* the government or *for* the government; but only these two questions: "Are you hungry? Have you nothing to pay?" If they were hungry and had nothing to pay, bread was given to them. It cost them nothing. Now the Bread of Eternal Life is offered. There is bread enough and to spare; but it cannot be purchased. "Without money and without price" is this heavenly manna. "Without money and without price" this Gospel fountain.

*AUGUST SIXTEENTH.***WE MUST DIE AND ALONE.**

“It is appointed unto men once to die.”—HEB. ix. 27.

SUPPOSE you should sit down at a piano, put a piece of music on the rack, then put your foot on the pedal and your fingers on the keys—the music would start off magnificently. But suppose you struck one key and the chord did not respond, because it was broken. Why, that ruins the entire accompaniment. Well, sometimes in life you have been going on in great joy and hilarity when suddenly you have thought of a voice, just one voice, that has been hushed, of one heart that is still, and the silent key spoiled all the music.

Oh, if we could all die together! If we could keep the lambs and the sheep of our family flock all together until some bright spring day, the birds a-chant, and the water a-glitter, and then we together could hear the voice of the good Shepherd, and we could all go through the flood, hand in hand! If we only knew when we were to die, and we could gather our family and say, “Now Jesus calls us, and we must away;” and then we could put our little ones in the bed and straighten out their limbs, and say, “Sleep, now, the last sleep,” and then we could go to our own couches and lie down, and say, “Master, we are all ready. The children have gone, and we are ready.” But it is not that way. It is one by one—one by one. It may be in mid-winter, and the snow comes down twenty inches deep above our fresh grave: or it may be in the

dark, damp, chill March midnight; or it may be in a hotel, our arm too weak to pull the bell for help; or it may be so suddenly we cannot say good-by. Oh, death is bitter—a racking, tremendous curse! The apple that our first parents plucked from the forbidden tree had in it two black seeds, one called Sin, the other called Death.

AUGUST SEVENTEENTH.

THE RESURRECTED BODY WILL BE POWERFUL.

“It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.”—1 COR. xv. 42.

WALKING ten or fifteen miles, we are weary. Lifting a few hundred pounds makes us pant. Unarmed, meeting a wild beast, we must climb, run, dodge, or somehow get out of the way. Eight hours' work makes any man tired. But the resurrected body shall be mighty. God always will have great projects to carry on, and will want the righteous to help. We know not what journeys the resurrected may have to take, or what heavenly enterprises they may have to carry on. I suppose the heavenly city is more busy than any earthly city, and that Broadway at noonday is quiet compared with the business of heaven. Yea, it is noonday all the time, and all heaven is coming and going. They rest not day nor night, in the lazy sense of resting. They have so many victories to celebrate! so many songs to sing! so many high days to keep! They need no night, for their eyes are never weary. They need no sleep, for there is no call for physical renovation. If they sit down under the tree of life, it is not to rest, but with some resurrected soul of earth to talk over old times, and rehearse the battles in which they fought shoulder to shoulder. Jacob wrestled with the angel, but was not thrown, because

the angel favored him ; but Jacob once resurrected, an angel could not throw him. There would be no such thing as wrestling down the giants of heaven. They are strong, supple, unconquerable, immortal athletes.

That kind of a body I want. There is so much of work to be done that I now begrudge the hours for sleep and necessary recreation. I sometimes have such views of the glorious work of preaching the Gospel that I wish that from the first day of January to the last day of December, without pausing for food or sleep or rest, I could tell men of Christ and Heaven.

AUGUST EIGHTEENTH.

EXPIATION!

“Christ hath redeemed us.”—GAL. iii. 13.

I WAS lost once, but now I am found. I deserved to die, but Jesus took the lances into His own heart until His face grew pale and His chin dropped on His chest, and He had strength only to say, “It is finished!” The boat swung round into the trough of the sea, and would have been swamped, but Jesus took hold of the oar. I was set in the battle, and must have been cut to pieces had not, at night-fall, He who rideth on the white horse come into the fray. That which must have been the Waterloo of my defeat now becomes the Waterloo of my triumph, because Blucher has come up to save. Expiation! expiation! The law tried me for high treason against God, and found me guilty. The angels of God were the jurors impannelled in the case, and they found me guilty. I was asked what I had to say why sentence of eternal death should not be pronounced upon me, and I had nothing to say. I stood on the scaffold of God’s justice ; the black cap of

eternal death was about to be drawn over my eyes, when from the hill of Calvary One came. He dashed through the ranks of earth and heaven and hell. He rode swiftly. His garments were dyed with blood, His face was bleeding, His feet were dabbled with gore, and He cried out, "Save that man from going down to the pit. I am the ransom." And He threw back the coat from His heart, and that heart burst into a crimson fountain, and He dropped dead at my feet ; and I felt of His hands, and they were stiff ; and I felt of His feet, and they were cold ; and I felt of His heart, and it was pulseless ; and I cried, " Dead ! " And angels with excited wings flew upward, amidst the thrones, crying, " Dead ! " and spirits lost in black brood wheeled down amidst the caverns, crying, " Dead ! " Expiation ! expiation !

" Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise ;
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace."

AUGUST NINETEENTH.

CLIMBING TREES.

" And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him."—LUKE xix. 4.

ZACCHEUS had mounted the sycamore-tree out of mere inquisitiveness. He wanted to see how this stranger looked—the color of His eyes, the length of His hair, the contour of His features, the height of His stature. " Come down," said Christ.

And so many people, in this day, get up into the tree of curiosity or speculation to see Christ. They ask a thousand queer questions about His divinity, about God's sovereignty,

and the eternal decrees. They speculate, and criticise, and hang on to the outside limb of a great sycamore. But they must come down from that if they want to be saved. We cannot be saved as philosophers, but as little children. You cannot go to heaven by way of Athens, but by way of Bethlehem. What matters it who are elected to be saved, when we know that unless we believe and repent we shall all be damned? Why be perplexed about the way sin came into the world, when the great question is how we shall get sin driven out of our hearts? How many spend their time in criticism and religious speculation! They take the Rose of Sharon, or the Lily of the Valley, pull out the anther, scatter the corolla, and say, "Is that the beautiful flower of religion that you are talking about?" No flower is beautiful after you have torn it all to pieces. The path of heaven is so plain that a fool need not make any mistake about it, and yet men stop and cavil. Suppose that, going towards the Pacific slope, I had resolved that I would stop until I could kill all the grizzly bears and the panthers, on either side of the way. I would never have got to the Pacific coast. When I went out to hunt the grizzly bear, the grizzly bear would have come out to hunt me. Here is a plain road to heaven. Men say they will not take a step on until they can make game of all the theories that bark at them from the thickets. They forget the fact that as they go out to hunt the theory, the theory comes out to hunt them, and so they perish.

*AUGUST TWENTIETH.***WHITE ROBED WARRIORS.**

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—REV. vii. 14.

THERE is John Howard, who circumnavigated the globe in the name of Him who said, "I was sick, and ye visited me." What to him were the thanks of the House of Commons, or the recognition of all the governments of earth, compared with the joy of this day in which he rides on, followed by multitudes of those whom he found in dungeons of darkness and lazarettos of pain! Here go the Moravian missionaries, who were told that they could not go on a Christian errand to a hospital where the plague was raging unless they would consent to go in and never come out, yet deliberately making all arrangements, and going in to take care of the sick, and then lying down beside the dying themselves to die. Here goes Eliot, who once toiled for Christ among savages, travelling on foot through the wilds, saying, "My feet are always wet, but I pull off my boots and wring my stockings, and put them on again and go forward, trying to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," defying the savages who bade him stop preaching or die, by saying to them, "I am about the work of the great God. Touch me if you dare!"

The Maid of Saragossa, the angel of the Spanish battlefields, passes by. Elizabeth Fry, followed by those whom she showed the way from Newgate Prison to heaven. Grace

Darling, of the strong oar and the sea-bird's wing, with which she once swooped to the drowning from Alnwick Castle. The good Samaritan, who put the wounded man on his horse, while he himself walked, now riding more firmly for that charitable dismounting. Thousands of men and women who served God, and grandly did their duty.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIRST.

BLESSED DAY.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Ps. cxviii. 24.

I WOULD to God that we could all come to a higher appreciation of this Sabbath heritage ! We cannot count the treasures of one Christian Sabbath. It spreads out over us the two wings of the archangel of mercy. Oh, blessed Sabbath ! blessed Sabbath ! They scoff a great deal about the old Puritanic Sabbaths, and there is a wonderful amount of wit expended upon that subject now—the Sabbaths they used to have in New England. I never lived in New England, but I would rather trust the old Puritanic Sabbath, with all its faults, than this modern Sabbath, which is fast becoming no Sabbath at all. If our modern Sabbatism shall produce as stalwart Christian character as the old New England Puritanic Sabbatism, I shall be satisfied, and I shall be surprised.

Oh, blessed day ! blessed day ! I should like to die some Sabbath morning when the air is full of church music and the bells are ringing. Leaving my home group with a dying blessing, I should like to look off upon some Christian assemblage chanting the praises of God as I went up to join the one hundred and forty and four thousand and the thousands of thousands standing around the throne of Jesus. Hark ! I hear

the bell of the old kirk on the hill-side of heaven! It is a wedding-bell, for behold the Bridegroom cometh. It is a victor's bell, for we are more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us. It is a Sabbath-bell, for it calls the nations of earth and Heaven to everlasting repose.

“Oh when, thou city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend?
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end.”

AUGUST TWENTY-SECOND.

GOD'S BALANCE AND WEIGHT PERFECT.

“A just weight and balance are the LORD.”—PROV. XVI. 11.

TH**ERE** has been a great deal of cheating in this country by false weights and measures. Government appointed commissioners to stamp the weights and measures. Much of the wrong has been righted. I speak of another kind of scales. We all have been in the habit of making mistakes in our weighing of men and things. There is, indeed, only one pair of balances absolutely perfect, and that is suspended from the throne of God Almighty. Other balances get out of order. The chain breaks, or the metal is clipped, or the equipoise in some other way is broken; and a pound does not always mean a pound; and you pay for one thing and get another. But the balances of God never lose their adjustment. With them, a pound is a pound, and right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a soul is a soul, and eternity is eternity. God has a bushel measure, a peck measure, and a gallon measure. Whenever a merchant measures a bushel of wheat, or salt, or corn, God weighs it immediately after him. The merchant's measure may be wrong, but God's measure is

just right. If a merchant measures a gallon of oil and does not give the proper quantity, God measures it and says, "So many drops too few! Recording angel, write it down." If a farmer comes to town with apples for sale, and he does not give full measure, the apples are immediately put into God's peck, and record is made of twenty apples too few. We may cheat ourselves and we may cheat our neighbors; but in the last day we shall find that what we learned at school, in our boyhood, is true; and that twelve ounces make a pound, and twenty hundred weight make one ton, and one hundred and twenty-eight solid feet make one cord of wood. No more, no less.

AUGUST TWENTY-THIRD.

DO SOMETHING FOR CHRIST.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works."—**MATT. v. 16.**

TH**ERE** are churches that are arctic seas, iceberg grinding against iceberg. The attendants upon them come as men come into the ferry-boat, sitting down beside each other—no nod of recognition, no hand-grasping of fellowship, no throb of brotherly and sisterly affection. They come in, they sit down, they go out. From Saturday to Monday morning they are ferried over by Christian ordinances, and that is all there is of it. Now, my dear brother, if you are cold and hard and selfish, then the higher the wall you build around your soul, the better. You would do well to be exclusive; but if there is in you anything kind, anything lovely, anything noble, anything useful, let it shine out. Suppose a vessel were driven on the rocks, and while fifty people were struggling in the surf, one man gets safely to the beach and runs up to the

fisherman's hut and sits down and warms himself, regardless of those who are still struggling in the water—what a cruel thing that would be! How much better, like the survivors of the *Atlantic* shipwreck, toiling with both hands until the left hand gave out, and until the right hand gave out, and then with their teeth, seizing the clothing of the suffering ones and pulling them ashore! And what do you suppose God thinks of us if, having escaped from the bands of sin, and darkness, and death, we are culturing an unchristian selfishness, while there are hundreds and thousands all around about us still struggling in the wave? I say, let us have a kindly sympathy and helpfulness towards those who are all around us. Every church was intended by God to be a large family circle—of fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters.

AUGUST TWENTY-FOURTH.

CHRIST'S WILL.

“My peace I give unto you.”—JOHN xiv. 27.

AFTER a man of large estate dies, the relatives assemble to hear the will read. So much of the property is willed to his sons, and so much to his daughters, and so much to benevolent societies. Our Lord Jesus hath died, and we are assembled to-day to hear the will read. He says: “My peace I give unto you.” Through His apostle He says: “All are yours.” What! everything! Yes; everything! This world and the next. In distinguished families there are old pictures hanging on the wall. They are called “the heir-loom” of the estate. They are very old, and have come down from generation to generation. So I look upon all the beauties of the natural world as the heir-loom of our royal family. The morning

breaks from the east. The mists travel up hill above hill, mountain above mountain, until sky-lost. The forests are full of chirp, and buzz, and song. Tree's leaf and bird's wing flutter with gladness. Honey-makers in the log, and beak against the bark, and squirrels chattering on the rail, and the call of the hawk out of a clear sky, make you feel glad. The sun, which kindles conflagrations among the castles of cloud, and sets minaret and dome aflame, stoops to paint the lily white, and the butter-cup yellow, and the forget-me-not blue. What can resist the sun? Light for the voyager over the deep! Light for the shepherd guarding the flocks afield! Light for the poor who have no lamps to burn! Light for the down-cast and the lowly! Light for aching eyes, and burning brain, and wasted captive! Light for the smooth brow of childhood, and for the dim vision of the octogenarian! Light for queen's coronet, and for sewing-girl's needle! Let there be light! Whose morning is this? My morning. Your morning.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIFTH.

SPIRITUAL HUNTERS.

"He was a mighty hunter before the Lord."—GEN. x. 9.

IF you want to be skilful in spiritual archery, you must hunt *in unfrequented and secluded places*. Why does the hunter go three or four days in the Pennsylvania forests or over Raquette Lake into the wilds of the Adirondacks? It is the only way to do. The deer are shy, and one "bang" of the gun clears the forest. From the California stage you see, as you go over the plains, here and there, a coyote trotting along, almost within range of the gun—sometimes quite within range of it. No one cares for that; it is worthless. The

good game is hidden and secluded. Every hunter knows that. So many of the souls that will be of most worth for Christ and of most value to the Church are secluded. They do not come in your way. You will have to go where they are. Yonder they are, down in that cellar ; yonder they are, up in that garret—far away from the door of any church ; the Gospel arrow has not been pointed at them. The tract distributor and the city missionary sometimes just catch a glimpse of them, as a hunter through the trees gets a momentary sight of a partridge or roebuck. The trouble is, we are waiting for the game to come to us. We are not good hunters. We are standing on Montague Street and Schermerhorn Street, expecting that the timid antelope will come up and eat out of our hand. We are expecting that the prairie-fowl will light on our church-steeple. It is not their habit. If the Church should wait ten millions of years for the world to come in and be saved, it will wait in vain. The world will not come. What the Church wants now is to lift its feet from damask ottomans, and put them in the stirrups. The Church wants not so much cushions as it wants saddle-bags and arrows. We have got to put aside the gown and the kid-gloves, and put on the hunting-shirt. We want a pulpit on wheels.

AUGUST TWENTY-SIXTH.

AN ENDURING MEMORIAL.

“Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”—MARK xiv. 9.

JESUS says that this woman’s action of kindness and love shall be a memorial of her. I cannot understand the feelings of those who would like to be remembered far on in the future, but I think it is pleasant for us to think that our

friends and associates will remember us when we are gone. To get worldly fame men tread on nettles, and work mightily and die wretchedly. Human aggrandizement gives no permanent satisfaction.

I had an aged friend who went into the White House when General Jackson was President of the United States, four days before he left the White House, and the President said to him, "I am bothered almost to death. People strive for this White House as though it were some grand thing to get here, but I tell you it is a perfect hell!" There was nothing in the elevation the world had given him that rendered him satisfaction, or could keep off the annoyances and vexations of life.

A man writes a book. He thinks it will circulate for a long while. Before long it goes into the archives of the city library to be disturbed once a year, and that when the janitor cleans house! A man builds a splendid home, and thinks he will get fame from it. A few years pass along, and it goes down under the auctioneer's mallet at the executor's sale, and a stranger buys it.

The Pyramids were constructed for the honor of the men who ordered them built. Who built them? Do not know! For whom were they built? Do not know; their whole history is an obscuration and a mystery. There were men in Thebes and Tyre and Babylon who strove for a great eminence, but they were forgotten, while the woman of the text, who lovingly accosted Jesus, has her memorial in all ages.

*AUGUST TWENTY-SEVENTH.***THE GREAT WORD.**

“There is none like that ; give it me.”—1 SAM. xxi. 9.

I ONLY imitate David when I stretch out my hand towards that blade of the Philistine, and cry, “There is none like that ; give it me !”

This is true *in regard to all scientific exploration*. You know that the first discoveries in astronomy, and geology and chronology were used to battle Christianity. Worldly philosophy came out of its laboratory, and out of its observatory, and said, “Now, we will prove, by the very structure of the earth, and by the movement of the heavenly bodies, that the Bible is a lie, and that Christianity, as we have it among men, is a positive imposition.” Good men trembled. The telescope, the Leyden-jars, the electric batteries, all in the hands of the Philistines. But one day, Christianity, looking about for some weapon with which to defend itself, happened to see the very old sword that these atheistic Philistines had been using against the truth, and cried out, “There is none like that ; give it me !” And Copernicus, and Galileo, and Kepler, and Isaac Newton came forth and told the world that, in their ransacking of the earth and heavens, they had found overwhelming presence of the God whom we worship ; and this old Bible began to shake itself from the Koran, and Shaster, and Zendavesta with which it had been covered up, and lay on the desk of the scholar, and in the laboratory of the chemist, and in the lap of the Christian,

unharméd and unanswered, while the tower of the midnight heavens struck a silvery chime in its praise.

Worldly philosophy said, "Matter is eternal. The world always was. God did not make it." Christian philosophy plunges its crow-bar into rocks, and finds that the world was gradually made, and if gradually made, there must have been some point at which the process started; then, who started it? And so that objection was overcome, and in the first three words of the Bible we find that Moses stated a magnificent truth when he said, "*In the beginning.*"

AUGUST TWENTY-EIGHTH.

ASK AND YOU WILL RECEIVE.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do."—JOHN xiv. 13.

YOU go to a friend you helped in time of trouble, and want to get his name on your note, and he will not give it, and in utter despair, and wild with trouble, you say, "If it were not for my wife and children, I would jump off the dock." I remember a man who, in 1857, helped a dozen people through the financial straits. He loaned a thousand dollars here, and five thousand there, and ten thousand there, and took his friends to the bank, and allowed them to go on his credit, and helped them through. Five years after *his* trial came. Where were those old friends? Gone; or, if they came into his store, it was only to say, "God bless you!" forgetful of the fact that one ounce of pure financial help at that time would have been worth fifty tons of "God bless you." Instead of going at such a time to worldly resources, why did you not go to God? Why did you not lock the door of your private office, and get down on your knees, and say,

“O Lord! thou seest my business trouble. There is that note at the bank. I have no money to meet it. There is my rent, it has become due: what shall I do about it? There are my unsalable goods at the warehouse. Lord Jesus, help me out of this trouble.” God would have done it as certainly as He sits upon the throne and offers help to men who want it. You did not go for it, and you did not get it. If you had made your religion do that, it would have been worth something. Your religion, instead of being a robe to wrap around you and keep you warm in the chill blasts of trial, has been merely a string of beads around your neck, very beautiful to look at, and that is all.

AUGUST TWENTY-NINTH.

GOD WILL NOT BREAK HIS PROMISE.

“I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.”—GEN. xvii. 7.

YOU have wrestled with God in agony for the salvation of your children. You ask me if all that anxiety has been ineffectual. I answer, *No*. God understands your heart. He understands how hard you have tried to make that daughter do right, though she is so very petulant and reckless; and what pains you have bestowed in teaching that son to walk in the path of uprightness, though he has such strong proclivities for dissipation. I speak a cheering word. God heard every counsel you ever offered Him. God has known all the sleepless nights you have ever passed. God has seen every sinking of your distressed spirit. God remembers your prayers. He keeps eternal record of your anxieties; and in His lachrymatory—not such as stood in ancient tomb, but in one that glows and glitters beside the throne of God—He holds all those

exhausting tears. The grass may be rank upon your grave, and the letters upon your tombstone defaced by the elements before the divine response will come ; but He who hath declared, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee," will not forget ; and some day, in heaven, while you are ranging the fields of light, the gates of pearl will swing back, and, garlanded with glory, that long-wayward one will rush into your outstretched arms of welcome and triumph. The hills may depart and the earth may burn, and the stars fall and time perish, but God will break His oath and trample upon His promises—*never ! NEVER !*

AUGUST THIRTIETH.

NOVEL READING.

"Understand thou what thou redest?"—ACTS viii. 30.

"SHALL we read novels?" I reply: There are novels that are pure, good, Christian, elevating to the heart and ennobling to the life. But I have still further to say that I believe that ninety-nine out of the one hundred novels in this day are baleful and destructive to the last degree. A pure work of fiction is history and poetry combined. It is a history of things around us with the licenses and the assumed names of poetry. The world can never pay the debt which it owes to such fictitious writers as Hawthorne, and McKenzie, and Landon, and Hunt, and Arthur, and Marion Harland and others whose names are familiar to all. The follies of high life were never better exposed than by Miss Edgeworth. The memories of the past were never more faithfully embalmed than in the writings of Walter Scott. Cooper's novels are healthfully redolent of the breath of the sea-weed

and the air of the American forest. Charles Kingsley has smitten the morbidity of the world and led a great many to appreciate the poetry of sound health, strong muscles, and fresh air. Thackeray did a grand work in caricaturing the pretenders to gentility and high blood. Dickens has built his own monument in his books, which are an everlasting plea for the poor and the anathema of injustice. Now, I say, books like these read at right times, and read in right proportion with other books, cannot help but be ennobling and purifying; but alas for the loathsome and impure literature that has come upon this country in the shape of novels, like a freshet overflowing all the banks of decency and common sense. They are coming from some of the most celebrated publishing houses of the country. They are coming with the recommendation of some of our religious newspapers. They lie on your centre-table to curse your children, and blast with their infernal fires generations unborn. You find these books in the desk of the school miss, in the trunk of the young man, in the steamboat cabin, on the table of the hotel reception-room. You see a light in your child's room late at night. You suddenly go in, and say: "What are you doing?" "I am reading." "What are you reading?" "A book." You look at the book; it is a bad book. "Where did you get it?" "I borrowed it." Alas, there are always those abroad who would like to loan your son or daughter a bad book. Everywhere, everywhere an unclean literature. I charge upon it the destruction of ten thousand immortal souls, and I bid you this morning wake up to the magnitude of the theme.

*AUGUST THIRTY-FIRST.***HEAVEN NOT FAR OFF.**

"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—LUKE xxiii. 43.

I OFTEN hear people talk as though heaven were a great distance. The departed must go hundreds of thousands of miles until they get to a star, and then hundreds of thousands of miles until they get to another star, and then millions of miles from that, and then they get to heaven. They tell us that heaven is the centre of the universe, and that we are on the outer rim of the universe. But we have learned to calculate distance by the time it takes to travel it, and by the speed and the frequency of the intercommunication, and, by that estimate, heaven is not far off. It certainly is not twelve hours off, for Jesus said to the dying thief: "*This day—this day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*" And I suppose that the wing of the soul, when it leaves the body, is so swift, that it does not take a day, or an hour, or a minute, or the ten thousandth part of a second for it to flash into glory; and as to the intercommunication, there are hundreds of souls every day going up from the church on earth to the church in heaven, and thousands of ministering spirits every day coming down from heaven to earth, and all the King's highway from earth to heaven is thronged with messengers, coming, going; coming, going.

Some years ago, a foolish undertaking was made, by which it was proposed to gain the attention of another world, and on

the highest mountains of Siberia, it was proposed to build some mounds in mathematical figures with which to attract the attention of another world—a most preposterous undertaking. Blessed be God, we need go through no such artifices to attract the attention of heaven! The heart of heaven beats close against the heart of this world, for “there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

SEPTEMBER FIRST.

EXTERMINATION.

“But Saul spared Agag, and the best of the sheep.”—1 SAM. xv. 9.

SAUL was told to slay all the Amalekites, and the beasts in their possession. He saves Agag, the Amalekite king, and some of the sheep and oxen. God chastises him for it. God likes nothing done by halves. God will not stay in the soul that is half His and half the devil's. There may be more sins in our soul than there were Amalekites. We must kill them. Woe unto us if we spare Agag! Here is a Christian. He says, “I will drive out all the Amalekites of sin from my heart. Here is jealousy—down goes that Amalekite. Here is backbiting—down goes that Amalekite;” and what slaughter he makes among his sins, striking right and left! What is that out yonder, lifting up his head? It is Agag—it is worldiness. It is an old sin he cannot bear to strike down. It is a darling transgression he cannot afford to sacrifice. Oh, my brethren, I appeal this morning for entire consecration! Some of the Presbyterians call it the “high life.” The Methodists, I believe, call it “perfection.” I do not care what you call it; without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I know

men who are living with their soul in perpetual communion with Christ, and day by day are walking within sight of heaven. How do I know? They tell me so. I believe them. They would not lie about it. Why cannot we all have this consecration? Why slay some of the sins in our soul, and leave others to bleat and bellow for our exposure and condemnation. Christ will not stay in the same house with Agag. You must give up Agag, or give up Christ. Jesus says, "All of that heart or none."

SEPTEMBER SECOND.

CHRIST A GOOD CEDAR.

"It shall be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing."—EZEKIEL xvii. 23.

MY text intimates that Christ is the cedar, and the people from all quarters are the birds that lodge among the branches. "It shall be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing." As in Ezekiel's time, so now—Christ is a goodly cedar, and to Him are flying all kinds of people—young and old, rich and poor; men, high-soaring as the eagle, those fierce as the raven, and those gentle as the dove. "All fowl of every wing."

First, the young may come. Of the eighteen hundred and seventy-one years that have passed, about sixteen hundred have been wasted by the good in misdirected efforts. Until Robert Raikes came, there was no organized effort for saving the young. We spend all of our strength trying to bend old trees, when a little pressure would have been sufficient for the sapling. We let men go down to the very bottom of sin before we try to lift them up. It is a great deal easier to keep a train on the track than to get it on when it is off.

The experienced reinsman checks the fiery steed at the first jump, for when he gets in full swing, the swift hoofs clicking fire from the pavement, and the bit between his teeth, his momentum is irresistible. It is said that the young must be allowed to sow their "wild oats." I have noticed that those who sow their wild oats seldom try to raise any other kind of crop. Heaven is in one direction, hell is in another. If you are going to heaven, you had better take the straight road, and not try to go to Boston by the way of New Orleans. What is to be the history of this multitude of young people who sit and stand around me to-night? I will take you by the hand and show you a glorious sunrise. I will not whine about this thing, nor groan about it; but come, young men and maidens, Jesus wants you. His hand is love: His voice is music: His smile is heaven. Religion will put no hand-cuffs on your wrist, no hobbles on your feet, no brand on your forehead.

SEPTEMBER THIRD.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.—EPHES. vi. 13.

THE first step that yonder man makes towards heaven will call forth a volley of criticism and caricature. Many of their friends in the world would as soon be shot as be seen on their knees praying. The whole atmosphere is as uncongenial to religion as a Northern clime is to pineapples and bananas. If that young man should become a Christian and go back to the store, they would accost him with: "John, how is your soul? Come, now, give us a prayer. Suppose you will have nothing to do with such sinners as we. What is the news from heaven? What! getting red in the face! Not mad, I hope.

Christians ought not to get mad. What a saint you are! I suppose you are almost ready for translation!" Sunday nights, your friends play cards, drink wine, and smoke cigars; and in all the round of your associates the name of God is never used save in profanity.

The long, high, mighty breastwork of social influences; how shall grace ever take it? For which one of these ungodly friends will you send when you are dying? They could sit up with you, and pour out the medicines, and shake up your hot pillow: but could they administer any comfort for the soul? As the waves of the Jordan begin to lick your feet, will they be able to say anything to strengthen? If, in some awful spasm of physical suffering, you should ask them to pray, do you think they would know how to do it? Will they crowd the room, and keep out the last enemy? What single thing can they do for you when heart and flesh shall fail? When the trumpet sounds, do you want to rise with them in *their* resurrection? Do you think they will put on the coronations of heaven? If not, do not let them hinder you now. If they do nothing for you in death, judgment, or eternity, it is high time you looked for help in some other direction.

SEPTEMBER FOURTH.

DAY IS BREAKING.

"The day breaketh."—GEN. xxxii. 26.

NO one was ever more glad to see the morning than was Jacob after that night of struggle. It is appropriate for philanthropists and Christians to cry out, with this angel of the text, "The day breaketh." The worldly prospects are brightening. Popery has had its strongest props knocked out. The

tyrants of the earth are falling flat in the dust. The Church of Christ is rising up in its strength, to go forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Clap your hands, all ye people : *the day breaketh*. The bigotries of the earth are perishing. The time was when we were told that if we wanted to get to heaven we must be immersed or sprinkled; or we must believe in the perseverance of the saints, or in falling away from grace, or a liturgy, or no liturgy, or we must be Calvinists or Arminians, in order to reach heaven. We have all come to confess, now, that there are non-essentials in religion.

During my vacation, one summer, I was in a Presbyterian audience, and it was sacramental day; and with grateful heart I received the holy communion. On the next Sabbath I was in a Methodist church, and sat at a love-feast. On the following Sabbath I was in an Episcopalian church, and knelt at the altar and received the consecrated bread. I do not know which service I enjoyed the most. "*I believe in the communion of saints, and in the life everlasting.*" "*The day breaketh.*"

SEPTEMBER FIFTH.

TELL YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO DIE.

"All thy children shall be taught of the Word."—Is. liv. 13.

A DYING son said to his father, "Father, you gave me an education, and good manners, and everything that the world could do for me; but, father, you never told me how to die; and now my soul is going out in the darkness."

Oh, ye who have taught your children how to live, have you also taught them how to die? Life here is not so important as the great hereafter. It is not so much the few furlongs this side

the grave as it is the unending leagues beyond. O eternity! eternity! Thy locks white with the ages! Thy voice announcing stupendous destiny! Thy arms reaching across all the past and all the future! Thy heart beating with raptures that never die, and agonies that never cease! O eternity! eternity!

Go home and erect a family altar. You may break down in your prayer. But never mind, God will take what you mean, whether you express it intelligibly or not. Bring all your house into the ark. Is there one son whom you have given up? Is he so dissipated that you have stopped counselling and praying? Give him up? How dare you give him up? Did God ever give thee up? Whilst thou hast a single articulation of speech left, cease not to pray for the return of that prodigal. He may even now be standing on the beach at Hong Kong or Madras, meditating a return to his father's house. Give him up? Never give him up! Has God promised to hear thy prayer only to mock thee? It is not too late.

SEPTEMBER SIXTH.

FREE FROM SICKNESS AND HUNGER.

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water.”—Rev. vii. 16, 17.

IT is very fortunate that we cannot see heaven until we get into it. Oh, Christian man, if you could see what a place it is, we would never get you back again to the office, or store, or shop, and the duties you ought to perform would go neglected. I am glad I shall not see the world until I enter it. Suppose we were allowed to go on an excursion into that good land, with the idea of returning. When we got there, and heard the song, and looked at their raptured faces, and mingled

in the supernal society, we would cry out: "Let us stay! We are coming here anyhow. Why take the trouble of going back again to that old world? We are here now; let us stay." And it would take angelic violence to put us out of that world, if once we got there. But as people who cannot afford to pay for an entertainment, sometimes come around it and look through the door ajar, or through the openings in the fence, so we come and look through the crevices into that good land which God has provided for us. We can just catch a glimpse of it. We come near enough to hear the rumblings of the eternal orchestra, though not near enough to know who blows the cornet or who fingers the harp. My soul spreads out both wings and claps them in triumph at the thought of those upper springs. One of them breaks from beneath the throne; another breaks forth from beneath the altar of the temple; another at the door of "the house of many mansions." Upper springs of gladness! upper springs of light! upper springs of love! It is no fancy of mine. "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water." Oh, Saviour divine! roll in our souls one of those anticipated raptures! Pour around the roots of the parched tongue one drop of that liquid life! Toss before our vision those fountains of God, rainbowed with eternal victory! Hear it! They are never sick there—not so much as a headache, or twinge rheumatic, or thrust neuralgic. The inhabitant never says: "I am sick." They are never tired there. Flight to farthest world is only the play of a holiday. They never sin there. It is as easy for them to be holy as it is for us to sin. They never die there. You might go through all the outskirts of the great city and find not one place where the ground was broken for a grave. The eyesight of the redeemed is never blurred with tears. There is health in every cheek. There is spring in every foot. There is majesty on every brow. There is joy in every heart. There is hosanna on every lip.

SEPTEMBER SEVENTH.

JOY IN HEAVEN.

“Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.”—LUKE xv. 7.

YOU have often noticed churches with two towers. But I suppose that the temple of God on high may have four towers, and sometimes one of them rings, and sometimes they all ring. Here is a moral man. He never said a bad word. He never did a mean action. Everybody loves him. He is not a Christian ; but after a while he sees that he is a sinner, and he cries to God, and he is saved, and *one* tower of heaven rings out with beautiful chime.

Here is another man. He is very bad. He knows it. Everybody knows it. Still he is kept in respectable society. He is far from being an outlaw. That man is converted to God. Now, *two* towers in heaven chime out the glorious tidings.

Here is an outcast of society. Last night he was picked up out of the gutter and taken to the station-house. He has gone through all the crimes against God and man, He is utterly loathsome. Nobody wants to touch him. To-night, in all his wretchedness, he cries out : “ O Lord, help me ! O Lord, forgive me ! ” Now, *three* towers in heaven chime out the tidings.

Yonder is a poor waif of the street. She has gone down until no one has any pity for her. As she goes under the gaslight and you see her, your soul shivers with a great horror. Going along, by the Midnight Mission, she hears Christian singing. They are singing a beautiful tune :

“ All may come, whoever will,
This man receives poor sinners still.

And she puts into that harbor. She kneels down at the first bench she comes to, and she cries out: “ O Thou who didst have mercy on Mary Magdalen, take my bleeding feet off of the hot pavement of hell ! ” Now, the four towers of heaven chime out the tidings ; and they who pass along the streets say : “ Hark ! some great news has come up. Some great sinner is saved ; the four towers are ringing. ” And “ there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. ”

SEPTEMBER EIGHTH.

RICHES GOT BY FRAUD.

“ As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not ; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end he shall be a fool. ”—*JER.* xvii. 11.

IF God should put suddenly into money, or its representative, the power to return to its rightful owner, there is not a bank or a safety deposit that would not have its sides blown out ; and parchments would rip, and gold would shoot, and mortgages would rend, and beggars would get horses, and stock-gamblers would go to the almshouse. How much dishonesty in the making of invoices, and in oaths at the Custom House, and in plastering of labels, and in the filching of customers of rival houses, and in false samples, and in the making and breaking of contracts ! Hundreds of young men are being indoctrinated in the idea that money must be had quickly, and that the larger the scale on which they take it, the more admirable the smartness and legerdemain. A young man of New York stood behind the counter selling silks to

a lady. After the sale had been made, he said to the customer: "I see a slight flaw in that silk." The lady recognized it, and did not conclude the purchase. The head man of the firm saw the transaction, and wrote to the father of the young man in the country, saying: "Come down and take your boy home; he will never make a merchant." The father came down in excitement to see what his boy had been doing. The employer said: "Your son actually stood at the counter the other day and pointed out a flaw in one of our silks, so that we lost the sale of the goods." The father said, "If that is all my boy has done, I am proud of him, and I would not have him stay five minutes more under your bad influence. John, take your hat and come home;" and away they started.

The pressure on our young men in town to-day is awful. Hundreds of them are going down under it for time and for eternity. Others are nobly enduring the pressure. May God help them!

The public mind is utterly poisoned and diseased on the subject of money-making; and no wonder that God spoke in thunder last week, not only to New York, but to all the cities of the world, saying: "Look out how you get your money. By the hand of death or judgment it shall be wrenched from your grasp. If you get riches by fraud, you will leave them in the midst of your days, and at the end you shall be a fool."

What shall be the eternal destiny of such a man? I leave you to guess. I make you the jury to say what shall be the doom of that Wall Street defrauder who, after the most gigantic dishonesties that were ever practiced on this planet, died without one seeming word of repentance or of prayer—in his will giving away the spoils of the most unprecedented thefts without saying in that will: "These are the moneys I got by crime, and are the plea for my eternal condemnation." One minute after a man goes up to judgment, how many

steamboats does he own? How many shares of stock in Erie Railway? How many opera-houses? None. The poor boy with a penny in his pocket who stands on the street corner as the funeral pageant of the dead cheat passes along, has more money in his pocket than the man who, a few days before, boasted that all the country was afraid of him.

SEPTEMBER NINTH.

"THE GLORIOUS KING."

"Glory ye in his holy name."—1 CHRON. xvi. 10.

IT is with some of you half-past five in the morning and some faint streaks of light. With others, it is seven o'clock, and thus full dawn. With others, it is twelve o'clock at noon, and you sit in the full blaze of Gospel pardon. I bring you congratulation. Joseph delivered from Potiphar's dungeon, Daniel lifted from the lion's den, Saul arrested and unhorsed on the road to Damascus. Oh! you delivered captives, how your eyes should gleam, and your souls should bound, and your lips should sing in this pardon. From what land did you come? A land of darkness. What is to be your destiny? A land of light. Who got you out? Christ, the Lord. Can you sit so placidly and unmoved while all heaven comes to your soul with congratulation, and harps are strung, and crowns are lifted, and a great joy swings round the heaven at the news of your disenthralment? If you could realize out of what a pit you have been dug, to what height you are to be raised, and to what glory you are destined, you would spring to your feet with "Hosanna."

In 1808, there was a meeting of the emperors of France and Russia at Erfurt. There were distinguished men there

also from other lands. It was so arranged that when any of the emperors arrived at the door of the reception-room, the drum should beat three times ; but when a lesser dignitary should come, then the drum would sound but twice. After a while, the people in the audience-chamber heard two taps of the drum. They said : " A prince is coming." But after a while there were three taps, and they cried : " The emperor ! " Oh ! there is a more glorious arrival at your soul to-night. The drum beats twice at the coming in of the lesser joys and congratulations of your soul ; but it beats once, twice, thrice at the coming in of a glorious King, Jesus the Saviour, Jesus the God. I congratulate you. All are yours—things present and things to come.

SEPTEMBER TENTH.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.

" And they that use this world as not abusing it."—1 COR. vii. 31.

THERE are good people whose ideas of heaven are all shut out with clouds of tobacco smoke. There are people who dare to shatter the physical vase in which God has put the jewel of eternity. There are men with great hearts and intellects in bodies worn out by their own neglects—magnificent machinery capable of propelling a *Great Eastern* across the Atlantic, yet fastened in a racketty North River propeller. Martin Luther was so mighty for God, first, because he had a noble soul, and secondly, because he had a muscular development which would have enabled him to thresh any five of his persecutors, if it had been Christian so to do. Physical development which merely shows itself in fabulous lifting, or in perilous rope-walking, or in pugilistic encounter, excites only

our contempt ; but we confess to great admiration for the man who has a great soul in an athletic body, every nerve, muscle, and bone of which is consecrated to right uses. Oh, it seems to me outrageous that men, through neglect, should allow their physical health to go down beyond repair, spending the rest of their life, not in some great enterprise for God and the world, but in studying what is the best thing to take for dyspepsia ! A ship which ought, with all sail set and every man at his post, be carrying a rich cargo for eternity, employing all its men in stopping up leakages. When you may, through the gymnasium, work off your spleen and your querulousness and one-half of your physical and mental ailments, do not turn your back upon such a grand medicament.

SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH.

CHRIST ON THE SEA OF TROUBLE.

“Jesus walking on the sea.”—JOHN vi. 19.

THE ancients used to think that the straits entering the Red Sea were very dangerous places, and they supposed that every ship that went through those straits would be destroyed, and they were in the habit of putting on weeds of mourning for those who had gone on that voyage, as though they were actually dead. Do you know what they called those straits ? They called them the “Gate of Tears.” Oh, I stand at the gate of tears through which many of your loved ones have gone, and I want to tell you that all are not shipwrecked that have gone through those straits into the great ocean stretching out beyond. The sound that comes from that other shore on still nights when we are wrapped in prayer makes me think that the departed are not dead. *We* are the dead—we

who toil : we who weep : we who sin—*we* are the dead. How my heart aches for human sorrow ! this sound of breaking hearts that I hear all about me ! this last look of faces that never will brighten again ! this last kiss of lips that never will speak again ! this widowhood and orphanage ! oh, when will the day of sorrow be gone.

After the sharpest winter, the spring dismounts from the shoulder of a southern gale and puts its warm hand upon the earth, and in its palm there comes the grass, and there come the flowers, and God reads over the poetry of bird, and brook, and bloom, and pronounces it very good. What, my friends, if every winter had not its spring, and every night its day, and every gloom its glow, and every bitter now its sweet hereafter ! If you have been on the sea, you know, as the ship passes in the night, there is a phosphorescent track left behind it ; and as the waters roll up, they toss with unimaginable splendor. Well, across this great ocean of human trouble Jesus walks. Oh, that in the phosphorescent track of His feet we might follow and be blessed.

SEPTEMBER TWELFTH.

JESUS ALWAYS WITH US.

“I will not forsake my people.”—1 KINGS vi. 13.

UNDER God’s scrutiny passes all the world’s suffering. He sees Rizpah weeping among the rocks, and Naomi mourning for Elimelech, and Jeremiah for Jerusalem, and John Oldcastle in London Tower, and Eliot among the savages, and Swartz among the Hindoos, and Cranmer in the fire. Jesus of the manger stands by every poor man’s home. Jesus of the way-side defends the foot-sore pilgrim. Jesus of

Pilate's hall acquits the innocent prisoner. Jesus of the cross pities all the suffering. Jesus of the tomb watches over every sepulchre. Not alone, thou child of poverty, goest thou to thy distant toil, or sittest in the lonely cabin. Christ will go with thee all along the road to Emmaus. Not alone, sick one, dost thou endure the pang, the suffocation, the heart-ache. He whose hands were riven, and whose brow was pierced, holds thee in His infinite sympathy. Not alone, victim of persecution, dost thou endure the scoff and the buffeting. Not alone, stricken heart, must thou bear thy sore bereavement—for tell me, thou tomb of Lazarus, did not Jesus weep? Not alone, dying Christian, shalt thou go through the valley. The Shepherd gently leads His flock, and with His staff they shall be comforted. Oh, how this sweetens the bitterest cup, and lightens the darkest night, and smooths the roughest road, and calms the stormiest sea, and dulls the acutest anguish, and soothes the pang of earthly disaster and despair with the glorious announcement, "I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee." Then, if God thinks best, come poverty—Jesus was poor. Come sickness—Jesus was sick. Come slander—Jesus was abused. Come death—Jesus died. Come the grave—Jesus was buried. The record was kept on high. Oh, how the throng before the judgment-seat will thrill, when, before the universe, the book of tears is opened.

SEPTEMBER THIRTEENTH.

PRAY FOR PERSECUTORS.

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me."—ACTS ix. 4.

THE day of fire and sword for Christians seems to have gone by; but has the day of persecution ceased? No.

Are you not caricatured for your religion? In proportion as you try to serve God and be faithful to Him, are you not sometimes maltreated? That woman finds it hard to be a Christian, as her husband talks and jeers while she is trying to say her prayers or read the Bible. That daughter finds it hard to be a Christian with the whole family arrayed against her—father, mother, brother and sister making her the target of ridicule. That young man finds it hard to be a Christian in the shop, or factory, or store, when his comrades jeer at him because he will not go to the gambling-hell or the house of shame. Oh, no, the days of persecution have not ceased, and will not until the end of the world. But, oh! you persecuted ones, is it not time that you began to pray for your persecutors? They are no prouder, no fiercer, no more set in their way than was this persecutor of the text. He fell. They will fall, if Christ from the heavens grandly and gloriously look out on them. God can by His grace make a Renan believe in the divinity of Jesus, and a Tyndall in the worth of prayer. Robert Newton stamped the ship's deck in derisive indignation at Christianity only a little while before he became a Christian. "Out of my house," said a father to his daughter, "if you will keep praying;" yet before many months passed, the father knelt at the same altar with the child. And the Lord Jesus Christ is willing to look out from heaven upon that derisive opponent of the Christian religion, and address him not in glittering generalities, but calling him by name, "John! George! Henry!—Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?"

*SEPTEMBER FOURTEENTH.***VISITING OUR KINDEED.**

“And the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.”—GEN. xlii. 5.

THE king's wagons took Jacob up to see his lost boy, and so I really think that the King's wagons will take us up to see our lost kindred. How long is it since Joseph went out of your household? How many years is it now, last Christmas, or the fourteenth of next month? It was a dark night when he died, and a stormy day it was at the burial, and the clouds wept with you, and the winds sighed for the dead. The bell at Greenwood's gate rang only a few moments, but your heart has been tolling, tolling, ever since. You have been under a delusion, like Jacob of old. You have thought that Joseph was dead. You put his name first in the birth-record of the family Bible, and then you put it in the death-record of the family Bible, and you have been deceived. *Joseph is yet alive.* He is more alive than you are. Of all the sixteen thousand millions of children that statisticians say have gone into the future world, there is not one of them dead, and the King's wagons will take you up to see them. You often think how glad you will be to see them. Have you never thought, my brother, my sister, how glad they will be to see you? Jacob was no more glad to see Joseph than Joseph was to see Jacob. Every time the door in heaven opens, they look to see if it is you coming in. Joseph, once standing in the palace, burst out crying when he thought of Jacob—afar off. And the

heaven of your little ones will not be fairly begun until you get there. All the kindnesses shown them by immortals will not make them forget you. There they are, the radiant throngs that went out from your homes! I throw a kiss to the sweet darlings. They are all well now in the palace. The crippled child has a sound foot now. A little lame child says, "Ma, will I be lame in heaven?" "No, my darling, you won't be lame in heaven." A little sick child says, "Ma, will I be my sick in heaven?" "No, my dear, you won't be sick in heaven." A little blind child says, "Ma, will I be blind in heaven?" "No, my dear, you won't be blind in heaven." They are all well there.

SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH.

GRACE FOR THE SOUL.

"Let us have grace."—HEB. xii. 28.

MAN and beast perish without salt. What are those paths across the Western prairies? Why, they were made there by deer and buffalo going to and coming away from the salt "licks." Chemists and physicians, all the world over, tell us that salt is a necessity of life. And so with the grace of God: you must have it or die. I know a great many people speak of it as a mere adornment, a sort of shoulder-strap adorning a soldier, or a light, frothing dessert, brought in after the greatest part of the banquet of life is over, or a medicine to be taken after calomel and mustard-plasters have failed to do their work; but ordinarily a mere superfluity, a string of bells around a horse's neck while he draws the load, and in no wise helping him to draw it. So far from that, I declare the grace of God to be the first and the last necessity. It is food we must take,

or starve into an eternity of famine. It is clothing, without which we freeze to the mast of infinite terror. It is the plank, and the only plank, on which we can float shoreward. It is the ladder, and the only ladder, on which we can climb away from eternal burnings. It is a positive necessity for the soul. You can tell very easily what the effect would be if a person refused to take salt into the body. The energies would fail, the lungs would struggle with the air, slow fevers would crawl through the brain, the heart would flutter, and the life would be gone. That process of death is going on in many a one because they take not the salt of divine grace. The soul becomes weaker and weaker, and after a while the pulses of life will stop entirely. Stretch out that soul on the bier of eternal death! Coffin it in a groan! Strew on it wreaths of nightshade! Cover it with a pall of eternal blackness! Set no burning lamps at the head and at the feet, but rather the extinguished torches of the silly virgins whose lamps went out. Let the pall-bearers come in—Remorse and Despair and Anguish and Pain, and shoulder it, and take it away with solemn and awful tramp, remembering that they carry the corpse of a soul. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.” Salt, a necessity for the life of the body—the grace of God a necessity for the life of the soul.

SEPTEMBER SIXTEENTH.

CHURCH PRIDE.

“The pride of Israel doth testify to his face; therefore shall Israel fall.”—*HOSSEA* v. 5.

THE pride of the Church must come down. The exclusiveness of the Church must come down! The financial

boastings of the Church must come down! If momentary success were the chief idea in the Church, then I say that the present modes of conducting finances were the best. If it is to see how many dollars you can gain, then the present mode is the best. But if it is the saving of souls from sin and death, and bringing the mighty populations of our cities to the knowledge of God, then I cry, *Revolution!* It is coming fast. I feel it in the air. I hear the rumbling of an earthquake that shall shake down, in one terrific crash, the arrogance of our modern Christianity.

The sea is covered with wrecks, and multitudes are drowning. We come out with the Church life-boat, and the people begin to clamber in, and we shout, "Stop! stop! You must think it costs nothing to keep a life-boat. Those seats at the prow are one dollar a piece, those in the middle fifty cents, and those in the stern two shillings. Please to pay up, or else flounder on a little longer till the mission boat, whose work it is to save you penniless wretches, shall come along and pick you up. We save only first-class sinners in this boat."

The talk is, whether Protestant churches or Roman Catholic churches are coming out ahead. I tell you, Protestants, this truth plainly: that until your churches are as free as are the Roman Catholic cathedrals, they will beat you. In their cathedrals the millionaire and the beggar kneel side by side. And until that time comes in our churches, we cannot expect the favor of God, or permanent spiritual prosperity.

Revolution! It may be that, before the Church learns its duty to the masses, God will scourge it, and come with the whip of omnipotent indignation, and drive out the money-changers. It may be that there is to be a great day of upsetting before that time shall come. If it must come, O Lord God, let it come now!

*SEPTEMBER SEVENTEENTH.***GOD IN MINUTE AFFAIRS.**

"The very hairs of your head are all numbered."—*MATT. x. 30.*

WE associate God with revolutions. We can see a divine purpose in the discovery of America, in the invention of the art of printing, in the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot, in the contrivance of the needle-gun, in the ruin of an Austrian or Napoleonic despotism ; but how hard it is to see God in the minute personal affairs of our lives. We think of God as making a record of the starry host, but cannot realize the Bible truth that He knows how many hairs are on your head. It seems a grand thing that God provided food for hundreds of thousands of Israelites in the desert, but we cannot appreciate the truth that, when a sparrow is hungry, God stoops down and opens its mouth and puts the seed in it. We are struck with the idea that God fills the universe with His presence, but cannot understand how He encamps in the crystal palace of a dew-drop, or finds room to stand, without being crowded, between the alabaster pillars of a pond-lily. We can see God in the clouds. Can we see God in these flowers on the platform? We are apt to place God upon some great stage—or to try to do it—expecting Him there to act out His stupendous projects ; but we forget that the life of a Cromwell, an Alexander, or a Washington, or an archangel, is not more under divine inspection than your life or mine. Pompey thought that there must be a mist over the eyes of God

because He so much favored Cæsar. But there is no such mist. He sees everything. We say God's path is in the great waters. True enough ; but no more certainly than He is in the water in the glass on the table. We say God guides the stars in their courses. Magnificent truth ! But no more certain truth than that He decides which ferry-boat you shall to-morrow morning take to New York.

SEPTEMBER EIGHTEENTH.

COWARDLY CHRISTIAN.

“Let me not be ashamed.”—Ps. xxv. 2.

MY text intimates that there are people ashamed of Christ. They recoil at the idea of being called Christians. If you should call them worldlings, they would stand that. If you should call them half-a-dozen other names, they would stand that. But the idea of their being Christians ! They are embarrassed. Their cheek is crimson with shame and rage when you suggest it. They say : “You are mistaken. Have I ever given any signs of being pious ? Did you ever see me weak ? Did you ever see me pray ? No sir ! I want you to understand that I am not a Christian.” Ashamed of the sweetest name that ever thrilled the lips of men or woke up the harps of heaven ! For that precious name others have suffered. For that precious name's sake Anne Askew went from her home to the prison, and from the prison to the rack, and from the rack to the stake, and when asked in her last moments if she would give up Christ, she said : “No ; I did not come here to deny my Lord.” For that precious name's sake Zwinglius perished in battle, and Jerome of Prague, consumed at the stake, exclaimed, “O

Christ! this body in flames I give to Thee." For that precious name's sake Perpetua and Felicitas, two gentle women, were denuded in the public streets and hooked to death by mad cattle, while the mob jeered as they died for Jesus. For that precious name's sake the Theban legion perished—six thousand six hundred and sixty-six Christians slashed to pieces by the sword. For that precious name's sake some were tied down on the beach of the sea at low-water mark, so that the waves, rising, floated them to the throne. For that precious name's sake some were devoured of dogs, and some were bedaubed of combustibles and set on fire, and some were sewed up in bags with reptiles. Aye, under Dominican forty thousand were put to death for Christ; under Dioclesian nine hundred and forty-four thousand perished. And yet, hear, O heaven, and earth, and hell! in this day, when all the fires of persecution are put out and the inquisition has been abolished, there are those who for that name's sake cannot take the scoff of their companion or the jeer of a godless world. Ashamed of that name which it now costs so little to avow! Ashamed of that name which was the last word on the dying lip of your father, and in the song with which your mother sang you to sleep in those times before the evil days came when you forgot her counsel and bröke her dear old heart.

SEPTEMBER NINETEENTH.

THE GOSPEL MIRROR.

"And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses."—
Ex. xxxviii. 8.

I HAVE to say that this is the only looking-glass in which a man can see himself as he is. There are some mirrors that flatter the features, and make you look better than you

are. Then there are other mirrors that distort your features, and make you look worse than you are ; but I want to tell you that this looking-glass of the Gospel shows a man just as he is. When the priests entered the ancient tabernacle, one glance at the burnished side of this laver showed them their need of cleansing ; so this Gospel shows the soul its need of divine washing. " All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." That is one showing. " All we, like sheep, have gone astray." That is another showing. " From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no health in us." That is another showing. The world calls these defects, imperfections, or eccentricities, or erratic behavior, or " wild oats," or " high living ;" but the Gospel calls them sin, transgression, filth—the abominable thing that God hates. It was just one glance at that mirror that made Paul cry out, " Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? and that made David cry out, " Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ;" and that made Martin Luther cry out, " Oh, my sins, my sins !" I am not talking about bad habits. You and I do not need any Bible to tell us that bad habits are wrong, that blasphemy and evil-speaking are wrong. But I am talking of a sinful nature, the source of all bad thoughts, as well as of all bad actions. The Apostle Paul calls their roll in the first chapter of Romans. They are a regiment of death encamping around every heart, holding it in a tyranny from which nothing but the grace of God can deliver it.

*SEPTEMBER TWENTIETH.***THE BEST FOR CHRIST.**

"As he sat at meat there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious."—MARK xiv. 3.

THAT woman could have got a vase that would not have cost so much as those made of alabaster. She might have brought perfume that would have cost only fifty pence; this cost three hundred. As far as I can understand, her whole fortune was in it. She might have been more economical; but no—she gets the very best box, and puts in it the very best perfume, and pours it all out on the head of her Redeemer. My brothers and sisters in Christ, the trouble is that we bring to Christ too cheap a box. If we have one of alabaster and one of earthen ware, we keep the first for ourselves, and we give the latter to Christ. We owe Jesus the best of our time, the best of our talents, the best of everything. Is there an hour in the day when we are wider awake than any other, more capable of thought and feeling, let us bring that to Christ. We are apt to take a few moments in the morning when we are getting awake, or a few moments at night when we are getting asleep, to Jesus. If there be an hour in the day when we are most appreciative of God's goodness, and Christ's pardon, and heaven's joy, oh, that is the alabaster box to bring to Jesus. We owe Christ the very best years of our life. When the sight is the clearest, when the hearing is the acutest, when the arm is the strongest, when the nerves are the steadiest, when the imagination is the bright-

est, let us come to Jesus, and not wait until our joints are stiffened with rheumatism, and the glow is gone out of our temperament, and we arise in the morning as weary as when we laid down at night.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIRST.

EARTHLY AUTHORITY PASSES AWAY.

“The fashion of this world passeth away”—*JOHN ii. 17.*

OF how much worth now is the crown of Cæsar? Who bids for it? Who cares now anything about the Amphictyonic Council or the laws of Lycurgus? Who trembles now because Xerxes crossed the Hellespont on a bridge of boats! who fears because Nebuchadnezzar thunders at the gates of Jerusalem? Who cares now whether or not Cleopatra marries Antony? Who crouches before Ferdinand, or Boniface, or Alaric? Can Cromwell dissolve the English Parliament now? Is William, prince of Orange, king of the Netherlands? No; no! However much Elizabeth may love the Russian crown, she must pass it to Peter, and Peter to Catherine, and Catherine to Paul, and Paul to Alexander, and Alexander to Nicholas. Leopold puts the German sceptre into the hand of Joseph, and Philip comes down off the Spanish throne to let Ferdinand go on. House of Aragon, house of Hapsburg, house of Stuart, house of Bourbon, quarreling about everything else but agreeing in this: “The fashion of this world passeth away.” But have all these dignitaries gone? Can they not be called back? I have been in assemblages where I have heard the roll called, and many distinguished men have answered. If I should call the roll to-night of some of those mighty ones who have gone, I wonder if they would

not answer. I will call the roll. I will call the roll of the Kings first: Alfred the Great! William the Conqueror! Frederick II.! Louis XVI.! No answer. I will call the roll of the poets: Robert Southey! Thomas Campbell! John Keats! George Crabbe! Robert Burns! Lord Byron! No answer. I call the roll of the artists: Michael Angelo! Paul Veronese! William Turner! Christopher Wren! No answer. Eyes closed. Ears deaf. Lips silent. Hands palsied. Sceptre, pencil, pen, sword, put down forever. In literature, in art, in government, "The fashion of this world passeth away."

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SECOND.

IT IS FOR YOUR GOOD.

"The ways of the Lord are right."—HOSEA xiv. 19.

WHO has not come to some pass in life thoroughly inexplicable? You say, "What does this mean? What is God going to do with me now? He tells me that all things work together for good. This does not look like it." You continue to study the dispensation, and after awhile guess about what God means. "He means to teach me this. I think He means to teach me that. Perhaps it is to humble my pride. Perhaps it is to make me feel more dependent. Perhaps to teach me the uncertainty of life." But after all, it is only a guess—a looking through the glass, darkly. The Bible assures us there shall be a satisfactory unfolding. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." You will know why God took to Himself that only child. Next door there was a household of seven children. Why not take one from that group, instead of your only one? Why

single out the dwelling in which there was only one heart beating responsive to yours? Why did God give you a child at all, if He meant to take it away? Why fill the cup of your gladness brimming, if He meant to dash it down? Why allow all the tendrils of your heart to wind around that object, and then, when every fibre of your own life seemed to be interlocked with the child's life, with strong hand to tear you apart, until you fall, bleeding and crushed, your dwelling desolate, your hopes blasted, your heart broken? Do you suppose that God will explain that? Yea. He will make it plainer than any mathematical problem—as plain as that two and two make four. In the light of the throne you will see that it was right—all right. “Just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints!”

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.”

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-THIRD.

THE LINE OF PROTECTION.

“Thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by. And she bound the scarlet line in the window.”—*JOSH. ii. 19, 21.*

WHEN the Israelitish army came up against Jericho, they said, “What is that in the window?” Some one said, “That is a scarlet line.” “Oh,” said some one else, “that must be the house that was to be spared. Don't touch it.” That line was thick enough and long enough and conspicuous enough to save Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and her sisters—the entire family. Have our households as good protection? You have bolts on the front

door and on the back, and fastenings to the window, and perhaps burglar alarms, and perhaps an especial watchman blowing his whistle at midnight before your dwelling; but all that cannot protect your household. Is there on our houses the sign of a Saviour's sacrifice and mercy? Is there a scarlet line in the window? Have your children been consecrated to Christ? Have you been washed in the blood of the atonement! In what room do you have family prayers? Show me where it is you are accustomed to kneel. The sky is black with the coming deluge. Is your family inside or outside the ark? It is a sad thing for a man to reject Christ; but to lie down in the night of sin, across the path to heaven, so that his family come up and trip over him into an infinity of horrors—that is the longest, the deepest, the mightiest. It is a sad thing for a mother to reject Christ; but to gather her family around her, and then take them by the hand and lead them out into paths of worldliness, away from God and heaven—oh, it will take all the dirges of earth and hell to weep out that agony. I suppose there are families where there has not been an audible prayer offered for ten years. There may be geranium and cactus in the window, and upholstery hovering over it, and childish faces looking out of it; but there is no scarlet thread stretched across it. Although that house may seem to be on the finest street in all the city, it is really on the edge of a marsh across which sweep most poisonous malarias, and it has a sandy foundation, and its splendor will come down, and great will be the fall of it. A home without God! A prayerless father! An undevout mother! Awful! awful! Is that you? Will you keep on, my brother, on the wrong road, and take your loved ones with you? May God arrest you before you complete the ruin of those whom you ought to save. You see I talk plainly to you, just as I would have you talk plainly to me. Time is so short that we cannot waste any of it on apologies or indirections or

circumlocutions. You owe to your children, O father, O mother, more than food, more than clothing, more than shelter—you owe them the example of a prayerful, consecrated, pronounced, out-and-out Christian life. You cannot afford to keep it away from them.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH.

AN EARNEST MINISTRY.

“ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”—MATT. xxiv. 46.

UNIVERSALISM is *withering to all earnestness in soul-saving*. What is the matter with a great many of the Protestant Churches to-day? They have this disease of Universalism in a milder form. They adopt the Heidelberg Catechism or the Westminster Assembly, or they sit in Methodist conferences, or in Baptist associations; but there is so much Universalism in the air, they are cowed down. They dare not preach a rugged Gospel. They say “heaven” with a shout, but they say “hell” with a whisper, so that the people do not know exactly what they did say, and the Calvinists think they said “hell,” and the Restorationists think they said “bell,” and the merchants think they said “sell,” and so they are all satisfied. Oh, I abhor this mamby-pambyism in religion. What is the reason we do not have any more conversions in our Churches? It is because we do not sufficiently preach rewards and punishments. We tell the righteous it shall be well with them; but not in the same emphasis do we tell the wicked it shall be ill with them. Why did Samuel Davies, and Nettleton, and Baxter, and the Wesleys, and Whitefield, and Osborne and Daniel Baker count the conversions under their ministry by tens and tens of thousands? It was because their sermons

rang with the doxologies of the saved, and crackled with the fires of the lost. Did you ever hear of a great awakening in a Universalist Church? Never. What would they get wakened about? They are all safe, always have been safe, always will be. What is the use of the jailor's rushing through between the falling walls of the prison, crying: "What must I do to be saved!" He was safe before the prison began to rock. What is the use of the sinking man's crying: "Lord, save; I perish?" Stop your noise. The water is not up to your chin! What is the use of making such a fuss about three thousand souls saved on the Day of Pentecost? They were as saved before as they were after. What did Paul mean when he feared becoming a castaway? Castaway on what coast? The coast of everlasting love? Why are the wicked in the last day represented as crying out: "Rocks and mountains fall on us, and hide us from the face of the Lamb?" No danger! Oh, if we want to bring souls to Jesus Christ, men and women of God, we must tell the whole truth, and hide none of it. What means that picture, in some of the old books, representing Martin Luther almost bent double by a paroxysm of earnestness while he is preaching about men's souls? What meant Thomas Chalmers, standing in his Edinburgh pulpit, warning people to flee from the wrath to come until he actually foamed at the mouth? Why did John Summerfield and Robert McCheyne preach themselves so early into the grave? Why was it that when Mr. Venn described the perils of an immortal soul, history tells us the audience "dropped like slaked lime?" Why was Edward Payson so anxious for the salvation of men that his doctors said his body was in a continuous fever? Oh, my brethren, what we in the ministry most want, is to be aroused, convicted, melted, re-baptized, surcharged with the power of the Lord God Almighty.

*SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH.***BENEFITS OF GOD.**

“ Bless the Lord, O my soul : and forget not all his benefits.”—Ps. ciii. 2.

WE have found that though the world is blasted with sin, it is a very bright and beautiful place to reside in. We have had joys innumerable. There is no hostility between the gospel and the merriments and the festivities of life. I do not think that we fully enough appreciate the worldly pleasures God gives us. When you recount your enjoyments you do not go far enough back. Why do you not go back to the time when you were an infant in your mother's arms, looking up into the heaven of her smile ; to those days when you filled the house with the uproar of boisterous merriment ; when you shouted as you pitched the ball on the playground ; when on the cold, sharp, winter night, muffled up, on skates you shot out over the resounding ice of the pond ? Have you forgotten all those good days that the Lord gave you ! Were you never a boy ? Were you never a girl ? Between those times and this, how many mercies, how many kindnesses the Lord has bestowed upon you. How many joys have breathed up to you from the flowers, and shone down to you from the stars, and chanted to you with the voice of soaring bird, and tumbling cascade, and booming sea, and thunders that with bayonets of fire charged down the mountain side ! Joy ! Joy ! Joy ! If there is any one who has a right to the enjoyments of the world, it is the Christian,

for God has given him a lease to everything in the promise: "All are yours." But I have to tell you that a man who measures his life on earth by mere worldly gratification, is a most unwise man. Our life is not to be a game of chess. It is not a dance in lighted hall, to quick music. It is not the froth of an ale pitcher. It is not the settlings of a wine cup. It is not a banquet with intoxication and roystering. It is the first step on a ladder that mounts into the skies, or the first step on a road that plunges into a horrible abyss. So that in this world we are only keying up the harp of eternal rapture, or forging the chain of an eternal bondage.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH.

MARRIAGES.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."—2 COR. vi. 14.

WHEN a man builds his earthly home, he decides his eternity. I know that affiancing is usually looked upon as something to be merry over, instead of something to be prayed about; but what step is there fraught with such weal or woe? Is it not strange that an affair charged with such temporal and eternal import should depend on a whim or a glance? I do not think I put the case too strongly when I say that when a young man marries, he marries for heaven or hell! If he bring into his household the right kind of influences, the home will be elevated and upward in its impulsions. If he bring the wrong kind of influences into his house, he will go down, he must go down. Build not your home on the color of a fair cheek or the sparkle of a bright eye, for life is not a gay romance, but a tremendous reality; and there will come a time in your house when you will want not so much a

pet or a toy as a heroine. There will be a time when the outside world will be dark enough, and you will come into your home wanting, most of all, a cheerful word, and to see a countenance unbecombed, yet sympathetic. There is a man—his head is gray now—who looks back to the time of some great business disaster, when his soul sank within him, and his mind almost dropped from its throne ; yet after the duns, and toils and annoyances, and insults of the day, he went to his house and shut the door against the world of annoyance, and there, amid the sweet home voices of those who had never betrayed him, found a foretaste of that heaven where panics never come. Why, he hardly dare to tell his wife of the business misfortune. He says : “ She wont be able to endure it.” But when he was compelled to tell her, how surprised he was to find that she was as happy in a small house as in a large house ; and after the piano went, she still could sing without the accompaniment as well as she ever sang with it—

“ Jesus lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high ;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh, receive my soul at last.”

There have been Christian women who have so had their domestic troubles sanctified to them that they could get more music out of a Wheeler & Wilson’s sewing machine than ever before in their life they could get out of a Chickering grand or a Steinway.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

GOD'S FAVORITES.

“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.”—HEB. xii. 6.

THERE is a child who at two years of age had a fall. He has never got over it. The scarlet fever muffled his hearing. He is not what he once was. That child has caused the mother more anxious nights than all the other children. If he coughs in the night, she springs out of a sound sleep and goes to him. The last thing she does when going out of the house is to give a charge in regard to him. The first thing on coming in is to ask in regard to him. Why, the children of the family all know that he is the favorite, and say, “Mother, you let him do just as he pleases, and you give him a great many things which you do not give us. He is your favorite.” The mother smiles; she knows it is so. So he ought to be; for if there is any one in the world who needs sympathy more than another, it is an invalid child, weary on the first mile of life’s journey; carrying an aching head, a weak side, an irritated lung. So the mother ought to make him a favorite. God, our Mother, has favorites. “Whom the Lord *loveth* he chasteneth.” That is, one whom He *especially* loves He chasteneth. God loves us all; but is there one weak, and sick, and sore, and wounded, and suffering, and faint? That is the one who lies nearest and more perpetually on the great, loving heart of God. Why, it never coughs but our Mother, God, hears it. It never stirs a weary limb in the bed but our

Mother, God, knows of it. There is no such a watcher as God. The best nurse may be overborne by fatigue and fall asleep in the chair ; but God, our Mother, after being up a year of nights with a suffering child, never slumbers nor sleeps.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH.

CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."—ECCLES. ix. '10.

I ADVISE that you be busy in Christian work. How many Sabbaths in the year? Fifty-two. If the text be true of you, it does not say at what time you may go, and therefore it is unsafe to count on all of the fifty-two Sundays. As you are as likely to go in the first half of the year as in the last half, I think we had better divide the fifty-two into halves. and calculate only on twenty-six Sabbaths. Come, Christian men, Christian women, what can you do in twenty-six Sabbaths. Divide the three hundred and sixty-five days into two parts : what can you do in one hundred and eighty-two days? What, by the way of saving your family, the church, and the world? You will not, through all the ages of eternity, in heaven get over the dishonor and the outrage of going into glory, and having helped none up to the same place. It will be found that many a Sabbath-school teacher has taken into heaven her whole class ; that Daniel Baker, the evangelist, took hundreds into heaven ; that Doddridge took in many thousands ; that Paul took in a hundred million. How many will you take in? If you get into heaven, and find none there that you sent, and that there are none to come through your instrumentality, I beg of you to crawl under some seat in the back corner, and never come out, lest the redeemed get their

eyes on you, and some one cry out: "That is the man who never lifted hand or voice for the redemption of his fellows! Look at him, all heaven!" Better be busy. Better pick the gunlock, and bite the cartridge, and be sure the caps are good. Better put the plough in deep. Better say what you have to say quickly. Better cry the alarm. Better fall on your knees. Better lay hold with both hands. What you now leave undone for Christ will forever be undone.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-NINTH.

PREJUDICE.

"A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last."—GEN. xlix. 19.

THERE are men who, for various reasons, do not believe in these things. My reply to this is, seek out a church and a minister that you *do* like. That is the religious advantage that men have in large towns, that they have nowhere else. They may have their pick, high churches and low churches, rich churches and poor churches, aristocratic churches and democratic churches, pew-renting churches and free churches, Calvinistic churches and Arminian churches, ministers white and black, learned and ignorant, fantastic and plain, old and young, manuscript-reading and extemporaneous, some wearing fine gowns and others a very poor coat, ministers argumentative or figurative, ministers statistical or poetical.

Look over the whole list of churches and clergymen, and I think that you will find one good enough for your soul. Keep, if you will, your prejudice against all other institutions, but love that one. To some of you I commend the Episcopalian liturgy as the best; to others, the informal worship of the Methodists. Some of you had better be sprinkled, and others

had better go down to be dipped in the flood. To some of you I commend a church where the music is led by a precentor, and all the people join in the singings ; to others, a church where four persons stand in the loft and conduct the music, and during the dull passages in prayer and sermon, write sentimental notes, or eat philopenas. Amid all the denominations there must be one place where your soul will be blessed. This very church, to some of you, shall be the way to heaven ; and through this one break in the long fortification of your prejudice I press through with the battle-cry of the Cross, feeling that though these prejudices have been *the troop that overcame Christ, He shall overcome at the last* :

SEPTEMBER THIRTIETH.

EGOTISM THAT IS NOT SINFUL.

“Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—2 PETER iii. 18.

IT is not sinful egotism for a Christian man to say : “I am purer than I used to be. I am more consecrated to Christ than I used to be. I have got over a great many of the bad habits in which I used to indulge. I am a great deal better man than I used to be.” There is no sinful egotism in that. It is not base egotism for a soldier to say : “I know more about military tactics than I used to before I took a musket in my hand, and learned to ‘present arms,’ and when I was a pest to the drill-officer.” It is not base egotism for a sailor to say : “I know better how to ‘pall’ the windlass and clew down the mizzen topsail, than I used to before I had ever seen a ship.” And there is no sinful egotism when Christian men, fighting the battles of the Lord, or if you will have it, voyaging towards a haven of eternal rest, say : “I know more about

spiritual tactics, and about voyaging towards heaven, than I used to." Why, there are those in this presence who have measured lances with many a foe, and unhorsed them. There are Christian men here who have become swarthy by hammering at the forge of calamity. They stand on an entirely different plane of character from that which they once occupied. They are measuring their life on earth by golden-gated Sabbaths, by pentacostal prayer-meetings, by communion tables, by baptismal fonts, by hallelujahs in the temple. They have stood on Sinai and heard it thunder. They have stood on Pisgah and looked over into the promised land. They have stood on Calvary and seen the cross bleed. They can, like Paul, the Apostle, write on their heaviest troubles, light, and but for a moment. Darkest night of their soul is irradiated, as was the night over Bethlehem, by the faces of those who have come to proclaim glory and good-cheer. They are only waiting for the gate to open, and the chains to fall off and the glory to begin.

OCTOBER FIRST.

THE PERFECT SHIP.

"We took ship."—ACTS xxi. 6.

YOU must have Love for a helm, to guide and turn the craft. Neither Pride, nor Ambition, nor Avarice will do for a rudder. Love, not only in the heart, but flashing in the eye, and tingling in the hand—Love, married to work, which many look upon as so homely a bride—Love, not like brooks which foam and rattle, yet do nothing, but Love like a river, that runs up the steps of mill-wheels, and works in in the harness of factory bands—Love, that will not pass by on the other side, but visits the man who fell among thieves

near Jericho, not merely saying "Poor fellow! you are dreadfully hurt," but, like the good Samaritan, pours in oil and wine, and pays his board at the tavern.

There must also be a prow, arranged to cut and over-ride the billow. That is Christian perseverance. There are three mountain surges that sometimes dash against a soul in a minute—the world, the flesh, and the devil; and that is a well-built prow that can bound over them. For lack of this, many have put back and never started again. It is the broadside wave that so often sweeps the deck and fills the hatches; but that which strikes in front is harmless. Meet troubles courageously and you surmount them. Stand on the prow, and as you wipe off the spray of the split surge, cry out with the apostle, "None of these things move me." Let all your fears stay aft. The right must conquer. Know that Moses, in an ark of bulrushes, can run down a war-steamer.

Have a good, strong anchor. "Which hope we have as an anchor." By this strong cable and windlass, hold on to your anchor. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Do not use the anchor wrongfully. Do not always stay in the same latitude and longitude. You will never ride up the harbor of Eternal Rest if you all the way drag your anchor. But you must have sails. Vessels are not fit for the sea until they have the flying jib, the foresail, the topgallant, the sky-sail, the gaff-sail, and other canvas. Faith is our canvas. Hoist it, and the winds of heaven will drive you ahead. Sails made out of any other canvas than Faith will be slit to tatters by the first northeaster. Strong faith never lost a battle. It will crush foes, blast rocks, quench lightnings, thresh mountains. It is a shield to the warrior, a crank to the most ponderous wheel, a lever to pry up pyramids, a drum whose beat gives strength to the step of the heavenly soldiery, and sails to waft ships laden with priceless pearls from the harbor of earth to the harbor of heaven.

But you are not yet equipped. You must have what seamen call the *running rigging*. This comprises the ship's braces, halliards, clew-lines, and such like. Without these the yards could not be braced, the sails lifted, nor the canvas in anywise managed. We have *prayer* for the running rigging. Unless you understand this tackling you are not a spiritual seaman. By pulling on these ropes, you hoist the sails of faith and turn them every whither. The prow of courage will not cut the wave, nor the sail of faith spread and flap its wing, unless you have strong prayer for a halliard.

One more arrangement, and you will be ready for the sea. You must have a compass—which is the Bible. Look at it every day, and always sail by it as its needle points towards the star of Bethlehem. Through fog and darkness and storm it works faithfully.

OCTOBER SECOND.

I SAY UNTO YOU STAND.

“Trust in the Lord for ever.”—Is. xxvi. 4.

“OH,” says some one, “I was a Christian twenty years ago!” That does not mean anything to me. What are you now? We are not talking, my brother, about pardon ten years ago, but about pardon now—a fresh salvation. Suppose a time of war should come, and I could show the Government that I had been loyal to it twelve years ago, would that excuse me from taking an oath of allegiance now? Suppose you ask me about my physical health, and I should say I was well fifteen years ago—that does not say how I am now. The Gospel of Jesus Christ comes and demands present allegiance, present fealty, pres-

ent moral health ; and yet how many Christians there are seeking to live entirely in past experience, who seem to have no experience of present mercy and pardon ! When I was on the sea, and there came up a great storm, and officers and crew and passengers all thought we must go down, I began to think of my life insurance, and whether, if I were taken away, my family would be cared for ; and then I thought, Is the premium paid up ? and I said, Yes. Then I felt comfortable. Yet there are men who in religious matters are looking back to past insurance. They have let it run out, and they have nothing for the present, no hope nor pardon—falling back on the old insurance policy of ten, twenty, thirty years ago. If I want to find out how a friend feels towards me, do I go to the drawer and find some old yellow letters written to me ten or twelve years ago ? No ; I go to the letter that was stamped the day before yesterday in the post-office, and I find how he feels towards me. It is not in regard to old communications we had with Jesus Christ, it is communications we have now. Are we not in sympathy with Him this morning, and is He not in sympathy with us.

OCTOBER THIRD.

GLOOMY SABBATHS.

“A day of darkness and gloominess.”—JER. ii. 2.

THERE are some very good parents who have the faculty of making the Sabbath a great gloom. Their children run up against the wall of parental lugubriousness on that day. They are sorry when Sunday comes, and glad when it goes away. They think of everything bad on that day. It is the worst day to them, really, in all the week. There are persons

who, because they were brought up in Christian families where there were wrong notions about the Sabbath, have gone out into dissipation and will be lost. A man said to me, "I have a perfect disgust for the Sabbath-day. I never saw my father smile on Sunday. It was such a dreadful day to me, when I was a boy, I never got over it, and never will." Those parents did not "call the Sabbath a delight;" they made it a gloom. But there are houses represented here this morning where the children say through the week, "I wonder when Sunday will come!" They are anxious to have it come. I hear their hosanna in the house; I hear their hosanna in the school. God intended the Sabbath to be especially a day for the father. The mother is home all the week. Sabbath-day comes, and God says to the father, who has been busy from Monday morning to Saturday night at the store, or away from home, "This is your day. See what you can do in this little flock in preparing them for heaven. This day I set apart for you." You know very well that there are many parents who are mere sutlers of the household; they provide the food and raiment; once in a while, perhaps, they hear the child read a line or two in the new primer; or if there be a case of especial discipline, and the mother cannot manage it, the child is brought up in the court-martial of the father's discipline and punished. That is all there is of it. No scrutiny of that child's immortal interests, no realization of the fact that the child will soon go out in a world where there are gigantic and overwhelming temptations that have swamped millions.

OCTOBER FOURTH.

GOD EXAMINING RICHES.

“Your riches are corrupted.”—JAMES v. 2.

HERE is your money-safe. The manufacturer and your self only know how it can be opened. You have the key. You touch the lock, and the ponderous door swings back. But let me tell you that, however firmly barred and bolted your money-safe may be, you cannot keep God out. He will come, some day, into your counting-room, and he will demand, “Where did that note of hand come from? How do you account for this security? Where did you get that mortgage from? What does *this* mean?” If it is all right, God will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Be prospered in this world. Be happy in the world to come. If it is all wrong, he will say, “Depart, ye cursed. Be miserable for your iniquities in this life; and then go down and spend your eternity with thieves and horse-jockeys, and pickpockets.” You have an old photograph of the signs on your street. Why have those signs nearly all changed within the last twenty years? Does the passing away of a generation account for it? Oh, no! Does the fact that there are hundreds of honest men who go down every year account for it? Oh, no! This is the secret: The Lord God has been walking through Wall Street, Broadway, Water Street, Fulton Street, Atlantic Street; and He has been adjusting things according to the principles of eternal rectitude. The time will come when,

through the revolutionary power of this Gospel, a falsehood, instead of being called exaggeration, equivocation, or evasion, will be branded a lie! And stealings that now sometimes go under the head of percentages, and commissions, and bonuses, will be put into the catalogue of state-prison offences. Society will be turned inside-out and upside-down, and ransacked of God's truth, until business dishonesties shall come to an end, and all double-dealing; and God will overturn, and overturn, and overturn.

OCTOBER FIFTH.

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE.

"Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."—DAN. v. 27.

GOD is every day estimating churches. He puts a great church into the scales. He puts the minister, and the choir, and the grand structure, that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, on the same side. On the other side of the scales He puts the idea of spiritual life that the Church ought to possess, or brotherly love, or faith, or sympathy for the poor. Up goes the grand meeting-house, with its minister and choir. God says that a Church is of much worth only as it saves souls; and if, with all your magnificent machinery, you save but a handful of men when you might save a multitude, He will spew you out of his mouth. Weighed, and found wanting!

God is also estimating nations. He put the Spanish monarchy in the scales a few months ago, and found it insufficient, and cast it aside. He put the French monarch, with his empire, in the scales. Napoleon cried out, "See what I have done to enlarge the Boulevards! I kindled up the glories of the Champs Elysées! I enlarged the Tuileries! I built the

gilded Opera House!" Then God put on one side of the scales the Emperor, and the Boulevards, and the Champs Elysées, and the Tuileries, and the gilded Opera House, but on the other side of the scales He put that man's abominations and the outrages he had committed against the French nation. Down went the sins; up went the emperor, with all his surroundings. "Weighed in the balance, and found wanting!"

OCTOBER SIXTH.

SIN IS A LIAR.

"The way of the transgressor is hard."—Prov. xiii. 15.

SIN is a scarification of the soul. Sin comes to the young man. It says, "Take a game of cards—it won't hurt you. Besides that, it is the way men make their fortune." It is only a small stake. See how easy it is. The young man plays and wins a horse and carriage and a house—wins a fortune! "See how easy it is," says sin; "it don't cost you anything! Look at those young men who stick to their salaries, away down at the foot of the ladder, while you are in great prosperity." The young man is encouraged. He goes on and plays larger and larger; the tide turns against him; he loses the horse, loses the carriage, loses the house, loses the fortune. Crack! goes the sheriff's mallet on the last household valuable. Down lower and lower the man falls, until he pitches pennies for a drink, or clutches for devils that trample him in wild delirium. "The way of the transgressor is hard."

Sin comes to a young man and says, "Take this glass—it won't hurt you. It has a very fine flavor. Take a glass in the morning; it will be an appetizer. Take a glass at noon;

it will aid digestion. Take a glass at night ; it will make you sleep well." You are in a glow, while others are chilly. How bright it makes the eye—how elastic it makes the step ! One day you meet him, and you say, "What are you doing here at noon ! I thought you were at business." "Oh, I lost my place." "Lost your place?" God have mercy upon the young man when, through misdemeanor, he loses his place ! Every temptation in hell takes after him. Hopped and handcuffed, at thirty years of age, by evil habit ! Save that young man ; he is on the express train that stops not until it tumbles over the embankment of perdition. "The way of the transgressor is hard."

OCTOBER SEVENTH.

CHRISTIANITY HAS INCREASED.

"He must increase."—JOHN iii. 30.

WHEN Christ was upon earth, the people that followed Him, for the most part, had no social position. There was but one man naturally brilliant in all the apostleship. Joseph of Arimathea, the rich man, risked nothing when he offered a hole in the rock for the dead Christ. How many of the merchants in Asia Minor befriended Jesus ? I think of only one. Lydia. How many of the castles on the beach of Galilee entertained Christ ? Not one. When Christ came to Joppa, He stopped with one Simon, a tanner. What power had Christ's name on the Roman Exchange, or in the bazaars of Corinth ? None. The prominent men of the day did not want to risk their reputation for sanity by pretending to be one of His followers. Now that is all changed. Among the mightiest men in our great cities to-day are the Christian

merchants and the Christian bankers ; and if to-morrow, at the Board of Trade, any man should get up and malign the name of Jesus, he would be quickly silenced or put out. In the front rank of all our Christian workers to-day are the Christian merchants ; and the enterprises of the world are coming on the right side. There was a farm willed away some years ago, all the proceeds of that farm to go for spreading infidel books. Somehow matters have changed, and now all the proceeds of that farm go towards the missionary cause. One of the finest printing-presses ever built was built for the express purpose of publishing infidel tracts and books. Now it does nothing but print Holy Bibles. I believe that the time will come when, in commercial circles, the voice of Christ will be the mightiest of all voices, and the ships of Tarshish will bring presents, and the Queen of Sheba her glory, and the wise men of the East their myrrh and frankincense.

OCTOBER EIGHT.

SLEEPING IN THE MIDST OF DANGER.

“ But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship ; and he lay, and was fast asleep.”—JONAH i. 5.

LEARN *how soundly men will sleep in the midst of danger.* The worst sinner on shipboard, considering the light he had, was Jonah. He was a member of the Church, while they were heathen. The sailors were engaged in their lawful calling, following the sea. The merchants on board, I suppose, were going down to Tarshish to barter ; but Jonah, notwithstanding his Christian profession, was flying from duty. He was sound asleep in the cabin. He has been motionless for hours—his arms and feet in the same posture as when he lay down—his breast heaving with deep respira-

tion. Oh! how could the sinner sleep! What if the ship struck a rock! what if it sprang a leak! what if the clumsy Oriental craft should capsize! What would become of Jonah?

So men sleep soundly now amid perils infinite. In almost every place, I suppose, the Mediterranean might be sounded, but no line is long enough to fathom the profound beneath every impenitent man. Plunging a thousand fathoms down, you cannot touch bottom. Eternity beneath him, before him, around him! Rocks close by, and whirlpools, and hot-breathed Levanters; yet sound asleep! We try to wake him up, but fail. The great surges of warning break over the hurricane-deck—the gong of warning sounds through the cabin—the bell in the wheel-house rings. “Awake!” cry a hundred voices; yet sound asleep in the cabin.

OCTOBER NINTH.

GOD'S MERCY.

“The Lord is of great mercy.”—NUM. xiv. 18.

THERE are hospitals for “*incurables*.” When men are hopelessly sick, they are sent there. Thank God! there is no hospital for spiritual incurables. Though you had the worst leprosy that ever struck a soul, your flesh shall come again like the flesh of a little child.

Oh, this mercy of God. I am told it is an ocean. Then I place on it four swift sailing craft, with compass, and charts, and choice rigging, and skilful navigators, and I tell them to launch away, and discover for me the extent of this ocean. That craft puts out in one direction and sails to the north; this to the south; this to the east; this to the west. They crowd on all their canvas, and sail ten thousand years, and one day

come up to the harbor of heaven, and I shout to them from the beach, "Have you found the shore?" and they answer, "No shore to God's mercy!" Swift angels, dispatched from the throne, attempt to go across it. For a million years they fly and fly, but then come back and fold their wings at the foot of the throne, and cry, "No shore! no shore to God's mercy!"

Mercy! Mercy! Mercy! I sing it. I preach it. I pray it. Here I find a man bound hand and foot to the devil, but with one stroke of the hammer of God's truth the chains fall off and he is free forever. Mercy! Mercy! Mercy! There is no depth it cannot fathom; there is no height it cannot scale; there is no infinity it cannot compass.

OCTOBER TENTH.

RUMSELLING.

"Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it."—DEUT. v. 12.

ALL through this country it is against the law to sell liquor on the Sabbath-day. Where is the city that keeps that law? Where are the police? Where are the Mayors? Where are the Common Councils? Where are the legislative assemblies? The fact is, that when the Republicans are in power they dare not execute the law lest they lose votes, and when the Democrats are in power they dare not execute the law lest they lose votes. Meanwhile, between these political parties who are struggling for the spoils of office, the virtue and the religion of the city die.

What chance is there for the morals of our city when these places are so easy of access, and when if you want to get out of the smell of rum, you have to ride five or six miles out of

town, and even the outskirts of the city are sometimes worse than the heart of it? What chance is there for that young man? Temptation before him, temptation behind him, in the loft above him, and in the cellar beneath him; and when our very best citizens patronize such places! They are cold, and they must go in and get something warm; they are warm, and they must get something to cool off. They lose money, and begin to drink to keep up their spirits; they gain something, and then they can afford to drink. And so the casks are filled, and the strychnine is poured in, and the leaks are stopped, and the faucets are drawn, and the intoxication is swilled down, and sometimes, standing before professed Christian men, their breath is so foul with drink that I feel tempted to bury my face in my pocket-handkerchief.

OCTOBER ELEVENTH.

THE GREAT REDEMPTION.

"Great Salvation."—HEB. ii. 3.

PAUL was right when he called it great. The most stupendous undertaking, since God existed, was the hoisting of this world out of ruin. It had made shipwreck—going down with all hands on board. From none of the surrounding worlds did a life-boat push out. The Lord God Almighty rose up, and bringing into action all the omniscience, and omnipotence, and majesty, and loving-kindness of His nature, He set about the redemption of the world. John Frederick Oberlin put off all earthly comfort to redeem a barren district of France from poverty and ignorance, with his own pickaxe beginning the building of a high-road from Ban de la Roche up to the city of Strasburg. But here was a highway to be constructed from the squalor of earth to the heights of heaven.

Clarkson pleaded before the English Parliament and the Russian emperor, against the slave trade. But here was the question of deliverance for a hundred thousand millions of bondmen. Ay! it was the pounding off of an iron chain from the neck of a captive world

I think it was the greatest and most absorbing thought of God's lifetime. I do not think that there was anything in all the ages of the past, or that there will be in all the ages of the future, anything to equal it. The masterpiece of eternity! There were so many difficulties to be overcome! There were such infinite consequences to be considered! There were such gulfs to bridge, and such heights to scale, and such immensities to compass! If God had been less than omnipotent, He would not have been strong enough; or less than omniscient, I do not think He would have been wise enough; or less loving, would have been sympathetic enough.

OCTOBER TWELFTH.

IN DEBT TO GOD FOR OUR BOARD.

"How much owest thou."—LUKE xvi. 7.

W E have been sitting at God's table ten, thirty, fifty, seventy years. Put the board down low—at three dollars per week, and in forty years it is six thousand two hundred and forty dollars. From the apples you ate in the orchard when a boy, to the fruit last night upon your tea-table, it all came out of the same hand. From the horn that called you from the hay-field years ago, to the silver bell that tinkled on your table at noon to-day, you have never known the pang, the sickening horror of having nothing to eat. We pay the butcher, the baker, and the fruit dealer, but we do not pay

that God who makes the food, and who gives us the money with which to buy it. If on Saturday night, or at the end of the month, they with whom we board present the bill, and we do not pay it, we are put out ; but year after year, and for scores of years, have we been permitted to sit at God's table without paying, and the luxuries are greater now than ever before. Every one of you has consumed whole acres of corn, whole flocks of birds, whole droves of sheep, whole herds of cattle. Ah ! it has been no cheap thing to feed your appetites for forty years ; and do you think it is a mean, unfair, or dishonest thing, when to-night there is put upon your table a bill for board ?

OCTOBER THIRTEENTH.

MAN.

“ What is man that thou art mindful of him.”—Ps. viii. 4.

THE Christian anatomist, gazing upon the conformation of the human body, exclaims, “ Fearfully and wonderfully made.” No embroidery so elaborate, no gauze so delicate, no color so exquisite, no mechanism so graceful, no handiwork so divine. So quietly and mysteriously does the human body perform its functions, that it was not until five thousand years after the creation of the race that the circulation of the blood was discovered and though anatomists of all countries and ages have been so long exploring this castle of life, they have only begun to understand it.

Volumes have been written of the *hand*. Wonderous instrument ! With it we give friendly recognition, and grasp the sword, and climb the rock, and write, and carve, and build. It constructed the pyramids, and hoisted the Parthenon. It

made the harp, and then struck out of it all the world's minstrelsy. In it the white marble of Pentelicon mines dreamed itself away into immortal sculpture. It reins in the swift engine ; it holds the steamer to its path in the sea ; it snatches the fire from heaven ; it feels the pulse of the sick child with its delicate touch ; and makes the nations quake with its stupendous achievements. What power brought down the forests, and made the marshes blossom, and burdeneth the earth with all the cities that thunder on with enterprise and power? Four fingers and a thumb. An hundred millions dollars would not purchase for you a machine as exquisite and wonderful as your own hand. Mighty hand ! In all its bones, and muscles, and joints, I learn that God is good.

Behold the eye, which, in its Daguerrean gallery, in an instant catches the mountain and the sea. This perpetual telegraphing of the nerves ; these joints that are the only hinges that do not wear out ; these bones and muscles of the body with fourteen thousand different adaptations ; these one hundred thousand glands ; these two hundred million pores ; this mysterious heart, contracting four thousand times every hour—two hundred and fifty pounds of blood rushing through it every sixty seconds ; this chemical process of digestion ; this laboratory, beyond the understanding of the most skilful philosophy ; this furnace, whose heat is kept up from cradle to grave ; this factory of life, whose wheels, and spindles, and bands are God directed ; this human voice, capable, as has been estimated, of producing seventeen trillions, five hundred and ninety-two billions, one hundred and eighty-six millions, forty-four thousand four hundred and fifteen sounds.

I take a step higher, and look at man's mental constitution.

Behold the lavish benevolence of God in powers of *perception*, or the faculty you have of transporting this outside world into your own mind—gathering into your brain the majesty of the storm, and the splendors of the day-dawn, and lifting into

your mind the ocean as easily as you might put a glass of water to your lips.

Watch the *law of association*, or the mysterious linking together of all you ever thought, or knew, or felt, and then giving you the power to take hold of the clew-line, and draw through your mind the long train with indescribable velocity—one thought starting up a hundred, and this again a thousand—as the chirp of one bird, will sometimes wake a whole forest of voices, or the thrum of one string will rouse an orchestra.

OCTOBER FOURTEENTH.

MAN'S DOMINION.

“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.”—Ps. viii. 6.

IN reason and understanding, man is alone. The ox surpasses him in strength, the antelope in speed, the hound in keenness of nostril, the eagle in far-reaching sight, the rabbit in quickness of hearing, the honey-bee in delicacy of tongue, the spider in fineness of touch. Man's power, therefore, consisteth not in what he can lift, or how fast he can run, or how strong a wrestler he can throw—for in these respects the ox, the ostrich, and the hyena are his superior—but by his reason he comes forth to rule all: through his ingenious contrivance to outrun, outlift, outwrestle, outsee, outhear, outdo. At his all-conquering decree, the forest that had stood for ages steps aside to let him build his cabin and cultivate his farm. The sea which raved and foamed upon the race has become a crystal pathway for commerce to march on. The thunder-cloud that slept lazily above the mountain is made to come down and carry mail-bags. Man, dissatisfied

with his slowness of advancement, shouted to the Water and the Fire: "Come and lift!" "Come and draw!" "Come and help!" And they answered, "Aye, aye, we come;" and they joined hands—the fire and the water—and the shuttles fly, and the rail-train rattles on, and the steamship comes coughing, panting, flaming across the deep. He elevates the telescope to the heavens, and, as easily as through the stethoscope the physician hears the movement of the lung, the astronomer catches the pulsation of distant systems of worlds throbbing with life. He takes the microscope, and discovers that there are hundreds of thousands of animalculæ living, moving, working, dying within a circle that could be covered with the point of a pin—animals to which a rain-drop would be an ocean, a rose-leaf a hemisphere, and the flash of a fire-fly lasting enough to give them light to several generations.

Watch *your memory*—that sheaf-binder that goest forth to gather the harvest of the past, and bring it into the present. Your power and velocity of thought—thought of the swift wing and the lightning foot; thought that outspeeds the star and circles through the heavens, and weighs worlds, and, from poising amid wheeling constellations comes down to count the blossoms in a tuft of mignonette, then starts again to try the fathoming of the bottomless, and the scaling of the insurmountable, to be swallowed up in the incomprehensible, and lost in God!

I take a step higher, and look at man's moral nature. Made in the image of God. Vast capacity for enjoyment; capable at first of eternal joy, and though now disordered, still, through the recuperative force of heavenly grace, able to mount up to more than its original felicity: faculties that may blossom and bear fruit inexhaustibly. Immortality written upon every capacity: a soul destined to range in unlimited spheres of activity long after the world has put on ashes, and

the solar system shall have snapped its axle, and the stars that, in their courses, fought against Sisera, shall have been slain and buried amid the tolling thunders of the last day.

OCTOBER FIFTEENTH.

THE LAST BUSINESS DAY.

“Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man cometh.”—
MATT. xxiv. 44.

MY hearers are coming nearer their *last business day*. You move in routine. You rise at seven o'clock, breakfast, start for the store, enter your counting-room, read your letters, and give consequent orders. You look at the prices-current, and talk with customers. You sell and you buy. You run over to the bank or insurance company. You come back and look into the cash-drawer, and see by the book how much money your partner has drawn out. You run out to lunch. You come back. You drive out the street-pedlers, who have razors or apples, or books to sell. At five or six o'clock you start for Fulton, Wall, or South Ferry. That order goes on day after day, and year after year. Yet a day is not far distant which may seem to be like all the others, but shall be entirely different. It will have two twilights—that of the morning and that of the evening. There will be a meridian. You will go to business. You will come back. Yet it will be, in the calendar of eternity, as marked a day as though it had no twilight; as though every hour the sky rang a fire-bell; as though faces looked out from all the clouds; as though the wind had voices; as though every hour an angel shot past your store-door. It will be your last business-day. Unknown and unexpected by yourself, you will terminate all your business engagements. You will shut your cash-drawer, will close

your portfolio, will slam shut the money-safe, will take your hat and go out. Nothing that ever happens in the store can take you back again. A burglar might blow open the safe ; you would not go in to examine. A fire might consume half the goods ; you would not see the damage. Gold might go up to 150, or drop to 105 ; it would not disturb you. After ten, twenty, or thirty years being seen in business-places, or the exchange, or at the broker's you will not appear. Men will ask about you, and say : "Where is so-and-so?" And your friend will say, "Have you not heard the news?" and will take a paper from his pocket and point to your name on the death-list. If things are wrong, they will always stay wrong. No chance of correcting a false entry, or repairing the loss done a customer by a dishonest sample, or handing back the five dollars overpaid you by the cashier at the bank, or apologizing for the imposition you inflicted upon one of your clerks. The seal has been set to all your business life. Good-by to the store ! Good-by to the Stock Exchange ! Good-by to all your business friends ! Good-by !

OCTOBER SIXTEENTH.

A BEGGAR HERE, A PRINCE IN HEAVEN.

"Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."—
LUKE xvi. 25.

WELL, you see a man *may be beggared for this life, but be a prince in eternity.* A cluster of old rags was the entire property of Lazarus. His bare feet and ulcered legs were an invitation to the brutes—his food the broken victuals that were pitched out by the housekeeper, half-chewed crusts, rinds, peelings, bones, gristle—about the last creature out of

which to make a prince, yet for eighteen hundred years he has been one of the millionaires of heaven. No more waiting for crumbs. He sits at the same table with the kings of eternity, himself one of them. What were the forty years of his poverty compared with the long ages of his royalty?

Let all the Christian poor be comforted. Your good days will be after a while. Stand it a little longer, and you will be all right. God has a place for you among the principalities. Do not be afraid of the dogs of distress: they will not bite—they will help to heal. Your poverty may sometimes have led you to doubt whether you will have a decent funeral. You shall have grander obsequies than many a man who is carried out by a procession of governors and senators. The pall-bearers will be the angels that carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom. The surveyors have been busy. Your eternal possessions have been already laid out by God's surveyors, and the stake that bounds the property on this side is driven into the top of your grave, and all beyond is yours. You can afford to wear poor clothes now, when for you in the upper wardrobe is folded up the royal purple. You can afford to have coarse food here, when your bread is to be made from the finest wheat of the eternal harvests. Cheer up! Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

OCTOBER SEVENTEENTH.

ABIMELECH'S EXAMPLE.

"And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech."
—JUDGES ix. 49.

IF Abimelech had sat down on the grass, and told his men to go and get the boughs, and go out to the battle, they would never have gone at all, or if they had, it would have

been without any spirit or effective result ; but when Abimelech goes with his own axe and hews down a branch, and with Abimelech's arm puts it on Abimelech's shoulder, and marches on, then, my text says, all the people did the same. How natural that was. What made Garibaldi and Stonewall Jackson the most magnetic commanders of this century? They always rode ahead. Oh, the overcoming power of example. Here is a father on the wrong road : all his boys go on the wrong road. Here is a father who enlists for Christ : his children enlist. I saw in some of the picture galleries of Europe, that before any of the great works of the masters—the old masters—there would be sometimes four or five artists taking copies of the pictures. These copies they were going to carry with them, perhaps, to distant lands ; and I have thought that your life and character are a masterpiece, and it is being copied, and long after you are gone it will bloom or blast in the homes of those who knew you, and be a Gorgon or a Madonna. Look out what you say. Look out what you do. Eternity will hear the echo. The best sermon ever preached is a holy life. The best music ever chanted is a consistent walk. If you want others to serve God, serve Him yourself. If you want others to shoulder their duty, shoulder yours. Where Abimelech goes his troops go. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob. The father good, it was easy enough for the son and the grandson to be good. Ahaziah begat Joash, and Joash begat Jeroboam. The father bad, it was easy enough for the son and grandson to be bad. Oh, start out for heaven to-day, and your family will come after you, and your business associates will come after you, and your social friends will join you. With one branch of the tree of life for a baton, marshal just as many as you can gather. Oh, the infinite, the eternal, the semi-omnipotent power of a good or bad example !

*OCTOBER EIGHTEENTH.***NEEDING HELP.**

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?"—*JER.* xii. 5.

OH ! when the swift coursers of trouble are brought up, champing and panting for the race, and the reins are thrown upon their necks, and the lathered flanks at every spring feel the stroke of the lash, what can we on foot do with them? How can we compete with them? If, having run with the footmen, they wearied us, how can we contend with horses?

We have yielded to temptation. We have been surprised, afterwards, that so small inducement could have decoyed us from the right. How insignificant a temptation has sometimes captured our soul. And if that is so, my dear brother, what will it be when we come to stand in the presence of temptations that prostrated a David, and a Moses, and a Peter, and some of the mightiest men in all God's kingdom? Now we are honest, but suppose we were placed in some pass of life, as many of God's children have been, where all the forces of earth and hell combine to capture the soul, without Jesus we would go down under it. If already we have been beaten by insignificant footmen, we would be distanced ten thousand leagues by the horses. Ah! I don't like to hear a man say: "I could not commit such a sin as that. I can't understand how a man could be carried away like that." You don't know what you could do if the grace of God let you. You know the old story about John Bunyan that when he saw a man staggering in the

street, he said : " There goes John Bunyan but for the grace of God." I can say, when I see one utterly fallen : " But for the grace of God there goes De Witt Talmage?" If we have been delivered from temptation, it is because the strong arm of the Lord Almighty has been about us, and not because we were any better than they. It is a great folly to borrow trouble. If we can meet the misfortunes of to-day, we will be able to meet the troubles of to-morrow ; but suppose now if through a lack of the religion of Jesus we are overthrown by small sins, does not our common sense teach us that we cannot stand up against great ones ? If we can't carry a pound, can we carry a thousand pounds ? If we are discomfited coming into battle against one regiment, a battalion will cut us to pieces. If we are unfit to cope with one small trial, won't we be overcome by greater ones ? If the footmen are too much for us, won't the odds be more fearful against us when we contend with horses. I thank God that some of His dear children have been delivered. They have all been delivered. How was it that Paul could say : " Sorrowful yet always rejoicing, poor yet making many rich, having nothing yet possessing all things?" And David, the psalmist, soars up into the rock of God's strength and is thoroughly composed amid all his sorrows, saying : " God is our refuge and strength ; a very present help in time of trouble ; therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof ; selah."

*OCTOBER NINETEENTH.***THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD'S BLESSING.**

"Thy Righeousness is like the great mountains."—Ps. xxxvi. 6.

WHEN in 1857, the banks went down, insurance companies went down, and mercantile establishments went down, there was a great panic. But how stolid our indifference when the great truth is announced to-night that the whole earth has suspended payment to God, and that it can not pay one per cent. on a million of dollars! Let us now acknowledge our obligations to God. We do not appreciate their magnitude. The traveller on the Pacific Railroad, going towards California day after day, asks, "Why, where are the Rocky Mountains?" The fact is that the train goes up so very gradually for hundreds and hundreds of miles, the traveller does not see the precipices and the rocks that he expected to see; so that when he gets to Sherman, where he is eight or nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, he cannot appreciate the fact that he is at so great an altitude. Well, my friends, we have been going on in this path of life, over the mountain of God's blessing, rising higher and higher, until we are not aware of the great altitude of benediction to which we have been lifted; yet here we stand to-night, thousands of feet above the level of that great sea of want and woe upon which million of our fellow-men are tossed, and we can not appreciate the elevation. Oh! you need to pile the Sierra Nevada and the Wahsatch on the top of the Rocky Mountains to ap-

preciate the meaning of the Psalmist when he says, "Thy righteousness is like the *great mountains*."

OCTOBER TWENTIETH.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

"Having a desire to depart and be with Christ.—PHIL. i. 23.

YOU see a crowd of people in some street, and you say: "Who is passing there? What general, what prince, is going up there?" Well, I see a great throng in heaven. I say: "Who is the focus of all that admiration? Who is the centre of that glittering company?" It is Jesus, the champion of all worlds, the favorite of all ages. Do you know what is the first question the soul will ask when it comes through the gate of heaven? I think the first question will be, "Where is Jesus, the Saviour that pardoned my sin; that carried my sorrows; that fought my battles; that won my victories? O radiant One! how I would like to see Thee; Thou of the manger, but without its humiliation; Thou of the cross, but without its pangs; Thou of the grave, but without its darkness. The Bible intimates that we will talk with Jesus in heaven just as brother talks with a brother. Now what will you ask Him first? I do not know. I can think what I would ask Paul first if I saw him in heaven. I think I would like to hear him describe the storm that came upon the ship when there were two hundred and seventy-five souls on the vessel, Paul being the only man on board cool enough to describe the storm. There is a fascination about a ship and the sea that I shall never get over, and I think I would like to hear him talk about that first. But when I meet my Lord Jesus Christ, of what shall I first delight to hear Him speak?

Now I think what it is. I shall first want to hear the tragedy of His last hours ; and then Luke's account of the crucifixion, and Mark's account of the crucifixion, and John's account of the crucifixion will be nothing, while from the living lips of Christ the story shall be told of the darkness that fell, and the devils that arose, and the fact that upon his endurance depended the rescue of a race ; and there was darkness in the sky, and there was darkness in the soul, and the pain became more sharp, and the burdens became more heavy, until the mob began to swim away from the dying vision of Christ, and the cursing of the mob came to His ear more faintly, and His hands were fastened to the horizontal piece of the cross, and His feet were fastened to the perpendicular piece of the cross, and His head fell forward in a swoon as He uttered the last moan and cried, "It is finished!" All heaven will stop to listen until the story is done, and every harp will be put down, and every lip closed, and all eyes fixed upon the Divine narrator, until the story is done ; and then, at the tap of the baton, the eternal orchestra will rouse up, finger on string of harp, and lips to the mouth of trumpet, there shall roll forth the oratorio of the Messiah, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and riches, and honor, and glory, and power, world without end!"

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIRST.

I WAS MUCH.

"Then shall the King say: I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink."—*MATT. xxv. 34, 35.*

THEN shall we hear of the cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple ; the food left at the way-side cabin, the smile of approval, the word of encouragement, the good

deed of which earth made no record, blazing out among the names of those who endowed universities, and civilized nations, and broke shackles, and disenthralled empires, and inspired generations. Oh, for more of the spirit that sends men down through the dark lanes, and into the squalid cellars, and among the pestiferous fumes, to prophesy in God's name over the mangled and decaying carcasses of the morally dead; that will send books and clothing to the colporteur at the West, and with its prayers help fill the sails of the clipper that carries Amerian missionaries to Japan; that will rejoice over a blind girl taught to read in the asylum, and the throwing open of Chinese ports to the Gospel; that will teach the black boy in the Sabbath-school his *a b c's*, and pray that Ethiopia may soon stretch forth her hands to God; that will light a taper in a sick man's room, and, by its prayers, help roll up the Sun of Righteousness. When from that book Jesus shall read the story of the modest charities and unobtrusive work, He will turn towards some of you who do not imagine that you will be specially recognized on that day, and will say, "I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me. Inasmuch as ye did it to them, ye did it to me."

OCTOBER TWENTY-SECOND.

A PARDONING GOD.

"Thou art a God ready to pardon."—NEHEMIAH ix. 17.

IT makes me mad to see Christian people give up a prodigal as lost. There are those who talk as though the grace of God were a chain of forty or fifty links, and after they had run out, there was nothing to touch the depth of a very bad

case. If they were hunting and got off the track of the deer, they would look longer among the brakes and bushes for the lost game than they have been looking for that lost soul. People tell us that if a man has the delirium tremens twice, he cannot be reclaimed ; that after a woman has fallen from her integrity, she cannot be restored. The Bible has distinctly intimated that the Lord Almighty is ready to pardon four hundred and ninety times ; that is, seventy times seven. There are men before the throne of God who have wallowed in every kind of sin ; but, saved by the grace of Jesus, and washed in His blood, they stand there radiant now. There are those who plunged into the very lowest hell of Elm Street, New York, who have for the tenth time been lifted up, and finally, by the grace of God, they stand in heaven gloriously rescued by the grace promised to the chief of sinners. I want to tell you that God loves to take hold of a very bad case. When the Church casts you off, and when the club-room casts you off, and when society casts you off, and when business associates cast you off, and when father casts you off, and when mother casts you off, and when everybody casts you off, your first cry for help will bend the Eternal God clear down into the ditch of your suffering and shame. The Good Templars cannot save you, although they are a grand institution. The Sons of Temperance cannot save you, although they are mighty for good. Signing the temperance pledge cannot save you, although I believe in it. Nothing but the grace of the Eternal God can save you, and that will if you will but throw yourself on it.

OCTOBER TWENTY-THIRD.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

“Lord, teach us to pray.”—LUKE xi. 1.

WHAT is prayer? A rolling over on the tongue of a few cold formalities? No; it is the flinging of all our sins, wants, sorrows, and expectations right down at the feet of an all-sympathetic God.

“O Thou by whom we come to God—
The Life, the Truth, the Way—
The path of prayer thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray.”

The wood of the cross was not a thin pole that you could clasp with one hand or two hands, but a beam. The only way that we can clasp the cross is by throwing both our arms around it in one imploration for mercy. A whole church membership at prayer! Tell me what they can not get. The lightnings are snails when compared with the feet of Christ as he comes to the cry of his children.

“Were half the breath that’s vainly spent,
To Heaven in supplication sent
Our cheerful song would oftener be,
Hear what the Lord has done for me.”

The spirit of prayer poured out will be continuous. Some of these men who do business on Water Street, Wall Street, Broadway, Fulton Street, and Atlantic Street, will be praying

while putting up the goods, praying while assorting the samples, praying while they are looking into the money-safe.

Prayer is the chalice in which we fetch the water from the rock. It is the ladder on which we climb up to pick the grapes hanging over the wall of heaven. It is the fire that warms the frigid soul. It is the ship that carries away our wants, and comes back with a return cargo of Divine help. Archimedes said, if he could only find a fulcrum for his lever, he could move the world. Ah! we have found it! Prayer is the lever. The divine promise is the fulcrum. Pushing down on such a lever, we move not only earth, but also heaven.

Earnest prayer is always answered. No wonder that Havelock went from victory to victory. If his army was to march at six o'clock, he would rise at four and spend the two hours in prayer. Get out of that man's way who has been on his knees before God. He is a thunderbolt swung by the arm of the Lord omnipotent. The figure 0 stands for nothing; but put the figure 1 beside it, and it becomes considerable. We are nothing. We are naught. But when Christ stands beside us, it augments us tenfold.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FOURTH.

CRUEL TREATMENT.

"Is this thy kindness to thy friend?"—2 SAM. xvi. 17.

THERE was a steamer on one of the Western lakes heavily laden with passengers, and there was a little child, who stood on the side of the taffrail, leaning over and watching the water, when she lost her balance, and dropped into the wave. The lake was very rough. The mother cried

out ; "Save my child, save my child !" There seemed none disposed to leap into the water. There was a Newfoundland dog on deck. He looked up to his master as if for orders. The master said : "Tray, overboard ; catch' em?" The dog sprang into the water, caught the child by the garments, swam back to the steamer. The child was picked up by loving hands, the dog was lifted on deck, and the mother, ere she fainted away, in utter thanksgiving to that dog, threw her arms around its neck and kissed it ; but the dog shook himself from her embrace, and went and laid down as though he had accomplished nothing. Shall a mother be grateful to a dog that saves her child, and we ungrateful to the Son of God who, from the heights of heaven, plunged into the depths of darkness, and suffering, and woe that he might lift us up out of our sin, and place us on the rock of ages? Oh! the height, the depth, the length, the infinity, the horror of our ingratitude. Don't you treat Jesus like that any more, my dear brother. Don't you shove him back from your soul. He has been the best friend you ever had. You will want him after a while. When the world is going away from your grasp, and all the lights that shine upon your soul are going out, and the friends that stand around you can do you no good, and you feel your feet slipping from beneath you, oh, then you will want him—the loving Jesus, the sympathetic Jesus, the pardoning Jesus—to stand close by you, and hold you up amid "the swelling of Jordan."

*OCTOBER TWENTY-FIFTH.***INFINITE MERCY.**

“My spirit shall not always strive with man.”—GEN. vi. 3.

IN the morning, after a severe night, you have gone out and seen the birds dead on the snow ; so, after a while, God’s mercy will cease, and the earth will be covered with the bodies of those who perished in the storm. That storm is coming. It will shiver the mast of pride—it will drive into the white reefs of death every cargo of sin. The cedars of the mountain will split in the hurricane, and the islands shall be moved out of their places, and the continents shall be rent asunder, and the hemispheres shall whirl like a top in the fury of that day. The mountains will be blasted, and the beasts, in affright, be pitched from the cliffs in an avalanche of terror. The dead shall rush forth from their sepulchres to see what is the matter, and all those who despise God shall horribly perish.

My last resting place will probably be near yours. What if, when I get up in the resurrection day, I should see you rushing at me across the lots of the cemetery, and hear you cry, “Why did you not tell me of this? If it had not been for your neglect, I should have been on the way to glory.” I can not prepare myself for such a consternation.

“Can you tell me how far it is to hell?” said a young man, as, on Sunday, on horseback, he dashed past a good Christian deacon. At the next turn in the road the horse threw the scoffing rider, and he was dead. He wanted to know how far

it was to hell, and he found out without the deacon's telling him.

So thou art mounted on a swift steed, whose hoofs strike fire from the pavement as he dashes past, and you cry out, "How far is it to ruin?" I answer, "Near, very near!"

"Perhaps this very day
Thy last accepted time may be;
Oh shouldst thou grieve Him now away,
Then hope may never beam on thee!"

OCTOBER TWENTY-SIXTH.

NINEVEH'S DESTINY.

"And he cried and said, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."—JONAH
iii. 4.

GOD decided exactly the day when Nineveh's lease of mercy should end. If Jonah preached that sermon on the first day of the month, then the doom was to fall upon Nineveh on the tenth day of the next month. So God decides what shall be the amount of our rebellion. Though there may be no sound in the heavens, He has determined the length of His endurance of our sin. It may be forty days, it may be forty hours, it may be forty minutes, it may be forty seconds. The fact that the affairs of God's government are infinite and multifarious is no reason why He should not attend to the minutiae. God no more certainly decided that on June 15th, 1215, England should have her *Magna Charta*; nor that on the 4th of July, 1776, the Declaration of Independence should go forth; nor that at half-past eleven o'clock at night on the 14th of December, 1799, George Washington should die; nor that forty days after Jonah preached that ser-

mon, Nineveh's chance for mercy should end unless she repented, than He has decided the point beyond which you and I cannot pass and still obtain the divine clemency. What careful walking this ought to make for those who are unsaved, lest the hour-glass of their opportunity be almost empty. Men and women do not lose their souls by putting off repentance forever, but only by putting it off one second after the time is up. They propose to become Christians in mid-life, but they die in youth ; or they propose in old age to be Christians, but they die in mid-life ; or on the forty-first day they will attend to the matter, but on the fortieth Nineveh is overthrown.

Standing on ship's deck amid a coil of chains, sailors roughly tell you to stand back if you do not want your limbs broken, or, by the chains, be hurled overboard ; for they are going to let out the anchor, and when the anchor does go the chains make the deck smoke with their speed. As swiftly our time runs away from us. Now it seems coiled all around us in a pyramid of years and days and minutes, but they are going, and they will take us off with their lightning velocity. If I should by some supernatural revelation to-night tell you just how long or how brief will be your opportunity for repentance and salvation, you would not believe me. You would say: "I shall have tenfold that time ; I shall have a hundred-fold that time." But you will not have more ; you will have less. You have put off repentance so long that you are going to be very much crowded in this matter of the soul's salvation. The corner of time that is left you is so small that you will hardly have room to turn around in it. You are like an accountant who has to have a certain number of figures added up by four o'clock in the afternoon. It is two full, round hours' work, and it is a quarter past three o'clock, and yet he has not begun.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

SIN IS A THIEF.

“And they cut off his head and stripped off his armour.”—1 SAM. xxxi. 8.

SIN is *hard, cruel and merciless*. Instead of helping a man up it helps him down; and when, like Saul and his comrades, you lie on the field, it will come and steal your sword, and helmet, and shield, leaving you to the jackal and the crow.

But the world and Satan do not do all their work with the outcast and abandoned. A respectable, impenitent man comes to die. He is flat on his back. He could not get up if the house were on fire. Adroitest medical skill and gentlest nursing have been a failure. He has come to his last hour. What does Satan do for such a man? Why he fetches up all the inapt, disagreeable, and harrowing things in his life. He says: “Do you remember those chances you had for heaven and missed them? Do you remember all those lapses in conduct? Do you remember all those opprobrious words and thoughts and actions? Don’t remember them, eh? I’ll make you remember them.” And then he takes all the past and empties it on that death-bed, as the mail-bags are emptied on the post-office floor. The man is sick. He cannot get away from them. Then the man says to Satan: “You have deceived me. You told me that all would be well. You said there would be no trouble at the last. You told me if I did so and so you would do so and so. Now you corner me, and

hedge me up, and submerge me in everything evil." "Ha! ha!" says Satan, "I was only a fooling you. It is mirth to me to see you suffer. I have been for thirty years plotting to get you just where you are. It is hard for you now—it will be worse for you after a while. It pleases me. Lie still, sir. Don't flinch or shudder. Come now, I will tear off from you the last rag of expectation. I will rend away from your soul the last hope. I will leave you bare for the beating of the storm. It is my business to strip the slain."

While men are in robust health, and their digestion is good, and their nerves are strong, they think their physical strength will get them safely through the last exigency. They say it is only cowardly women who are afraid at the last, and cry out for God. "Wait till I come to die. I will show you. You won't hear me pray, nor call for a minister, nor want a chapter read me from the Bible." But after the man has been three weeks in a sick room his nerves are not so steady, and his worldly companions are not anywhere near to cheer him up, and he is persuaded that he must quit life,—his physical courage is all gone. He jumps at the fall of a teaspoon in a saucer. He shivers at the idea of going away. He says: "Wife, I don't think my infidelity is going to take me through. For God's sake don't bring up the children to do as I have done. If you feel like it, I wish you would read a verse or two out of Fannie's Sabbath-school hymn-book or New Testament." But Satan breaks in, and says: "You have always thought religion trash and a lie; don't give up at the last. Besides that, you cannot, in the hour you have to live, get off on that track. Die as you lived. With my great black wings I shut out that light. Die in darkness. I rend away from you that last vestige of hope. It is my business to strip the slain."

*OCTOBER TWENTY-EIGHTH.***DORCAS THE LAMENTED.**

“And all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing him the coats and garments which Dorcas made.”—ACTS ix. 39.

WHEN death struck down that good woman, oh, how much sorrow there was in Joppa! I suppose there were women there with larger fortunes; women, perhaps, with handsomer faces; but there was no grief at their departure like this at the death of Dorcas. There was not more turmoil and upturning in the Mediterranean Sea, dashing against the wharves of that sea-port, than there were surgings to and fro of grief in Joppa because Dorcas was dead. There are a great many who go out of life and are unmissed. There may be a very large funeral; there may be a great many carriages and a plumed hearse; there may be high-sounding eulogiums; the bell may toll at the cemetery gate; there may be a very fine marble shaft reared over the resting-place; but the whole thing may be a falsehood and a sham. The Church of God has lost nothing, the world has lost nothing. It is only a nuisance abated; it is only a grumbler ceasing to find fault; it is only an idler stopped yawning; it is only a dissipated fashionable parted from his wine-cellar; while on the other hand, no useful Christian leaves this world without being missed. The Church of God cries out like the prophet: “Howl, fir-tree, for the cedar has fallen.” Widowhood comes and shows the garments which the departed had made. Orphans are lifted up to look into the calm face of the sleeping benefactress.

OCTOBER TWENTY-NINTH.

THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL LIVE.

“These all died in faith.”—HEB. xi. 13.

GLORIOUS consolation! They are not dead. You cannot make me believe they are dead. They have only *moved on*. With more love than that with which they greeted us on earth, they watch us from their high place, and their voices cheer us in our struggle for the sky. Hail, spirits blessed, now that ye have passed the flood and won the crown! With weary feet we press up the shining way, until in everlasting reunion we shall meet again. Oh! won't it be grand when, our conflicts done and our partings over, we shall clasp hands, and cry out, “This is Heaven!”

But how if we do not meet our heavenly friends? We cannot meet them unless we travel the same path they trod.

There is an old hymn, only a part of which I can think of now:

“Oh! there will be mourning, mourning,
 Mourning at the judgment seat of Christ.
 Parents and children there will part,
 Parents and children there will part,
 Will part to meet no more.
 Oh! there will be mourning, mourning,
 Mourning at the judgment seat of Christ,

“Brothers and sisters there will part,
 Brothers and sisters there will part,
 Will part to meet no more.
 Oh! there will be mourning, mourning,

Mourning at the judgment seat of Christ.
 Wives and husbands there will part,
 Wives and husbands there will part,
 Will part to meet no more."

It is sad to say farewell on earth, but how sad to say farewell in the judgment—to gaze eternally up towards the place where our loved ones dwell, but be ourselves thrown out.

OCTOBER THIRTIETH.

A NEW BIRTH DEMANDED.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—JOHN iii. 3.

THE impression is abroad that you must fix up the Gospel to suit the age, instead of fixing up the age to suit the Gospel; and the young men coming out of our theological seminaries have the impression that they must palliate the prejudices of society, and must cover over the natural rottenness of the human heart, and that they must tell men what very clever people they are, and that they only need to be pressed in a little one way, and pulled out a little the other way, and then they will be all right. And they say, "All you want is development." Is it? Development! You might as well go to a man bent double with the cramps of Asiatic cholera, and tell him that all he wants is development. It is a lie. He needs to have his disease killed, so that he may get well. Until our heart is changed by the grace of God, it is scabbed and ulcerous with a great leprosy; and it is not development we want, but it is the cure of an eating, loathsome, blasting, damning leprosy. Our whole nature throughout, and throughout, and throughout wrong, needs to be made

over, and over, and over again. I wish that every word of that passage would come down with five tons' weight of emphasis—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;"—though he had given one hundred thousand dollars to religious institutions; though he never used a bad word in his life; though he paid all his debts; though he lived on the tip-top round of respectability—"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." But so little do we hear about this doctrine of regeneration in this day, that it is almost considered indelicate for a man to read in a public assemblage the word of Christ to Nicodemus about the new birth. And as to there being any hell, if we make any allusion to that, it must be with exquisite circumlocutions as "the place of high temperature," "the world insalubrious," or as a minister recently called it, "the great elsewhere."

OCTOBER THIRTY-FIRST.

HEREAFTER.

"And he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion."—JUDGES xiv. 8.

THIS idea or future association with our departed friends is honey out of the slain lion. In the first place, this consideration *exalts and gives stability to Christian friendship*. If our association is only a matter of five or ten or thirty years it is not worth much. Can it be that our attachment to each other has such short arms that it cannot reach across the grave? We go into a rail-train, and we sit down for a few hours beside a stranger and talk with him. Then he leaves at one station, and we leave at another. He never thinks of us again; we never think of him again. Is that a type of our Christian attachments? Oh, no! We are in heaven to rise

up amid infinite congratulations to renew our association. The only difference between our acquaintanceship here and our acquaintanceship there will be that there we shall know each other better and love each other more. Death will not strike anything out of our association but its imperfections. Wading down into the river of death, it will only bathe off our impurities. If you now count me to be your friend, when I shall have quit all my sins and follies and imperfections, and my entire nature is uplifted before the throne of God, you will have for me a million-fold greater attachment. If my friendship to you is merely because you invite me to grand entertainments, or because you allow me to have your name on the back of my notes, such a mercenary and half-hearted attachment as that cannot stride across the grave. But this communing of heart with heart, this mingling of sympathy with sympathy, this feeling which leads us to carry each others' burdens, and weep each others' sorrows, and laugh in each others' joys—all these are prophecies of eternal intimacy. You and I may soon part, we may pitch our tents in different zones, our graves may be cleft in opposite sides of the earth ; but the scenes in which we now mingle will be renewed under milder skies. And so I strike hands with you to-day in a friendship which shall bloom immortal after the mountains have crumbled, and the stars that flower in celestial gardens shall have wilted in the hot breath of a judgment day.

NOVEMBER FIRST.

SANCTIFIED WORK.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
—1 COR. x. 31.

WE must bring the religion of Christ into our *every-day employments*. “Oh,” you say, “that is very well if a man handle large sums of money, or if he has an extensive traffic ; it is very well for this importer of silks, for the bankers and shippers, for the Rothschilds and the Barings ; but in my thread-and-needle store, in my trimming establishment, in the humble work in life that I am called to, the sphere is too small for the action of such grand, heavenly principles.” Who told you so? Do you not know that God watches the faded leaf on the brook’s surface as certainly as He does the path of a blazing sun? And the moss that creeps up the side of the rock makes as much impression upon God’s mind as the waving tops of Oregon pine and Lebanon cedar ; and the alder, crackling under the cow’s-hoof, sounds as loud in God’s ear as the snap of a world’s conflagration. When you have anything to do in life, however humble it may seem to be, God is always there to help you to do it. If your work is that of a fisherman, then God will help you as He helped Simon when he dragged Gennesaret. If your work is drawing water, then He will help you as when He talked at the well-curb to the Samaritan woman. If you are engaged in the Custom House, He will lead you as He led Matthew sitting

at the receipt of customs. A religion that is not good in *one* place, is not worth anything in another place. The man who has only a day's wages in his pocket, as certainly needs the guidance of religion, as he who rattles the keys of a bank and could abscond with a hundred thousand hard dollars.

There are those prominent in the churches, who seem to be, on public occasions, very devout, who do not put the principles of Christ's religion into practice. They are the most inexorable of creditors. They are the most grasping of dealers. They are known as sharpers on the street. They fleece every sheep they can catch. A country merchant comes in to buy Spring or Fall goods, and he gets into the store of one of these professed Christian men, who have really no grace in their hearts, and he is completely swindled. He is so overcome that he cannot get out of town during the week. He stays in town over Sunday, goes into some church to get Christian consolation, when what is his amazement to find that the very man who hands him the poor-box in the church, is the one who relieved him of his money. But, never mind; the deacon has his black coat on now. He looks solemn, and goes home talking about "the blessed sermon." If the wheat in the churches should be put into a hopper, the first turn of the crank would make the chaff fly, I tell you. Some of these men are great sticklers for gospel preaching. They say: "You stand there in bands, and surplice, and gown, and preach, preach like an angel, and we will stand out here and attend to business. Don't mix things. Don't get business and religion in the same bucket. You attend to your matters and we will attend to ours." They do not know that God sees every cheat they have practised in the last six years; that He can look through the iron wall of their fire-proof safe; that He has counted every dishonest greenback they have in their pocket, and that a day of judgment will come.

NOVEMBER SECOND.

RESTING BEYOND.

“Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.”—Ps. lv. 6.

THERE are hundreds weary—oh, how weary—weary with sin; weary with trouble; weary with bereavement. Some have been pierced through and through. You carry the scars of a thousand conflicts, in which you have bled at every pore; and you sigh, “Oh that I had the wings of a dove! that I might fly away, and be at rest!” You have taken the cup of this world’s pleasure and drunk it to the dregs, and still the thirst claws at your tongue, and the fever strikes to your brain. You have chased Pleasure through every valley, by every stream, amid every brightness, and under every shadow; but just at the moment when you were all ready to put your hand upon the rosy, laughing sylph of the wood, she turned upon you with the glare of a fiend and the eye of a satyr, her locks adders, and her breath the chill damp of a grave. Out of Jesus Christ no rest. No voice to silence the storm. No light to kindle the darkness. No dry-dock to repair the split bulwark.

Thank God, I can tell you something better. If there is no rest on earth, there is rest in heaven.

“There is a place of sacred rest,
Far, far, beyond the skies,
Where beauty smiles eternally,
And pleasure never dies.

My Father's house, my heavenly home,
Where "many mansions" stand,
Prepared, by hands divine, for all
Who seek the better land."

NOVEMBER THIRD.

CHARACTER.

"A good name is better than precious ointment."—ECCLES. vii. 1.

IT is right that we should want to be thought well of. God says a good name is better than precious ointment. It is an immense power for good. Always to be on the right side, ready to speak or to act for the cause of God, and one's country, gives one a reputation that is fit to be the ambition of any man. But he who lives for the approval and applause of the world is already under a destructive process. There are thousands that have gone down under it. Across holocausts of the dead, men have fought their way just to add one star more to their shoulder-straps. Beauty, genius, everything that men and women have, have been sacrificed for this; and it has generally been the case that in proportion as they went up in fame, they went down in character. Some of them took to their cups. Some floundered in political dishonesties. Some stood in the high places of the earth, or sat in presidential chairs, displaying a stubbornness and spite, the laughing-stock of all nations. Byron wrote that he felt more pain from the criticism of the most ignorant man than he felt joy from the praises of all intelligent men. The very same admirers that applauded Sheridan's wit, wrangled over Sheridan's coffin. Dryden was kept from being buried several days after he ought to have been buried, because the roughs hooted and howled and quar-

relled about his dead body. Burns, after being spoiled of popular caresses, is flung into an inebriate's grave. And the devil now takes a man up to the top of the temple, and shows him the kingdoms of the world and the glories of them, and then pushes him off the pinnacle. The world slew, by its flatteries, Charles Mathews, and De Quincy, and Campbell, and Aaron Burr, and Pierrepont Edwards; and it has paved Westminster Abbey and the Congressional burying ground with the hollow skulls in which genius and art and eloquence once lived. Oh, the approval of the world! While it pleases, it damns!

NOVEMBER FOURTH.

THE BEAUTIFUL NAME OF JESUS.

"Blessed be his glorious name forever and forever."—Ps. lxxii. 19.

YOU have noticed that it is impossible to disassociate a name from the person who has the name. So there are names that are to me repulsive—I do not want to hear them at all—while those very names are attractive to you. Why the difference? It is because I happen to know persons by those names who are cross, and sour, and snappish, and queer, while the persons you used to know by those names were pleasant and attractive. As we cannot disassociate a name from the person who holds the name, that consideration makes Christ's name so unspeakably beautiful. No sooner is it pronounced in your presence than you think of Bethlehem and Gethsemane and Golgotha, and you see the loving face, and hear the tender voice, and feel the gentle touch. You see Jesus, the One who, though banqueting with heavenly hierarchs, came down to breakfast on the fish that rough men

had just hauled out of Genessaret ; Jesus, the One who, though the clouds are the dust of His feet, walked foot-sore on the road to Emmaus. Just as soon as that name is pronounced in your presence, you think of how the Shining One gave back the centurion's daughter, and how He helped the blind man to the sunlight, and how He made the cripple's crutch useless, and how He looked down into the babe's eyes, and, as the little one struggled to go to Him, flung out His arms around it and impressed a loving kiss on its brow, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Beautiful name—Jesus ! It stands for love, for patience, for kindness, for forbearance, for self-sacrifice, for magnanimity. It is aromatic with all odors and accordant with all harmonies. Sometimes I see that name, and the letters seem to be made out of tears, and then again they look like gleaming crowns. Sometimes they seem to me as though twisted out of the straw on which He lay, and then as though built out of the thrones on which His people shall reign. Sometimes I sound that word "Jesus," and I hear coming through the two syllables the sigh of Gethsemane and the groan of Calvary ; and again I sound it, and it is all a-ripple with gladness and a-ring with hosanna. Take all the glories of bookbindery, and put them around the page where that name is printed. On Christmas morning wreath it on the wall. Let it drip from harp's string and thunder out in organ's diapason. Sound it often, sound it well, until every star shall seem to shine it, and every flower shall seem to breathe it, and mountain, and sea, and day, and night, and earth, and heaven acclaim in full chant : "Blessed be His glorious name forever."

"Jesus, I love Thy charming name,
'Tis music to my ear ;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That heaven and earth might hear."

NOVEMBER FIFTH.

WATER TO CLEANSE US.

"Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."—Rev. xxii. 17. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—MARK xvi. 16.

ONE of the forms of curing disease in our day is *the water treatment*. The patient is washed in it, bathed in it, plunged in it, packed in it; and I have known those who were carried to Saratoga utterly helpless, not able to lift a hand or move a foot, in the course of four or five weeks walking out vigorously for three or four miles. And this is the old Gospel cure. It is the favorite simile all through the Bible. "Water"—"water"—"water." In one place it speaks of "a fountain" open for sin and uncleanness. In another place it says: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." In another place it speaks of "springs breaking out in the desert." In another place it talks about "a river of life that flows from beneath the throne of God, clear as crystal." It is water! water! water! everywhere through God's word, as a simile. We need this water for our cleansing. We need to be washed in that which springs from the eternal Rock. We also want it for refreshment. You have been out on a long journey on some hot summer day, and you come in at night irritated and uncomfortable; and you plunged into the bath, and in half an hour were alert and happy. So we have in the Christian life so many long journeys to take, and such heavy burdens to carry, and such hard battles to fight, that there must be somewhere a fountain

for refreshment. Just plunge into that fountain once, and the flesh comes again as the flesh of a little child. Health for the body is this Gospel, health for the mind, health for the soul.

Yea, we want this water for baptism. I know a great many make nothing of baptism; say that it is a mere form of the past ages; that it need make no difference whether you are baptized or not. When a man says that, he differs from the Lord Jesus Christ, who said to His disciples: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And lest you should put too little stress upon this ordinance, He couples it with faith, the action which decides whether a man shall reach heaven or not, when He says: "Whoso believeth and is baptized shall be saved." We must either be sprinkled on the brow or plunged under the wave. I don't care about the form or process, but be baptized we must. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and a man who says there is no importance in baptism takes a terrific responsibility.

NOVEMBER SIXTH.

JONAH IN THE DEEP.

"And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."—JONAH i. 17.

THE rationalist comes to you saying, "How about Jonah and the whale? Do you really believe that fish story?" There were never so many Nantucket fishermen after one whale as there have been rationalists flinging harpoons at the Mediterranean sea-monster, and from that one whale they have got enough oil to light ten thousand souls to perdition. A skeptic tells you that Jonah would have been killed in the

process of swallowing, and that he could not, anyhow, have lived three days in such close quarters, but would have been smothered by the poor ventilation. How the good Christians immediately go to work, and try to explain the whole thing by natural laws, so as to please the rationalists, and say that a whale is an air-breathing fish; that every little while it comes to the surface, and that the whale that swallowed Jonah did the same thing, and thus got a supply for itself and for the prophet. Why not rather say that God can do *anything*; and He could take Jonah through the whale's throat, although the throat would not have been half large enough ordinarily to let him pass, and could have kept him alive in the whale five years without any air, if He had chosen to. Who made the whale? God. Who made Jonah? God. Then He could do anything he pleased with either of them.

The moment you begin to explain away the miraculous and supernatural, you surrender the Bible. Take the supernatural out of the Bible, and you make it a collection of lies and humbugs, in preference to which I choose Æsop's Fables. *They* are what they pretend to be—*fables*.

NOVEMBER SEVENTH.

CHRIST BRINGS PEACE.

"Acquaint thyself with God and be at peace."—JOB xxii. 21.

WHEN governments not only theoretically, but practically, acknowledge the Saviour of the world, there will be peace in the United States, peace in Spain, peace in France, peace in Germany, peace in Mexico, peace everywhere. In that day the sea will have more ships than now, but there will not be one "*man-of-war*." The founderies of the world will

jar with still mightier industries, but there will be no moulding of bullets. Printing-presses will fly their cylinders with greater speed, but there shall go forth no iniquitous trash. In laws, in constitutions, on exchange, in scientific laboratory, on earth as in heaven, Christ shall be called Wonderful. Let that work of the world's regeneration begin in your heart, oh hearer! A Jesus so kind, a Jesus so good, a Jesus so loving—how can you help but love Him?

It is a beautiful moment when two persons who have pledged each other, heart and hand, stand in church and have the banns of marriage proclaimed. Father and mother, brothers and sisters stand around the altar. The minister of Jesus gives the counsel; the ring is set; earth and heaven witness it; the organ sounds, and amid many congratulations they start out on the path of life together.

Oh, that this might be your marriage day! Stand up, immortal soul. Thy Beloved comes to get his betrothed. Jesus stretches forth his hand and says, "I will love thee with an everlasting love," and you respond, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." I put your hand in His; henceforth be one. No trouble shall part you—no time cool your love. Side by side on earth—side by side in heaven! Now let the blossoms of heavenly gardens fill the house with their redolence, and all the organs of God peal forth the wedding march of eternity.

NOVEMBER EIGHTH.

ZEAL IN SEEKING CHRIST.

"Strive to enter in the straight gate."—LUKE xiii. 24.

I WAS reading, a day or two ago, of the fact that in 1861 there were in this country failures in business amounting to

two hundred millions of dollars, and that in 1857 there were failures in this country amounting to two hundred and ninety-seven millions of dollars. Yet who stopped seeking after money? Let me tell you that if you had sought with one-half of the earnestness after Christ and eternal treasures which characterized your search for earthly perishables, you would long ago have had the joy and peace of the Gospel. So it is with the honors of the world. How men push out their energies in that direction, and toil and drudge, and yet how little they are worth after they are gotten! How mightily it was illustrated in the history of William the Conqueror. The world bowed down before him, and yet, when he came to die, the rabble rushed into the room and stole the pictures, and actually stole the last shred of clothing off the corpse of William the Conqueror. And then, when they came to bury him in the chancel of the church, a man stood up with a strong protest that actually staggered back the pall-bearers and procession, and inquired why such a miserable carcass as that should be let down into the church chancel? All the world honoring him a little while before—now all the glory departed! But the failure of the world's honors have not discouraged you; you have pushed on after them. When I see that one-half of that energy put out in the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ would have brought you into the peace and the life of the Gospel, I do not ask you to exert any more energy in the divine direction than you do in the worldly direction, but just as much. Strive to enter into the straight gate.

*NOVEMBER NINTH.***EARTHLY FRIENDSHIP UNCERTAIN.**

“Trust ye not in a friend.”—MICAH vii. 5.

HE cannot depend upon the friendship of those by whom we are surrounded. I think more and more of my friends every day, and less and less can bear alienation from any of them. I can stand the misinterpretation of an enemy or his assault as easily as any man; but the misinterpretation of a friend I never could stand. God intends us to put our confidence in those who have been with us in days of trouble as well as in days of joy, and who have through long years proved themselves worthy of our confidence. Yet can we keep them? I am not speaking of the betrayal of friends; I am supposing that they remain true to the last. But they have to go away from us. Are they not now asleep, many of them, in the cemeteries? We could not keep them. Oh, how death has again and again rifled our affections! Some of them were our comrades in boyhood days. Some stood beside us in great church enterprises. Some fell in the last war. We go and sit where they sat. We have their pictures on the wall. We recount their excellencies; but the chapter in which is recorded our interviews and our congratulations, and our meetings, and partings, and mirthfulness, and sadness—that chapter is done. It is closed, it is clasped, it is put away forever.

To come still nearer home, you cannot build on domestic

enjoyments. I hope we think more and more of our homes every day. It is a bad sign if you do not. It is a prophecy of your ruin. God bless our homes. I do not wonder that the Swiss, when they are away off in some distant land, sometimes begin to lose their appetite, and after a while they are flushed with fever, and in their last moments, as though it were a secret they wanted to keep, when asked what is the matter with them, they say: "Homesick." It was a beautiful epitaph for a Christian woman: "She did what she could to make home happy." Is it possible with any of you, that you are losing your patience now with the sportfulness of childhood; and because the honeymoon has been gone for some years, and the lustre is gone from the eye, and the hilarity from the disposition, and the rose from the cheek, you find no more charm in the companionship of those whom you promised to take "for better or for worse?" Then you had better rehearse your vows, and look upon what a dark sea you are drifting. But even though you may be faithful to your home, do you expect to keep all those charming objects about you? And can you say: "Here I build for eternity?" Oh no. They go away from us. How many bright eyes are closed, how many gentle hands folded; how many feet still.

NOVEMBER TENTH.

LIGHT AFFLICTIONS.

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment."—2 Cor. iv. 17.

THE apostle got such an idea of heaven, that it made all the troubles of this world seem insignificant. "Light, and but for a moment," he describes them. Who is it that says our troubles are light? Why, they kill us! they kill us!

Who dares say our troubles are light? It is a man who had lost his friends, and lost his property, and was whipped, and imprisoned, and shipwrecked, and hounded, and pursued, and condemned, and was on his way to be beheaded. He says it is "light, and but for a moment." Why? It was in contrast with the glories that were to come. And, my dear brother, when trouble is in your heart; my dear sister, borne down by many sorrows, if you could only let the sunshine of the eternal world come down upon your soul, it would chase away all the darkness, and the cavern of trouble would only be the encampment of eternal consolation, and the stalactites of the cave would glisten like the chandeliers of heaven. O sweet, grand, glorious heaven! We cannot think enough of it. We cannot have our affections enough raptured away towards it. Jesus is there, and the good are there. They walk in the light of the throne. They drink from the drippings of the rock. They skip with glee. They pluck fruits, golden and fair. Their feet bound with a gladness that never dies. They weep no grief. They carry no chain. They bear no burden. They die no death. Amid palaces where kings are never discrowned; amid harvest fields never struck through with rust; amid fountains never touched of drought; in temples that are never shut; amid blazing splendors that ever kindle and never die—they walk, they sing, they triumph.

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH.

CHRIST A SYMPATHIZER.

"Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not."—LUKE vii. 12, 13.

I LEARN from this subject that Christ was a sympathizer. Mark you, this was a city funeral. In the country, when

the bell tolls, they know all about it for five miles around, and they know what was the matter with the man, how old he was, and what were his last experiences. They know with what temporal prospects he has left his family. There is no haste, there is no indecency, in the obsequies. There is nothing done as a mere matter of business. Even the children come out as the procession passes, and look sympathetic, and the tree-shadows seem to deepen, and the brooks weep in sympathy as the procession goes by. But, mark you, this that I am speaking of was a city funeral. In great cities the cart jostles the hearse, and there is mirth, and gladness, and indifference as the weeping procession goes by. In this city of Nain it was a common thing to have trouble, and bereavement, and death. Christ saw it every day there. Perhaps that very hour there were others being carried out; but this frequency of trouble did not harden Christ's heart at all. He stepped right out, and He saw this mourner, and He had compassion on her, and He said, "Weep not." Christ meets you, and He says, "Weep not." Perhaps with some it is financial trouble. "Oh!" you say, "it is such a silly thing for a man to cry over lost money." Is it? Suppose you had a large fortune, and all luxuries brought to your table, and your wardrobe was full, and your home was beautified by music, and sculpture, and painting, and thronged by the elegant and the educated, and then some rough misfortune should strike you in the face, and trample your treasures, and taunt your children for their faded dress, and send you into commercial circles an underling where once you waved a sceptre of gold, do you think you would cry then? I think you would. But Christ comes and meets all such today. He sees all the straits in which you have been thrust. He observes the sneer of that man who once was proud to walk in your shadow and glad to get your help. He sees the protested note, the uncanceled judgment, the foreclosed

mortgage, the heart-breaking exasperation, and he says: "Weep not. I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I will never let you starve. From my hand the fowls of heaven peck all their food. And will I let you starve? Never—no, my child, never."

NOVEMBER TWELFTH.

BORROWED LIGHT.

"The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."—REV. xxi. 23.

WHAT makes Mars, and Venus, and Jupiter so luminous? When the sun throws down his torch in the heavens, the stars pick up the scattered brands, and hold them in procession as the queen of the night advances; so all Christian workers, standing around the throne, will shine in the light borrowed from the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus in their faces, Jesus in their songs, Jesus in their triumph. Christ left heaven once for a tour of redemption on earth, yet the glorified ones knew He would come back again. But let Him abdicate His throne, and go away to stay forever, the music would stop; the congregation disperse; the temples of God be darkened; the rivers of light stagnate; and every chariot would become a hearse, and every bell would toll, and there would not be room on the hill-sides to bury the dead of the great metropolis, for there would be pestilence in heaven. But Jesus lives, and so all the redeemed live with Him. He shall recognize them as His comrades in earthly toil, and remember what they did for the honor of His name, and for the spread of His kingdom. All their prayers, and tears, and work will rise before Him as He looks into their faces, and He will divide His kingdom with them; His peace—their

peace ; His holiness—their holiness ; His joy—their joy. The glory of the central throne reflected from the surrounding thrones, the last spot of sin struck from the Christian orb, and the entire nature a-tremble and a-flash with light, they shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH.

CHRIST'S SWEETEST NAME.

“I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys.”—CANT. ii. 1.

HAVE you ever made up your mind by what name you will call Christ when you meet Him in heaven? You know He has many names. Will you call Him Jesus, or the Anointed One, or the Messiah, or will you take some of the symbolical names which on earth you learned from your Bible?

Wandering some day in the garden of God on high, the place a-bloom with eternal springtide, infinite luxuriance of rose and lily and amaranth, you may look up into His face and say: “My Lord, Thou art the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley.”

Some day as a soul comes up from earth to take its place in the firmament, and shine as a star forever and ever, and the lustre of a useful life shall beam forth tremulous and beautiful, you may look up into the face of Christ and say: “My Lord, Thou art a brighter star—the Morning Star—a star forever.”

Wandering some day amid the fountains of life that toss in the sunlight and fall in crash of pearl and amethyst in golden and crystalline urn, and you wander up the round-banked river to where it first tingles its silver on the rock, and out of

the chalices of love you drink to honor and everlasting joy, you may look up into the face of Christ and say: "My Lord, Thou art the Fountain of Living Water."

Some day, wandering amid the lambs and sheep in the heavenly pastures, feeding by the rock, rejoicing in the presence of Him who brought you out of the wolfish wilderness to the sheepfold above, you may look up into His loving and watchful eye and say: "My Lord, Thou art the Shepherd of the Everlasting Hills."

But there is another name you may select. I will imagine that heaven is done. Every throne has its king. Every harp has its harper. Heaven has gathered up everything that is worth having. The treasures of the whole universe have poured into it. The song full. The ranks full. The mansions full. Heaven full. The sun shall set a-fire with splendor the domes of the temples, and burnish the golden streets into a blaze, and be reflected back from the solid pearl of the twelve gates, and it shall be noon in heaven, noon on the river, noon on the hills, noon in all the valleys—high noon. Then the soul may look up, gradually accustoming itself to the vision, shading the eyes as from the almost insufferable splendor of the noonday light, until the vision can endure it, then crying out: "Thou art the Sun that never sets!"

NOVEMBER FOURTEENTH.

WINE IS AN ENEMY.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging."—Ps. xx. 1.

WHEN I first entered the ministry I drank wine at weddings, and there were exceptional occasions when I took it, and I felt it was allowable, and I was committing no

sin against either my conscience or my God ; but I felt always trammelled when I came to talk about intemperance, and I said to myself one day : " There must be something wrong in doing anything which trammels my tongue on this subject," and from that time I have banished the idea of taking wine under any circumstance. The only ground for Christian men to take is the teetotal ground. Take it on account of your influence ; your children will do as you do, only a little more so. You take wine, for instance, only on New Year's Day, and your sons will take it on New Year's and Christmas and Thanksgiving Day and the month of July ; and sometimes when they feel hot, and sometimes when they feel cold, and sometimes when they feel tired. You take a quarter of a glass, they will take three-quarters of a glass. You take ale, and they will take brandy. You drink, and your sons will drink. It is an awful responsibility for a parent to assume, that of taking his whole family on the wrong road. They think you are right. They have more admiration for you than they have for any other man. They try to walk like you. They try to wear their hat like you. They would like to dress like you. In every respect you are their model. Now, look out in this matter of strong drink you do not become an evil example and a ruinous and blasting influence.

You also have an influence in the community. Time was when a Christian man might consistently have wine on his sideboard and on his table every day at noon, and as good men as ever lived practised that all their lives, and have gone into glory, sitting down to drink new wine in our Father's kingdom, a wine that never intoxicates ; but that day is passed. God winked at those times of ignorance. In this day, the line is so thoroughly and sharply drawn that there are but two sides—the men who are for rum, and the men who are against rum, and you cannot afford to sit on the fence, and you will not sit there a great while, for either this side or that side will pull you over. You will not do much in the way of bringing

souls unto Jesus Christ unless you are right on this subject in this day of glorious enlightenment.

NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH

THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

"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."—2 TIM. iv. 7, 8.

I WILL show you three spectacles: Napoleon the first; Voltaire the second; Paul the third. Spectacle the first: Napoleon passing along with his armies down through Egypt, up through Russia, across nations on whose bleeding heart he set his iron heel, and across whose quivering flesh ground the wheels of his gun carriages. Spectacle the second: Voltaire, learned, witty, eloquent, but all the forces of pen and tongue, and with a most infernal stratagem, arrayed against Christianity, and poisoning empires with his philosophy and his infidelity, yet applauded by the clapping hands of thrones, empires, and continents. Spectacle the third: Paul, insignificant in personal appearance, shoved out from polite circles, scourged, spit upon, hounded from city to city as though he were a wild beast, yet giving his life to make the world better and heaven full; announcing the resurrection to those who mourn at the barred gates of the sepulchre, speaking consolations that make the eyes of widowhood and orphanage and want gleam with anticipation of certain and eternal rescue, undaunted in the presence of those who could take his life, his cheek flushed with transport, his eye on heaven, exclaiming, while with one hand he shook defiance to all the earth, and with the other beckoned to the angels of God to come and bear him away: "I am now ready to be offered up, and

the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the 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, will give me, and not to me only, but to all them that love His appearing." Oh! it is a grand thing to be a Christian hero. I heard of a troop, of a regiment of a thousand men, who went out into battle, and a host of ten thousand men came down to meet them. "Why," said the men in the small army, "there is no chance for us. We are *one* thousand and they are *ten* thousand." Their commander looked at the great host and then looked at the small band, and said: "I see a thousand here and ten thousand yonder, but *the match is even.*" That speech won them the victory. And I have seen many a Christian man standing all alone, the forces of earth and hell seemingly arrayed against him, yet in the strength of God he won the day, for the match was even. Nay, the odds were on the side of the one Christian man; for if God be for us, who can be against us?"

NOVEMBER SIXTEENTH.

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S MERCIES.

"Be thankful unto him, and bless his name."—Ps. c. 4.

AS the ox grazes in the pasture, up to his eyes in clover, yet never thinking who makes the clover, and as the bird picks up the worm from the furrow, not knowing that it is God who makes everything from the *animalculæ* in the sod to the seraph on the throne—so we go on eating, drinking and enjoying, but never thanking, or seldom thanking; or if thanking at all, with only half a heart. I compared our indifference to

the brute ; but perhaps I wronged the brute. I do not know but that among its other instincts, it may have an instinct by which it recognizes the divine hand that feeds it. I do not know but that God is, through it, holding communication with what we call "irrational creation." The cow that stands at this hour, under the willow by the water-course, chewing its cud, *looks* very thankful ; and who can tell how much a bird means by its song? The aroma of the flowers smells like incense, and the mist arising from the river looks like the smoke of a morning sacrifice. Oh, that we were as responsive. Yet, who thanks God for the water that gushes up in the well and that foams in the cascade, and that laughs over the rocks, and that patters in the shower, and that claps its hands in the sea? Who thanks God for the air, the fountain of life, the bridge of sunbeams, the path of sound, the great fan on a hot summer's day? Who thanks God for this wonderful physical organism—this sweep of the vision, this chime of harmony struck into the ear, this soft tread of a myriad delights over the nervous tissue, this rolling of the crimson tide through artery and vein, this drumming of the heart on our march to immortality. We take all these things as a matter of course. But suppose God should withdraw these common blessings? Your body would become an Inquisition of torture, the cloud would refuse rain, every green thing would crumple up, and the earth would crack open under your feet. The air *would* cease its healthful circulation, pestilence would swoop, and every house would become a place of skulls. Streams would first swim with vermin and then dry up ; and thirst, and hunger, and anguish, and despair would lift their sceptres. Oh, compare such a life as that with the life you live to-day, and the life that you lived this morning with your families about you ! Is it not time that with every word of our lips and with every action of our life, we began to acknowledge these every-day mercies ?

NOVEMBER SEVENTEETH.

GOD IS LOVE.

“The God of love.”—2 COR. xiii. 11.

THE Bible is a warm letter of affection from a parent to a child, and yet there are many who see chiefly the severer passages. As there may be fifty or sixty nights of gentle dew in one summer, that will not cause as much remark as one hail-storm of half an hour, so there are those who are more struck by those passages of the Bible that announce the indignation of God than by those that announce His affection. There may come to a household twenty or fifty letters of affection during the year, and they will not make as much excitement in that home as one sheriff's writ ; and so there are people who are more attentive to those passages which announce the wrath of God, than those which announce His mercy and His favor. God is a Lion, John says in the Book of Revelation. God is a Breaker, Micah announces in his prophesy. God is a Rock. God is a King. But hear also that God is Love. A father and his child are walking out in the fields on a summer's day, and there comes by a thunder-storm, and there is a flash of lightning that startles the child, and the father says, “My dear, that is God's *eye*.” There comes a peal of thunder, and the father says, “My dear, that is God's *voice*.” But the clouds go off the sky, and the storm is gone, and light floods the heavens and floods the landscape, and the father forgets to say, “That is God's *smiles*.”

*NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH.***EVERY-DAY RELIGION.**

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written.”—MAL. iii. 16.

WHEN a dam breaks, and two or three villages in Massachusetts are overwhelmed, or an earthquake in South America swallows down a whole city, then people begin to talk about the uncertainty of life, and they imagine that they are engaged in positively religious conversation. No. You may talk about these things and have no grace of God at all in your heart. We ought every day to be talking religion. If there is anything glad about it, anything beautiful about it, anything important about it, we ought to be continuously speaking about it. I have noticed that men, just in proportion as their Christian experience is shallow, talk about funerals, and grave-yards, and tomb-stones, and death-beads. The real, genuine Christian man talks chiefly about this life, and the great eternity beyond, and not so much about the insignificant pass between these two residences. And yet how few circles there are where the religion of Jesus Christ is welcome. Go into a circle, even of Christian people, where they are full of joy and hilarity, and talk about Christ or heaven, and everything is immediately silenced. As on a Summer day, when the forests are full of life, chatter, and chirrup, and carol, a mighty chorus of bird-harmony, every tree branch an orchestra—if a hawk appear in the sky every voice stops and the forests are still. Just so I

have seen a lively, religious circle silenced on the appearance of anything like religious conversation. No one had anything to say save, perhaps, some old patriarch in the corner of the room, who really thinks that something ought to be said, under the circumstances ; so he puts one foot over the other, and heaves a long sigh, and says : “ Oh yes, that’s so ; that’s so ! ”

My friends, the religion of Jesus Christ is something to talk about with a glad heart. It is brighter than the waters ; it is more cheerful than the sunshine. Do not go around about, groaning about that religion, when you ought to be singing it or talking it in cheerful tones of voice. How often it is that we find men whose lives are utterly inconsistent, who attempt to talk religion and always make a failure of it. My friends, we must *live* religion or we cannot talk it. If a man is cranky, and cross, and uncongenial, and hard in his dealings, and then begins to talk about Christ and heaven, everybody is repelled by it. Yet I have sometimes heard such men say, in whining tones : “ We are miserable sinners. The Lord bless you ; the Lord have mercy on you ; ”—their conversation interlarded with such expressions, which mean nothing but canting ; and canting is the worst form of hypocrisy. If we have really felt the religion of Christ in our hearts, let us talk it, and talk it with an illuminated countenance, remembering that when two Christian people talk, God gives especial attention, and writes down what they say. Malachi iii. 16 : “ Then the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written.”

NOVEMBER NINETEENTH.

JESUS.

"Jesus."—MATTHEW i. 21.

I DO not care where I open the Bible, I find Jesus. In whatever path I start, I come, after awhile, to the Bethlehem manger. I go back to the old dispensation, and see a lamb on the altar, and say, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" Then I go and see the manna provided for the Israelites in the wilderness, and I say, "Jesus, the Bread of Life." Then I look at the rock which was smitten by the prophet's rod, and, as the water gushes out, I say, "It is Jesus, the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." I go back and look at the writings of Job, and hear him exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Then I go to Ezekiel, and I find Christ presented there as "a Plant of Renown;" and then I turn over to Isaiah, and Christ is spoken of "as a Sheep before her Shearers." It is Jesus all the way between Genesis and Malachi. Then I turn over to the New Testament, and it is Christ in the parable, it is Christ in the miracle, it is Christ in the evangelists' story, it is Christ in the apostles' epistles, and it is Christ in the trumpet peal of the Apocalypse. I know there are a great many people who *do not find Christ* in the Bible. Here is a man who studies the Bible *as a historian*. Well, if you come as a historian, you will find in this book how the world was made, how the seas fled to their places, how empires were established, how nation fought

with nation, javelin ringing against harbegeon, until the earth was ghastly with the dead. You will see the coronation of princes, the triumph of conquerors, and the world turned upside-down and back again and down again, cleft and scarred with great agonies of earthquake, and tempest, and battle. It is a wonderful history, putting to the blush all others in the accuracy of its recital, and in the stupendous events it records. Homer, and Thucydides, and Gibbon could make great stories out of little events ; but it took a Moses to tell how the heavens and the earth were made in one chapter, and to give the history of thousands of years upon two leaves.

NOVEMBER TWENTIETH.

GOSPEL ARROW.

“Thine arrows are sharp.”—Ps. xlv. 5.

THERE was something very fascinating about the archery of olden times. Perhaps you do not know what they could do with the bow and arrow. Why, the chief battles fought by the English Plantagenets were with the long-bow. They would take the arrow of polished wood, and feather it with the plume of a bird, and then it would fly from the bowstring of plaited silk. The bloody fields of Agincourt, and Solway Moss, and Neville’s Cross heard the loud thrum of the archer’s bowstring. Now, my Christian friends, we have a mightier weapon than that. It is the arrow of the Gospel ; it is a sharp arrow ; it is a straight arrow ; it is feathered from the wing of the dove of God’s Spirit ; it flies from the bow made out of the wood of the cross. As far as I can estimate or calculate, it has brought down three hundred millions of souls. Paul knew how to bring the notch of that arrow on to the bowstring, and its whir was heard through

the Corinthian theatres, and through the court-room, until the knees of Felix knocked together. It was that arrow that stuck in Luther's heart when he cried out, "Oh, my sins! oh, my sins!" If it strike a man in the head, it kills his skepticism; if it strike him in the heel, it will turn his step; if it strike him in the heart, he throws up his hands, as did one of old when wounded in the battle, crying, "O Galilean! thou hast conquered!"

"Sharp are the arrows of the Lord,
And swift as lightning fly;
They enter quick the hardest heart
And make the boldest spirit cry."

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIRST.

STRIPPING THE SLAIN.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa."—1 SAM. xxxi. 8

THERE are tens of thousands of young men every year coming from the country to our great cities. They come with brave hearts and grand expectations. They think they will be Rufus Choates in the law, or Drapers in chemistry, or A. T. Stewarts in merchandise. The country lads sit down in the village grocery, with their feet on the iron rod around the red-hot stove, in the evening, talking over the prospects of the young man who has gone off to the city. Two or three of them think that perhaps he may get along very well and succeed, but the most of them prophesy failure; for it is very hard to think that those whom we knew in boyhood will ever make any stir in the world. But our young man has a fine position in a dry-goods store. The month is

over. He gets his wages. He is not accustomed to have so much money belonging to himself. He is a little excited, and does not exactly know what to do with it, and he spends it in some places where he ought not. Soon there come up new companions and acquaintances from the bar-rooms and the saloons of the city. Soon that young man begins to waver in the battle of temptation, and soon his soul goes down. In a few months, or few years, he has fallen. He is morally dead. He is a mere corpse of what he once was. The harpies of sin snuff up the taint and come on the field. His garments gradually give out. He has pawned his watch. His health is failing him. His credit perishes. He is too poor to stay in the city, and he is too poor to pay his way home to the country. Down! down! Why do the low fellows of the city now stick to him so closely? Is it to help him back to a moral and spiritual life? Oh, no. I will tell you why they stay; they are the Philistines stripping the slain.

An ex-member of Congress, one of the most eloquent men that ever stood in the House of Representatives, said in his last moments: "This is the end. I am dying—dying on a borrowed bed, covered by a borrowed sheet, in a house built by public charity. Bury me under that tree in the middle of the field, where I shall not be crowded, for I have been crowded all my life." Where were the jolly politicians and the dissipating comrades who had been with him, laughing at his jokes, applauding his eloquence, and plunging him into sin? They have left. Why? His money is gone, his reputation is gone, his wit is gone, his clothes are gone, everything is gone. Why should they stay any longer? They have completed their work. They have stripped the slain.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SECOND.

TAKING COUNSEL.

“Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest.”—ECCLES. ix. 9.

SIR JAMES MCINTOSH, one of the most eminent and elegant men that ever lived, while standing at the very height of his eminence, said to a great company of scholars: “My wife made me.” The wife ought to be the advising partner in every firm. She ought to be interested in all the losses and gains of shop and store. She ought to have a right—she *has* a right—to know everything. If a man goes into a business transaction that he *dare* not tell his wife of, you may depend that he is on the way either to bankruptcy or moral ruin. There may be some things which he does not wish to trouble his wife with, but if he dare not tell her, he is on the road to discomfiture. On the other hand, the husband ought to be sympathetic with the wife’s occupation. It is no easy thing to keep house. Many a woman that could have endured martyrdom as well as Margaret, the Scotch girl, have actually been worn out by house management. There are a thousand martyrs of the kitchen. It is very annoying, after the vexations of the day around the stove or the table, or in the nursery or parlor, to have the husband say: “You know nothing about trouble; you ought to be in the store half-an-hour.” Sympathy of occupation! If the husband’s work cover him with the soot of the furnace, or the odors of leather or soap factories, let not the wife be easily disgusted at the begrimed hands or unsavory

aroma. Your gains are one, your interests are one, your losses are one ; lay hold of the work of life with both hands. Four hands to fight the battle. Four eyes to watch for the danger. Four shoulders on which to carry the trials. It is a very sad thing when the painter has a wife who does not like pictures. It is a very sad thing for a pianist when she has a husband who does not like music. It is a very sad thing when a wife is not suited unless her husband has what is called a "genteel business." As far as I understand "a genteel business," it is something to which a man goes at ten o'clock in the morning, and comes home at two or three in the afternoon, and gets a large amount of money for doing nothing. This is, I believe, a "genteel business ;" and there has been many a wife who has made the mistake of not being satisfied until the husband has given up the tanning of the hides, or the turning of the banisters, or the building of the walls, and put himself in circles where he has nothing to do but smoke cigars and drink wine, and get himself into habits that upset him, going down in the maelstrom, taking his wife and children with him.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-THIRD.

PLAINNESS OF SPEECH.

"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."—2 COR. III. 12.

RELIGION will make headway in hat factories when you can send there, baptized by the Spirit, a Christian hatter. We want men in all the occupations, in the name of God, to throttle the sins of their own trade. Religion will never conquer the plumber's shop, or the mason's wall, or the carpenter's scaffolding, or the tinner's roof, or the printer's

type-room, until converted plumbers, and masons, and carpenters, and printers carry it there. Some men are so profound in their education they do not seem qualified for this mission. You cannot send the Great Eastern up the Penobscot River. Profoundly educated men seem to "draw too much water" to get up such a stream. I have heard finely educated men in prayer-meeting talk in sentences of Miltonic affluence, yet their words fell dead upon the meeting; but when some poor, uneducated man arose, and said, "I suppose you fellows think that because I don't know anything I haven't no right to speak; but Christ has converted my soul, and you know I was the miserablest chap in town; and if God will pardon me, He will pardon you. Come to Jesus! Come now?"—the prayer-meeting broke down with religious emotion. It is a grand thing to be accurate in speech; but get out with your grammar if you are going to let the lack of acquaintance therewith keep a man down when God Almighty tells him to get up!

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH.

CHRIST OUR REFUGE IN TIME OF TROUBLE.

"Thou art my strong refuge."—Ps. lxxi. 7.

CHRI^ST is the only shelter of the soul in trouble. What can you do without Him when sorrow comes? Perhaps at first you take valerian to quiet your nerves, or alcohol to revive your spirits; but have you found anything in the medicines or physical stimulants sufficient? Perhaps in the excitement of the money-market, or in the merry-making of the club-room, you have sought relief. This world has no balsam for a wounded soul, no shelter for a bruised spirit.

The dove, in time of the deluge, flew north, and it was all water ; and south, and east, and west, and it was all water, in which were tossed the carcasses of the dead world ; and the first solid thing the dove's feet touched was the window of the ark. So the soul in trouble goes out in one direction, and finds nothing substantial to rest upon ; and in another direction, and every whither, but there is no rest for the dove save the ark.

“Substantial comfort will not grow
In Nature's barren soil :
All we can boast, till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.
But where the Lord has planted grace,
And made His glories known,
There fruits of heavenly joy are found,
And there alone.”

You lost a parent: some one said that it was in the regular course of nature that your father should expire. Did that comfort you? You lost a child: somebody said if that child had lived it might have turned out badly. Did that comfort you? You lost your property: they told you that riches were very uncertain. You knew that before. You were sick: they explained to you that the difficulty was in the secretions, or in the sciatic nerve. Did that soothe you? Oh, the despicable quackery of earthly comfort.

*NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH.***THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD.**

"The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."—Ps. xxxiii. 5.

GOOD, grand, old-fashioned Thanksgiving-day has come. Nothing could stop it. It pressed on down through the weeks and months, its way lighted by burning cities, or cleft by cavernous graves; now strewn with orange-blossoms, and then with funeral-weeds; amid instruments that piped "the quickstep" and drummed "the dead march." Through the gates of this morning it came, carrying on one shoulder a sheaf of wheat, and on the other a shock of corn. Children, in holiday dress, hold up their hands to bless it, and old age goes out to bid it welcome, asking that it come in, and by the altars of God rest awhile. Come in, O day! fragrant with a thousand memories, and borne down under the weight of innumerable mercies, and tell to our thankful hearts how great is the goodness of God.

Although nature is out of joint, yet even in its disruption I am surprised to find the almost universal happiness of the animal creation. On a summer day, when the air and the grass are most populous with life, you will not hear a sound of distress, unless, perchance a heartless schoolboy has robbed a bird's nest, or a hunter has broken a bird's wing, or a pasture has been robbed of a lamb, and there goes up a bleating from the flocks. The whole earth is filled with animal delight—joy: feathered, and scaled, and horned, and hoofed. The

bee hums it ; the frog croaks it ; the squirrel chatters it ; the quail whistles it ; the lark carols it ; the whale spouts it. The snail, the rhinoceros, the grizzly bear, the toad, the wasp, the spider, the shell-fish, have their homely delights—joy as great to them as our joy is to us. Goat climbing the rocks ; anaconda crawling through the jungle ; buffalo plunging across the prairie ; crocodile basking in tropical sun ; seal puffing on the ice ; ostrich striding across the desert, are so many bundles of joy. They do not go moping or melancholy. They are not only half supplied : God says *they are filled with good.*

The worm squirming through the sod upturned of ploughshare, and the ants racing up and down the hillock, are happy by day and happy by night. Take a drop of water under the microscope, and you find that within it there are millions of creatures that swim in a hallelujah of gladness. The sounds in nature that are repulsive to our ears are often only utterances of joy—the growl, the croak, the bark, the howl. The good God made these creatures ; thinks of them ever, and will not let a ploughshare turn up a mole's nest, or fisherman's hook transfix a worm, until, by eternal decree, its time has come. God's hand feeds all these broods, and shepherds all these flocks, and tends all these herds. He sweetens the clover-top for the oxen's taste ; and pours out crystalline waters, in mossed cups of rock, for the hind to drink out of on his way down the crags ; and pours nectar into the cup of the honeysuckle to refresh the humming-bird ; and spreads a banquet of a hundred fields of buckwheat, and lets the honey-bee put his mouth to any cup of all the banquet—a banquet richer than Belshazzar's, and no handwriting on the wall, save that of sweet-brier and trumpet-creeper ; and tells the grasshopper to go anywhere he likes, and gives the flocks of heaven the choice of all the grain-fields. The sea-anemone, half animal, half flower, clinging to the rock in mid-ocean, with its tentacles spread to catch its food, has the Owner of the universe to provide for it. We are repulsed at the hideousness

of the elephant, but God, for the comfort and convenience of the monster, puts forty thousand distinct muscles in its proboscis.

I go down on the barren sea-shore, and say: "No animal can live in this place of desolation." But all through the sands are myriads of little insects that leap with happy life. I go down by the marsh, and say: "In this damp place, and in these loathsome pools of stagnant water, there will be the quietness of death." But lo! I see the turtles on the rotten log sunning themselves, and hear the bogs quake with multitudinous life. When the unfledged robins are hungry, God shows the old robin where she can get food to put into their open mouths. Winter is not allowed to come until the ants have granaried their harvest, and the squirrels have filled their cellar with nuts. God shows the hungry ichneumon where it may find the crocodile's eggs; and in Arctic climes there are animals that God so lavishly clothes that they can afford to walk through snow-storms in the finest sable, and ermine, and chinchilla, and no sooner is one set of furs worn out than God gives them a new one. He helps the spider in its architecture of its gossamer bridge, and takes care of the color of the butterfly's wing, and tinges the cochineal, and helps the moth out of the chrysalis. The animal creation also has its army and navy. The most insignificant has its means of defence: the wasp its sting; the reptile its tooth; the bear its paw; the dog its muzzle; the elephant its tusk; the fish its scale; the bird its swift wing; the reindeer its antlers; the roe its fleet foot. We are repelled at the thought of sting, and tusk, and hoof, but God's goodness provides them for the defence of the animal's rights.

Why did God make all these, and why make them so happy? How account for all this singing, and dancing, and frisking amid the *irrational creation*? Why this heaven for the animalculæ in a dew-drop? Why for the condor a throne on Chimborazo? Why the glitter of the phosphorus in the ship's

wake on the sea, which is said to be only the frolic of millions of insects? Why the perpetual chanting of so many voices from the irrational creation in earth, and air, and ocean—beasts, and all cattle, creeping things, and flying fowl, permitted to join in the praise that goes up from seraph and archangel? Only one solution, one explanation, one answer—*God is good.* “*The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*”

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH.

A MIGHTY NAME.

“A name that is above every other name.”—PHILL. ii. 9.

ROTHSCCHILD is a potent name in the commercial world, Cuvier in the scientific world, Irving a powerful name in the literary world, Washington an influential name in the political world, Wellington a mighty name in the military world; but tell me any name in all the earth so potent to awe, and lift, and thrill, and rouse, and agitate, and bless as this name of Jesus. That one word unhorsed Saul, and flung Newton on his face on ship's deck, and to-day holds a hundred million of the race with omnipotent spell. That name in England to-day means more than Victoria; in Germany, means more than King William; in France, means more than Thiers or MacMahon; in Italy, means more than Garibaldi or Victor Emanuel. I have seen a man bound hand and foot in sin, Satan his hard task-master, in a bondage from which no human power could deliver him, and yet at the pronunciation of that one word he dashed down his chains and marched out forever free. I have seen a man overwhelmed with disaster, the last hope fled, the last light gone out: that name pronounced in his hearing, the sea dropped, the clouds scattered, and a sun-

burst of eternal gladness poured into his soul. I have seen a man hardened in infidelity, defiant of God, full of scoff and jeer, jocosé of the judgment, reckless of an unending eternity, at the mere pronounciation of that name blanch, and cower, and quake, and pray, and sob, and groan, and believe, and rejoice. Oh, it is a mighty name ! At its utterance the last wall of sin will fall, the last temple of superstition crumble, the last Juggernaut of cruelty crash to pieces. That name will first make all the earth tremble, and then it will make all the nations sing. It is to be the password at every gate of honor, the insignia on every flag, the battle shout in every conflict. All the millions of the earth are to know it. The red horse of carnage seen in apocalyptic vision, and the black horse of death, are to fall back on their haunches, and the white horse of victory will go forth, mounted by Him who hath the moon under His feet and the stars of heaven for His tiara. Other dominions seem to be giving out ; this seems to be enlarging. Spain has had to give up much of its dominion. Austria has been wonderfully depleted in power. France had to surrender some of her favorite provinces. Most of the thrones of the world are being lowered, and most of the sceptres of the world are being shortened ; but every Bible printed, every tract distributed, every Sunday-school class taught, every school founded, every Church established, is extending the power of Christ's name. That name has already been spoken under the Chinese wall and in Siberian snow-castle, in Brazilian grove and in eastern pagoda. That name is to swallow up all other names. That crown is to cover up all other crowns. That empire is to absorb all other dominations.

*NOVEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH.***THE CHRISTIAN'S SHELTER.**

MOST of the winged denizens have no home ; now they are at the north, and now at the south, as the climate indicates. This year a nest in one tree ; next year a nest in another tree. The golden oriole remains but three months of the year in Germany, and is then gone. The linnet of Norway crosses the ocean to find rest away from the winter's blast. The heron, the goldfinch, and the grossbeak are migratory. The cranes call each other together several days before going, choose their leader, arrange themselves in two lines, forming an angle, and are gone. But the pigeons, alluded to in the text, summer, and winter, and always, have *a home in the dove-cot*. And so Christ is the home of those who come to Him. He is a warm home : they rest under the "feathers of the Almighty." Christ tells us that chickens find not a warmer place under the wing of the hen than we in Him. He is a safe home : our fortunes may go down ten degrees below zero, the snows of trouble may fall, the winds of persecution may howl, the jackals of death may stalk forth—all is well, for "great peace have they who trust in God." From this home we shall never be driven out. The sheriff may sell us out of our earthly house, or the fires may burn it down, or the winds carry it away, but that home shall always be ours.

Men talk as though starting for God were putting out on a

trackless moor, or wandering through the sands of a great Sahara. No, no ; it is coming to the warmest and the best of homes.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH.

TOO EAGER FOR MONEY.

“If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.”—Ps. lxxii. 10.

NO man wants to see his investments perish or to have his plans frustrated. We all like to be paid for work, be it mental or manual. You feel better when you gain a hundred dollars than when you lose a hundred dollars. There is no fault to be found with such a preference ; but are you not willing to acknowledge that there are thousands of men being destroyed through money-making,—their earthly, spiritual, and immortal nature compelled to wheel around within the circuit of a ten-cent piece ! They bemean themselves for money. They defraud for money. They lie for money. They think of nothing else. They dream of nothing else. They are imprisoned in their own money vault. They are buried alive under their own accumulations. After the breath has gone out of their body and their pulse has ceased to beat, they will be no more dead than they are now. They perished long ago. They bowed down in worship to the golden calf, and the calf trod on them. “Oh,” say you, “I have not gone as far as that. I have not got to such an extreme as that.” But are you not, many of you, willing to acknowledge that during the past week you gave more thoughts to dollars and percentages and losses and gains and stocks and coupons and shares and dividends, a thousand-fold more, than you did to the wealth and treasure houses of heaven ? Are not some of

you willing to confess that avarice has begun to nibble at the skirts of your Christian garment? Are you not willing to admit that if you hewed away from yesterday all those hours that were given to worldliness, exclusive of God and eternity, you would hew them all away?

NOVEMBER TWENTY-NINTH.

WHEN THE CHRISTIAN DIES HE IS SAFE.

“It is better for me to die than to live.”—JONAH iv. 3.

THERE is a bell on the other side of the waters, weighing two hundred and eighty-eight thousand pounds, and it takes twenty-four men to ring it. But to bring out all the sweetness of this Gospel bell would take all the consecrated spirits of earth, and seraphim, and archangel.

In New England they have what they call a *passing* bell—that is, when some one dies in a village, word is sent to the sexton, and he sounds the bell just as often as the man lived years; and when the sound is in the tower, the people are solemn, and they say, “Some one is dead; who is it?” For us the passing bell will soon sound. Gone from the family; gone from the church; gone from our last opportunity of salvation.

The day is far spent. What the hand findeth to do, do it. Hours once dead can never be resuscitated. Among all the drops of dew that fall on thy grave, there will not be one tear of repentance. Slipping off the embankment of eternity, we can never clamber back. William the Conqueror established the ringing of *curfew* bells. The meaning of that curfew bell sounded at even-time was, that all the fires should be put out, or covered with ashes, all the lights should be extinguished,

and the people should go to bed. Soon for us the curfew bell will sound. The fires of our life will be banked up in ashes, and we shall go into the sleep, the long sleep, the cool sleep, I hope the blessed sleep. But there is no gloom in that if we are ready. *The safest thing a Christian can do is to die.*

NOVEMBER THIRTIETH.

A YOUNG CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO BE JOYFUL.

“ Rejoice, O young man.”—ECCLES. xi. 9.

IF a young man be not a Christian, his high spirits depend upon worldly prosperity. I do not wonder that that young man is cheerful;—large salary, plenty of friends, vigorous health, elegant apparel, brilliant associations. Why, of course he is gay and exuberant. But sometimes young men have troubles. We do not always recognize the fact, but I think some of the worst troubles that come in all our life, come before thirty years of age, in the struggle to get into business, or in the struggle to manage the business after it is gotten. Now, suppose the salary begins to fade away; suppose the physical health of that young man begins to wither; suppose the friends upon whom he depended turn their backs; suppose the wardrobe begins to fail, and there is no money to replenish it; what then will become of that young man who has no Christian comfort in his soul? He will fall back in dependency. He will be tempted to plunge into dissipation to drown his troubles. The very misfortunes that came to discipline and wake him up, are to be the means of his complete destruction. But here I find a Christian young man whom the same kind of trouble smites. What about him? He just falls back on the resources of God. He says: “God is my

Father, and out of all these misfortunes I mean to pluck advantages for my soul. All the promises in that Book are mine ; all Christian association is mine ; Christ is mine ; heaven is mine ! What though my garments do wear out, I have the imperial robe of righteousness which I got from Christ in the hour when I first came to Him. What though my money is gone, I have a deed to the whole universe in the promise, ' All things are yours.' What though my friends turn their backs upon me, ministering angels are my body-guard. What though my fare be poor and my bread scant, I sit at the King's banquet." Teresa lost all her property, came down to utter destitution, and had only two coins left. She jingled them in her hand, and said : " Teresa and two coins are nothing, but Teresa and two coins and Christ are everything." Oh the joy and the comforts of Christ's religion ! What a poor, shallow stream is worldly enjoyment compared with that wide, deep, ever rolling river of God's peace, that flows through the very midst of a Christian heart. You go down to the beach. You stand on a rock. You see the seas tossed in a storm. It does not frighten you. The waves beat against the rock ; but you are standing very firmly. You are not frightened. So there has been many a young man who has seen all around him the storm of temptation and trial, but he has planted both feet on the rock of Christ's salvation, and has been enabled to say : " God is our refuge and strength ; an ever-present help in time of trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be cast into the midst of the seas ; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled ; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah !"

*DECEMBER FIRST.***THE KING'S WAGONS.**

“And Joseph gave them wagons according to the commandment of Pharaoh.”—*GEN.*
xlv. 21.

WE are apt to think of the fields and the orchards as feeding us ; but who makes the flax grow for the linen, and the wheat for the bread, and the wool on the sheep's back ? Oh ! I wish we could see through every grain-field, by every sheep-fold, under the trees of every orchard, the King's wagons ! They drive up three times a day—morning, noon, and night. They bring furs from the Arctic, they bring fruits from the tropic, they bring bread from the temperate zone. The King looks out and He says, “ There are twelve hundred millions of people to be fed and clothed. So many pounds of meat, so many barrels of flour, so many yards of cloth and linen and flannel, so many hats, so many socks, so many shoes ; ” enough for all, save that we who are greedy get more shoes than belong to us, and others go barefooted. None but a God could feed and clothe the world. None but a King's corn-crib could appease the world's famine. None but a King could tell how many wagons to send and how heavily to load them, and when they are to start. They are coming over the frozen ground to-day. Do you not hear their rumbling ? They will stop at noon at your table. Oh ! if for a little while they should cease, hunger would come into the nations, as to Utica when Hamilcar besieged it, and as in Jerusalem when

Vespasian surrounded it ; and the nations would be hollow-eyed, and fall upon each other in universal cannibalism ; and skeleton would drop upon skeleton ; and there would be no one to bury the dead ; and the earth would be a field of bleached skeletons ; and the birds of prey would fall dead, flock after flock, without any carcasses to devour ; and the earth in silence would wheel around, one great black hearse ! All life stopped because the King's wagons are stopped. Oh ! thank God for bread—*for bread !*

DECEMBER SECOND.

EXHORTING WITH A FUNERAL COUNTENANCE.

“He that exhorteth, let him do it with simplicity, with cheerfulness.”—Rom. xiii. 8.

FRIDAY morning, you go into a merchant's store and buy a bill of hosiery. How his face lights up ! How cheerful he is ! How fascinating he is while he is selling the bill of goods ! You go away, saying, “That is one of the most agreeable men I ever met in my life.” That very Friday evening you go into the prayer-meeting where that same Christian merchant worships, and you find him getting up and recommending the religion of Jesus Christ with a funeral countenance and a doleful phraseology, enough to make an undertaker burst into tears. How few people there are who talk cheerfully about the religion of Jesus ! In other words, that man of whom I spoke had more exhilaration when he was selling a bill of goods than in recommending the religion which makes all heaven ring with the anthems of the free. Now, ought that so to be ? How many are driven from the doors of the churches by the simple reason that they do not want such a repulsive religion. They are afraid to shake hands with a

Christian man, lest they shall be religiously assaulted. I remember very well how it was when I was a boy. I laid one hour and a half under the raspberry-bushes in the garden, to escape from the minister and the elder who came to my father's house on a family visit; and my father came out on the back steps, and cried, "De Witt, where are you?" De Witt made no answer! Ought our religion to repel or attract?

"Lord, fill my heart with love and joy,
And fill it with Thy precious peace;
So will my tongue find sweet employ,
And bless the Lord my righteousness."

DECEMBER THIRD.

MORE EARNESTNESS IN PRAYER.

"Night and day praying exceedingly."—1 THESS. iii. 10.

IN childhood we begin with, "Nor I lay me down to sleep," and we learn the Lord's Prayer, and then in after life we get a few formulas of prayer, and go on with the same thing year by year, as though we did not have every day new sins to confess and new blessings for which to thank God. What is prayer? A doctor in the army said he was going over a battle-field after a great conflict. He had but few medicines, and there were enough men wounded to occupy twenty or thirty surgeons. He could only attend to a small part of the wounded. It was doleful, he said, to hear the cries of the wounded men. One cried out: "This artery is bleeding me to death, doctor, won't you bind it up?" And some one else cried: "Doctor, can't you give me an anodyne to soothe this pain?" Hundreds of voices crying out all over the battle-field. Ah, that was prayer! We are wounded from the crown of the head

to the sole of the foot—hurt with wounds that will be our death unless we have the Divine Surgeon come to our relief. Are we holding up these gashes of soul before Christ, our Divine Physician? Are we anxious for Him to come? That is prayer, and anything short of it is no prayer at all. We saw in one of the English journals a picture of the destruction of the *Northfleet* some time ago. You know how that vessel was anchored because of the rough sea—not venturing out very far. The afternoon went by, the evening came down, and in the darkness a steamer crashed into the *Northfleet*, and she sank. Amid the excitement they got out the life-boats; but the most of the passengers perished, three hundred going down to a watery grave. But a few got into the boats. We saw a picture representing a boat shoving off, and one man hanging outside the vessel, holding on and begging that they would take him in that boat. Oh! it was a distressing picture. We could almost hear the man cry out: “Let me in! I won’t be heavy! I can’t die? I don’t want to die here! Let me in?” Ah, that was the prayer of a dying soul for life. And if we could realize the position we occupy before God, going down in our sin and wretchedness, while the Gospel life-boat without is pulling away with two oars and two wounded hands for the beach, we would, from the depths of our anguish-stricken soul, offer up a prayer to God for mercy and pardon and life.

DECEMBER FOURTH.

BANISH YOUR SKEPTICISM.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork.”
—Ps. xix. 1.

NAPOLEON was on a ship’s deck bound for Egypt. It was a bright, starry night, and as he paced the deck

thinking of the great affairs of the state and of battle, he heard two men on the deck in conversation about God, one saying there was a God, and the other saying there was none. Napoleon stopped and looked up at the starry heavens, and then he turned to these men in conversation and said: "Gentlemen, I heard one of you say there is no God ; if there is no God will you please tell me who made all that ?" Aye, if you had not been persuaded of it before, you are persuaded of it now. For the shining heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth shows His handiwork. But you believe more than that. You believe that there was a Jesus, you believe that there was a cross, you believe that you have an immortal soul, you believe that it must be regenerated by the Spirit of God or you can never dwell in bliss eternal. Oh men, skeptical and struck through with unrest, would you not like to have some of the peace which broods over our souls to-night ? I know all about your doubts. I have been through them all. I have gone through all the curriculum. I have doubted whether there is a God, whether Christ is God. I have doubted whether the Bible was true, I have doubted the immortality of the soul, I have doubted my own existence, I have doubted everything ; and yet, out of that hot desert of doubt I have come into the broad, luxuriant, sunshiny land of Gospel hope and peace and comfort. However often you may have spoken against the Bible, or however much you may have caricatured religion, step ashore from that rocking and tumultuous sea.

* You do not want your children to come up with your skepticism. You cannot afford to die in that midnight darkness, can you ? If you do not believe in anything else, you believe in love—a father's love, a mother's love, a wife's love, a child's love. Then let me tell you that God loves you more than them all. Oh, you must come in. You will come in. The great heart of Christ aches to have you come in.

*DECEMBER FIFTH.***SELF-SACRIFICE.**

“Christ pleased not himself.”—ROM. xv. 3.

NO young man ever had opening before him brighter opportunities than opened before Christ, if He had chosen to follow a worldly ambition. He might have gained fortunes of wealth in the time He spent tending the sick. With His power to attract men and popularize Himself, He might have gained any official position. No orator ever won such plaudits as He might have won from sanhedrim and synagogue and vast assemblages on the seaside. No physician ever acquired such a reputation for healing power as Christ might have acquired, if He had performed His wonderful cures in the presence of the Roman aristocracy. I recite to you these things to show you what Paul meant when he said: “He pleased not Himself,” and to show you the splendor of His self-sacrifice. No human power could have thrown Christ into the manger, if He had not chosen to go there. No Satanic strength could have lifted Christ on the cross, if He had not elected Himself to the torture. To save our race from the raspings and turmoils of its guilt He faced the sorrows of earth and the woes of hell. All motherly, fatherly, brotherly, filial self-sacrifice paling into nothing before this extreme of divine generosity. Suppose you, by a straight course of conduct could win a palace, while by another course of conduct you might advantage your fellow-

men, but finally would have to come to assassination, which would you choose—the palace or assassination? Christ chose the latter. Oh, how little self-sacrifice we have. What is it? Why, it is taking from my comfort and adding to yours. It is walking a long journey to save you from fatigue. It is lifting a heavy weight in order that you may not be put to the strain. It is the subtraction of my ease and prosperity that there may be an addition to your ease and prosperity. How little of that spirit any of us have! Two little children on a cold day, were walking down the street, the boy with hardly any garments at all, and the girl in a coat that she had outgrown, and the wind was so sharp, she said: “Johnny, come under my coat.” He said: “It is too short.” “Oh,” she said, “it will stretch.” But the coat would not stretch enough, so she took it off and put it upon the boy. That was self-sacrifice. That was Christ taking off His robe for you and me, beggared for eternity without Him.

D E C E M B E R S I X T H .

OUR BEREAVEMENTS NOT FORGOTTEN.

“Ye shall be remembered before the Lord.”—NUMBERS x. 9.

GOD keeps a perpetual remembrance of all *bereavements*. These are the trials that throw the red hearts of men to be crushed in the wine-press. Troubles at the store you leave at the store. Misrepresentation and abuse of the world you may leave on the street where you found them. The lawsuit that would swallow your honest accumulations may be left in the court-room. But bereavements are *home* troubles, and there is no escape from them. You will see that vacant chair. Your eye will catch at the suggestive picture. You cannot

fly the presence of such ills. You go to Switzerland to get clear of them, but, more sure-footed than the mule that takes you up the Alps, your troubles climb to the tip-top, and sit shivering on the glaciers. You may cross the seas, but they can outsail the clipper or merchantman. You may take caravan, and put out across the Arabian desert, but they follow you like a simoom, armed with suffocation. You plunge into the Mammoth Cave, but they hang like stalactites from the roof of the great cavern. They stand behind with skeleton fingers to push you ahead. They stand before you to throw you back. They run upon you like reckless horsemen. They charge upon you with gleaming spear. They seem to come hap-hazard—scattering shots from the gun of a careless sportsman. But not so. It is good aim that sends them just right; for God is the archer.

“As sparks break out of burning coals,
And still are upward borne;
So grief is rooted in our souls,
And man grows up to mourn.”

“Yet with my God I leave my cause,
And trust His promised grace;
He rules me by His well-known laws,
Of love and righteousness.”

DECEMBER SEVENTH.

YOU CAN'T TAKE YOUR MONEY WITH YOU.

“Riches are not forever.”—PRO. xvii. 24.

RANSACK the whole earth, and show me one man who has been made happy by temporal success. You cannot find one—out of the millions and hundreds of millions, not one. First, a man wants to make a living. Having made a

living he wants to make a competency. Having made living and a competency, he wants to make a superfluity; and having made a living and a competency and a superfluity he wants—*more*. The husks of this wilderness can never satisfy the hunger of the soul. A lion is carnivorous, and wants meat; an ox is graminivorous, and wants grass; but man is omnivorous, and wants everything. The buckets of this world's pleasure are not large enough to bring up water to slake the thirst of the soul. You and I have known men who have garnered vast products and have had their houses full, but who morally and spiritually have actually starved to death. Oh! man of the world, how has it been with you? Now, with your large house, with twenty rooms in it splendidly upholstered, are you any happier than when you had only two rooms, with very poor furniture in both? No, no. If you have never found out the true secret of life—the love of God and His service—you are not as happy now with the twenty as with the two. Besides that, my friends, suppose these earthly things had all the value they profess to have, we cannot keep them. I have it as an authentic incident that an attorney was called to sit beside a dying man and to write his last will and testament. The attorney having taken pen, ink, and paper, and begun in the usual form of a last will and testament, said to the dying man: "Well, now, sir, what disposition do you propose to make of your property? In the first place, how much money have you?" "Well," the man replied, "I have thirty thousand dollars." "Thirty thousand dollars; and what will you do with it?" "Well," said he, "there is John; he has been a good boy. I'll give him five thousand dollars. Put down five thousand dollars. Ah! it is sad to give this money up. I worked very hard for it—very hard for it." "Well," inquired the attorney, "what disposition will you make of the rest of the property?" The dying man replied: "There is Sarah; she has been a good girl. I'll give her five thousand dollars." "Well, now, what disposi-

tion will you make of the rest?" inquired the attorney. "Ah!" said the dying man, "it is hard—it is hard, after-working as I have to get this property, to have to give it up. But there is so-and-so ; he has been a very good friend to me. He was a friend to me when I started in life, and has been a friend all through. I must do something for him. I'll give him five thousand dollars." "Well, now," said the attorney, "what else what else?" "Well," replied dying man, "I think *I shall keep the rest myself!*" In his stupidity only crying out what ten thousand have felt on their death-bed, while with a dying clutch they seized that which had been their ruin.

DECEMBER EIGHTH.

WE DIE, BUT WE LIVE AGAIN.

"God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power."—1 Cor. vi. 14.

I HAVE with these eyes seen so many of the glories of the natural world, and the radiant faces of my friends, that I do not want to think that when I close them in death I shall never open them again. It is sad enough to have a hand or foot amputated. In a hospital, after a soldier had had his hand taken off, he said, "Good-by, dear old hand, you have done me a great deal of good service," and burst into tears. It is a more awful thing to think of having the whole body amputated from the soul forever. I must have my body again, to see with, to hear with, to walk with. With this hand I must clasp the hand of my loved ones when I have passed clean over Jordan, and with it wave the triumphs of my King. Aha! we shall rise again—we shall rise again.

Crossing the Atlantic the ship may founder, and our bodies be eaten by the sharks ; but God tameth Leviathan, and we shall come again. In awful explosion of factory boiler our bodies may be shattered into a hundred fragments in the air ; but God watches the disaster, and we shall come again. He will drag the deep, and ransack the tomb, and upturn the wilderness, and torture the mountain, but He will find us, and fetch us out and up to judgment and to victory. We shall come up with perfect eye, with perfect hand, with perfect foot, and with perfect body. All our weaknesses left behind.

We fall, but we rise! We die, but we live again! We moulder away, but we come to higher unfolding!

DECEMBER NINTH.

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR INTELLECT

“Beware lest he take thee away with his stroke.”—JOB xxxvi. 18.

SOMETIMES the stroke comes in *the removal of the intellect*. “Oh,” says some man, “as long as I keep my mind I can afford to adjourn religion.” But suppose you do not keep it? A fever, the hurling of a missile, the falling of a brick from a scaffolding, the accidental discharge of a gun—and your mind is gone. If you have ever been in an anatomical room and have examined the human brain, you know what a delicate organ it is. And can it be possible that our eternity is dependent upon the healthy action of that which can be so easily destroyed? “Oh,” says some one, “you don’t know how strong a mind I have.” I reply: losses, accident, bereavement and sickness may shipwreck the best physical or mental condition. There are those who have been ten years in lunatic asylums who had as good a mind as

you. While they had their mind they neglected God, and when their intellect went, with it went their last opportunity for heaven. Now, they are not responsible for what they do, or for what they say ; but in the last day they will be held responsible for what they did when they were mentally well ; and if, on that day, a soul should say : " O God ! I was demented, and I had no responsibility," God will say : " Yes, you were demented, but there were long years when you were not demented. That was your chance for heaven and you missed it." Oh ! better be as the Scotch say, a little " daft," nevertheless, having grace in the heart : better be like poor Richard Hampton, the Cornish fool, whose biography has just appeared in England—a silly man he was, yet bringing souls to Jesus Christ by scores and scores—giving an account of his own conversion, when he said : " The mob got after me, and I lost my hat, and I climbed up by a meat-stand in order that I might not be trampled under foot ; and while I was there, my heart got on fire with love towards those who were chasing me, and, springing to my feet, I began to exhort and to pray." Oh ! my God, let me be in the last, last day the Cornish fool, rather than have the best intellect God ever created, unillumined by the gospel of Jesus Christ !

Consider what an uncertain possession you have in your intellect, when there are so many things around to destroy it, and beware lest, before you use it in making the religious choice, God takes it away with a stroke.

DECEMBER TENTH.

THE RAINBOW.

“There was a rainbow round about the throne.”—Rev. iv. 3.

I NOTICE that none but *the people who were in the ark saw the rainbow*. It cast its shadow clear down into the water where the people were buried, and lighted up the dead faces with a strange radiance, but they could not see it. So only those who are at last found in Christ, the Ark, will see the overspanning glories of the throne. Hence you had better get into the Ark! As you call your family out at the close of the shower to show them the sign in heaven, so I want you all at last to see the grander rainbow round about the throne. “Look there!” says Noah to his wife, “at that bow in the clouds; and Shem and Japhet, look! look!—the green, the yellow, the red, and the orange!” I should not wonder if some of our own children in the Good Land should after awhile cry out to you, “Look, father! look, mother! there is a rainbow round about the throne? You had better get into the Ark, with all your families, if you want to see it.

I notice also that the chief *glory of God comes after the rain*. No shower, no rainbow, no trouble, no brightness of Christian consolation.

Weavers are sometimes, by reason of their work, dusty and rough in their apparel; and so it is the coarse-clad tempest, whose hand and foot swing the shuttle, that weaves the rainbow.

Many Christians are dull, and stupid, and useless because they have not had disaster enough to wake them up. The brightest scarf that heaven makes is thrown over the shoulders of the storm. You cannot make a thorough Christian life out of sunshine alone. There are some very dark hues in the ribbon of the rainbow: you must have in life the blue as well as the orange. Mingling all the colors of the former makes a white light; it takes all the shades, and sadnesses, and vicissitudes of life to make the white lustre of a pure Christian character.

DECEMBER ELEVENTH.

PIETY AT HOME.

“Learn first to show piety at home.”—1 TIM. v. 4.

PRAYERS in the household will not make up for everything. Some of the best people in the world are the hardest to get along with. There are people who stand up in prayer-meetings and pray like an angel, who at home are uncompromising and cranky. You may not have everything just as you want it. Sometimes it will be the duty of the husband and sometimes of the wife to yield; but both stand punctiliously on your rights, and you will have a Waterloo with no Blucher coming up at nightfall to decide the conflict. Never be ashamed to apologize when you have done wrong in domestic affairs. Let that be a law of your household. The best thing I ever heard of my grandfather, whom I never saw, was this: that once having unrighteously rebuked one of his children, he himself having lost his patience, and, perhaps, having been misinformed of the child's doings, found out his mistake, and in the evening of the same day gathered all his

family together, and said: "Now, I have one explanation to make, and one thing to say. Thomas, this morning I rebuked you very unfairly. I am very sorry for it. I rebuked you in the presence of the whole family, and now I ask your forgiveness in their presence." It must have taken some courage to do that. It was right, was it not? Never be ashamed to apologize for domestic inaccuracy. Find out the points; what are the weak points, if I may call them so, of your companion, and then stand aloof from them. Do not carry the fire of your temper too near the gunpowder. If the wife be easily fretted by disorder in the household, let the husband be careful where he throws his slippers. If the husband comes home from the store with his patience all exhausted, do not let the wife unnecessarily cross his temper; but both stand up for your rights and I will promise the everlasting sound of the war-whoop. Your life will be spent in making up, and marriage will be to you an unmitigated curse. Cowper said:

"The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something, every day they live,
To pity and perhaps forgive."

DECEMBER TWELFTH.

A DAY OF DELIGHT.

"Call the Sabbath a delight."—Ps. lviii. 13.

I DO not believe it possible for any Christian to spend the Lord's day here without thinking of heaven. There is something in the gathering of people in church on earth to make one think of the rapt assemblage of the skies. There

is something in the song of the Christian Church to make one think of the song of the elders before the throne, the harpists and the trumpeters of God accompanying the harmony. The light of a better Sabbath gilds the tops of this, and earth and heaven come within speaking distance of each other, the song of triumph waving backward and forward, now tossed up by the Church of earth, now sent back by the Church of heaven.

“Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.”

The Christian man stands radiant in its light. His bereft heart rejoices at the thought of a country where there is neither a coffin nor grave ; his weary body glows at the idea of a land where there are no burdens to carry, and no exhaustive journeys to take. He eats the grapes of Eshcol. He stands upon the mountain top and looks off upon the Promised Land. He hears the call of the eternal towers, and the tramp of the numberless multitude with sins forgiven. This is the day which the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Oh, ye who have been hunting for Sunday pleasures in the street, and on the river bank, and in the houses of sin, I commend to you this holy day and holy service ! I do not invite you to swallow a great bitterness, or to carry a heavy yoke ; but I invite you to feel in body, mind, and soul the thrill of joy which God has handed down in the chalices of the golden Sabbath.

With what revulsion and with what pity we must look out on that large class of persons in our day who would, by legislative enactment, and by newspaper and magazine, and by their own personal example, throw discredit upon the Lord's day. There are two things which Protestants ought never to give up : the one is the Bible, the other is the Sabbath. Take away one, and you take both. Take either, and farewell to Christianity in this country, farewell to our civil and

religious liberties. When they go, all go. He who has ever spent Sunday in Paris, or Antwerp, or Rome, if he be an intelligent Christian, will pray God that the day will never come when the Sabbath of continental Europe shall put its foot upon our shores.

DECEMBER THIRTEENTH.

“We being many are one bread, and one body.”—1 COR. X. 17.

WHAT strikes me strangely is the mixing in companionship of those who on earth could not agree. There I see Martin Luther, and beside him a Roman Catholic who looked beyond the superstitions of his church and is saved. There is Albert Barnes, and around him the Presbytery who tried him for heterodoxy! Yonder is Lyman Beecher, and the church court that denounced him! Stranger than all, there is John Calvin and James Arminius! Who would have thought that they would sit so lovingly together? There is George Whitefield, and the bishops who would not let him come into their pulpits because they thought him a fanatic. There are the sweet singers, Toplady, Montgomery, Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts, and Mrs. Sigourney. If heaven had had no music before they went up, they would have started the singing. And there, the band of missionaries: David Abeel, talking of China redeemed; and John Scudder, of India saved; and David Brainard, of the aborigines evangelized; and Mrs. Adoniram Judson, whose prayers for Burmah took heaven by violence! All these Christians are looking into the arena. Our struggle is nothing to theirs! Do we, in Christ's cause, suffer from the cold? They walked Green-

land's icy mountains. Do we suffer from the heat? They sweltered in tropics. Do we get fatigued? They fainted, with none to care for them but cannibals. Are we persecuted? They were anathematized. And as they look from their gallery and see us falter in the presence of the lions, I seem to hear Isaac Watts addressing us in his old hymn, only a little changed :

“ Must *you* be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas ! ”

DECEMBER FOURTEENTH.

STAY WHERE GOD PUTS YOU, AND BE SATISFIED.

“ I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content.”—PHILL. iv. 11.

AS individuals, we are fragments. God makes the race in parts, and then he gradually puts us together. What I lack, you make up ; what you lack, I make up ; our deficits and surplus of character being the wheels in the great social mechanism. One person has the patience, another has the courage, another has the placidity, another has the enthusiasm ; that which is lacking in one is made up by another or is made up by all. Buffaloes in herds ; grouse in broods ; quails in flocks ; the human race in circles. God has most beautifully arranged this. It is in this way that He balances society ; this conservative and that radical keeping things even. Every ship must have its mast, cutwater, taffrail, ballast. Thank God, then, for Princeton and Andover for the opposites. I have no more right to blame a man for being

different from me than a driving-wheel has a right to blame the iron shaft that holds it to the centre. John Wesley balances Calvin's Institutes. A cold thinker gives to Scotland the strong bones of theology. Dr. Guthrie clothes them with a throbbing heart and warm flesh. The difficulty is that we are not satisfied with just the work that God has given us to do. The water-wheel wants to come inside the mill and grind the grist, and the hopper wants to go out and dabble in the water. Our usefulness and the welfare of society depend upon our staying in just the place that God has put us, or intended we should occupy. For more compactness, and that we may be more useful, we are gathered in still smaller circles in the home group. And there you have the same varieties again; brothers, sisters, husband and wife; all different in temperaments and tastes. It is fortunate that it should be so. If the husband be all impulse, the wife must be all prudence. If one sister be sanguine in her temperament, the other must be lymphatic. Mary and Martha are necessities. There will be no dinner for Christ if there be no Martha, there will be no audience for Jesus if there be no Mary.

DECEMBER FIFTEENTH.

DEATH A GREAT EATER.

"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweet."—JUDGES xiv. 14.

THE most frequent trial that comes across the families of the earth is the loss of children. The vast majority of the race may not reach manhood and womanhood. Infantile diseases are the gauntlet they cannot run. It seems as if this world were too chill and cold and drear for the flowers of

childhood, so the heavenly gardener takes them in. You look down as you think of the little one that God took out of your cradle. At the moment when he was the most promising—at that moment the blast came. Oh! that was a grief—the closing of the lids over the blue eyes that shall never sparkle again at your coming. That was a heart rending—the putting of the burial flowers that some playmate had brought into the hand that used to pluck its own wild flowers from the field, and gather them in bunches and wear them in her flaxen hair. And sometimes you sit down and look at the floor by the hour, until within the small pattern of the carpet at which you stare there come bounding in with mirth and gladness the feet that have long been still; and you wake up in the midnight as though you had heard the call of a loved one, as though it were a cry of distress: “Mother! mother!” but you fall back, for it is all a dream. Oh, I wish I could to-day hang one picture in your nursery, hang it right over the place where your little ones used to play; hang it right between the windows up against which they used to press their sunny faces—a picture of the heavenly greeting. You know how it was after you had been absent a long while and coming home, they saw you before you got up to the front of the house and they shouted: “They have come! they have come!” and they held to your dress and told you a hundred things at once, and almost blocked up your entrance to the house with their gladness. So, methinks, it will be when you at last enter heaven’s gate, the shout will be: “She’s come! she’s come!” and they will put garlands on your brow and palms in your hands, and clap and sing, waking up heaven to brighter gladness with their sweet voices and their bounding feet and their jubilant hosannahs.

“ How shall we know them, the infant race?
How will the mother her loved one trace?
By the thrill which when first he smiled,
Came o’er her soul, will she know her child? ”

Oh, glorious anticipation, that with all our Christian dead, whether young or old, we shall meet again. Be patient, therefore. No trouble, no comfort. No cross, no crown. No battle, no victory.

DECEMBER SIXTEENTH.

THE PULPIT CAN'T DO ALL THE WORK.

"Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets."—NUM. xi. 29.

MINISTERS *cannot do the work of the world's evangelization.* What are the few thousand ministers in this country compared to the thirty millions of the population! We are numerically too small. You might as well have sent ten brigadier generals without any troops to conquer the Southern Confederacy. Leaving their swords at home, they would have conquered you with their penknives. Sin, with its army of drunkenness, and lust, and crime, has not yet put out half of its strength, for it can beat us, and not half try. Who is getting the victory in our cities to-day—sobriety or intemperance? Honesty or fraud? Purity or uncleanness? Infidelity or the Gospel? Light or darkness? Heaven or hell? If you are an honest man, you confess that the latter have gained the victory. What is the matter? Are the Gospel weapons insufficient? Is the sword of the Spirit dull? Are the great howitzers of truth at too short range to throw the bombshells into the enemy's fortress? No, no! The great want, and the only want, is *more troops!* Instead of five or ten thousand ministers, we want two million men and women, sworn that they will neither eat nor sleep until they have slain iniquity. But how if you cannot get them? Suppose, after a long war, the President should make proclamation for one hundred thousand men,

and they were not to be had? But the Church has not sent a thousandth part of its strength, and the troops are encamping by the still waters of Zion, when they ought to be at the front, and would be if you gave them a chance, and made them ready for the heat and terror of the contest.

It is no more the work of the pulpit to convert and save the world than it is the work of the pew. If men go to ruin, there will be as much blood on your skirts as on mine.

Let us quit this grand farce of trying to save the world by a few clergymen, and let all hands lay hold of the work. Give us in all our churches two or three hundred aroused and qualified men and women to help.

DECEMBER SEVENTEENTH.

AN ENDURING NAME.

“His name shall endure forever.”—Ps. lxxii. 17.

YOU clamber over the fence of the graveyard and pull aside the weeds, and you see the faded inscription on the tombstone. That was the name of a man who once ruled all that town. The mightiest names of the world have either perished or are perishing. Gregory VI., Sancho of Spain, Conrad I. of Germany, Richard I. of England, Louis XVI. of France, Catharine of Russia—mighty names once, that made the world tremble; but now, none so poor as to do them reverence, and to the great mass of the people they mean absolutely nothing; they never heard of them. But the name of Christ is to endure forever. It will be perpetuated in art, for there will be other Bellinis to depict the Madonna; there will be other Ghirlandjos to represent Christ's baptism; there will be other Bronzinos to show

us Christ visiting the spirits in prison ; other Giottos to appal our sight with the crucifixion. The name will be preserved in song, for there will be other Alexander Popes to write the "Messiah," other Youngs to portray His triumph ; other Cowpers to sing His love. It will be preserved in costly and magnificent architecture, for Protestantism is yet to have its St. Marks and its St. Peters. That name will be preserved in the literature of the world, for already it is embalmed in the best books, and there will be other Dr. Paleys to write the "Evidences of Christianity," and other Richard Baxters to describe the Saviour's coming to judgment. But above all, and more than all, that name will be embalmed in the memory of all the good of earth and all the great ones of heaven. Will the delivered bondman of earth ever forget who freed him ? Will the blind man of earth forget who gave him sight ? Will the outcast of earth forget who brought him home ? No ! no ! To destroy the memory of that name of Christ, you would have to burn up all the Bibles and all the churches on earth, and then in a spirit of universal arson go through the gate of heaven, and put a torch to the temples, and the towers, and the palaces, and after all that city was wrapped in awful conflagration, and the citizens came out and gazed on the ruin—even then, they would hear that name in the thunder of falling tower, and the crash of crumbling wall, and see it inwrought in the flying banners of flame, and the redeemed of the Lord on high would be happy yet and cry out : "Let the palaces and the temples burn, *we have Jesus left !*"

*DECEMBER EIGHTEENTH.***YOUR TIME WILL COME.**

“Thou shalt surely die.”—GEN. ii. 17.

I HEAR aged people sometimes saying: “I can’t live much longer.” But do you know the fact that there are a hundred young people and middle aged people who go out of this life, to one aged person, for the simple reason that there are not many aged people to leave life. The aged seem to stand around like stalks, separate stalks of wheat at the corner of the field; but when death goes a-moving, he likes to go down amid the thick of the harvest. What is more to the point: a man’s going out of this world is never in the way he expects—it is never at the time he expects. The moment of leaving this world is always a surprise. If you expect to go in the Winter, it may be in the Summer; if in the Summer, it may be in the Winter; if in the night, it may be in the day-time; if you think to go in the day-time, it may be in the night. Suddenly the event will rush upon you, and you will be gone. Where? If a Christian, into joy. If not a Christian, into suffering. The Gospel call stops outside of the door of the sepulchre. The sleeper within cannot hear it. If that call should be sounded out with clarion voice louder than ever rang through the air, that sleeper could not hear it. I suppose every hour of the day, and now, while I am speaking, there are souls rushing into eternity unprepared. They slide from the pillow, or they slip from the pavement, and in an

eye twinkling they are gone. Elegant and eloquent funeral oration will not do them any good. Epitaph, cut on polished Scotch granite, will not do them any good. Wailing of beloved kindred cannot call them back.

But, says some one : "I'll keep out of peril, I will not go on the sea, I will not go into battle, I'll keep out of all danger." That is no defence. Thousands of people, last night, on their couches, with the front door locked, and no armed assassin anywhere around, surrounded by all defended circumstances, slipped out of this life into the next. If time had been on one side of the shuttle and eternity on the other side of the shuttle, they could not have shot quicker across it. A man was saying : "My father was lost at sea, and my great-grandfather. Wasn't it strange?" A man talking to him, said : "You ought never to venture on the sea least you, yourself, be lost at sea." The man turned to the other, and said : "Where did your father die?" He replied : "In his bed." "Where did your grandfather die?" "In his bed." "Where did your great-grandfather die?" "In his bed." "Then," he said, "Be careful lest some night while you are asleep on your couch, your time may come !"

DECEMBER NINETEENTH.

A PRISON FROM WHICH YOU CANNOT BE DELIVERED.

"Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."—JOB xxxvi. 18.

THE text supposes that a man goes into ruin and that an effort is made afterwards for his rescue, and then says the thing cannot be done. Is that so? After death seizes upon that soul, is there no resurrection? If a man topples off the edge of life, is there nothing to break his fall? If an im-

penitent man goes overboard, are there no grappling hooks to hoist him into safety? The text says distinctly: "Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." A second chance not desirable. I know there are people who call themselves "Restorationists," and they say, a sinful man may go down in the world of the lost; he stays there until he gets reformed and then comes up into the world of light and blessedness. It seems to me to be a most unreasonable doctrine—as though the world of darkness were a place where a man could get reformed! Is there anything in the society of the lost world, the abandoned and the wretched of God's universe to elevate a man's character and lift him at last to heaven! Can we go into the companionship of the Néros, and the Herods, and the Hilderbrands, and the Jim Fisks, and spend a certain number of years in that lost world, and then by that society be purified and lifted up? Is that the kind of society that reforms a man and prepares him for heaven? Would you go to Shreveport or Memphis with the yellow fever there, to get your physical health restored? Can it be that a man may go down into the diseased world, a world overwhelmed by an epidemic of transgressions and by that process and in that atmosphere be lifted up to health and glory? Your common sense says "no! no!" In such society as that, instead of being restored, you would go down worse and worse, plunging every hour into deeper depths of suffering and darkness.

DECEMBER TWENTIETH.

A CHANCE FOR YOUR LIFE GIVEN.

“ Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”—JONAH iii. 4.

I LEARN from my subject that *God gives every man a fair chance for his life.* The iniquity of Nineveh was accumulating. It had been rolling up and rolling up. There the city lay—blotched, seething, festering under the sun. Why did not God put an end to its iniquity? Why did not God unsheathe some sword of lightning from the scabbard of a storm-cloud, and slay it? Why did He not with some pry of an earthquake throw it into the tomb where Caraccas and Lisbon now lay? Why did He not submerge it with the scorn of His indignation, as He did Herculaneum and Pompeii? It was because He wanted to give the city a fair chance. You would have thought that thirty days would have been enough to repent in, or twenty days, or ten days. Aye, you would have said: “If that city don’t quit its sin in five days it never will.” But see the wide margin. Listen to the generosity of time. “Yet forty days!”

Be frank, my brother, and confess to-night that God is giving you a fair chance for safety, a better chance than He gave to Nineveh. They had one prophet. You have heard the voices of fifty. They had one warning. You have had a thousand. They had forty days. Some of you have had forty years. Sometimes the warnings of God have come upon your soul soft as the breath of lilies and frankincense, and then again

as though hurled from a catapult of terrific Providence. God has sometimes led you to see your unsaved condition while you were walking amid perils, and your hair stood on end, and you stopped breathing; you thought your last moment had come. Or, through protracted illness, He allowed you in many a midnight to think over this subject—when all was still save the ticking of the clock in the hall and the beating of your own anxious heart. Warned that you were a sinner. Warned that you needed a divine Saviour. Warned of coming retribution. Warned of an eternity crowded with splendor or catastrophe. Warned by the death of those with whom you were familiar. Warned day after day, and month after month, and year after year—warned, warned, warned. Oh! my dear brother, if your soul is lost, in the day of judgment you will have to acknowledge “no man in Brooklyn ever had a better chance for heaven than I had. I was preached to, and prayed for, and divinely solicited. I was shown the right, and fully persuaded of it; but I did not act and I did not believe, and now, in the presence of a burning earth and a flying heaven, I take the whole responsibility. Hear me, men! Angels! Devils!—I took the life of my own soul; and I did it so thoroughly that it is done forever. And now I trudge off over the hot desert and under the burning sky—a suicide! A suicide!”

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIRST.

THE INFIDEL'S KNIFE.

“When Jehudi had read three or four leaves he cut it with the penknife.”—**JEREMIAH xxxvi. 23.**

THE hostility existing that night in that winter-house among those lords and senators, exists yet. The enemies of this Book have gathered themselves into clubs,

and have tried to marshal on their side chemist's laboratory, and astronomer's telescope, and geologist's pry, and mineralogist's hammer, and ornithologist's gun ; and they have ransacked the earth and the heavens to see if they could not find arguments with which to refute the Bible, and balk the Church, and clip the wing of the Apocalyptic angel. With the black hulk of their pirate craft they have tried to run down this Gospel ship speeding on errands of salvation. They have tried to stab patriarch and prophet, evangelist and apostle, with Jehoiakim's penknife. They say that the Bible is a very weak book, filled with big stories and Munchausen adventures, and has no more authority than the Shaster of the Hindoo, or the Zend-Avesta of the Persian, or the Talmud of the Hebrew, or the Confucian writings of the Chinese, or the Sibylline books of the Romans, or the Koran of the Moham-medans.

Men strike their knife through this Book because they say that *the light of nature is sufficient*. Indeed! Have the fire-worshippers of India, cutting themselves with lancets until the blood spurts at every pore, found the light of nature sufficient? Has the Bornesian cannibal, gnawing the roasted flesh from human bones, found the light of nature sufficient? Has the Chinese woman, with her foot cramped and deformed into a cow's hoof, found the light of nature sufficient? Could the ancients see heaven from the heights of Ida or Olympus? No! I call upon the pagodas of superstition, the Brahminic tortures, the infanticide of the Ganges, the bloody wheels of the Juggernaut, to prove that the light of nature is *not* sufficient. A star is beautiful, but it pours no light into the midnight of a sinful soul. The flower is sweet, but it exudes no balm for the heart's wound. All the odors that ever floated from royal conservatory, or princely hanging-gardens, give not so much sweetness as is found in one waft from this Scripture mountain of myrrh and frankincense. All the waters that ever leaped in torrent, or foamed in cascade, or

fell in summer shower, or hung in morning dew, gave no such coolness to the fevered soul as the smallest drop that ever flashed out from the showering fountains of this divine Book. If you like the light of nature better than that of revelation, why do you not go and root up in the ground with the Hottentot ; or go ride with the Laplander behind a team of dogs ; or go help the Mexican pick cochineal ; or go help the Arabs lasso the wild horse ; or the Turk hunt for gall-nuts and meerschaum. I bring China, and India, and Siberia, and Ethiopia, and Tartary, and New Holland, and Persia, and Hindostan, to prove, before all the hosts of hell, and the armies of heaven, and the nations of the earth, that the light of nature is not sufficient. "*What must I do to be saved?*" Sweltering nations have knelt at the feet of the Himalayan Mountains for ages asking that question, but the mountains made no response.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SECOND.

THE STORM COMING.

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning?"—Is. xxxiii. 14.

YOU have marched many a mile on towards the end of your earthly journey, and the opening of your eternal destiny. No pardon, no peace, no prospect of heaven. O Lord God, lay hold of that man ! If this be his last chance, tell him so. Let him not plunge off where there are no soundings. I have no sympathy with that cowardice that dare not speak of future punishment without apology, and that thinks the word "hell" too vulgar to be used in polite assemblies.

The storm is coming ; the cloud that was only a speck of

darkness on the sky has become a squadron of black sails, and the port-holes of the thunder are opening for the cannonade in which all those who reject God shall go down. Canst contend with Him who smote Sennacherib's host in a night, and whose arm upholds the universe, and whose voice shall announce the doom of all the dead? I tremble to offend Him. Rather would I have all heaven and hell arrayed against me than to stand one moment in the darkness of His frown. Tremble, O unforgiven soul, tremble before Him. The God in whose hands is thy breath is angry with thee. Wilt thou defy Him any longer? Wilt thou run upon the thick bosses of His buckler? Who will bail thee out of the prison-house of despair? Who will help thee ashore from an eternal shipwreck? I take the words of the prophet and cry out, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

The gate of refuge is open—it is wide open. The Spirit of God, with flying feet, will bear thee within if thou wilt. Let not the bells of eternity toll the death-knell of thy soul. Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed.

DECEMBER TWENTY-THIRD.

THE GARNISHED FOUNDATIONS.

"The first foundation was Jasper; the second Sapphire; the third a Chalcedony; the fourth an Emerald."—REV. XXI. 19.

ST. JOHN announces the twelve foundations of this wall to be, the first, of Jasper—yellow and red; the second, of sapphire—a deep blue; the third a chalcedony—of varied beauty; the fourth, emerald—a bright green color; the fifth, sardonyx—a bluish white; the sixth, sardius—red and fiery;

the seventh, chrysolite — golden-hued ; the eighth, beryl—a bluish green ; the ninth, topaz—a pale green mixed with yellow ; the tenth, chrysoprasus—a golden bluish tint ; the eleventh, jacinth—fiery as the sunset ; the twelfth, amethyst. But these precious stones are only the foundation of the wall of heaven—the most inferior part of it. On the top of this foundation there rises a mighty wall of jasper—of brilliant yellow and gorgeous crimson. Stupendous cataract of color ! Throne of splendor and sublimity ! You see that the beautiful colors which are the robes of glory to our earth are to be forever preserved in this wall of heaven. Our skies of blue, which sometimes seem almost to drop with richness of color, shall be glorified and eternized in the deep everlasting blue of that fiery stone which forms the second foundation of the heavenly wall. The green that sleeps on the brook's bank, and rides on the sea-wave, and spreads its banners on the mountain top, shall be eternized in the emerald that forms the fourth foundation of the heavenly wall. The fiery gush of the morning, the conflagration of the autumnal sunset, the electricity that shoots its forked tongue out of the thunder-cloud, the flame at whose breath Moscow fell and Ætnas burn, shall be eternized in the fiery jasper. It seems as if all earthly beauty were in one billow to be dashed up against that wall of heaven.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH.

CHRIST GOD.

“ And he said, young man, I say unto thee, arise ; and he that was dead sat up.” LUKE VII. 14, 15.

SUPPOSE that a man should now attempt to break up funeral obsequies. He would be seized by the law, he

would be imprisoned, if he were not actually slain by the mob before the officers could secure him. If Christ had been a mere mortal, would He have had a right to come in upon such a procession? Would He have succeeded in His interruption? He was more than a man, for when He cried out: "I say unto thee, arise!" he that was dead sat up." If, when I see my Lord Jesus Christ mourning with the bereaved, I put my hands on His shoulders, and say: "My brother," now that I hear Him proclaim supernatural deliverances, I look up into his face and say with Thomas: "My Lord and my God." Do you not think He was a God? A great many people do not believe that, and they compromise the matter, or they think they compromise it. They say He was a very good man, but he was not a God. That is impossible. He was either a God or a wretch, and I will prove it. If a man professes to be that which he is not, what is he? He is a liar, an impostor, a hypocrite. That is your unanimous verdict. Now, Christ professed to be a God. He said over and over again he was a God, took the attributes of a God, and assumed the works and offices of a God. Dare you now say He was not? He was a God or He was a wretch. Choose ye. Do you think I cannot prove by this Bible that He was a God? If you do not believe the Bible, of course there is no need of my talking with you. There is no common data from which to start. Suppose you do believe it? Then I can demonstrate that He was divine. I can prove He was creator, John i. 3, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." He was eternal, Rev. xxii. 13, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." I can prove that he was omnipotent, Heb. i. 10, "The heavens are the work of Thine hands." I can prove He was omniscient, John ii. 25, "He knew what was in man." Oh yes, He is a God. He cleft the sea. He upheaved the crystalline walls along which the Israelites marched. He planted the mountains.

He raises up governments and casts down thrones, and marches across nations and across worlds and across the universe. Eternal, omnipotent, unhindered, and unabashed. That hand that was nailed to the cross holds the stars in a leash of love. That head that dropped on the bosom in fainting and death, shall make the world quake at its nod. That voice that groaned in the last pang, shall swear before the trembling world that time shall be no longer. Oh, do not insult the common sense of the race, by telling us that this person was only a man, in whose presence the paralytic arm was thrust out well, and the devils crouched, and the lepers dropped their scales, and the tempests folded their wings, and the boy's satchel of a few loaves made a banquet for five thousand.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH.

CHRISTMAS.

"Unto you is born this day, a Saviour."—LUKE ii. 11.

THE world keeps festival to-day. Christmas is of the ages and the universe. From the hour when the flaming sword whirled at Eden's gate, until the Bethlehem star in its silver beauty shone in the midnight sky, all time was a ladder that led to the coming of Christ. Round by round it was builded through the centuries. Sunbeams of promise illumined it. Mists of prophecy hung over it a nebulous veil. Heavenward, up its ethereal steps, climbed the feet of patriarchs and priests, or sages and seers; and beautiful women, Deborah and Miriam, Esther and Ruth, went that way into the land of peace. At last came the sacred hour of which Luke sublimely tells, when Gabriel, an angel who stood in the

presence of God, went forth to a virgin of Nazareth, named Mary. In the dreams of the old painters, the angel of Annunciation—grave, stately, and majestic, bearing a lily, emblem of the stainless purity—enters the humble home of the gentle maiden. Little thought the simple Jewish girl, as she went about her daily tasks, that to her was to come the greatest honor and the deepest sorrow ever laid upon woman. For her mystical motherhood gave His human nature to the Divine Son. Sweet Mary, mother of our Lord! With no worship, yet with tenderest love, our hearts remember thee, as on Christmas day we gather round the Holy Child. We come, the world comes, to adorn on Christmas morning, where the shepherds and the wise men came :

“The pastoral spirits first,
Approach Thee, Babe Divine,
For they in lowly thoughts are nursed,
Meet for Thy lowly shrine ;
Sooner than they should miss where Thou dost dwell,
Angels from heaven will stoop to guide them to Thy cell.”

The simple-minded and the childlike still have the shortest way to come. Their eyes open to the light from heaven ; they hear the songs, and angels guide them to the cradle in the stall. Still the world's great and mighty ones find the path to Christ longer and stranger ; but the star goes before them too. It stops in its radiant clearness over the place where the Young Child lies. By what road soever of mountain or plain wise or simple have travelled, alike they find full content only when, in the rest of taith, they kneel before the Incarnate Love. For men through the frosty Christmas air of this year, as for shepherds and magi so long ago,

“The star rains its fire,
While the beautiful sing,
In the manger at Bethlehem,
Jesus is King !”

*DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH.***THE LAST SABBATH.**

“It is the last time.”—I JOHN ii. 18.

THE week seems to me like a Red Sea, tossing, tossing: the Sabbath like a path cut through it, where we may walk dry shod. God lifting His hand again above the waters, all our cares and annoyances are whelmed in the flood.

Where did you pass your boyhood Sabbaths? You say in a New England village. You remember the church, and the green in front; and the cry of the swallows in the tower, as the tap of the bell scattered them; and the quiet graveyard beside it, some of the stones leaning over, and the moss almost covering the letters; the long line of horses at the hitching-post; the group at the church-door; the minister, plain, and earnest, and affectionate; the children, with whom you exchanged mischievous glances, and the aged men and women, to whom you looked up with veneration, though they were sometimes asleep at the head of the pew—all of them sound asleep now in the shadow of the church that once they frequented. With some of you it was the Scotch kirk, or the English chapel, or the city church. Somehow, ever since then you loved Sunday to come. Its sunrise seems more golden. Its noonday more bright. Its evening more suggestive. And although you feel, before God, that many of your Sundays have been wasted, you still say: “Sweet Sabbath! Messenger from God! Pillow on which to put the aching

head! Day, fragrant of all sweet memories! How I love thee!"

If you are forty years of age, two thousand and eighty of your Sabbaths are gone. Indeed, the whole flock of them is started, and the last one will soon spread wing. It will break from the East. The bells will ring. There will be the shuffle of young feet and old on the way to church. The baptismal waters will be shed, the sacramental wine poured, the evening service will pass, the *Amen* will finish the benediction, the lights will be lowered, the gates will jar shut, and the sexton will turn the key in the lock. Nothing peculiar in the looks of the wall that night, or in the sound of the music. But that will be the ending of your Sabbaths. Can you not have one more? Not one more. It will come for others, but not for us. The last hymn. The last sermon. The last benediction. The last Sabbath. *The last time!* This very Sabbath may be your closing day of rest. If so, you had better take a good look at all these sacred places, and say: "Farewell, pew and pulpit, and all ye worshippers! Farewell, song and sermon! I make my exit! Farewell, thou Christian Sabbath! To all these scenes, where I have rejoiced, and prayed, and wept—Farewell, forever!"

DECEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

NO TRIAL TOO SMALL FOR GOD'S ASSISTANCE.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee."—Ps. l. 15.

FOR severe losses, for bereavement, for trouble that shocks like an earthquake and that blasts like a storm, we prescribe religious consolation; but, business man, for the small annoyances of last week, how much of the grace of God did you apply? "Oh!" you say, "these trials are too small

for such application." My brother, they are shaping your character, they are souring your temper, they are wearing out your patience, and they are making you less and less of a man. I go into a sculptor's studio, and see him shaping a statue. He has a chisel in one hand and a mallet in the other, and he gives a very gentle stroke—click, click, click! I say, "Why don't you strike harder?" "Oh!" he replies, "that would shatter the statue. I can't do it that way; I must do it this way." So he works on, and after a while the features come out, and everybody that enters the studio is charmed and fascinated. Well, God has your soul under process of development, and it is the little annoyances and vexations of life that are chiselling out your immortal nature. It is click, click, click. I wonder why some great Providence does not come and with one stroke prepare you for heaven. Ah! no. God says that is not the way. And so He keeps on by strokes of little annoyances, little sorrows, little vexations, until at last you shall be a glad spectacle for angels and for men. You know that a large fortune may be spent in small change, and a vast amount of moral character may go away in small depletion. It is the little troubles of life that are having more effect upon you than great ones. A swarm of locusts will kill a grain-field sooner than the incursion of three or four cattle. You say, "Since I lost my child, since I lost my property, I have been a different man." But you do not recognize the architecture of little annoyances, that are hewing, digging, cutting, shaping, splitting, and interjoining your moral qualities. Rats may sink a ship. One lucifer match may send destruction through a block of store-houses. Catherine de Medicis got her death from smelling a poisonous rose. Columbus, by stopping and asking for a piece of bread and a drink of water at a Franciscan convent, was led to the discovery of a new world. And there is an intimate connection between trifles and immensities, between nothings and everythings.

*DECEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH.***LIVE RELIGION.**

“It is high time to wake out of sleep.”—ROM. xiii. 11.

WE have plenty of stale, insipid, lethargic, half and half religious life. The Church needs more caloric. The stove must have the damper open, and the grate shaken ; and the dull heap of darkness must become a bright illumination. Let us begin by more earnestness in Bible reading. How many years is it since you learned the shortest verse in the Bible, at your mother's knee? “Jesus wept.” “I have become familiar with the parables and miracles,” you say ; “it is almost impossible that I should find anything startling or surprising in that book.” It has become like an old fable. It ceases to make that deep, profound, and rousing impression upon our soul which it ought to make. Are you not aware of the fact that we need in the perusal of God's word an earnestness of soul we have never before felt? What is the Bible? It is a prescription for the worst of all illness. Suppose you had been sick for years and years, and all medical treatment had failed in your case, and some skilful one should come along and examine the symptoms of your disease and write a prescription, saying: “I go by the next steamer into a far country, you will never see me again ; do not lose that prescription. I am sure if you take the medicine there prescribed you will get well.” How would you hold on to that prescription. You would say: “Everything depends upon my getting that pre-

scription before the apothecary in the right shape, and my getting the right medicine." We are stricken by the leprosy of sin. The world comes and tries with its pleasures and honors to heal us ; but it has always failed. Here is a divine prescription. Take it, and live ; refuse it, and die. How we ought to hold on to it, and with what earnestness we ought now to take it. It is more than that. Suppose a captain is awakened in the night. The men who have had the management of the ship have been asleep and not minding their business. The vessel is among the breakers. The captain comes on deck with the chart. With what earnestness he looks at it now. Here is a rock and there is a rock ; there is a lighthouse ; here is a way of escape. So here is a map setting forth the perils of the sea in which we are voyaging ; there are dangers all around about us. If the following of that chart does not get us out of the breakers nothing will. With what earnestness we ought to examine it, and feel that it is a matter of heaven or hell whether or not we read it, and whether we read it right or wrong.

DECEMBER TWENTY-NINTH.

A MORAL HERO.

" I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."—Rom. i. 16.

HERE are two young men. The first has a very neat hat, very fine shoes, very costly watch, very beautiful jewels ! but he is all wrapped up in himself. His own existence and his own pleasure are the A and Z of his entire planning. Here is another young man, his apparel not quite so good. His joy is the making of other people happy. He loves Christ, and wants everybody to love him ; is not ashamed to carry a bun-

dle of clothes down to that poor man in the dark alley. Which of those two young men is the best adorned? Which will have the best prospect for this life, which the best prospect for the life that is to come? I think that one of the finest sights in all the world is a young man trying to serve God. Here is a fallen man; he takes him up. Here is a vagrant boy in the street; he takes him to the mission school. Here is a freezing family; he carries to them a scuttle of coal. Here are eight hundred millions of the race in heathenish darkness; by every possible means he sends the Gospel to them. Light-hearted people may laugh at that young man, may caricature him, may call him old fashioned; but he is ready to say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It is the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation." Some years ago there was carried all through the country a painting which you may remember, representing a martyr preaching while the flames were kindling in the street—the flames with which he was to be consumed. The light of those flames flashed through the window on his cheek, and on the book from which he was preaching. It was a thrilling picture. Everybody admired it. But I could show you many a picture in this city just as thrilling, perhaps more, of a young man in the hat factory, in the cutlery establishment, in the dry-goods store, trying to serve God, while all around are the kindling fires of scorn and contempt, he the martyr, to be accounted so in the day when God makes up His jewels. It is easy for a young man to be a Christian in his father's house, where all the influences are Christian; but to stand, as some of these young men do, in stores and shops, where all the influences are adverse to the Christian religion, and maintain integrity of soul and faithfulness to Christ—that demands more concentration and strength than a great many think.

*DECEMBER THIRTIETH.***IT IS FOOLISHNESS TO FIGHT AGAINST GOD.**

"And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers. And all the host ran, and cried, and fled."—JUDGES vii, 19, 21.

CRASH go the pitchers! up flare the lamps! To the mountains! fly! fly! Troop running against troop, thousands trampling upon thousands. Hark to the scream and groan of the routed foe, with the Lord God Almighty after them! How sudden the onset, how wild the consternation, how utter the defeat! I do not care so much what is against me, if God is not. You want a better sword or carbine than I have ever seen to go out and fight against the Lord omnipotent. Give me God for my ally, and you may have all the battlements and battalions.

I saw the defrauder in his splendid house. It seemed as if he had conquered God, as he stood amidst the blaze of chandeliers and pier mirrors. In the diamonds of the wardrobe I saw the tears of the widows whom he had robbed, and in the snowy satin the pallor of the white-cheeked orphans whom he had wronged. The blood of the oppressed glowed in the deep crimson of the imported chair. The music trembled with the sorrow of unrequited toil. But the wave of mirth dashed higher on reefs of coral and pearl. The days and the nights went merrily. No sick child dared pull that silver door-bell. No beggar dared sit on that marble step. No voice of prayer floated amidst that tapestry. No shadow of a judgment-day darkened that fresco. No tear of human sympathy dropped upon that upholstery. Pomp strutted the hall, and Dissipation filled her cup, and all seemed safe as the

Midianites in the valley of Jezreel. But God came. Calamity smote the money market. The partridge left its eggs unhatched. Crash went all the porcelain pitchers! Ruin, route, dismay, and woe in the valley of Jezreel!

Alas for those who fight against God! Only two sides. Man immortal, which side are you on? Woman immortal, which side are you on? Do you belong to the three hundred that are going to win the day, or to the great host of Midianites asleep in the valley, only to be roused up in consternation and ruin? Suddenly the golden bowl of life will be broken, and the trumpet blown that will startle our soul into eternity. The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, and as the God-armed Israelites upon the sleeping foe. Ha! Canst thou pluck up courage for the day when the trumpet which hath never been blown shall speak the roll-call of the dead, and the earth, dashing against a lost meteor, have its mountains scattered to the stars, and oceans emptied in the air? Oh, then, what will become of you? What will become of me?

DECEMBER THIRTY-FIRST.

TOWARD SUNRISING.

“The day breaketh.”—GEN. xxxii. 26.

THE Bible tells of an army who pitched their tents towards sunrising. It would be wise for us all to do the same. Let our tents open towards the east instead of towards the west. The world is going on towards six o'clock in the morning instead of six o'clock at night. Instead of listening for the night-hawk and the whip-poor-will on the edge of the darkening woods, let us be watching for the getting up of the lark. Oh, for more tents pitched towards sunrising!

Commercial men say things are flat down, and act as though

they were always to be as prostrate. Man alive ! were things flat down in 1837 ? In 1857 the failures amounted to two hundred and ninety-one million dollars, and yet the chief fortunes of the country have been made since then. Every two or three years, since we were five years old, we have heard the cry of hard times, yet there always came a day of resuscitation. But you say the grasshoppers are coming. Are they any worse than the locusts that have again and again desolated the land ? As certainly as you read these lines, business will rise, all the factories will be started, all industrious men will find employment, the burden of taxes will be removed, capitalists will get large revenue from their investments, and ten thousand men who, in this particular pass, have hard work to supply their families with bread, will make fortunes great enough to allow them brown stone fronts and a fiery span with harness golden-plated. You ought to see us ten years from now ! We pitch our tent towards sunrising.

There are many who think society and the world are rapidly going to pieces. Drunkenness will drown the cities ; fraud will swamp the government ; free-loveism will whelm the family institution. So you pitch your tent towards the dark ages. But we look towards the east, and lo ! Scotland is burning, and Ireland is burning, and soon all the earth will be burning with the bonfires of Christian victory ! The submarine telegraph will some morning announce that a nation has been born in a day. We are only just planting our batteries on the coasts of China, Japan, India, and Africa, and when the Lord once opens the fire all along the line, you will see such a complete rout as the Midianites experienced when they mistook the splitting of Gideon's pitchers for the smashing of everything. Day-dawn for the dark places of our own land ! Day-dawn for all the islands of the sea ! Day-dawn for all the continents ! Stand out of our way with your soporifics, and give us a few drops of double distilled exhilaration ! We pitch our tent towards the sunrising.



