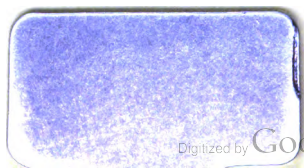




600095082U



FIFTY SERMONS

BY

REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "CRUMBS SWEEPED UP," "THE ABOMINATIONS OF MODERN SOCIETY,"
"FIRST SERIES OF SERMONS," ETC.

PHONOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED AND REVISED.

Second Series.



LONDON:

R. D. DICKINSON, FARRINGTON STREET.
1874.

100. 9. 394.
Digitized by Google

CONTENTS,

—:—

	PAGE
FISHING TOO NEAR SHORE	1
THE WINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY	9
THE WHITE HAIR OF JESUS	16
THE WRATH OF THE SEA	23
THE SILVER TRUMPET	32
THE POULTICE THAT CURED THE CARBUNCLE	41
CROWN-JEWELS	50
THE CAROUSAL IN THE PALACE	57
RIDDLES TO BE SOLVED	65
THE GRAIN RIPE	72
THE ANTHEM OF HEAVEN	81
THE KING'S BUSINESS	89
FEEDING SPARROWS	96
LATE IN THE AFTERNOON	105
RUNNING WATER	113
THE BRIGHT SIDE OF A MINISTER'S LIFE	120
REVOLUTION	127
WINE FOR THE WEDDING... ..	136
MONEY, AND THE BLESSING	144
GREEN PASTURES	151
THE BATTLE OF THE FITCHERS	159
LEFT-HANDED MEN... ..	167
HORACE GREELEY, LIVING AND DEAD	174
THE CITY AND NATION	182
THE SWELLING OF JORDAN	191
THINGS NOT BURNED UP

	PAGE
THE BEST WE HAVE	208
WASTED AROMA	216
OLD WELLS DUG OUT	224
GOSPEL ARCHERY	233
THE KING'S WAGGONS	241
HYPOCRISY	250
TORCHES LIGHTED	258
GRACE IN CRYSTALS	266
THE BANQUET	273
THE CHRISTIAN NEEDLEWOMAN	283
THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE	291
THE BRIGHTEST OF DAYS... ..	301
THE BIBLE RIGHT	312
EARNESTNESS	322
BIGOTRY	327
THE LIFE OF THE LAD	336
A CLUSTER OF CAMPHIRE	348
THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOL	356
FREE CHURCHES	368
THE LAYER AND LOOKING GLASSES	378
HEAVEN OR HELL	387
CHRIST EVERYTHING	395
WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES	403
LIFE AT HOME	413
THE GARDEN OF GARDENS	421

S E R M O N S .

FISHING TOO NEAR SHORE.

“Launch out into the deep.”—*Luke* v. 4

CHRI^ST, starting on the campaign of the world's conquest, was selecting his staff officers. There were plenty of students with high foreheads, and white hands, and intellectual faces, and refined tastes, in Rome and in Jerusalem. Christ might have called into the apostleship twelve book-worms, or twelve rhetoricians, or twelve artists. Instead, he takes a group of men who had never made a speech, never taken a lesson in *belles-lettres*,—never been sick enough to make them look delicate—their hands broad, clumsy, and hard knuckled. He chose fishermen, among other reasons, I think, because they were physically hardy. Rowing makes strong arms and stout chests. Much climbing of ratlines makes one's head steady. A Galilee tempest wrestled men into gymnasts. The opening work of the Church was rough work. Christ did not want twelve invalids hanging about him, complaining all the time how badly they felt. He leaves the delicate students at Jerusalem and Rome for their mothers and aunts to take care of, and goes down to the sea-shore, and out of the toughest material makes an apostleship. The ministry need more corporeal vigour than any other class. Fine minds and good intentions are important, but there must be physical force to back them. The intellectual millwheel may be well built and the grist good, but there must be enough blood in the mill-race to turn the one and grind the other.

He chose fishermen, also, because they were used to hard knocks. The man who cannot stand assault is not fit for the ministry. It always has been and always will be rough work : and the man who, at every censure or caricature, sits down to

▲

cry, had better be at some other work. It is no place for ecclesiastical doll-babies. A man who cannot preach because he has forgotten his manuscript or lost his spectacles, ought not to preach at all. Heaven deliver the Church from a ministry that preach in kid gloves, and from sermons in black morocco covers! These fishermen were rough and ready. They had been in the severest of all colleges. When they were knocked over by the main boom of the ship, they entered the "Sophomore;" when washed off by a great wave, they entered the "Junior;" when floating for two days, without food or drink, on a plank, they came to the "Senior;" and, when, at last, their ship dashed on the beach in a midnight hurricane, they graduated with the first honor.

My text finds Jesus on shipboard with one of those bronzed men — Simon by name. This fisherman had been sweeping his net in shoal water. "Push out," says Christ; "what is the use of hugging the shore in this boat? Here is a lake twelve miles long and six wide, and it is all populated — just waiting for the sweep of your net. *Launch out into the deep.*"

The advice that my Lord gave to Simon is as appropriate for you and for me: We are just paddling along the shore. We are afraid to venture out into the great deeps of God and Christian experience. We think that the boat will be upset, or that we can not "clew down the mizzen top-sail," and our cowardice makes us poor fishermen. I think I hear the voice of Christ commanding us, as he did Simon, on that day when bright Galilee set in among the green hills of Palestine, like water flashing in an emerald cup: "*Launch out into the deep.*"

This divine counsel comes, first, to all those who are paddling in *the margin of Bible research*. My father read the Bible through three times after he was eighty years of age, and without spectacles; not for the mere purpose of saying he had been through it so often, but for his eternal profit. John Colby, the brother-in-law of Daniel Webster, learned to read after he was eighty-four years of age, in order that he might become acquainted with the Scriptures. 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 Christian 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

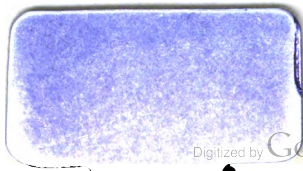
farther you go from shore the better, if you have the right kind of ship. If you have mere worldly philosophy for the hulk, and pride for a sail, and self-conceit for the helm, the first squall will destroy you. But if you take the Bible for your craft, the farther you go the better; and after you have 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 noonlight; 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.

A missionary in France offered a Bible in an humble dwelling. The man took it, tore out a dozen pages, and with them began to light his pipe. Some years after the missionary happened in the same house. The family had just lost their son in the Crimean war, and his Bible had been sent back home. The missionary took it up, and saw that it was the very same Bible that he had left in the house, and from which the leaves had been torn. The dying soldier had written on one of the leaves of the Bible: "Rejected and scoffed at, but finally believed in and saved." The Bible may be used to light the pipe of witticism by some, but for us it is a staff in life, a pillow in death, and our joy for eternity.

Walk all up and down this Bible domain! Try every path. Plunge in at the phrophecies, and come out at the epistles. Go with the patriarchs, until you meet the evangelists. Rummage and ransack, as children who are not satisfied when they come to a new house, until they know what is in every room, and into what every door opens. Open every jewel-casket. Examine the sky-lights. Forever be asking questions. Put to a higher use than was intended the Oriental proverb: "Hold all the skirts of thy mantle extended when Heaven is raining gold."



600095082U



FIFTY SERMONS

BY

REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "CRUMBS SWEEPED UP," "THE ABOMINATIONS OF MODERN SOCIETY,"
"FIRST SERIES OF SERMONS," ETC.

PHONOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED AND REVISED.

Second Series.



LONDON:

R. D. DICKINSON, FARRINGTON STREET,
1874.

100. q. 394
Digitized by Google

CONTENTS,

—10—

	PAGE
FISHING TOO NEAR SHORE	1
THE WINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY	9
THE WHITE HAIR OF JESUS	16
THE WRATH OF THE SEA	23
THE SILVER TRUMPET	32
THE POULTICE THAT CURED THE CARBUNCLE	41
CROWN-JEWELS	50
THE CAROUSAL IN THE PALACE	57
RIDDLES TO BE SOLVED	65
THE GRAIN RIPE	72
THE ANTHEM OF HEAVEN	81
THE KING'S BUSINESS	89
FEEDING SPARROWS	96
LATE IN THE AFTERNOON	105
RUNNING WATER	113
THE BRIGHT SIDE OF A MINISTER'S LIFE	120
REVOLUTION	127
WINE FOR THE WEDDING... ..	136
MONEY, AND THE BLESSING	144
GREEN PASTURES	151
THE BATTLE OF THE PITCHERS	159
LEFT-HANDED MEN... ..	167
HORACE GREELEY, LIVING AND DEAD	174
THE CITY AND NATION	182
THE SWELLING OF JORDAN	191
THINGS NOT BURNED UP	199

	PAGE
THE BEST WE HAVE	208
WASTED AROMA	216
OLD WELLS DUG OUT	224
GOSPEL ARCHERY	233
THE KING'S WAGGONS	241
HYPOCRISY	250
TORCHES LIGHTED	258
GRACE IN CRYSTALS	266
THE BANQUET	273
THE CHRISTIAN NEEDLEWOMAN	283
THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE	291
THE BRIGHTEST OF DAYS... ..	301
THE BIBLE RIGHT	312
EARNESTNESS	322
BIGOTRY	327
THE LIFE OF THE LAD	336
A CLUSTER OF CAMPHIRE	348
THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOL	356
FREE CHURCHES	368
THE LAVER AND LOOKING GLASSES	378
HEAVEN OR HELL	387
CHRIST EVERYTHING	395
WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES	403
LIFE AT HOME	413
THE GARDEN OF GARDENS	421

SERMONS.

FISHING TOO NEAR SHORE.

“Launch out into the deep.”—*Luke* v. 4

CHRIST, starting on the campaign of the world's conquest, was selecting his staff officers. There were plenty of students with high foreheads, and white hands, and intellectual faces, and refined tastes, in Rome and in Jerusalem. Christ might have called into the apostleship twelve book-worms, or twelve rhetoricians, or twelve artists. Instead, he takes a group of men who had never made a speech, never taken a lesson in *belles-lettres*,—never been sick enough to make them look delicate—their hands broad, clumsy, and hard knuckled. He chose fishermen, among other reasons, I think, because they were physically hardy. Rowing makes strong arms and stout chests. Much climbing of ratlines makes one's head steady. A Galilee tempest wrestled men into gymnasts. The opening work of the Church was rough work. Christ did not want twelve invalids hanging about him, complaining all the time how badly they felt. He leaves the delicate students at Jerusalem and Rome for their mothers and aunts to take care of, and goes down to the sea-shore, and out of the toughest material makes an apostleship. The ministry need more corporeal vigour than any other class. Fine minds and good intentions are important, but there must be physical force to back them. The intellectual millwheel may be well built and the grist good, but there must be enough blood in the mill-race to turn the one and grind the other.

He chose fishermen, also, because they were used to hard knocks. The man who cannot stand assault is not fit for the ministry. It always has been and always will be rough work: and the man who, at every censure or caricature, sits down to

▲

cry, had better be at some other work. It is no place for ecclesiastical doll-babies. A man who cannot preach because he has forgotten his manuscript or lost his spectacles, ought not to preach at all. Heaven deliver the Church from a ministry that preach in kid gloves, and from sermons in black morocco covers! These fishermen were rough and ready. They had been in the severest of all colleges. When they were knocked over by the main boom of the ship, they entered the "Sophomore;" when washed off by a great wave, they entered the "Junior;" when floating for two days, without food or drink, on a plank, they came to the "Senior;" and, when, at last, their ship dashed on the beach in a midnight hurricane, they graduated with the first honor.

My text finds Jesus on shipboard with one of those bronzed men — Simon by name. This fisherman had been sweeping his net in shoal water. "Push out," says Christ; "what is the use of hugging the shore in this boat? Here is a lake twelve miles long and six wide, and it is all populated—just waiting for the sweep of your net. *Launch out into the deep.*"

The advice that my Lord gave to Simon is as appropriate for you and for me: We are just paddling along the shore. We are afraid to venture out into the great deeps of God and Christian experience. We think that the boat will be upset, or that we can not "clew down the mizzen top-sail," and our cowardice makes us poor fishermen. I think I hear the voice of Christ commanding us, as he did Simon, on that day when bright Galilee set in among the green hills of Palestine, like water flashing in an emerald cup: "*Launch out into the deep.*"

This divine counsel comes, first, to all those who are paddling in the margin of Bible research. My father read the Bible through three time after he was eighty years of age, and without spectacles; not for the mere purpose of saying he had been through it so often, but for his eternal profit. John Colby, the brother-in-law of Daniel Webster, learned to read after he was eighty-four years of age, in order that he might become acquainted with the Scriptures. 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 Christian 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 noonlight; 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 Syrophenician 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.

A missionary in France offered a Bible in an humble dwelling. The man took it, tore out a dozen pages, and with them began to light his pipe. Some years after the missionary happened in the same house. The family had just lost their son in the Crimean war, and his Bible had been sent back home. The missionary took it up, and saw that it was the very same Bible that he had left in the house, and from which the leaves had been torn. The dying soldier had written on one of the leaves of the Bible: "Rejected and scoffed at, but finally believed in and saved." The Bible may be used to light the pipe of witticism by some, but for us it is a staff in life, a pillow in death, and our joy for eternity.

Walk all up and down this Bible domain! Try every path. Plunge in at the phrophecies, and come out at the epistles. Go with the patriarchs, until you meet the evangelists. Rummage and ransack, as children who are not satisfied when they come to a new house, until they know what is in every room, and into what every door opens. Open every jewel-casket. Examine the sky-lights. Forever be asking questions. Put to a higher use than was intended the Oriental proverb: "Hold all the skirts of thy mantle extended when Heaven is raining gold."

Passing from Bonn to Coblenz on the Rhine, the scenery is comparatively tame. But from Coblenz to Mayence it is enchanting. You sit on deck, and feel as if this last flash of beauty must exhaust the scene; but in a moment there is a turn of the river, which covers up the former view with more luxuriant vineyards, and more defiant castles, and bolder bluffs, vine-wreathed, and grapes so ripe that, if the hills be touched, they would bleed their rich life away into the bowls of Bingen and Hockheimer. Here and there, there are streams of water melting into the river, like smaller joys swallowed in the bosom of a great gladness. And when night begins to throw its black mantle over the shoulder of the hills, and you are approaching disembarkation at Mayence, the lights along the shore fairly bewitch the scene with their beauty, giving one a thrill that he feels but once, yet that lasts him for ever. So this river of God's word is not a straight stream, but a winding splendour—at every turn new wonders to attract, still riper vintage pressing to the brink, and crowded with castles of strength (Stolzenfels and Johannisberger as nothing compared with the strong tower into which the righteous run and are saved), and our disembarkation at last, in the evening, amidst the lights that gleam from the shore of heaven. The trouble is that the vast majority of Bible voyagers stop at Coblenz, where the chief glories begin.

The sea of God's word is not like Gennesaret, twelve miles by six, but boundless; and in any one direction you can sail on for ever. Why, then, confine yourself to a short psalm, or to a few verses of an epistle? The largest fish are not near the shore. Hoist all sail to the winds of heaven. Take hold of both oars, and pull away. Be like some of the whalers that go off from New Bedford or Portsmouth, to be gone for two or three years. Yea, calculate on a lifetime voyage. You do not want to land until you land in heaven. Sail away, oh, ye mariners, for eternity! *Launch out into the deep.*

The text is appropriate to all *Christians of shallow experience*. Doubts and fears have in our day been almost elected to the parliament of Christian graces. 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 yourself no rest, day nor 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 every thing 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.*

The text is appropriate to all who *are engaged in Christian work.* The Church of God has been fishing along the shore. We set our net in a good, calm place, and in sight of a fine chapel, and we go down every Sunday to see if the fish have been wise enough to come into our net. We might learn something from that boy with his hook and line. He throws his line from the bridge: no fish. He sits down on a log: no fish. He stands in the sunlight and casts the line: but no fish. He goes up by the mill-dam, and stands behind the bank, where the fish can not see him, and he has hardly dropped the hook before the cork goes under. The fish come to him as fast as he can throw them ashore. In other words, in our Christian work, why do we not go where *the fish are?* It is not so easy to catch souls in church, for they know that we are trying to take them. If you can throw

your line out into the world where they are not expecting you, they will be captured. Is it fair to take men by such stratagem? Yes. I would like to cheat five thousand souls into the kingdom. Our Tabernacle Free College, within one year, will be doing the work of many churches. The students set their net last night on the back streets, and will set it every night this week in many destitute places; and soon we shall have a hundred lay preachers, proclaiming the Gospel day by day, and week by week, and three or four hundred Christians prepared for other styles of Christian work. If a man does not appreciate that work, he is stupid beyond all arousal.

The whole policy of the Church of God is to be changed. Instead of chiefly looking after the few who have become Christians, our chief efforts will be for those outside. If, after a man is converted, he can not take care of himself, I am not going to take care of him. If he thinks that I am going to stand and pat him on the back, and feed him out of an elegant spoon, and watch him so that he does not get into a draught of worldliness, he is much mistaken. We have in our churches a great mass of helpless, inane professors, who are doing nothing for themselves or for others, who want us to stop and nurse them! They are so troubled with doubt as to whether they are Christians or not. The doubt is settled. They are *not* Christians. The best we can do with these fish is to throw them back into the stream, and go after them again with the Gospel net.

“Go into all the world and preach the Gospel,” says Christ; into the factory, the engine-house, the club-room, into the houses of the sick, into the dark lane, into the damp cellar, into the cold garret, into the dismal prison. Let every man, woman, and child in Brooklyn, New York, and London know that Jesus died, and that the gate of heaven is wide open. With the Bible in one pocket, and the hymn-book in another pocket, and a loaf of bread under your arm—*launch out into the great deep* of this world’s wretchedness.

The text is appropriate *to all the unforgiven*. Every sinner in this house would come to God if he thought that he might come just as he is. People talk as though the pardon of God were a narrow river, like the Kennebec or the Thames, and that their sin draws too much water to enter it. No; it is not a river, nor a bay, but a sea. I should like to persuade you to launch out into the great deep of God’s mercy. I am a merchant. I have bought a cargo of spices in India. I have, through a bill

of exchange, paid for the whole cargo. You are a ship-captain. I give you the orders, and say: "Bring me those spices." You land in India. You go to the trader and say, "Here are the orders;" and you find everything all right. You do not stop to pay the money yourself. It is not your business to pay it. The arrangements were made before you started. So, Christ purchases your pardon. He puts the papers, or the promises, into your hand. Is it wise to stop and say, "I cannot pay for my redemption?" God does not ask you to pay. Relying on what has been done, *launch out into the deep.*

The Bible promises join hands, and the circle they make will compass all your sins, and all your temptations, and all your sorrows. The round table of King Arthur and his knights had room for only thirteen banquetters; but the round table of God's supply is large enough for all the present inhabitants of earth and heaven to sit at, and for the still mightier populations that are yet to be.

Do not sail coast-wise along your old habits and old sins. Keep clear of the shore. Go out where the water is deepest. Oh, for the mid-sea of God's mercy! "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." I preach it with as much confidence to that eighty-year-old transgressor as to this maiden. Though your sins were blood-red, they shall be snow-white. The more ragged the prodigal the more compassionate the father. Do you say that you are too bad? The high-water mark of God's pardon is higher than all your transgression. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sins." Do you say that your heart is hard? Suppose it were ten times harder. Do you say that your iniquity is long continued? Suppose it were ten times longer. Do you say that your crimes are black? Suppose that they were ten times blacker. Is there any lion that this Samson cannot slay? Is there any fortress that this Conqueror cannot take? Is there any sin this Redeemer cannot pardon?

It is said that when Charlemagne's host was overpowered by the three armies of the Saracens in the pass of Roncesvalles, his warrior, Roland, in terrible earnestness, seized a trumpet, and blew it with such terrific strength that the opposing army reeled back with terror; but at the third blast of the trumpet it broke in two. I see your soul fiercely assailed by all the powers of earth and hell. I put the mightier trumpet of the Gospel to my lips, and I blow it three times. "Blast the first—"*Whosoever will,*

let him come." Blast the second—" *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.*" Blast the third—" *Now is the accepted time ; now is the day of salvation.*" Does not the host of your sins fall back ? But the trumpet does not, like that of Roland, break in two. As it was handed down to us from the lips of our fathers, we hand it down to the lips of our children, and tell them to sound it when we are dead, that all the generations of men may know that our God is a pardoning God—a sympathetic God—a loving God ; and that more to him than the anthems of heaven, more to him than the throne on which he sits, more to him than are the temples of celestial worship, is the joy of seeing the wanderer putting his hand on the door-latch of his Father's house. Hear it, all ye nations ! Bread for the worst hunger. Medicine for the worst sickness. Light for the thickest darkness. Harbor from the worst storm.

Dr. Prime, in his book of wonderful interest entitled "Around the World," describes a tomb in India of marvellous architecture. Twenty thousand men were twenty-two years in erecting that and the buildings around it. Standing in that tomb, if you speak or sing, after you have ceased you hear the echo coming from a height of one hundred and fifty feet. It is not like other echoes. The sound is drawn out in sweet prolongation, as though the angels of God were chanting on the wing.

How many souls here to-day, in the tomb of sin, will lift up the voice of penitence and prayer ? If now they would cry unto God, the echo would drop from afar—not struck from the marble cupola of an earthly mausoleum, but sounding back from the warm heart of angels, flying with the news ; for there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth !

THE WINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY.

"The Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."—
Ruth ii, 12.

SCENE: An Oriental harvest-field. Grain standing. Grain in swaths. Grain in sheaves. At the side of the field, a white tent in which to take the nooning, jars of vinegar or of sour wine to quench the thirst of the hot working-people. Swarthy men striking their sickles into the rustling barley. Others twisting the bands for the sheaves, putting one end of the band under the arm, and with the free arm and foot collecting the sheaf. Sunburned women picked up the stray straws and bringing them to the binders. Boaz, a fine-looking Oriental, gray-bearded and bright-faced, the owner of the field, looking on, and estimating the value of the grain and calculating so many ephas to the acre; and, with his large, sympathetic heart, pitying the overtasked workmen and the women, with white faces enough to faint, in the hot noonday sun. But there is one woman who especially attracts the man's attention. She is soon to be with him the joint owner of the field. She has come from a distant land for the sole purpose of being kind to an aged woman. I know not what her features were; but when the Lord God sets behind a woman's face the lamp of courage, and faith, and self-sacrifice, there comes out a glory independent of features. She is to be the ancestress of Jesus Christ. Boaz, the owner of the field, as soon as he understands that it is Ruth, accosts her with the blessing: "A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Christ compares himself to a hen gathering the chickens under her wings. In Deuteronomy, God is represented as an eagle stirring up her nest. In a great many places in the Psalms, David makes ornithological allusions; while my text mentions the *wings* of God, under which a poor, weary soul had come to trust.

I ask your attention, therefore, this morning, while, taking the suggestion of my text, I speak to you in all simplicity and love of the *wings of the Almighty*.

First: I remark that they were *swift* wings under which Ruth had come to trust. There is nothing in all the handiwork of

God more curious than a bird's wing. You have been surprised, sometimes, to see how far it could fly with one stroke of the wing; and, when it has food in prospect, or when it is affrighted, the pulsations of the bird's wing are unimaginable for velocity. The English lords used to pride themselves on the speed of their falcons. These birds, when trained, had in them the dart of the lightning. How swift were the carrier-pigeons in the time of Anthony and at the siege of Jerusalem! Wonderful speed! A carrier-pigeon was thrown up at Rouen and came down at Ghent—ninety miles off—in one hour. The carrier-pigeons were the telegraphs of the olden time. Swallows have been shot in our latitude having the undigested rice of Georgia swamps in their crops, showing that they had come four hundred in six hours. It has been estimated that, in the ten years of a swallow's life, it flies far enough to have gone round the world eighty-nine times, so great is its velocity. And so the wings of the Almighty, spoken of in the text, are *swift* wings. They are swift when they drop upon a foe, and swift when they come to help God's friends. If a father and his son be walking by the way and the child goes too near a precipice, how long does it take for the father to deliver the child from danger? Longer than it takes God to swoop for the rescue of his children. The fact is that you can not get away from the care of God. If you take the steamship, or the swift rail-train, He is all the time along with you. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit, and whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold! Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Thy hand shall hold me."

The Arabian gazelle is swift as the wind. If it gets but one glimpse of the hunter, it puts many crags between. Solomon, four or five times, compares Christ to an Arabian gazelle (calling it by another name) when he says: "*My beloved is like a roe.*" The difference is, that the roe speeds the other way; Jesus speeds this. Who but Christ could have been quick enough to help Peter, when the water-pavement broke? Who but Christ could have been quick enough to help the Duke of Argyle, when, in his dying moment, he cried: "Good cheer! I could die like a Roman, but I mean to die like a Christian. Come away gentlemen. He who goes first, goes cleanest?" I had a friend who stood by the rail-track at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, when the

ammunition had given out at Antietam; and he saw the train from Harrisburg, freighted with shot and shell, as it went thundering down toward the battle-field. He said that it stopped not for any crossing. They put down the brakes for no grade. They held up for no peril. The wheels were on fire with the speed as they dashed past. If the train did not come up in time with the ammunition, it might as well not come at all. So, my friends, there are times in our lives when we must have help immediately or perish. The grace that comes too late is no grace at all. What you and I want is a God—*now*. Oh! is it not blessed to think that God is always in such quick pursuit of his dear children? When a sinner seeks pardon, or a baffled soul needs help, swifter than thrush's wing, swifter than ptarmigan's wing, swifter than flamingoe's wing, swifter than eagle's wing, are *the wings of the Almighty*.

I remark further, carrying out the idea of my text, that the wings under which Ruth had come to trust were very *broad* wings. There have been eagles shot on the Rocky Mountains with wings that were seven feet from tip to tip. When the king of the air sits on the crag, the wings are spread over all the eaglets in the eyrie, and when the eagle starts from the rock, the shadow is like the spreading of a storm cloud. So the wings of God are *broad* wings. Ruth had been under those wings in her infantile days; in the days of her happy girlhood in Moab; in the day when she gave her hand to Mahlon, in her first marriage; in the day when she wept over his grave; in the day when she trudged out into the wilderness of poverty; in the days when she picked up the few straws of barley dropped by ancient custom in the way of the poor.

Oh! yes, the wings of God are *broad* wings. They cover up all our wants, all our sorrows, all our sufferings. He puts one wing over our cradle, and he puts the other over our grave. Yes, my dear friends, it is not a desert in which we are placed; it is a nest. Sometimes it is a very hard nest, like that of the eagle, spread on the rock, with ragged moss and rough sticks, but still is a nest; and, although it may be very hard under us, over us are the wings of the Almighty. There sometimes comes a period in one's life when he feels forsaken. You said, "Every thing is against me. The world is against me. The Church is against me. No sympathy; no hope. Every body that comes near me thrusts at me. I wonder if there is a God, anyhow!" Every thing 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 was 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 gravedigger to do his work for you? I have seen such days. Oh, the faithlessness of the human heart! God's wings are broad, whether we know it or not.

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, and we are under his wings—the broad wings of the Almighty.

Yes; they are very broad! There is room under those wings for the thousand millions of the race. You say: "Do not get the invitation too large, for there is nothing more awkward than to have more guests than accommodations." I know it. The *Seamen's Friend Society* are inviting all the sailors. The *Tract Society* is inviting all the destitute. The Sabbath-schools are inviting all the children. The *American and Foreign Christian Union* is inviting all the Roman Catholics. The *Missionary Society* is inviting all the heathen. The printing-presses of Bible Societies are going night and day, doing nothing but

printing invitations to this great Gospel banquet. And are you not afraid that there will be more guests than accommodations? No! All who have been invited will not half fill up the table of God's supply. There are chairs for more. There are cups for more. God could with one feather of his wing cover up all those who have come; and when He spreads out both wings, they cover all the earth and all the heavens. Ye Israelites, who went through the Red Sea, come under! Ye multitudes who have gone into glory for the last six thousand years, come under! Ye hundred and forty-four thousand, and the thousands of thousands, come under! Ye flying cherubim and archangel, fold your pinions, and come under! And yet there is room! Ay! if God would have all the space under his wings occupied, he must make other worlds, and people them with other myriads, and have other Resurrection and Judgment Days; for broader than all space, broader than thought, wide as eternity, from tip to tip, are the wings of the Almighty! Oh! under such provision as that can you not rejoice? Come under, ye wandering, ye weary, ye troubled, ye sinning, ye dying souls! Come under the wings of the Almighty. Whosoever will come, let him come. However ragged, however wretched, however abandoned, however woe-begone, there is room enough under the wings—under the broad wings of the Almighty! Oh, what a Gospel! So glorious, so magnificent in its provisions! I love to preach it. It is my life to preach it. It is my heaven to preach it.

I remark, further, that the wings under which Ruth came to trust were *strong* wings. The strength of a bird's wing—of a sea-fowl's wing, for example—you might guess it from the fact that sometimes for five, six, or seven days it seems to fly without resting. There have been condors in the Andes that could overcome an ox or a stag. There have been eagles that have picked up children, and swung them to the top of the cliffs. The flap of an eagle's wing has death in it to every thing it strikes. There are birds whose wings are packed with strength to fly, to lift, to destroy. So the wings of God are strong wings. Mighty to save. Mighty to destroy. I preach him—"the Lord, strong and mighty—the Lord, mighty in battle!" He flapped his wing, and the antediluvian world was gone. He flapped his wing and Babylon perished. He flapped his wing, and Herculaneum was buried. He flapped his wing, and the Napoleonic dynasty ceased. Before the stroke of that pinion a fleet is nothing. An army is nothing. An empire is nothing.

A world is nothing. The universe is nothing. King—Eternal, Omnipotent—he asks no counsel from the thrones of heaven. He takes not the archangel into his cabinet. He wants none to draw his chariots, for they are the winds. None to load his batteries, for they are the lightnings. None to tie the sandals of his feet, for they are the clouds. He is the Lord God Almighty—a truth that is sad or glad, just according to the position you occupy—just as the castle is grand or terrible, according as you are inside or outside of it. If you are inside of it, it is your defence. If you are outside of it, it is your destruction. The Lord God is a tower, a stronghold, a fortress. Found in him—oh, the gladness of this truth I am preaching! The mighty God. Mighty to save. Our enemies may be strong. Our sorrows violent. Our sins may be great. But quicker than an eagle ever hurled down from the crags a hawk or a raven, will the Lord God strike back our sins and our temptations, if they assault us when we are once seated on the eternal rock of his salvation. What a blessed thing it is to be defended by the strong wing of the Almighty! Stronger than the pelican's wing, stronger than the albatross's wing, stronger than the condor's wing, are the wings of the Almighty.

I have only one more thought to present. The wings under which Ruth had come to trust were *gentle* wings. There is nothing softer than a feather. 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." Under the *swift* wings, under the *broad* wings, under the *strong* wings, under the *gentle* wings of the Almighty, find shelter until these calamities be overpast. Then when you want to change nests, it will only be from the valley of earth to the heights of heaven; and instead of "the wings of a dove," for which David longed, not knowing that in the first mile of their flight they would give out, you will be conducted upward by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings Ruth, the beautiful Moabitess, came to trust.

God forbid that in this matter of eternal weal or woe we should be more stupid than the fowls of heaven; "for the stork knoweth her appointed time; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their going; but my people know not the judgments of the Lord."

THE WHITE HAIR OF JESUS.

“His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.”—*Revelation* i. 14.

TRADITION and an ancient document tell us that the hair of Christ, when he was upon earth, was chestnut color to the ears, and then flowed down in golden curls upon the neck. My text says that his hairs were white; that is, of course, a figurative representation. As Jesus died at thirty-three years of age, we are apt to think of him as a young man; but he is living now. That makes him more than an octogenarian, more than a centenarian—ay, eighteen hundred and seventy-two years of age. But the Bible tells us that he was present at the creation of the world; that makes him six thousand years old. Ay, Jesus says of himself, “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the world was;” so that makes him as old as eternity.

You wear a suit of clothes for a little while, then put it off not to put it on again; and so the Lord Jesus put on the raiment of our humanity for a little while, and then doffed it for ever. He is an aged Christ; his hairs are white like wool, white like snow.

If God will help me this morning, I will tell you of the *sorrow*, the *beauty*, and the *antiquity* of Jesus.

There is nothing that so soon changes the color of the hair as trouble. You see some man to-day with his hair jet-black; if you see him five years from now, his hair will be white. Meantime, his property is gone, or he has been bereft of his family, and that sorrow accounts for it. Marie Antoinette came to Paris greeted by a shout, the mightiest Frenchmen her escort. The populace actually tried to unharness the horses from her carriage, that they themselves might draw it. Beautiful in person, beautiful in heart, the whole French nation worshipped her. A little time passed on, and I behold her on a hurdle, or sled, drawn toward the place of execution, her arms pinioned behind her, one eye entirely put out, the glory of her face extinguished. Oh, the change! History says of this woman that, imprisoned, her husband executed, her children torn from her embrace, the knife of the guillotine sharpening for her neck—in one night her hair turned white.

Well, surely, Jesus my Lord had enough sorrow to whiten his

hair. He had dwelt in the palaces of eternity—the archangel one of his body-guard, the unfallen ones of heaven glad to draw his chariot. Methinks, when he came out on the balcony of heaven, there was a waving of palm branches and shouting. But here you see him drawn on the hurdle of our humanity, toward the place of execution. Castles by the sea, and Roman palaces, in which kings' children were born; but this son of a King, born in the outhouse of a tavern! Potentates with luxuriant tables, and surrounded by cup-bearers; but this King the disciples find one morning on the beach, frying his own fish and toasting his own bread for breakfast; his feet shod with ordinary sandals—a sole of leather fastened with thongs; his head bared under the hot Judean sun, seated on the well-curb thirsty; his coat gambled for by the roughs who wanted it; the police after him for blasphemy; the filthy villains hawking up the phlegm from their throats and spitting it on his clean cheek; pursued as though he were a tiger; his dying drink vinegar, sucked out of a sponge. Every thing seemed leaving him, even the light of day running away, and leaving him in the hands of the Night—the black nurse that bent over him; forsaken by every thing but fiends, executioners, and the darkness—oh! methinks that was the night in which his hair turned white.

We would have thought that some one of the Roman soldiers would have had humanity and magnanimity enough to step out from the ranks and say, "Stop this butcher!" that Scorn would have uncurled its lip and said, "Enough!" that Revenge would have cried out, "I am satisfied!" that Pain would have said, "I have done my worst!" that the swords would have snapped off at the hilt and the lances broken in twain. Oh, no! no! no! The world wanted blood; and as long as a single globule remained in the arteries or the veins of Christ, the anguish must go on, and the wine-press keep crushing the purple cluster until the last drop was out.

Oh, freezing horror! the guillotine was mercy compared with it! Pang of nail! Pang of spear! Pang of thirst! Pang of betrayal! Pang of vicarious suffering! I hear the hammers ringing through the darkness, loud and fierce, thump! thump! thump! against the cross. But the work is done! The groaning has ceased, the last Roman regiment has marched down the hill, the victim is taken from the tree, his dead weight coming down on the hands of those who carry him, his hand falling where it will, his head falling back or sidewise, as they allow it.

Let the thunders toll at this funeral of a God, and the organ of the winds weep this requiem : " He was despised and rejected of men ; wounded for our transgressions. Behold where they have laid him ! " Ah, methinks the golden curls have gone from his cheek, and the auburn has faded from his brow, and " his hair is white as the wool, as white as the snow." Sorrow and anguish have turned it.

My text sets forth the *beauty of Christ*. Whimsical fashion changes its mind very often as to which is the best color for the hair. The Romans sprinkled theirs with silver and gold. Our ancestors powdered theirs white. Human custom decides this and decides that ; but God declares that he likes *frost-color* best when he says, " The *hoary* head is a crown of glory, if it be in way of righteousness." Indeed, is there any thing more beautiful ? This is the way God has of saying to a man, at the end of an upright life : " You have been honorable." Alas ! for those who will not take the adornment, and who swear by all the dyes of the apothecary that they will not have it. Nevertheless, gray hair is a crown of glory. It is beautiful in the Church, it is beautiful in the home, it is beautiful at the wedding, it is beautiful at the burial.

Waiting for the door of one of my parishioners to open, I stand at the front steps, and, looking through the window, see grandfather with a child on either knee—his face beaming with benedictions. He is almost through with his journey, but he has an interest in those who are starting. The racket is almost too much for the old man's head, but he says nothing. The granddaughter, half grown, stands behind the chair and runs her hand through his locks. As grandfather stoops down to kiss the children good night, it is sunset embracing sunrise ; it is the spring crocuses around about the edge of the snow-bank : it is the white locks, beautiful in the domestic circle.

Grandfather is in church. His comrades are gone. His sons and daughters, though grown to be men and women, will never be any thing but boys and girls to him. He looks around the audience and sees so many strange faces, and he wonders why people don't talk as loud as they used to. As some old hymn comes through his soul, his memory brings back the revival scenes of a half-century. He wonders where all the old people are. His second sight has come, and he rarely uses spectacles. With a cane in both hands, he sits at the end of the pew. Don't crowd him, he will soon pass over the river and see the

King in his beauty. White locks beautiful in the Lord's temple.

Two hearts have been affianced. Against the marriage altar there dashes a wave of orange blossoms. The two families, in a semicircle, stand about the altar. Father and mother come, of course, and give the first congratulations; but let them not tarry too long, for grandfather is coming up, with trembling step. "God be good to you both, my children;" he says, as he takes their hands. Then he seals his word with an old man's kiss. The bridal veil was graceful, but I know something more graceful than that. The vase of flowers on the altar was beautiful, but I know something more beautiful than that. The light that danced in the socket was bright, but I know something brighter than that. It is the long white locks of grandfather at the wedding.

Pull the door-bell very gently; it is wrapped with the black and the white—the signals of mourning. The throngs have come in. There is weeping in the hall, weeping in the parlour, and weeping in the nursery. The grandchild was a great pet with grandpa; but he says, "I must control myself for the sake of others;" so he goes all through the house a comforter. He says, "The Lord has taken the child—it is well with it, it is well with it." Grandfather may sometimes have been a little querulous, but it is a great favour to have him now. The song, the prayer, the sermon, may have been comforting, but more comforting than any thing that could be said are the white locks of grandfather at the burial.

Oh! are you not ready to admit that my text means the *beauty* of Christ, when it says, "His hairs were white like the wool, white like the snow?" Have you not seen him? Through the dark night of your sin has he not flashed upon your vision? Beautiful when he comes to pardon, beautiful when he comes to comfort, beautiful when he comes to save. A little child was crying very much during the time of an eclipse. It got so dark at noon she was afraid, and she kept sobbing, and could not be silenced until, after awhile, the sun came out again, and she clapped her hands, and said, "Oh, the sun! the sun!" Some of us have been in the darkness of our sin; eclipse after eclipse has passed over our soul; but after awhile the Sun of Righteousness poured his beams upon our hearts, and we cried, "The sun! the sun!" Beautiful down in the straw of the Bethlehem khan. Beautiful in his mother's shawl, a fugitive to Egypt!

Beautiful with his feet in the Galilean surf! Beautiful with the children hanging about his neck! Beautiful in the home circle of Bethany! Fairer than the sons of men; day-spring from on high; light for those who sit in darkness; rose of Sharon; lily of the valley—altogether lovely. As the sheep from the washing go up the bank, their fleece makes you think of the rising cloud, because of its brightness; but makes you think more of him whose hair is as white as the *wool*; and on the morning after a snow-storm you look out of the window before the wheel or the hoof has passed, and the whiteness is almost insufferable, and it makes you think of him whose hair is “white like the *snow*.”

Again: my text presents the *antiquity of Jesus*. It is no new Christ that has come. It is no new experimenter coming to the crucible. The telegraph don't announce the arrival of a stranger. It is an aged Christ. If I should tell you that he was a thousand million years old, it would give you no idea of his antiquity. He comes down through the periods when there were no worlds, before light had struck its first spark, or the first angelic wing was spread for flight. He saw the first star beam on the darkness, the first wave swing to its place, and he heard the first rock jar down to its place in the mountain socket. “His hair is white as the wool, white as the snow”—an aged Christ. Oh! that gives me so much confidence. It is the same Jesus that heard David's prayer, the same Jesus on whose breast John leaned. It is the same one who stood in the Mamartine dungeon with Paul, who watched the ashes of Wickliffe when they were thrown into the river, and stood by Hugh Latimer in the fire. He comes down bearing the pains and the agonies of Christendom. After six thousand years of sin-pardoning, burden-bearing and wound-healing, he knows how to do it. You can not bring him a new case. He has had ten thousand cases just like it before. He is an aged Christ.

There are times when we want chiefly the young and the gay about us; but when I am in deep trouble, give me a fatherly old man or a motherly old women. More than once, in the black night of sorrow, have I hailed the gray dawn of an old man's hair. Grandmother's hand may tremble too much to hold the phial in the sick room, and her eye be too dim to count the drops, but surely you have all felt that there is no hand so competent to pour out the medicine of Christian consolation as an aged hand. When I want courage for life, I love to think of Christ as *young*

and *ardent*; but when I feel the need of sympathy and condolence, I bring before me the picture of an *old* Jesus, his hairs as white as the wool, as white as the snow.

Is there not a balm in this for the aged? Mythology tells us of one who got aged, and they tried to make him young again. And so they took herbs, and they took fragments of owls and wolves, and put them in a caldron and stirred them up, and gave some to the man, and instantly his hair was blackened, his eyes brightened, his forehead smoothed, and his foot bounded like the roe. But the Gospel intimates that if a man knows Jesus Christ in his soul, he shall never get old; or, having got old before he came to Jesus, he shall be made young again. I pluck some of these herbs from the Hill of Zion, and I put them in a caldron and stir them up, and I take out life and health for the soul. One drop shall make everlasting youth flash through your veins.

Jesus of the white locks is sympathetic with all those who have white locks. If you get weary in life, here is an arm to lean upon. If your eye gets dim, he will pick out the way for you. He will never leave you. He will never forsake those who put their trust in him. Some of us, in our own families, have had instances where Christ has been very kind and loving to the aged. My mother's hair had turned white, until there was not one dark thread in it—the type of her character, out of which every thing had faded but the light. After a useful and blameless life, she came to her end in peace. No beggar ever came to her door and was turned away. No worried soul ever came to her and was not pointed to Jesus. When the angel of life came to a neighbor's dwelling, she was there to rejoice at the incarnation. And when the angel of death flapped its wings, she was there to robe the departed for the burial. We had often heard her, while kneeling among her children at family prayers, when father was absent, say, "I ask not for my children wealth or honor; but I do ask that they may all become the subjects of thy converting grace." Having seen her eleven children in the Kingdom of God, she had only one more desire before she died, and that was that the son on missionary ground might come back, that she might see him once alive. And when the ship from China anchored in New York harbor, and the long-absent son stepped over the parental threshold, she said: "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" We gathered from afar to see only the house from which the soul had departed. Her folded hands appeared just as when they

were employed in kindnesses for her children. Standing there, we said: "Don't she look beautiful?" It was a cloudless day when we carried her out to the last resting-place. The withered leaves crumbled under wheel and hoof as we passed, and the setting sun, shining upon the river, made it look like fire. But more calm and peaceful was the setting sun of this aged pilgrim's life. No more tears, no more sickness, no more death! Dear mother, beautiful mother! Do you wonder that I think gray hairs are beautiful? May her Saviour be the guide, the comforter, and the joy of all the aged!

To the Jesus of the auburn locks, as the Jews saw him, to the Jesus of the white hair, as John described him, I commend the young and the old. If you are in trouble, go to him for comfort. If you are guilty go to him for pardon. Take his yoke, it is easy—his burden, it is light.

I saw in Oxford, England, this summer, a picture of St. Christopher, bringing to mind a wonderful legend that some of you may know about. He had been in the habit of fording a stream and taking people across it. He heard a child crying. The child wanted to pass that stream, so he took the child on his shoulders and started to ford the stream; but the little child grew heavier and heavier, and before he got to the other bank he found he had a giant on his shoulders, and was almost borne down in the flood. The legend says he found it was Jesus whom he was carrying. Ah! my friends, that is not my religion. Religion, instead of getting heavier and heavier, gets lighter and lighter; and that which was a cross, heavy enough almost to break the back, becomes two hands—instead of pushing us down, lifting us up the steep of heaven, where the *black* shall be exchanged for the *white*—white robes washed in the blood of the Lamb—white horses in the procession of eternal victory—white flocks, following the good Shepherd over the heavenly pastures—while presiding over all the scene, and seated on a great white throne, is the One whose "hairs are *white* as the wool, as *white* as the snow."

THE WRATH OF THE SEA.

“And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.—*Acts xxvii. 44.*”

ONE November day, lying snugly in port at Fair Havens, was an Alexandrian corn-ship. These Alexandrian corn-ships stood amidst the ancient shipping, as the Cunarders stand now amidst modern steamers. Respect was paid to them especially; and they were the only vessels that had a right to go into any port without lowering their top-sail.

On board that vessel at Fair Havens are two distinguished passengers: one, Josephus, the historian, as we have strong reason to believe; the other, a convict, one Paul by name, who was going to prison for upsetting things, or, as they termed it, “turning the world upside down.” This convict had gained the confidence of the captain. Indeed I think that Paul knew almost as much about the sea as did the captain. He had been shipwrecked three times already; he had dwelt much of his life amidst capstans, and yard-arms, and cables and storms; and he knew what he was talking about. Seeing the equinoctial storm was coming, and perhaps noticing something unseaworthy in the vessel, he advised the captain to stay in the harbor. But I hear the captain and the first mate talking together. They say, “We can not afford to take the advice of this landsman, and he a minister. He may be able to preach very well, but I don’t believe he knows a marline-spike from a luff-tackle. All aboard! Cast off! Shift the helm for headway! Who fears the Mediterranean?” They had gone only a little way out when a whirlwind, called Euroclydon, made the torn sail its turban, shook the mast as you would brandish a spear, and tossed the hulk into the heavens. Overboard with the cargo! It is all washed with salt-water, and worthless now; and there are no marine insurance companies. All hands ahoy, and out with the anchors!

Great consternation comes on crew and passengers. The sea-monsters snort in the foam; and the billows clap their hands in glee of destruction. In a lull of the storm I hear a chain clank. It is the chain of the great apostle as he walks the deck, or holds fast to the rigging amidst the lurching of the ship—the spray dripping from his long beard as he cries out to the crew: “Now

I exhort you to be of good cheer ; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul : thou must be brought before Cæsar : and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

Fourteen days have passed, and there is no abatement of the storm. It is midnight. Standing on the look-out, the man peers into the darkness, and, by a flash of lightning, sees the long white line of the breakers ; and knows they must be coming near to some country ; and fears that in a few moments the vessel will be shivered on the rocks. The ship flies like chaff in the tornado. They drop the sounding-line, and by the light of the lantern they see it is twenty fathoms. Speeding along a little farther, they drop the line again, and by the light of the lantern they see it is fifteen fathoms. Two hundred and seventy-six souls within a few feet of awful shipwreck ! The managers of the vessel, pretending they want to look over the side of the ship and undergird it, get into the small boat, expecting in it to escape ; but Paul sees through the sham, and he tells them that if they go off in the boat it will be the death of them. The vessel strikes ! The planks spring ! The timbers crack ! The vessel parts in the thundering surge ! Oh, what wild struggling for life ! Here they leap from plank to plank. Here they go under as if they would never rise, but, catching hold of a timber, come floating and panting on it to the beach. Here, strong swimmers spread their arms through the waves until their chins plough the sand, and they rise up and wring out their wet locks on the beach. When the roll of the ship is called, two hundred and seventy-six people answer to their names. "And so," says my text, *it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land.*"

I learn from this subject :

First, that *those who get us into trouble will not stay to help us out.* These ship-men got Paul out of Fair Havens in 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

contests 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 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 no help to him when he gets into the breakers of Melita. Hear it, young man, hear it!

I remark again, as a lesson learned from the text, that *it is dangerous to refuse the counsel of competent advisers*. Paul told them not to go out with that ship. They thought he knew nothing about it. They said, "He is only a minister! They went, and the ship was destroyed. There are a great many people who now say of ministers, "They know nothing about the world. They can not talk to us!" Ah! my friends, it is *not* necessary to have the Asiatic cholera before you can give it medical treatment in others. It is not necessary to have your own arm broken before you can know how to splinter a fracture. And we who stand in the pulpit, and in the office of a Christian teacher, know that there are certain styles of belief and certain kinds of behavior that will lead to destruction as certainly as Paul knew that if that ship went out of Fair Havens it would go to destruction. "Rejoice, oh, young man! in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth! but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." We may not know much, but we know that.

Young people refuse the advice of parents. They say, "Father is over-suspicious, and mother is getting old." But those parents have been on the sea of life. They know where the storms sleep, and during their voyage have seen thousands of battered hulks marking the place where beauty burned, and intellect foundered, and morality sank. They are old sailors,

having answered many a signal of distress, and endured great stress of weather, and gone scudding under bare poles; and the old folks know what they are talking about. Look at that man—in his cheek the glow of infernal fires. His eye flashes not as once with thought, but with low passion. His brain is a sewer through which impurity floats, and his heart the trough in which lust wallows and drinks. Men shudder as the leper passes, and parents cry, “Wolf! wolf!” Yet he once said the Lord’s Prayer at his mother’s knee, and against that iniquitous brow once pressed a pure mother’s lip. But he refused her counsel. He went where Euroclydons have their lair. He foundered on the sea, while all hell echoed at the roar of the wreck—*Lost Pacifics! Lost Pacifics!*

Another lesson from the subject is, that *Christians are always safe.*

There did not seem 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, my texts 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 hogs-heads, 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 enemy 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.

You have, my friends, had illustrations, in your own life, of how God delivers his people. I have had illustrations in my own life of the same truth.

Two weeks ago, last Thursday, the steamer *Greece*, of the National line, swung out into the River Mersey at Liverpool, bound for New York. We had on board seven hundred, crew and passengers. We came together strangers—Englishmen, Irishmen, Italians, Swedes, Norwegians, Americans. Two flags floated from the masts—British and American ensigns. So may they ever float, and no red hand of war ever snatch either of them down. In the same prayer that we put up for our own national prosperity, we will send up the petition, "God save the Queen!" We had a new vessel, or one so thoroughly remodelled that the voyage had around it all the uncertainties of a trial trip. The great steamer felt its way cautiously out into the sea. The pilot was discharged; and committing ourselves to the care of Him who holdeth the winds in his fist, we were fairly started on our voyage of three thousand miles. It was rough nearly all the way—the sea with strong buffeting disputing our path. But one week ago last night, at eleven o'clock, after the lights had been put out, a cyclone—a wind just made to tear ships to pieces—caught us in its clutches. It came down so suddenly that we had not time to take in the sails or to fasten the hatches. You may know that the bottom of the Atlantic is strewn with the ghastly work of cyclones. Oh! they are cruel winds. They have hot breath, as though they came up from infernal furnaces. Their merriment is the cry of affrighted passengers. Their play is the foundering of steamers. And, when a ship goes down, they laugh until both continents hear them. They go in circles, or, as I describe them with my hand—rolling on! rolling on! With finger of terror writing on the white sheet of the wave this sentence of doom: "Let all that come within this circle perish! Brigantines, go down! Clippers, go down! Steamships, go down!" And the vessel, hearing the terrible voice, crouches in the surf, as the waters gurgle through the hatches and port-holes, it lowers away, thousands of feet down, farther and farther, until at last it strikes the bottom; and all is peace, for they have landed. Helmsman, dead at the wheel! Engineer, dead amidst the extinguished furnaces! Captain, dead in the gangway! Passengers, dead in the cabin! Buried in the great cemetery of dead steamers, beside the *City of Boston*, the *Lexington*, the *President*, the *Cambria*—waiting for the archangel's trumpet to split up the decks, and wrench open the cabin-doors, and unfasten the hatches.

I thought that I had seen storms on the sea before; but all

of them together might have come under one wing of that cyclone. We were only eight or nine hundred miles from home, and in high expectation of soon seeing our friends, for there was no one on board so poor as not to have a friend. But it seemed as if we were to be disappointed. The most of us expected then and there to die. There were none who made light of the peril, save two: one was an Englishman, and he was drunk, and the other was an American, and he was a fool! Oh! what a time it was! A night to make one's hair turn white. We came out of the berths, and stood in the gangway, and looked into the steerage, and sat in the cabin. While seated there, we heard overhead something like minute-guns. It was the bursting of the sails. We held on with both hands to keep our places. Those who attempted to cross the floor came back bruised and gashed. Cups and glasses were dashed to fragments; pieces of the table getting loose, swung across the saloon. It seemed as if the hurricane took that great ship of thousands of tons and stood it on end, and said, "Shall I sink it, or let it go this once?" And then it came down with such force that the billows trampled over it, each mounted of a fury. We felt that every thing depended on the propelling screw. If that stopped for an instant, we knew the vessel would fall off into the trough of the sea and sink; and so we prayed that the screw, which three times since leaving Liverpool had already stopped, might not stop now. Oh! how anxiously we listened for the regular thump of the machinery, upon which our lives seemed to depend. After awhile some one said, "*The screw is stopped!*" No; its sound had only been overpowered by the uproar of the tempest, and we breathed easier again when we heard the regular pulsations of the over-taxed machinery, going thump, thump, thump. At three o'clock in the morning the water covered the ship from prow to stern, and *the sky-lights gave way!* The deluge rushed in, and we felt that one or two more waves like that must swamp us forever. As the water rolled back and forward in the cabins, and dashed against the wall, it sprang half way up to the ceiling. Rushing through the sky-lights as it came in with such terrific roar, there went from the cabin a shriek of horror which I pray God I may never hear again. I have dreamed the whole scene over again, but God has mercifully kept me from hearing that one cry. Into it seemed to be compressed the agony of expected shipwreck. It seemed to say, "I shall never get home again! My children shall be orphaned, and my wife shall be widowed!

I am launching now into eternity ! In two minutes I shall meet my God !”

There were about five hundred and fifty passengers in the steerage ; and as the water rushed in and touched the furnaces, and began violently to hiss, the poor creatures in the steerage imagined that the boilers were giving way. Those passengers writhed in the water and in the mud, some praying, some crying, all terrified. They made a rush for the deck. An officer stood on deck, and beat them back with blow after blow. It was necessary. They could not have stood an instant on the deck. Oh ! how they begged to get out of the hold of the ship ! One woman, with a child in her arms, rushed up and caught hold of one of the officers, and cried, “ Do let me out ! I will help you ! do let me out ! I can not die here ! ” Some got down and prayed to the Virgin Mary, saying, “ O blessed Mother ; keep us ! Have mercy on us ! ” Some stood with white lips and fixed gaze, silent in their terror. Some wrung their hands and cried out, “ O God ! what shall I do ? what shall I do ? ” The time came when the crew could no longer stay on the deck, and the cry of the officers was, “ Below ! all hands below ! ” Our brave and sympathetic Captain Andrews—whose praise I shall not cease to speak while I live—had been swept by the hurricane from his bridge, and had escaped very narrowly with his life. The cyclone seemed to stand on the deck, waving its wing, crying, “ This ship is mine ! I have captured it ! Ha ! ha ! I will command it ! If God will permit, I will sink it here and now ! By a thousand shipwrecks, I swear the doom of this vessel ! ” There was a lull in the storm ; but only that it might gain additional fury. Crash ! went the life-boat on one side. Crash ! went the life-boat on the other side. The great booms got loose, and, as with the heft of a thunder-bolt, pounded the deck and beat the mast—the jib-boom, studding-sail boom, and square-sail boom, with their strong arms, beating time to the awful march and music of the hurricane.

Meanwhile the ocean became phosphorescent. The whole scene looked like fire. The water dripping from the rigging, there were ropes of fire ; and masts of fire ; and there was a deck of fire. A ship of fire, sailing on a sea of fire, through a night of fire. O my God ! let me never see any thing like it again.

Every body prayed. A lad of twelve years of age got down and prayed for his mother. “ If I should give it up,” he said,

"I do not know what would will become of mother." There were men who, I think, had not prayed for thirty years, who then got down on their knees. When a man who has neglected God all his life feels that he has come to his last time, *it makes a very busy night*. All of our sins and short-comings passed through our minds. My own life seemed utterly unsatisfactory. I could only say, "Here, Lord, take me as I am. I can not mend matters now. Lord Jesus, thou didst die for the chief of sinners. That's me! Into Thy hands I commit myself, my wife, my children at home, the Tabernacle, the College—all the interests of Thy kingdom. It seems, Lord, as if my work is done, and poorly done, and upon Thy infinite mercy I cast myself, and in this hour of shipwreck and darkness commit myself and her whom I hold by the hand to thee, O Lord Jesus! praying that it may be a short struggle in the water, and that at the same instant we may both arrive in glory!" Oh! I tell you a man prays straight to the mark when he has a cyclone above him, an ocean beneath him, an eternity so close to him that he can feel its breath on his cheek.

The night was long. At last we saw the dawn looking through the port-holes. As in the olden time, in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came walking on the sea, from wave-cliff to wave-cliff; and when he puts his foot upon a billow, though it may be tossed up with might, it goes down. He cried to the winds, *Hush!* They knew his voice. The waves knew his foot. They died away. And in the shining track of his feet I read these letters on scrolls of foam and fire, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea." The ocean calmed. The path of the steamer became more and more mild; until, on the last morning out, the sun threw round about us a glory such as I never witnessed before. God made a pavement of mosaic, reaching from horizon to horizon, for all the splendors of earth and heaven to walk upon—a pavement bright enough for the foot of a seraph—bright enough for the wheels of the archangel's chariot. As a parent embraces a child, and kisses away its grief, so over that sea, that had been writhing in agony in the tempest, the morning threw its arms of beauty and of benediction; and the lips of earth and heaven met.

As I came on deck—it was very early, and we were nearing the shore—I saw a few sails against the sky. They seemed like the spirits of the night walking the billows. I leaned over the taffrail of the vessel, and said, "Thy way, O God, is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters."

It grew lighter. The clouds were hung in purple clusters along the sky; as if those purple clusters were pressed into red wine and poured out upon the sea, every wave turned into crimson. Yonder, fire-cleft stood opposite to fire-cleft; and here, a cloud rent and tinged with light, seemed like a palace, with flames bursting from the windows. The whole scene lighted up, until it seemed as if the angels of God were ascending and descending upon stairs of fire, and the wave crests changed into jasper and crystal, and amethyst, as they were flung toward the beach, made me think of the crowns of heaven cast before the throne of the great Jehovah. I leaned over the taffrail again, and said, with more emotion than before, "*Thy way, O God, is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters!*"

So, I thought, will be the going off of the storm and night of the Christian's life. The darkness will fold its tents and away!

The golden feet of the rising morn will come skipping upon the mountains, and all the wrathful billows of the world's woe break into the splendor of eternal joy.

And so we came into the harbor. The cyclone behind us. Our friends before us! God, who is always good, all around us! And if the roll of the crew and the passengers had been called, seven hundred souls would have answered to their names "And so it came to pass that we all escaped safe to land."

To that God who, delivered me and my comrades, to that God I commend you. Wait not for the storm and darkness before you fly to him. Go to him now, and seek his pardon. Find refuge in his mercy.

And may God grant that when all our Sabbaths on earth are ended, we may find that, through the rich mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, we all have weathered the gale!

"Into the harbor of heaven now we glide,
Home at last!
Softly we drift on the bright silver tide,
Home at last!
Glory to God! All our dangers are o'er;
We stand secured on the glorified shore.
Glory to God! we will shout evermore.
Home at last!
Home at last!"

THE SILVER TRUMPET.

“ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”—*Isaiah xxvii. 13.*

AS when the front and back doors of a barn are open, a gust of wind scatters the dust and chaff, so the Jews had been swept every whither—some wandering in Assyria, and some exiled in Egypt; but their coming back, as by the call of a trumpet, is here predicted.

The passage is strongly descriptive of the exiled and perishing condition of sinful men, and of their return at the trumpet-call of the Gospel.

Need I stop to prove that out of God we are in exile? Who here is at home in his sins? Does he not wander about looking for a home? Within the walls of his house, does he find entire rest for his spirit? No; he sees those walls are crumbling. His family must, by the nature of things, after awhile be scattered. Sickness can not be kept out, nor death. How many men have lived in the same house for twenty years? Not many. Your office or store makes a poor home. Are things all right at the store? Do things go on there as if they might go on for ever? Would you be satisfied to spend an eternity amidst that hardware, and those ribbons, and yonder kegs and hogsheads? Your pleasures are not lasting. You get tired of laughing, and tired of card-playing, and tired of fast riding; and all the peace you ever had was not very deep nor very lasting. You wander about, and wander about—*exiled*. That is the suggestive idea of the text. You have been expatriated. You are in worse than Siberian exile. The chains are harder. The mine is darker. The climate is colder. The gloom is ghastlier. “Lost in the land of Assyria!” That is, you do not know how you got in, and you cannot find your way out. If a man has missed his way, the more he walks the more he is lost. He starts off and goes ten miles in the wrong direction. Nor can you find your way out of this spiritual confusion. Lost, and without food. Lost, and without water. St. Bernard dogs pick up the worn traveller from Alpine gulches; but nothing has picked you out

from your freezing exhaustion. Strong-armed sailors have put out from a steamer and saved a shipwrecked crew; but no craft has borne down for your rescue. "Ready to perish!" says the text. Not floating on down into peril, but in the last stages of it—the work of sin almost completed—the day of grace almost gone—your feet on the crumbling brink. Perhaps the last call made. Ready to perish! Ready to perish! Not the first symptoms of disease, but the ninth day has passed; all remedies have failed; and there has been a relapse. What a dim prospect of recovery! Almost hopeless! Ready to perish! Ready to perish! Not the first reefing of the sail, and "the making of things snug;" but the mast shivered, the helm gone, the leak sprung, the timbers parting—the crash come! Ready to perish! *Ready to perish!*

Am I right in supposing that there are two thousand persons in this house unprepared to meet God? If a fishing-smack, with three or four persons on board, goes to pieces on Newfoundland banks, we say, "Poor fellows! what a sad thing it is that they were lost!" but if an ocean steamer goes down with three hundred passengers, the catastrophe is more overwhelming. If I thought that in this house there were only two or three persons in eternal peril, I would bemoan the fact; but when perhaps they may be counted by thousands, shall I not shriek out the horror—*Ready to perish! Ready to Perish!*

Ingenuous little children sometimes tell you how, with a few letters, they can spell a very large word. With three letters I can spell *bereavement*. With three letters I can spell *disappointment*. With three letters I can spell *suffering*. With three letters I can spell *death*. With three letters I can spell *perdition*. S-I-N—SIN. That is the cause of all our trouble now. That is the cause of our trouble for the future.

In 1665, in Derbyshire, England, there was a great plague. So many died, that it was decreed that none of the inhabitants should leave the villiage, and thus extend the distemper. A circle of stone was built all round about the city, beyond which no citizen could pass. Outsiders who had medicine or food to bring, brought it and threw it over the stone wall, and fled for their life.

To-night I mark the circle of a plague. The circle begins back of this pulpit, goes along the wall to the right, along the wall in front, along the wall to the left, coming back to the same point behind the the pulpit, thus including all within this house.

That circle is marked with these words: "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good—no, not one. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.*" A PLAGUE! A PLAGUE! And hundreds ready to perish!

But upon this dark background of the text a light falls. Amidst the harsh discords of which I speak, there sound the sweet and thrilling notes of a great trumpet. 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 about 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 Phillipian 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 lungs; 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 civilisation. 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 these 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 ear :
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears.”

A patient may be so weak that the fall of a door-latch or the rattle of a spoon in the tea-cup disturbs; but this sound quiets the nerves and stills the fears. The gentlest step that ever entered a sick-room is that of the Great Physician. Take some favourite word and utter it among the rocks, and there come back half a dozen echoes. So there is one word that, uttered here to-night will echo back from five hundred wounded but comforted hearts. That word is JESUS. That is the name that makes you weep. That is the name that makes you smile. That is the name that arouses your courage. That is the name that kindles your faith. That is the name that helps you to live. That is the name that will help you to die.

But I make a more determined advance into my subject and say that the Gospel trumpet is a trumpet of *alarm*. The sentinel on the wall sees the enemy coming, and puts the trumpet to his lips; and the soldier grasps his musket, and the trooper springs into his saddle, and the gates ajar shut at the cry “*Beware!*” Listening not to trumpet-call, the palace is taken, the treasures despoiled, the city burned. So the Gospel is a trumpet of alarm. It says, “Be armed, or die!” Satan assaults. The world tempts. Death advances. Judgment bursts upon thee, and an eternity from which thou shalt not escape. One strain of that trumpet is this, “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment.” Another strain, “Who of us can dwell amidst devouring flames? Who of us can lie down in everlasting burnings?” “*Beware, beware!*”

The Gospel trumpet is one of *recruit*. During the late war you heard the trumpet calling from the recruiting-stations; and at its call the people flocked to the standard of the Government

and went out to battle. In a spiritual sense, war is declared. Who is on the Lord's side? Are you ready to answer the call of the trumpet? There is no neutral ground. You are for God or for Satan, for light or for darkness, for heaven or for hell. Some theologians take four or five volumes in which to state their religious belief; I tell you all my theology in one sentence, *Jesus Christ—take him and live; refuse him and die.*

Sometimes, by mismanagement, a regiment will get in between the two opposing hosts and be cut to pieces by both sides. Will you stand half-way between the right side and the wrong side, and take shot of both hosts, or will you come under our standard? You will finally wish you had, for we shall gain this war. As a recruiting officer of the great army of banners, I blow this blast, Choose this day whom ye will serve. Why halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, then follow him; if Baal, then follow him. Come, for all things are now ready. The banquet is ready. The heart of Christ is ready. The house of many mansions is ready. The temple is ready. The angels are ready. Everything is ready. With such a Leader, with such a flag, with such a cause, with such a result, with such a crown—to-night put down your names on the muster roll.

This Gospel trumpet is one of *assault*. The besieging army prepares to storm the wall. They wheel round the guns. They march by platoons. The swords gleam. The guns are loaded. The men are anxious for the affray. Then there comes the ruffle of the drums, and all are ready for the charge. But they wait—not moving hand, or foot, or chin, to right or left—until the trumpet peals, when instantly the wave of valor dashes upon the casement. At every new roll of the drum the courage rises, until the castle is taken.

Arrayed against thy sins to-night, art thou ready to storm and trample them down? Fall into line! Attention! The trumpet sounds, and down go the mailed hosts, biting the dust. Sins of the heart, sins of the life, sins of the tongue, sins of thy youth, sins of maturity, sins of old age—one black, infernal army of transgression: they must go down under thee, or thou shalt go down under them. Harken to the trumpet of assault: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell—think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in

Jerusalem? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

This Gospel trumpet is also one of *retreat*. 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 amidst things that flatter it. If your proclivity be toward 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 was 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.

This Gospel trumpet is one of *victory*. Such a trumpet was sounded when Gideon scattered the Amalekites; when King David's troops overcame Absalom; when Napoleon rode on the field of Austerlitz; when Sebastopol fell; when Paris surrendered. For awhile the din of battle is great: the frenzied shriek; the revengeful cry; the dying groan; the shouting of the captains; the neighing of the war-chargers; the howling shells; the raking artillery; but as these subside in the defeat of one army, a musician leaps on the wall, flourishes his trumpet, and sounds victory over the plains. This shall be thy case, oh sinner! when under Christ thou dost get the victory. Not

always in the night or in retreat thou shalt yet be more than conqueror. The brightest hour that ever dawns on a human soul is that in which its sins are pardoned, and Christ says, "Oh, long-imprisoned spirit! go free. I am thy Saviour and thy God. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but I will never fail thee." Oh! could you only know the transport of such a hope, methinks you would not longer be able to keep your seat, but, like a man I heard last Sunday night in Charleston, you would rise up in the midst of the sermon, and cry out, "*Give me Christ! Give me Christ!*"

Oh, ye forgiven ones! did Christ make you a slave? Has he trampled you down? Do you find the cup he presses to your lips all wormwood and gall? Do you not rather feel like spending your life in praising the free grace of the Gospel, waving the palm branch, shouting the hosanna, clapping the cymbals, and blowing the trumpets of victory?

Finally, the Gospel trumpet is one of *reveille*. As chaplain, I was a little while in the army, and at Williamsport had the joy of telling this Gospel to the Federal and Confederate troops that lay wounded and dying in the hospitals. Early every morning we were awakened by a trumpet sounding the reveille. At that sound all the troops arose from the tents, hastened to their places in the line, and answered the roll-call. That done, they went to their morning rations. We, who are the soldiers of Christ, can not 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 grave-yards 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-places, 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 can not 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!

And now my address is to those in this audience who are ready to perish, asking them to hear this Gospel trumpet and live. They have come into this Tabernacle—some for one purpose and some for another. Perhaps some only to hear what "this babbler saith." But God will hold every one of you responsible for the fact that you here heard Christ set forth as a Saviour for all who would come to him and live. This Sabbath hour seems to you like all other Sabbath hours; but to some of you it may be the most stupendous hour in all your life of twenty, forty, or sixty years, because now you may refuse your last call of mercy.

The *Hungarian*, a ship sailing from Liverpool to Portland, was wrecked. It went down with all on board. Nothing was ever known of it, except that a clock that had belonged to the steamer floated up on the beach. The hands of the clock stood at eleven o'clock, showing that at that hour the ship had perished.

There may be some soul in this house to-night that will fatally refuse Christ; and it will be known in heaven that the hour of their shipwreck was ten minutes of nine o'clock—the moment at which I speak. May God have mercy upon those that are ready to perish! Oh! that by some song of heaven, or by some groan from hell, or by some death-bed from which they received admonition, or by the memory of some sick-pillow where they promised to do better, or by some rumbling of judgment thunder, or by

some invitation of the cross, they might be raised from the dead ! Jesus places his right hand on his bleeding brow, and his left hand on his bleeding side, and after holding them there a little while, he stretches them both forth, blood-tipped, saying, " Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

THE POULTICE THAT CURED THE CARBUNCLE.

"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*. That is a tough word that we use to show how much we know. If in the pulpit we always use words the people understand, we never should have any reputation for learning. Well, 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 plentiful 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.

In this age of discovery, when men know so much, it kills them, and write so wisely it almost kills *us*, it has been found out that prayer to God is a dead failure. All things are arranged according to inexorable law. There is no use in praying to God for rain in the time of drought, The "weather probabilities" in the morning paper will decide the question, rain or no rain, and the whole nation in prayer before God would not bring down a single drop. I am not now speaking of an imaginary theory, but of that which is believed by ten thousand times ten thousand men. If sickness comes to your household, it will depend entirely upon ventilation, good diet, and the skill of the doctors, as to whether your child gets well. The father might pray all day and the mother might pray all night—it would not have any effect upon the case. If squills, belladonna, paregoric, and

gruel, do the work, your child will get well; if not, not. There is a cast-iron God seated at the head of the universe, holding in the grasp of his metal fingers a band of law from which nothing can break away.

The whole Christian world and the Lord Almighty, within the past few weeks, have been challenged. God has now an opportunity of proving whether he keeps his promises, by an experiment. Professor Tyndall and Francis Galton, English gentlemen, propose that two wards in a hospital be set apart for the experiment. The people in the one ward of the hospital shall not be prayed for; the people in the other ward of the hospital *shall* be prayed for. Then we will see which of the patients get well the sooner—the experiment to go on for five years. Well; it is the most condescending thing in human philosophy that I think I have ever heard of. Here the Lord Almighty has an opportunity of winning the confidence of such men as Professor Tyndall and Francis Galton! Besides that, it is very complimentary to the angels; and if David, Paul, and Isaiah, who wrote so much about prayer, hear of it, they will, no doubt, be very much gratified to have a recommendation from such high authority. If there ever was a time when the whole universe ought to present a vote of thanks to one English literary review, this is the time. I call for the ayes and noes. The ayes have it!

My friends, that experiment will never be made, for the reason, in the first place, you never could get a man to lie down in the prayerless ward of that hospital—not even the philosophers who make the proposal. If they were sick, it would be the last place on earth they would want to be sick in—that prayerless ward of the hospital. You could not get an Englishman to lie there, for King James's translation has been abroad too long among Britons, and the bell of St. Paul's has rung London to prayer too often. You could not get an American to lie there, for he has a suspicion that the prayers that went up from Plymouth Rock, and Independence Hall, and Bunker Hill, and Getysburg, have had something to do with the history of this people. You could not get a Scotchman to lie there, for he comes from the land of John Knox, and methinks the old Covenanters who died for their faith would get up from Grayfrairs church-yard and hiss at him if he tried it.

The experiment is also impossible; because if the professor and myself should agree upon making it, you could not stop the

world and the Church from praying for all the distressed. There is a great company of deluded men and women who, every day, have the habit of praying for *all* the sick, and you could not stop them. Besides that, the Episcopal Church, in its liturgy, has a prayer to God for the sick, and I don't suppose that you could get them to put into their liturgy a sentence like this: "This we ask for all the sick, save those in Ward 62 of Tyndall and Talmage's experimental hospital." Besides that, at the end of four years three hundred and sixty four days, on the last day of the five years of our experiment, some sympathetic woman might say, "Alas, for the poor people in that sixty-second ward of the hospital! I must pray for them." And she would get down on her knees, and in two minutes spoil the whole experiment.

That challenge coming across the water, has not yet been accepted. I now accept it in the presence of this people, and of all to whom these words shall come, in the United States and Europe. I accept the challenge on one condition, and that is, that these men who make this proposal, themselves, when they are sick, go down in the prayerless ward, while we give our attention to the next ward. I hope these physicists will let us know as soon as they are fairly down on their backs, that we may begin even. They have not made any arrangement about paying the expenses of the experiment. I will pay half, however, on the condition that they do not have the ordering of their own provisions.

Ah! my friends, have we been so mistaken? Does God hear and answer prayer, or does he not? Why come out with a challenge in this day, and an experiment, when we have here the very experiment. Hezekiah was sick unto death; he prayed for his life; God heard him, and added fifteen years to that lifetime. The prayer saved him—the lump of figs applied being merely the God-appointed human instrumentality. "But," says some one, "I don't believe the Bible." Ah! then we will have to part company for four or five minutes, for it is useless to try to argue with any man with whom you can not stand upon common ground. In any argument, if you would be successful, there must be some common data to start from. It is foolish to try to prove to a man that twice three are six, provided he does not admit the multiplication-table, or that two and two are four, if he does not admit the addition table.

My first address, therefore, is to those who do believe the Bible. I want to tell you that prayer is the mightiest of all remedies, and that 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 *materia 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 be oftener 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.

John Abercrombie, the most celebrated physician of Scotland, prayed when he went into a sick-room, and he wrote no more ably about "diseases of the brain" than about "the philosophy of the moral feelings." I don't know how much of the medical success of Sydenham, and Cooper, and Harvey, and Rush, depended upon the fact that they knew how to pray as well as to prescribe. I don't want a physician who sees no God in human anatomy to doctor my bones. If God made us (and I think he did), and if the Bible is true (and I am rather disposed to think it is), then it is not strange that prayer does traverse natural causes; aye, that it introduces a new cause. When God made the law, he did not make it so strong he could not break it. If God made our bodies, when they are broken, he is the one to mend them; and it is reasonable that we should call him in to do it. If my furnace in the cellar breaks down, there is no one so competent to repair it as the manufacturer. If my watch stop, there is no one so competent to repair it as the one who made it. If the body is disordered, call in the Maker of it. It is not all, as these physicists tell us, a matter of ventilation or poisoned air, of cleanliness or dirt, of nutritious diet or poor fare. I have known people to get well in rooms where the windows had been six weeks down, tight shut, and I have known them to die right under patent ventilators. I have known children sickly

who every day had their bath, and I have known children robust, the washing of whose faces would make their features unrecognizable.

God did not make the law and then run away from it. What is a law of nature? It is only God's usual way of doing things. But he has said that if his children ask him to do a thing, and he can consistently do it, he will do it. Go on with your pills, and plasters, and nostrums, and elixirs, and your catholicon, but remember that the mightiest agency in your recovery is prayer. Prayer to God brought the king's cure, the lump of figs being the God-directed human instrumentality.

I would have you also see—for it is another lesson of the subject—that our prayer must be accompanied by means. It is an outrage to ask God to do a thing while we sit indolent. The prayer, to be acceptable, must come not only from the heart, but from the hands. We must work while we pray—devotion and work going together. Luther came to Melancthon's bedside and prayed for his recovery, and insisted, at the same time, that he should take some warm soup, the soup being just as important as the prayer. In the time of the great plague that came to York, of England, the priest prayed all day and all night for the removal of the plague, but did not think of clearing out the dead dogs and cats that lay in the gutters, causing the sickness. We must use means as well as supplication. If a man has "evening prayers," asking for health, and then sits down to a full supper of indigestibles at eleven o'clock at night, his prayer is a mockery. A man has no right to pray for the safety of his family when he knows there is no cover on the cistern. The Christian man, reckless about his health, ought not to expect the same answer to his prayer as the Christian man expects who retires regularly at ten o'clock at night, and takes his morning bath with the appendix of a Turkish towel. Paul said to the passengers of the Alexandrian corn-ship that they should get safe ashore, but he told them they must use means, and that was, "Stick to the old ship!" God is not weak, needing our help, but God is strong, and asks us to co-operate with him that we may be strong too. Pray by all means, but don't forget the fig-poultice.

That God answers prayer offered in the right spirit, seconded by our own effort, is the first and the last lesson of this text, and it is a lesson that this age needs to learn. If all communication between heaven and earth is cut off, let us know it. If all the Christian prayers that are going up toward God never reach

him, then, I say, let silence smite the lips of the afflicted world, and the nations smother their groans and die quietly, God does answer prayer. The text shows it. You say, "I don't believe the Bible; I think that those things were merely coincidences which are often brought as answers to prayer." Do you say that? Was it mere happens-so that Elijah prayed for rain just as the rain was going to come anyhow? Did Daniel pray in the wild beasts' den just at the time when all the lions happened to have the lockjaw? Did Jesus pray at the grave of Lazarus just at the time when Lazarus was going to dress himself and come out anyhow? Did Jesus lose his place in his sermon, and make a mistake when he said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you?" And, lest some were so stupid they could not understand it, he goes on, "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

But some one persists in saying, "I don't believe any thing of the Bible." Then I appeal to *your own instincts*. Prayer in certain circumstances is as natural to man as the throbbing in the pulse, as the respiration of the lungs. Put a company of men—I don't care how bad they are—in some imminent peril, and they will cry out, "God, have mercy on us!" It seems to be a time for making challenges; so I make one. I challenge that these men who don't believe in prayer charter a steamer, go out in the "Narrows," swing out eight or nine hundred miles to sea, and then heave-to and wait for a cyclone. And after the cyclone comes and the vessel has gone under ten times, when they did not expect it would rise again, and the bulwarks have been knocked in, and the masts are gone—if they do not pray, I will surrender my theory. Do you tell me that this instinct which God has put in us, he put there just to mock us for his own cruel amusement? If God implanted that instinct in the human heart, it was because in his own heart there was something responsive.

To prove that God does hear prayer, I put on the witness-stand Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Micah, John, Paul, Peter, and King Hezekiah. Tell me ye ancient battle-fields, ye Oriental thrashing floors, ye Judean corn-fields, ye Galilean fishing smacks, is God deaf, and dumb, and blind before all human petition? That God answers prayer, I bring the ten million facts of Christendom to prove. There has never paper

enough come out of the paper-mills to write the story. Has not many a mother prayed back her bad boy from the ends of the earth—from Canton, from Madras, from Constantinople—until he knelt beside her in the old homestead? Have there not been desperadoes and renegades who have looked into the door of a prayer-meeting to laugh and scoff at it, who have been drawn by the power of prayer, until they ran to the altar crying out for mercy? Did not the blacksmith in Lyons, New York, pray to God until there came a great awakening that shook the community?

In my parish, in Philadelphia, one night, at a meeting, I asked a young man to go into a room at the side of the church, and talk upon the theme of religion. He grew violently angry, and shook his fists at me. We resolved to pray for that young man, and we prayed that he might yield his soul to God. And when, next night, at the meeting, the side-door was flung open, he was the first to step in. Prayer had captured him. I had a classmate in college whose uncle, Dr John Scudder, of India, wrote to him, saying, "I will pray for you every day until such a day, and then I will give my attention to some other subject." The last day of these prayers, when they had all gathered up before the throne of God, my classmate surrendered his soul to Jesus. This is no second-hand story. I saw the letter, and I knew the young man.

But why should I go so far? I have had, in my own experience, and I have had in the history of my own family, the evidence that God answers prayer. My mother, with three Christian women, assembled week after week, and prayed for their children; they kept up that prayer-meeting of four persons year after year. The world knew nothing of it. God answered all those prayers. All the group came in; the eleven sons and daughters of my mother came in, myself the last.

Sickness came to my household—hopeless sickness, as it seemed to many. At three o'clock on Saturday afternoon, the invalid was carried to the steamer for Savannah. At eleven o'clock the next day, being Sunday, standing in this very place, a man of God prayed for the recovery of the sick one. At that time, eleven o'clock, she who had been prostrated three weeks, with some help, walked up on deck. The occurrence is as near to being miraculous as I can imagine. That she was hopelessly sick, people who sat up with her night after night, and are here, can testify, That the prayer for her recovery was offered in this

pulpit, thousands of people could testify. That at eleven o'clock on that Sunday morning she walked up on deck, as by a miraculous recovery, I call the passengers on the *San Jacinto*, commanded by Captain Atkins, December 16th, to testify. This is no second-hand story.

Prayer impotent! If I dared to think there was no force in prayer, methinks God, after all he has done for me and mine, would strike me dead. Prayer impotent! Why it is the mightiest force in the universe. Lightning has no speed, the Alpine avalanche has no power, compared with it.

Will you let the abstractions and the vagaries of a few skeptics, or a good many skeptics, stand beside the experience of General Havelock, who came out in front of the English army, lifted his hat, and called upon the Lord Almighty? or of George Washington, who at Valley Forge was found upon his knees in prayer? or of William Wilberforce, who went from the British Parliament to the closet of devotion? or of Latimer, who stood with his hands on fire, in martyrdom, praying for his persecutors? Was Washington weak? Was Havelock weak? Was Wilberforce weak? Was Latimer weak? Bring all the affairs of your store, of your soul, of your body, of your friends, of your church, before Him, and the great day of eternity will show you that the best investment you ever made were your prayers, and though you may have broken promises you made to God, God never broke his promises to you. Let God be true, though every man be found a liar.

I have another challenge to make: Professor Tyndall is on his way to this country. May he have a smooth passage and a safe arrival! If he will come for ten nights to our Friday evening prayer-meeting, we will pray for him especially, and if at the end of that time he has not become an old-fashioned, psalm-singing, prayer-offering Christian, I will either confess that there is nothing in prayer, or else that we had a very discouraging case to act on.

And now, in conclusion, I have to present you some checks, blank checks, on the bank of heaven, written in blood, and signed by the hand wounded on the cross. It is not safe for you to give a blank check with your name to it. You do not know what might be written above. But here is a blank check which God says I can give to you! it is signed by the handwriting of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you can fill it up with anything you want to "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find."

I do not say that your prayer will be answered in just the way you expect, but I do say it will be answered in the best way. Oh! will you test him? This is the outcome of all this subject.

I am glad the Christian world has been challenged. I think it will evoke ten thousand experiences that otherwise would not have been told. If I should ask the men and women in this audience who have found God a prayer-answering God to rise up, you would nearly all rise up. In time of darkness and trouble, as in time of light and prosperity, he answered you. I commend you to that God to whom your parents dedicated you in infancy. They believed so much in prayer, that their last word was a supplication for you. Having heard you in days of prosperity, he will not reject your last petition, when, in the darkened room, after they have wiped the dew of death from your brow, and the whole group of loved ones have kissed you good-bye, you have only strength enough left to pray, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

CROWN JEWELS.

"They shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—*Malachi* iii. 17.

FAR enough down in the mountains to make us dig, and deep enough in the sea to make us dive, are gems of exquisite beauty. The kings of the earth gather them together, and set them in the hilts of swords, in crowns, and vases, and carcanets. Queen Charlotte and Marie Antoinette boasted of these. Leo owned a pearl worth eighty thousand crowns. Philip of Spain bought a gem worth fifteen thousand ducats. The white topaz of Portugal had an untold value. The King of Persia bought a gem worth one million six hundred thousand livres. The diamond belonging to the Austrian coronet, lost in the battle of Granson, had a whole fortune in it. Spain, France, Britain, boast of their jewels, and on coronation day are proud of the crown set on the brow of the enthroned potentate. The mighty nations of the earth have all boasted of their costly gems, have guarded them with extreme vigilance, have rung them in the chime of their poets laureate, and have handed them down from age to age as an evidence of national wealth.

Well, the Lord Jesus Christ, our King, has been gathering up his treasures for a good while, and on the great coronation-day of the judgment he will, in the presence of the assembled universe, show that the good of all ages are his crown-jewels. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

I speak to you of the jewel-finding, the jewel-grinding, and the jewel-setting. It is a rare thing that a jewel is found on the surface of the earth. The heart of the mountains is cut out to find it. Boring, blasting, and huge-handed machinery, make the rock open its fist and drop the jewel. There are thousands of people who may be seen on the shores of Ceylon and Coromandel, watching the divers who go out to get pearls. At the firing of a gun, the boats are shoved off, and the divers go down forty or fifty feet into the water, find the shells containing the pearls, then rap on the side of the diving-bell as a signal that they are ready to return, and then the men at the top haul them swiftly to the surface.

It is a rare thing that you find gold on the surface ; it is as thoroughly hidden as the pearls are. The miner must dig, and blast, and sweat, before he comes to it. If you have seen the quartz-crusher of California, you know something of the toil of getting it. So the Lord's jewels are hidden. Once they were far down in the darkness, buried in trepasses and in sins. No human invention could reach them. No pearl was ever so far down in the water, no gold was ever so far down in the earth, but the grace of God came to the work. That is a miner, and it can blast the rock. That is a diver, and it can touch the bottom of the sea. The Gospel of Jesus Christ went on, crushing down through this pride, and that sin, and this prejudice, pounding, and breaking, and washing, and sifting, until one day the gold flashed in the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

I have been told that deeper the water the larger the pearl. I don't know how that is, but I do know that from the greatest depths of sin the Lord Jesus Christ sometimes gathers up his brightest jewels. Paul was a persecutor, Bunyan was a blasphemer. John Newton was a libertine, the Earl of Rochester was an infidel ; and yet the grace of God went plunging through the fathoms of their abomination, until it found them and brought them up to the light. Oh, there is no depth where that grace can not touch the bottom. All over the Dead Sea of sin covering the nations, God's diving-bells are busy ; all through the mountains of death, God's miners are blasting. Where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound.

The geologist tells you that the brightest diamond is only crystallized carbon, or, as I might call it, charcoal glorified ! and so it is with souls that were coal-black in the defilements of sin—by the power of God's grace they are made his jewels forever.

You have noticed the great difference between jewels. 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 carnelian 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 many 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 may 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.

History tells us that in the Middle-Ages the precious stones were symbols of the apostles. In those Middle Ages, for instance, the jasper was considered the symbol of St. Peter, the sapphire of St. Andrew, the emerald of St. John, the chalcedony of St. James, sardonyx of St. Philip. Those stones were not more different than the men whom they symbolized. While I would have you, as a Christian, polish your Christian grace to the very last degree of brightness, I would not have you complain that you are not like somebody else, or think it strange because chrysolite, and topaz, and amethyst, and emerald don't all shine alike. Be content to be one of God's jewels, although you may not have as much lustre as some one else. Concerning you it has been said, as well as concerning the most sparkling Christian character, "They shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels."

The jewel-grinding. That is the sawing and the splitting process by which the gem is taken from its rough state and

changed into any thing that the lapidary chooses. Sapphire, corundum, and topaz powder are used for grinding diamonds. The rose diamond is so flat that it would have no attraction at all, unless it passed through some such operation. Now God's jewels all go through that process. Affliction is the wheel and the sharp instrument that grinds the character into shape. You may think that conversion gives character to the soul. It does not. Conversion is only the digging out of the jewel; God afterwards shapes and fashions it by his providence. Christ sometimes allows his children to fall, but they fall forward, not backward. Chrysolite, to be cleared of its imperfections, must pass through careful burning. Oriental carnelian, zircon, and Brazillian topaz must be submitted to the fire before they get their lustre. Christian character, like black spots in an amethyst, must sometimes be cleared out by the flame; in other words, you must go through the furnace.

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 to be changed, and they came out of that sudden sickness strong men. So it is with many of those who are 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 swarthiness? It was by sweltering at the forge of affliction. Their battle axe was dull enough until it was sharpened on a grave stone.

Nearly all of God's jewels are crystallized tears. You ask me "Why is it that yonder man does not have trouble—he gets along without any misfortune." For the same reason that the lapidary does not put the delicate instrument upon a common pebble. It does seem as if God thought that some men were not worth a process of tribulation. The Dutch call diamonds that are not fit to be cloven *divel steene*—that is, devil stones.

There are those here who are almost ready for the kingdom ; one more turn of the wheel, one more shove of the harsh file, and they will be ready. God is testing in the presence of men and angels, whether you are paste diamonds or real diamonds. You know there is an artificial ruby, an artificial sapphire, an artificial emerald. Strauss, of Strasburgh, discovered that by taking silex, and potash, and borax, and red-lead, he could make a very good imitation of some jewels ; but before that, Satan found out that he could imitate the Lord's jewels. A composition of orthodox faith and of good works has made many a child of the devil look like a child of the Lord. Nevertheless, borax, potash, silex, and red-lead are not jewels.

There is a way in which the lapidary tells whether a diamond is genuine or not. He breathes on it, and if the breath linger there it is a false diamond ; if the breath immediately vanish, it is a real diamond. Then he has the grinding process afterward if the first fail. So you can tell God's jewel. If the breath of temptation comes on it, and soon vanishes, it is a real diamond ; if that breath lingers, and continues to blur it, it is a false diamond. But better than all is the grinding machine of affliction. If a soul can go through that and keep bright, it is one of God's jewels. Egyptian topaz, brought up from the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, shows the same inextinguishable color to-day, after it has been buried hundreds and hundreds of years. And so God's children come up out of the ruins of misfortune and disaster as bright as when they went down.

The jewel setting. 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. Amidst 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 candleabra, there will be the bonfire of the 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."

You know the lapidary arranges jewels according to their size and color. This one will do best for that place ; another will do best for another place. So it will be in heaven. I suppose that John and Peter will be just as different in heaven as when they were on earth. I suppose that if a gentle spirit were departing from earth, the soul of John would be the very one to come and take it up to glory. I suppose that if a martyr were torn of the rack, the soul of Paul would be the very one to fetch him to heaven. I suppose that if a wanderer of the street were dying penitent in a prison, the soul of Elizabeth Fry would be the very one to bring her up to the light.

If a lapidary has an especial gem whose color he wishes especially to set forth, he takes the minor gems—those of less value and beauty—garnets, rubies, and so on—and sets them around the great central wealth of beauty. And so it will be on the last day : Christ surrounded by the redeemed—the lesser jewels of earth surrounding the pearl, the Pearl of great price. Christ will look off upon the redeemed : upon the troubled who were comforted—upon the tempted who were delivered—upon the guilty who were pardoned, Methinks the sweetest song in heaven will be the chime of the jewels, as they praise God for the trials that sawed them and ground them for the kingdom. Who are these ? you ask. I answer, "These are they who came out of great tribulations, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb."

In the latter part of the last century, Messrs. Boemer and Bassange, the most celebrated jewellers of the world, resolved that they would fashion a diamond necklace such as the world never saw. They sent out their agents in all lands to gather up the most costly gems. They stopped not for any expense. In

the year 1782 the necklace was done; there were in it eight hundred diamonds, swinging around in nine rows, waving up to the throat, dropping over the chest and shoulders, pendent in crosses and crowns and lilies—swinging a very blaze of loops, festoons, and clusters. Oh! what a day it must have been when Louis XVI. presented that to the queen, and, in the presence of the Court, Marie Antoinette put on the necklace! But the Court could not pay for it, and there were robber hands that longed for it; and, before that diamond necklace had done its work, it had disgraced one countess, dishonored a cardinal, branded with a red-hot iron a favorite of the Court, and blackened a page of history, already infamous. Not so when my Lord gathers up his jewels. They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south. He will send out his messenger angels, and tell them to gather them up from all the land, and gather them up from all the sea. Golconda, and Ceylon, and Coromandel will send their best treasures; the whole universe will make contributions to it; and I think the brightest gems in the palace will be the gems that come up from earth. They will flash in swaying sceptre, and in gleaming crown, and in belt of imperial beauty, and in all the vases of eternity, “in the day when the Lord of hosts makes up his jewels.”

Oh! that God's diving-bells might this morning bring you up out of the depths of your sins, and that God's wheel might grind you for the kingdom, that you may at last be prepared for the great jewel-setting.

In Golconda, if a slave find a diamond of extraordinary value, he takes it up to the Government, and the Government gives him his liberty. If some of those who are this morning the slaves of sin, while they are seeking for God, would find this Pearl of great price, the hour of their emancipation would come, and the king would make proclamation from the throne, saying, “Go free! You have found the Pearl! Be one of my jewels!”

“THE CAROUSAL IN THE PALACE.”

‘In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.’—*Daniel* v. 30.

BIBLE pictures, like the works of the old masters, improve by age. Like Raphael's *Transfiguration*, or Da Vinci's *Last Supper*, they are worth more now than ever before.

Night was about to come down upon Babylon. The shadows of her two hundred and fifty towers began to lengthen. The Euphrates rolled on, touched by the fiery splendors of the setting sun; and gates of brass, burnished and glittering, opened and shut like doors of flame. The hanging gardens of Babylon, wet with the heavy dew, began to pour, from starlit flowers and dripping leaf, a fragrance for many miles around. The streets and squares were lighted for dance, and frolic, and promenade. The theatres and galleries of art invited the wealth and pomp, and grandeur of the city to rare entertainments. Scenes of riot and wassail were mingled in every street; and godless mirth, and outrageous excess, and splendid wickedness came to the king's palace, to do their mightiest deeds of darkness.

A royal feast to-night at the king's palace! Rushing up to the gates are chariots, upholstered with precious cloths from Dedan, and drawn by fire-eyed horses from Togarmah, that rear and neigh in the grasp of the charioteers; while a thousand lords dismount, and women, dressed in all the splendor of Syrian emerald and the colour-blending of agate, and the chasteness of coral, and the sombre glory of Tyrian purple and princely embroideries; brought from afar by camels across the desert, and by ships of Tarshish across the sea.

Open wide the gates, and let the guests come in. The chamberlains and cup-bearers are all ready. Hark to the rustle of the silks, and to the carol of the music! See the blaze of the jewels! Lift the banners. Fill the cups. Clap the cymbals. Blow the trumpets. Let the night go by with song, and dance, and ovation; and let that Babylonish tongue be palsied that will not say, “O King Belshazzar, live for ever!”

Ah! my friends, it was not any common banquet to which these great people came. All parts of the earth had sent their richest viands to that table. Brackets and chandeliers flashed their

light upon tankards of burnished gold. Fruits, ripe and luscious, in baskets of silver, entwined with leaves, plucked from royal conservatories. Vases, inlaid with emerald, and ridged with exquisite traceries, filled with nuts that were threshed from forests of distant lands. Wine brought from the royal vats, foaming in the decanters and bubbling in the chalices. Tufts of cassia and frankincense wafting their sweetness from wall and table. Georgeous banners unfolding in the breeze that came through the opened window, bewitched with the perfume of hanging gardens. Fountains rising up from inclosures of ivory, in jets of crystal, to fall in clattering rain of diamonds and pearls. Statues of mighty men looking down, from niches in the wall, upon crowns and shields brought from subdued empires. Idols of wonderful work, standing on pedestals of precious stones. Embroideries stooping about the windows, and wrapping pillars of cedar, and drifting on floor inlaid with ivory and agate. Music, mingling the thrum of harps, and the clash of cymbals, and the blast of trumpets in one wave of transport that went rippling along the wall, and breathing among the garlands, and pouring down the corridors, and thrilling the souls of a thousand banqueters. The signal is given and the lords and ladies, the mighty men and women of the land, come around the table. Pour out the wine. Let foam and bubble kiss the rim! Hoist every one his cup, and drink to the sentiment: "O King Belshazzar live for ever!" Bestarred head-band and carcanet of royal beauty gleam to the uplifted chalices, as again, and again, and again they are emptied. Away with care from the palace! Tear royal dignity to tatters! Pour out more wine! Give us more light, wilder music, sweeter perfume! Lord shouts to lord, captain ogles to captain. Goblets clash; decanters rattle. There come in the obscene song, and the drunken hiccough, and the slavering lip, and the guffaw of idiotic laughter, bursting from the lips of princes, flushed, reeling, bloodshot; while mingling with it all I hear "Huzza! huzza! for great Belshazzar!"

What is that on the plastering of the wall? Is it a *spirit*? Is it a *phantom*? Is it *God*? The music stops. The goblets fall from the nerveless grasp. There is a thrill. There is a start. There is a thousand-voiced shriek of horror. Let Daniel be brought in to read that writing. He comes in. He reads it: "*Weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.*"

Meanwhile the Assyrians, who for two years had been laying a siege to that city, took advantage of that carousal and came in.

I hear the feet of the conquerors on the palace-stairs. Massacre rushes in with a thousand gleaming knives. Death bursts upon the scene; and I shut the door of that banqueting-hall, for I do not want to look. There is nothing there but torn banners, and broken wreaths, and the slush of upset tankards, and the blood of murdered women, and the kicked and tumbled carcass of a dead king. For "in that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain."

I go on to learn some lessons from all this, as on former occasions I learned certain lessons. I learn that when God *writes anything on the wall a man had better read it as it is*. Daniel did not misinterpret or modify the handwriting on the wall. It is all foolishness to expect a minister of the Gospel to preach always things that the people like, or the people choose. Young men of Brooklyn, what shall I preach to you to-night? Shall I tell you of the dignity of human nature? Shall I tell you of the wonders that our race has accomplished? "Oh! no," you say; "tell me the message that came from God." I will. If there is any handwriting on the wall, it is this lesson: "*Repent! Accept of Christ, and be saved!*" I might talk of a great many other things; but that is the message, and so I declare it. Jesus never flattered those to whom he preached. He said to those who did wrong, and who were offensive in his sight, "Ye generation of vipers! ye whited sepulchres! how can ye escape the damnation of hell!" Paul the apostle preached before a man who was not ready to hear him preach. What subject did he take? Did he say, "Oh! you are a good man, a very fine man, a very noble man?" No; he preached of righteousness to a man who was unrighteous; of temperance to a man who was the victim of bad appetites; of the judgment to come to a man who was unfit for it. So we must always declare the message that happens to come to us. Daniel must read it as it is. A minister preached before James I. of England who was James VI. of Scotland. What subject did he take? The king was noted all over the world for being unsettled and wavering in his ideas. What did the minister preach about to this man, who was James I. of England and James VI. of Scotland? He took for his text James i., 6: "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." Hugh Latimer offended the king by a sermon he preached; and the king said, "Hugh Latimer come and apologize." "I will," said Hugh Latimer. So the day was appointed; and the king's

chapel was full of lords and dukes, and the mighty men and women of the country, for Hugh Latimer was to apologize. He began his sermon by saying, "Hugh Latimer, bethink thee! Thou art in the presence of thine earthly king, who can destroy thy body. But bethink thee, Hugh Latimer, that thou art in the presence of the King of heaven and earth, who can destroy both body and soul in hell-fire." Then he preached with appalling directness at the king's crimes.

Another lesson that comes to us to-night: there is a great difference between the opening of the banquet of sin and its close. 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 how 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!

Here is a man who begins to read French novels. "They are so charming," he says; "I will go out and see for myself whether all these things are so." He opens the gate of a sinful life. He goes in. A sinful sprite meets him with her wand.

She waves her wand, and it is all enchantment. Why it seems as if the angels of God had poured out phials of perfume in the atmosphere. As he walks on, he finds the hills becoming more radiant with foliage, and the ravines more resonant with the falling water. Oh! what a charming landscape he sees! But that sinful sprite, with her wand, meets him again; but now she reverses the wand, and all the enchantment is gone. The cup is full of poison. The fruit turns to ashes. All the leaves of the bower are forked tongues of hissing serpents. The flowing fountains fall back in a dead pool, stenchful with corruption. The luring songs become curses and screams of demoniac laughter. Lost spirits gather about him and feel for his heart, and beckon him on with "Hail brother! Hail, blasted spirit, hail!" He tries to get out. He tries to get out. He comes to the front door where he entered, and tries to push it back, but the door turns against him; and in the jar of that shutting door he hears these words, "*This night is Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.*"

Sin may open bright as the morning. It ends dark as the night!

I learn further from this subject that *Death sometimes breaks in upon a banquet.* Why did he not go down to the prisons in Babylon? There were people there that would like to have died. I suppose there were men and women in torture in that city who would have welcomed death. But he comes to the palace; and just at the time when the mirth is dashing to the tiptop pitch, *Death breaks in at the banquet.* We have often seen the same thing illustrated. Here is a young man just come from college. He is kind. He is loving. He is enthusiastic. He is eloquent. By one spring he may bound to heights toward which many men have been struggling for years. A profession opens before him. He is established in the law. His friends cheer him. Eminent men encourage him. After awhile you may see him standing in the American Senate, or moving a popular assemblage by his eloquence, as trees are moved in a whirlwind. Some night he retires early. A fever is on him. Delirium, like a reckless charioteer, seizes the reins of his intellect. Father and mother stand by and see the tides of his life going out to the great ocean. The banquet is coming to an end. The lights of thought and mirth, and eloquence are being extinguished. The garlands are snatched from the brow. The vision is gone. *Death at the banquet!*

Good-night, my young friends! may you have rosy sleep, guarded by Him who never slumbers! May you awake in the morning strong and well! But oh! art thou a depiser of God? Is this thy last night on earth? Shouldest thou be awakened in the night by something, thou knowest not what, and there be shadows floating in the room, and a handwriting on the wall, and you feel that your last hour is come, and there be a fainting at the heart, and a tremor in the limb, and a catching of the breath—then thy doom would be but an echo of the words of the text: “*In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.*”

Hear the invitation of the Gospel! There may be some one in this house to whom I shall never speak again, and therefore let it be in the words of the Gospel, and not in my own, with which I close: “Ho, every one that thirsteth! Come ye to the waters. And let him that hath no money come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.” “Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Oh! that my Lord Jesus would now make himself so attractive to your souls that you can not resist him: and that, if you have never prayed before, or have not prayed since those days when you knelt down at your mother’s knee, then that to-night you might pray, saying:

“Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid’st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

But if you can not think of so long a prayer as that, I will give you a shorter prayer that you can say: “God be merciful to me, a sinner!” Or, if you can not think of so long a prayer as that, I will give you a still shorter one that you may utter: “Lord, save me, or I perish!”

RIDDLES TO BE SOLVED.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

THE Bible is the most forceful and pungent of books. While it has the sweetness of a mother's hush for human trouble, it has all the keenness of a cimeter, and the crushing power of a lightning-bolt. It portrays with more than a painter's power, at one stroke picturing a heavenly throne and a judgment conflagration. The strings of this great harp are fingered by all the splendors of the future, now sounding with the crackle of consuming worlds, now thrilling with the joy of the everlasting emancipated. It tells how one forbidden tree in the Garden blasted the earth with sickness and death; and how another tree, though leafless and bare, yet, planted on Calvary, shall yield a fruit which shall more than antidote the poison of the other. It tells how the red-ripe clusters of God's wrath were brought to the wine-press, and Jesus trod them out; and how, at last, all the golden chalices of heaven shall glow with the wine of that awful vintage. It dazzles the eye with an Ezekiel's vision of wheel, and wing, and fire, and whirlwind; and stoops down so low that it can put its lips to the ear of a dying child, and say, "Come up higher."

And yet Paul, in my text, takes the responsibility of saying that it is only an indistinct mirror, and that its mission shall be suspended. I think there may be one Bible in heaven, fastened to the throne. Just as now, in a museum, we have a lamp exhumed from Herculaneum or Nineveh, and we look at it with great interest, and say, "How poor a light it must have given, compared with our modern lamps!" So I think that this Bible, which was a lamp to our feet in this world, may lie near the throne of God, exciting our interest to all eternity by the contrast between its comparatively feeble light and the illumination of heaven. The Bible, now, is the scaffolding to the rising temple, but when the building is done there will be no use for the scaffolding.

The idea I shall develope to-day is, that in this world our knowledge is comparatively dim and unsatisfactory, but never-

E

We saw the same thing, on a larger scale, illustrated at the last war in this country. Our whole nation had been sitting at a national banquet—North, South, East, and West. What grain was there, but we grew it on our hills. What invention was there, but our rivers must turn the new wheel, and rattle the strange shuttle. What warm furs, but our traders must bring them from the Arctic. What fish, but our nets must sweep them for the markets. What music, but it must sing in our halls. What eloquence, but it must speak in our Senates. Ho! to the national banquet, reaching from mountain to mountain, and from sea to sea! To prepare that banquet, the sheep-folds and the aviaries of the country sent their best treasures. The orchards piled up on the table their sweetest fruits. The presses burst out with new wines. To sit at that table, came the yeomanry of New Hampshire, and the lumber-men of Maine, and the tanned Carolinian from the rice-swamps, and the Western emigrant from the pines of Oregon, and we were all brothers—brothers at a banquet. Suddenly the feast ended. What meant those mounds thrown up at Chickahominy, Shiloh, Atlanta, Gettysburg, South Mountain? What meant those golden grain-fields, turned into a pasturing-ground for cavalry horses? What meant the corn-fields gullied with the wheels of the heavy supply-train? Why those rivers of tears—those lakes of blood? God was angry! Justice must come. A hand-writing on the wall! The nation has been weighed and found wanting. Darkness! Darkness! Woe to the North! Woe to the South! Woe to the East! Woe to the West! DEATH AT THE BANQUET!

I have also to learn from the subject that the destruction of the vicious, and of those who despise God, *will be very sudden*. The wave of mirth had dashed to the highest point when that Assyrian army broke through. It was unexpected. Suddenly, almost always, comes the doom of those who despise God, and defy the laws of men. How was it at the Deluge? Do you suppose it came through a long north-east storm, so that people for days before were sure it was coming? No; I suppose the morning was bright; that calmness brooded on the waters; that beauty sat enthroned on the hills; when *suddenly* the heavens burst, and the mountains sank like anchors into the sea that dashed clear over the Andes and the Himalayas.

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 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.

Skilled sportsmen do not like to shoot a bird standing on a sprig near by. If they are skilled, they pride themselves on taking it on the wing; and they wait till it starts. Death is an old sportsman; and he loves to take men flying under the very sun. He loves to take them on the wing.

Are there any here to-night who are unprepared for the eternal world? Are there any here who have been living without God, and without hope? Let me say to you that you had better accept of the Lord Jesus Christ, lest suddenly your last chance be gone. The lungs will cease to breathe; the heart will stop. The time will come when you shall go no more to the office, or to the store, or to the shop. Nothing will be left but Death, and Judgment, and Eternity. Oh! flee to God this night! If there be one in this presence who has wandered far away from Christ, though he may not have heard the call of the Gospel for many a year, I invite him now to come and be saved. Flee from thy sin! Flee to the stronghold of the Gospel! Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

theless is introductory to grander and more complete vision. This is eminently true in regard to our view of God. We hear so much about God that we conclude that we understand him: He is represented as having the tenderness of a father, the firmness of a judge, the pomp of a king, and the love of a mother. We hear about him, talk about him, write about him. We lisp his name in infancy, and it trembles on the tongue of the dying octogenarian. We think that we know very much about him. Take the attribute of *mercy*. Do we understand it? The Bible blossoms all over with that word—*MERCY*. It speaks again and again of the *tender* mercies of God; of the *sure* mercies; of the *great* mercies; of the mercy that *endureth forever*; of the *multitude* of his mercies. And yet I know that the views we have of this great Being are most indefinite, one-sided, and incomplete. When, at death, the gates shall fly open, and we shall look directly upon him, how new and surprising! We see upon canvas a picture of the morning. We study the cloud in the sky, the dew upon the grass, and the husbandman on the way to the field. Beautiful picture of the morning! But we rise at day-break, and go up on a hill to see for ourselves that which was represented to us. While we look, the mountains are transfigured. The burnished gates of heaven swing open and shut, to let pass a host of fiery splendors. The clouds are all abloom, and hang pendent from arbors of alabaster and amethyst. The waters make pathway of inlaid pearl for the light to walk upon; and there is morning on the sea. The crags uncover their scarred visage; and there is morning among the mountains. Now you go home, and how tame your picture of the morning seems in contrast! Greater than that shall be the contrast between this Scriptural view of God and that which we shall have when standing face to face. This is a *picture* of the morning: that will be the morning itself.

Again: my text is true of the Saviour's *excellency*. 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 prefiguration. 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 amidst 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, to run our fingers along the scars of ancient sufferings; to say, "This is my Jesus! He gave himself to 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!"

The idea of the text is just as true when applied to *God's providence*. 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 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!”

Here is a man who cannot get on in the world. He always seems to buy at the wrong time and to sell at the worst disadvantage. He tries this enterprise, and fails; that business, and is disappointed. The man next door to him has a lucrative trade but *he* lacks customers. A new prospect opens. His income is increased. But that year his family are sick; and the profits are expended in trying to cure the ailments. He gets a discouraged look. Becomes faithless as to success. Begins to expect disasters. Others wait for something to turn up; he waits for it to turn down. Others with only half as much education and character, get on twice as well. He sometimes guesses as to what it all means. He says, “Perhaps riches would spoil me. Perhaps poverty is necessary to keep me humble. Perhaps I might, if things were otherwise, be tempted into dissipations.” But there is no complete solution of the mystery. He sees through a glass darkly, and must wait for a higher unfolding. Will there be an explanation? Yes; God will take that man in the light of the throne, and say, “Child immortal, hear the explanation! You remember the failing of that great enterprise—your misfortune in 1837; your trial in 1857; your disaster in 1867. This is the explanation.” And you will answer, “It is all right!”

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

illuminated 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 Paul that he was hump-backed; 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 hog-carriers will sing it, those who were once the off-scouring 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.

Again: the thought of the text is just, when applied to the enjoyments of the righteous in heaven. I think we have but little idea of the number of the righteous in heaven. Infidels says, "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 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 the hundred and forty and four thousand 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 anything 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."

We are told that heaven is a place of happiness ; but what do we know about happiness? Happiness in this world is only a half-fledged thing ; a flowery path, with a serpent hissing across it ; a broken pitcher, from which the water has dropped before we could drink it ; a thrill of exhilaration, followed by disastrous reactions. To help us understand the joy of heaven, the Bible takes us to a river. We stand on the grassy bank. We see the waters flow on with ceaseless wave. But the filth of the cities are emptied into it ; and the banks are torn ; and unhealthy exhalations spring up from it ; and we fail to get an idea of the River of Life in heaven.

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, never more in this world to look upon her ? Ah ! there was a skeleton at the feast ; and tears mingled with our laughter on the 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 bell 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.

Many of our friends have entered upon that joy. A few days ago they sat with us studying these Gospel themes ; but they only saw through a glass, darkly—now revelation hath come. Your time will also come. God will not leave you floundering in the darkness. You stand wonder-struck and amazed. You feel as if all the loveliness of life were dashed out. You stand gazing into the open chasm of the grave. Wait a little. In the presence of your departed, and of Him who carries them in his bosom, you shall soon stand face to face. Oh, that our last hour may kindle up with this promised joy ! May we be able to say, like the Christian not long ago, departing, " Though a pilgrim, walking through the valley, the mountain tops are gleaming from peak to peak ! " or, like my dear friend and brother, Alfred Cookman, who recently took his flight to the throne of God, saying in his last moment that which has already gone into Christian classics, "*I am sweeping through the pearly gate, washed in the blood of the Lamb !*"

THE GRAIN RIPE.

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”—*John iv. 35.*

IF you have been in the country districts with the last few days, you have seen that the grain is ripening, and in about two weeks it will be gathered. But the harvest spoken of in the text was not one of wheat, or rye, or oats, but a harvest of men. How shall you estimate the value of a man? You say he is worth so many dollars, or that he has achieved such and such positions; yet there are men at the top of the ladder who ought to be at the bottom, and men at the bottom of the ladder who ought to be at the top. The only safe way to estimate a man is by *his soul*.

We all expect to live forever. We know that death cannot kill us. Having once launched this ship, it sails on forever. Other craft may be sucked into a whirlpool, or shivered on the rocks, but this life within us shall weather the storms, and drop no anchor, and ten million years from now shall shake out signals passing others on the high seas of eternity. Look out how you shove that man off the sidewalk. You say, “He is only a beggar.” He is worth all the pearls of the sea; worth all the gold of the mountains; worth the solid earth; worth sun, and moon, and stars; worth more than the material universe.

Take all the paper that has ever come from the papermills, and place it in sheets side by side, and get all those fleet with the pen to come and make figures upon that paper, yet in ten thousand years there will not be expressed one half of the value of the soul. Fold your arms, and you have with those folded arms covered an estate vaster than everything that can be represented of material treasure, for the reason that you cover the soul. Suppose I should have deeds to California and Australia—good warranty deeds, signed, sealed, and delivered. When I die, how much would I own of it? How much of Philadelphia property does Stephen Girard now own? How much of New York property does John Jacob Astor own now? How much of Boston property does Lawrence own now? How much

money have you in your pocket to-night? Fifty dollars? Ten dollars? One penny? Then you are richer in estate than the millionaire who died last night. How do you suppose I feel standing here, when I know that I am surrounded by thousands of souls, each one of which is worth more than a universe? Here I stand on an isthmus between two eternities, the ocean of the everlastingly saved dashing against one side of the platform, and the ocean of the everlastingly lost dashing on the other side.

Understand, therefore, the value of the harvest spoken of in the text. I feel that I must tighten my girdle, and sharpen the sickle, and be more careful how I swing the weapon and bind the sheaf, lest a single stalk of the grain be lost.

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 rose-wood, 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 some 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 swarths 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. Every thing 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! Men may clench their fists and gnash their teeth against it, but it goes on from conquest unto conquest. It takes John the lamb, and Paul the lion. It is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, unto salvation.

But alas! if the pulpit be the only place where preaching is done! We stand here two hours each Sabbath, and plead for the world's redemption. But there are one hundred and sixty-eight hours in every week. Can we expect the two hours we spend here on Sunday to overcome the one hundred and sixty-six remaining hours of the week? No! You need all to go to preaching in your stores, and in your offices, and in your shops. The command comes to all these business-men, as it came of old: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

We have to learn that one of the most powerful ways of preaching the Gospel is to sing it. No power can stand before Christian song. The time was when "Mear" and "Antioch," and "Windham" and "Dundee" stood with the strength of an archangel to marshal the troops of God; but for the last thirty years our churches have been going back in sacred music. We have been under a servitude to the artistic tastes of the world. In most of our churches, four persons are delegated to do this service. With a whip of scorpions let the nuisance be scourged from the house of God; and since no one can repent for us, and no one can die for us, let us sing out our sorrow over sin, and our triumphs over the last enemy, and our anticipation of glory. When you can die for me, and open the gate of heaven to my departing soul, then I will let you do my singing. Oh! sing, ye who are bought by love divine, and who are on the way to grandeur immortal—sing! While I stand here and argue about the things of eternity you may argue back; and you may be more skilful in your argument *against* religion than I am skilful in my argument *for* religion; but who could resist the holy influence when last Sunday night, this audience, like the voice of many waters, lifted its unanimous song:

"Show pity, Lord! O Lord, forgive;
Let a repenting rebel live.
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?"

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 "oh" 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 shower. 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.

But you ask, "When shall we go to work at this great harvest?" The text says *now*. The fields are already white to the harvest. The world stands at the door of the Church ready to be invited in. What are you doing, O, Christian men? What are you waiting for? You will be dead very soon. I see Christian men and women going into glory. This soul goes up to the gate of heaven surrounded by a dozen souls whom he has brought with him. Yonder comes a tract distributor, followed by fifty souls. Yonder comes a Sabbath-school teacher, with ten souls following him into the kingdom. I see your soul coming up alone. Why do you come up alone? Have you not brought one soul to Christ? Have you lived thirty or forty years and done nothing? What will God say? What will the angels say? You had better crouch down in one corner of heaven and never show yourself.

There are some who are not only idle in the work of saving souls, but who are afraid of anything like *excitement*; and if the Lord brings a multitude into the kingdom, they think the ship

of the Church is going to be swamped, and they cry, "Out with the life boats!" *We* have no such fear. Oh, that the Lord God would let us now bind some sheaves for the heavenly garner!

But before you are willing to listen to my words, perhaps you would like to know who I am that I dare thus to speak to you. I will tell you who I am. I am a sinner, saved, as I hope, by the infinite grace of God. For eighteen years of my life I offered up no believing prayer. From a Christian family altar I flew toward perdition. With my back toward the cross and my face toward death, I bounded away toward darkness and woe, and said, "Who is the Lord that I should serve him?"

"Against the God that rules the sky
I fought with hands uplifted high,
Despised the offers of his grace;
Too proud to seek a hiding place."

But there came a memorable Sabbath night. I retired, thoughtless as ever. About one o'clock in the morning, I awoke. Something said: "Are you prepared for eternity? You had better fly." I raised up in bed. I tried to strike a light. I could not get a light. I went down stairs, and asked of one who knew well how to tell me, "What must I do to be saved?" For days, and weeks, and months I wandered in the darkness—too stubborn to submit, too hard-hearted to repent; but at last the day dawned, and at the torn and bleeding feet of the Son of God I put down the awful burden of my guilt.

"O happy day! happy day!
When Jesus washed my sins away."

From the presence of this cross, on which all my hopes depend, I come out to invite you all to the pardon and peace of the Gospel.

"But says a man out yonder, "I am too bad to come. I am all astray. For thirty years I have been going down hill. I am scalded and blistered with sin. I have gone through the whole catalogue. I can not come as I am. I must first get things fixed up!" Ah! my friends you will never get things fixed up until you come to the cross. You will get worse and worse. Not the righteous: *sinner*s Jesus came to call. You see that I take the worst cases first. If there are those in this audience who are *almost* right in their habits and heart, I do not talk to them just now. I come to the sickest cases with this Gospel medicine. Though you be wounded in the head, and wounded in the heart, and wounded in the hands, and wounded in the

feet, and have the gangrene of eternal death upon you, the Great Physician, with one drop of this elixir of eternal life, shall cure your soul. Though you be soaked with sinful indulgences, and your feet have gone in evil places, and you have companioned with harlots, one touch of God's almighty grace shall cleanse and deliver your soul. I do not say you will have no more struggles; but your struggles will be different. Now, when you fight against your evil habits, all the powers of darkness are against you, and you are alone, and you fight weaker and weaker until you fall, and they trample upon your soul; but in the other case you go into the battle with God on your side, and you shall fight stronger and stronger against your evil propensities, until you get the final victory. All hail to the man who fights with God on his side! Oh, ye long dead in sin! to-night I rattle the gates of your sepulchre, and put the resurrection trumpet of the Gospel to my lips, and cry: "Come forth from your graves! Come forth from your evil ways! Come forth into the life and liberty of the sons of God!"

But there are persons who have been incarcerated so long that when the door is opened, and they are told to come out, they prefer the prison. They have become so used to it. And so, to-night, though the door of your dungeon opens, you prefer to stay where you are. Yet who knows but that God may bring you to-night to repentance. I do not know for what purpose you came in here. It may have been for a very evil purpose. In Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, a revival-meeting was being held, and many souls were being saved; and among them a member of one of the worst club-houses in the city. The leader of the club-room went to the prayer-meeting to make a disturbance and to get his old comrade to come out. Stopping at the door of the prayer-meeting, a song arrested his attention, and he went in, and before the meeting closed knelt at the altar, asking for prayers; and he became a captive of heavenly grace. Another member of the same club, on another night, started with the same idea of disturbing and breaking up the meeting, and decoying away his old comrades who had been converted. But the grace of God also seized him at the door, and his soul was saved. There may be some such wanderers in this house of God to-night. Oh, that there may be something in the prayer, or in the sermon, or in the Scripture lesson, or in the song, to save their souls! My word is to the most wicked, to the most besotted, to the most hardened, to the hopeless, the abandoned, the distressed.

advantages will plead against them. God will say, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; . . . 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!*

I make one more plea in their presence. 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 men once to die, and after that the judgment."

To-night the gates of life are open. I plead by the bloody sweat in Gethsemane! by the death-agonies of Golgotha! by Pilate's hall and Joseph's sepulchre! by the value of life, and the solemnity of death, and the grandeurs of eternity! by cross and crown! by death-beds and gates of glory! by earth and heaven! by kingdoms of light and realms of darkness! by harps and chains! by anthems and wailing! by the trumpet of the archangel that shall wake the dead, and by the throne of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb! I plead with you to flee from the wrath to come.

Oh! to have come so near to heaven, and have missed it! to catch a glimpse of the pinnacles of the golden city, and yet never have entered it! to see the mighty procession of the glorified, and yet not have joined it! to hear the shout of our ransomed kindred on coronation-day, and yet not have come into their companionship!

O my Lord God! save the people! We want to be saved. We are going into life. We put down our sins. Angels of God, come hither! Good news for you! Tell it in heaven that we repent. If there be souls in heaven that long for our redemption, let them know it now. The towers of glory strike their silvery chime; and there is joy in heaven over wanderers brought home to God. Glory to God for such a hope! for such a pardon! for such a heaven! for such a Christ!

THE ANTHEM OF HEAVEN.

“And they sung a new song.”—*Rev. v. 9.*

NEARLY all the cities of Europe and America have conservatories of music, and associations, whose object it is, by voice and instrument, to advance the art of sweet sounds. On Thursday nights, Exeter Hall, of London, used to resound with the music of first-class performers, who gave their services gratuitously to the masses, who came in with free tickets and huzzaed at the entertainment. At Berlin, at eleven o'clock daily, the military band, with sixty or one hundred instruments, discourses at the royal opera-house for the people. On Easter Sunday, in Dresden, the boom of cannon, and the ringing of bells, bring multitudes to the churches to listen to the organ peals, and the exciting sounds of trumpet and drum. When the great fair-day of Leipsic comes, the bands of music, from far and near, gather in the street, and bewilder the ear with incessant playing of flute, and horn, violin, and bassoon. At Dusseldorf, once a year, the lovers of music assemble, and for three or four days wait upon the great singing festivals, and shout at the close of the choruses; and greet the successful competitors as the prizes are distributed—cups and vases of silver and gold. All our American cities at times resound with orchestra and oratorio. Those who can sing well or play skilfully upon instruments are greeted with vociferation, and garlanded by excited admirers.

There are many whose most ecstatic delight is to be found in melodies; and all the splendour of celestial gates, and all the lusciousness of twelve manner of fruits, and all the rush of floods from under the throne of God, would not make a heaven for them if there were no great and transporting harmonies. Passing along our streets in the hour of worship, you hear the voice of sacred melody, although you do not enter the building. And passing along the street of heaven, we hear, from the temple of God and the Lamb, the breaking forth of the magnificent jubilate. We may not yet enter in among the favoured throng, but God will not deny us the pleasure of standing awhile on the outside to hear. John listened to it, a great while ago, and “*they sang a new song.*”

Let none aspire to that blessed place who have no love for this exercise, for although it is many ages since the thrones were set and the harps were strung, there has been no cessation in the song, excepting once for about thirty minutes; and, judging from the glorious things now transpiring in God's world, and the ever-accumulating triumphs of the Messiah, that was the last half-hour, that heaven will ever be silent.

I. Mark the fact that this was a *new* song.

Sometimes I have in church been floated away upon some great choral, in which all our people seemed to mingle their voices; and I have, in the glow of my emotions said, Surely this is music good enough for heaven. Indeed I do not believe that "Luther's Hymn," or "Coronation," or "Old Hundred," or "Mount Pisgah," would sound ill if spoken by sainted lips, or thrummed from seraphic harps. There are many of our fathers and mothers in glory who would be slow to shut heaven's gate against these old-time harmonies. But this, we are told, is a *new* song. Some of our greatest anthems and chorals are compositions from other tunes—the sweetest parts of them gathered up into the harmony; and I have sometimes thought that this "new song" may be partly made up of sweet strains of earthly music mingled in eternal choral. But it will, after all, be a *new* song. This I do know, that in sweetness and power it will be something that ear never heard. All the skill of the oldest harpers of heaven will be flung into it. All the love of God's heart will ring from it. In its cadences the floods will clap their hands, and it will drop with the sunlight of everlasting day, and breathe with odors from the blossoms of the tree of life. "A *new* song"—just made for heaven.

Many earthly songs are written by composers just for the purpose of making a tune; and the land is flooded with note-books in which really valuable tunes are the exception. But once in a while a man is wrought up by some great spectacle, or moved by some terrible agony, or transported by some exquisite gladness, and he sits down to write a tune, or a hymn, in which every note or every word is a spark dropped from the forge of his own burning emotions. So Mendelssohn wrote, and so Beethoven, and so Charles Wesley. Cowper, depressed with misfortunes until almost insane, resolved on suicide, and asked the cab-driver to take him to a certain place where he expected to destroy his own life. The cab-driver lost his way, and Cowper

began to think of his sin, and went back to his home, and sat down and wrote,

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

“Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.”

Mozart composed his own requiem, and said to his daughter Emily, “Play that;” and while Emily was playing the requiem, Mozart’s soul went up on the wave of his own music into glory. Emily looked around, and her father was dead.

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 eternity, 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 new 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. Transfixed, lost, enchanted, dumb, we could not bear it—the faintest note of the new song. Yet, while I speak, heaven’s cathedral quakes under it, and seas of glory bear it from beach to beach, and ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, sing it—“*the new song.*”

II. Further: It is a *commemorative* song. We are distinctly told that it makes reference to past deliverances. Oh! how much they have to sing about. They sing of the darkness

through which on earth they passed, and it is a *night* song. That one was killed in the seven days' fight before Richmond, and with him it is a *battle* song. That one was starved to death at Belle Isle, and with him it is a *prison* song. That was a Christian sailor-boy that had his back broken on the ship's halyards, and with him it is a *sailor's* song. That one was burned at Smithfield, and with him it is a *fire* song. Oh! how they will sing of floods waded, of fires endured, of persecution suffered, of grace extended! Song of hail! song of sword! song of hot lead! song of axe! As, when the organ-pipes peal out some great harmony, there comes occasionally the sound of the tremulante, weeping through the cadences, adding exquisiteness to the performance, so amidst the stupendous acclaim of the heavenly worshippers shall come tremulous remembrances of past endurance, adding a sweetness and glory to the triumphal strain. So the glorified mother will sing of the cradle that death robbed; and the enthroned spirit from the alms-house will sing of a lifetime of want. God may wipe away all tears, but not the memory of the grief that started them!

III. Further: It will be an *accompanied* song. Some have a great prejudice against musical instruments; and even among those who like them, there is an idea that they are unauthorised. I cannot share in such prejudices, when I remember how God has honoured 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."

Yes, the song is to be accompanied. 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 incli-

nations, 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 !

IV. Further : it will be an *anticipative* song. Why, my friends, heaven has hardly begun yet. If you had taken the opening piece of music this evening for the whole service, you would not have made so great a mistake as to suppose that heaven is fully inaugurated. Festal choruses on earth last only a short while. The famous musical convocation at Dusseldorf ended with the fourth day. Our holidays last only eight or ten days ; but heaven, although singing for so many years, has only just begun "the new song." If the glorified inhabitants recount past deliverances, they will also enkindle at glories to come. If, at six o'clock, when this church opened, you had taken the few people that were scattered through it as the main audience, you would not have made so great a mistake as if you supposed that the present population of heaven are to be its chief citizenship. Although ten million times ten million, the inhabitants are only a handful compared with the future populations. All China is yet to be saved. All India is yet to be saved. All Borneo is yet to be saved. All Switzerland is yet to be saved. All Italy is yet to be saved. All Spain is yet to be saved. All Russia is yet to be saved. All France is yet to be saved. All England is yet to be saved. All America is yet to be saved. All the world is yet to be saved. After that there may be other worlds to conquer. I do not know but that every star that glitters to-night is an inhabited world, and that from all those spheres a mighty host are to march into our heaven. There will be no gate to keep them out. We will not want to keep them out. God will not want to keep them out.

I have sometimes thought that all the millions of earth that go into glory are but a very small colony compared with the influx from the whole universe. God could build a heaven large enough not only for the universe, but for ten thousand universes. I do not know just how it will be, but this I know, that heaven is to be constantly augmented ; that the song of glory is rising higher and higher, and the procession is being multiplied. If heaven sang when Abel went up—the first soul that ever left earth for glory—how must it sing now when souls go up in flocks from all Christendom, hour by hour, and moment by moment.

Our happy gatherings on earth are chilled by the thought that

soon we must separate. Thanksgiving and Christmas days come, and the rail trains flying thither are crowded. Glad reunions take place. We have a time of great enjoyment. But soon it is "good-bye" in the hall, "good-bye" at the door, "good-bye" on the street, "good-bye" at the rail train, "good-bye" at the steamboat wharf. We meet to-night in church. It is good to be here. But soon it will be nine o'clock. The doxology will be sung, the benediction pronounced, the lights will lower, and the audience will be gone. But there are no separations, no good-byes in heaven. At the door of the house of many mansions, no "good-bye." At the pearly gate, no "good-bye." The song will be more pleasant, because we are always to sing it. Mightier song as our other friends come in: Mightier song as other garlands are set on the brow of Jesus. Mightier song as Christ's glories unfold.

If the first day we enter heaven we sing well, the next day we sing better. Song anticipative of more light, of more love, of more triumphs. Always something new to hear, something new to see. Many good people suppose that we shall see heaven the first day we get there. No! You can not see London in two weeks. You can not see Rome in six weeks. You can not see Venice in a month. You can not see the great city of the New Jerusalem in a day. No; it will take all eternity to see heaven, to count the towers, to examine the trophies, to gaze upon the thrones; to see the hierarchies. Ages on ages roll, and yet heaven is new! The streets new! The Temple new! The joy new! The song new.

I stayed a week at Niagara Falls, hoping thoroughly to understand and appreciate it. But on the last day they seemed newer and more incomprehensible than on the first day. Gazing on the infinite rush of celestial splendors, where the oceans of delight meet, and pour themselves into the great heart of God—how soon will we exhaust the song? *Never! Never!*

The old preachers, in describing the sorrows of the lost, used to lift up their hands and shout, "The wrath to come!" "The wrath to come! To-day I lift up my hands, and looking towards the great future, cry, "The joy to come!" "The joy to come!"

Oh, to wander on the banks of the bright river, and yet to feel that a little farther down we shall find still brighter floods entering into it! Oh, to stand a thousand years, listening to the enchanting music of heaven, and then to find out that the harpers are only tuning their harps.

V. Finally, I remark, that it will be a *unanimous* song. There will, no doubt, be some to lead, but all will be expected to join. It will be grand *congregational* singing. All the sweet voices of the redeemed! Grand music will it be, when that new song arises. Luther sings it. Charles Wesley sings it. Lowell Mason sings it. Our voices now may be harsh and our ears uncultivated, but, our throats cleared at last, and our capacities enlarged, you and I will not be ashamed to utter our voices as loudly as any of them.

Those nations that have always been distinguished for their capacity in song will lift up their voices in that melody. Those who have had much opportunity to hear the Germans sing will know what idea I mean to give, when I say that the great German nation will pour their deep, full voices into the new song. Every body knows the natural gift of the African for singing. No singing on this continent like that of the colored churches in the south. Everybody going to Richmond or to Charleston wants to hear the Africans sing. But when not only Ethiopia, but all that continent of darkness, lifts up its hands, and all Africa pours her great volume of voice into the new song—that will be music for you. Added to this are all the sixteen thousand millions of children that are estimated to have gone into glory, and the host of young and old that hereafter shall people the earth and inhabit the stars.

Oh! the new song! Gather it all up! Multiply it with every sweetness! Pour into it 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!*

God grant that at last we may all sing it. But if we do not sing the praise of Christ on earth, we will never sing it in heaven. Be sure that your hearts are now attuned for the heavenly worship. On this Christmas-eve, I foresee the time when the whole earth shall be brought in accord with the Gospel—“Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good-will to men!”

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 joy there! Jesus here and

Jesus there! Trumpet to trumpet! Organ to organ!
Hallelujah to hallelujah!

“Until the day break and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether!”

THE KING'S BUSINESS.

“The king's business required haste.”—1 *Samuel* xxi. 8.

AS the depths of the sea are said to correspond with the heights of the mountains, so the depths of David's faults seemed to be as great as the height of his excellencies. However, our business with David this morning is not to criticise him, but to catch from his lips a profitable suggestion. He appears before Abimelech without sword, or food, or usual attendants; and gives as his reason for this unseemly appearance, that he was on urgent imperial business, and had no time to properly accoutre or equip himself. “*The king's business required haste.*”

My friends, we are all intrusted with some part of the King's business; and our great need is to have our speed accelerated. God seems to be a being of infinite leisure. He sometimes takes twenty-five hundred years to do one thing; though in six days he put on the world the final touches that made it inhabitable for man. Geologists tell us that uncounted ages passed between the laying of the corner-stone of the earth and its final completion. God took this unimaginable reach of time for work that he could have done in three months. He has plenty of time for every thing. With an eternity behind him and an eternity before him, there is no flurry, no precipitation, no haste. But, so far as *we* are concerned, what we do must be done in briefest time and in quickest way. *The King's business requires haste.*

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 "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.*

Like other kings, he has his army and navy. Fighting on his side are the hurricanes of the great deep—as in the breaking up of the Spanish Armada; the volcanoes of the earth—as in the burial of infamous Herculaneum; the fire—as when Sodom was deluged with conflagration; the rocks—as when they crashed their terrors about the crucifixion. The Psalmist counted the flaming artillery of heaven, as it came rushing down the sky, and cried, "The chariots of God are twenty-thousand." Elijah's servants caught a glimpse of them among the mountains—a cavalcade of flame; and the horses had necks of fire, and flaunting manes of fire, and eyes of fire, and nostrils of fire, and feet of fire; and they were driven by reins of fire, by horsemen of fire. The cherubim on his side; the seraphim on his side; the archangels on their side. *King Omnipotent.*

Our King is wrapped up in the welfare of his subjects. The Sultan of Turkey had a rule that, when riding out on horseback, any of his subjects might approach him, and state their wrongs and sufferings; and the people pressed so close up to the stirrups that it was sometimes impossible for the Sultan to proceed. But we have a more merciful King. We do not have to wait for public occasions. Any hour of the day or night, without introduction, we may press into his palace, tell our wants, and secure his help. Going before other kings, we must have a court dress, rightly cut and rightly adorned; but beggars may come before this King in their rags; and the prodigal, filthy from the swines' herd, is immediately ushered in. A pardoning King! A condescending King! A merciful King! *O Jesus, live forever!*

It is on the business of such a King that we are all sent. It

is the business of bringing the world to God. Compared with it, all other business is a holiday and a sport. If a man go into some financial operation by which he loses a hundred thousand dollars, and his house and estate drop out of his possession, and his failure upset the next man, and his the next and the next, until the whole land quails under the panic, the disaster is insignificant compared with the ruin of that man who loses his own soul, and by example takes down another and another, until heaven, and earth, and hell feel the effects of the eternal defalcation.

William the Conqueror pulled down forty-six of the churches of God in order that he might enlarge his park for game. So men sweep away spiritual things, that they may advance their amusement and worldly gains. But the great day of eternity will reveal the fact that the most important of all business on earth and in heaven is *the King's business*.

The King's business is not only important, but immediate. If we do not attend to it quickly, we will never attend to it at all. Here is a Christian man expecting some day to be thoroughly consecrated. After a while he will become diligent in searching the Scriptures and in prayer. Meanwhile the day of grace is going. It will soon be gone. Out with your Bibles and begin to read. Down on your knees, and begin to pray. For the business of the store, of the shop, and of the field, you are neglecting God's business. Your soul is losing its best, perhaps its last, chance. Up, man! *The King's business requires haste.*

In the day of the world's doom, what will become of that man who had a thousand Sabbaths, and ten thousand opportunities for usefulness, and a million chances of being made better, but comes to the gate of eternity a pauper in Christian experience, and with but one sheaf, though all his life he was walking in golden harvest-fields. You have postponed your higher life, until God tells me you will not come to it if you postpone it any longer. *The King's business requires haste.*

There is a great work of comfort to be done. If it is not done speedily, it never will be done. Yonder is a heart breaking. Now is the time to say the healing word. Go next week with your balsam, and it will not touch the case. A man yonder came under your influence, and you might have captured him for God. You will never have another chance at him. Tomorrow another man will be under your influence. You will

have but one opportunity of saving him. It may be at ten o'clock, at twelve o'clock, or at three o'clock; miss that, and you miss it forever. He will be lost, when you might have saved him. Do not say, "Wait until the next time." Next time will never come. Be prompt and immediate. *The King's business requires haste.*

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. Mean-while, 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 can not 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.*

I pray God that my text may be brought home with special power to those in this audience who have never yet sought Christ. As many of the causes that come up in court are adjourned, sometimes because the witnesses are not ready, and sometimes because the plaintiff is not ready, and sometimes because the defendant is not ready, and sometimes because the judge is not ready, until the bill of costs is ruinous and hard to pay—so there are men and women who have adjourned the cause of the soul's

salvation from youth to middle life, and adjourned it from health to sickness, and adjourned it from prosperity to adversity, until *death eternal will be the bill of costs to pay*. Oh, procrastinating, deliberating, halting soul! let me tell you *the King's business requires haste!* Before you attend to it, your mental faculties may fail. Your intellect works admirable now; but in this country the ratio of intellects that are giving out is larger every year. Something in the climate urges men on to such extremes, and the pressure on active men is so great, that before they are aware of it the brain softens, or, more suddenly, the mind drops dead from its throne.

Pythagoras, studying philosophy, was so anxious to keep awake, and improve all his time, that with a string he tied the hair of his head to a beam above, so that the very moment he nodded in sleep, the pain would awake him. So there are men now who have much morbid and unhealthy notions about how much work it is necessary to do, that they never take any rest. They can not stand the stress. The most brilliant are in the most peril. What if the mind, that God has given you for high and holy uses, should perish before you have found Christ! A heavy fall, an accidental stroke on the head, a sudden affliction, for which you are not ready, may kill your intellect, and so your last chance for heaven pass away, though you should live on for many a year.

In the great populations that occupy the asylums of the country, or are carefully guarded in private dwellings, are hundreds of men and women who expected some day to be Christians. They had abundance of time, they thought; but mental disorders dropped under them before they had decided the matter, and although now they are irresponsible, and shall not be brought to account for any thing they do under this mental eclipse, yet they shall at last be called into judgment for the long years of mental health when they neglected the Gospel. What will become of them I leave you to judge. While your reason acts, put it to the grandest use—that of weighing time against eternity, and heaven against hell. While your will acts, put it to its highest use in coming to God. While your imagination acts, bring before you the realities of another world. Look out how you carry the magnificent torch of your intellect, lest God put it out in darkness forever. *The King's business requires haste.*

I would have you regard the text, because you may have come

near to the end of God's patience. There can be no doubt that some men, in youth or mid-life or old age, so aggravatingly reject the Gospel that God lets them alone. They slam the door of their soul in God's face, and tell him to be gone; then, when they call after him to come back, he will not come. Eternal affront has been given; and in that book where no erasures are made, the man's name is put down among the doomed. Cross the line that divides God's mercy from his wrath—step but one inch over, and you are as badly off as if you went ten thousand furlongs. Before the iron bolt fastens the door against you, you had better go in. Before the last boat sails for heaven, you had better get on board. Hasten thee out of thy sin into the pardon of God. *The King's business requires haste.*

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 traveling. No explorer has been ahead, and come back to tell us 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, by 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. *The King's business requires haste.*

I stand here with the feeling that if some of you do not start for heaven this morning, you will not start at all. Oh, that God

would arouse you! Sin has benumbed your soul. The insensibility that you feel is like the drowsiness that comes over the Swiss traveler before he freezes to death. Awake, before you die!

There is a sea-flower called the "opelet," which spreads abroad its petals beautifully; but it is very poisonous; and the little fish that touches it struggles but a moment and then dies, and other petals of the same flower, floating in the water, wrap around the fish and pull it down into the deadly bosom of the flower. That is what is the matter with some of you. Sin is an attractive flower, and it glows and waves beautifully before the soul; but no sooner do you touch it than you are poisoned and must be swallowed up, unless we may sweep you away and sweep you up in this net of the Gospel.

Don't you see that the tides of worldliness are setting against you? Don't you see that there are influences at work to destroy you forever? Haste ye to Jesus, the only refuge. The next moment may be worth to thee an eternity. *The King's business requires haste.*

Hear this music that drops straight from heaven: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Are thou weary? Art thou languid? Art thou sore distressed?
Come to me, saith One—and coming, be at rest.
If I ask him to receive me, will he say me nay?
Not till earth, and not till heaven pass away.
Finding, following, keeping, struggling, is he sure to bless?
Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs, answer—*Yes!*"

FEEDING SPARROWS.

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?”—*Luke xii. 6.*

YOU see the Bible will not be limited in the choice of symbols. There is hardly a beast, or bird, or insect, which has not been called to illustrate some divine truth. The ox's patience, the ant's industry, the spider's skill, the hind's sure-footedness, the eagle's speed, the dove's gentleness, and even the sparrow's meanness and insignificance. In Oriental countries, none but the poorest people buy the sparrow and eat it—so very little meat is there on the bones, and so very poor is it, what there is of it. The comfortable population would not think of touching it, any more than you would think of eating a bat or a lampercel. Now, says Jesus, if God takes care of such a poor bird that is not worth a cent, won't he care for you, *an immortal!*

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 can not 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 can not appreciate the truth that, when a sparrow is hungry, God stoops down and opens its mouth and puts the seed in. We are struck with the idea that God fills the universe with his presence; but can not 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 every thing. 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.

I have thought—coming now, as we do, from our summer wanderings, and with every variety of experience, some of us having passed through appalling dangers—it might be profitable if we studied this great doctrine of a particular providence. Understand that God does not sit upon an indifferent and unsympathetic throne, but that he sits down beside you to-day, and stands beside me to-day, and no affair of our lives is so insignificant but that it is of importance to God.

In the first place, God chooses for us *our occupation*. I am amazed to see how many people there are dissatisfied with the work they have to do. I think three-fourths wish they were in some other occupation, and they spend a great deal of time in regretting that they got in the wrong trade or profession. I want to tell you that God put into operation all the influences which led you to that particular choice. Many of you are not in the business that you expected to be in. You started for the ministry, and learned merchandise; you started for the law, and you are a physician; you preferred agriculture, and you became a mechanic; you thought one way, God thought another. But you ought not to sit down and mourn over the past. You are to remember that God—a beneficent God, a kind God, a loving God—arranged all these circumstances by which you were made what you are.

Hugh Miller says, "I will be a stone-mason;" God says, "You will be a geologist." David goes out to tend his father's sheep; God calls him to govern a nation. Saul goes out to hunt his father's asses, and before he gets back finds the crown of mighty dominion. How much happier would we be if we were content with the places God gave us. God saw your temperament, and all the circumstances by which you were surrounded, and I believe nine-tenths of you are in the very work you are best fitted for.

I hear a great racket in my watch, and I find that the hands and the wheels and the spring are getting out of their places. I send it down to the jewelers, and say, "Overhaul that watch, and teach the wheels and the spring and the hands to mind their own business."

You know a man having a large estate. He gathers his working-hands in the morning, and says to one, "You go and trim that vine;" to another, "You go and weed those flowers;" and to another, "You plough that tough glebe;" and each one goes to his particular work. The owner of the estate points the man to what he knows he can do best; and so it is with the Lord. He calls us up and points us to that field for which we are best fitted. So that the first lesson of this morning, coming from this subject, is, "*Stay cheerfully where God puts you.*" I remark further, that God has arranged the place of *our dwelling*. What particular city or town, street or house you shall live in, seems to be a mere matter of accident. You go out to hunt for a house, and you happen to pass up a certain street, and happen to see a sign; and you select that house. Was it all happening so? Oh, no! God guided you in every step. He foresaw the future. He knew all your circumstances, and He selected just that one house as better for you than any one of the ten thousand habitations in the city. Our house, however humble the roof, and however lowly the portals, is as near God's heart as an Alhambra or a Kremlin. Prove it, you say: Proverbs iii. 33: "He blesseth the *habitation* of the just."

I remark, further, that God arranges all our *friendships*. You were driven to the wall. You found a man just at that crisis who sympathized with you and helped you. You say, "How lucky I was." There was no luck about it. God sent that friend, just as certain as He sent the ravens to feed Elijah, or the angel to strengthen Christ. Your domestic friends, your business friends, your Christian friends, God sent them to bless you; and if any of them have proved traitorous, it is only to bring out the value of those who remain. If some die, it is only that they may stand on the outpost of heaven to greet you at your coming.

You always will have friends—warm-hearted friends—magnanimous friends; and when sickness comes to your dwelling, there will be watchers; when trouble comes to your heart, there will be sympathizers; when death comes, there will be gentle fingers to close the eyes and fold the hands, and consoling lips to tell of a resurrection. Oh! we are compassed by a body-guard of friends. Every man, if he have behaved himself well, is surrounded by three circles of friends—those on the outer circle wishing him well; those in the next circle willing to help him; while close up to his heart are a few who would die for him.

God pity the wretch who has not any friends. He has not behaved well!

I remark, again, that God puts down the limit to *our temporal prosperity*. The world of finance seems to have no God in it. You can not 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 the peat dug up from some New England marsh the millionaire builds his fortune. The poor man thinks it is *chance* that keeps him down. The rich man thinks that 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 there 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.

The French Government thought itself rich in having so many palaces—"St. Cloud," and the "Tuileries," and "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.*

Like other kings, he has his army and navy. Fighting on his side are the hurricanes of the great deep—as in the breaking up of the Spanish Armada; the volcanoes of the earth—as in the burial of infamous Herculaneum; the fire—as when Sodom was deluged with conflagration; the rocks—as when they crashed their terrors about the crucifixion. The Psalmist counted the flaming artillery of heaven, as it came rushing down the sky, and cried, "The chariots of God are twenty-thousand." Elijah's servants caught a glimpse of them among the mountains—a cavalcade of flame; and the horses had necks of fire, and flaunting manes of fire, and eyes of fire, and nostrils of fire, and feet of fire; and they were driven by reins of fire, by horsemen of fire. The cherubim on his side; the seraphim on his side; the arch-angels on their side. *King Omnipotent*

Our King is wrapped up in the welfare of his subjects. The Sultan of Turkey had a rule that, when riding out on horseback, any of his subjects might approach him, and state their wrongs and sufferings; and the people pressed so close up to the stirrups that it was sometimes impossible for the Sultan to proceed. But we have a more merciful King. We do not have to wait for public occasions. Any hour of the day or night, without introduction, we may press into his palace, tell our wants, and secure his help. Going before other kings, we must have a court dress, rightly cut and rightly adorned; but beggars may come before this King in their rags; and the prodigal, filthy from the swines' herd, is immediately ushered in. A pardoning King! A condescending King! A merciful King! *O Jesus, live forever!*

It is on the business of such a King that we are all sent. It

is the business of bringing the world to God. Compared with it, all other business is a holiday and a sport. If a man go into some financial operation by which he loses a hundred thousand dollars, and his house and estate drop out of his possession, and his failure upset the next man, and his the next and the next, until the whole land quails under the panic, the disaster is insignificant compared with the ruin of that man who loses his own soul, and by example takes down another and another, until heaven, and earth, and hell feel the effects of the eternal defalcation.

William the Conqueror pulled down forty-six of the churches of God in order that he might enlarge his park for game. So men sweep away spiritual things, that they may advance their amusement and worldly gains. But the great day of eternity will reveal the fact that the most important of all business on earth and in heaven is *the King's business*.

The King's business is not only important, but immediate. If we do not attend to it quickly, we will never attend to it at all. Here is a Christian man expecting some day to be thoroughly consecrated. After a while he will become diligent in searching the Scriptures and in prayer. Meanwhile the day of grace is going. It will soon be gone. Out with your Bibles and begin to read. Down on your knees, and begin to pray. For the business of the store, of the shop, and of the field, you are neglecting God's business. Your soul is losing its best, perhaps its last, chance. Up, man! *The King's business requires haste.*

In the day of the world's doom, what will become of that man who had a thousand Sabbaths, and ten thousand opportunities for usefulness, and a million chances of being made better, but comes to the gate of eternity a pauper in Christian experience, and with but one sheaf, though all his life he was walking in golden harvest-fields. You have postponed your higher life, until God tells me you will not come to it if you postpone it any longer. *The King's business requires haste.*

There is a great work of comfort to be done. If it is not done speedily, it never will be done. Yonder is a heart breaking. Now is the time to say the healing word. Go next week with your balsam, and it will not touch the case. A man yonder came under your influence, and you might have captured him for God. You will never have another chance at him. Tomorrow another man will be under your influence. You will

have but one opportunity of saving him. It may be at ten o'clock, at twelve o'clock, or at three o'clock; miss that, and you miss it forever. He will be lost, when you might have saved him. Do not say, "Wait until the next time." Next time will never come. Be prompt and immediate. *The King's business requires haste.*

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. Mean-while, 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 can not 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.*

I pray God that my text may be brought home with special power to those in this audience who have never yet sought Christ. As many of the causes that come up in court are adjourned, sometimes because the witnesses are not ready, and sometimes because the plaintiff is not ready, and sometimes because the defendant is not ready, and sometimes because the judge is not ready, until the bill of costs is ruinous and hard to pay—so there are men and women who have adjourned the cause of the soul's

salvation from youth to middle life, and adjourned it from health to sickness, and adjourned it from prosperity to adversity, until *death eternal will be the bill of costs to pay*. Oh, procrastinating, deliberating, halting soul! let me tell you *the King's business requires haste!* Before you attend to it, your mental faculties may fail. Your intellect works admirable now; but in this country the ratio of intellects that are giving out is larger every year. Something in the climate urges men on to such extremes, and the pressure on active men is so great, that before they are aware of it the brain softens, or, more suddenly, the mind drops dead from its throne.

Pythagoras, studying philosophy, was so anxious to keep awake, and improve all his time, that with a string he tied the hair of his head to a beam above, so that the very moment he nodded in sleep, the pain would awake him. So there are men now who have much morbid and unhealthy notions about how much work it is necessary to do, that they never take any rest. They can not stand the stress. The most brilliant are in the most peril. What if the mind, that God has given you for high and holy uses, should perish before you have found Christ! A heavy fall, an accidental stroke on the head, a sudden affliction, for which you are not ready, may kill your intellect, and so your last chance for heaven pass away, though you should live on for many a year.

In the great populations that occupy the asylums of the country, or are carefully guarded in private dwellings, are hundreds of men and women who expected some day to be Christians. They had abundance of time, they thought; but mental disorders dropped under them before they had decided the matter, and although now they are irresponsible, and shall not be brought to account for any thing they do under this mental eclipse, yet they shall at last be called into judgment for the long years of mental health when they neglected the Gospel. What will become of them I leave you to judge. While your reason acts, put it to the grandest use—that of weighing time against eternity, and heaven against hell. While your will acts, put it to its highest use in coming to God. While your imagination acts, bring before you the realities of another world. Look out how you carry the magnificent torch of your intellect, lest God put it out in darkness forever. *The King's business requires haste.*

I would have you regard the text, because you may have come

near to the end of God's patience. There can be no doubt that some men, in youth or mid-life or old age, so aggravatingly reject the Gospel that God lets them alone. They slam the door of their soul in God's face, and tell him to be gone; then, when they call after him to come back, he will not come. Eternal affront has been given; and in that book where no erasures are made, the man's name is put down among the doomed. Cross the line that divides God's mercy from his wrath—step but one inch over, and you are as badly off as if you went ten thousand furlongs. Before the iron bolt fastens the door against you, you had better go in. Before the last boat sails for heaven, you had better get on board. Hasten thee out of thy sin into the pardon of God. *The King's business requires haste.*

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 traveling. No explorer has been ahead, and come back to tell us 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, by 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. *The King's business requires haste.*

I stand here with the feeling that if some of you do not start for heaven this morning, you will not start at all. Oh, that God

would arouse you! Sin has benumbed your soul. The insensibility that you feel is like the drowsiness that comes over the Swiss traveler before he freezes to death. Awake, before you die!

There is a sea-flower called the "opelet," which spreads abroad its petals beautifully; but it is very poisonous; and the little fish that touches it struggles but a moment and then dies, and other petals of the same flower, floating in the water, wrap around the fish and pull it down into the deadly bosom of the flower. That is what is the matter with some of you. Sin is an attractive flower, and it glows and waves beautifully before the soul; but no sooner do you touch it than you are poisoned and must be swallowed up, unless we may sweep you away and sweep you up in this net of the Gospel.

Don't you see that the tides of worldliness are setting against you? Don't you see that there are influences at work to destroy you forever? Haste ye to Jesus, the only refuge. The next moment may be worth to thee an eternity. *The King's business requires haste.*

Hear this music that drops straight from heaven: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Are thou weary? Art thou languid? Art thou sore distressed?
 Come to me, saith One—and coming, be at rest.
 If I ask him to receive me, will he say me nay?
 Not till earth, and not till heaven pass away.
 Finding, following, keeping, struggling, is he sure to bless?
 Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs, answer—*Yes!*"

You know a man having a large estate. He gathers his working-hands in the morning, and says to one, "You go and trim that vine;" to another, "You go and weed those flowers;" and to another, "You plough that tough glebe;" and each one goes to his particular work. The owner of the estate points the man to what he knows he can do best; and so it is with the Lord. He calls us up and points us to that field for which we are best fitted. So that the first lesson of this morning, coming from this subject, is, "*Stay cheerfully where God puts you.*" I remark further, that God has arranged the place of *our dwelling*. What particular city or town, street or house you shall live in, seems to be a mere matter of accident. You go out to hunt for a house, and you happen to pass up a certain street, and happen to see a sign; and you select that house. Was it all happening so? Oh, no! God guided you in every step. He foresaw the future. He knew all your circumstances, and He selected just that one house as better for you than any one of the ten thousand habitations in the city. Our house, however humble the roof, and however lowly the portals, is as near God's heart as an Alhambra or a Kremlin. Prove it, you say: Proverbs iii. 33: "He blesseth the *habitation* of the just."

I remark, further, that God arranges all our *friendships*. You were driven to the wall. You found a man just at that crisis who sympathized with you and helped you. You say, "How lucky I was." There was no luck about it. God sent that friend, just as certain as He sent the ravens to feed Elijah, or the angel to strengthen Christ. Your domestic friends, your business friends, your Christian friends, God sent them to bless you; and if any of them have proved traitorous, it is only to bring out the value of those who remain. If some die, it is only that they may stand on the outpost of heaven to greet you at your coming.

You always will have friends—warm-hearted friends—magnanimous friends; and when sickness comes to your dwelling, there will be watchers; when trouble comes to your heart, there will be sympathizers; when death comes, there will be gentle fingers to close the eyes and fold the hands, and consoling lips to tell of a resurrection. Oh! we are compassed by a body-guard of friends. Every man, if he have behaved himself well, is surrounded by three circles of friends—those on the outer circle wishing him well; those in the next circle willing to help him; while close up to his heart are a few who would die for him.

God pity the wretch who has not any friends. He has not behaved well!

I remark, again, that God puts down the limit to *our temporal prosperity*. The world of finance seems to have no God in it. You can not 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 the peat dug up from some New England marsh the millionaire builds his fortune. The poor man thinks it is *chance* that keeps him down. The rich man thinks that 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 there 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.

There are two things, says an old proverb, you ought not to fret about: first, things that you *can* help; and, second, things which you *can not* help. If you can help them, why do you not apply the remedy? if you can not help them, you might as well surrender first as last. My dear brethren, do not sit any longer moping about your ledger. Do not sit looking so despondingly upon your stock of unsaleable goods. Do you think that God is going to allow you, a Christian man, to do business alone? God is the controlling partner in every firm; and although your debtors may abscond, although your securities may fail, although your store may burn, God will, out of an infinity of results, choose for you the very best results. Do not have any idea that you can overstep the limit that God has laid down for your prosperity. You will never get one inch beyond it. God has decided how much property you can stand honorably, and employ usefully, and control righteously; and at the end of 1872, you will have just so many dollars and cents, just so much wardrobe, just so much furniture, just so many bonds and mortgages, and nothing more. I will give you one hundred dollars for every penny beyond that. God has looked over your life. He knows what is best for you, and he is going to bless you in time, and bless you for eternity, and he will do it in the best way.

Your little child says, "Papa, I wish you would let me have that knife," "No," you will say, "it is a sharp knife, and you will cut yourself." He says, "I must have it." "But you can not have it," you reply. He gets angry and red in the face, and says he *will* have it; but you say he shall not have it. Are you not kind in keeping it from him? So God treats his children. I say, "I wish, heavenly Father, to get that." God says, "No, my child." I say, "I must have it." God says, "You can not have it." I get angry, and say, "I will have it." God says, "You shall not have it;" and I do not get it. Is he not kind, and loving, and the best of Fathers? Do you tell me that there is no rule or regulation in these things? Tell that to the men who believe in no God and no Bible. Tell it not to me.

A man of large business concludes to go out of his stores leaving much of his investments, and he says to his sons, "Now I am going to leave this business in your hands. Perhaps, I may come back in a little while, and perhaps not. While I am gone, you will please to look after affairs." After awhile

the father comes back and finds every thing at loose ends, and the whole business seems to be going wrong. He says, "I am going to take possession of this business. You know I never fully surrendered it, and henceforth consider yourselves subordinates." Is he not right in doing it? He saves the business. The Lord seems to let us go on in our life, guided by our own skill, and we make miserable work of it. God comes down to our shop or store, and says, "Things are going wrong; I come to take charge; I am Master, and know what is best, and I proclaim my authority." We are merely subordinates.

It is like a boy at school with a long sum that he can not do. He has been working at it for hours, making figures here, and rubbing out figures there, until it is all mixed up, and the teacher, looking over the boy's shoulder, knows that he can not get out of it, and cleaning the slate, says, "Begin again." Just so God does to us. Our affairs get into an inextricable entanglement, and he rubs every thing out, and says, "*Begin again!*" Is he not wise and loving in so doing?

I think the trouble is, that there is so large a difference between the Divine and human estimate as to what is enough. I have heard of people striving for that which is enough, but I never heard of any one who had enough. What God calls *enough* for man, man calls *too little*. What man calls *enough*, God says is *too much*.

The difference between a poor man and a rich man is only a difference in banks. The rich man puts his money in the Nassau Bank, or the Long Island Bank, or some other bank of that character, while the poor man comes up and makes his investments in the bank of Him who owns all the quarries, all the mines, all the gold, all the earth, all the heaven. Do you think a man can fail when he is backed up like that?

I want to bring this truth close up to the hearts of those people in this audience who have to calculate rigid economy, who are perplexed how they will make the old garment hold out a little longer, with whom the great question is not which is the best investment or the most lucrative security, but how shall I make the two ends meet? To such people I bring the condolence of this Christian truth.

You may have seen a map on which is described, with red ink, the travels of the children of Israel through the desert to

the Promised Land. You see how they took this and that direction, crossed the river and went through the sea. Do you know God has made a map of your life, with paths leading up to this bitterness and that success, through this river and across that sea ; but, blessed be God, the path always comes out at the Promised Land. Mark that ! *Mark that !*

I remark again, that all those things that *seem to be but accidents* in our life are under the divine supervision. We sometimes seem to be going helmless and anchorless. You say, "If I had some other trade ; if I had not gone there this summer ; if I had lived in some other house." You have no right to say that. Every tear you wept, every step you have taken, every burden you have carried, is under divine inspection, and that event which startled your whole household with horror, God met with perfect placidity, because he knew it was for your good. It was part of a great plan projected long ago. In eternity, when you come to reckon up your mercies, you will point to that affliction as one of your greatest blessings. God has a strange way with us. Joseph found his way to the prime minister's chair by being pushed into a pit ; and to many a Christian *down* is *up*. The wheat must be flailed ; the quarry must be blasted ; the diamond must be ground ; the Christian must be afflicted ; and that single event, which you supposed stood entirely alone, was a connecting link between two great chains, one chain reaching through all eternity past, and the other chain reaching through all eternity future—so small an event fastening two eternities together.

A missionary, coming from India to the United States, stopped at St. Helena while the vessel was taking water. He had his little child with him. They walked along by an embankment, and a rock at that moment became loosened, and falling, instantly killed the child. Was it an accident ? Was it a surprise to God ? Had he allowed his servant, after a life of consecration, to come to such a trial without any divine meaning ? Not such is my God. There are no accidents in the divine mind, though they may seem so to us. God is good, and by every single incident of our life, whether it be adverse or otherwise, before earth and heaven God will demonstrate his mercy.

I hear a man say, "That idea belittles God. You bring him down to such little things." Ah ! I have a more thorough appreciation of God in little things than I have in great things.

The mother does not wait until the child has mashed its foot or broken its arm before she administers sympathy. The child comes in with the least bruise, and the mother kisses it. God does not wait for some tremendous crisis in our life, but comes down to us in our most insignificant trials, and throws over us the arms of his mercy.

Going up among the White Mountains some years ago, I thought of that passage in the Bible that speaks of God as weighing mountains in a balance. As I looked at those great mountains, I thought, can it be possible that God can put these great mountains in scales? It was an idea too great for me to grasp; but when I saw a blue-bell down by the mule's foot, on my way up Mount Washington, then I understood the kindness and goodness of God. It is not so much of God in great things, I can understand, but of God in little things.

Here is a man who says, "That doctrine can not 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 materials, 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 this summer. 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." Ask these aged men in this church if it is not so. 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."

So, my dear people, this morning take home the comfort of this subject. Be content with such things as you have. From every grass-blade under your feet learn the lesson of divine care, and never let the smallest bird flit across your path without thinking of the truth that "five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God." Blessed be his glorious name forever. Amen.

LATE IN THE AFTERNOON.

“Abide with us; for it is toward evening.”—*Luke xxiv. 29.*

TWO villagers, having concluded their errand in Jerusalem, have started out at the city gate, and are on their way to Emmaus, the place of their residence. They go with a sad heart. Jesus, who had been their admiration and their joy, had been basely massacred and entombed. As with sad face and broken heart they pass on their way, a stranger accosts them. They tell him their anxieties and bitterness of soul. He, in turn, talks to them, mightily expounding the Scriptures. He throws over them the fascination of intelligent conversation. They forget the time, and notice not the objects they pass, and, before they are aware, have come up in front of their house. They pause before the entrance, and attempt to persuade the stranger to tarry with them. They press upon him their hospitalities. Night is coming on, and he may meet a prowling wild beast, or be obliged to lie unsheltered from the dew. He can not go much farther now. Why not stop there, and continue their pleasant conversation? They take him by the arm, and they insist upon his coming in, addressing him in the words, “Abide with us; for it is toward evening.”

The candles are lighted. The table is spread. Pleasant socialities are enkindled. They rejoice in the presence of the stranger guest. He asks a blessing upon the bread they eat, and he hands a piece of it to each. Suddenly, and with overwhelming power, the thought flashes upon the astounded people—*It is the Lord!* and as they sit in breathless wonder, looking upon the resurrected body of Jesus, he vanished. The interview ended. He was gone.

With many of us it is a bright sunshiny day of prosperity. There is not a cloud in the sky. Not a leaf rustling in the forest. No chill in the air. But we can not expect all this to last. He is not an intelligent man who expects perpetual daylight of joy. The sun will, after awhile, near the horizon. The shadows will lengthen. While I speak, many of us stand in the very hour described in the text, for it is *toward evening*.

I. The request of the text is appropriate for some before me,

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 can not lift quite so much as once. They can not walk quite so fast. They can not read quite so well without spectacles. They can not so easily recover from a cough, or any 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 axemen 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 we feel that the day is far spent, we need most of all to supplicate the strong and beneficent Jesus, in the prayer of the villagers, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening."

II. The request of the text is an appropriate exclamation for all those who are approaching the gloomy hour of temptation. There is nothing easier than to be good-natured when every thing pleases, or to be humble when there is nothing to oppose us, or forgiving when we have not been assailed, or honest when we have no inducement to fraud. But you have felt the grapple of some temptation, your nature at some time quaked and groaned under the infernal force. You felt that the devil was

after you: You saw your Christian graces retreating. You feared that you would fail in the awful wrestle with sin, and be thrown into the dust. The gloom thickened. The first indications of the night were seen. In all the trembling of your soul; in all the infernal suggestions of Satan; in all the surging up of tumultuous passions and excitements, you felt, with awful emphasis, that it was *toward evening*. In the tempted hour you need to ask Jesus to abide with you. He can beat back the monster that would devour. He can unhorse the sin that would ride you down. He can sharpen the battle-axe with which you split the head of helmeted abomination. Who helped Paul shake the brazen-gated heart of Felix? Who acted like a good sailor when all the crew howled in the Mediterranean shipwreck? Who helped the martyrs to be firm, when one word of recantation would have unfastened the withes of the stake and put out the kindling fire? When the night of the soul came on, and all the denizens of darkness came riding up on the winds of perdition—who gave strength to the soul? Who gave calmness to the heart? Who broke the spell of infernal enchantment? HE, who heard the request of the villagers: “*Abide with us; for it is toward evening.*”

One of the forts of France was attacked, and the outworks were taken before night. The besieging army lay down, thinking that there was but little to do in the morning, and that the soldiery in the fort could be easily made to surrender. But during the night, through a back stairs, they escaped into the country. In the morning the besieging army sprang upon the battlements, but found that their prey was gone. So, when we are assaulted in temptation, there is always some secret stair by which we may get off. God will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able, but with every temptation will bring a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it.

III. The prayer of the text is appropriate for all *who are anticipating sorrow*. The greatest folly that ever grew on this planet is the tendency to borrow trouble; but there are times when approaching sorrow is so evident, that we need to be making especial preparation for its coming.

One of your children has lately become a favourite. 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,

You know a man having a large estate. He gathers his working-hands in the morning, and says to one, "You go and trim that vine;" to another, "You go and weed those flowers;" and to another, "You plough that tough glebe;" and each one goes to his particular work. The owner of the estate points the man to what he knows he can do best; and so it is with the Lord. He calls us up and points us to that field for which we are best fitted. So that the first lesson of this morning, coming from this subject, is, "*Stay cheerfully where God puts you.*" I remark further, that God has arranged the place of *our dwelling*. What particular city or town, street or house you shall live in, seems to be a mere matter of accident. You go out to hunt for a house, and you happen to pass up a certain street, and happen to see a sign; and you select that house. Was it all happening so? Oh, no! God guided you in every step. He foresaw the future. He knew all your circumstances, and He selected just that one house as better for you than any one of the ten thousand habitations in the city. Our house, however humble the roof, and however lowly the portals, is as near God's heart as an Alhambra or a Kremlin. Prove it, you say: Proverbs iii. 33: "He blesseth the *habitation* of the just."

I remark, further, that God arranges all our *friendships*. You were driven to the wall. You found a man just at that crisis who sympathized with you and helped you. You say, "How lucky I was." There was no luck about it. God sent that friend, just as certain as He sent the ravens to feed Elijah, or the angel to strengthen Christ. Your domestic friends, your business friends, your Christian friends, God sent them to bless you; and if any of them have proved traitorous, it is only to bring out the value of those who remain. If some die, it is only that they may stand on the outpost of heaven to greet you at your coming.

You always will have friends—warm-hearted friends—magnanimous friends; and when sickness comes to your dwelling, there will be watchers; when trouble comes to your heart, there will be sympathizers; when death comes, there will be gentle fingers to close the eyes and fold the hands, and consoling lips to tell of a resurrection. Oh! we are compassed by a body-guard of friends. Every man, if he have behaved himself well, is surrounded by three circles of friends—those on the outer circle wishing him well; those in the next circle willing to help him; while close up to his heart are a few who would die for him.

God pity the wretch who has not any friends. He has not behaved well!

I remark, again, that God puts down the limit to *our temporal prosperity*. The world of finance seems to have no God in it. You can not 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 the peat dug up from some New England marsh the millionaire builds his fortune. The poor man thinks it is *chance* that keeps him down. The rich man thinks that 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 there 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.

There are two things, says an old proverb, you ought not to fret about: first, things that you *can* help; and, second, things which you *can not* help. If you can help them, why do you not apply the remedy? if you can not help them, you might as well surrender first as last. My dear brethren, do not sit any longer moping about your ledger. Do not sit looking so despondingly upon your stock of unsaleable goods. Do you think that God is going to allow you, a Christian man, to do business alone? God is the controlling partner in every firm; and although your debtors may abscond, although your securities may fail, although your store may burn, God will, out of an infinity of results, choose for you the very best results. Do not have any idea that you can overstep the limit that God has laid down for your prosperity. You will never get one inch beyond it. God has decided how much property you can stand honorably, and employ usefully, and control righteously; and at the end of 1872, you will have just so many dollars and cents, just so much wardrobe, just so much furniture, just so many bonds and mortgages, and nothing more. I will give you one hundred dollars for every penny beyond that. God has looked over your life. He knows what is best for you, and he is going to bless you in time, and bless you for eternity, and he will do it in the best way.

Your little child says, "Papa, I wish you would let me have that knife," "No," you will say, "it is a sharp knife, and you will cut yourself." He says, "I must have it." "But you can not have it," you reply. He gets angry and red in the face, and says he *will* have it; but you say he shall not have it. Are you not kind in keeping it from him? So God treats his children. I say, "I wish, heavenly Father, to get that." God says, "No, my child." I say, "I must have it." God says, "You can not have it." I get angry, and say, "I will have it." God says, "You shall not have it;" and I do not get it. Is he not kind, and loving, and the best of Fathers? Do you tell me that there is no rule or regulation in these things? Tell that to the men who believe in no God and no Bible. Tell it not to me.

A man of large business concludes to go out of his stores leaving much of his investments, and he says to his sons, "Now I am going to leave this business in your hands. Perhaps, I may come back in a little while, and perhaps not. While I am gone, you will please to look after affairs." After awhile

the father comes back and finds every thing at loose ends, and the whole business seems to be going wrong. He says, "I am going to take possession of this business. You know I never fully surrendered it, and henceforth consider yourselves subordinates." Is he not right in doing it? He saves the business. The Lord seems to let us go on in our life, guided by our own skill, and we make miserable work of it. God comes down to our shop or store, and says, "Things are going wrong; I come to take charge; I am Master, and know what is best, and I proclaim my authority." We are merely subordinates.

It is like a boy at school with a long sum that he can not do. He has been working at it for hours, making figures here, and rubbing out figures there, until it is all mixed up, and the teacher, looking over the boy's shoulder, knows that he can not get out of it, and cleaning the slate, says, "Begin again." Just so God does to us. Our affairs get into an inextricable entanglement, and he rubs every thing out, and says, "*Begin again!*" Is he not wise and loving in so doing?

I think the trouble is, that there is so large a difference between the Divine and human estimate as to what is enough. I have heard of people striving for that which is enough, but I never heard of any one who had enough. What God calls *enough* for man, man calls *too little*. What man calls *enough*, God says is *too much*.

The difference between a poor man and a rich man is only a difference in banks. The rich man puts his money in the Nassau Bank, or the Long Island Bank, or some other bank of that character, while the poor man comes up and makes his investments in the bank of Him who owns all the quarries, all the mines, all the gold, all the earth, all the heaven. Do you think a man can fail when he is backed up like that?

I want to bring this truth close up to the hearts of those people in this audience who have to calculate rigid economy, who are perplexed how they will make the old garment hold out a little longer, with whom the great question is not which is the best investment or the most lucrative security, but how shall I make the two ends meet? To such people I bring the condolence of this Christian truth.

You may have seen a map on which is described, with red ink, the travels of the children of Israel through the desert to

the Promised Land. You see how they took this and that direction, crossed the river and went through the sea. Do you know God has made a map of your life, with paths leading up to this bitterness and that success, through this river and across that sea ; but, blessed be God, the path always comes out at the Promised Land. Mark that! *Mark that!*

I remark again, that all those things that *seem to be but accidents* in our life are under the divine supervision. We sometimes seem to be going helmless and anchorless. You say, "If I had some other trade ; if I had not gone there this summer ; if I had lived in some other house." You have no right to say that. Every tear you wept, every step you have taken, every burden you have carried, is under divine inspection, and that event which startled your whole household with horror, God met with perfect placidity, because he knew it was for your good. It was part of a great plan projected long ago. In eternity, when you come to reckon-up your mercies, you will point to that affliction as one of your greatest blessings. God has a strange way with us. Joseph found his way to the prime minister's chair by being pushed into a pit ; and to many a Christian *down* is *up*. The wheat must be flailed ; the quarry must be blasted ; the diamond must be ground ; the Christian must be afflicted ; and that single event, which you supposed stood entirely alone, was a connecting link between two great chains, one chain reaching through all eternity past, and the other chain reaching through all eternity future—so small an event fastening two eternities together.

A missionary, coming from India to the United States, stopped at St. Helena while the vessel was taking water. He had his little child with him. They walked along by an embankment, and a rock at that moment became loosened, and falling, instantly killed the child. Was it an accident ? Was it a surprise to God ? Had he allowed his servant, after a life of consecration, to come to such a trial without any divine meaning ? Not such is my God. There are no accidents in the divine mind, though they may seem so to us. God is good, and by every single incident of our life, whether it be adverse or otherwise, before earth and heaven God will demonstrate his mercy.

I hear a man say, "That idea belittles God. You bring him down to such little things." Ah ! I have a more thorough appreciation of God in little things than I have in great things.

The mother does not wait until the child has mashed its foot or broken its arm before she administers sympathy. The child comes in with the least bruise, and the mother kisses it. God does not wait for some tremendous crisis in our life, but comes down to us in our most insignificant trials, and throws over us the arms of his mercy.

Going up among the White Mountains some years ago, I thought of that passage in the Bible that speaks of God as weighing mountains in a balance. As I looked at those great mountains, I thought, can it be possible that God can put these great mountains in scales? It was an idea too great for me to grasp; but when I saw a blue-bell down by the mule's foot, on my way up Mount Washington, then I understood the kindness and goodness of God. It is not so much of God in great things, I can understand, but of God in little things.

Here is a man who says, "That doctrine can not 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 materials, 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 this summer. 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." Ask these aged men in this church if it is not so. 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."

So, my dear people, this morning take home the comfort of this subject. Be content with such things as you have. From every grass-blade under your feet learn the lesson of divine care, and never let the smallest bird flit across your path without thinking of the truth that "five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God." Blessed be his glorious name forever. Amen.

LATE IN THE AFTERNOON.

“Abide with us; for it is toward evening.”—*Luke xxiv. 29.*

TWO villagers, having concluded their errand in Jerusalem, have started out at the city gate, and are on their way to Emmaus, the place of their residence. They go with a sad heart. Jesus, who had been their admiration and their joy, had been basely massacred and entombed. As with sad face and broken heart they pass on their way, a stranger accosts them. They tell him their anxieties and bitterness of soul. He, in turn, talks to them, mightily expounding the Scriptures. He throws over them the fascination of intelligent conversation. They forget the time, and notice not the objects they pass, and, before they are aware, have come up in front of their house. They pause before the entrance, and attempt to persuade the stranger to tarry with them. They press upon him their hospitalities. Night is coming on, and he may meet a prowling wild beast, or be obliged to lie unsheltered from the dew. He can not go much farther now. Why not stop there, and continue their pleasant conversation? They take him by the arm, and they insist upon his coming in, addressing him in the words, “Abide with us; for it is toward evening.”

The candles are lighted. The table is spread. Pleasant socialities are enkindled. They rejoice in the presence of the stranger guest. He asks a blessing upon the bread they eat, and he hands a piece of it to each. Suddenly, and with overwhelming power, the thought flashes upon the astounded people—*It is the Lord!* and as they sit in breathless wonder, looking upon the resurrected body of Jesus, he vanished. The interview ended. He was gone.

With many of us it is a bright sunshiny day of prosperity. There is not a cloud in the sky. Not a leaf rustling in the forest. No chill in the air. But we can not expect all this to last. He is not an intelligent man who expects perpetual daylight of joy. The sun will, after awhile, near the horizon. The shadows will lengthen. While I speak, many of us stand in the very hour described in the text, for it is *toward evening*.

I. The request of the text is appropriate for some before me,

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 can not lift quite so much as once. They can not walk quite so fast. They can not read quite so well without spectacles. They can not so easily recover from a cough, or any 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 axemen 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 we feel that the day is far spent, we need most of all to supplicate the strong and beneficent Jesus, in the prayer of the villagers, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening."

II. The request of the text is an appropriate exclamation for all those who are approaching the gloomy hour of temptation. There is nothing easier than to be good-natured when every thing pleases, or to be humble when there is nothing to oppose us, or forgiving when we have not been assailed, or honest when we have no inducement to fraud. But you have felt the grapple of some temptation, your nature at some time quaked and groaned under the infernal force. You felt that the devil was

after you. You saw your Christian graces retreating. You feared that you would fail in the awful wrestle with sin, and be thrown into the dust. The gloom thickened. The first indications of the night were seen. In all the trembling of your soul; in all the infernal suggestions of Satan; in all the surging up of tumultuous passions and excitements, you felt, with awful emphasis, that it was *toward evening*. In the tempted hour you need to ask Jesus to abide with you. He can beat back the monster that would devour. He can unhorse the sin that would ride you down. He can sharpen the battle-axe with which you split the head of helmeted abomination. Who helped Paul shake the brazen-gated heart of Felix? Who acted like a good sailor when all the crew howled in the Mediterranean shipwreck? Who helped the martyrs to be firm, when one word of recantation would have unfastened the withes of the stake and put out the kindling fire? When the night of the soul came on, and all the denizens of darkness came riding up on the winds of perdition—who gave strength to the soul? Who gave calmness to the heart? Who broke the spell of infernal enchantment? HE, who heard the request of the villagers: "*Abide with us; for it is toward evening.*"

One of the forts of France was attacked, and the outworks were taken before night. The besieging army lay down, thinking that there was but little to do in the morning, and that the soldiery in the fort could be easily made to surrender. But during the night, through a back stairs, they escaped into the country. In the morning the besieging army sprang upon the battlements, but found that their prey was gone. So, when we are assaulted in temptation, there is always some secret stair by which we may get off. God will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able, but with every temptation will bring a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it.

III. The prayer of the text is appropriate for all *who are anticipating sorrow*. The greatest folly that ever grew on this planet is the tendency to borrow trouble; but there are times when approaching sorrow is so evident, that we need to be making especial preparation for its coming.

One of your children has lately become a favourite. 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 can not 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 light is fading from the sky. The air is chill. *It is toward evening.*

You had a considerable estate, and felt independent. In five minutes, on one fair balance-sheet, you could see just how you stood with the world. But there came complications. Something that you imagined impossible happened. The best friend you had proved traitor to your interests. A sudden crash of national misfortune frustrated your credit. You may to-day be going on in business, but you feel anxious about where you are standing, and fear that the next turn of the commercial wheel will bring you prostrate. You foresee what you consider certain defalcation. You think of the anguish of telling your friends that you are not worth a dollar. You know not how you will ever bring your children home from school. You wonder how you will stand the selling of your library, or the moving into a plainer house. The misfortunes of life have accumulated. You wonder what makes the sky so dark. *It is toward evening.*

Trouble is an apothecary that mixes a great many draughts, bitter, and sour, and nauseous, and you must drink some one of them. Trouble puts up a great many heavy packs, and you must carry some one of them. There is no sandal so thick and well adjusted but some thorn will strike through it. There is

no sound so sweet, but the undertaker's screw-driver grates through it. In this swift shuttle of the heart some of the threads must break. The journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus will soon be ended. Our Bible, our common sense, our observation, reiterate in tones that we can not mistake, and ought not to disregard. *It is toward evening.*

Oh, then, for Jesus to abide with us. He sweetens the cup. He extracts the thorn. He wipes the tear. He hushes the tempest. He soothes the soul that flies to him for shelter. Let the night swoop, and the Euroclydon toss the sea; let the thunders roar—soon all will be well. Christ in the ship to soothe his friends. Christ on the sea to stop its tumult. Christ in the grave to scatter the darkness. Christ in the heavens to lead the way. Blessed all such. His arms will inclose them, his grace comfort them, his light cheer them, his sacrifice free them, his glory enchant them. If earthly estate take wings, he will be an incorruptible treasure. If friends die, he will be their resurrection. Standing with us in the morning of our joy, and in the noon-day of our prosperity, he will not forsake when the lustre has faded and *it is toward evening.*

Listen to Paul's battle-shout with misfortune. Hark to martyred Latimer's fire-song. Look at the glory that hath reft the dungeon, and filled the earth and heavens with the crash of the falling manacles of despotism; and then look at those who have tried to cure themselves with human prescriptions, attempting to heal gangrene with a patch of court-plaster, and to stop the plague of dying empires with the quackery of earthly wisdom. Nothing can speak peace to the soul, nothing can unstrap our crushing burdens, nothing can overcome our spiritual foes, nothing can open our eyes to see the surrounding horses and chariots of salvation that fill all the mountains, but the voice and command of Him who stopped one night at Emmaus.

IV. The words of the text are pertinent to us all, from the fact that we are nearing the *evening of death*. 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 can not 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 knew 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 behaviour. 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. You ought to be willing to exchange your body, that has headaches, and sideaches, and weaknesses innumerable, that limps with the stone-bruise, or festers with a thorn, or flames on the funeral pyre of fevers, for an incorruptible body and an eye that blinks not before the jasper gates and the great white throne. But between that and this there is an hour about which no man should be reckless or fool-hardy. I doubt not your courage, but I tell you that you will want something better than a strong arm, a good aim, and a trusty sword, when you come to your last battle. You will need a better robe than any you have in your wardrobe to keep you warm in that place.

Circumstances do not make so much difference. It may be bright day when you push off from the planet, or it may be dark night and while the owl is hooting from the forest. It may be

spring, and your soul may go out among the blossoms, apple-orchards swinging their censers in the way. It may be winter, and the earth in a snow-shroud. It may be autumn, and the forests set on fire by the retreating year: dead nature laid out in state. It may be with your wife's hand in your hand, or you may be in a strange hotel, with a servant faithful to the last. It may be in the rail train, shot off the switch, and tumbling, in long reverberation, down the embankment—crash! crash! I know not the time; I know not the mode. But the days of our life are being subtracted away, and we shall come down to the time when we have but ten days left, then nine days, then eight days, seven days, six days, five days, four days, three days, two days, one day. Then hours: three hours, two hours, one hour. Then only minutes left: five minutes, four minutes, three minutes, two minutes, one minute. Then only seconds left: four seconds, three seconds, two seconds, one second. Gone! The chapter of life ended! The book closed! The pulses at rest! The feet through with the journey! The hands closed from all work! No word on the lip. No breath in the nostril. Hair combed back to lie undisheveled by any human hands. The muscles still. The nerves still. The lungs still. The tongue still. All still. You might put the stethoscope to the breast, and hear no sound. You might put a speaking-trumpet to the ear, but you could not break the deafness. No motion. No throb. No life. Still! Still!

On earth, with many of you, the evening is the happiest part of the twenty-four hours. You gather about the stand. You talk, and laugh, and sing. You recount the day. You plan for the morrow. You have games and repartee. Amidst all the toil of the day, that is the goal for which you run; and as you take out your watch, or look at the descending sun, you thrill with the thought that it is *toward evening*.

So death comes to the disciple! What if the sun of life is about to set: Jesus is the dayspring from on high; the perpetual morning of every ransomed spirit. What if the darkness comes: Jesus is the light of the world and of heaven. What though this earthly house does crumble: Jesus hath prepared a house of many mansions. Jesus is the anchor that always holds. Jesus is the light that is never eclipsed. Jesus is the fountain that is never exhausted. Jesus is the evening star, hung up amidst the gloom of the gathering night.

You are almost through with the abuse and backbiting of

enemies. They will call you no more by evil names. Your good deeds will not longer be misinterpreted, or your honor filched. The troubles of earth will end in the felicities of heaven! *Toward evening!*

The bereavements of earth will soon be lifted. You will not much longer stand pouring your grief in the tomb, like Rachel weeping for her children, or David mourning for Absalom. Broken hearts bound up. Wounds healed. Tears wiped away. Sorrows terminated. No more sounding of the dead-march! *Toward evening!*

Death will come, sweet as slumber to the eyelids of the babe, as full rations to a starving soldier, as evening hour to the exhausted workman. The sky will take on its sunset glow, every cloud a fire-psalm, every lake a glassy mirror; the forests transfigured; delicate mists climbing the air. Your friends will announce it; your pulses will beat it; your joys will ring it; your lips will whisper it: "TOWARD EVENING."

"The world its fancied pearl may crave,
 'Tis not the pearl for me.
 'Twill dim its lustre in the grave;
 'Twill perish in the sea.
 But there's a Pearl of price untold,
 That never can be bought with gold;
 The sinking soul 'twill save,
 Oh! that's the Pearl for me!

"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 ransomed sing—
 To Jesus, their exalted King,
 With cheerful heart and tongue,
 Oh! that's the song for me!"

RUNNING WATER.

“ Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—*Rev. xxii. 17.*

MID-DESERT, the water exhausted from the goat-skins, the caravan panting under a blistering sun, the feet consumed of the desert, what is it that the people most want? For what do they cry bitterly? For what would they give up the most valuable cargo on the back of the camels? *Water! Water!*

An army is on the march. They are fainting from the long way. The canteens are empty. The hour of battle is coming on. Forward yet for many a weary mile. No shelter from the burning sun; no rest for the weary feet; pushing on through suffocation and heat. What is it that the soldier most wants? For what would he give up everything that he has with him? What awful want fills his mind, and fevers his tongue, and consumes his vitals? Ask him, as he staggers on under the weight of knapsack and blanket, and if he have strength enough to answer he will say, “*Water! Water!*”

I was told by a gentleman who walked over one of the battle-fields on a hot summer night after a day of carnage, that the cry of the wounded was absolutely unbearable, and that, after giving all supply that he could, he put his fingers to his ears, for the cry all over the plain was from hundreds of dying men, “*Water! Water!* For God’s sake give us water!”

Coming home from the store on a hot summer day, in the eventide, every muscle of your body exhausted with fatigue, what do you first ask for? A cup of water—fresh, clear, sparkling water. Gathered here to night in this summer weather, the revolution of your fans not able to keep your cheek cool, what subject shall be most appropriate? Of what shall I speak? You will want nothing very profound; nothing very protracted. I hear hundreds of voices saying, “Talk about water.” And so that shall be my theme, God helping me. “Whosoever will, let him come and take the *water of life* freely.”

The Bible is all a-sparkle with fountains and wells, and rivers and oceans. They toss up their brightness from almost every chapter. Solomon, refreshed with the story of heaven, exclaims, “As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.” Isaiah, speaking of the blessedness of Christians,

says, "They shall spring as willows by the water-courses." In the Canticles, the Church is often spoken of as a "well of living water," and "streams from Lebanon." The prophet, glowing with the anticipation of the millennium, says, "Streams shall break forth in the desert;" while the text holds forth ten thousand chalices filled with living water for a thirsty world.

I have, in the first place, to remark that water is typical of the Gospel, because of its *brightness*. That which dashes from the city fountains has no lustre in it compared with that which springs up to-night from this Bible aqueduct. The unpretending fountain breaks forth from the side of the hill, flashing with silver, and gold, and beryl, and chrysolite; and, as you see it, you almost clap your hands with gladness. But I have to tell you that there is no brightness in it compared with this living fountain of the Gospel; for in each falling drop I see the glory of heaven. "Good news! Good news!" The angels chanted it. "Behold! I bring you glad tidings of great joy and salvation, which shall be to all people." Joy of pardoned sin! Joy of broken bondage! Joy of a coming heaven! Oh! it is a bright Gospel! You remember the time when that fountain first flashed upon your vision, and you cried, "Behold! I have found Him whom my soul loveth!" And there was joy in heaven among the angels of God over your forgiven spirit. Roll on, O ye waters of gladness! Roll on, till every deaf ear shall hear the ripple of the wave, and every blind eye shall see the toss of the crystalline brightness, and the glory shall cover the earth as the water the sea.

I have further to remark, that the water typifies the Gospel *by its refreshment*. 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 called out, "Has God forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Hath he in his 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 off ountains 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!"

I go further, and say that water typifies the Gospel by its *freeness*. On this hot Sabbath, when the cows break through the alders of the meadows 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 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 can not be purchased. "Without money and without price," is this heavenly manna. "Without money and without price," this Gospel fountain.

I have further to remark, that the water typifies the Gospel because of its *abundance*. 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 his 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 can not drink it dry. Oh, 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." Oh, 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 opened arms;
He calls; he bids you come:
Sin holds you back, and grief alarms,
But still there yet is room."

I stand, this evening, offering this Gospel to all who are here, with just as much confidence that there is enough for them as though there were only two or three persons present. Hear it, ye dying men and women—hear it! "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

I have one more leading thought: The water typifies the Gospel in the fact that it is *perennial*. I know that in this hot summer weather some of the fountains have dried up; but stand you on the banks of the Amazon, or of the St. Lawrence, or of the Mississippi, or of the Ohio, and see if they run dry. No; they have been flowing on for thousands of years, and they will probably flow on for thousands of years more. The trees of the forest have cast their leaves for ages into the bosom of these waters, and the birds of heaven have dipped their wings in the wave. And so it is with this Gospel. It is a *perennial* Gospel. On earth we only see a portion of that great River of Life; but after awhile the river will rise, and it will join the tides of the celestial river that flows hard by the throne of God. "And the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water."

Ah! my dear brothers and sisters, some of you have found this life a desert march. You have all had your troubles. Is there one in this audience that has never been bereft—that has never been broken-hearted? Not one. You come to some one who you suppose is always happy—whom you think has never had any misfortunes; but he will tell you that he has had a thousand trials. A man of a great many troubles saw a shepherd in the field watching the sheep, and he said to himself, "Ah! there is a man that never had anything to trouble him;"

and he went to the shepherd and accosted him, saying, "Everything is very beautiful around here. You have no troubles; you are to be congratulated. I have so many troubles!" "Ah!" said the shepherd to the man, "you do not understand my life. There is a black ewe that every few days goes off, and all the sheep of my flock follow her, and *that black ewe is the plague of my life.*" It was a parable. In every man's life there is at least one black ewe—one sorrow, one perplexity, one disaster, one bereavement, one agony. I said you have found this life, some of you, a desert march. The sun has smitten you by day. You have been consumed, almost, of the desert, and you have staggered wearily on in the long tramp. Your lips are parched; your tongue is fevered; your heart is sick. What do you want? *Bread* to feed your hunger; *water* to slake this all-consuming thirst.

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 through all the valleys, 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, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*"

Blessed be God for the *brightness*, for the *refreshment*, for the *freeness*, for the *abundance*, for the *continuity* of this glorious Gospel! "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Come now.

Just off our coast there is a dangerous point for the sailors, and a light-house has been set up. There is a great lantern in that light-house. I saw it a few summers ago. There is machinery by which this light is reflected over the sea peculiarly, and that machinery must, every half hour in the night, be wound up. If the man at that post should happen to sleep, alas for the sailors in the storm! alas for the ship! God has lifted a great lantern to shine over the sea of this world's sin, and darkness, and temptation, and trouble. It needs no human agency to wind it up. It shines through all the darkness of the world's suffering; and it says to those who are tossing on the sea, "Keep off the rocks! Keep off the rocks!" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" If, after this water of salvation has been provided, without money and without price, we reject it, where shall we spend our eternity but among those whom God has cast off?

While the door of mercy is open, come, O ye wanderers! While yet the fountain is flowing from the rock, come, O ye thirsty ones! "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

THE BRIGHT SIDE OF A MINISTER'S LIFE.

"My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." *Philippians* iv. 1.

THAT is what Paul said, expressing his love for and his confidence in the people to whom he ministered. But the words are just as appropriate to-night for me to use, in this my parting address now, as I am some time to be absent from you: "My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown."

The great cry in all denominations of Christians to-day is for more ministers. There are many brilliant young men, having earnest hearts, now entering upon life; but for the most part they float past the ministry into the counting-room, the law-office, and the medical chair. So much has been written and said about the hardships of the ministry, that our young men are afraid to run the gauntlet of so much neglect, abuse, and starvation. I have to say that the majority of the books written on this subject are exaggerations of the sorrows of the minister's life, and for the most part give only one side of that life. I have to tell you that I believe the office of the minister of Christ has fewer trials, larger spiritual emoluments and rewards, brighter inducements, higher development, grander joys, than any other occupation in all the earth.

Admitting, so plainly that no man shall misinterpret what I say, that there are now many ministers undergoing persecutions, and hardships, and outrages that amount to positive martyrdom, I contend that these are the exceptions; and that, gathering an audience of a *thousand* ministers of Christ, *nine hundred* of them have many advantages—good books, refined associations, sons and daughters well fed, well clad, well educated, opportunities innumerable—while all around there is the evidence that their services are being appreciated. Gather a thousand merchants together, and I will show you that nine hundred of them have had harder knocks, greater privations, have come more frequently to the study of severe economy, have had harder work to pay their rent, and many have been subject to annoyances which a minister of Christ never experiences.

We are to remember the fact that a vast majority of men in wordly occupations do not succeed; that it is an authentic statistic,

that out of a hundred merchants all fail except two ; that there are tens of thousands of clerks living on insufficient salaries ; that it is a rare thing when a mechanic earns any thing more than a plain livelihood. We are to take, I say, these things into consideration, and remember that if the ministry sometimes has its hardships, commerce and mechanism have their hardships.

We are to remember that the minister of the Gospel, so far as worldly support is concerned, has the advantage over the doctor, the lawyer, and almost every other profession at the start ; for although a man in these professions may after awhile come to affluence, we all know that his first ten years are a hard struggle, and a livelihood is not won ; while the minister of the Gospel steps right out of the theological school into a settlement, where from the first day he is supported. Show me one minister of Christ who has fared hard, and I will show you ten merchants and mechanics who have been fretted, and exasperated, and tossed about, and moved from a large house into a smaller one, and dogged, and dunned, and abused, and set upon, and trampled under foot, until all courage is gone out of you.

But you say, see how old ministers are neglected, and their families after them. I admit it. Shame on the Christian Church that it is so ! But remember, also, that there are thousands of old merchants who, with their families, have come down to abjectest poverty, and that every day there are mechanics moving out of their plain houses because they cannot pay the rent. What company of men is it that sends a music-teacher to Europe because he has bronchitis ? What company of well-to-do men meet together and pass resolutions of sympathy when a carpenter is sick ? I admit that in the ministry we have our annoyances, but I wish it understood, at the same time, they are no more (I think they are less) than in other occupations.

For a particular and specific purpose to-night, I want to say to young men who hear me, that if you enter the holy office with the right spirit, loving God and desiring usefulness, you will find this Christian work of the ministry always a satisfaction, often a joy, and sometimes a rapture ! Of course, I exclude from these consolations those men who enter the ministry with half a heart, and who at the first opportunity escape through Wall Street, or through the fortune of a rich wife. I also exclude from these consolations those ministers who smoke themselves to death, as hundreds of them do. I exclude also from these consolations those ministers who pass their lives in complaining

about the sins of the world, instead of putting both hands forth to make that world better. This joy of which I speak comes to those who feel called to the work of the Christian ministry, and are glad of it.

You have heard sermons on the hardships of the ministry, on the privations of the ministry, on the sorrows of the ministry. I have thought, in this my parting address, I would talk to you a little while about the *joys of the Christian ministry*, hoping that before I get through I may induce some of these young men to buckle on the armour of the Lord Almighty.

In the first place, there is the *joy of interesting work*. The minister of Christ in this day must toil thoroughly and continuously. If he would be able to instruct the people, he must have something decided to say, and be able to say it in such a way that the people will understand. There are in this day so many pamphlets, so many books, so many newspapers, so many lecturing platforms, that the great mass of people are accustomed to discuss questions of literature, and morals, and religion; and I care not how fine the voice may be, how elaborate the rhetoric, or how high-sounding the phrase, unless the minister of Christ has something to say, all the people know it, and they know it right away. Hence he must be busy not only with the books in his library, but with that large book of every-day Christian experience and of worldly observation. He must not only know what were the scepticisms of Hume, and Gibbon, and Voltaire, but be acquainted with the modern infidelities that swarm in the street and drawing-room. Besides that, his hand and heart must ever be open for Christian sympathy and help. There are the bereaved to be comforted. There are the dead to be buried. There are the fallen to be lifted up with great encouragement. There are young men coming to town who need Christian counsel. Plenty of work for voice, for hand, for pen. Besides that, there are a thousand charities of the world and of the Church to which he must, in the name of Christ, put forth his hands.

Now I say that a man entering the ministry with the right spirit will find perpetual exhilaration and joy in the work. To stand before a company of immortal men and women importuning them to such belief and behaviour as shall lead them to high happiness on earth and open for them the grandeurs of eternity; to enter the harvest-field where the grain is ripe, and the sheaves are coming toward the garner—that is life for the body, that is inspiration for the mind, that is rapture for the soul; and if

there is in all the world an occupation or profession that yields such mighty satisfaction, I have never heard of it. Some have expressed it as a matter of surprise that our life-insurance men have stated that ministers of the Gospel, as a class, live longer than any other class of people. It is no surprise to me. The joy of their work is the reason of their longevity.

I remark again: there is the *joy of elevated associations* for a minister. If a man be tolerably acceptable in his work, the refinements of society open before him. He is invited into the enclave of poets and artists; he is surrounded by kindly influences; society breathes upon him its most elevating advantages. Men in other occupations must depend on their wealth and achievements to obtain such position. By reason of the respect of men for the Christian minister, all these spheres open before him. In addition to that, and more than that, his constant associates are the princes of God and the heirs of heaven.

Then comes the *joy of seeing souls converted*. "Go into all the world and preach my Gospel," said Christ; and that is to be the great means of bringing the world back to God. To go from the house of God some Sabbath and feel that the sermon has fallen dead, and to be told the next day by some man, "That sermon was the redemption of my soul." It has been the history of almost all the sermons about which I have been especially discouraged, that before the week was out I have heard that that particular administration of the Gospel has been blessed to some one's salvation. I went home one Sabbath almost resolved never to preach again; the Gospel seemed to have no effect; but before one week had passed I found that five souls, through the instrumentality of that poor sermon, had pressed into the kingdom of God. It is a joy like that of the angels of God over a repentant sinner to see men turning their backs on the world to follow Christ, and to hear them saying, "Where thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried." Oh! this is the joy of the heavens.

"Pleased with the news, the saints below
In songs their tongues employ;
Beyond the skies the tidings go.
And heaven is filled with joy."

There is the joy of *comfort-bearing*. It does not take a very

ong ministry before you look over an audience and see that there is not a single family that has escaped sicknesses, losses of property, or bereavements of the household. Oh! if we were obliged to stand in the pulpits without this balm of heaven; what should we do?

To see the wounds healing; to see some one kneeling down beside the coffin of a loved one, and hear her saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord"—I feel as if I could trust Him; to see Christ come to the prow of the vessel and silence the Euroclydon; to see a soul rise up strengthened and comforted; to look over an audience, one-half of them in the habiliments of mourning, and yet feel that there is power in that Gospel to silence every grief and soothe every wound of the soul—ah! to tell the broken-hearted people of the congregation that God pities, that God feels, that God loves, that God sympathizes—that is the joy of the Christian ministry!

There is joy in a *church's sympathy*. It is a sad thing that many of the best people in affliction do not get sympathy; they are all alone in their sorrow; the world yields them no condolence at all. If the minister of Christ has been at all faithful in his work, he knows that there are those who are willing to sympathize in his every sorrow and in every success. He knows that he has their prayers and good wishes. If he be sick, he knows they are praying for his recovery. If dark shadows hover over his household, he knows there are those who are praying that those shadows may be lifted. Multitudes of those to whom he has brought the comforts of the Gospel in hours of tribulation come to him in his hours of disaster:

"Their streaming eyes together flow
For human guilt and mortal woe;
Their ardent prayers together rise
Like mingling flames in sacrifice.

"Together oft they seek the place
Where God reveals his awful face;
At length they meet in realms above,
A heaven of joy, because of love."

I have felt, my brethren and sisters in Christ, constrained, in this moment of parting for an absence of some weeks, to tell you the deep, high, protracted joy of the Christian ministry. I do not believe there is any congregation on earth that has been more sympathetic with the work of a pastor than you have been

with me. And I have felt that before I go away from you now I must offer my thanks, first to God, and next to you. For I can say, in the words of the apostle in the text, "*My brethren dearly beloved, my joy and crown.*"

For these three years I have received kindness at the hands of this people. I have dwelt among you with imperfections, not so well known to you as to myself. And in looking over all these three years, I have but one fault to find, and that is, that you have been *too kind*. With my temperament, I know that I must in that time have said a good many things that I ought never to have said, and must have done a good many things that I ought never to have done. And so now, in this closing hour, I ask the forgiveness of God and the forgiveness of this people for all the shortcomings of my ministry.

I know, my friends, you will not begrudge me this vacation. It has been a busy year to me—God only knows how busy. During this year we have established the Tabernacle Free College, have raised the money for the building and for the running expenses, have secured the professorate, have attended upon all the lectures save two, and have five hundred students engaged in different kinds of Christian work—going forth as lay preachers, and visiting sickness and trouble, and engaged in Sabbath-school employment. I have preached every Sabbath save two; I have delivered two sermons and a lecture each week, and corrected the phonographic report of them for the *Christian Age*, of London, *The Methodist*, of New York, and the *Interior*, of Chicago—an amount of work which some of you may understand. I have prepared articles for secular and religious papers, and have lectured in San Francisco, Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and other cities, for the benefit of the college. During the year I have conducted two books through the printing-press; I have tried to answer the thousands of letters that have come to me with questions about the Free Tabernacle, and about the Free College, and about various questions of Christian experience. I have tried as well as I could to look after the spiritual welfare of hundreds of families. While I have seen angry discussions in the newspapers about how many hours a man ought to work, some saying he ought to work eight, and some saying eight hours were too much, I have this year worked fifteen hours per day as a regular thing, and still stand before you in perfect health, although this vacation comes very acceptable. You will be glad that I have this opportunity to rest.

I want, to-night, to build on this platform a monument to the goodness of God and to your faithfulness to me as pastor. I would like to say over that monument, as was said over one that was raised in the wilderness, "*Mizpeh*: The Lord watch between thee and me when we are absent one from another!"

To the God of the mountains, and the God of the valleys, and the God of the oceans, and the God of the great town, I commend you and your families. Let us all make league with him. The time will soon come when I shall have preached my last sermon, and you will have had your last opportunity of salvation. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment."

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

"In this dark world of sin and pain
We only meet to part again;
But when we reach the heavenly shore,
We there shall meet to part no more;
The hope that we shall see that day
Should chase our present griefs away."

REVOLUTION.

“Those that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”—
Acts xvii. 6.

TH**ERE** 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 a 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 seemed 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!

I. The religion of the Bible will make a *revolution in the family*. Those things that are wrong in the family circle will be overthrown by it, while justice and harmony will take the place. The husband will be the head of the household only when he is fit to be. I know a man who spends all the money he makes in drink, as well as all the money that his wife makes; and he sometimes sells the children's clothes for rum. Do you tell me that he is to be the head of that household? If the wife have more nobility, more courage, more consistency, more of all that is right, she shall have the supremacy. You say that the Bible says that the wife is to be subject to the husband. I know it. But that is a *husband*, not a masculine caricature. There is no human or divine law that makes a woman subordinate to a man unworthy of her. When Christianity comes into a domestic circle, it will give the dominancy to that one who is the most worthy of it.

As religion comes in at the front door, mirth and laughter will not go out of the back door. It will not hopple 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 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.

II. Christianity will produce a revolution in *commercial circles*. Find me fifty merchants, and you find that they have fifty standards of what is right and wrong. You say to some one about a merchant, "Is he honest?" "Oh! yes," the man says, "he is honest; but he grinds the faces of his clerks. He is honest; but he exaggerates the value of his goods. He is honest; but he loans money on bond and mortgage, with the understanding that the mortgage can lie quiet for ten years, but as soon as he gets the mortgage, he records it and begins a foreclosure suit, and the sheriff's writ comes down, and the day of sale arrives, and away goes the homestead, and the creditor buys it in at half-price." Honest! when he loaned the money, he knew that he would get the homestead at half-price. Honest! but he goes to the insurance office to get a policy on his life, and tells the doctor that he is well, when he knows that for ten years he has had but one lung. Honest! though he sells property by the map, forgetting to tell the purchaser that the ground is all under water; but it is generous in him to do that, for he throws the water into the bargain.

Ah! my friends, there is but one standard of the everlastingly right and of the everlastingly wrong, and that is the Bible and when that principle shall get its pry under our commercial houses, I believe that one half of them will go over. The ruin will begin at one end of the street, and it will be crash! crash! crash! all the way down to the docks. "What is the matter? Has there been a fall in gold?" "Oh no." "Has there been a new tariff?" "No." "Has there been a failure in crops?" "No." "Has there been an unaccountable panic?" "No." This is the secret: The Lord God has set up his throne of judgment in the Exchange. He has summoned the righteous and the wicked to come before him. What was 1837? A day of judgment! What was 1857? A day of judgment! What was two years ago this very month? A day of judgment! Do you think that God is going to wait until he has burned the

world up before he rights these wrongs? I tell you, Nay! Every day is a day of judgment.

The fraudulent man piles up his gains, bond above bond, United States security above United States security, emolument above emolument, until his property has become a great pyramid; and, as he stands looking at it, he thinks it can never be destroyed; but the Lord God comes, and with his little finger pushes it all over.

You build a house, and you put into it a rotten beam. A mechanic standing by says, "It will never do to put that beam in; it will ruin your whole building." But you put it in. The house is completed. Soon it begins to rock. You call in the mechanic and ask, "What is the matter with this door? What is the matter with this wall? Every thing seems to be giving out." Says the mechanic, "You put a rotten beam into that structure, and the whole thing has got to come down." Here is an estate that seems to be all right now. It has been building a great many years. But fifteen years ago there was a dishonest transaction in that commercial house. That one dishonest transaction will keep on working ruin in the whole structure, until down the estate will come in wreck and ruin about the possessor's ears—one dishonest dollar in the estate demolishing all his possessions. I have seen it again and again; and so have you.

Here is your money-safe. The manufacturer and yourself 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 can not 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 pick-pockets."

You have an old photograph of the signs of 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; and commercial men in all circles will throw up their hands, crying out, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither."

III. The religion of Jesus Christ will produce a revolution in *our churches*. The non-committal, do-nothing policy of the Church of God will give way to a spirit of bravest conquest. Piety in this day seems to me to be salted down just so as to keep. It seems as if the Church were chiefly anxious to take care of itself; and if we hear of want, and squalor, and heathenism outside, we say, "What a pity!" and we put our hands in our pockets, and we feel around for a two-cent piece, and with a great flourish we put it upon the plate, and are amazed that the world is not converted in six weeks. Suppose there were a great war; and there were three hundred thousand soldiers, but all of those three hundred thousand soldiers, excepting ten men, were in their tents, or scouring their muskets, or cooking rations. You would say, "Of course, defeat must come in that case." It is worst than that in the Church. Millions of the professed soldiers of Jesus Christ are cooking rations, or asleep in their tents, while only one man here and there goes out to do battle for the Lord.

"But," says some one, "we are establishing a great many missions, and I think they will save the masses." No; they will not. Five hundred thousand of them will not do it. They are doing a magnificent work; but every mission chapel is a confession of the disease and weakness of the Church. It is making a dividing-line between the classes. It is saying to the rich and to the well-conditioned, "If you can pay your pew rents,

come to the main audience-room." It is saying to the poor man, "Your coat is too bad, and your shoes are not good enough. If you want to get to heaven, you will have to go by the way of the mission chapel." The mission chapel has become the kitchen, where the Church does its sloppy work. There are hundreds and thousands of churches in this country—gorgeously built and supported—that, even on bright and sunny days, are not half full of worshipers; and yet they are building mission chapels, because, by some expressed or implied regulation, the great masses of the people are kept out of the main audience-room.

Now I say that any place of worship which is appropriate for one class is appropriate for all classes. Let the rich and the poor meet together, the Lord the Maker of them all. Mind you that I say that mission chapels are a necessity, the way churches are now conducted; but may God speed the time when they shall cease to be a necessity. God will rise up and break down the gates of the Church that have kept back the masses; and woe be to those who stand in the way! They will be trampled under foot by the vast populations making a stampede for heaven.

I saw in some paper, a few months ago, an account of a church in Boston in which, it is said, there were a great many plain people. The next week the trustees of that church came out in the paper, and said it was not so at all; "they were elegant people, and highly-conditioned people that went there." Then I laughed outright; and when I laugh, I laugh very loudly. "Those people," I said, "are afraid of the sickly sentimentality of the churches." Now, my ambition is not to preach to you so much. It seems to me that you must be faring sumptuously every day, and the marks of comfort are all about you. You do not need the Gospel half as much as do some who never come here. Rather than be priding myself on a church in front of which there shall halt fifty splendid equipages on the Sabbath day, I would have a church up to whose gates there should come a long procession of the suffering, and the stricken, and the dying, begging for admittance. You do not need the Gospel so much as they. You have good things in this life. Whatever may be your future destiny, you have had a pleasant time here. But those dying populations of which I speak, by reason of their want and suffering, whatever may be their future destiny, are in perdition now; and if there be any comfort in Christ's Gospel, for God's sake, give it to them!

Revolution! 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 monetary success were the chief idea in the Church, then I say that the present mode of conducting finances is 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.

We have tried for the last two years to preach the Gospel of a free church; and there is a great body of men and women here who have sworn by high heaven that, if God gives them strength, they will carry out that idea; and they are being successful; and they will be successful. Sometimes people have said to me, "Why don't you sell your pews? You could have a magnificent salary." I suppose so! But when a man says that to me, I feel like saying to him, as Peter said to the sorcerer, "*Thy money perish with thee!*"

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 apiece, these in the middle fifty cents, and those seats 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 can not 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!

In that future day of the reconstructed Church of Christ, the church-building will be the most cheerful of all buildings. Instead of the light of the sun strained through painted glass, until an intelligent auditory looks green, and blue, and yellow, and copper-colored, we will have no such things. The pure atmosphere of heaven will sweep out the fœtid atmosphere that has been kept in many of our churches boxed up from Sunday to Sunday.

The day of which I speak will be a day of great revivals. There will be such a time as there was in the parish of Shotts, where five hundred souls were born to God in one day; such times as were seen in this country when Edwards gave the alarm, when Tennent preached, and Whitefield thundered, and Edward Payson prayed; such times as some of you remember in 1857, when the voice of prayer and praise was heard in theatre, and warehouse, and blacksmith-shop, and factory, and engine-house; and the auctioneer's cry of "a half, and a half, and a half," was drowned out by the adjoining prayer-meeting, in which the people cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

In those days of which I am speaking, the services of the Church of God will be more spirited. The ministers of Christ, instead of being anxious about whether they are going to lose their place in their notes, will get on fire with the theme, and pour the living truth of God upon an aroused auditory—crying out to the righteous, "It shall be well with you;" and to the wicked, "Woe! It shall be ill with you." In those days the singing will be very different from what it is now. The music will weep, and wail, and chant, and triumph. People then will not be afraid to open their mouths when they sing. The man with a cracked voice will risk it on "Windham," and "Ortonville," and "Old Hundred." Grandfather will find the place for his grandchild in the hymn-book; or the little child will be spectacles for the grandfather. Hosanna will meet hosanna, and together go climbing to the throne; and the angels will hear; and God will listen; and the gates of heaven will hoist; and it will be as when two seas meet—the wave of earthly song mingling with the surging anthems of the free.

O my God, let me live to see that day! Let there be no power in disease, or accident, or wave of the sea, to disappoint my expectations. Let all other sight fail my eyes, rather than that I should miss that vision. Let all other sounds fail my ears,

rather than that I should fail to hear that sound. I want to stand on the mountaintop, to catch the first ray of the dawn, and with flying feet bring the news to this people. And, oh! when we hear the clattering hoofs that bring on the King's chariot, may we all be ready, with arches sprung, and with hand on the rope of the bell that is to sound the victory, and with wreaths all twisted for the way; and when Jesus dismounts, let it be amidst the huzza! huzza! of a world redeemed.

Where and when shall that revolution begin? Here and now. In your heart and mine. Sin must go down; our pride must go down; our worldliness must go down, that Christ may come up. *Revolution!* "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." Why not now let the revolution begin? Not next Sabbath, but now! Not to-morrow, when you go out into commercial circles, but now!

Archias, the magistrate of Thebes, was sitting with many mighty men, drinking wine. A messenger came in, bringing a letter informing him of a conspiracy to end his life, and warning him to flee. Archias took the letter, but, instead of opening it, put it into his pocket, and said to the messenger who brought it, "Business to-morrow!" The next day he died. Before he opened the letter, the Government was captured. When he read the letter it was too late. To-night I put into the hand of every man and woman in this house a message of life. It says, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." Do not put away the message and say, "This business to-morrow." *This night thy soul may be required of thee!*

WINE FOR THE WEDDING.

"Thou hast kept the good wine until now."—*John* ii. 10.

IF the hard brow ever relaxes, it is at the wedding. The nature cold and unsympathetic thaws out under the glow, and the tears start as we hear the bride's dress rustling down the stairs, and the company stands back, and we hear in the timid "I will" of the twain the sound of a lifetime's hopes, and joys, and sorrows. We look steadily at them, but thrice at her to once at him, and say, "God bless her, how well she looks!"

We cry at weddings, but not bitter tears; for when the heart is stirred, and smiles are insipid, and laughter is tame, the heart writes out its joy on the cheek in letters of crystal. Put on the ring! Let it ever be bright, and the round finger it incloses never be shrunken by sorrow. May they get old together, helping each other on in the path of life; and coming up to the marble pillar of the grave and parting, one going this side, and the other going that, may they meet again just beyond it, to find that the marble pillar was only the door-post of Heaven. When the wedding is done, and the carriage rolls to the door, and the trunks are heaved to their places, and the door goes shut with a bang, and the driver gathers up the reins, we all come out on the steps and give them three times three for a good starting.

We come to-day to a wedding. It is in common life. No carriages roll to the door, no costly dress rustles on the carpet, no diamond head-gear, but a marriage in common life—two plain people having pledged each other, hand and heart, and their friends having come in for congratulation. The joy is not the less because there is no pretension. In each other they find all the future they want. The daisy in the cup on the table may mean as much as a score of artistic garlands fresh from the hot-house. When a daughter goes off from home with nothing but a plain father's blessing and a plain mother's love, she is missed as much as though she were a princess. It seems hard, after the parents have sheltered her for eighteen years, that in a few short months her affections should have been carried off by another; but mother remembers how it was in her own case

when she was young ; and so she braces up until the wedding has passed, and the banqueters are gone, and she has a good cry all alone.

Well, we are to-day at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus and his mother have been invited. It is evident that there are more people there than were expected. Either some people have come who were not invited, or more invitations have been sent out than it was supposed would be accepted. Of course there is not enough supply of wine. You know that there is nothing more embarrassing to a housekeeper than a scant supply. Jesus sees the embarrassment, and he comes up immediately to relieve it. He sees standing six water-pots. He orders the servants to fill them with water, then waves his hand over the water, and immediately it is wine—real wine. Taste of it, and see for yourselves ; no logwood in it, no strychnine in it, but first-rate wine. When God makes wine, he makes the very best wine ; and one hundred and thirty gallons of it standing around in these water-pots : wine so good that the ruler of the feast tastes it and says, “ Why, this is really better than anything we have had ! Thou has kept the good wine until now.” Beautiful miracle ! A prize was offered to the person who should write the best essay about the miracle in Cana. Long manuscripts were presented in the competition, but a poet won the prize by just this one line descriptive of the miracle :

“ The unconscious water saw its God, and blushed.”

We learn from this miracle, in the first place, that Christ has *sympathy with housekeepers*. You might have thought that Jesus would have said, “ I can not be bothered with this household deficiency of wine. It is not for me, Lord of heaven and earth, to become caterer to this feast. I have vaster things than this to attend to.” Not so said Jesus. The wine gave out, and Jesus, by miraculous power, came to the rescue. Does there ever come a scant supply in your household ? Have you to make a very close calculation ? Is it hard work for you to carry on things decently and respectably ? If so, don't sit down and cry. Don't go out and fret ; but go to Him who stood in the house in Cana of Galilee. Pray in the parlor ! Pray in the hall ! Pray in the nursery ! Pray in the kitchen ! Let there be no room in all your house unconsecrated by the voice of prayer. If you have a microscope, put under it one drop of water, and see the insects

floating about; and when you see that God makes them, and cares for them, and feeds them, come to the conclusion that he will take care of you and feed you, oh ye of little faith.

A boy asked if he might sweep the snow from the steps of a house. The lady of the household said, "Yes; you seem very poor." He says, "I am very poor." She says, "Don't you sometimes get discouraged, and feel that God is going to let you starve?" The lad looked up in the woman's face, and said, "Do you think God will let me starve when I trust him, and then do the best I can?" Enough theology for older people! Trust in God and do the best you can. Amidst all the worriments of housekeeping, go to him: he will help you control your temper, and supervise your domestics, and entertain your guests, and manage your home economies. There are hundreds of women in this house this morning weak, and nervous, and exhausted with the cares of housekeeping. I commend you to the Lord Jesus Christ as the best adviser and the most efficient aid—the Lord Jesus who performed his first miracle to relieve a housekeeper.

I learn also 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 every thing on the largest and most generous scale. Does Christ, our Creator, go forth to make leaves, he makes them by the whole 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 cup-full, but by a river-full, a lake-full, an ocean-full, 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 ocean-full 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 ; not merely a cupful of gospel supply, but one hundred and thirty gallons. Ay, the tears of godly repentance are all gathered up into God's bottle, and some day, standing before the throne, we will lift our cup of delight and ask that it be filled with the wine of heaven ; and Jesus, from that bottle of tears, will begin to pour in the cup, and we will cry, " Stop Jesus, we do not want to drink our own tears ;" and Jesus will say, " Know ye not that the tears of earth are the wine of heaven?" Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

I remark further, *Jesus does not shadow the joys of others with his own griefs.* He might have sat down in that wedding and said, " I have so much trouble, so much poverty, so much persecution, and the cross is coming ; I shall not rejoice, and the gloom of my face and of my sorrows shall be cast over all this group." So said not Jesus. He said to himself, " Here are two persons starting out in married life. Let it be a joyful occasion. I will hide my own griefs. I will kindle their joy." There are many not so wise as that. I know a household where there are many little children where for two years the piano has been kept shut because there has been trouble in the house. Alas, for the folly ! Parents saying, " We will have no Christmas-tree this coming holiday because there has been trouble in the house. Hush that laughing up stairs ! How can there be any joy when there has been so much trouble?" And so they make every thing consistently doleful, and send their sons and daughters to ruin with the gloom they throw around them.

Oh, my dear friends, do you not know those children will have trouble enough of their own after a while ? Be glad they can not appreciate all yours. Keep back the cup of bitterness from your daughter's lips. When your head is down in the grass of Greenwood, poverty may come to her, betrayal to her, bereavement to her. Keep back the sorrows as long as you can. Do you not know that son may, after a while, have his heart broken. Stand between him and all harm. You may not fight his battles long ; fight them while you may. Throw not the chill of your own despondency over his soul ; rather be like Jesus, who came to

the wedding, hiding his own grief and kindling the joy of others. So I have seen the sun, on a dark day, struggling amidst clouds black, ragged, and portentous, but after a while the sun, with golden pry, heaved back the blackness; and the sun laughed to the lake, and the lake laughed to the sun, and from horizon to horizon, under the saffron sky, the water was all turned into wine.

I learn from this miracle that Christ is *not impatient with the luxuries of life*. It was not necessary that they should have that wine. Hundreds of people have been married without any wine. We do not read that any of the other provisions fell short. When Christ made the wine it was not a necessity, but a positive luxury. I do not believe that he wants us to eat Graham bread, and sleep on hard mattresses, unless we like them the best. I think, if circumstances will allow, we have a right to the luxuries of dress, the luxuries of diet, and the luxuries of residence. There is no more religion in an old coat than in a new one. We can serve God drawn by golden-plated harness as certainly as when we go afoot. Jesus Christ will dwell with us under a frescoed ceiling as well as under a thatched roof; and when you can get wine made out of water, drink as much of it as you can.

What is the difference between a Chinese mud-hovel and a Brooklyn house? What is the difference between the rough bear-skins of the Russian boor and the outfit of an American gentleman? No difference, except that which the Gospel of Christ, directly or indirectly, has caused. When Christ shall have vanquished all the world, I suppose every house will be a mansion, and every garment a robe, and every horse an arch-necked courser, and every carriage a glittering vehicle, and every man a king, and every woman a queen, and the whole earth a paradise; the glories of the natural world harmonizing with the glories of the material world, until the very bells of the horses shall jingle the praises of the Lord.

I learn, further, from this miracle, that Christ has *no impatience with festal joy*, otherwise he would not have accepted the invitation to that wedding. He certainly would not have done that which increased the hilarity. There may have been many in that room who were happy, but there was not one of them that did so much for the joy of the wedding party as Christ himself. He was the chief of the banqueters. When the wine gave out, he supplied it; and so, I take it, he will not deny us the joys that are positively festal.

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 any thing 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."

I remark, again, that *Christ comes to us in the hour of our extremity*. He knew the wine was giving out before there was any embarrassment or mortification. Why did he not perform the miracle sooner? Why wait until it was all gone, and no help could come from any source, and then come in and perform the miracle? This is Christ's way; and when he did come in, at the hour of extremity, he made first-rate wine, so that they cried out, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now." Jesus in the hour of extremity! He seems to prefer that hour.

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!

I wonder if it will be so in our very last extremity. We shall fall suddenly sick, and doctors will come, but in vain. We will try the anodynes, and the stimulants, and the bathings, but all in vain. Something will say, "You must go." No one to hold us back, but the hands of eternity stretched out to pull us on. What then? Jesus will come to us, and as we say, "Lord Jesus, I am afraid of that water; I can not wade through to the other side," he will say, "Take hold of my arm;" and we will take hold of his arm, and then he will put his foot in the surf of the wave, taking us on down deeper, deeper, deeper, and our soul will cry, "All thy waves and billows have gone over me." They cover the feet, come to the knee, pass the girdle, and come to the head, and our soul cries out, "Lord Jesus Christ, I can not hold thine arm any longer!" Then Jesus will turn around, throw both his arms about us, and set us on the beach, far beyond the tossing of the billow. Jesus in the last extremity.

That wedding scene is almost gone now. The wedding-ring has been lost, the tankards have been broken, the house is down: but Jesus invites us to a grander wedding. You know the Bible says that the Church is the Lamb's wife; and the

Lord will after a while come to fetch her home. There will be gleaming of torches in the sky, and the trumpets of God will ravish the air with their music; and Jesus will stretch out his hand, and the Church, robed in white, will put aside her veil, and look up into the face of her Lord the king, and the bridegroom will say to the bride, "Thou hast been faithful through all these years! The mansion is ready! Come home! Thou art fair my love!" and then he shall put upon her brow the crown of dominion, and the table will be spread, and it will reach across the skies, and the mighty ones of heaven will come in, garlanded with beauty and striking their cymbals; and the bridegroom and bride will stand at the head of the table, and the banqueters, looking up, will wonder and admire, and say, "That is Jesus the bridegroom! But the scar on his brow is covered with the coronet, and the stab in his side is covered with a robe!" and "That is the bride! the weariness of her earthly woe lost in the flush of this wedding triumph!"

There will be wine enough at that wedding; not coming up from the poisoned vats of earth, but the vineyards of God will press their ripest clusters, and the cups and the tankards will blush to the brim with the heavenly vintage, and then all the banqueters will drink standing. Esther, having come up from the Bacchanalian revelry of Ahasuerus, where a thousand lords feasted will be there. And the Queen of Sheba, from the banquet of Solomon, will be there. And the mother of Jesus, from the wedding in Cana, will be there. And they all will agree that the earthly feasting was poor compared with that. Then, lifting their chalices in that holy light, they shall cry to the Lord of the feast, "*Thou hast kept the good wine until now!*"

MONEY, AND THE BLESSING.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”—*Malachi* iii. 10.

LONG, consuming drought had come upon the land. The leaves crumpled and fell. The ground cracked open. The cattle stood with swollen tongue, moaning for drink. What is the matter? I will show you. Come into the big room in the Temple where the offerings are kept. The meat is gone. The frankincense is gone. The room is almost empty, although it was the business of the people to keep that room full of offerings. “Fill that room,” says God, “and I will stop the drought. Do you not believe it? Try me. Do it, and I will send you such crops that your barns will not hold them.” They brought the offerings, and one day there came a cloud on the sky. Somebody said, “I think it will rain!” “No.” said another, “we have been deceived too often. The nation must die.” The cloud grew, and it became very dark. Then there was a splash of something on the cheek, and the man put out his hand and said, “Why, it rains!” Now there is a great dash. The water rushes in torrents, The land is soaked. Fertility takes the place of barrenness, and what to do with the unprecedented harvest they knew not. A great amount of it must have rotted in the fields, because there was no room to receive it.

Well, my friends, while the past year in this church was far from being a drought, it was a drought compared with the blessing we might have had. The nigh two hundred souls received, ought to have been two thousand. One-half of our prayers failed. One-half of our hymns were not blessed. One-half of our sermons fell dead. What was the matter? We were behind in offerings. We lacked, as all the churches of the land did, in proper generosity. But last Sabbath we heard the voice of God, and brought our tithes into the store-house.

A grander thing seldom happens. In a time of great commercial depression, when many of our merchants are losing money, and our laborers are out of employ, a call was made upon the people for twenty-one thousand dollars to sweep off the floating debt incurred in putting up this building—a debt which for

the last year has been to us a nuisance and a curse. It seemed a mighty thing to do. Had we not gone out in the spirit of prayer to God, the effort would have been a disgraceful failure. The result made me thankful to God, and proud of you. The Christian Church, north, south, east, and west, will clap their hands when they hear of it. The last impediment is gone out of the track. No more running, Sabbath by Sabbath, against an unpleasant dollar question. We have proved not only that a free church can be well supported, but that it can be built.

"The year of jubilee is come.
Return! ye ransomed sinners, home."

Many of you gave until *you felt it*. There will, for a while, be less luxury on your table, and fewer comforts in your wardrobe. But it will all be paid back again. We keep a record of your subscriptions; but God keeps a better account, and he will pay it all back, dollar for dollar.

People do not understand that passage—"Cast thy bread upon the waters." Sometimes the Nile overflows its banks, and the people throw the seed on the water. As the water subsides, the seed strikes into the ground and comes up. Hence the allusion, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it will come back after many days." What you sow you will reap. Ye who gave a thousand dollars will get back two thousand at least. Ye who gave five hundred dollars will get back a thousand dollars at least. Ye who gave ten dollars will get back twenty dollars at least. Ye who gave a dollar will get back two dollars at least. Do you doubt it? The promise of the text was a promise of temporal blessing. If a man brought the value of one bushel of wheat to the Temple, I think he got the value of five bushels afterward. Or if he brought the value of one sheep, I think he got the value of five sheep afterward. For what you gave God last Sabbath, he will give you, before long, better clothes, more food, richer investments, higher wages, a larger income. And if, at the end of 1872, we are both living, and you will say that you are a farthing poorer for what you gave, come to me, and I will see that you are refunded.

No; you are already repaid in the joy of the thing consummated. Any thing that happens to the old homestead happens to you; and is not this your Father's house? When that is honored you are honored. There was a time when this place was

just like any other building ; but now to thousands of you it is a home. Every inch of it is sacred, and you can not speak of it without tears in your eyes, and deep emotion in your heart. Here you will be comforted when trouble comes. Here you are to be strengthened when temptation assaults. Here your children are to be offered in baptism : and from this room some of you are to see carried out your beloved dead.

Oh, consecrated place !

“It is a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground ;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness.”

But I make a higher application of my text to-day : “Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house ; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” In other words, give the money, and I will give an overwhelming religious influence.

The first thing that I expect, as the result of last Sabbath's work, is the personal conversion of every man, woman and child who made a contribution—beginning with our dear friends who are members of the Board of Trustees, and who are hard workers for the church, but not professors of religion—I expect to see them immediately harvested for God. They will *have* to come in. It can not be that men who have toiled and contributed as they have, shall miss the blessing that comes from the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. Then there are a great many here who are among the most generous, who have come in fresh from the world. Last Sabbath they made their first considerable investment for God. Some of them have for the first time felt the disposition of self-denial for a religious object. That God who moved upon their hearts *to give* will move upon their hearts *to believe*. They will pray to-night. Ay ! ay ! they pray now. They have seen enough of this world to know that it is a poor portion, and they want the Lord Almighty this day to fill them with his presence and salvation. Yea, there are Christian people here who brought their gifts. A new era has dawned upon them. Their doubts are to be gone. Their tongues are to be loosened. The twilight of their souls is to become a noonday.

We have brought the gifts into the store-house. Now look

out for the opening of the heavens! The first blessing that will come will be one of *prayer*. Be early next Friday night at the prayer-meeting, or you will not get in. There will be scores of persons there whom you never saw there before, and the room will be like the vestibule of eternity. Week before last we met and prayed to God for twenty-one thousand dollars. God answered our prayer, and gave us the money. Shall we ever doubt him again? I am not looking for a blessing that comes and lasts only five or six weeks, but for one that will last ten years. What is prayer? A rolling over on the tongue of a few cold formalities? No; it is a 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 thunder-bolt 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. Yea, it gives us infinite advantage. Whatever you want, ask for. Is it for a revelation from heaven upon your soul? Implore it; and the place will be so bright you will have to shut your eyes because of the effulgence. Is it for the salvation of your son John, or Henry, or Frank—or of your daughter Mary, or Helena, or Jane, or Esther? Implore it. Put their very name into your prayer; and that son or that daughter will begin to feel a shaking at the gates of the soul. Is it your husband or your wife that you want saved? Now cry to God, and to-night you will kneel together. Yea, before night you will kneel together at the same altar. Is it for the conviction and conversion of three thousand souls on the spot? It shall be done. We have faith to ask for ten souls, or for twenty souls. Who here dare ask for three thousand souls? God can save three thousand just as easily as he can one.

Another blessing that will fall from the open windows will be a *spirit of work*. The vast majority of the Christians in our church have done nothing for God. I expect them now to take their places. They will hardly be able to wait until the Sabbath-school bell rings, or they will be found going about visiting the sick and the troubled. Every body here will be asking somebody else to be saved. Sometimes it will be by letter; sometimes face to face; sometimes in the church-aisle; sometimes on the way to the ferry; sometimes at the restaurant, at the noon-day meal. Not a Christian here but will be anxious about somebody else. Those church-members will say, "The way is clear now. The time that we used to spend in talking about whether the church would be a financial success, we will now spend in talking about Christ and heaven." This Christian will say, "Here I am, forty years old. I do not know that I have ever been the means of saving a soul. Let me start now." And you will wonder where he is going so rapidly down the street

looking so earnest. He is going for a soul. Before night an arrow will fly from his bow, and another soul will be conquered for the King. I just want in this church two hundred men and women on fire with prayer and Christian zeal; and with such a regiment, I could storm the city for Christ and heaven.

This church was never in such a fair way for a blessing as now. Our experiment of a free church has proved successful. There is no more need of discussing that. Our style of architecture is no more a novelty, for churches all over the land are copying it. We will waste no more time about that. Let us all concentrate now upon one object. So far as I am myself concerned, I consecrate the remaining years and days of my life to the conversion of souls in the old-fashioned way—by repentance for sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I will preach nothing else. I will work for nothing else. I shall take no food, no sleep, no recreation, except such as will make me stronger for this work. Every faculty of my mind I marshal for this assault, and every passion of my soul I enlist in the cause. I want to care nothing for the flowers of the field, save so far as I may twist them into a garland for my Lord; or for music, save as it may lift me up into sympathy with high Gospel themes; or for friendship, save as it may give me a better opportunity of finding my way to the hearts of men. Most damnable will it be for you and me if, with such a grand field to work in, and the windows of heaven open to pour the blessing, we are indolent or unbelieving.

I think, from what I saw last Sabbath, and from what I feel now, that this winter of 1871 is to be the most memorable of all our lives. Are you all ready for the blessing? Yea, Lord, we wait for it. God, in the text, places himself on trial. He says, "Prove me. Take your human scales and weigh me, the Infinite One. Bring the tithes into the store-house, and see if I will not pour out a blessing." We have brought the tithes. Now, Almighty God, let the blessing come! Let the ripe corn feel the sharp edge of the sickle! Let the parched field feel the rain in its face! O Lord, revive thy work! "In the midst of the years, make known! In wrath, remember mercy!"

But it may be that still further means are to be used, and that this morning's call is to be decisive for some soul. What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise and call upon thy God. The judgment

is coming. Eternity is coming. Your last hour for repentance is coming—nay, it may have already come. Why not listen, and live? The heart of the eternal God yearns for you. You have brought your money, now bring your heart. Celebrate our deliverance as a church from financial embarrassment by having the debt of your soul to Christ settled. God has been calling many a long day for your soul. When your child died, he called; when you were sick, he called. Through every bright day, and every dark night, and every harvest-home, and every spring morning, and every autumnal withering, he called, and called, and called. Hear him. Now forsake your sin. Fly for refuge. What is that I hear? Tramp! Tramp! It is the coming on of your eternal destiny. What you mean to do, do now. What crash is that I hear? It is the jarring shut of the door of mercy against a soul that may never be saved. The alarm-bell of the Gospel strikes. Fly! Fly while you may!

Let all the Christian people who brought their money, now bring their prayers. That is a part of the offering that must be brought into the store-house. That is all that God is waiting for. People wonder that the sermon of Jonathan Edwards on the text, "Their feet shall slide in due time," made such a wonderful impression, that the people held on to the pillars of the church lest their feet slip into perdition. They do not know the fact that the night before, a company of Christians had spent the whole night in prayer for a blessing.

People wondered that the sermon of John Livingston, in Scotland, should have brought five hundred souls to Christ. They did not know that Mr. Livingston and his people spent the previous night in prayer. If we have these wrestling Jacobs, we shall have these prevailing Israels.

Let your first thought in the morning be a prayer, and your last at night a prayer; and standing at your counter, send up a prayer; and going down the street, drop on every hand a prayer. God is ready to hear. Angels are ready to fly. The spirit is ready to give. Pray! Pray! Pray! Oh, for such days as M'Cheyne saw in Dundee; as Baxter saw at Kidderminster; as Whitefield saw on the London commons! You say that those days of blessing were accompanied by persecution. We answer that if it be necessary that persecution come with the blessing, then let it come. Let the sword strike, and the fagots kindle. At all risks, and at all hazards, Lord God, give us the blessing.

GREEN PASTURES.

"The Lord is my shepherd."—*Psaln* xxiii. 1.

WHAT with post and rail fences, and our pride in South-down, Astrakhan, and Flemish varieties of sheep, there is no use now of the old-time shepherd. Such an one had abundance of opportunity of becoming a poet, being out-of-doors twelve hours the day, and oftentimes waking up in the night on the hills. If the stars, or the torrents, or the sun, or the flowers, had anything to say, he was very apt to hear it. The Ettrick Shepherd of Scotland, who afterwards took his seat in the brilliant circle of Wilson and Lockhardt, got his wonderful poetic inspiration in the ten years in which he was watching the flocks of Mr. Laidlaw. There is often a sweet poetry in the rugged prose of the Scotch shepherd. One of these Scotch shepherds lost his only son, and he knelt down in prayer, and was overheard to say, "O Lord, it has seemed good in thy providence to take from me the staff of my right hand at the time when to us sand-blind mortals I seemed to be most in need of it; and how I shall climb up the hill of sorrow and auld age without it, thou mayst ken, but I dinna."

David, the shepherd-boy, is watching his father's sheep. They are pasturing on the very hills where afterward a Lamb was born of which you have heard much, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." David, the shepherd-boy, was beautiful, brave, musical, and poetic. I think often he forgot the sheep in his reveries. There in the solitude he struck the harp-string that is thrilling through all ages. David, the boy, was gathering the material for David the poet, and David the man. Like other boys, David was fond of using his knife among the saplings, and he had noticed the exuding of the juice of the tree; and when he became a man, he said, "The trees of the Lord are full of sap." David, the boy, like other boys, had been fond of hunting the birds'-nests, and he had driven the old stork off the nest to find how many eggs were under her; and when he became a man, he said, "As for the stork, the fir-trees are her house." In boyhood he had heard the terrific thunder-storm that frightened the red deer into premature sickness; and when he became a man, he said,

"The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve." David, the boy, had lain upon his back looking up at the stars and examining the sky, and to his boyish imagination the sky seemed like a piece of divine embroidery, the divine fingers working in the threads of light and the beads of stars; and he became a man, and wrote, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers." When he became an old man, thinking of the goodness of God, he seemed to hear the bleating of his father's sheep across many years, and to think of the time when he tended them on the Bethlehem hills, and he cries out in the text, "*The Lord is my shepherd.*"

If God will help me this morning, I will talk to you of the shepherd's plaid, the shepherd's crook, the shepherd's dogs, the shepherd's pasture-grounds, and the shepherd's flocks.

THE SHEPHERD'S PLAID.

It would be preposterous for a man going out to rough and besouling work to put on splendid apparel. The potter does not work in velvet; the serving-maid does not put on satin while toiling at her duties; the shepherd does not wear a splendid robe in which to go out amidst the storms, and the rocks, and the nettles: he puts on the rough apparel appropriate to his exposed work. The Lord our Shepherd, coming out to hunt the lost sheep, puts on no regal apparel, but the plain garment of our humanity. There was nothing pretentious about it.

I know the old painters represent a halo around the babe Jesus, but I do not suppose that there was any more halo about that child than about the head of any other babe that was born that Christmas-eve in Judea. Becoming a man, he wore a seamless garment. The scissors and needle had done nothing to make it graceful. I take it to have been a sack with three holes in it: one for the neck, and two for the arms. Although the gamblers quarreled over it, that is no evidence of its value. I have seen two rag-pickers quarrel over the refuse of an ash-barrel. No; in the wardrobe of heaven he left the sandals of light, the girdles of beauty, the robes of power, and put on the besouled and tattered raiment of our humanity. Sometimes he did not even wear the seamless robe. What is that hanging about the waist of Christ? Is it a badge of authority? Is it a royal coat of arms? No: it is a towel. The disciples' feet are filthy from the walk on the long way, and are not fit to be

put upon the sofas on which they are to recline at the meal, and so Jesus washes their feet, and gathers them up in the towel to dry them.

The work of saving this world was rough work, rugged work, hard work; and Jesus put on the raiment, the plain raiment, of our flesh. The storms were to beat him, the crowds were to jostle him, the dust was to sprinkle him, the mobs were to pursue him. Oh, Shepherd of Israel! leave at home thy bright array. For thee, what streams to ford, what nights all unsheltered! He puts upon him the plain raiment of our humanity; wears our woes; and while earth and heaven and hell stand amazed at the abnegation, wraps around him the shepherd's plaid.

“Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of his prayer.”

THE SHEPHERD'S CROOK.

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 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 independant 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 trouble.

When I was on the steamer the other day, coming across the ocean, I got a cinder in my eye, and several persons tried to get it out very gently, but it could not be taken out in that way. I was told that the engineer had a facility in such cases. I went to him. He put his large, sooty hand on me, took a knife, and wrapped the lid of the eye around the knife. I expected to be hurt very much, but without any pain, and instantly, he removed the cinder. Oh, there come times in our Christian life when our spiritual vision is being spoiled; and all gentle appliances fail. Then there comes some giant trouble, and black-handed, lays hold of us and removes that which would have ruined our vision forever. I will gather all your joys together in one regiment of ten companies, and I will put them under Colonel Joy. Then I will gather all your sorrows together in one regiment of ten companies, and put them under Colonel Breakheart. Then I will ask, Which of these regiments has gained for you the greater spiritual victories? Certainly that under Colonel Breakheart.

In the time of the war, you may remember, at the South and North, the question was whether the black troops would fight; but when they were put into the struggle on both sides, they did heroically. In the great day of eternity it will be found that it was not the *white* regiment of joys that gained your greatest successes, but the *black troops* of trouble, misfortune, and disaster. Where you have gained one spiritual success from your prosperity, you have gained ten spiritual successes from your adversity.

There is no animal that struggles more violently than a sheep when you corner it and catch hold of it. Down in the glen I see a group of men around a lost sheep. A ploughman comes along and seizes the sheep, and tries to pacify it; but it is more frightened than ever. A miller comes along, puts down his grist, and caresses the sheep, and it seems as if it would die of fright. After a while some one breaks through the thicket. He says, "Let me have the poor thing." He comes up and lays his arms around the sheep, and it is immediately quiet. Who is

the last man that comes? It is the shepherd. Ah, my friends, be not afraid of the Shepherd's crook. It is never used on you, save in mercy, to pull you back. The hard, cold iceberg of trouble will melt in the warm Gulf Stream of divine sympathy.

There is one passage I think you misinterpret: "The bruised reed he will not break." Do you know that the shepherd in olden times played upon these reeds? They were very easily bruised; but when they were bruised they were never mended. The shepherd could so easily make another one, he would snap the old one and throw it away, and get another. The Bible says it is not so with our Shepherd. When the music is gone out of a man's soul, God does not snap him in twain and throw him away. He mends and restores. "The bruised reed he will not break."

"When, in the o'erhanging heavens of fate,
The threatening clouds of darkness dwell,
Then let us humbly watch and wait;
It shall be well; it shall be well.

"And when the storm has passed away,
And sunshine smiles on flood and fell,
How sweet to think, how sweet to say,
It has been well, it has been well."

THE SHEPHERD'S DOGS.

They watch the straying sheep, and drive them back again. Every shepherd has his dog—from the nomads of the Bible times, down to the Scotch herdsman watching his flocks on the Grampian Hills. Our shepherd employs the criticisms and persecutions of the world as his dogs. There are those, you know, whose whole work it is to watch the inconsistencies of Christians, and bark at them. If one of God's sheep gets astray, the world howls. With more avidity than a shepherd's dog ever caught a stray sheep by the flanks or lugged it by the ears, worldlings seize the Christian astray. It ought to do us good to know that we are thus watched. It ought to put us on our guard. They can not bite us, if we stay near the Shepherd. The sharp knife of wordly assault will only trim the vines until they produce better grapes. The more you pound marjoram and rosemary, the sweeter they smell. The more dogs take after you, the quicker you will get to the gate. The bloody muzzle of the papacy hounded fifty million Protestants into glory.

You have noticed that different flocks of sheep have different

marks upon them ; sometimes a red mark, sometimes a blue mark, sometimes a straight mark, and sometimes a crooked mark. The Lord our Shepherd has a mark for his sheep. It is a red mark—the mark of the cross. “Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

THE SHEPHERD’S PASTURE-GROUNDS.

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.”

THE SHEPHERD’S FOLD.

The time of sheep-shearing was a very glad time. The neighbors gathered together, and they poured wine and danced for joy. The sheep were put in a place inclosed by a wall,

where it was very easy to count them and know whether any of them had been taken by the jackals or dogs. The inclosure was called the sheep-fold. Good news I have to tell you to-day, in that our Lord the Shepherd has a sheep-fold, and those who are gathered in it shall never be struck by the storm, shall never be touched by the jackals of temptation and trouble. It has a high wall—so high that no troubles can get in—so high that the joys can not get out. How glad the old sheep will be to find the lambs that left them a good many years ago! Millions of children in heaven! Oh, what a merry heaven it will make! Not many long-metre psalms there; They will be in the majority, and will run away with our song, carrying it up to a still higher point of ecstasy. Oh, there will be shouting! If children on earth clapped their hands and danced for joy, what will they do when, to the gladness of children on earth, is added the gladness of childhood in heaven.

It is time we got over these morbid ideas of how we shall get out of this world. You make your religion an undertaker planing coffins and driving hearses. Your religion smells of the varnish of a funeral casket. Rather let your religion to-day come out and show you the sheep-fold that God has provided for you. Ah, you say there is a river between this and that. I know it; but that Jordan is only for the sheep-washing, and they shall go up on the other banks snow-white. They follow the great Shepherd. They heard his voice long ago. They are safe now—one fold and one Shepherd!

Alas for those who are finally found outside the inclosure. The night of their sin howls with jackals; they are thirsting for their blood. The very moment that a lamb may be frisking upon the hills, a bear may be looking at it from the thicket.

The historian tells us that when Moscow was burning there was a party dancing in the palace right over a gunpowder magazine. They knew not it was there. The flames came on, and Carnot said, "Let us have one dance more;" and they shouted all through the palace, "One dance more!" The music played, the feet bounded, the laughter rang. But suddenly, through the smoke, and fire, and thunder of the explosion, death and eternity broke in. Alas! if any of my hearers keep on in the dance of worldliness and sin, heedless

of the warning until the terror of eternity explode upon their souls, and the foundations give away, and they drop into the burning.

The shepherd of old used to play beautiful music, and sometimes the sheep would gather around him and listen. To-day my heavenly Shepherd calls to you with the very music of heaven, bidding you to leave your sin and accept his pardon. Oh, that all this flock would hear the piping of the Good Shepherd!

THE BATTLE OF THE PITCHERS.

“And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp, and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.”—*Judges* vii. 20, 21.

THAT is the strangest battle ever fought. God had told Gideon to go down and thrash the Midianites, but his army is too large; for the glory must be given to God; and not to man. And so proclamation is made that all those of the troops who are cowardly, and want to go home, may go; and twenty-two thousand of them scampered away, leaving only ten thousand men. But God says the army is too large yet; and so he orders these ten thousand remaining to march down through a stream, and commands Gideon to notice in what manner these men drink of the water as they pass through it. If they get down on all-fours and drink, then they are to be pronounced lazy and incompetent for the campaign; but if, in passing through the stream, they scoop up the water in the palm of their hand and drink, and pass on, they are to be the men selected for the battle. Well, the ten thousand men march down in the stream, and the most of them come down on all-fours, and plunge their mouths, like a horse or an ox, into the water and drink; but there are three hundred men who, instead of stooping, just dip the palm of their hands in the water, and bring it to their lips, “lapping it as a dog lappeth.” Those three hundred brisk, rapid, enthusiastic men are chosen for the campaign. They are each to take a trumpet in the right hand and a pitcher in the left hand, and a lamp inside the pitcher, and then at a given signal they are to blow the trumpets, and throw down the pitchers, and hold up the lamps. So it was done.

It is night. I see a great host of Midianites, sound asleep in the valley of Jezreel. Gideon comes up with his three hundred picked men, and when every thing is ready, the signal is given, and they blow the trumpets, and they throw down the pitchers, and hold up the lamps, and the great host of Midianites, waking out of a sound sleep, take the crash of the crockery and the glare of the lamps for the coming on of an overwhelming foe; and they run, and cut themselves to pieces, and horribly perish.

The lessons of this subject are very spirited and impressive. This seemingly valueless lump of quartz has the pure gold in it. The smallest dew-drop on the meadow at night has a star sleeping in its bosom, and the most insignificant passage of Scripture has in it a shining truth. God's mint coins no small change.

I learn in the first place, from this subject, *the lawfulness of Christian stratagem*. You know very well that the greatest victories ever gained by Washington or Napoleon were gained through the fact that they came when and in a way they were not expected—sometimes falling back to draw out the foe, sometimes breaking out from ambush, sometimes crossing a river on unheard-of rafts; all the time keeping the opposing forces in wonderment as to what would be done next. The Northern troops beat their life out in the straightforward fight at Fredericksburg, but it was through strategy they got the victory at Lookout Mountain.

You all 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 hydropathy 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 results in any thing but the blurring of the spiritual eye-sight. 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 moved. 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.

I think that the finest of all the fine arts is the art of doing good, and yet this art is the least cultured. We have in the kingdom of God to-day enough troops to conquer the whole earth for Christ if we only had skilful manœuvring. I would rather have the three hundred lamps and pitchers of Christian stratagem than one hundred thousand drawn swords of literary and ecclesiastical combat.

I learn from this subject, also, that *a small part of the army of God will have to do all the hard fighting*. Gideon's army was originally composed of thirty-two thousand men, but they went off until there were only ten thousand left, and that was subtracted from until there were only three hundred. It is the same in all ages of the Christian Church: a few men have to do the hard fighting. Take a membership of a thousand, and you generally find that fifty people do the work. Take a membership of five hundred, and you generally find that ten people do the work. There are scores of churches where two or three people do the work.

It is the business of the Lay College to correct that fault; and instead of having three hundred, we will have thirty-two thousand, all armed for God. But in the mean time, we must mourn that there is so much useless lumber in the mountains of Lebanon. I think, of the ten millions membership of the Christian Church to-day, if five millions of the names were off the books, the Church would be stronger. You know that the more cowards and drones there are in any army the weaker it is. I would rather have the three hundred picked men of Gideon than the twenty-two thousand unsifted host. How many Christians there are standing in the way of all progress! I think it is the duty of the Church of God to ride over them, and the quicker it does it the quicker it does its duty.

Do not worry, O Christian, if you have to do more than your

share of the work. You had better thank God that He has called you to be one of the picked men, rather than to belong to the host of stragglers! Would not you rather be one of the three hundred that fight, than the twenty-two thousand that run? I suppose those cowardly Gideonites who went off congratulated themselves. They said, "We got rid of all that fighting, did not we? How lucky we have been; that battle cost us nothing at all." But they got none of the spoils of the victory. After the battle, the three hundred men went down and took the wealth of the Midianites, and out of the cups and platters of their enemies they feasted. And the time will come, my dear brethren, when the hosts of darkness will be routed, and Christ will say to his troops, "Well done, my brave men, go up and take the spoils! Be more than conquerors forever!" and in that day all deserters will be shot!

Again: I learn from this subject that *God's way is different from man's, but is always the best way.* If we had the planning of that battle, we would have taken those thirty-two thousand men that originally belonged to the army, and we would have drilled them, and marched them up and down by the day, and week, and month, and we would have had them equipped with swords or spears, according to the way of arming in those times; and then we would have marched them down in solid column upon the foe. But that is not the way. God depletes the army, and takes away all their weapons, and gives them a lamp, and a pitcher, and a trumpet, and tells them to go down and drive out the Midianites. I suppose some wiseacres were there who said, "That is not military tactics. The idea of three hundred men, unarmed, conquering such a great host of Midianites!" It was the best way. What sword, spear, or cannon ever accomplished such a victory as the lamp, pitcher, and trumpet?

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 stand-point and tempera-

ment ; 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. His child falls from a third-story window, and has its life dashed out ; his most confident investment tumbles him into bankruptcy ; his friends, upon whom he depended, aid the natural force of gravitation in taking him down ; his life is a Bull Run defeat. Instead of twenty-two thousand advantages, he has only ten thousand—ay, only three hundred—ay, none at all. How many good people there are at their wits' end about their livelihood, about their health, about their reputation. But they will find out it is the best way after a while ; God will show them that he depletes their advantages just for the same reason he depleted the army of Gideon—that they may be induced to throw themselves on his mercy.

A grape-vine says in the early spring, "How glad I am to get through the winter ! I shall have no more trouble now ! Summer weather will come, and the garden will be very beautiful !" But the gardener comes, and cuts the vine here and there with his knife. The twigs begin to fall, and the grape-vine cries out, "Murder ! what are you cutting me for ?" "Ah," says the gardener, "I don't mean to kill you. If I did not do this you would be the laughing-stock of all the other vines before the season is over." Months go on, and one day

the gardener comes under the trellis, where great clusters of grapes hang, and the grape-vine says, "Thank you, sir; you could not have done anything so kind as to have cut me with that knife." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." No pruning, no grapes; no grinding-mill, no flour; no battle, no victory; no cross, no crown!

So God's way, in the redemption of the world, is different from ours. If we had our way, we would have had Jesus stand in the door of heaven and beckon the nations up to light, or we would have had angels flying around the earth proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. Why is it that the cause goes on so slowly? Why is it that the chains stay on, when God could knock them off? Why do thrones of despotism stand, when God could so easily demolish them? It is his way, in order that all generations may co-operate, and that all men may know they cannot do the work themselves. Just in proportion as these pyramids of sin go up in height will they come down in ghastliness of ruin.

Oh, thou father of all iniquity! If ye can hear my voice above the crackling of the flames, drive on thy projects, dispatch thy emissaries, build thy temples, and forge thy chains; but know that thy fall from heaven was not greater than thy final overthrow shall be when thou shalt be driven disarmed into thy fiery den; and for every lie thou hast framed upon earth thou shalt have an additional hell of fury poured into thine anguish by the vengeance of our God; and all heaven shall shout at the overthrow, as from the ransomed earth the song breaks through the skies, "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Hallelujah! for the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ!" God's way in the composition of the Bible, God's way in the Christian's life, God's way in the redemption of the world, God's way in everything—different from man's way, but the best.

I learn from this subject, that the overthrow of God's enemies will be sudden and terrific. There is the army of the Midianites down in the valley of Jezreel. I suppose their mighty men are dreaming of victory. Mount Gilboa never stood sentinel for so large a host. The spears and the shields of the Midianites gleam in the moonlight, and glance on the eye of the Israelites, who hover like a battle of eagles, ready to swoop from the cliff. Sleep on, O army of the Midianites! With the night to hide them, and the mountain to guard them, and strong arms to

defend them, let no slumbering foeman dream of disaster! Peace to the captains and the spearmen!

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, rout, 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?

If those Midianites had only given up their swords the day before the disaster, all would have been well; and if you will now surrender the sins with which you have been fighting against God, you will be safe. Oh, make peace with him now, through Jesus Christ the Lord. With the clutch of a drowning man seize the cross. Oh, surrender! Surrender! Christ, with his hand on his pierced side, asks you to.

LEFT-HANDED MEN.

"But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man left-handed; and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab."—*Judges* iii. 15.

EHUD was a ruler in Israel. He was left-handed, and, what was peculiar about the tribe of Benjamin, to which he belonged, there were in it seven-hundred left-handed men; and yet, so dexterous had they all become in the use of the left hand, that the Bible says they could sling stones at a hair's breadth, and not miss.

Well, there was a king by the name of Eglon, who was an oppressor of Israel. He imposed upon them a most outrageous tax. Ehud, the man of whom I first spoke, had a divine commission to destroy that oppressor. He came, pretending that he was going to pay the tax, and asked to see King Eglon. He was told he was in the summer-house, the place to which the king retired when it was too hot to sit in the palace. This summer-house was a place surrounded by flowers, and trees, and springing fountains, and warbling birds. Ehud entered the summer-house, and said to King Eglon that he had a secret errand with him. Immediately all the attendants were waved out of the royal presence. King Eglon rises up to receive the messenger. Ehud, the left-handed man, puts his left hand to his right side, pulls out a dagger, and thrusts Eglon through until the haft went in after the blade. Eglon falls. Ehud comes forth to blow a trumpet of right amidst the mountains of Ephraim; and a great host is marshalled, and proud Moab submits to the conqueror, and Israel is free. So, O Lord, let all thine enemies perish! So, O Lord, let all thy friends triumph!

I learn first, 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 overspans 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.

But I do not suppose that Ehud, the first time he took a sling in his left hand, could throw a stone a hair's-breadth, and not miss. I suppose it was practice that gave him the wonderful dexterity. Go forth to your spheres of duty, and be not discouraged if, in your first attempts, you miss the mark. Ehud missed it. Take another stone, put it carefully into the sling, swing it around your head, take better aim, and the next time you will strike the centre. The first time a mason rings his trowel upon the brick, he does not expect to put up a perfect wall. The first time a carpenter sends the plane over a board, or drives a bit through a beam, he does not expect to make perfect execution. The first time a boy attempts a rhyme, he does not expect to chime a "Lalla Rookh," or a "Lady of the Lake." Do not be surprised if, in your first efforts at doing good, you are not very largely successful. Understand that usefulness is an art, a science, a trade.

There was an oculist performing a very difficult operation on the human eye. A young doctor stood-by and said, "How easily you do that; it don't seem to cause you any trouble at all." "Ah," said the old oculist, "it is very easy now, but I spoiled a hatful of eyes to learn that." Be not surprised if it takes some practice before we can help men to moral eye-sight, and bring them to a vision of the cross. Left-handed men, to the work! Take the Gospel for a sling, and faith and repentance for the smooth stone from the brook; take sure aim, God direct the weapon, and great Goliaths will tumble before you.

When Garibaldi was going out to battle, he told his troops what he wanted them to do, and after he had described what he wanted them to do, they said, "Well, general, what are you going to give us for all this?" "Well," he replied, "I don't know what else you will get, but you will get hunger, and cold, and wounds, and death. How do you like it?" His men stood before him for a little while in silence, and then they threw up their hands and cried, "We are the men! we are the men!" The Lord Jesus Christ calls you to his service. I do not promise you an easy time in this world. You may have persecutions, and trials, and misrepresentations; but afterward there comes an eternal weight of glory, and you can bear the wounds, and the bruises, and the misrepresentations, if you can have the reward afterward. Have you not enough enthusiasm to cry out, "We are the men! we are the men!"

I learn also from this subject *the danger of worldly elevation*. This Eglon was what the world called a great man. There were hundreds of people who would have considered it the greatest honour of their life just to have him speak to them; yet, although he is so high up in worldly position, he is not beyond the reach of Ehud's dagger. I see a great many people trying to climb up in social position, having an idea that there is a safe place somewhere far above, not knowing that the mountain of fame has a top like Mont Blanc, covered with perpetual snow.

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 honour, 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. It may not be said of us, "He was a great general," or "He was an honored chieftain," or "He was mighty in worldly attainments;" but this thing may be said of you and of me, "He was a good citizen, a faithful Christian, a friend of Jesus." And that in the last day will be the highest of all eulogiums.

I learn further from this subject that *death comes to the summer-house*. Eglon did not expect to die in that fine place. Amidst all the flower-leaves that drifted like summer snow into the window; in the tinkle and dash of the fountains; in the sound of a thousand leaves fluttering on one tree-branch; in the cool breeze that came up to shake feverish trouble out of the king's locks—there was nothing that spake of death, but there he died! In the winter, when the snow is a shroud, and when the wind is a dirge, it is easy to think of our mortality; but when the weather is pleasant, and all our surroundings are agreeable, how difficult it is for us to appreciate the truth that we are mortal! And yet my text teaches that death does sometimes come to the summer house. He is blind and can not see

the leaves. He is deaf, and can not hear the fountains. Oh, if death would ask us for victims, we could point him to hundreds of people who would rejoice to have him come. Push back the door of that hovel. Look at that little child—cold, and sick, and hungry. It has never heard the name of God but in blasphemy. Parents intoxicated, staggering around its straw bed. Oh, Death, *there* is a mark for thee! Up with it into the light! Before those little feet stumble on life's pathway, give them rest.

Here is an aged man. He has done his work. He has done it gloriously. The companions of his youth all gone, his children dead, he longs to be at rest, and wearily the days and the nights pass. He says, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Oh, Death, *there* is a mark for thee! Take from him the staff, and give him the sceptre! Up with him into the light, where eyes never grow dim, and the air whitens not through the long years of eternity. Ah, Death will not do that. Death turns back from the straw bed, and from the aged man ready for the skies, and comes to the summer-house. What doest thou here thou bony, ghastly monster, amidst this waving grass, and under this sunlight sifting through the tree-branches? Children are at play. How quickly their feet go, and their locks toss in the wind. Father and mother stand at the side of the room looking on, enjoying their glee. It does not seem possible that the wolf should ever break into that fold and carry off a lamb. Meanwhile an old archer stands looking through the thicket. He points his arrow at the brightest of the group—he is a sure marksman—the bow bends, the arrow speeds! Hush now. The quick feet have stopped, and the locks toss no more in the wind. Laughter has gone out of the hall. *Death in the summer-house!*

Here is a father in mid-life; his coming home at night is the signal for mirth. The children rush to the door, and there are books on the evening stand, and the hours pass away on glad feet. There is nothing wanting in that home. Religion is there, and sacrifices on the altar morning and night. You look in that household, and say, "I can not think of any thing happier. I do not really believe the world is so sad a place as some people describe it to be." The scene changes. Father is sick. The doors must be kept shut. The death-watch chirps dolefully on the hearth. The children whisper, and walk softly where once they romped. Passing the house late at night, you see the quick glancing of lights from room to room. It is all over. *Death in the summer-house!*

Here is an aged mother—aged, but not infirm. You think you will have the joy of caring for her wants a good while yet. As she goes from house to house, to children and grandchildren her coming is a dropping of sunlight in the dwelling. Your children see her coming through the lane, and they cry, "Grandmother's come!" Care for you has marked up her face with many a deep wrinkle, and her back stoops with carrying your burdens. Some day she is very quiet. She says she is not sick, but something tells you, you will not much longer have a mother. She will sit with you no more at the table, nor at the hearth. Her soul goes out so gently, you do not exactly know the moment of its going. Fold the hands that have done so many kindnesses for you right over the heart that has beat with love toward you since before you were born. Let the pilgrim rest. She is weary. *Death in the summer-house!*

Gather about us what we will of comfort and luxury, when the pale messenger comes, he does not stop to look at the architecture of the house before he comes in; nor, entering, does he wait to examine the pictures we have gathered on the wall; or, bending over your pillow, he does not stop to see whether there is color in the cheek, or gentleness in the eye, or intelligence in the brow. But what of that? Must we stand forever mourning among the graves of our dead? No! No! The people in Bengal bring cages of birds to the graves of their dead, and then they open the cages, and the birds go singing heavenward. So I would bring to the graves of your dead to-night all bright thoughts and congratulations, and bid them think of victory and redemption. I stamp on the bottom of the grave, and it breaks through into the light and the glory of heaven.

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 call those straits? They call them the "Gate of Tears." Oh, I stand to-night 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 all follow and be illumined!

There was a gentleman in a rail-car who saw in that same car three passengers of very different circumstances. The first was a maniac. He was carefully guarded by his attendants; his mind, like a ship dismasted, was beating against a dark, desolate coast, from which no help could come. The train stopped, and the man was taken out into the asylum, to waste away, perhaps, through years of gloom. The second passenger was a culprit. The outraged law had seized on him. As the cars jolted, the chains rattled. On his face were crime, depravity, and despair. The train halted, and he was taken out to the penitentiary, to which he had been condemned. There was the third passenger, under far different circumstances. She was a bride. Every hour was gay as a marriage-bell. Life glittered and beckoned. Her companion was taking her to his father's house. The train halted. The old man was there to welcome her to her new home, and his white locks snowed down upon her as he sealed his word with a father's kiss.

Quickly we fly toward eternity. We will soon be there. Some leave this life condemned culprits. They refused a pardon, they carry their chains. Oh, may it be with us, that, leaving this fleeting life for the next, we may find our Father ready to greet us to our new home with him forever. That will be a marriage banquet! Father's welcome! Father's bosom! Father's kiss! Heaven! Heaven!

HORACE GREELEY, LIVING AND DEAD.

“Howl, fir tree, for the cedar has fallen.”—*Zech. xi. 2.*

WHEN the smaller growths of the forest topple, there is but little excitement in the wood, the stork does not so much as flutter a wing, nor does the hart lift its mouth dripping from the water-brooks. But when a cedar, which has been standing for ages, the glory of the forest, touched with decay, or under the swoop of the hurricane, begins to weigh its anchorage of root, and falls, the crash startles the eagle from its aerie, and sends the stag in wild plunge from the rock, and shakes the very foundation of the mountains.

A few hours ago a black and swarthy axeman went into the forests of men. He had hewn down many a tall and gigantic growth; he has been swinging his axe for six thousand years, and he knows how to cut. He aimed the sharp and fatal edge at one we all knew—stroke after stroke, stroke after stroke, until the cedar which had stood the blasts of trouble and trial, and abuse and toil, drops into the dust—two hemispheres resounding with the fall. “Howl, fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen!”

Horace Greeley is dead! and the caricaturist drops his pencil, the author his pen, the merchant his yard-stick, the labourer his pickaxe, the child its toy, and the world its eulogium. Taking it in all, I think it is the saddest death of any public man in our whole history. Let neither pen nor tongue, by useless review or unbrotherly criticism, add one drop to the nations cup of grief; it is brimful already. Be it ours the Christian duty of learning the lessons of this man, living and dead.

I think the life of this man ought to *kindle hope and enthusiasm in all the struggling*. There are a great many young men who tell me that they have no chance. They say: “Yonder is a young man who started with a large fortune, and here is a young man who married a fine estate, and here is another who has been through our best universities, and has finished his education in Edinburgh or Germany; but I have no education; I have no money; I have no chance.” You have as good a

chance as Horace Greeley, the boy. See him in Vermont, in homespun, dyed with butternut bark, helping his father get a living for the family out of very poor soil. I tell you that one who has, with bare feet and in tow shirt, helped a father to get out of poor soil a living for mothers and sisters, has a right to publish fifty books concerning "what he knows about farming." See the lad stepping up from the Albany boat on the New York Battery, and then coming and sitting down on the steps of a printing-house, waiting for the employer to come in the morning. Then look at him sitting in the foremost editorial chair of all the world, and then tell me again you have no chance. If a young man starts from a good, honest, industrious Christian mother, he graduates from a university better than that of Berlin or Edinburgh, with a diploma in each hand. Every sound man starts life with a capital of at least one hundred thousand dollars—I say every man. You tell me to prove it. I will prove it. Your right arm—will you take five thousand dollars and have it cut off? "No," you say. Then certainly it is worth five thousand dollars, and your left arm is worth as much, and your right foot as much, and your left foot as much. Twenty thousand dollars of capital to start with. Your mind—for how much would you go up and spend your life in Bloomingdale Asylum? Twenty thousand dollars for your intellect? You would refuse it. It is worth that, anyhow—forty thousand dollars of equipment. Then you have an immortal soul—for how much would you sell it? For sixty thousand dollars? "No," you say, with indignation. Then certainly it is worth that much. And there are your one hundred thousand dollars—the magnificent outfit with which the Lord God Almighty started every one of you. And yet there are young men who are waiting for others to come and start them—to make them; waiting for institutions to make them; waiting for circumstances to make them. Fool! go and make yourself. Columbus was a weaver; Halley a soap boiler; Arkwright a barber; Æsop a slave; the learned Bloomfield was a shoemaker; Hogarth was an engraver of pewter plate; Sixtus the Fifth was a swine-herdsman; Homer was a beggar; and Horace Greeley started life in New York with ten dollars and seventy-five cents in his pocket, as well off as if he had the eleven full round dollars. But there are a great many young men who are waiting for the other twenty-five cents before they begin. "Oh," you say, "it was his eccentricities that got him success." A great many men

have supposed that, and they have aped him, and they got so far as the bad penmanship and the slouched hat, but they never got to be Horace Greeleys. So it was in the days of Lord Byron. Excessively admired he was, and there were many people in England who resolved that they would be Lord Byrons, and they got to be, so far as a very large shirt-collar went, but no nearer. It was not eccentricity that made Horace Greeley; it was hard work. Proverbs xxii. 29; "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings."

Again, my friends, there comes from this providence a *warning for all brain-workers*. Mr. Greeley at my own table, ten days before his nomination at Cincinnati, told me that he had not had a sound sleep for fifteen years! I said to him, "Why do you sit up in your room writing, with your hand up at that elevation, on a board raised to that point?" "Well," he said, "I have so much work to do, that I must not have my chest cramped at all. I must keep all my faculties of body and mind in full play, or I cannot get on." During the late war in connection with his editorial duty, almost every evening you might have seen him on the rail-car, going out to meet a lecturing engagement. He was writing articles for other journals beside his own. He was preparing a history of the war, which history might have taken the exclusive time of any other man for two or three years. And now people say it is political disappointment that killed him. I do not believe it, unless it is on the principle that it is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. A man with his magnificent cerebral development would not have been overthrown in that way; it was because for twenty years he had been giving the death-blow with his own pen—extreme work, work which he did conscientiously, but it was *overwork*. Work is good, as I said in the former head of my discourse; but too much work is death.

Now brethren, of literary work, you had better hold up. If you are going at the rate of sixty miles an hour, you had better stop and go no more than thirty. The temptations to overwork for literary men are multiplying all the time in increased newspapers and magazines and lecturing platforms. The temptation to night-work is especially great—that kind of work which is most exhausting and ruinous. When the sun goes down, God puts his candle out, and says to the world, "My child, you had better go to sleep: I have put the candle out." The brass-headed nails of coffins are made out of gaslight! The money

that a man makes by midnight toil he pays toward the expenses of his own funeral. When the devil cannot stop a good man's work by making him lazy, then he comes into the editor's room, or into the minister's study, or into the artist's studio, and he says, "Go it! you ought to be doing five times the work you are doing. You ought to write two books this year. You ought to send out twenty or thirty additional articles. You ought to deliver fifty lectures, at two hundred dollars a night." Then, when his health fails, there is satanic congratulation. The devil first tries to stop a useful man by making him lazy. Failing in that, he then puts on the lash and digs in the spurs, and drives him to death. I say, therefore, to the men who are toiling with their brain, you had better "slow-up," as they say on the rail-road lines. I hear somebody say, "You had better take your own advice." I will. I am being converted under my own sermon. God gives to every man a certain amount of work, and He does not want him to do any more than that. "Do thyself no harm," is advice no more appropriate to the jailor when the prison is tumbling around his ears than it is appropriate to those the wards of whose health and the fastnesses of whose strength begin to tremble with the earthquake. Paul was very careful with his body; long before the days of expressage he sent hundreds of miles for his great coat to Troas. O ye men of literary toil! you have been careful about keeping the candle snuffed and burning brightly, is it not most time you began to look after the candlestick? The sharp sword will not make any execution, unless you have a handle to it. Through all the editorial-rooms and through all the studies of this country let warning reverberate; let it come up to night from the graves of Kirke White, of Henry J. Raymond, and of Horace Greeley.

Again, I have found, since this calamity came to the nation, the great *law of brotherhood illustrated*. Have you not been surprised to see how every heart thrilled in sympathy with this trial? Take this in consideration of the fact that we are now at the close of the meanest and most dastardly chapter of personality, and vituperation, and scorn, and political calumny that has ever been written. It is most marvellous. If there is any word expressive of contempt, and of hatred, and of disgust, and of defamation that has not been used within the past six months, it is because the dictionaries have made the word obsolete. Why, the cylinders of the printing presses have

hardly cooled off from the fiery assault. But the very moment this death is announced, how everything is hushed! And next Wednesday, when the nation follows Horace Greeley to his grave, in the vast procession you will not be able to tell who were Republicans and who were Liberal-Republicans. All the States will vote for him now, and by the electoral college of the whole world he will be proclaimed unanimously President of the great reformatory movements of the last twenty years. Oh! how quickly the nation grounded arms! how quickly the sword clanked back into the scabbard! The drums that were beating the victory of his political opponent deepen now into the grand march for the dead. Oh, is it not beautiful? We are all brothers, after all. The sorrow reveals it. It is just as when two brothers have been fighting about father's property and will not speak to each other. Mother dies, and they go home to the obsequies, and John stands on one side of the mother's coffin, and George on the other side, and, for the first time speaking in five years, say, "Wasn't she a good mother?" And then hands clasp, and they say, "Oh! we can't live this way any longer, can we?" And so, the two great parties, after long and bitter strife, now clasp hands over the sepulchre of the dead, and promise new exertion for the welfare of the country. If there be in all this audience a base heart in which the serpent of bad feeling against the renowned man still lingers, next Wednesday let him take that serpent and fling it under the hoofs of the black-tasselled horses that shall draw out to their last resting-place this great man. But I am lion-hunting to-night, and I have no ammunition to waste on vultures that plunge their beaks into the bosoms of the dead.

I learn from this solemn providence that *newspaper-men, like all other men, will have to come to an account before God.* Nothing could keep this man when the time came for him to go. God called; he went. The doctors could not hold him back; the prayers of a nation could not hold him back; even his own loving daughter, her hand in his, could not hold him back. Surely she had enough trouble. Mother gone, and one nearer and dearer than mother gone—all within a few weeks. God comfort that triple anguish, and be to her more than father, or mother, or lover. I say, when God called him to meet his account, he had to go. It is a vast responsibility that rests upon people that set type or sit in editorial chairs. The audience is so large, the influence is so great, the results are so eternal,

that I believe, in the day of judgment, amid all the millions of men who will come up to render their account, the largest account will be rendered by newspaper-men; and I will tell you why. Here is a paper that has, for instance, fifty thousand circulation. We will suppose that each of those papers is read by three men. There is an audience of one hundred and fifty thousand people. Now, suppose that, in one of the issues of that paper, there be a grand truth forcibly put, how magnificent the opportunity! Suppose there be a wrong thing projected in that paper, who can estimate the undoing of that one issue? Oh! if there is any man who needs to be a Christian, it is an editor. He needs more grace, more help, more wisdom than any other man. Now, in the columns it is by custom that the editor writes "we" and "us;" in the last great day it will be "I" and "me." I congratulate you newspaper-men on the splendour of your opportunity, but I charge you before God, who will judge the quick and the dead, that you be careful to use your influence in the right direction. How grand will be the result in the last day for the man who has consecrated the printing-press to high and holy objects! God will say to such an one, "You broke off a million chains, you opened a million blind eyes, you gave resurrection to a million of the dead." But what shall become of those who have prostituted their press to black-mailing and the advocacy of that which is wrong, multiplying the numbers of their papers by pandering to the tastes of bad men and worse women, poisoning the air with a plague that killed a nation? Why, God will say to such men in the last day, "You were destroying angels, smiting the first-born of man and beast; you made the world horribly worse, when you might have made it gloriously better. Go down and suffer with the millions you have damned. You knew your duty and you did it not."

I remark, further, there ought to be, in consequence of this Providence, a great arousal on the part of men engaged in *temperance reform*. Horace Greeley was the champion of temperance in this country. His pen wrote more and effected more than that of any other man. You remember how he spoke last winter in the Lay College on this subject. He was a hater of all intoxicating drinks, from the rye whiskey that pitches the sot into the ditch, up to the wine glass that makes a fool of the fine lady in the parlor. He had seen so much devastation of drunkenness amid the brethren of his own

occupation; he had heard the snapping of the heart-strings of widowhood and orphanage, robbed by the fiend that squats in the wine-cask and sweats in the brewery, the smoke of its torment ascending up for ever and ever. I think that yesterday all the gin-bottles in the grog-shop rattled with gladness when it was told that Horace Greeley was dead, and that drunkenness, which "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder," hissed for joy. But, boast not, O thou demon of the pit. If Horace Greeley is dead, the principles he advocated live. Elisha may be buried, but we will keep his grave open, and let down this inert cause until, touching his bones, it shall spring up with tenfold power, and go forth for the conquest of the world. Because Christ turned water into wine, men turned the pure juice of the grape into swill. Now that the standard-bearer of temperance has fallen, who will catch up the colors and carry them on to victory? I ask these fathers and mothers, before their sons wither under this hot simoon of hell, to come and join the standard. I ask men in all circumstances to deny their palates and save their souls. When next Wednesday the nation gathers around Horace Greeley's grave, I would like to have the little children whose fathers he redeemed from the cup come and throw flowers over that grave, and the woman whom he lifted up from the squalor of being a drunkard's wife come and pour her tears on the resting-place of him who has spoken his last word and written his last line in behalf of the reformation of the inebriate. "Howl, howl, fir-tree, for the cedar hath fallen."

I learn, again, from this providence that the *last hours of a man's life are a poor time to prepare for eternity*. I do not know about Mr. Greeley's experience: I do not know whether in life he thought much about the things of eternity. I suppose he did; I hope he did. I read that in his last moments he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and a man who can say that, is fit for anything in time or anything in eternity. But it is my belief, it is my hope, that, in the days of his life, he thought much upon these subjects, and did not leave until the last hour, consecration to God. The last moments of his life were passed under mental aberration, and it is always true that the last hours of a man's life are a poor time in which to prepare for eternity. It is either delirium or some trouble about property, or it is the magnitude of world-changing, or it is bidding good-bye to friends—making it a very poor hour to prepare for heaven. The fact is, that if a man wants to get

ready for eternity, he must do it while he is well. I do not suppose there were ten men in the United States with a stronger natural constitution than Horace Greeley; but death is an old besieger, and he prides himself on the strength of the castle he takes. Be ye also ready. Do not wait until you see the *flambeau* of the bridegroom coming through the darkness before you begin to trim your lamps. You may wait for your last moment, but when your last moment comes, it will not wait for you. There are a great many doors through which you may get out of this world, but there is only one door into heaven. "*I am the door,*" said One who threw out his hands in the gesticulation, showing the sacrificial blood clotted in the palm and dripping from the fingers. I can only with my voice reach those who hear it now; but ye men of the press who take the words I utter to-night, tell all the cities, tell all the world, that Jesus died to save men; that the deathbed is a poor place to get ready for eternity; that it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after that—the judgment, the judgment!

Hush, all ye people! Let the nation uncover its head and bow lowly, and carry out the illustrious dead. Along the same streets where he trudged a poor boy, and afterward a weary man, let him be carried. Hang out signals, white and black—black for the woe, white for the resurrection. Bring him across the river into his city, where he always loved to come; then out toward Greenwood take him. Toll long and loud the bell at the gate. Put him down under the snow to rest—the only good rest he has had for thirty years; his right hand closed, for there are no more heroic words for it to write; his lips shut, for there are no more encouraging words for them to speak; his brow cool, for his head has stopped aching now; his heart quiet, for it will never break again. I put upon his grave not a single wreath, not a single daisy or a blossom, but I put upon his grave a scroll, plain and white, a scroll half open, that you may read it from both sides: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."
"Howl, howl, fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen."

THE CITY AND NATION.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people."—*Luke i. 68.*

THIS is the brightest Thanksgiving-day in twenty years. Other years may have excelled the last one in agricultural products and in commercial prosperity; but, taking it all in all, I think that our present comforts and our opening prospects ought to arouse us up to a thanksgiving to-day such as was never uttered.

Give us full organ to-day; pull out all the glad stops, and while we pray and while we preach and while we sing, let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation. Gather your families together. Let your children be arrayed in their brightest robes. Let garlands crown all the vases. In the morning, let the temples of God ring with hosannas, and in the night let your homes be filled with congratulations, laughter and song. Turn on all the lights, bracket, chandelier, and candelabra. Throw another armful of firewood upon the hearth, and let the fire blaze right cheerfully. When you and I are gone, and our children come out and look at the place where we sleep, may they be enabled to say: "There rest a father or a mother who knew how to make their children happy on Thanksgiving-day." The corn of full shocks is tossed up from the husking peg; the sheaf-binders have sung "Harvest-home." Hats for the head, shoes for the feet, coats for the back, mufflers for the neck, soft couches to rest on when we are weary, good doctors to take care of us when we are sick; friends to laugh with us when we laugh, and cry with us when we cry, and the whole world packed full of joy from deepest cavern to furthest star. On such a day as this, shall we not render thanksgiving to the Lord? What a wonderful change! It was not a great while ago when government forbade religious assemblages; now, they invoke them. The father, the husband, the brother, sit now at the end of the pew through custom—a custom established

in the dark days of persecution, when it was necessary for the male members of the family to sit at the head of the church pew, armed for the defence of those who could not defend themselves. Now, we meet none to molest or to make us afraid.

I have asked myself how I might to-day best stir your gratitude. On Sabbath-days, I have so much to tell you about Christ and eternity, and a judgment-day, that I might neglect to speak of matters of a public nature, pertinent to the city and to the nation; but on Thanksgiving-day, the last dawn breaks away and I say all that I have to say about the affairs of the city and the nation. I need make no apology for such a subject. The lightest science in all the universe is Theology, or the science of God; the next to that is politics or the science of government, so far removed from base partisanship and demagoguism, and the comprehension of those bloated wretches who go around about with their hands in their pockets waiting for crumbs of office to fall to them. I say as far removed from all that as decency is from scoundrelism.

I find great cause for congratulation to-day in *municipal reform*, as being effected all over the country. The last eighteen months have wrought marvels. You well remember the moral earthquake that shook New York a year and a half ago. The same earthquake put its fury under the municipal governments of all the country. The fact was that the city halls and the boards of aldermen and common council had become so corrupt, that decent men forsook the polls and surrendered the contest. I do not suppose that New York was any worse than other cities; but its opportunities of theft were larger! It stole more because it had more to steal. I suppose that if they had the same opportunities, if there had been the same largeness of spoils in Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, and New Orleans, the political cormorants would not have stopped short of the same magnitude of outrage. Tweed and Sweeney were not worse than hundreds of political corruptionists. They were smarter, and they knew how to clutch a million when the stupid fellows knew only how to clutch a thousand! But never since God corrected the politics of Sodom by burying the city in brimstone, were there greater outrages enacted on earth than in these clusters of cities, under the disguise of municipal government; frauds about parks, about pavements, about station-houses, about pipes, about city halls, about aqueducts, about courts, about accounts, about elections; frauds about every-

thing. Fraudulent men applied for contracts to fraudulent officials, who wrote contracts upon paper they had stolen, and then went home over pavements, every stone of which had been put down in dishonesty, and in carriages, every spoke and rivet of which were the evidences of their crime. Fraudulent election inspectors sat around fraudulent ballot-boxes and took fraudulent votes, and made fraudulent returns, and sent to our state legislatures, men fit only for the idiot asylum, or the penitentiary! Things went on until the decent people in all our cities for ten years were under the very saddest depression. The newspapers did not dare to speak out for fear they would lose the public printing; the pulpits did not dare to speak out because there were prominent men in the churches who had one hand on the spoils and the other hand at the throat of the clergy, telling them they had better be prudent and keep quiet. Matters were beyond all human redemption; and no statesmanship, no skill, no human wisdom would ever have met the crisis; but the Lord God Almighty rose up, and He put it into the hearts of the best men of both parties to band together and lay their hands to the work. The monstrosities were exposed, the vagabonds of fraud were arrested, the moral sentiment in all the cities was roused up. Although the work has only fairly begun, the prospects are brightening, and New York and Brooklyn and all the cities in this land will yet be redeemed. It is time, I think, for taxgatherers and reformers, and Christian men, to assemble in the churches with thanksgiving to God for the deliverances effected, and the deliverances that are to come; and to remember that while honest men may be the instrumentalities, the Lord Almighty alone can save the city. Oh, when I look off upon the wreck of routed office-holders, when I see to-day men whose names only a little while ago made cities stand in awe, now playing hide and seek with sheriffs and constables, when I see the patronage of our great cities going out of the hands of the abandoned and the miserable into the hands of men whose integrity cannot be questioned, I feel that I must clap the cymbals of triumph, as did Miriam on the banks of the Red Sea, and cry out: "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea."

I have much also to congratulate you upon in the *condition and prospects of the nation*. We have come to the most thorough feeling of amity in this country that we have ever

experienced. The oldest man in this house never saw such peace and brotherhood in this country as there are now. Look back twenty years. See the change. Oh, is it not a pity that the North and the South have nothing to quarrel about? Even the meddlesome politicians, who are trying from time to time to stir up old feuds between different sections of the country, have failed utterly. And so may they always fail. After all the blood that has been shed, and all the carnage of civil war that has been enacted, I say that if a man dare to stand up in any public place and try to rouse up the old hostilities between the North and the South, let him be accursed. I congratulate the men and women who are before me this morning upon this state of national amity and brotherhood. We were for a great many years under the delusion that we were at peace in this country; but there never has been any peace until very recently. It was war of pen and war of speech. Look at the Congressional record of 1830, was that peace? The Congressional record of 1837, of 1846, of 1857, of 1860. Was that peace? No! Because of the inimical nature of the interests of the North and the South, there was perpetual collision. It was free-trade men against tariff men; it was free labor against slave labor; it was Massachusetts against South Carolina; it was New York against Virginia representation. It was *Charleston Mercury* against *Albany Journal*. Challenge, altercation, and duel all over the land. Even at the time that Brooks was cudgelling Sumner, and Potter thrashing Pryor, and chains were stretched around Boston court-house to keep fugitives from escaping from the hands of the marshal, and all our northern cities were in riot and bloodshed about the relation of black men to their owners, we were under the delusion that we were at peace. Monstrous absurdity! It was war—not perpetual. Pennsylvania Hall burned on account of this political agitation in the city of Philadelphia: was that peace? The printing press of the *Alton Observer* thrown into the river: was that peace? In 1820, when the air was hot with sectional imprecation about the admission of Missouri as a slave state—was that peace? The burning of a college in New Hampshire, in 1835, because colored youth were admitted—was that peace? South Carolina nullification—was that peace? The Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches, North and South, split with a fracture that shook all Christendom on account of political agitation—was that peace? No! All Billingsgate, and scum, and

vituperation, and hatred, and revenge, and blasphemy on both sides were exhausted. It was war of tongue, war of pen, war of trade, war of Church—war! bitter, furious, consuming, relentless. Thank God that time has gone by. We have come to a new state of feeling—a brotherhood such as we have never enjoyed. And our Congress, instead of spending nine-tenths of its time, wasting the public treasury in discussing sectional difficulties, as it used to do, will give nine-tenths of its time to the discussion of the agricultural, the mining, the manufacturing, the commercial, the literary, and the moral interests of this nation. Are we not to be thankful to God for this state of feeling? He hath not dealt so with any other nation. Praise Him all ye people.

I remark, also, that I find great cause of congratulation in *the developing of our national resources*. It is evident now to most men that our commercial depression has touched the bottom. It is an inevitable law of nature, which is also a law of God, that the natural resources of this country must in the future produce natural wealth. It is inevitable. You will hear the anvil ring with a sturdier blow, you will see the furnace glow with a fiercer fire, you will see the wheel-buckets strike with a swifter dash. America has not been discovered yet. Various Americas have been found, but there are better ones, perhaps, to come. Columbus found only the shell of this country. Agassiz came along, and discovered fossiliferous America; Silliman came along and discovered geological America; Audubon came along, and discovered bird America; Longfellow came, and discovered poetic America: but there are other Americas yet to be found. Our resources have not all been tested. We have a land capable of supporting three thousand six hundred millions of people; feeding them, clothing them, sheltering them. We have just begun to open the outside door of this great underground vault in which nature holds its treasures—the copper, the zinc, the coal, the iron, the gold, the silver. If you have ever crossed the mountains to California, you have had some idea of it. The rail-trains have only just begun to bring the harvest of the west down to our seaboard. The American fishers have only just begun to cast their nets on the right side of the ship. The dry docks have but just begun to set the keels and clamp the spars of our trading vessels. Our national resources are not like the silver and gold of other days and other lands, hung in clumsy mementoes about the necks or moulded

into blundering tankards; but our national wealth goes forth to claim the spices of the East, and the furs of the North, and the fruits of the South, until the glories of the whole earth begin to look out of the windows of the mansions and the bazaars of our American cities.

What populations, what industries, what enterprizes, what wealth, what civilization you might argue from the *coal-fields*. What an advance from the time when, under Edward, a man was put to death for burning coal, and from the time when the House of Commons forbade the use of what was called "the noxious fuel;" and these days when the long trains rush down from the mines, and fill our coal-bins, and gorge the furnaces of our ocean steamers. One hundred and sixty thousand square miles of coal-fields—two fields of coal; one reaching from Illinois down through Missouri into Iowa, the other from Pennsylvania down into Alabama; while, side by side with these great coal-fields, are the mines of iron. These two giants—these two Titans of the earth—iron and coal, insuring perpetual wealth to the nation, standing side by side to help each other—the iron to excavate and pry up the coal, and the coal to smelt, and forge, and mould the iron. Eight hundred thousand tons of iron sent forth from the mines in one year in this country. Thirty-two million tons of coal sent out from the mines of this country in a year; and all this only a prophecy of a larger yield when we shall come on with larger trains, and more miners, and stronger machinery to develop, to gather up, to transport, and to employ all this treasure. Make this calculation for yourselves, if you can make it: if England's coal-bed, thirty-two miles long by eight miles wide, can keep, as it does, seventeen millions, six hundred thousand spindles at work in that small island, what may we not expect of our national industries, when these one hundred and sixty thousand square miles of coal shall unite with the one hundred and sixty thousand square miles of iron, both stretching themselves up to a full strength and height—two black, world-shaking giants.

Lift up thy eyes, O nation of God's right hand, at the glorious prospects. Build larger your barns for the harvests. Dig deeper the vats for the spoil of the vineyards. Enlarge the warehouses for the merchandize. Multiply galleries of art for the pictures and statues. Advance, O nation of God's right hand; but, remember that national wealth is unsanctified, is sumptuous waste, is ruin, is debauchery, is magnificent woe, is

splendid rottenness, is gilded death. Woe to us, for the wine vats, if drunkenness wallows in them. Woe to us for the harvests, if greed sickens them. Woe to us for the merchandize, if avarice swallows it. Woe to us for the cities, if misrule walks there. Woe to the land, if God-defying crime debauches it. Our only safety is in more Bibles, more churches, more free schools, more consecrated men, more enlightening printing presses, more of the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, that corrects all wrongs and is the source of blessedness.

I remark, again, that we may find cause for congratulation in this nation to-day from the fact that we are coming to a higher style of independence that we have ever reached before. We signed the Declaration of Independence a great many years ago; but it was a sentiment, not a fact. We went to France to gather our fashions; to Rome to get our pictures; to Florence to get our mosaics; to Sweden to get our singers; to England to get our aristocratic notions of society: and, pretending to be independent, there was nothing so blasting to anything as it was to say that it was a home manufacture. There were people in this country who threw up their hands in ecstasy at the music of Piccolomini or Sontag, who were disgusted with the sweetness of the Hutchinsons because they were born among our own hills. We went to foreign lands, and aped foreign customs, and came back and talked with a foreign accent, and spoke of moonlight on castles by the sea. We had no patience with Mount Washington, because we had seen Jungfrau. We have looked upon Italian skies, and we talked as though there were no glories looking out from our sunsets, or fire-worked curtains of autumnal foliage hung around the couch of the dying year. The day is past. We have come, I think, to a national independence. We have been in trials which helped us to show that we could stand alone. Our romancers will not have to go to Alhambra legends or marble fauns to find plots for a thrilling story. They will find it at home. Our Motleys will not have to go to the Netherlands to find stories of wonderful endurance, but will find them here. The Prescotts will discover in their recent battle-fields remains more wonderful than anything brought to light in the land of the Aztecs. There is hardly a day in which we may not see a cloud as rich as Cuyt painted, or foliage as luxuriant as Claude copied, or a wave as graceful as Turner sketched.

We are having an American literature, its poetry reflecting the skies and forests of America; American architecture, crowning

our hills and adorning our streets ; American histories, gathering up the American legends and American contests. We are having an American costume, coming forth from American looms, and dictated by American tastes. So it ought to be. God intended us to be independent in literature, independent in heart, independent in feeling. He placed the Atlantic Ocean on the one side to keep us off from the dynasties of the West, and the Pacific Ocean on the other side to keep us off from the superstitions of the East ; and now He says, by His Providence : " Oh, country of my right hand, stand alone, relying on nothing but My arm ; that arm which started you at the first, that arm which will be faithful to the last."

Have you no thanksgiving to God for your native country ? He has been busy for us all this year. He who walked Galilee has traversed our lakes ; He who plucked the corn, rubbing it in His hands for His disciples, hath helped to gather our harvests ; He who built Jerusalem has set up our cities ; He who stayed one night in Bethany has blessed our villages. Not a ship's keel but he set it, or a wheel's tyre but he forged it, or buckwheat's blossom but he grew it, or a robin's wing but he tinged it. Bless the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men. Bless Him for what He has done for our cities, bless Him for what He has done for the land, bless Him for what He has done for the people.

I stand on the highest ground when I review our *religious advantages*, the glorious Sabbaths, the Holy Communions. Oh, that manger in which our Saviour was born ! Oh, that cross on which Jesus died ! Oh, that throne on which Jesus reigns. Here you have had before you pardon for all sin, hope for all discouragement, comfort for all trouble, life for all the dead. I cannot even let Thanksgiving-day go by without reminding you of your obligations to the Lord. Oh, that His goodness to you personally when you were sick and when you were well, His goodness to your family and His goodness to you, all your life long, might this day lead you to repentance, and that you might surrender your hearts this morning—this beautiful, bright, Thanksgiving morning—to the Lord Jesus Christ who died to redeem your souls.

But I must dismiss you to your domestic circles. Go home to your sumptuous repasts. Gather your loved ones together, and, oh ! if there be one absent from earth and absent from you—a childish voice, that was most gladsome last Thanksgiving-day ; or

if you miss father or mother, who used to mingle in the domestic circle and rejoice over children and grandchildren on such festal days, do not let your sorrow hinder your thanksgiving; but when you are all seated at the table, and the merry voices around it are hushed, and your heads are bowed down for the blessing, oh! give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.

THE SWELLING OF JORDAN.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"
—*Jeremiah xii. 5.*

JEREMIAH had become impatient with his troubles. God says to him: "If you cannot stand these small trials and persecutions, what are you going to do when the greater trials and persecutions come? If you have been running a race with footmen and they have beaten you, what chance is there that you will outrun horses?" And then the figure is changed. You know, in April and May, the Jordan overflows its banks, and the waters rush violently on, sweeping everything before them. And God says to the prophet: "If you are overcome with smaller trials and vexations, which have assaulted you, what will you do when the trials and annoyance and persecutions of life come in a freshet?" "If in the land of peace wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

I propose, if God will help me, to-night, in a very practical way to ask—if it is such a difficult thing to get along without the religion of Jesus Christ, when things are comparatively smooth, what will we do without Christ amid the overpouring misfortunes and disasters of life that may come upon us? If troubles, slow as footmen, surpass us, what will we do when they take the feet of horses? and if now in our lifetime we are beaten back and submerged of sorrows because we have not the religion of Jesus to comfort us, what will we do when we stand in death, and we feel all around about us "the swelling of Jordan?" The fact that you have come here, my brother, my sister, shows that you have some things you believe in common with myself. You believe that there is a God. There is not an Atheist in all this house. I do not believe there ever was a real Atheist in all the world. If you had not believed it before you left home, coming to church through this glorious night, you must have been persuaded of it. 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 to 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 handy work. 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. I think a great many of you will say that you believe it is important to have the religion of Jesus Christ every day of our life, to smooth our tempers and purify our minds, and hold us imperturbable amid all the annoyance and vexations of life. You and I have seen so many men trampled down by misfortunes because they had no faith in Jesus, and you say to yourself: "If they were so easily overcome by the trials of life, what will it be when greater misfortunes come upon them—heart-breaking calamities, tremendous griefs?" Oh, if we have no God to comfort us when our fortune goeth, and we look upon the grave of our children, and our houses are desolate, what will become of us? What a sad thing it is to see men all unhelped of God, going out to fight giants of trouble; no closet of prayer in which to retreat, no promise of mercy to soothe the soul, no rock of refuge in which to hide from the blast. 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 all yielded to temptation. We have been surprised afterwards that so small an 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 temptation 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 path of life, as many of God's

children have been, where all the force 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 lets you. You know what John Bunyan said when he saw a man staggering along the street, thoroughly imbued with his habits. He said: "There goes John Bunyan, but for the grace of God." I can say when I see one utterly fallen: "There goes De Witt Talmage, but for the grace of God!" 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 cannot carry a pound, can we carry a thousand pounds? If we are discomfited coming into battle, with 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. 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 becomes thoroughly composed amid all his sorrows, saying: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in the time of trouble; therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountain shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

But my text suggests something in advance of anything I have said. We must all quit this life. However sound our health may be, it must break down; however good our title may be to houses, land, and estates, we must surrender them. We will hear a voice bidding us away from all these places. We will have to start on a pilgrimage from which we can never come back.

We will have seen for the last time the evening star, and watched the last summer cloud, and felt the breath of the spring wind for the last time. Hands of loved ones may be stretched out to hold us back, but they cannot—go we must. About all other exits and changes we may trifle, but not about this. Stupendous moment of life-quitting. Oh, when the great tides of eternity arise about us, and fill the soul and surround it, and sweep it out towards rapture or woe, ah, that will be “the swelling of Jordan.” I know people sometimes talk very merrily about the departure from this life. I am sorry to hear it. But men do make fun of the passage from one world to another. Byron joked a great deal about it, but when it came he shivered with horror. Many an infidel has scoffed at the idea of fearing a future world, but lying upon his pillow in the last hour his teeth have chattered with terror. I saw last summer, in Westminster Abbey, an epitaph which a poet ordered to be put upon his tomb:—

“Life is a jest,
And all things show it.
I thought so once,
But now I know it.”

I thought how inapt that, in a place of sepulture, men should try their witticisms. A great German having rejected Christ, in his last moment said: “Give me light, give me light!” Oh, we may be smart with our witticism about the last hour; but when it comes, and the tides are rising, and the surf is beating, and the winds are howling, we will each one, my brethren, find for himself, that it is “the swelling of Jordan.” Our natural courage won’t hold us out then. However familiar we may have been with scenes of mortality, however much we may have screwed our courage up, we want something more than natural resources. When the north-east wind blows off from the sea of death, it will put out all earthly lights. The lamp of the Gospel, God-lighted, is the only lamp that can stand in that blast. The weakest arm holding that shall not be confounded; the strongest one neglecting that shall stumble and die. When the Jordan rises in its wrath, the first dash of its wave will swamp them for ever. We feel how sad it is for a man to attempt this life without religion. We see what a doleful thing it is for a man to go down into the misfortunes of life without Christian solace; but if that be so, how much more terrible when that man comes face to face with the solemnities

of the last hour. Oh, if in the bright sunshine of health and prosperity a man felt the need of something better, how will he feel when the shadows of the last hour gather above his pillow? If, in the warmth of worldly prosperity, he was sometimes dismayed, how will he feel when the last chill creeps over him? If while things were comparatively smooth he was disquieted, what will he do in the agonies of dissolution? "If, in the land of peace in which he trusted, they wearied him, what will he do amid the swelling of Jordan?"

Oh, I rejoice to know that so many of God's children have gone through that pass without a shudder. Some one said to a dying Christian: "Isn't it hard for you to get out of this world?" "Oh, no," he says, "it is easy dying, it is blessed dying, it is glorious dying;" and then he pointed to a clock on the wall, and he said: "the last two hours in which I have been dying, I have had more joy than all the years of my life." General Fisk came into the hospital after the battle, and there were many seriously wounded, and there was one man dying, and the general said: "Ah, my dear fellow, you seem very much wounded. I am afraid you are not going to get well." "No," said the soldier, "I am not going to get well, but I feel very happy." And then he looked up into the general's face, and said: "*I am going to the front!*" Oh, I have seen them, and so have you, go out of this life without a tear on their cheek. There was weeping all round the room, but no weeping in the bed; the cheeks were dry. They were not thrown down into darkness, they were lifted up. We saw the tides rising around them, and the swelling of the wave. It washed them off from the cares and toils of life; it washed them on towards the beach of heaven. They waved to us a farewell kiss as they stood on deck, and floated down further and further, wafted by gales from heaven, until they were lost to our sight—mortality having become immortality—

"Life's duty done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say,
How blest the righteous when he dies."

But there is one step still in advance suggested by this subject. If this religion of Christ is so important in life, and so important in the last hours of life, how much more important it will be in the great eternity. I need not stand here and argue it. There is something within your soul that says now,

while I speak: "I am immortal; stars shall die; but I am immortal." You feel that your existence on earth is only a small piece of your being. It is only a mile up to the grave; but it is ten thousand miles beyond. The slab of the tomb is only the milestone on which we read of infinite distance yet to be travelled. The world itself will grow old and die. The stars of to-night will burn down in their sockets and expire. The sun, like a spark struck from an anvil, will flash and go out. The winds will utter their last whisper, and ocean heave its last groan; but you and I will live for ever! Gigantic—immortal. Mighty to suffer or enjoy. Mighty to love or hate. Mighty to soar or to sink. Then, what will be to us the store, the shop, the office, the applause of the world, the scorn of our enemies, the things that lifted us up, and the things that pressed us down? What to John Wesley are all the mobs that howled after him? What to Voltaire are all the nations that applauded him? What to Paul now, the dungeons that chilled him? What to Latimer now, the flames that consumed him? All those who through the grace of Christ reach that land, will never be disturbed. None to dispute their throne, they shall reign for ever and ever. But, alas, for those who have made no preparation for the future! When the sharp shod hoofs of eternal disaster come up panting and swift to go over them, how will they contend with horses? And when the waves of their wretchedness rise up, white and foamy, under the swooping of eternal storms, and the billows become more wrathful and dash more high, oh, what, will they do "amid the swelling of Jordan?"

If I could come into your heart to-night, I would see that many of you, my dear friends, had vowed to be the Lord's. I know not what sickness it was, or what trial; but I verily believe there is not a man in the house but has sometimes vowed he would be the Lord's. It might have been at the time when your child lay sick, you said: "O Lord, if you will let this child get well, I will be a Christian." Or it might have been in some business trouble, when you have said: "O Lord, if thou wilt let me keep my property, I will be a Christian." You kept your property, your child got well, the peril passed. Are you a Christian? History says that long ago it had been announced that the world was coming to an end, and there was great excitement in London. It was said that the world would perish on a certain Friday. On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday the people were in the cathedral, praying and weeping. It seemed as

if the whole English nation was being converted to God, for it was announced as certain by philosophers that on that coming Friday the world would perish. Friday came, and there were no portents, no fires in the air, no earthquakes. The day passed along just like every other day, and when it was past and the night came, it is said that in London there was a scene of riot, and wassail, and drunkenness, and debauchery such as had never been witnessed. They forgot their vow, they forgot their repentance, they forgot their good resolutions. O how much human nature in that! While trials and misfortunes come to us, and we are down deep in darkness and trouble we make vows. We say: "O Lord, do so, and I will do so." The darkness passes, the peril goes away. We are as we were before, or worse; for oh, how often I have seen men start for the kingdom of God, come up to within arm's reach of it, and then go back farther from God than they ever were before, dropping from the very moment of their privilege into darkness for ever. Oh, how ungrateful we have been! Do you know how much God has done for you and for me? Have you never felt it? How much He did for you to-day! Who spread the table for you? Who watched you last night? Who has been kind and good to you all your life long? Oh how ungrateful we have been! Methinks the goodness of God ought to-night to lead this whole audience to repentance. I know not your individual history. Some of you I never saw before; some of you I will never see again; but I know that God has been good to you. What return have you made? 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 waves. The lake was very rough. The mother cried: "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 in his master's face, as if for orders. His master said: "Tray, overboard, catch 'em!" The dog sprang into the water, caught the child by the garments, and 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 off 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 be 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. Don't you thrust Him back from your soul. He has been the best friend you ever had. You will want Him after awhile. When the world is going away from your grasp, and all the lights that shine on 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.”

THINGS NOT BURNED UP.

“Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.”—*Isaiah* xl. 1.

THESSE words came to Isaiah after Jerusalem had been wasted with fire and famine and war; and I wish, to-night, from these leaves of the tree of life, to compound a salve for a very sore burn.

Standing to-day in this brilliant Academy, by its trustees so kindly afforded us, our first feeling is one of gratitude to God and to them for so grand a refuge; but, notwithstanding it is so much costlier a place than we are used to, we feel homesick. The wanderer in a strange land, amid palaces and temples and cathedrals, sits down and says to himself: “I would give the whole world for one hour under the thatched roof of my humble home.” “Home, sweet home; there is no place like home.” It was nothing but homesickness that made the inspired writer say: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasteth us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land.”

The Brooklyn Tabernacle is gone! The bell that hung in its tower last Sabbath morning rang its own funeral knell. On that day we gathered from our homes with our families, to hear what Christ had of comfort and inspiration for His people. We expected to meet cheerful smiles, and warm hand-shakings, and the triumphant song, and the large brotherhood, that characterized that blessed place; but coming to the doors, we found nothing but an excited populace and a blazing church. People who had given until they deeply felt it, saw all the results of their benevolence going down into ashes, and, on that cold morning, the tears froze on the cheek of God’s people as they saw they were being burned out. Brooklyn Tabernacle is gone! The platform on which it was my joy to stand with messages of salvation; the pews in which you listened and prayed, and wept and rejoiced; the altars around which you and your children were consecrated

in baptism; the communion-table where we celebrated the Saviour's love—all that scene which to us was the shining gate of heaven is gone! I will not hide the loss. If I ever forget the glorious Sabbaths we spent there, and the sweet reunions, and the mighty demonstrations of God's Spirit among the people, may my right hand forget its cunning, and my soul be left desolate. But we have not come here to sound a dirge. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Sorrows are loathsome things, but they are necessary. They are leeches that suck out the hot inflammation from the soul. "Weeping may endure for a day, but joy cometh in the morning." I could cover up all this place with promises of hope and peace, and comfort and deliverance. Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

I am here to-night not to preach a formal sermon, but to tell you of *some things that last Sabbath were not burned up*.

First, the spirit of Christian brotherhood was not consumed. You never greeted the members of our church with such cordiality as this week on the street, in cars, and on the ferries. You stood on no cold formalities. The people who, during the last two years sat on the other side of the aisle, whose faces were familiar to you, but to whom you had never spoken, you greeted them this week with smiles and tears, as you said: "Well, the old place is gone." You did not want to seem to cry, and so you swept the sleeve near the corner of the eye, and pretended it was the sharp wind that made your eyes weak. Ah! there was nothing the matter with your eyes; it was your soul bubbling over. I tell you that it is impossible to sit for two or three years around the same church fireside and not have sympathies in common. Somchow you feel that you would like those people on the other side of the aisle, about whom you know but little, prospered and pardoned, and blessed and saved. You feel as if you are in the same boat, and you want to glide up the same harbor, and want to disembark at the same wharf. If you put gold and iron; and lead and zinc in sufficient heat, they will melt into a conglomerate mass; and I really feel that last Sabbath's fire has fused us all, grosser and finer natures, into one.

It seems as if we all had our hands on a wire connected with an electric battery, and when this church sorrow started, it thrilled through the whole circle, and we all felt the shock. The oldest man and the youngest child could join hands in this misfortune. Grandfather said: "I expected from those altars to be

buried;" and one of the children last Sabbath cried: "I don't want the Tabernacle to burn, I have been there so many times." You may remember that over the organ we had the words: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." That was our creed. Well, that is all burned down, but the sentiment is engraved with such durability in our souls that no earthly fire can scorch it, and the flames of the judgment-day will have no power to burn it.

Another thing that did not burn up is *the cross of Christ*. That is used to the fire. On the dark day when Jesus died, the lightning struck it from above, and the flames of hell dashed up against it from beneath. That tearful, painful, tender, blessed cross still stands. On it we hang all our hopes; beneath it we put down all our sins; in the light of it we expect to make the rest of our pilgrimage. Within sight of such a sacrifice, who can feel he has it hard? In the sight of such a symbol, who can be discouraged, however great the darkness that may come down upon him? Jesus lives! The loving, patient, sympathizing, mighty Jesus! It shall not be told on earth, or in hell, or in heaven, that three Hebrew children had the Son of God beside them in the fire, and that a whole church was forsaken by the Lord when they went through a furnace one hundred and fifty-three feet front by one hundred deep. O Lord Jesus! shall we take out of Thy hand the flowers and the fruits, and the brightness and the joys, and then turn away because thou dost give us one cup of bitterness to drink? Oh! no, Jesus, we will drink it dry. But how it is changed! Blessed Jesus, what hast thou put into the cup to sweeten it? Why, it has become the wine of heaven, and our souls grow strong. I come down to-night, and place both of my feet deep down into the blackened ashes of our consumed church, and I cry out, with an exhilaration that I never felt since the day of my soul's emancipation: "Victory! victory! through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Your harps ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take;
Loud to the praise of love divino
Bid every string awake."

I remark, again, that the *catholicity of the Christian churches has not been burned up*. We are in the Academy to-day, not because we have no other place to go to. Last Sabbath morning, at nine o'clock, we had but one church; now we have twenty-five at our disposal. Their pastors and their trustees say: "You may take our main audience-rooms, you may take our lecture-

rooms, you may take our church parlors, you may baptize in our baptistries, and sit on our anxious seats." Oh! if there be any larger-hearted ministers or larger-hearted churches anywhere than in Brooklyn, tell me where they are, that I may go and see them before I die. The millennium has come. People keep wondering when it is coming. It *has* come. The lion and the lamb lie down together, and the tiger eats straw like an ox. I should like to have seen two of the old-time bigots with their swords fighting through that great fire on Schermerhorn Street, last Sabbath. I am sure the swords would have melted, and they who wielded them would have learned war no more. I can never say a word against any other denomination of Christians. I thank God I never have been tempted to do it. I cannot be a sectarian. I have been told I ought to be, and I have tried to be, but I have not enough material in me to make such a structure. Every time I get the thing most done, there comes a fire, or something else, and all is gone. The angels of God shake out on this Christmas air: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." I do not think the day is far distant when all the different branches of the Presbyterian Church will be one, and all the different branches of the Methodist Church will be one, and all the different branches of the Episcopal Church will be one. I do not know, but I see on the horizon the first gleam of the morning which shall unite all evangelical denominations in one organization; churches distinguished from each other, not by a variety of creeds, but difference of locality, as it was in the times of the Apostles. It was then the Church of Thyatira, and the Church of Thessalonica, and the Church of Antioch, and the Church of Laodicea. So, I do not know but that in the future history, and not far off either, it may be simply a distinction of locality, and not of creed, as the Church of New York, the Church of Brooklyn, the Church of Boston, the Church of Charleston, the Church of Madras, the Church of Constantinople.

My dear brethren, we cannot afford to be severely divided. Standing in front of the great foes of our common Christianity, we want to put on the whole armor of God, and march down in solid column, shoulder to shoulder, one commander, one banner, one triumph.

"The trumpet gives a martial strain:
O Israel! gird thee for a fight;
Arise, the combat to maintain,
Arise, and put thy foes to flight."

I have to announce, also, among the things not burned up is *Heaven*. Fires may sweep through other cities—we heard the tolling of the bell as we came in to-night; but I am glad to know that the New Jerusalem is fire-proof. There will be no engines rushing through the streets; there will be no temples consumed in that city. Coming to the doors of that church, we will find them open, resonant with songs, and not cries of fire. O my dear brother and sister! if this short lane of life comes up so soon to that blessed place, what is the use of our worrying? I have felt a good many times this last week like Father Taylor, the sailors' preacher. He got in a long sentence while he was preaching one day, and lost himself, and could not find his way out of the sentence. He stopped, and said: "Brethren, I have lost the nominative of this sentence, and things are generally mixed up, but I am bound for the kingdom anyhow." And during this last week, when I saw the rushing to and fro, and the excitement, I said to myself: "I do not know just where we shall start again, but I am bound for the kingdom anyhow." I do not want to go just yet. I want to be pastor of this people until I am about eighty-nine years of age, but I have sometimes thought that there are such glories ahead that I might be persuaded to go a little earlier; for instance, at eighty-two or eighty-three; but I really think that if we could have an appreciation of what God has in reserve for us, we would want to go to-night, stepping right out of the Academy of Music into the glories of the skies. Ah! that is a good land. Why, they tell me that in that land they never have a heart-ache. They tell me that a man might walk five hundred years in that land and never see a tear, or hear a sigh. They tell me of our friends who have left us and gone there, that their *feet* are radiant as the sun, and that they take hold of the hand of Jesus familiarly, and that they open that hand and see in the palm of it a healed wound that must have been very cruel before it was healed. And they tell me that there is no winter there, and that they never get hungry or cold, and that the sewing-girl never wades through the December snow-bank to her daily toil, and that the clock never strikes twelve for the night, but only twelve for the day.

See that light in the window? I wonder who set it there? "Oh!" you say: "My father that went into glory must have set that light in the window." No, guess again: "My mother, who died fifteen years ago in Jesus, I think, must have set that

light there." No, guess again. You say: "My darling little child that last summer I put away for the resurrection, I think she must have set that light there in the window." No, guess again. *Jesus* set it there, and He will keep it burning until the day we put our finger on the latch of the door, and go in to be at-home for ever. Oh! when my sight gets black in death, put on my eyelids that sweet ointment. When in the last weariness I cannot take another step, just help me put my foot on that door-sill. When my ear catches no more the voices of wife and child, let me go right in to have my deafness cured by the stroke of the harpers, whose fingers fly over the strings with the anthems of the free. Heaven never burns down! The fires of the last day, that are already kindled in the heart of the earth, but are hidden because God keeps down the hatches—those internal fires will after a while break through the crust, and the plains and the mountains and the seas will be consumed, and the flames will fling their long arms into the skies, but all the terrors of a burning world will do no more harm to that heavenly temple than the fires of the setting sun which kindle up the window-glass of the house on yonder hill-top. O blessed land! But I do not want to go there until I see the Brooklyn Tabernacle rebuilt. You say, "Will it be?" You might as well ask me if the sun will rise to-morrow morning, or if the next spring will put garlands on its head. You and I may not do it—you and I may not live to see it; but the Church of God does not stand on two legs nor a thousand legs. I am here to tell you that among the things not burned up is *our determination, in the strength and help of God, to go forward.*

You say: "Where are you going to get the means?" Don't know. The building of the Tabernacle within two years, and then an enlargement, at great expense, within that same time, and the establishment and the maintenance of the Lay College, have taken most of our funds. Did I say just now that I did not know where the funds are to come from? I take that back. I do! I do! From the hearts of the Christian people, and the lovers of the cause of morality, all over this land. I am sure they will help us, and we shall go on, and the new structure shall rise. How did the Israelites get through the Red Sea? I suppose somebody may have come and said: "There is no need of trying; you will get your feet wet, you will spoil your clothes, you will drown yourselves. Whoever heard of getting through such a sea as that?" How did they get through it? Did they

go back? No! Did they go to the right? No! Did they go to the left? No! They went *forward* in the strength of the Lord Almighty, and that is the way *we* mean to get through the Red Sea. Do you tell me that God is going to let the effort for the establishment of a free Christian church in Brooklyn fail? Why, on the dedication day of our Tabernacle, I was not more confident and was not so happy as I am now. That building did its work. We wanted to support a free Christian church; we did it, and got along pleasantly and successfully, and demonstrated the fact. The building is gone. The ninety-five souls received at the first communion in that building more than paid us for all the expenditure. We only put up the Tabernacle for *two years*. Do you know that? Here sits a member of the Board of Trustees right under me, and he remembers that when we built we said: "We shall put it up for two years—it will be a temporary residence, and at the close of that time we will know how large a building we want, and what style of building we want." But having put it up we liked it so well, we concluded to stay there permanently. But God decided otherwise; and I take it as one of the providential indications of that fearful disaster that we are to build a larger church, and ask all the people to come in and be saved. You know how we were crowded, and pushed, and jammed in that building; and last summer some of us talked about an enlargement, but we found it impossible without changing the whole structure of the building. The difficulty now is gone; and if the people, North, South, East, and West, will help us, we shall build on a larger scale, and the hundreds and thousands who have wanted to be with us, but could not, shall have room for themselves and families, where they may come and be comforted in their sorrows, and, by the grace of the Lord Jesus, find out the way to heaven. Do you tell me that the human voice cannot reach more people than we used to have there? It is a mistake. I have been wearing myself out for the last two years in trying to keep my voice in. Give me room where I can preach the glories of Christ and the grandeurs of heaven.

The old iron-clad has gone down with a shot midships. We will build next time of brick. The building shall be amphitheatrical in shape; it shall be very large; it shall be very plain. Whether the material will be any better than the one used in the old structure I cannot say, for there are four things that God has demonstrated within a short time are not fire-proof. One is corrugated iron; witness the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Another is

brick; witness the fire last week in Centre Street, New York. Another is Joliet stone; witness Chicago. Another is Quincy granite; witness Boston. Why, when God rises up to burn anything, a stone wall is shavings. Hear that, O you men who are building on nothing but earthly foundations. The people will rise up, and all our friends, North, South, East, and West, who have been giving us their sympathies and their "God bless you's" into "greenbacks," and next winter the people will cry out: "The glory of the second temple is greater than the first."

There was a king of olden time who prided himself on doing that which his people thought impossible; and it ought to be the joy of the Christian Church to accomplish that which the world thinks cannot be done.

But I want you to know that it will require more prayer than we have ever offered, and more hard work than we have ever put forth. Mere skirmishing around the mercy-seat will not do. We have got to take the kingdom of heaven by violence. We have got to march on, breaking down all bridges behind us, making retreat impossible. Throw away your knapsack if it impedes your march. Keep your sword-arm free. Strike for Christ and his kingdom while you may. No people ever had a better mission than you are sent on. Prove yourselves worthy. If I am not fit to be your leader, set me aside. The brightest goal on earth that I can think of is a country parsonage amid the mountains. But I am not afraid to lead you. I have a few hundred dollars; they are at your disposal. I have good physical health; it is yours as long as it lasts. I have enthusiasm of soul; I will not keep it back from your service. I have some faith in God, and I shall direct it toward the rebuilding of our new spiritual home. Come on then! I will lead you. Come on ye aged men, not yet passed over Jordan! Give us one more lift before you go into the promised land. You men in mid-life, harness all your business faculties to this enterprise. Young man, put the fire of your soul in this work. Let women consecrate their persuasiveness and persistence to this cause, and they will be preparing benedictions for their dying hour and everlasting rewards; and if Satan really did burn that Tabernacle down, as some people say he did, he will find it the poorest job he ever undertook.

Good-bye, Old Tabernacle! your career was short but blessed; your ashes precious in our sight. In the last day, may we be able to meet the songs there sung, and the prayers there offered,

and the sermons there preached. Good-bye, old place, where some of us first felt the Gospel peace, and others heard the last message ere they fled away into the skies! Good-bye, Brooklyn Tabernacle of 1870.

But welcome our new church (I see it as plainly as though it were already built). Your walls firmer; your gates wider; your songs more triumphant; your ingatherings more glorious. Rise out of the ashes, and greet our waiting vision. Burst on our souls, O day of our church's resurrection! By your altars, may we be prepared for the hour when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Welcome, Brooklyn Tabernacle of 1873!

THE BEST WE HAVE.*

“Being in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment very precious, and she brake the box and poured it on His head. Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”—*Mark* xiv. 3, 9.

IN a village where I once lived, on a cold night, there was a cry of fire; house after house was consumed. But there was in the village a large hospitable dwelling, and as soon as the people were burned out, they came into this common centre. A good man stood at the door and said: “Come in,” and the children who came to the door wrapped in shawls were taken up and put to bed, and the old when they came in from the consumed dwellings were seated around the fire, and the good man of the house told them that all should be well. This is a very cold day to be turned out of house and home; but we come into this hospitable home to-night and gather around this great fire of Christian love; and it is good to be here. The Lord built the Tabernacle, and the Lord allowed it to burn down. Blessed be the name of the Lord! We do not feel like sitting down in discouragement, although the place was very dear to us, our hearts having often been there consecrated; and many times has Jesus appeared there, his face as radiant as the sun. To-day, when the Christian sympathy came to us from Plymouth Church, and ten other church congregations of this city, all offering their houses of worship to us, I must say that it became very damp weather about the eyelashes. If anybody tells you that there is no kindness between churches—if anybody tells you that there is no such thing as Christian brotherhood, tell him he lies! I find amid the sorrows of the day one cause for extreme congratulation. I thank God that the fire took place when it did, and not an hour later. Had it come an hour later, when we were assembled for worship, many who are here to-night—(Mr. Talmage paused and was greatly affected. In a moment he continued) I will not finish that. .

* Preached at Plymouth Church, on the evening of the day on which the Brooklyn Tabernacle was burned.

I shall say to you what I would have said this morning, if my pulpit had not been burned up, more especially addressing my own people, who, through the courtesy of this Church, are here to-night.

A man, pale and wasted with recent sickness, is entertaining the doctor who cured him—Simon the host, Christ the guest. It is unpleasant to be interrupted at meals, and considerable indignation is aroused by the fact that a woman presses into the dining-hall with ointment made of spica of nard, and poured this ointment on the head of Christ. It was an ointment so costly and so rare that the bestowment of it implied great admiration and affection. "Put her out," cried the people, "what an outrageous interruption this is. Why is this woman allowed to come in here?" Besides that, it is such a lack of economy. Here she takes a stone jar made from the mountains near the city of Alabastron—a stone jar filled with perfume so costly that it might have purchased bread for the poor—and pours it on the head of One who cares nothing for the fragrance. "Stop," said Jesus, "don't put her out!" He who had mingled the cup of all the flowers appreciated the breath of nard; and he who had made the stone jar in the factories of Alabastron knew the worth of that box. Jesus says: "The woman is right. She has done her best; and the perfume which fills this banqueting-house shall yet fill all the earth and all the ages."

I notice in this subject, in the first place, *a very pleasant way of getting ourselves remembered*. 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 President Jackson 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, 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 the house. A man builds a splendid house, and thinks he will get fame from it. A few years pass along, and it goes down under the auctioneer's hammer at the executors' sale, and a stranger buys it. The pyramids were constructed for the honor of the men who ordered them to be built. Who built them? Don't know! For whom were they built? Don't know. Their whole history is an obscuration and a mystery. There were men in Thebes, and Tyre, and Babylon who strove for great eminence, but they were forgotten; while the woman of the text, who lovingly accosted Jesus, has *her* memorial in all the ages. Ah! men and women of God, I have found out the secret; that which we do for ourselves is forgotten—that which we do for Christ is immortal. They who are kind to the sick, they who instruct the ignorant, they who comfort the troubled, shall not be forgotten. There have been more brilliant women than Florence Nightingale, but all the world sings her praise. There have been men of more brain than missionary Carey—their names are forgotten, while his is famous on the records of the Christian Church. There may have been women with vases more costly than that which is brought into the house of Simon, the leper; but their names have been forgotten, while I stand before you to-night reading the beautiful story of this Bethany worshipper. In the gallery of heaven are the portraits of Christ's faithful servants, and the monuments may crumble, and the earth may burn, and the stars may fall, and time may perish; but God's faithful ones shall be talked of among the thrones, and from the earthly seed they sowed there shall be reaped a harvest of everlasting joy. In contrast with the struggle for earthly aggrandizement, I put the life and death of an aged Christian minister, who laid down in the country parsonage the other day and died. A brilliant intellect, a large heart, and a consecrated life were the alabaster box he brought to Jesus. For forty years he had toiled for the welfare of men, and then he laid down peacefully and died. We went out to put him away to his sleep. For hours the carriages came over the hills and through the valleys. The aged came who had forty years ago entertained him at their own firesides. The young came who had taken his benediction from the marriage altar. Ministers of all denominations of Christians came with whom he had mingled in Christian counsel. We joined hands that day in new consecration to the cause for which he had lived and died; and then we put him away in the shadow of the old

meeting house, amid the graves of his kindred and whole generations; in the door of his sepulchre he had stood with consolation, and so on the morning of the resurrection, when he rises up, he will find his old friends all around him and say: "I baptized you; I married you; I buried you. This is the day of which I often spoke—it is the resurrection!" When I came to talk of his departure, I did not have long to look for a text; this one immediately flashed upon my mind: "Let me die the death of the righteous—let my last end be like his."

I learn further from this subject that *Christ deserves the best of everything*. That woman could have got a vase that would not have cost half 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 earthenware, we keep the first for ourselves and give the other 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 brightest, 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 rise in the morning as weary as when we laid down at night. How often we bring the broken pitcher of exhausted faculties instead of the bright alabaster box. Men come to Christ when they have a great pain, or when some terror looks in at the store or home; but how few well men, how few prospered men come to Jesus. Christ has whole piles of broken ware thrown at His feet. We take the best of the lumber for our own structure, and give Christ the

chips. We eat the ripe, luscious clusters, and give Christ the rinds and the peelings. The best thing we can do is to bring our infancy; the next best thing, our youth; the next best thing, our athletic manhood; but I tell you the poorest thing we can do is to bring our emaciation and sickness. Would it not be sad if, after all the blessings we have had, we should bring to Christ a wasted skeleton and an empty skull, or a cracked cup and a shattered box, when Jesus knows that for years we have had in our possession the vases of Alabastron? The people of Circassia used, until sixty years of age, to worship on the outside of the temple. They let the younger people go in. These old men tarried outside because they wanted to give themselves up to worldliness and vice. At sixty years of age they proposed to go in and worship. How many stand now on the outside of the temple of Christian sanctification and Christian work, expecting after a while to go in. I can think of but two aged men that the Bible speaks of as coming to God. Abraham in the Old Testament, and Nicodemus in the New. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;" before the evil days come and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say: "I have no pleasure in them." Oh, that to-night I might twine all these youthful hearts into a wreath for my blessed Jesus.

But, I remark, further, that 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 debts and carry all your burdens and suffer all your pains? Which one of them offered to go into the grave to make you victor? 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 dominions, 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 McCheyne 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. I will go further and say, we owe to Christ *all our kindred and friends.*

Is there a child in your household especially bright and beautiful, take it right up to Jesus. Hold it in baptism before Him ; kneel beside it in prayer ; take it right up to where Jesus is. Oh, do you not know, father and mother, that the best thing that could happen to that child would be to have Jesus put His hands on it ? If some day Jesus should come to the household, and take one away to come back never, never, do not resist Him. His heart is warmer, His arm stronger than yours. The cradle for a child is not so safe a place as the arms of Jesus. If Christ should come into your household where you have your very best treasures, and should select from all the caskets an alabaster box, do not repulse Him. It has seemed as if Jesus Christ took the best ; from many of your households the best one is gone. You knew that she was too good for this world ; she was the gentlest in her ways, the deepest in her affections ; and when at last, the sickness came, you had no faith in medicines. You knew that Jesus was coming over the door-sill. You knew that the hour of parting had come, and when, through the rich grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, you surrendered that treasure, you said : " Lord, Jesus, take it—it is the best we have—take it. Thou art worthy." The others in the household may have been of grosser mould. She was of alabaster. The other day a man was taking me from the depôt to a village. He was very rough and coarse, and very blasphemous ; but after a while he mellowed down as he began to talk of his little son whom he had lost. " Oh, sir," he said, " that boy was different from the rest of us. He never used any bad language ; no, sir. I never heard him use a bad word in my life. He used to say his prayers, and we laughed at him ; but he would keep on saying his prayers, and I often thought, " I can't keep that child ; " and I said to my wife, " Mother, we can't keep that child." But, sir, the day he was drowned, and they brought him in and laid him down on the carpet, so white and so beautiful, my heart broke, sir. I knew we couldn't keep him." Yes, yes, that is Christ's way ; He takes this alabaster box.

Now, my friends, 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; you are here to-night. What offering have you to make to the Lord Jesus who cured you? Some of you have been to Greenwood, not as those who go to look at the monuments and criticize 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 gravedigger's spade seemed to turn 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? The woman of the text brought the perfumes of nard. You say: "The flowers of the field are all dead now, and we can't bring them." I know it. The flowers on the platform are only those that are plucked from the grim hand of death; they are the children of the hothouse. The flowers of the field *are* all dead. We saw them blooming in the valleys and mountains; they ran up to the very lips of the cave; they garlanded the neck of the hills like a May queen. They sat their banquet of golden cups for the bee, and dripped in drops of honeysuckle for the humming-bird. They dashed their anthers against the white hand of the sick child, and came to the nostrils of the dying like spice gales from heaven. They shook in the agitation of the bride, and at the burial hour rang the silver chime of a resurrection. Beautiful flowers! Bright flowers! Sweet flowers. But they are all dead now. I saw their scattered petals on the foam of the wild brook, and I pulled aside the hedge, and saw the place where their corpses lay. We cannot bring the flowers. What shall we bring? Oh, from our heart's affections, to-night let us bring the sweet-smelling savour of a Christian sacrifice. Let us bring it to Christ, and as we have no other vase in which to carry it, let this glorious Sabbath hour be the alabaster box. Rawlins White,

an old martyr, was very decrepid ; and for years he had been bowed almost double, and could hardly walk ; but he was condemned to death, and on his way to the stake, we are told, the bonds of his body seemed to break, and he roused himself up as straight and exuberant as an athlete, and walked into the fire singing victory over the flames. Ah, it was the joy of dying for Jesus that straightened his body, and roused his soul ! If we suffer with him on earth we shall be glorified with Him in heaven. Choose His service ; it is a blessed service. Let no man or woman go out of this house to-night unblest. Jesus spreads out both arms of His mercy. He does not ask where you came from, or what have been your sins, or what have been your wanderings ; but he says with a pathos and tenderness that ought to break you down : “ Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Who will accept the offer of His mercy.

WASTED AROMA.

“Why was this waste?”—*Mark xix. 4.*

LAST Sabbath night, in Plymouth Church, we saw a woman with a box of costly perfume pressing into the banqueting-hall, where sat Christ the physician and Simon the convalescent. The box in which she carried the perfume had been made in the city of Alabastron, from stone dug up from a hill near that city, and hence, you see, was very appropriately called an alabaster box. According to an olden custom, she shook the box and poured the odour out on the head of Jesus whom she very dearly loved. The guests were seized with a sudden fit of prudence, and pronounced the whole thing as uneconomical—crying out, in the words of the text: “Why was this waste?” But Jesus applauded her, and said: “She hath done what she could,” and proclaimed the fact that her behaviour should be approvingly known through all the earth and through all the ages.

Now, before I come this morning to the main thought of my subject, I want you to see what a beautiful thing it is for a woman to approach Christ. This woman of Bethany might have done a great many pleasant things before; but this was the grandest, bravest, sweetest thing she ever did, and it is told as a memorial of her.

Woman's life is dull and monotonous in this country without Jesus. Men may go out into the world, as they do, every day, and they see new sights and they hear new sounds; but woman, for the most part, suffers and toils in doors. She needs a rest and inspiration she cannot get from music and needlework. She has affections deep and priceless, and will never be happy until she pours that alabaster box on the head of Christ. She may try to satisfy her soul by drawing-room flatteries and elegancies of apparel; but will often feel great disquietude. She cannot have peace here and a state of well-being hereafter, unless, like the woman of the text, she bursts into the room where Jesus sits, with all worshipful affection. Oh, that Mary would this morning sit down at the feet of Jesus, and Martha, and Rachel, and

Rebecca, and the Israelitish waiting-maid, and grandmother Louise.

I see also that Christ 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 facility 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 Scripture 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 amid 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 were 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 upon the heads of His disciples place 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." But I also see in this subject **WHAT WRONG NOTIONS THE WORLD HAS OF ECONOMY.**

Just as soon as these people saw the ointment spilling on the head of Christ, they said: "Why this waste? Why, that ointment might have been sold and given to the poor!" Ye hypocrites! What did they care about the poor? I do not

believe that one of them that made the complaint ever gave a farthing to the poor. I think Judas was most indignant, and he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. There is nothing that makes a stingy man so cross as to see generosity in others. If this woman of the text had brought in an old worn-out box, with some stale perfume, and given that to Christ, they could have endured it; but to have her bring in a vessel on which had been expended the adroitness of skilled artisans, and containing perfume that had usually been reserved for palatial and queenly use, they could not stand it. And so it is often the case in communities and in churches that those are the most unpopular men who give the most. Judas cannot bear to see the alabaster box broken at the feet of Christ.

There is a man who gives a thousand dollars to the missionary cause. Men cry out: "What a waste! What's the use of sending out New Testaments and missionaries, and spending your money in that way? Why don't you send ploughs, and corn-threshers, and locomotives, and telegraphs?" But is it a waste? Ask the nations that have been saved; have not religious blessings always preceded financial blessings? Show me a community where the Gospel of Christ triumphs, and I will show you a community prospered in a worldly sense. Is it a waste to comfort the distressed, to instruct the ignorant, to baulk immorality, to capture for God the innumerable hosts of men who with quick feet were trampling the way to hell! If a man buys railway stock, it may decline. If a man invests in a bank, the cashier may abscond. If a man goes 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 dismasts 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 barefooted, 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.

A young Christian woman starts to instruct the freedmen at the South, with a spelling-book in one hand and a Bible in the other. She goes aboard a steamer at Savannah. Through days, and months, and years she toils among the freedmen of the South; and one day there comes up a poisonous breath from the swamp, and a fever smites her brow, and far away from home, watched tearfully by those whom she has come to save, she drops into an early grave. "Oh, what a waste!—waste of beauty, waste of talent, waste of affection, waste of everything," cries the world. "Why, she might have been the joy of her father's house: she might have been the pride of the drawing-room." But, in the day when rewards are given for earnest Christian work, her inheritance will make insignificant all the treasure of Cræsus. Not wasted, her gentle words; not wasted, her home sickness; not wasted, her heart-aches; not wasted, her tears of loneliness; not wasted, the pangs of her last hour; not wasted, the sweat on her dying pillow. The freedmen thought it was the breath of the magnolia in the thicket; the planter thought it was the sweetness of acacia coming up from the hedge. No! no! it was the fragrance of an alabaster box poured on the head of Christ.

Our world will, after a while, burn up. So great have been its abominations and disorders that one would think that when the flames touched it a horrible stench would roll into the skies; the coal mines consuming, the impurities of great cities burning, you might think that a lost spirit from the pit would stagger back at the sickening odour. But no. I suppose on that day a cloud of incense will roll into the skies, all the wilderness of tropical flowers on fire, the mountains of frankincense, the white sheet of the water-lilies, the million tufts of heliotrope, the

trellises of honeysuckle, the walls of "morning glory." The earth shall be a burning censor, held up before the throne of God with all the odours of the hemisphere. But on that day a sweeter gale shall waft into the skies. It will come up from ages past, from altars of devotion, and hovels of poverty, and beds of pain, and stakes of martyrdom, and from all the places where good men and women have suffered for God and died for the truth. It will be the fragrance of ten thousand boxes of alabaster which, through the long reach of the ages, were poured on the head of Christ.

Last Sabbath morning, I think a great many persons standing in the presence of our burning Tabernacle in Schermerhorn Street, said: "What a waste! Here all the toil expended gone in an hour." Indeed, those who have built churches know that there are a great many toils, and anxieties, and sacrifices connected with such an enterprise; the solicitation and collection of funds; the selection of a site for building; the choice of architect, and plans, and materials; the discussion of acoustics; the watching of building committees, themselves severely watched; the fatigue by day, and the sleeplessness by night. It is a fact that in many cases, after the church has been built, the congregation is exhausted, and the minister is kicked out! Oh, you people of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, what have you to show for all the toil, and prayers, and expenditure of the last two years? A heap of ashes, twisted walls, scorched pillars, an utter obliteration of all you have done. "Why was this waste?" Ah, my dear friends, there was not any waste. All the toil and money you put in that enterprise had a heavenly insurance, and it will be paid back to you in some shape. You may depend upon that. What money I gave towards it, I would rather have it where it is this morning than have it in my pocket; having it in my pocket I might lose it, but where it is, it is safe for ever. I do not begrudge a nail, or a bolt, or a screw that went down in that great conflagration. Why, if it costs me nothing, do you think Christ would have wanted it? Do not fling any of your worn-out boxes at Him! That was the great precious alabaster box that this congregation poured on the head of Christ. When I say it was precious, I only say what is true. Our hearts had twined around that place very much. I can hear the old organ going yet, marshalling the hosts of God for the battle-shout of Christian song. I can see the audience rising yet to the "Old Hundred" Doxology. I can see the pillars en-

twined with Christmas garlands, telling the people that Jesus is born, and every man has a chance for heaven. Oh, the place was all crowded with memories; days when Jesus rode through with dyed garments from Bozrah, smiting down our sins and discomfoting our sorrows. On the last Sabbath night I preached in that blessed place, inviting men to the hope and joy of the Gospel. If I had known it was the last time, I could have kissed the old place good-bye. It seemed to me that when the roof went in, and we felt that all was gone, that the tears on the cheeks stopped, and the sighs ceased, and as if there went through the street on that cold morning one great groan. But do not mourn the loss of that; Jesus is worthy of the most precious gift. Was it a waste? Are all the joys we felt there a waste? Are all the comforts that brooded over our souls in days of darkness, when trouble came to our souls and families; were the hundreds and hundreds of souls who in that building first found the peace of the Gospel, a waste? No, no, no; the building did its work, and it is gone! Let not the woman of Bethany begrudge the box or begrudge the perfume. Let her rather go and get a better box, and put in it a sweeter odour, and come with another offering.

I have been bothered all this morning with a snatch of an old hymn, which I cannot quite catch. I wish some of you would hunt it up, and tell it to me. I get only two or three lines of it:—

“Her dust and ruins that remain,
Are precious in our eyes;
Those ruins shall be built again,
And all that dust shall rise.”

You remember that, Father Waterbury; find it for me some time.

God means something by this disaster. If such a torch be lifted, it means to light us somewhere. I wish that that fire had burned up all our sins. I wish that it might teach us what poor foundation man builds on when he builds in this world; and that iron, and brick, and granite, are wax when God breathes on them. We see that there is nothing of an earthly nature safe. Does not the telegraph flash from all parts of the earth now, bringing baleful things. You are not safe on land or on sea. Witness the Portuguese bark driven the night before last on Peaked Head Bar, and the bark *Kadosh* on Alderon point. Aye, you are not safe on the other side of the sea. Witness the

hurricane that last week swept over London ; witness the floods that swept through Derbyshire. You are not safe on the rail train. The "lightning express" last week rolls over an embankment in Pennsylvania and thirty lives are ground out. On last Tuesday night the floor gave way under a festival, and the mangled children were dragged out on the snow for fathers and mothers to look at. God, by fire, and earthquake, and storm, is crying to all the earth, saying: "Build higher, build firmer, build on the rock!" I am glad to hear that there were some of our people who in the presence of that raving, thundering ruin, last Sabbath morning, resolved to be the Lord's. They started for heaven. They say: "Is this the way things go on earth? Give me something better, something stronger, something that will last."

My friends, all these flames in Brooklyn, and in Chicago, and in Boston; are only prefigurements of a great day of fire which you and I will see just as certainly as you sit there and I stand here. That day the fire will test us thoroughly. It will show whether our religion is a reality, or whether it is a false face. When that fire comes over the fields, it will come swifter than an autumnal fire across the Illinois prairie. Before it, beasts will dash from the rocks in wild leap. Coming over the precipice, it will be a Niagara of fire. The continents of earth will wrap themselves in a winding-sheet of flame, and the mountains will cry to the plain, "Fire!" and the plain will cry to the sea, "Fire!" and the sea will cry to the sky, "Fire!" and heaven will answer back to earth, and the caverns will groan it, and the winds will shriek it, and the thunders will toll it, and the storms will wail it, and the nations will cry it: "Fire! fire!" And the day will burn on, and away will go all the churches you ever built, and away will go all your storehouses, and away will go all your cities; but what will become of those who have no Christ, no sins pardoned, no heaven secured? Oh, I wish that this morning, in our first service in this beautiful place, the hour might be signalized by a great stampede for heaven. I wish that you would all come in, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, friends, and neighbors. In the presence of the great sorrow that has come upon us can you not do that? Do you believe that if this morning, with all the solemn surroundings of the past week, you reject the Gospel of Christ, you will ever feel? Do not some of you think that this is the last opportunity? Do you not feel that if you drive away the

Spirit of God, He will never come back? Do you not think that God is speaking to me, and speaking to you all? Oh, that this house, set apart for secular song, might, this morning, hear sweeter music, namely, the angelic minstrelsy that sounds when sins are pardoned, and God is glorified, and Jesus sees the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. Strike all your harps, ye spirits blest, the prodigal is come home. Clap your hands, all ye people, the lost is found.

OLD WELLS DUG OUT.

“And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.”—*Genesis xxvi. 18.*

IN Oriental lands a well of water is a fortune. If a king dug one, he became as famous as though he had built a pyramid or conquered a province. Great battles were fought for the conquest or defence of wells of water; castles and towers were erected to secure permanent possession of them. The traveller to-day finds the well of Jacob dug one hundred feet through a solid rock of limestone. These ancient wells of water were surrounded by walls of rock. This wall of rock was covered up with a great slab. In the centre of the slab there was a hole, through which the leathern bottle or earthen jar was let down. This opening was covered by a stone. When Jacob, a young man of seventy years, was courting Rachel, he won her favour, the Bible says, by removing the stone from the opening of the well. He liked *her* because she was industrious enough to come down and water the camels. She liked *him* because he was clever enough to lay hold and give a lift to one who needed it.

It was considered one of the greatest calamities that could happen a nation when these wells of water were stopped. Isaac, you see, in the text, found out that the wells of water that had been dug out by his father Abraham, at great expense and care, had been filled up by the spiteful Philistines. Immediately Isaac orders them all opened again. I see the spades plunging and the earth tossing and the water starting until the old wells are entirely restored; and the cattle come down to the trough and thrust their nostrils in the water, their bodies quaking at every swallow, until they lift up their heads and look around and take a long breath, the water from the sides of their mouths dripping in sparkles down into the trough. I never tasted such water in my life as in my boyhood I drank out of the moss-covered bucket that swung up on the chains of the old well-

sweep; and I think when Isaac leaned over the curb of these restored wells, he felt within himself that it was a beverage worthy of God's brewing. He was very careful to call all the wells by the same names which his father had called them by; and if this well was called "The Well in the Valley," or "The Well by the Rock," or "The Well of Bubbles," Isaac baptized it with the same nomenclature.

You have noticed, my Christian friends, that many of the old Gospel wells that our fathers dug have been dug up by the modern Philistine. They have thrown in their scepticisms and their philosophies, until the well is almost filled up, and it is nigh impossible to get one drop of the clear water. These men tell us that you ought to put the Bible on the same shelf with the Koran and the old Persian manuscripts, and to read it with the same spirit; and there is not a day but somebody comes along and drops a brick or a stone or a carcass in this old Gospel well. We are told that all the world wants is development, forgetful of the fact that without the Gospel the world always develops downward, and that if you should take the religion of Christ out of this world, in two hundred years it would develop into the "Five Points" of the universe. Yet there are a great many men and there are a great many rostrums whose whole work is to fill up these Christian wells.

You will not think it strange, then, if the Isaac who speaks to you this morning tries to dig open some of the old wells made by Abraham, his father, nor will you be surprised if he call them by the same old names.

Bring your shovel and pickaxe, and crowbar, and the first well we will open is the glorious well of *the Atonement*. It is nearly filled up with the chips and *débris* of old philosophies that were worn out in the time of Confucius and Zeno, but which smart men in our day unwrap from their mummy-bandages, and try to make us believe are original with themselves. I plunge the shovel to the very bottom of the well, and I find the clear water starting. Glorious well of the Atonement. Perhaps there are people here who do not know what "atonement" means, it is so long since you have heard the definition. The word itself, if you give it a peculiar pronunciation, will show the meaning—*at-one-ment*. Man is a sinner and deserves to die. Jesus comes in and bears his punishments and weeps his griefs. 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 nightfall, 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 empannelled 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 His hands, and they were stiff; and I felt His feet, and they were cold; and I felt His heart, and it was pulseless; and I cried: "Dead!" And angels with excited wings flew upward, amid the thrones, crying: "Dead!" and spirits lost in black brood wheeled down amid the caverns, crying: "Dead!" Expiation! expiation!

Cowper, overborne with his sin, threw himself into a chair by the window, picked up a New Testament, and his eye lighted upon this: "Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith and His blood;" and instantly he was free. Unless Christ pays our debt, we go to eternal jail. Unless our Joseph opens the King's corn-crib, we die of famine. One sacrifice for all. A heathen got worried about his sins, and came to a priest and asked how he might be cured. The priest said: "If you will drive spikes into your shoes and walk five hundred miles, you will get over it." So he drove spikes in his shoes and began the pilgrimage, trembling, tottering, agonizing on the way, until he came about twenty miles, and sat down under a tree, exhausted. Near by, a missionary was preaching Christ, the Saviour of all men. When the heathen heard it, he pulled off his sandals, threw them as far as he could, and cried: "That's

what I want: give me Jesus! give me Jesus!" O ye who have been convicted and worn of sin, trudging on all your days to reap eternal woe, will you not, this morning, at the announcement of a full and glorious Atonement, throw your torturing transgressions to the winds? "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin;" that was the very passage that came to the tent of Hedley Vicars, the brave English soldier, and changed him into a hero for the Lord.

Around this great well of the Atonement, the chief battles of Christianity are to be fought. Ye Bedouins of infidelity, take the other wells, but do not touch this. I call it by the same name that our father Abraham gave it—the *atonement*. Here is where he stood, his staff against the well-curb. Here is where he walked, the track of his feet all around about the well. This is the very water that with trembling hand, in his dying moment, he put to his lips. Oh, ye sun-struck, desert-worn pilgrims, drive up your camels, and dismount! A pitcher of water for each one of you and I will fill the trough for the camels. See the bucket tumble and dash into the depths; but I bring it up again, hand over hand, crying: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

Now, bring your shovels and your pickaxes, and we will try to open another well. I call it *the well of Christian Comfort*. You have noticed that there are a good many new ways of comforting. Your father dies. Your neighbour 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 neighbour 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. Drive up the great herd of your cares and anxieties, and stop their bleating in this cool fountain. To this well David came when he lost Absalom, and Paul when his back was red and raw with the scourge, and Dr. Young when his daughter died, and Latimer when the flames of martyrdom leaped on his track, and McKail when he heard the knife sharpening for his beheading, and all God's sheep, in all the ages.

After one of Napoleon's battles, it was found that the fight had been so terrific, that when the muster-roll was called of one regiment, there were only three privates and one drummer-boy that answered. An awful fight that! O that Christ to-day might come so mightily for the slaying of your troubles and sorrows that when you go home and call the muster-roll of the terrible troop, not one—not one—shall answer, Christ having quenched every annoyance, and salved every gash, and wiped every tear, and made complete extermination!

Now, bring your shovels and pickaxes, and we will dig out another well—a well opened by our father Abraham, but which the Philistines have filled up. It is the *well of Gospel Invitation*. I suppose you have noticed that religious address in this day, for the most part, has gone into the abstract and essayic. You know the word "sinner" is almost dropped out of the Christian vocabulary; it is not thought polite to use that word now. It is methodistic or old-fashioned. If you want to tell men that they are sinners, you must say they are spiritually erratic or have moral deficits, or they have not had a proper spiritual development; and I have not heard in twenty years that old hymn:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy."

In the first place, they are not sinners, and in the second place, they are neither poor nor needy! I have heard Christian men in prayer-meetings and elsewhere talk as though there were no very great radical change before a man becomes a Christian; all he has got to do is to stop swearing, clear his throat a few times, take a good wash, and he is ready for heaven! My friends, if every man has not gone astray, and if the whole race is not plunged in sin and ruin, then that Bible is the greatest fraud ever enacted, for from the beginning to end it sets forth that they are. Now my brothers, and sisters, if a man must be

born again in order to see the kingdom of God; and if a man is absolutely ruined unless Christ checks his course, why not proclaim it? 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 around 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 that 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 Gospel feast, and men do not come because they are not specially invited. It is because you do not take hold of them and say: "My 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 Bunyan's pilgrim start from? Did he start from some easy, quiet, cosy 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. There are enough sinners in this house this morning, if they should come to God, to make joy enough in heaven to keep jubilee a thousand years. Why not come? Have you

never had a special invitation to come? If not I give it now: you, you, you, come now to Jesus! Why do you try to cover that cancer with a piece of court-plaster, when Christ, the surgeon, with his scalpel would take it all away, and it would never come again? Do you know that your nature is all wrong unless it has been changed by the grace of God? Do you not know that God cannot be pleased with you, my dear brother, in your present state? Do you know that your sinful condition excites the wrath of God? "God is angry with the wicked every day." Do you not know that you have made war upon God? Do you not know that you have plunged your spear into the Saviour's side, and that you have punctured His temples, and spiked His feet, and that you have broken His heart?

Oh! is this what He deserves, you blood-bought soul? Is this the price you pay Him for His long, earthly tramp and His shelterless nights, and His dying prayer, and the groan that made creation shiver? Do you want to drive another nail into Him? Do you want to stick Him with another thorn? Do you want to join the mob that with bloody hands smote Him on the cheek, crying, "His blood be on us and our children for ever?" O your sins! And when I say that, I do not pick out some man who may not have been in a house of worship for forty years, but I pick out any man you choose, whose heart has not been changed by the grace of God. O your sins! I press them on your attention—the sins of your lifetime. What a record for a death-pillow! What a *data* for the judgment day! What a cup of gall for your lips! Look at all the sins of your childhood and riper years, with their forked tongues and adder stings and deathless poignancy, unless Jesus with his heel shall crush the serpents. You have sinned against your God; you have sinned against your Jesus; you have sinned against your grave—aye, you have sinned against the little resting-place of your darling child, for you will never see her again unless you repent. How can you go to the good place, the pure place where she is, your heart unpardoned? You have sinned against a Christian father's counsel and dying mother's prayer. 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? O 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 into the arms of Thy compassion. None ever wanted Thee more than we. Oh! turn on us Thy benediction! "Lord, save us, we perish!"

Let us come around the old Gospel well. A good many of you came in these doors this morning carrying a very heavy burden. I do not know what it is—I cannot guess what it is; but I noticed some of you, when you came in this morning, looked sad. It may be a home trouble you cannot tell anybody. How many have burdens on your shoulders and on your hearts! Come to the well; put down the pack right beside the well. Jacob's well was one hundred feet deep, and cut through the rock; but this Gospel well is deep as eternity, and it is cut right down through the heart of the Son of God. Shovels opened that other well; spears opened this. You remember that the old well-sweep in the country was made out of two pieces—one planted in the ground, and on it was swung a long beam, which we laid hold of in our boyhood and brought down, and the bucket dipped into the water and came up full. So the cross of Jesus is made out of two pieces. I take one piece and plant it close by this good old well, and then swing on it the long piece,

and I lay hold of it with my prayer, and I pull it down unti the bucket strikes the bottom of the Saviour's groans and the Saviour's tears, and then I fetch it up, bubbling, foaming, brimming, sparkling, with the water of which, if a man drink, he shall never thirst.

"To the dear fountain of Thy blood,
Incarnate God I fly;
Here let me wash my spotted soul
From crimes of deepest dye.

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all."

GOSPEL ARCHERY.

“He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.”—*Genesis x. 9.*

IN our day, hunting is a sport; but in the lands and the times infested with wild beasts, it was a matter of life or death with the people. It was very different from going out on a sunshiny afternoon with a patent breech-loader, to shoot reed-birds on the flats, when Pollux and Achilles and Diomedes went out to clear the land of lions and tigers and bears. My text sets forth Nimrod as a hero when it presents him with broad shoulders and shaggy apparel and sun-browned face, and arm bunched with muscle—“a mighty hunter before the Lord.” I think he used the bow and the arrows with great success practising archery.

I have thought if it is such a grand thing and such a brave thing to clear wild beasts out of a country, if it is not a better and braver thing to hunt down and destroy those great evils of society that are stalking the land with fierce eye and bloody paw, and sharp tusk and quick spring. I have wondered if there is not such a thing as Gospel archery, by which those who have been flying from the truth may be captured for God and heaven. The Lord Jesus in His sermon used the art of angling for an illustration when He said: “I will make you fishers of men.” And so I think I have authority for using hunting as an illustration of Gospel truth; and I pray God that there may be many a man in this congregation who shall begin to study Gospel archery, of whom it may, after a while, be said: “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.”

How much awkward Christian work there is done in the world! How many good people there are who drive souls away from Christ instead of bringing them to Him! All their fingers are thumbs—religious blunderers who upset more than they right. Their gun has a crooked barrel, and kicks as it goes off. They are like a clumsy comrade who goes along with skilful hunters; at the very moment he ought to be most quiet, he is cracking an alder, or falling over a log and frightening away the game. How few Christian people have ever learned the lesson of which I read at the beginning of the service, how that the Lord Jesus Christ at the well went from talking about a cup

of water to the most practical religious truths, which won the woman's soul for God! Jesus in the wilderness was breaking bread to the people. I think it was good bread; it was very light bread, and the yeast had done its work thoroughly. Christ, after he had broken the bread, said to the people: "Beware of the yeast, or of the leaven of the Pharisees." So natural a transition it was; and how easily they all understood Him! But how few Christian people there are who understand how to fasten the truths of God and religion to the souls of men. Truman Osborne, one of the evangelists who went through this country some years ago, had a wonderful art in the right direction. He came to my father's house one day, and while we were all seated in the room, he said: "Mr. Talmage, are all your children Christians?" Father said: "Yes, all but De Witt." Then Truman Osborne looked down into the fire-place, and began to tell a story of a storm that came on the mountains, and all the sheep were in the fold; but there was one lamb outside that perished in the storm. Had he looked me in the eye, I should have been angered when he told that story; but he looked into the fire-place, and it was so pathetically and beautifully done that I never found any peace until I was sure I was inside the fold, where the other sheep are.

The archers of olden times studied their art. They were very precise in the matter. The old books gave special directions as to how an archer should go, and as to what an archer should do. He must stand erect and firm, his left foot a little in advance of the right foot. With his left hand he must take hold of the bow in the middle, and then with the three fingers and the thumb of his right hand he should lay hold of the arrow and affix it to the string—so precise was the direction given. But how clumsy we are about religious work. How little skill and care we exercise. How often our arrows miss the mark. Oh, that there were lay colleges established in all the towns and cities of our land, where men might learn the art of doing good—studying spiritual archery, and known as "mighty hunters before the Lord."

In the first place, if you want to be effectual in doing good, you must be very *sure of your weapon*. 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 bow-string of plaited silk. The broad fields of Agincourt, and Solway Moss, and Neville's Cross heard the loud thrum of the archer's bow-string. 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 a bow made out of the wood of the cross. As far as I can estimate or calculate, it has brought down three hundred million souls. Paul knew how to bring the notch of that arrow on to that bowstring, and its whirr 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 scepticism; 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: "Oh, Galilean, Thou hast conquered."

In the armoury of the Earl of Pembroke, there are old corslets which show that the arrow of the English used to go through the breastplate, through the body of the warrior, and out through the back-plate. What a symbol of that Gospel which is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and body, and of the joints and marrow! Would to God we had more faith in that Gospel! The humblest man in this house, if he had enough faith in him, could bring a hundred souls to Jesus—perhaps five hundred. Just in proportion as this age seems to believe less and less in it, I believe more and more in it. What are men about that they will not accept their own deliverance? There is nothing proposed by men that can do anything like this Gospel. The religion of Ralph Waldo Emerson is the philosophy of icicles; the religion of Theodore Parker was a sirocco of the desert of covering up the soul with dry sand; the religion of Rénan is the romance of believing nothing; the religion of Thomas Carlyle is only a condensed London fog; the religion of the Huxleys and the Spensers is merely a pedestal on which human philosophy sits shivering in the night of the soul, looking up to the stars, offering no help to the nations that crouch and groan at the base. Tell me where there is one man who has rejected that Gospel for another, who is thoroughly satisfied, and helped, and contented in his scepticism, and I will take the car to-morrow and ride five hundred miles to see him. The full power of the Gospel has not yet been touched. As a sportsman

throws up his head and catches the ball flying through the air, just so easily will this Gospel after a while catch this round world flying from its orbit and bring it back to the heart of Christ. Give it full swing, and it will pardon every sin, heal every wound, cure every trouble, emancipate every slave, and ransom every nation. Ye Christian men and women who go out this afternoon to do Christian work, as you go into the Sunday-schools and the lay preaching stations, and the penitentiaries, and the asylums, I want you to feel that you bear in your hand a weapon, compared with which the lightning has no speed, and avalanches have no heft, and the thunderbolts of heaven have no power; it is the arrow of the omnipotent Gospel. Take careful aim. Pull the arrow clear back until the head strikes the bow! Then let it fly! And may the slain of the Lord be many!

Again, 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 Pennsylvanian 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 in 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 their feet from damask ottomans, and put them in the stirrups. We want

a pulpit on wheels. The Church wants not so much cushions as it wants saddle-bags and arrows. We have got to put aside the gown and kid-gloves, and put on the hunting-shirt. We have been fishing so long in the brooks that run under the shadow of the Church that the fish know us, and they avoid the hook, and escape as soon as we come to the bank, while yonder is Upper Saranac and Big Tupper's Lake, where the first swing of the Gospel net would break it for the multitude of the fishes. There is outside work to be done. What is it that I see in the backwoods? It is a tent. The hunters have made a clearing and camped out. What do they care if they have wet feet, or if they have nothing but a pine branch for a pillow, or for the north-east storm? If a moose in the darkness steps into the lake to drink, they hear it right away. If a loon cry in the midnight, they hear it. So in the service of God we have exposed work. We have got to camp out and rough it. We are putting all our care on the forty thousand people in Brooklyn, who, they say, come to Church. What are we doing for the three hundred and sixty thousand that do not come? Have they no souls? Are they sinless that they need no pardon? Are there no dead in their houses that they need no comfort? Are they cut off from God, to go into eternity—no wing to bear them, no light to cheer them, no welcome to greet them? I hear to-day, surging up from the lower depths of Brooklyn, a groan that comes through our Christian assemblages and through our beautiful churches; and it blots out all this scene from my eyes to-day, as by the mists of a great Niagara; for the dash and the plunge of these great torrents of life dropping down in to the fathomless and thundering abyss of suffering and woe. I sometimes think that just as God blotted out the Church of Thyatira and Corinth and Laodicea, because of their sloth and stolidity, He will blot out American and English Christianity, and raise on the ruins a stalwart, wide-awake, missionary Church, that can take the full meaning of that command, "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned"—a command, you see, punctuated with a throne of heaven and a dungeon of hell.

I remark, further, if you want to succeed in spiritual archery, you must *have courage*. If the hunter stand with trembling hand or shoulder that flinches with fear, instead of his taking the catamount, the catamount takes him. What would become of

the Greenlander if, when out hunting for the bear, he should stand shivering with terror on an iceberg? What would have become of Du Chaillu and Livingstone in the African thicket, with a faint heart and a weak knee? When a panther comes within twenty paces of you, and it has its eye on you, and it has squatted for the fearful spring, "Steady there."

Courage, O ye spiritual archers! 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 back-bone. 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 logwood, 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 two million five 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. I think it was in 1793 that there went out from Lucknow, India, under the sovereign, the greatest hunting party that was ever projected. There were ten thousand armed men in that hunting party. There were camels, and horses, and elephants. On some, princes rode, and royal ladies, under exquisite housings, and five hundred coolies waited upon the train, and the desolate places of India were invaded by this excursion, and the rhinoceros, and deer, and elephant, fell under the stroke of the sabre and bullet. After a while the party brought back trophies worth fifty thousand rupees, having left

the wilderness of India ghastly with the slain bodies of wild beasts. Would to God that instead of here and there a straggler going out to fight these great monsters of iniquity in our country, the million membership of our churches would band together and hew in twain these great crimes that make the land frightful with their roar, and are fattening upon the bodies and souls of immortal men. Who is ready for such a party as that? Who will be a mighty hunter for the Lord?

I remark again, if you want to be successful in spiritual archery, you need not only to bring *down* the game, but bring it *in*. I think one of the most beautiful pictures of Thorwaldsen is his "Autumn." It represents a sportsman coming home and standing under a grape-vine. He has a staff over his shoulder, and on the other end of that staff are hung a rabbit and a brace of birds. Every hunter brings home the game. No one would think of bringing down a reindeer or whipping up a stream for trout, and letting them lie in the woods. At eventide the camp is adorned with the treasures of the forest—beak, and fin, and antler.

If you go out to hunt for immortal souls, not only bring them down under the arrow of the Gospel, but bring them into the Church of God, the grand home and encampment we have pitched this side the skies. Fetch them in; do not let them lie out in the open field. They need our prayers and sympathies and help. That is the meaning of the Church of God—*help*. O ye hunters for the Lord! not only bring *down* the game, but bring it *in*.

If Mithridates liked hunting so well that for seven years he never went in-doors, what enthusiasm ought we to have who are hunting for immortal souls! If Domitian practised archery until he could stand a boy down in the Roman amphitheatre, with a hand out, the fingers outstretched, and then the king could shoot an arrow between the fingers without wounding them, to what drill and what practice ought not we to subject ourselves in order to become spiritual archers and "mighty hunters before the Lord!" But let me say, you will never work any better than you pray. "The old archers took the bow, put one end of it down beside the foot, elevated the other end, and it was the rule that the bow should be just the size of the archer; if it were just his size, then he would go into the battle with confidence. Let me say that your power to project good in the world will correspond exactly to your own spiritual stature. In other words,

the first thing, in preparation for Christian work is personal consecration.

“Oh! for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb.”

I am sure that there are some here who at some time have been hit by the Gospel arrow. You felt the wound of that conviction, and you plunged into the world deeper; just as the stag, when the hounds are after it, plunges into Scroon Lake, expecting in that way to escape. Jesus Christ is on your track to-day, impenitent man! not in wrath, but in mercy. Oh, ye chased and panting souls! here is the stream of God's mercy and salvation, where you may cool your thirst! Stop that chase of sin to-day. By the red fountain that leaped from the heart of my Lord, I bid you stop.

There is mercy for you—mercy that pardons; mercy that heals; everlasting mercy. Is there in all this house anyone who can refuse the offer that comes from the heart of the dying Son of God? Why, do you know that there are, in the banished world, souls that, for that offer you get to-day, would fling the crown of the universe at your feet, if they possessed it? But they went out on the mountains, the storm took them, and they died.

There is in a forest in Germany a place they call the “deer leap”—two crags about eighteen yards apart, between them a fearful chasm. This is called the “deer leap,” because once a hunter was on the track of a deer; it came to one of these crags; there was no escape for it from the pursuit of the hunter, and in utter despair it gathered itself up, and in the death agony attempted to jump across. Of course, it fell, and was dashed on the rocks far beneath. Here is a path to heaven. It is plain; it is safe. Jesus marks it out for every man to walk in. But here is a man who says: “I won't walk in that path; I will take my own way.” He comes on up until he confronts the chasm that divides his soul from heaven. Now, his last hour has come, and he resolves that he will leap that chasm, from the heights of earth, to the heights of heaven. Stand back, now, and give him full swing, for no soul ever did that successfully. Let him try. Jump! Jump! He misses the mark, and he goes down, depth below depth, “destroyed without remedy.” Men! angels! devils! what shall we call that place of awful catastrophe? Let it be known for ever as **THE SINNER'S DEATH-LEAP.**

THE KING'S WAGGONS.

"And when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.—*Genesis* xlv. 27.

THE Egyptian capital was the focus of the world's wealth. In ships and barges there had been brought to it from India frankincense, and cinnamon, and ivory, and diamonds; from the north marble and iron; from Syria purple and silk; from Greece some of the finest horses of the world, and some of the most brilliant chariots; and from all the earth that which could best please the eye, and charm the ear, and gratify the taste. There were temples aflame with red sandstone, entered by gateways that were guarded by pillars bewildering with hieroglyphics, and wound with brazen serpents, and adorned with winged creatures, their eyes and beaks, and pinions glittering with precious stones. There were marble columns blooming into white flower-buds; there were stone pillars, the top bursting into the shape of the lotus when in full bloom, along the avenues lined with sphinx, and fane, and obelisk; there were princes who came in gorgeously upholstered palanquins, carried by servants in scarlet, or else were drawn in vehicles, the snow-white horses golden bitted, six abreast, dashing at full run; there were fountains from stone-wreathed vases climbing the ladder of the sun. You would hear a bolt drawn and a door of brass open like a flash of the sun. The surrounding gardens were saturated with odour that climbed the terrace, and dripped from the arbors, and burned their incense in the Egyptian noon. In floors of mosaic the glories of Pharaoh were spelled out in letter of porphyry and beryl and flame. There were ornaments twisted from the wood of the tamarisk, embossed with silver breaking into foam. There were footstools made out of a single precious stone. There were beds fashioned out of a crouched lion in bronze. There were chairs spotted with the sleek hide of the leopard. There were sofas footed with the claws of wild beasts, and armed with the beaks of birds. As you stand on the level beach of the sea, on a sunny day, you look either way and there are miles of breakers white with the ocean foam dashing shoreward, so it

seemed as if the sea of the world's pomp and wealth, in the Egyptian capital, for miles and miles flung itself up into white breakers of marble temple, mausoleum, and obelisk.

This was the place where Joseph, the shepherd boy, was called to stand next to Pharaoh in honour. What a contrast between this scene and his humble standing, and the pit into which his brothers threw him! Yet he was not forgetful of his early home—he was not ashamed of where he came from. The Bishop of Mentz, descended from a wheelwright, covered his house with spokes, and hammers, and wheels; and the King of Sicily, in honor of his father, who was a potter, refused to drink out of anything but earthen vessels. So Joseph was not afraid of his early surroundings, or of his old-time father, or of his brothers. When they came up from the famine-struck land to get corn from the king's corn-crib, Joseph, instead of chiding them for the way they had maltreated and abused him, sent them back with waggons, which Pharaoh furnished, laden with corn; and old Jacob, the father, in the very same waggon, was brought back that Joseph, the son, might see him, and give him a home all the rest of his days.

Well, I hear the waggons—the king's waggons—rumbling down in front of the palace. On the outside of the palace, to see the waggons go off, stands Pharaoh in royal robes, and beside him prime-minister Joseph, with a chain of gold around his neck, and on his hand a ring, given by Pharaoh to him, so that any time he wanted to stamp the royal seal upon a document he could do so. Waggon after waggon rolled down from the palace, laden with corn, and meat, and changes of raiment, and everything that could help a famine-struck people. One day I see aged Jacob seated in the front of his house; he is possibly thinking of his absent boys (sons, however old they get, are never anything more than boys) and while he is seated there he sees dust arising, and he hears waggons rumbling, and he wonders what is coming now, for the whole land had been smitten with the famine and was in silence. But after awhile the waggons come near enough, and he sees his sons in the waggons, and before they come up they shout: "Joseph is yet alive!" The old man faints dead away. I do not wonder at it. The boys tell the story how that the boy, the long-lost Joseph, has got to be the first man in the Egyptian palace. While they unload the waggons the wan and wasted creatures come up and ask for a handful of corn and they are satisfied. One day the

waggons are brought up for Jacob; the old father, is about to go to see Joseph in the Egyptian palace. You know it is not a very easy thing to transplant an old tree, and Jacob has hard work to get away from the place where he had lived so long. He bids good-bye to the old place, and leaves his blessing with his neighbors; and then his sons steady him, while he, determined to help himself, gets into the waggon, stiff, old, and decrepid. Yonder they go, Jacob and his sons, and their wives, and their children, eighty-two in all, followed by herds and flocks, which the herdsmen drive along. They are going out from famine to luxuriance, they are going from a plain country home to the finest palace under the sun. Joseph, the prime minister, gets in his chariot and drives down to meet the old man. Joseph's charioteer holds up the horses on one side, the dust-covered waggons of the emigrants stop on the other. Joseph, instead of waiting for his father to come, leaps out of the chariot, leaps into the emigrants' waggon, throws his arms around the old man, and weeps aloud for past memories and present joy. The father, Jacob, can hardly think it is his boy. Why, his smooth brow of childhood has become wrinkled with the cares of state, and the garb of the shepherd boy has become a robe royally bedizened. But as the old man finds out it is actually Joseph, I see the thin lips quiver against the toothless gums. He cries out: "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face. Behold, Joseph is yet alive!" The waggons roll up in front of the palace. Help out the grandchildren and take them in out of the Egyptian sun. Help old Jacob out of the waggon; send word to Pharaoh that the old shepherd has come. In the royal apartments Pharaoh and Jacob meet dignity and rusticity, the gracefulness of the court and the plain manners of the field. The king, wanting to make the old countryman at ease, and seeing how white his beard is, and how feeble his step, looks familiarly into his face, and says to the aged man: "How old art thou?" Give the old man a seat; unload the waggons; drive out the cattle towards the pasture of Goshen; let the slaves in scarlet kneel and wash the feet of the newly-arrived, wiping them on the finest linen in the palace; from vases of perfume let the newly-arrived be sprinkled and refreshed. Let minstrels come in with sandals of crimson, and thrum the harp, and clash the cymbals, and jingle the tambourines, while we set down at this great distance of time and space and learn the lesson of the king's waggons.

My friends, we are in a world by sin famine-struck, but the King is in constant communication with us, his waggons coming and going perpetually; and in the rest of my discourse I will show what the waggons bring and what they take back.

In the first place, like those that came from the Egyptian palace, the King's waggons now bring us *corn and meat*, and many changes of raiment. 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 waggons 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—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 clothe and feed the world. None but a King's corn-crib could appease the world's famine. None but a King could tell how many waggons 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 cease, hunger would come into the nations—as to Utica when Hamilcan beseiged 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 carcases to devour; and the earth, in silence, would wheel around one great black hearse—all life stopped because the King's waggons are stopped. Oh! thank God for bread—for bread!

I remark, again, that, like those that came from the Egyptian palace, the King's waggons 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 laid the corpse of his unburied Joseph; and when the waggons came—the king's waggons—and told him

that Joseph was yet alive, he faints dead away. Good news for Jacob! Good news for us! The King's waggons 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 waggons 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 Aramathean 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 screwdriver, 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 Redemer lives.'"

The King's waggons will after a while unload, and they will turn round, and they will go back to the palace, and I really think that you and I will go with them. The King will not leave us in this famine-struck world. The King has ordered that we be lifted into the waggons, and that we go over into Goshen, where there shall be pasturage for our largest flock of joy; and then we will drive up to the palace where there are glories awaiting us which will melt all the snow of Egyptian marble into forgetfulness.

I think that the King's waggons will take us up *to see our lost friends*. Jacob's chief anticipation was not of seeing the Nile, or of seeing the long colonnade of architectural beauty, or of seeing the throne-room. There was a focus to all his journeyings—to all his anticipations—and that was Joseph. Well, my friends, I do not think heaven would be worth much if our brother Jesus was not there. If there were two heavens, the one with all the pomp and paraphernalia of an eternal monarchy, but no Christ—and the other were a plain heaven, humbly thatched, with a few daisies in the yard, and Christ were there, I would say: "Let the King's waggons take me up to the old farmhouse." If Jesus were not in heaven there would be no music there; there would be but very few people there; they would be off looking for the lost Christ, crying through the universe: "Where is Jesus? where is Jesus?" and, after they had found Him, with loving violence they would take Him and bear Him through the gates; and it would be the greatest day known in heaven within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. Jesus never went off from heaven but once, and He was so badly treated on that excursion they will never let Him go again.

Oh! the joy of meeting our brother Joseph—Jesus. After we have talked about him for ten, or fifty, or seventy years, to talk *with Him!* and to clasp hands with the Hero of the ages, not crouching as underlings in His presence, but as Jacob and Joseph hug each other. We will want some new term by which to address him. On earth we call Him Saviour, or Redeemer, or Friend; but when we throw our arms around Him in everlasting embrace, we will want some new term of endearment. I can think of what we shall do through the long ages of eternity, but what we shall do the first minute I cannot guess. In the first flash of His countenance, in the first rush of our emotions, what we shall do I cannot imagine. Oh! the overwhelming glory of the first sixty seconds in heaven. Methinks we will just stand and look, and look, and look.

The King's waggons took Jacob up to see his lost boy; and so I really think that the King's waggons 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 for 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 waggons 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 not 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 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.

In my boyhood, for some time, we lived three miles from church, and on stormy days the children stayed at home, but father and mother always went to church. That was a habit they had. On those stormy Sabbaths when we stayed at home, the absence of our parents seemed very much protracted, for the roads were very bad, and they could not get on very fast. So we would go to the window at twelve o'clock to see if they were coming; and then we would go at half-past twelve to see if they were coming; and at a quarter to one; and then at one o'clock. After awhile, Mary or Daniel, or De Witt would shout: "The waggon's coming:" and then we would see it winding out of the woods, and over the brook, and through the lane, and up in the front of the old farm-house; and then we would rush out, leaving the doors wide open, with many things to tell them, asking them many questions. Well, my dear brethren, I think we are many of us in the King's waggons, and we are on the

way home. The road is very bad, and we get on slowly; but after awhile we will come winding out of the woods, and through the brook of death, and up in front of the old heavenly home-stead; and our departed kindred who have been waiting and watching for us will rush out through the doors, and over the lawn, crying: "The waggons are coming! the King's waggons are coming!" Hark! the bell of the city hall strikes twelve. Twelve o'clock on earth; and likewise it is high noon in heaven.

During the past week some of God's waggons have come due, and a loved one is gone. John R. Lansing, an elder of this church, loved by me, loved by you all—one of those pure spirits that we sometimes see early ripening for heaven. I never heard a young man pray as Lansing did. He talked with God like an old Christian. Last Thursday morning the King's waggon halted at his pillow. There was no one present to see him go. Yes, there was; Jesus was there. I went round afterwards where he dwelt, and they had nothing but words of praise to say of him—so kind he was, so gentle he was, so pure he was, so upright he was. We picked him out of our large congregation as especially qualified for the service of the eldership. I have always been glad since we did. He was a young man to be called an elder, but he was worthy of his office, and he honored it. If I knew of any better words of eulogium—honest eulogium—than these I have already uttered, I would say them. Joy to him. No more asthma or heart disease for him. He is well now. He will never cough again. Joy, joy; but ours is the grief in the elder's board, in the Sabbath-school, in the prayer-meeting—ours is the grief. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." May God comfort those that mourn, especially that aged mother, too feeble to hear of such tidings. I do not know but that the King's waggon will take them both side by side through the gates into the city.

Does not the subject of the morning take the gloom out of the thoughts that would otherwise be struck through with midnight. We used to think that when we died we would have to go afoot, sagging down in the mire, and the hounds of terror might get after us and that if we got through into heaven at all, we would come in torn and wounded and bleeding. I remember when my teeth chattered and my knees knocked together when I heard anybody talk about death; but I have come to think that the grave will be the softest bed I have ever slept in, and that the

bottom of my feet will not be wet with the passage of the Jordan. "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." I was reading a day or two ago Robert Southey, who said he could die far away from his friends—like a dog, crawling into a corner and dying unobserved, those were his words. Be it ours to die on a couch, surrounded by loved ones, so that they, with us, may hear the glad, sweet, jubilant announcement: "The King's waggons are coming." Hark! I hear them now! Are they coming for me or you?

HYPOCRISY.

“And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”—1 *Samuel* xv. 14.

THE Amalekites thought they had conquered God, and that He would not carry into execution His threats against them. They had murdered the Israelites *in* battle and *out* of battle, and left no outrage untried. For four hundred years this had been going on; and they said: “God either dare not punish us, or He has forgotten to do so.” Let us see. Samuel, God’s prophet, tells Saul to go down and slay all the Amalekites, not leaving one of them alive; also to destroy all the beasts in their possession—ox, sheep, camel, and ass. Hark! I hear the tread of two hundred and ten thousand men, with monstrous Saul at their head, ablaze with armour, his shield dangling at his side, holding in his hand a spear, at the waving of which the great host marched or halted. The sound of their feet shaking the earth seemed like the tread of the great God, as, marching in vengeance, He trampled the nations into the dust. I see smoke curling against the sky. Now there is a thick cloud of it, and now I see the whole city rising in a chariot of smoke behind steeds of fire. It is Saul that set the city ablaze. The Amalekites and Israelites meet; the trumpets of battle blow peal upon peal; and there is a death hush. Then there is a signal waved, swords cut and hack; javelins ring on shields; arms fall from trunks; and heads roll in the dust. Gash after gash; the frenzied yell; the gurgling of throttled throats; the cry of pain; the laugh of revenge; the curse hissed between clenched teeth—an army’s death-groan. Stacks of dead on all sides, with eyes unshut, and mouths yet grinning vengeance. Huzza for the Israelites! Two hundred and ten thousand men wave their plumes and clap their shields, for the Lord God hath given them the victory.

Yet that victorious army of Israel are conquered by sheep and oxen. God, through the prophet Samuel, told Saul to slay all the Amalekites, and to slay all the beasts in their possession;

but Saul, thinking that he knows more than God, saves Agag, the Amalekite king, and a fine drove of sheep and a herd of oxen, that he cannot bear to kill. Saul drives the sheep and oxen down towards home. He has no idea that Samuel, the prophet, will find out that he has saved these sheep and oxen for himself. Samuel comes and asks Saul the news from the battle. Saul puts on a solemn face—for there is no one who can look more solemn than your genuine hypocrite—and he says: "I have fulfilled the commandment of the Lord." Samuel listens, and he hears the drove of sheep a little way off. Saul had no idea the prophet's ear would be so acute. Samuel says to Saul: "If you have done as God told you, and slain all the Amalekites and all the beasts in their possession, what meaneth the bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the cattle which I hear?" Ah! one would have thought that blushes would have consumed the cheek of Saul. No, no. He says the army—not himself, of course, but the army—had saved the sheep and oxen for sacrifice; and then they thought it would be too bad, anyhow, to kill Agag, the Amalekite king. Samuel takes the sword, and he slashes Agag to pieces; and then he takes the skirt of his coat, in true Oriental style, and rends it in twain, as much as to say: "You, Saul, just like that, shall be torn away from your empire and torn away from your throne." In other words: "Let all the nations of earth hear the story that Saul, by disobeying God, won a flock of sheep but lost a kingdom."

I learn, first, from the subject that *God will expose hypocrisy*. 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 practising 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 afterwards, 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 hosts. Oh ! we cannot deceive God with a church certificate. He sees behind the curtain as well as before the curtain. He sees everthing inside out. A man may, through policy, hide his real character ; but God will after awhile tear open the white sepulchre and expose the putrefaction. Sunday faces cannot save him ; long prayers cannot save him ; psalm-singing and church-going cannot save him. God will expose him just as thoroughly as though He branded upon his forehead the word "hypocrite." He may think he has been successful in the deception, but, at the most unfortunate moment, the sheep will bleat and the oxen will bellow. One of the cruel bishops of olden time was going to excommunicate one of the martyrs, and he began in the usual form : "In the name of God, Amen." "Stop," says the martyr ; "don't say, 'in the name of God.'" Yet, how many outrages are practised under the garb of religion and sanctity ! When in synods and conferences ministers are about to say something unbrotherly and unkind about a member, they almost always begin by being tremendously pious—the venom of their assault corresponding to the heavenly pathos of the prelude. Standing there, you would think they were ready to go right up into glory, and that nothing kept them down but the weight of their boots and overcoat, when suddenly the sheep bleat and the oxen bellow. Oh, my dear friends, let us cultivate simplicity of Christian character. Jesus Christ said : "Unless you become as this little child, you cannot enter the kingdom of God." We may play hypocrite successfully now, but the Lord God will, after a while, expose our true character. You must know the incident mentioned in the history of Ottacar, 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. Ottacar, after awhile, 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 Ottacar 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 shame, 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 that will bow before you, and who are obsequious in your presence, and talk flatteringly, but who, all the while they are in your conversation, are digging for bait and angling for imperfections. In your presence they imply that they are everything friendly, but after awhile you find that 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 ; and at the very moment they think they have been successful in deceiving you and deceiving the world, the sheep will bleat and the oxen will bellow.

I learn, further, from this subject *how natural it is to try to put off our sins upon other people*. Saul was charged with disobeying God. The man says it was not him ; he did not save the sheep, the army did it ; trying to throw it off on the shoulders of other people. Human nature is the same in all the ages. Adam confronted with his sin, said : " The woman tempted me, and I did it ; " and the woman charged it upon the serpent ; and, if the serpent could have spoken, it would have charged it upon the devil. I suppose the real state of the case was, that Eve was eating the apple, and that Adam saw it, and begged and coaxed until he got a piece of it. I suppose that Adam was just as much to blame as Eve was. You cannot throw off the responsibility of any sin upon the shoulders of

other people. Here is a young man who says: "I know I am doing wrong, but I have not had any chance. I had a father who despised God, and a mother who was a disciple of godless fashion. I am not to blame for my sins—it is my bringing up." Ah! no; that young man has been out long enough in the world to see what is right and to see what is wrong, and in the great day of eternity he cannot throw his sins upon his father or mother, but will have to stand for himself and answer before God. You have had a conscience, you have had a Bible, and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Stand for yourself or fall for yourself. Here is a business man. He says: "I know I don't do exactly right in trade, but all the dry goods men do it, and all the hardware men do this, and I am not responsible." You cannot throw off your sins upon the shoulders of other merchants. God will hold you responsible for what you do, and them responsible for what they do. I want to quote one passage of Scripture for you. I think it is in Proverbs: "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it."

I learn, further, from this subject *what God meant by extermination*. Saul was 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 a 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 who 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 worldliness. It is an old sin he can not 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 higher 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 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 can we not all have this consecration? Why slay some of

the sins in our soul and leave others to bleat and bellow for 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." Saul slew the poorest of the sheep and the meanest of the oxen, and kept some of the finest and the fattest; and there are Christians who have slain the most unpopular of their transgressions and saved those which are most respectable. It will not do. Eternal war against all the Amalekites; no mercy for Agag.

I learn, further, from this subject that *it is vain to try to defraud God*. Here Saul thought he had cheated God out of those sheep and oxen; but he lost his crown—he lost his empire. You cannot cheat God out of a single farthing. Here is a man who has made ten thousand dollars in fraud. Before he dies every dollar of it will be gone, or it will give him violent unrest. Here is a Christian who has been largely prospered. He has not given to God the proportion that is due in charities and benevolence. God comes to the reckoning, and He takes it all away. Do you suppose if a man has an income of ten thousand dollars, and he gives only five hundred dollars of it to God, that God is going to let him keep it? No. Do you suppose if a man have one hundred thousand dollars in capital or in estate, and gives only ten thousand of it to the Lord God in a year, that God is going to let him keep any? or, keeping it, it will curse him to the bone. You cannot cheat God. How often it has been that Christian men have had large estates, and it has gone. The Lord God came into the counting-house, and said: "I have allowed you to have all this property for ten, fifteen, or twenty years, and you have not done justice to My poor children. When the beggar called upon you, you hounded him off your steps. When My suffering children appealed to you for help, you had no mercy. I only asked for so much, or so much; but you did not give it to Me, and now I will take it all." God asks of us one seventh of our time in the way of Sabbath. Do you suppose we can get an hour of that time successfully away from its true object? No, no. God has demanded one seventh of your time. If you take one hour of that time that is to be devoted to God's service, and instead of keeping His Sabbath use it for the purpose of writing up your accounts, or making worldly gains, God will certainly bring you into judgment for the abuse of that time. God says to Jonah: "You go to Nineveh." He says: "No, I won't; I'll go to

Tarshish." He starts for Tarshish. The sea raves, the wind blows, 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 out 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 water to drown him; and the earth to swallow him. Those whose princely robes are woven out of heart-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 ashes, and the cry of pain was drowned in the snapping of the flame and the howling of the mob; from the valleys of Piedmont, and Smithfield Square, and London Tower, and the Highlands of Scotland. Gather in great procession, and together clap your bony hands, and together stamp your mouldy feet; and let the chains that bound you to dungeons all clank at once; and gather all the flames that burned you in one uplifted arm of fire, and plead for a judgment. Gather all the tears ye ever wept into a lake, and gather all the sighs ye ever breathed into a tempest, until the heaven-piercing chain clanks, and the tempest sighs, and the thunder groans, announce to earth, and hell, and heaven, a judgment!—a judgment! Oh! on that day, God will vindicate His own cause, and vindicate the cause of the troubled and the oppressed. It will be seen in that day, that though we may have robbed our fellows, we never have successfully robbed God.

My Christian friends, as you go into the world, exhibit an open-hearted Christian frankness. Do not be hypocritical in anything; you are never safe if you are. In the most inopportune moment the sheep will bleat and the oxen bellow.

Drive out the last Amalekite of sin from your soul. Have no mercy on Agag. Down with your sins—down with your pride—down with your worldliness. I know you cannot achieve this work by your own arm; but Almighty grace is sufficient—that which saved Joseph in the pit, that which delivered Daniel in the den, that which shielded Shadrach, that which cheered Paul in the shipwreck.

TORCHES LIGHTED.

SUBJECT:—The parable of the ten virgins.—*Matthew xxv. 1-12.*

A YOUNG man and a young woman have been affianced, according to the Oriental custom. The time of their marriage has arrived. Calm, soft, beautiful night comes down on the eastern hills. The bridegroom invited his most intimate friends to come. They are come from the life of the hills, and they are boisterous in their mirth. They have such clothes as their rusticity affords them. Each one has a flambeau, or rod of brass, with a piece of wood on the top of it, the wood wound with linen, the linen dipped in olive oil, and a cup fastened under it, so that the oil may not drop upon the man who bears it. They strike the flints, the sparks fly, and the flambeaux blaze. With these torches the procession starts. How beautifully the lights glance in and out among the leaves, and in the air redolent with lilies and frankincense. There are songs, and shouts, and glee, such as young men feel on the way to a marriage. On and on they go. It is twelve o'clock at night when they come within hailing distance of the bride's house. In the languor of these eastern nights all the bridesmaids have fallen asleep, when the sound came through the dwelling: "The wedding party is approaching," and the light of their torches pours a stream of fire down towards the house. What excitement there is in the dwelling, a running to and fro, and a great fluster. Some of them take up the flambeaux that are standing in the corner, and in the excitement and in the darkness, they cannot find the flints with which to strike the light. Some cry one thing, some cry another, and they jostle each other and stumble about in the darkness. Some one takes a flambeau and puts fire to it; for a moment it blazes, and she holds both hands over it, so as to keep it from the draught of the opening and the shutting doors; but it burns only a little, and goes out. Then they began to cry: "Who can lend us a little olive oil? Who has any oil to spare?" There are none who have any to lend.

But, I am happy to say that five of the bridesmaids were calm and placid. They had not waited until that night before they

prepared for the wedding. Long before the night came they had taken linen and wound it around the top of the flambeaux, saturated it with olive oil, set it where they could find it in the darkness, and placed the flints just where they could take them up and strike them. They had elaborately arranged garlands, and tresses, and robes. No sensible young woman waits until the last ten minutes before she prepares for a great entertainment. Open the door now, and let them go out. Of course the five bridesmaids who are ready cannot wait for the five slovens who are not ready. In front of the house the torches are lifted high and bright, and they are swung in the darkness by the maidens who are greeting the bridegroom's party, which has come near now, so that their voices may be heard; and the maidens stand in the full glare of their tossing flambeaux. The songs and the welcomes of the two parties mingle; the two flames become one, just like the two hearts whose united joy shall henceforth gleam on one pathway. There is a great hall in which the banquet is spread, and amid the clapping of hands, and under a ceiling a-bloom with flowers, and amid the thrum of harps and the clash of cymbals, and the waving of excited people, the bridal party enter. Of course there are stragglers round about the door, as around every gay wedding; a curious rabble, who just want to look in. So the door is slammed shut, and the bolts are shot; and until the capacity for congratulation and merriment is exhausted none shall come out and none shall go in. Now, there is an excitement outside the banqueting-hall. What is it? Why, here come the five belated bridesmaids. Stand back and let them come up. They knock at the door; no answer. They knock again; no answer. Then they put down their flambeaux on the ground and with both hands they beat against the door, as though to drive it in. The doorkeeper within hears the sound outside, and he opens the door; not wide enough to let anyone come in, but just wide enough to let his voice out, as he says: "Go away. Why do you bother us now? I never knew you. The door is shut."

Now there are some people who get one thing out of this parable, and there are others who get another thing; but I get this: *the soul needs light*. If you see the bridegroom's party coming down the hill, what do you find? Torches. If you see the bridal party coming out of the door, what do you see? Torches. What does the soul in its midnight of sin and suffering need? Torches. Confucius tried to strike a light for China,

and he did kindle it; but it went out and left her uncounted millions to make the centuries dismal with their wailing. Zeno, Cleanthes, Aristotle, each struck a light and passed it along from hand to hand, but it went out; and I have to tell you that the universities of the earth, while they have in their chemical laboratories made the blue light, and the green light, and the yellow light, they have never yet been able to make the white light of pardon, and peace, and hope, for a lost world. Peace! where is it? Diving bells have gone two hundred feet down, and not found it in the depths of the sea. Astronomers' telescopes have swept across the heavens and not found it in the air. From a consuming brand of Calvary I pick up the only light for a lost world. The fact that Christ died to save sinners is the flambeau which, flung on the darkness of your soul, will scatter its gloom as by a daybreak. A good many years ago in Washington there were two Congressioners who met once every week to talk about the immortality of the soul; but they despised the Bible. They found no comfort. Their time expired, and they went home. Years passed along. They both visited Washington, and at the same time, and happened to meet at the President's levée. They saw each other at the great distance across the room. They pressed their way through the crowd until they came to each other, and, after years of absence, the first thing that one said to the other was: "John, any light?" "No light." Then this one accosted the other, and said: "Henry, any light?" "No light." They said nothing more; they parted to meet at the judgment. Oh, are there any who have swung off from this grand old Gospel, thinking to find rest for their soul? Have you found comfort, peace, joy, heaven? From a score of souls there comes up to me the cry to-night: "No light! no light!"

All the flambeaux of the groomsmen and the bridesmaids of the text give no such piercing, leaping light as is to be found in the tossing flambeau of the Gospel, which flings light into the dungeon of thy sin and comfort out on the ocean of thy trouble. A blind man sat down by the way-side, and Jesus came along, and the blind man cried out: "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." "Hush up," said the people standing around. "You are a beggar and you are blind, and this is a King." But so much more he cried out: "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." They said: "Be still; it is indecorous; you are disturbing the peace." But the more he cried out: "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus turned to him

and said : " Thy faith hath made thee whole." Oh, that to-night, from this audience, there might go up such a deep, all-compelling prayer for light, that it would turn Jesus upon us with the response : " Thy faith hath made thee whole."

But I learn, also, from this subject, that the soul needs a *moveable* light. These torches coming out of the door are in motion. These torches of the bridegroom's party on the hill are in motion, hoisted, lowered, glancing in and out among the leaves, all moveable. The soul needs a moveable light, and in the Gospel of Christ we have it. That Gospel is not a lamp-post standing on one street. It is not a chandelier hung in one room. It is not a lighthouse set at one harbor. It is a flambeau—a moveable light—something to be carried. And we need to take it into our homes, and we need to take it into our stores and shops, and into our schools, and into our churches, and in the cellars where the poor freeze, and in the garret where the fevered languish, and into the hospital where the wounded die, and far out in the wilderness where the emigrant struggles. Do you know that the lights of this world are *stationary*, and that soon you and I will have to start on a road where all these lights will fail us ? The lights of earthly amusements are stationary ; and all those that are kindled in the most brilliant halls of earth, cannot flash one spark of cheer on that path which you and I will soon have to travel. The lamps of our churches are stationary. All the chandeliers of Christian sanctuaries in one flame of light could not throw a glow-worm spark upon the path which you and I will soon have to travel. The domestic light is stationary. If you should take it to the door on such a gusty night as this it would immediately be blown out. And all the lights that cheer us in the home circle will cast on that pathway on which you and I will soon travel. Oh, God ! when we turn our back upon our amusements, and our churches, and our homes, give us the flambeau of the Gospel—a moveable light ! That will show us where to step, that will make our wolfish fears hide, that will kindle up the sepulchre, as the hunter's torch changes the mountain cavern from a hole of gloom to a place where ceiling and floor are all a-glitter with spar, stalactite above, stalagmite beneath, the dungeon of the grave having become the conqueror's palace. This moveable light Paul carried down into the dungeon until that pestilential cell became an amphitheatre, where all the hosts of heaven stood watching his sufferings. And he took it on the deck of the convict ship where the crew were howling

with terror, and the wind was blowing, as the sailors say, "great guns." And it flamed on his pathway to the last, when the Roman jurors wrote on the tablet their verdict of "*condemno*;" and on the 29th of June, 66, on the road to Ostia, Paul was fastened to the stake, and the officer of the law drew the sword from the scabbard, and, with one sharp, keen, strong stroke, the blood spirted and the soul flew. That flambeau John Howard carried down into the prisons until they glowed with the light of heaven. Lady Rachel Russell was comforted by that light while she was arranging the papers as her husband was preparing for martyrdom. That light John Bunyan held up until by it he saw the gates of the celestial city. It flamed on the blind eyes of John Milton until he saw the battle of the angels. Oh, moveable light, glorious flambeau of the Gospel, pass it up and down through all hands, through all ages; pass it from hand to hand, and from mountain to mountain, and from sea to sea, until it shall be told everywhere that to those who sat in darkness a great light has sprung up. It must have been a brilliant scene when the first morning dawned on the world. Our planet had been a great black hulk—there was not even the gleam of a star or the flash of a fire-fly. But the command came forth: "let there be light," and flashes of brightness quivered through the gloom, and the darkness was lighted, and the mist arose, and there was a faint gleam on the water, and there was snow on the crest of the wave, and the remnants of the night rolled off the sky in splendor, and the bridegroom of the light appeared in the heavens, and all the glories of the earth with lighted torches went forth to meet him. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." But more glorious will be the time when Christ shall confront the world's moral darkness, and He shall cry: "Let there be light," and the Papacy shall cower, and Mahomedanism shall slink away, and Paganism shall go out of sight, and the darkness shall flee, and the Bridegroom of the Church shall appear in the heavens, and redeemed nations, with torches of victory and gladness, go forth to meet Him. "And the evening and the morning are the *last day*."

I next learn from this subject that *no man has any light to spare*. I suppose if some of these obliging bridesmaids had taken the linen from the top of the flambeaux and wrung them out on the lamps of the improvident ones, that after awhile they themselves would have been in darkness. So they did not lend it. There was no olive oil to spare. Neither has any one any

grace to spare. "Oh," says some one in this house: "I had a very good father and very good mother; if there ever was a good woman, she was; and somehow I hope through their piety to get into heaven." Had they any surplus of piety? None. Had they any goodness to spare? None. You cannot borrow oil out of their lamps. There never was a better man than Jonathan Edwards, but he had no grace to spare for his son Pierrepont, who made an awful shipwreck. President Burr was a holy and consecrated man, but he had no grace to spare for Aaron Burr, whose life was a horrid debauch. And, I suppose, if at the last, all the redeemed of heaven were gathered in a circle, and some poor soul should go round and say: "Have you olive oil to spare? give me some for my lamp?" I suppose they would all answer: "not so, lest there be not enough for us and for you." "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it." Every man for himself, every woman for herself.

I learn also from this subject that *some people apply for the light when it is too late*. How silly those bridesmaids must have felt when they could not get in to the wedding. It was not a secret wedding to which, perhaps, they had only a few hours' invitation. I suppose they had known for weeks and months that they were going to be invited, and yet they are not prepared. Though they knew where they could get oil, and they had the money, as the text intimates, yet the wedding comes, they are unprepared for it, and all their pounding at the door does not get them in. I see them coming on up to the door. The rabble begin to jeer at them. They say: "You are too late. Don't you wish you could get in? Where are all your fine clothes now? You are no better off than we are. We didn't expect to go in, we only came to see the bride as she moved into the banqueting hall." A type of that predicament, a good many shall find themselves about their souls at the last. They make an effort for heaven, and they make it after the chance is gone. Do you notice that one half the bridesmaids did not get into the wedding? I think it is a suggestion of the great multitude who will miss the eternal festivities. Do you notice the proportion in figures—five saved, five lost? No more torches go up than go down. The ecstasy of the song no more than the thunder of the groan. Five saved; five lost. So that at last it will not be the going away of that inebriate and that outlaw, merely; it will be a multitude that will go away and die. Stand at any point, and

you will see them going down—myriads! myriads! myriads! “Broad is the way”—(mark you, that is not any doctrine but Christ’s)—“broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: but strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to eternal life, and few there be that find it.” Five saved! Five lost! Brothers and sisters; some going to the right and some going to the left. Father and mother; one going up and the other going down. Husband and wife; one let in and the other shut out. Chanting! chanting! chanting! Wailing! wailing! wailing! Five saved! Five lost!

I suppose that those silly bridesmaids were moral, respectable, or they would not have been invited to the wedding. But their morality did not get them in. They had no torches. All our good works, and all our morality on earth, will not take us into the gate of heaven. We have got to have the torch of Divine grace, or we will be shut out. Just see how near those silly bridesmaids came to getting in. I suppose they were within half an inch of being in the celebration—only the thickness of the door between them; and I suppose some people come just as near to heaven as that, and do not get in. An earnest prayer, a sigh of repentance, one struggle of faith would have taken them in; yet they are shut out—almost saved, but lost. These silly virgins seemed to mean well enough. They expected to get in; but they were too late. I do not know that they were more than ten minutes too late. You know what that feeling is. You come to the depôt and the train is gone. They tell you that it has been gone an hour and a half. You are disappointed; but if they tell you that the train has only been gone two minutes, how chagrined you are. You say: “I might as well have been here as not.” And I suppose there are men who will miss Heaven just by two minutes. There is a man who was pushed into eternity by some accident. One second before that stroke came, a prayer of faith would have saved him, but the stroke came and he was a second too late. That is all. But when that door shuts, it shuts. Salvation lost, my dear brother, is lost for ever. As the tree falleth, so it must lie. How those virgins must have felt when they came up and heard inside the music, and the dancing, and the clash of the goblets, and the laughter, coming in quick percussion on the night air. How they must have felt. Their sisters inside; their brothers, and friends, and neighbours inside, and they themselves out. A type of how we will feel at the last if

we do not get inside the gate of heaven. I suppose every hour of the day and night there are souls going into eternity unprepared. Oh, what excitement it must be about the death-bed, crying out for a lamp, and for the oil, and for the light; throwing hands out, throwing them up, throwing them around, until the nurse asks, "What do you want, water?" He says, shaking his head: "No." "Bathing of the temples?" He shakes his head: "No." What does he want? Oh, he cannot get his light burning. He must start; he is started; he comes up to the gate of heaven; he knocks; he cries: "Let me in!" He is not admitted. He says: "I want to see the bridegroom." The voices within say: "You can't see the bridegroom; he is busy with the guests now." Says the man: "I must come in; my children are in there. I must come in." A voice within says: "You refused the grace that would have brought you where they are." "But," says the man, "I must come in; all my friends and kindred are in. Hark! now I hear the sound of their voices, and the bounding of their feet. Let me in." And a voice from within says: "You are too late!" It says to one man: "You are twenty years too late;" to another, "you are over five years too late;" to another, "you are a month too late;" to another, "you are a minute too late;" and the mob of destroyed ones outside the door take up the chorus, and cry: "Too late!" And the hot wind of the desert sighs: "Too late!" and the bell in the tower of eternal midnight tolls and tolls: "Too late! too late!" And the torches of the silly virgins begin to flicker and hiss in the storm, and one by one they go out, until in the suffocating darkness they cry: "Our lamps have gone out!" And they go wandering through eternity, ages after ages, feeling out for the light, for comfort, for peace, for hope, but finding none, and crying: "Our lamps have gone out!" and then, turning in another direction, and wandering on, age after age, age after age, feeling for hope, and comfort, and light, and Heaven, but finding none, and crying: "Our lamps have gone out!"

To save that time of desperation, I hold before you to-night the flambeau of the Gospel; and a great procession with torches lighted with eternal hope comes down the heavens, and Jesus stands in their midst. Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Plenty of lamps now! Plenty of oil now! Plenty of light now! This minute may fire fall from heaven, and kindle the torches!

GRACE IN CRYSTALS.

“Salt is good.”—*Luke xiv. 34.*

THE Bible is a dictionary of the finest similies. It employs, among living creatures, storks and eagles, and doves and unicorns, and sheep and cattle; among trees, sycamores, and terebinths, and pomegranates, and almond, and apples; among jewels, pearls and amethysts, and jacinths, and chrysoprases. Christ uses no stale illustrations. The lilies that He plucks for His sermons are dewy fresh; the ravens in His discourses are not stuffed specimens of birds; but warm with life from wing-tip to wing-tip; the fish He points to are not dull about the gills as though long captured, but a squirm in the wet net, just brought up on the beach of Tiberias.

In my text, which is the peroration of one of His sermons, He picks up a crystal, and holds it before His congregation as an illustration of Divine grace in the heart, when He says, what we all know by experiment: “Salt is good.”

I shall try to carry out the Saviour's idea in this text, and in the first place say to you that *grace is like salt in its beauty*. In Galicia there are mines of salt, with excavations and underground passages reaching, I am told, two hundred and eighty miles. Far under ground there are chapels and halls of reception, the columns, the altars, and the pulpits of salt. When the king and the princes come to visit these mines, the whole place is illumined, and the glory of crystal walls, and crystal ceilings, and crystal floors, and crystal columns, under the glare of the torches and the lamps, needs words of crystal to describe it. But you need not go so far as that to find the beauty of salt. We live in a land which produces fourteen millions of bushels of it in a year, and you can take the morning rail-train, and in a few hours get to the salt-mines and salt-springs and you have this article, morning, noon, and night on your table. Salt has all the beauty of the snow-flake and water-foam, with durability added. It is beautiful to the naked eye, but under the glass you see the stars, and the diamonds, and the white tree-branches, and the splinters, and the bridges of fire, as the sun glints them. There is more architectural skill in one of these crystals of salt

than human ingenuity has ever demonstrated in an Alhambra or St. Peter's. It would take all time with an infringement upon eternity, for an angel of God to tell one-half the glories in salt-crystal. So with the grace of God; it is perfectly beautiful. I have seen it smooth out wrinkles of care from the brow; I have seen it make an aged man feel almost young again; I have seen it lift the stooping shoulders, and put sparkle into the dull eye. Solomon discovered its anatomical qualities when he said, "It is marrow to the bones." It helps to digest the food and to purify the blood, and to calm the pulses, and quiet the spleen; and instead of putting a man in a philosophical hospital to be experimented upon by prayer, it keeps him so well that he does not need to be prayed for as an invalid. I am speaking now of a *healthy* religion—not of that morbid religion that sits for three hours on a gravestone reading Hervey's "Meditations Among the Tombs"—a religion that prospers best in a bad state of the liver! I speak of the religion that Christ preached. I suppose when that religion has conquered the world that disease will be banished; and that a man a hundred years of age will come in from business, and say, "I feel tired. I think it must be time for me to go," and without one physical pang, heaven will have him.

But the chief beauty of grace is in the soul. It takes that which was hard, and cold, and repulsive, and makes it all over again. It pours upon one's nature what David calls "the beauty of holiness." It extirpates everything that is hateful and unclean. If jealousy, and pride, and worldliness, lurk about, they are chained and have a very small sweep. Jesus throws upon the soul the fragrance of a summer garden, as He comes in, saying: "I am the rose of Sharon;" and He submerges it with the glory of a spring morning as He says: "I am the light." Oh! how much that grace did for the three Johns! It took John Bunyan the foul-mouthed, and made him John Bunyan the immortal dreamer. It took John Newton, the infidel sailor, and in the midst of the hurricane made him cry out: "My mother's God, have mercy upon me!" It took John Summerfield from a life of sin, and by the hand of a Christian edged-tool maker, led him into the pulpit that burns still with the light of that Christian eloquence which charmed thousands to Jesus whom he once despised. Ah! you may search all the earth over for anything so beautiful or beautifying as the grace of God. Go all through the deep mine-passages of Wielitzka, and amid the underground

kingdoms of salt in Hallstadt, and show me anything so exquisite, so transcendently beautiful as this grace of God fashioned and hung in eternal crystals.

Again, grace is like salt, in the fact that *it is a necessity of life*. 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. And that young woman who sits before me and laughs must have it or die. 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.

Again, 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 saline treasures. And if the twelve thousand millions of our race should now cry out to God for His mercy, there would be enough for all; for those farthest gone in sin, for the murderer standing on the drop of the gallows, for Rozenzweig, and Stokes, and Foster. It is an ocean of mercy; and if Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, and all the islands of the sea, went down in it to-day, they would have room enough to wash and to come up clean.

Let no man in this house think that his case is too tough a one for God to act upon; though your sin may be deep and raging, let me tell you that God's grace is a bridge not built on earthly piers, but suspended and spanning the awful chasm of thy guilt, one end resting upon the rock of eternal promises, and the other on the foundations of heaven. Demetrius wore a robe so incrustated with jewels that no one after him ever dared to wear it; but our King, Jesus, takes off the robe of His righteousness, a robe blood-dyed and heaven-impearled, and reaches it out to the worst wretch in all the earth, and says: "Put that on! wear it now! wear it for ever!"

Again, the grace of God is *like salt in the way we come at it*. The salt on the surface is almost always impure—that which incrusts the Rocky Mountains and the South American pampas and in India; but the miners go down through the shafts and through the dark labyrinths, and along by galleries of rock, and with torches and pickaxes find their way under the very

foundations of the earth, to where the salt lies that makes up the nation's wealth. To get to the best saline springs of the earth huge machinery goes down, boring depth below depth, depth below depth, until from under the very 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 vapours 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 vapours 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.

Have you not been in enough trouble to have that work go on? I was reading of Aristotle, who said there was a field of flowers in Sicily so sweet, that once a hound, coming on the track of game, came to that field, and was bewildered by the perfumes, and so lost the track. Oh! that our souls might become like "a field which the Lord hath blessed," and exhale so much of the sweetness of Christian character, that the hounds of temptation, coming on our track, might lose it, and go howling back with disappointment!

But, I remark again, that the grace of God is like the salt in its *preservative quality*. You know that salt absorbs the moisture of articles of food, and infuses them with brine which preserves them for a long while. Salt is the great anti-putrefactive of the world. Experimenters, in preserving food, have tried sugar, and smoke, and air-tight jars, and everything else; but as long as the world stands, Christ's words will be suggestive, and men will admit that, as a great preservative, "salt is good." But for the grace of God the earth would have become a stale carcass

long before this. That grace is the only preservative of laws, and constitution, and literatures. Just as soon as a government loses this salt of Divine grace, it perishes. The philosophy of this day, so far as it is antagonistic to this religion, putrefies and stinks. The great want of our schools of learning and our institutions of science, to-day is not more Leyden jars, and galvanic batteries, and spectroscopes, and philosophical apparatus, but more of that grace that will teach our men of science that the God of the universe is the God of the Bible. How strange it is that in all their magnificent sweeps of the telescope, they have not seen the morning star of Jesus; and that in all their experiments of light and heat, they have not seen the light and warmth of the Sun of Righteousness! We want more of the salt of God's grace in our homes, in our schools, in our colleges, in our social life, in our Christianity. And that which has it will live—that which has it not will die. I proclaim the tendency of everything earthly to putrefaction and death—the religion of Christ the only preservative.

My subject is one of great congratulation to those who have within their souls this Gospel antiseptic. This salt will preserve them through the temptations and sorrows of life, and through the ages of eternity. I do not mean to say that you will have a smooth time because you are Christian. On the contrary, if you do your whole duty, I will promise you a rough time. You march through an enemy's country, and they will try to double up both flanks, and to cut you off from your source of supplies. The war you wage will not be with toy arrows, but sword plunged to the hilt, and spurring on your steed over heaps of the slain. But I think that God Omnipotent will see you through. I think He will. But why do I talk like an atheist when I ought to say I *know* he will? "Kept by the power of God through faith unto complete salvation."

When Governor Geary, of Pennsylvania, died a few days ago, I lost a good friend. He impressed me mightily with the horrors of war. In the eight hours that it takes to come from Harrisburgh to New York, he recited to me the scenes through which he had passed in the last war. He said that there came one battle upon which everything seemed to pivot. Telegrams from Washington said that the life of the nation depended upon that struggle. He said to me: "I went into that battle, sir, with my son. His mother and I thought everything of him. You know how a father will feel towards his son who is coming up

manly and brave, and good. Well, the battle opened and centred, and it was awful! Horses and riders bent and twisted and piled up together: it was awful, sir! We quit firing and took to the point of the bayonet. Well, sir, I didn't feel like myself that day. I had prayed to God for strength for that particular battle, and I went into it feeling that I had in my right arm the strength of ten giants," and as the Governor brought his arm down on the back of the seat, it fairly made the car tremble. "Well," he said, "the battle was desperate, but after a while we gained a little, and we marched on a little. I turned around to the troops, and shouted, 'Come on, boys!' and I stepped across a dead soldier, and lo! it was my son! I saw at the first glance he was dead, and yet I didn't dare to stop a minute, for the crisis had come in the battle; so I just got down on my knees, and I threw my arms around him, and I gave him one good kiss, and said, 'Good bye, dear,' and sprang up and shouted, 'Come on, boys!'" So it is in the Christian conflict. It is a fierce fight. Eternal ages seem depending on the strife. Heaven is waiting for the bulletins to announce the tremendous issue. Hail of shot, gash of sabre, fall of battle-axe, groaning on every side. We cannot stop for loss or bereavement, or anything else. With one ardent embrace and one loving kiss, we utter our farewells, and then cry, "Come on, boys! There are other heights to be captured, there are other crowns to be won."

Yet, as one of the Lord's surgeons, I must bind up two or three wounds. Just lift them now, whatever they be. I have been told there is nothing like salt to stop the bleeding of a wound, and so I take this salt of Christ's Gospel and put it on the lacerated soul. It smarts a little at first; but see! the bleeding stops, and lo! the flesh comes again as the flesh of a little child. "Salt is good!"

THE BANQUET.

“Come; for all things are now ready.”—*Luke* xiv. 17.

IT was one of the most exciting times in English history when Queen Elizabeth visited Lord Leicester at Kenilworth Castle. The moment of her arrival was considered so important that all the clocks of the castle were stopped, so that the hands might point to that one moment as being the most significant of all. She was greeted to the gate with floating islands, and torches, and the thunder of cannon, and fireworks that set the night ablaze, and a great burst of music that lifted the whole scene into perfect enchantment. Then she was introduced in a dining-hall, the luxuries of which astonished the world; four hundred servants waited upon the guests; the entertainment cost five thousand dollars each day. Lord Leicester made that great supper in Kenilworth Castle.

Cardinal Wolsey entertained the French ambassadors at Hampton Court. The best cooks in all the land prepared for the banquet; purveyors went out and travelled all the kingdom over to find spoils for the table. The time came. The guests were kept during the day hunting in the king's park, so that their appetites might be keen; and then, in the evening, to the sound of the trumpeters, they were introduced into a hall hung with silk and cloth of gold, and there were tables a-glitter with imperial plate, and laden with the rarest of meats, and a-blush with the costliest wines; and when the second course of the feast came, it was found that the articles of food had been fashioned into the shape of men, birds, and beasts, and groups dancing, and jousting parties riding against each other with lances. Lords, and princes, and ambassadors, out of cups filled to the brim, drank the health, first of the king of England, and next to the Emperor of France. Cardinal Wolsey prepared that great supper in Hampton Court.

But I have to tell you to-night of a grander entertainment. My Lord, the King, is the banqueter. Angels are the cup-bearers. All the redeemed are the guests. The halls of eternal

love, frescoed with light, and paved with joy, and curtained with unfading beauty, are the banqueting place. The harmonies of eternity are the music. The chalices of heaven are the plate: and I am one of the servants coming out with both hands filled with invitations, scattering them everywhere; and, oh, that for yourselves, you might break the seal of the invitation and read the words written in red ink of blood by the tremulous hand of a dying Christ: "Come now, for all things are ready."

There have been grand entertainments where was a taking off—the wine gave out, or the servants were rebellious, or the light failed; but I have this afternoon gone all around about this subject and looked at the redemption which Christ has provided, and I come here to-night to tell you it is complete, and I swing open the door of the feast, telling you that: "All things are now ready."

In the first place, I have to announce that the *Lord Jesus Christ Himself is ready*. Cardinal Wolsey came into the feast after the first course; he came in booted and spurred, and the guests arose and cheered him. But Christ comes in at the very beginning of the feast; aye, He has been waiting eighteen hundred and seventy-three years for His guests. He has been standing on His mangled feet; He has had His sore hand on His punctured side; or He has been pressing His lacerated temples—waiting, waiting. It is wonderful that He has not been impatient, and that He has not said, "Shut the door, and let the laggard stay out;" but He has been waiting. No banqueter ever waited for his guests so patiently as Christ has waited for us. To prove how willing He is to receive us, I gather all the tears that rolled down His cheeks in sympathy for your sorrows; I gather all the drops of blood that channelled His brow, and His back, and His hands and feet, in trying to purchase your redemption; I gather all the groans that He uttered in midnight chill, and in mountain hunger, and in desert loneliness, and twist them into one cry—bitter, agonising, overwhelming. I gather all the pains that shot from spear, and spike, and cross, jolting into one pang—remorseless, grinding, excruciating. I take that one drop of sweat on His brow, and under the Gospel glass that drop enlarges until I see in it lakes of sorrow and an ocean of agony. That Being standing before you to-night, emaciated, and gashed, and gory, coaxes for your love with a pathos in which every word is a heart-break and every sentence a martyrdom. How can you think He trifles?

Ahasuerus prepared a feast for one hundred and eighty days; but this feast is for all eternity. Lords and princes were invited to that; you, and I, and all our world are invited to this. Christ is ready. You know that the banqueters of olden time used to wrap themselves in robes prepared for the occasion; so, my Lord Jesus hath wrapped Himself in all that is beautiful. See how fair He is! His eye, His brow, His cheek, so radiant that the stars have no gleam, and the morning no brilliancy compared with it. His face reflecting all the joys of the redeemed, His hand having the omnipotent surgery with which He opened blind eyes, and straightened crooked limbs, and hoisted the pillars of heaven, and swung the twelve gates which are twelve pearls. There are not enough cups in heaven to dip up this ocean of beauty. There are not ladders enough to scale this height of love. There are not enough cymbals to clap, or harps to thrum, or trumpets to peal forth the praises of this One altogether fair. Oh, thou flower of eternity, thy breath is the perfume of heaven! Oh, blissful daybreak, let all people clap their hands in thy radiance! Chorus! Come, men, and saints, and cherubim, and seraphim, and archangel—all heights, all depths, all immensities. Chorus! Roll Him through the heavens in a chariot of universal acclaim, over bridges of hosannas, under arches of coronation, along by the great towers chiming with eternal jubilee. Chorus! "Unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory, world without end!"

I have a word of five letters, but no sheet white enough on which to write it, and no pen good enough with which to inscribe it. Give me the fairest leaf from the heavenly records—give me the pencil with which the angel records his victory—and then, with my hand strong to supernatural ecstasy, and my pen dipped in the light of the morning, I will write it out in capitals of love: "J-E-S-U-S." It is this One, infinitely fair, to whom you, O sinner, are to-night invited. Christ is waiting for you; waiting as a banqueter waits for the delayed guest—the meats smoking, the beakers brimming, the minstrels with fingers on the stiff string, waiting for the clash of the hoofs at the gateway. Waiting for you, O sinner, as a mother waits for her son who went off ten years ago, dragging her bleeding heart along with him. Waiting! O! give me a comparison intense enough, hot enough, importunate enough to express my meaning—something high as heaven, and deep as hell, and long

eternity. Not hoping that you can help me with such a comparison, I will say: "He is waiting as only the all-sympathetic Christ can wait for the coming back of a lost soul."

"Bow the knee and kiss the Son,
Come, and welcome, sinner; come."

Again, *the Holy Spirit is ready*. Why is it that so many sermons drop dead—that Christian songs do not get their wing under the people—that so often prayer goes no higher than a hunter's "holloa?" It is because there is a link wanting—the work of the Holy Spirit. Unless that Spirit-give grappling hooks to a sermon, and lift the prayer, and waft the song, everything is a dead failure. That Spirit is willing to come to-night at our call and lead you to eternal life; or ready to come with the same power with which he unhorsed Saul on the Damascus turnpike, and broke down Lydia in her fine store, and lifted the three thousand from midnight into midnight at the Pentecost. With that power the Spirit of God this night beats at the gate of your soul. Have you not noticed what homely and insignificant instrumentality the Spirit of God employs for man's conversion? There was a man on a Hudson river-boat to whom a tract was offered. With indignation he tore it up and threw it overboard. But one fragment lodged on his coat-sleeve; and he saw on it the word "eternity;" and he found no peace until he was prepared for that great future. Do you know what passage it was that caused Martin Luther to see the truth? "The just shall live by faith." Do you know there is one—just one—passage that brought Augustine from a life of dissolution? "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." It was just one passage that converted Hedley Vicars, the great soldier, to Christ: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Do you know that the Holy Spirit used one passage of Scripture to save Jonathan Edwards? "Now, unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory." One year ago last Thanksgiving-day, I read for my text: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever." And there is a young man in the house to-night to whose heart the Holy Spirit took that text for his eternal redemption. I might speak of my own case. I will tell you I was brought to the peace of the Gospel through the Syrophenician woman's cry to Christ: "Even the dogs eat of

the crumbs that fall from the master's table." Do you know that the Holy Spirit almost always uses insignificant means? Eloquent sermons never save anybody; metaphysical sermons never save anybody; philosophical sermons never save anybody. But the minister comes some Sabbath to his pulpit, worn out with engagements and the jangling of a frenzied door bell; he has only a text and two or three ideas, but he says: "O Lord, help me. Here are a good many people I may never meet again. I have not much to say. Speak Thou through my poor lips:" and before the service is done there are tearful eyes and a solemnity like the judgment. The great French orator, when the dead king lay before him, looked up and cried: "God only is great;" and the triumph of his eloquence has been told by the historians. But I have not heard that one soul was saved by the oratorical flourish. Worldly critics may think that the early preaching of Thomas Chalmers was a masterpiece. But Thomas Chalmers says he never began to preach until he came out of the sick room, white and emaciated, and told men the simple story of Jesus. In the great day of eternity, it will be found that the most souls have been brought to Christ, not by the Bossuetts, and Massillons, and Bourdalons, but by humble men who, in the strength of God, and believing in the eternal Spirit, invited men to Jesus. There were wise salves—there were excellent ointments, I suppose, in the time of Christ, for blind or inflamed eyes. But Jesus turned His back upon them, and put the tip of His finger to His tongue, and then, with the spittle that adhered to the finger, He anointed the eyes of the blind man, and daylight poured into his blinded soul. So it is now that the Spirit of God takes that humble prayer-meeting talk, which seems to be the very saliva of Christian influence, and anoints the eyes of the blind, and pours the sunlight of pardon and peace upon the soul. Oh, my friend, I wish we could feel it more and more, that if any good is done it is by the power of God's omnipotent Spirit. I do not know what hymn to-night may bring you to Jesus. I do not know what words of the Scripture lesson I read may save your soul. Perhaps the Spirit of God may hurl the very text into your heart: "Come, for all things are now ready." Oh, eternal Spirit, strike with all Thine omnipotence, and slay the pride, and the indifference, and the sin of the people.

Again, *the Church is ready*. Imprudent man, if I could take the curtain off these Christian hearts, I could show you a great

many anxieties for your redemption. You think that old man is asleep, because his head is down and his eyes are shut. No, he is praying for your redemption, and hoping that the words spoken may strike your heart. Do you know the air is full of prayer? Do you know that prayer is going up from Fulton Street prayer-meeting, and from Friday evening prayer-meeting, and going up every hour of the day for the redemption of the people? And if you should just start towards the door of the Christian church, how quickly it would fly open. Hundreds of people would say: "Give that man room at the sacrament. Bring the silver bowl for his baptism. Give him the right hand of Christian fellowship. Bring him into all Christian associations." Oh, you wanderer on the cold mountains, come into the warm sheepfold. I let down the bars to-night and bid you come in. With the Shepherd's crook I point you the way. Hundreds of Christian hands beckon you into the Church of God. A great many people do not like the Church, and say it is a great mass of hypocrites; but it is a glorious Church with all its imperfections. Christ bought it, and hoisted the pillars, and swung its gates, and lifted its arches, and curtained it with upholstery crimson, with crucifixion carnage. Come into it.

"We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wild wilderness."

Again, *the angels of God are ready*. A great many Christians think that the talk about angels is fanciful. You say it is a very good subject for theological students who have just begun to sermonize; but for older men it is improper. There is no more proof in that Bible that there is a God than there are angels. Why, do not they swarm about Jacob's ladder? Are we not told that they conducted Lazarus upward? that they stand before the throne, their faces covered up with their wings while they cry: "Holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty!" Did not David see thousands and thousands? Did not one angel slay one hundred and eighty-five thousand men in Sennacherib's army? And shall they not be the chief harvesters at the Judgment? Our planet is in commerce with two worlds—heaven and hell—and all the intercommunication is by angels. Lost spirits are running a long train of darkness down to the depôt of eternal night; and when a bad man is about to die, they come upon sulphurous wings and they shackle him and push him off the

precipice, and with guffaw of hellish jubilation they celebrate his demolition. There is a line of loving, holy, mighty angels reaching to the bright world. I suppose they reach from here to the very gate, and when an audience is assembled for Christian worship, the air is full of them. If each one of you have a guardian angel, how many celestials there are here to-night. They crowd the place, they hover, they flit about, they rejoice, they batter down the evil in your heart, they light up the night. Look, that spirit is just come from the throne. A moment ago it stood before Christ, and heard the doxology of the glorifier. Look! Bright immortal, what news from the golden city! Speak, spirit blest! The response comes melting on the night air: "Come, for all things are now ready!" Angels ready to bear the tidings, angels ready to drop the benediction, angels ready to kindle the joy. These angels know what it is to be saved and lost, as no other creatures can. They have hovered over the abyss of woe. They have heard the groan shivering through the midnight of hell. They have seen the uncoiling of "the worm that never dies." They have beheld the beach of fire on which the eternally shipwrecked clamber up and fall back into fiercer surf and deeper darkness. They know what the Bible means when it speaks of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. They have beheld the smoke that ascendeth up for ever and ever. Then, on the other hand, they have stood in glory—they know all about it. They have felt the joy that is felt where there are no tears and no graves; immortal health but no invalidism; songs but no groans; wedding bells but no funeral torches—eyes that never weep—hands that never blister—heads that never faint—hearts that never break—friendships that are never weakened. Those angels looking off upon the great Sahara of eternal suffering on the one hand, and looking up to the gardens of eternal light on the other, and knowing what it is to be saved and lost, are you not surprised when I tell you that they all ready to rejoice over the redemption of an immortal spirit?

Ready, all of them! Ready thrones, principalities, and powers! ready seraphim and cherubim! Ready, Michael the archangel!

Again, *your kindred in glory are all ready for your coming.* I pronounce modern spiritualism to be a fraud and a sham. If John Milton and George Whitefield have no better business than to crawl under a table at Rochester and rattle the leaves, they

had better stay at home in glory. While I believe that modern spiritualism is the child of hell, because of its mental and domestic ravages, common sense, enlightened by the word of God, teaches us that our friends in glory sympathize with our redemption. This Bible says plainly there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth; and if angels rejoice and know of it, shall not our friends, standing among them, know it? Some of these spirits in glory toiled for your redemption. When they came to die, their chief grief was that you were not a Christian. They said: "Meet me in heaven;" but over their pillow hung the awful possibility that perhaps you might not meet them. There was a suspicion in their soul that it was an eternal farewell when they put their hand out from the cover and said: "Good-bye." Now, suppose you should cross over from a sinful life to a holy life. Suppose you should to-night be born into the kingdom. Suppose you should now say: "Farewell, O deceitful world! Get thee gone my sin! Fie upon all the follies! O Christ, help me or I perish! I take Thy promise. I believe Thy word. I enter Thy service." Suppose you should say and do this? Why, the angel sent to you would shout upward: "He is coming!" and the angel, poising higher in the air, would shout it upward: "He is coming;" and it would run all up the line of light, from wing to wing, and from trumpet to trumpet, until it reached the gate; and then it would flash to "the house of many mansions," and it would find out your kindred there, and before your tears of repentance had been wiped from the cheek, and before you had finished your first prayer, your kindred in glory would know of it, and another heaven would be added to their joy, and they would cry: "My prayers are answered; another loved one saved. Give me a harp with which to strike the joy. Saved! saved! saved!"

If I have shown you that "all things are ready," that Christ is ready, that the Holy Spirit is ready, that the Church is ready, that the angels in glory are ready, that your glorified kindred are ready, then with all the concentrated emphasis of my soul, I ask you if *you* are ready? You see my subject throws the whole responsibility of heaven or hell upon yourself. If you do not get in to the King's banquet, it is because you do not accept the invitation. You have the most importunate invitation. Two arms stretched down from the cross, soaked in blood from elbow to finger-tip; two lips quivering in mortal

anguish; two eyes beaming with infinite love, saying: "Come, come, for all things are now ready."

I told you that when the Queen came to Kenilworth Castle, they stopped all the clocks, that the finger of time might be pointed to that happy moment of her arrival. Oh! if to-night, the King would come to the castle of your soul, you might well afford to stop all the clocks, that the hands might for ever point to this moment as the one most bright, most blessed, most tremendous. Do you know that everything depends upon your coming? I know a great many people do not believe in these things, and say: "You ought to preach about manliness, and development, and about heaven;" but never say anything about the fact that if a man is not born again, he cannot get in. What is the wall around heaven for? I suppose it is to keep out people that are not fit for its society. And so I urge men to the fact that they must be born again, and that they must go through the gates of repentance and faith into the Gospel feast, or starve to death. Oh! why will ye die when such glorious provision is made for you? Now, I wish I could go around from circle to circle and invite every one of you, according to the invitation of my text, saying: "Come!" I would like to take every one of you by the hand, and say: "Come!" Old man, who hast been wandering sixty or seventy years, thy sun almost gone down, through the dust of the evening stretch out your withered hand to Christ. He will not cast thee off, old man. Oh! that one tear of repentance might trickle down thy wrinkled cheek. After Christ has fed thee all thy life long, do you not think you can afford to speak one word in His praise?

Come, all the young. Oh, how many here to-night? Come! Jesus is the fairest in earth or heaven! Put it not off until your heart gets hard. You must die. Perhaps to-night. What then?

Come, those of you who are farthest away from God. Drunkard! Christ can put out the fire of thy thirst. He can break that shackle. He can restore thy blasted home. Go to Jesus. Libertine! Christ saw thee where thou wert last night. He knows of thy sin. Yet, if thou wilt bring thy polluted soul to Him this moment, He will throw over it the mantle of His pardon and His love. Mercy for thee, O! thou chief of sinners. Harlot! thy feet foul with hell, and thy laughter the horror of the street—oh, Mary Magdalen—look to Jesus. Mercy for thee, poor lost waif of the street! Self-righteous man, thou must be

born again, or thou canst not see the kingdom of God. Do you think you can get into the feast with those rags? Why, the King's servant would tear them off and leave you naked at the gate. You must be born again; there is no exception. Unless Christ takes your case in hand, you must perish. The day is far spent. The cliffs begin to slide their long shadows across the plain. Do you know the feast has already begun—the feast to which you were invited—and the King sits with his guests, and the servant stands with his hand on the door of the banqueting-room, and he begins to swing it shut. It is half-way shut. It is three-fourths shut. It is only just a-jar. Soon it will be shut for ever!

“Come, for all things are now ready.” Have I missed one man? Who has not felt himself called to-night? Then, I call him now. Oh, sinner, come! This is the hour of thy redemption.

“While God invites how blest the day,
How sweet the Gospel's cheering sound;
Come, sinner, haste, oh, haste away,
While yet a pardoning God is found.”

THE CHRISTIAN NEEDLEWOMAN.

"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas."—*Acts ix. 36.*

TH**ERE** is in Joppa, a seaport town, a woman with her needle, embroidering her name ineffaceably into the charities of the world. I see her sitting in the village home. In the doorway and around about the building, and in the room where she sits, are the pale faces of the poor. She listens to their plaint, she pities their woe, she makes garments for them, she adjusts the manufactured articles to suit the bent form of this invalid woman, and the cripple that comes crawling on his hands and knees; she gives a coat to this one, she gives sandals to that one. With the gifts she mingles prayers and tears and Christian encouragement. Then, she goes out to be greeted at the street corners by those whom she has blessed, and all through the street the cry runs: "Dorcas is coming." The sick look up gratefully in her face as she puts her hand on the burning brow, and the lost and the abandoned start up with hope as they hear her gentle voice, as though an angel had addressed them, and as she goes out of the lane, eyes, half put out with sin, think they see a halo of light about her brow, and a trail of glory in her pathway. That night, a half-paid shipwright climbs the hill and reaches home; sees his little boy well clad, and says: "Where did these clothes come from?" and they tell him: "Dorcas has been here." In another place, a woman is trimming a lamp: Dorcas brought the oil. In another place, a family that had not been at table for many a week, are gathered now, for Dorcas has brought bread.

But there is a sudden pause in that woman's ministry. They say: "Where is Dorcas? Why, we have not seen her for many a day." And one of the poor people goes up and knocks at the door, and finds the mystery solved. All through the haunts of wretchedness, the news comes: "Dorcas is sick!" No bulletin flashing from the palace gate telling the stages of a

king's disease is more anxiously awaited for than the news from the sick benefactress. Alas for Joppa! there is wailing, wailing. That voice which had uttered so many cheerful words is hushed; that hand, which had made so many garments for the poor, is cold and still; that star which had poured light into the midnight of wretchedness, is dimmed by the blinding mists that go up from the river of death. In every God-forsaken place in that town, wherever there is a sick child and no balm, wherever there is hunger and no bread, wherever there is guilt and no commiseration, wherever there is a broken heart and no comfort, there are despairing looks and streaming eyes and frantic gesticulations as they cry: "Dorcas is dead!"

They send for the Apostle Peter. He urges his way through the crowd around the door, and stands in the presence of the dead. What expostulation and grief all about him! There stand some of the poor people who show the garments which this woman had made for them. Their grief cannot be appeased. The Apostle Peter wants to perform a miracle. He will not do it amid this excited crowd, so he kindly orders that the whole room be cleared. The "door is shut against the populace." The Apostle stands now with the dead. Oh, it is a serious moment, you know, when you are alone with a lifeless body. The Apostle gets down on his knees and prays, and then he comes to the lifeless form of this one already for the sepulchre, and in the strength of Him who is the resurrection, he exclaims: "*Tabitha, arise!*" There is a stir in the fountains of life; the heart flutters; the nerves thrill; the cheek flushes; the eyes open: she sits up.

We see in this subject Dorcas, the disciple; Dorcas, the benefactress; Dorcas, the lamented; Dorcas, the resurrected.

If I had not seen that word "disciple" in my text, I would have known this woman was a Christian. Such music as that never came from a harp which is not chorded and stringed by Divine grace. Before I show you the needlework of the woman, I want to show you her regenerated heart, the source of a pure life and of all Christian charities. I wish that the wives, and mothers, and daughters, and sisters of this congregation would imitate Dorcas in her discipleship. Before you sit with the Sabbath-class, before you cross the threshold of the hospital, before you carry a pack of tracts down the street, before you enter upon the temptations and trials of to-morrow, I charge you, in the name of God, and by the turmoil and tumult of the judg-

ment day, O woman! that you attend to the first, last, and greatest duty of your life; the seeking for God and being at peace with Him. Now, by the courtesies of society, you are deferred to, and he were less than a man who would not oblige you with kind attention; but when the trumpet shall sound, there will be an uproar and a wreck of mountain and continent, and no human arm can help you. Amid the raising of the dead, and amid the boiling of the sea, and amid the live, leaping thunders of the flying heavens, there will be no chance for courtesies. But in that day, calm and placid will be every woman's heart who hath put her trust in Christ; calm, notwithstanding all the tumult, as though the fire in the heavens were only the gildings of an autumnal sunset, as though the peal of the trumpet were only the harmony of an orchestra, as though the awful voices in the sky were but a group of friends bursting through a gateway at eventime with laughter and shout. Dorcas, the disciple! Would to God that every Mary and every Martha would this day sit down at the feet of Jesus.

Further, I see *Dorcas, the benefactress*. History has told the story of the crown; the epic poet has sung of the sword; the pastoral poet, with his verses full of the redolence of clover tops, and rustle with the silk of the corn, has sung the praises of the plough. I tell you the praises of the needle. From the fig-leaf robe prepared in the Garden of Eden, to the last stitch taken last night on the garment for the Tabernacle-fair, the needle has wrought wonders of kindness, generosity, and benefaction. It adorned the girdle of the high priest; it fashioned the curtain in the ancient tabernacle; it cushioned the chariots of king Solomon; it provided the robes of Queen Elizabeth, and in high places and in low places, by the fire of the pioneer's black log, and under the flash of the chandelier, everywhere it has clothed nakedness; it has preached the Gospel, it has overcome hosts of penury and want with the war-cry of "stitch, stitch, stitch." The operatives have found a livelihood by it, and through it the mansions of the employer have been constructed. Amid the mightiest triumphs in all ages and lands, I set down the conquests of the needle. I admit its crimes. I admit its cruelties. It has had more martyrs than the fire; it has butchered more souls than the "Inquisition;" it has punctured the eye; it has pierced the side; it has struck weakness into the lungs; it has sent madness into the brain; it has filled the "Potter's Field;" it has pitched whole armies of the suffering

into crime and wretchedness and woe. But now I am talking of Dorcas and her ministries to the poor, I shall speak only of the charities of the needle. This woman was a representative of all those women who make garments for the destitute, and knit socks for the barefooted, who prepare bandages for the lacerated, who make up bales 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 that 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's" 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 gave or 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.

I am glad that there is not a page of the world's history which is not a record of female beneficence. God says to all lands and people: "Come, now, and hear the widow's mite rattle down into the poor-box." The Princess of Conti sold all her jewels that she might help the famine-struck. Queen Blanche, the wife of Louis VIII. of France, hearing that there were some persons unjustly incarcerated in the prisons, went out amid the rabble, and took a stick and struck the door, as a signal that they might all strike it, and down went the prison-door and out came the prisoners. Queen Maud, the wife of Henry I., went

down amid the poor, and washed their sores and administered to them cordials. Miss Retson, at Matagorda, appeared on the battle-field while the missiles of death were flying around, and cared for the wounded. But why go so far back? Why go so far away? Is there a man or woman in this house who has forgotten the women of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, or the fact that before the smoke had gone up from Gettysburgh and South Mountain, the women of the North met the women of the South on the battle-field, forgetting all their animosities while they bound up the wounded and closed the eyes of the slain! Have you forgotten? Dorcas the benefactress!

I come, now, to speak of *Dorcas the lamented*. 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. Orphanage is lifted up to look into the calm face of the sleeping benefactress. Reclaimed vagrancy comes and kisses the cold brow of her who charmed it away from sin, and all through the streets of Joppa there is mourning—mourning because Dorcas is dead.

I suppose you have read of the fact that when Josephine was carried out to her grave, there were a great many women of pomp, and pride, and position, that went out after her; but I am most affected by the story of history that, on that day there were

two thousand of the poor of France who followed her coffin, weeping and wailing until the air rang again, because when they lost Josephine they lost their last earthly friend. Who would not rather hear such obsequies than all the tears that were ever poured in the lachrymals that have been exhumed from ancient cities. There may be no mass for the dead, there may be no costly sarcophagus, there may be no elaborate mausoleum; but in the damp cellars of the city and through the lonely huts of the mountain glen, there will be mourning—mourning—mourning, because Dorcas is dead. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; they rest from their labors and their works do follow them!”

I speak to you now of *Dorcas, the resurrected*. The apostle came to where she was and said: “Arise, and she sat up.” In what a short compass the great writer put that, “she sat up!” Oh! what a time there must have been when the Apostle brought her out among her old friends. How the tears of joy must have started. What clapping of hands there must have been. What singing. What laughter. Sound it all through that lane. Shout it up that dark alley. Let all Joppa hear it. Dorcas is resurrected! You and I have seen the same thing many a time—not a dead body resuscitated, but the deceased coming up again after death in the good accomplished. If a man labors up to fifty years of age serving God, and then dies, we are apt to think that his earthly work is done. No! His influence on earth will continue till the world ceases. Services rendered for Christ never stop. Here is a Christian woman. She toils for the upbuilding of a church through many anxieties, through many self-denials, with prayers and tears, and then she dies. It is fifteen years since she went away. Now, the Spirit of God descends upon that church; hundreds of souls stand up and confess the faith of Christ. Has that Christian woman who went away fifteen years ago, nothing to do with these things? I see now the flowering out of her noble heart. I hear the echo of her footsteps in all these songs over sins forgiven, in all the prosperity of the church. The good that seemed to be buried has come up again. Dorcas is resurrected.

After a while, all these womanly friends of Christ will put down their needle for ever. After making garments for others, some one will make a garment for them; the last robe we ever wear—the robe for the grave. You will have heard the last cry of pain, you will have witnessed the last orphanage, you will

have come in worn out from your last round of mercy. I do not know where you will sleep, or what your epitaph will be; but there will be a lamp burning at that tomb, and an angel of God guarding it; and through all the long night no rude foot will disturb the dust. Sleep on! sleep on! soft bed, pleasant shadows, undisturbed repose, Sleep on!

“Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep.”

Then, one day there will be sky rending, and a whirl of wheels, and the flash of pageants; armies marching, chains clanking, banners waving, thunders booming, and that Christian woman will rise from the dust, and she will be suddenly surrounded—surrounded by the wanderers of the street whom she reclaimed, surrounded by the wounded souls to whom she administered. Daughter of God so strangely surrounded, what means this? It means that reward has come, that the victory is won, that the crown is ready, that the banquet is spread. Shout it through all the crumbling earth. Sing it through all the flying heavens. Dorcas is resurrected!

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: Sebastopol, Inkermann, Balaklava, and Alma. 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, 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 servants,” 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!*

THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE.

"But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."—*Matthew xv. 26-28.*

IT was a Sabbath afternoon in the Belleville parsonage. I had been trying for years to preach, but to me the Christian life had been nothing but a struggle. I sat down at the table, took up my Bible, and asked for Divine illumination, and it poured like sunlight upon my soul through the story of the Syrophœnician woman.

This woman was a mother, and she had an afflicted daughter. The child had a virulent, exasperating, convulsive disease, called the possession of the devil. The mother was just like other mothers; she had no peace as long as her child was sick. She was a Gentile, and the Jews had such a perfect contempt for the Gentiles that they called them dogs. Nevertheless, she comes to Christ and asks His help in her family troubles. Christ makes no answer. The people are afraid there is going to be a "scene" there, and they try to get the woman out of Christ's presence, but he forbids her expulsion. Then she falls down and repeats her request. Christ, to rally her earnestness and to make His mercy finally more conspicuous, addresses her, saying: "It is not meet to take the children's bread (that is, the salvation appointed for the Jews) and cast it to dogs,"—the Gentiles. Christ did not mean to characterize that woman as a dog. That would have been most unlike Him, who from the cross said, "Behold thy mother." His whole life so gentle and so loving, He could not have given it out as His opinion that that was what she ought to be called; but He was only employing the ordinary parlance of the Jews in regard to the Gentiles. Yet that mother was not to be put off, pleading as she was for the life of her daughter; she was not to be rebuffed, she was not to be discouraged. She says: "Yea, Lord, I acknowledge I am a Gentile dog, but I remember that even the dogs have some privileges, and when the door is open they slink in and they

crawl under the table, and when the bread or the meat sifts through the cracks of the table, or falls off the edge of it, they pick it up, and the master of the house is not angry with them. I don't ask for a big loaf; I don't ask even for a big slice; I only ask for that which drops down through the chinks of the table—the dog's portion. It is the crumbs I am after." Christ felt the wit and the earnestness and the stratagem and the faith of that woman. He turns upon her and says: "You have conquered me; your daughter is well now. Go home, mother, but before you get there she will come down, skipping out to meet you."

There I see the mother going. She feels twenty years younger—getting on in life, but she goes with a half run. Amid an outburst of hysterical laughter and tears they meet. The mother breaks down every time she tries to tell it; the daughter with cheeks as rosy as before she fell in the first fit; the doctors of the village prophesying that the cure will not last, because it was not according to their prescription. But I read in the oldest medical journal of the world, "the daughter was made whole from that very hour."

In the first place, I learn from my subject that *sin treats us like a dog*—not as dogs are now treated. Landseer, in his pictures, makes princes of all the canine family. You sometimes find the kennel lined and cushioned. The St. Bernard dogs are admired all the world over. There is one of them with a collar on his neck inscribed with the names of twenty-five persons whose lives he saved from the snow. The sagacity and faithfulness and kindness of the dog have conquered the respect of the world. It dashes from the ship's deck to save the life of the man overboard. It rushes into the wild surf and brings ashore the exhausted bather. With its warm tongue it licks into life the freezing wayfarer. From the Liffy Bridge a child fell into the water. A dog stood on the bridge and saw it fall, and leaped after the child as it came to the surface, and seizing it gently, but firmly, brought it ashore. A gentleman stood on the bridge, looking down at it, and said: "How very sagacious that dog is—how very kind and faithful!" But he was thrilled through when he saw it was his own child that had been saved. There is no way in which you can so deeply offend a hunter as by maltreating his hounds. The finest picture in the room of Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, the celebrated author, is a picture of "Rab," the dog immortal. Walter Scott sang his

praise. The mastiff, lying toothless and blind, and lame, on the door-mat, is the pet of the whole household.

But it was not so in the time of Christ, nor is it so in the East to-day. That whole land is filled with mean curs; they are foul and vermin-covered, and snarly, and the most significant thing that a Jew could say about a Gentile in the way of depicting his hatred, was to call him a dog. It seems as if the sagacity of the dog was not discovered in those days. Job gives him a kick in his thirtieth chapter. Abishai said, in regard to David: "Shall this dead dog curse the king?" Goliath said to David: "Am I a dog, that thou comest out against me with stones?" Hazael, wishing to depict his hatred for some kind of sin, said: "Is thy servant a dog, that I should do this thing?" Paul, writing to the Philippians, tried to set forth the danger of consorting with certain persons, and said: "Beware of dogs." John, in Revelation, describing the fact that the abandoned and the dissolute and the sinful shall finally be thrust out of heaven, says: "Without are dogs." This I say to show you what intense hatred the Jew of olden time had against the Gentile. You must all admit that it must have been a positively sinful hatred, and so through my subject, the first lesson I learn is that sin treats us like a dog. It may flatter you for awhile; it may caress you for awhile; but no Eastern traveller ever more mercilessly beat a whelp in the streets of Beyrout or Damascus than sin will beat you and me if it gets a chance. "The way of transgressors is hard."

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 fortunes." 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 transgressors 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. Hobbled 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 transgressors is hard."

Sin comes to a young man, and says: "Take a dollar out of your employer's drawer; he won't miss it; you can put it back after awhile. Take another! take another! Don't you see how easy it is? Hundreds of dollars added to your salary in a year!" One day, the police knock at the door, and say: "I want you." "What?" "I want you." Discovery has come; disgrace, imprisonment, loss of the soul. "The way of transgressors is hard."

But you need not look through the wicket of the prison to learn this, and to find the frozen feet, and the bruised brow, and to hear the coughing lungs, resulting from crime. Every man has found out in his own experience that "The way of transgressors is hard." Sin demeans us, sin is cruel, sin is desperate—it lacerates, it mauls the soul, it chains you like a dog, it drives you out like a dog, it throws refuse to you like a dog, it whips you with innumerable stripes like a dog. There is a legend abroad of some one of whom it was foretold that she would die of a serpent's bite. The father, to keep her away from that, built a castle far out in the sea. He said no serpent could crawl there; but one day a boat came under the castle, and the daughter saw grapes in it, and, letting down a rope, she got the grapes, and was eating them, when she found a serpent entwined in the clusters. It stung her, and she died. Sin may seem luscious and ripe, and to have all the wealth of the vineyard, but at the last "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Oh! have nothing to do with its approaches. It promises you a robe; it will cover you with rags. It offers you a chalice of luxuriant beverages; it will fill you with wormwood. It promises you a throne! it will drive you into a kennel.

Again, my subject shows you *Jesus with His back turned*. That woman came to him and said: "Lord, spare the life of my child; it will not cost you anything." Jesus turns His back. He throws positive discouragement upon her petition. Jesus stood with His *face* to blind Bartimeus, and the foamy demoniac, and the limping paralytic, and the sea when he hushed it, and the grave when he broke it—but now He turns His back. I asked an artist a day or two ago if he ever saw a representation of Jesus Christ with His back turned. He said: "No." And it is a fact that you may go through all the picture galleries of London, and Dresden, and Rome, and Florence, and Naples, and you will find Christ with full face and profile, but never with His back turned. Yet here, in this passage, He turned away from the woman. And so, some of you have come at times and found Jesus with His face away from you. Here is somebody who is striving to be a Christian. He has cried to God for mercy, and he has been in as much anxiety about his soul as that Syrophœnician woman was about her daughter. He has come to Christ and said: "Lord, look this way." No answer. He said: "Lord Jesus Christ, look this way. I come with a soul sin-sick. Look this way." What did Christ say? "You are a sinner—you are a vile sinner—you are a condemned sinner—you are a dying sinner. Do you expect all the glories of heaven to be given to one as wayward as you have been?" But do not be discouraged, O seeking soul! Put down the pack of thy sins at Jesus' feet anyhow. If His face is turned away from thee, then put down thy pack of sins at His heel. Then, if perchance He step backward, He will fall over it into thine outstretched arms, O waiting sinner! Jesus will turn His face at the right time. Remember that mercy postponed is mercy augmented. If the waters of thy soul come to flood-tide, they will break away the dam. If the arrow-head be drawn clear back to the bow, it is only that it may be projected farther. If Christ turn His back to thee, it is only that the dawn on His face may be more effulgent. Oh, what are a few days or hours of darkness and struggle compared with the eternal illumination? What were the five minutes in which this Syrophœnician woman stood in bitterness behind Jesus, compared with the eighteen hundred years in which she has rejoiced before Him? Courage, O sorrowing soul. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Many a man has put his hand over his shoulder to find the cross, and lo! it was gone; and in

bringing his hand back again, he has struck the crown on his head radiant with pardon and glory. I see horses dashing down the street. They draw a chariot. Who is in it? A man with a bandage over his mouth, and his head wrapped in folds. Who is it? Naaman the leper. He drives up in front of the place where the prophet lives. The charioteer cries: "Whoa! Whoa!" They stop there. They wait for the prophet to come out. He does not come. He merely sends word: "Go wash in the Jordan, and thou shalt be healed." And so we come for Christ's mercy. That mercy may not have appeared as we expected, but let us be willing to take it at any time and in any way it shall come. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

Again, 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 Syrophenician 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. We cannot ride through the gates in state—we cannot come with plumes or pretension. Richly robed Queen Caroline failed at Westminster Abbey with George IV.; but the Syrophenician woman of the text, at the door of Christ's mercy, succeeded with the Lord of earth and heaven. She wanted only the crumbs—she is invited to set up as a banqueter. Bitter Valley Forge comes before victorious Yorktown. The kingdom of heaven is large enough when you get into it, but the gate is so low that you cannot come in save on your knees. O man! O woman out of Christ! push your way this day into that kingdom. With earnest, importunate, confident, persistent prayer, conquer all the obstacles in your way. I suppose that the people who were standing around about the woman and around about Christ said: "Don't bother Jesus with that matter. You can't make any impression on Him. He has no medicine. If the doctors of the village can't cure your daughter, Christ can't do it; besides that, you can see, from His looks, that He don't care anything for you." The woman knew better. With prayer, she seized Christ, and with omnipotent cure Christ seized the invalid, and "she was made whole from that very hour." Oh! bring the diseases of your body, bring the diseases of your soul, to Christ; if His face be turned away from you, keep on until He shall turn His face to you. Persevere, implore, beseech, agonize, and conquer.

Why, my friends, you talk as though there were a greater amount of perseverance to be used in the matter of becoming a Christian than in anything else. Let me say you have five hundred times in your life exerted more perseverance and put forth more determination than would have made you a Christian. You put it out in worldly directions. If you had taken a thousandth part of your worldly earnestness and with it gone toward Christ, you would have found Him. How men seek for the wealth of this world! Is any man utterly discouraged if he does not make a fortune this year? Does he not keep on trying and trying? Who here, especially among the young, has given up the idea of getting at least a competency? Not

one. And yet how treasures do fall out by the way! 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 1867 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! That world which one day cries to you: "Hosanna! hosanna!" will soon cry: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" And yet, my dear brethren, though you are aware of this, you have been pushing on after the honor of this world, 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 kingdom of heaven by violence. Come up to Christ as this Syrophœnician woman did, and refuse to be put off, and pray, and pray, and pray again, until He shall turn His face of benediction and mercy upon you.

Are you sitting here this morning unmoved while your last opportunity of salvation is going away from you? Spring is coming. Do you see the ice going out of the river? You see the snow melting. Soon the voice of the turtle will be heard in the land. Are there any signs that the winter is breaking up in your soul? Is the only sound there that of the bittern, and the owl of the night, and the petrel crying through the ever-

lasting storm? When I think of the perils that hang around those who have not secured the pardon of the Gospel, I feel that I must leave the platform and take you by the shoulder, and cry out in your ear, as the angel did to Lot: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither tarry thou in all the plain. Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed." I know that the critics sometimes say I am too importunate in pleading with men about their souls; but how can I observe formalities and oratorical proprieties when I see sitting before me thousands within a short time of hell and heaven?

Will you be like the Syrophenician woman upon whom Christ turned His back? Oh! He will not turn it for five minutes; but from those who finally reject Him, Christ will turn away, and no entreaty, no cry for mercy, no groaning will win His favor. The harvest will be past, and the summer ended, and the day of grace gone for ever. Can that all be true, or is this a fable? Am I merely imagining it? Will there be no great ordeal when you and I, my brethren, must stand naked and hear our doom—Christ saying to some on that day: "Come, you blessed"—that invitation chiming like the very bells of heaven? Will there be a cry: "Depart, you accursed?" Coming from the study of the Bible this morning into your presence, I feel overwhelmed by these truths, and I cry out: "If the Lord be God, follow Him." Make up your mind whether the Bible is right or not. If it is wrong, quit these assemblages; they do not amount to anything. If the Bible is wrong, stop praying; it does not amount to anything. But if it is all truth, if I am an immortal man, and yet a dying man, if this body must soon perish, and then my soul rise up into the presence of Almighty God, and stand before Him in judgment, oh! let me appreciate it, and let me act upon it. By the crushed heart of the Son of God, by the flaming throne of heaven, by the raging furnace of hell, fly for thy life! "Let the wicked forsake his way." I do not ask what sins you have committed. I do not come with a partial Gospel. I do not say: "This man may receive the Gospel, and for that man there will be no mercy." I tell you Christ's arm of mercy is stretched out far enough to take in all this audience, saying: "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Did you ever have a better offer than that?—pardon for all your sins, comfort for all your trouble, shelter in all your temptations, peace when you die, and joy for ever. And all "without money and without

price." May that Almighty Spirit, without which the heart stays hard, and all Christian entreaty is unavailing—may that Spirit this morning set before you the stupendous issue of this hour. O eternity! where shall I spend it? Where will you spend it? O eternity! Joys that will never fade! sorrows that never end—which shall be mine? Which shall be yours?

"To-day the Saviour calls,
Ye wanderers, come;
O ye benighted souls!
Why longer roam?

"To-day the Saviour calls,
For refuge fly;
The storm of vengeance falls,
Ruin is nigh.

"The Spirit calls to-day,
Yield to His power:
Oh! grieve Him not away,
'Tis mercy's hour."

THE BRIGHTEST OF DAYS.

“And call the Sabbath a delight.”—*Isaiah* lviii. 13.

TH**ERE** is an element of gloom striking through all false religions. Paganism is a brood of horrors. The god of Confucius frowned upon its victims with blind fate. Mahomedanism promises nothing to those exhausted with sin in this world but an eternity of the same passional indulgences. The Papacy prostrates its devotees with fastings, and kneelings, and merciless taxation of the poor man's wages, and tugs until it sweats, from January to December, in trying to pull its dead priests and bishops out of purgatory. But God intended that our religion should have the grand characteristic of cheerfulness. St. Paul struck the key-note of that religion when he said: “Rejoice evermore, and again I say, rejoice.” This religion has no spikes for the feet; it has no hooks for the shoulder; it has no long pilgrimages to take; it has no funeral piles upon which to leap; it has no Juggernauts before which to fall. Its good cheer is symbolized in the Bible by the brightness of waters, and the redolence of lilies, and the sweetness of music, and the hilarities of a banquet. A choir of seraphim chanted at its induction; and pealing trumpet, and waving palm, and flapping wing of archangel are to celebrate its triumphs. It began with the shout: “Glory to God in the highest;” and it will close its earthly mission with the ascription: “Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!”

But men have said that our religion is not cheerful because we have such a doleful Sabbath. They say: “You can have your religious assemblages, and your long faces, and your sniffing cant, and your psalm-books, and your Bibles. Give us the Sunday excursion, and the race, and the convivial laughter. We have so much joy that we want to spread it all over the seven days of the week, and you shall not have one of our days of worldly satisfaction for religious dolefulness. I want to show those men—if there are any such in the house this morning—that they are under a great delusion; and that God intended the fifty-two Sundays of the year to be hung up, like bells in a

tower, beating a perpetual chime of joy, and glory, and salvation, and heaven; for I want you to carry out the idea of the text, "and call the Sabbath a delight."

I remark, in the first place, we are to find in this day *the joy of healthy repose*. In this democratic country we all have to work; some with hand, some with brain, some with foot. If there is in all this house a hand that has not, during the past year, been stretched forth to some kind of toil, let it be lifted. Not one! not one! *You* sell the goods; *you* teach the school; *you* doctor in the sick-room; *you* practice at the bar; *you* edit a newspaper; *you* tan the hides; *you* preach the Gospel; *you* mend the shoes: *you* sit at the shuttle; *you* carry the hod of bricks up the ladder on the wall: and the one occupation is as honorable as the other, provided God calls you to do it. I care not what you do, if you only do it well. But when Saturday night comes, you are jaded and worn. The hand cannot so skilfully manufacture; the eye cannot see as well; the brain is not so clear; the judgment is not so well balanced. A prominent manufacturer told me that he could see a difference between the goods which went out of his establishment on Saturday, from the goods that went out on Monday. He said: "They were very different indeed. Those that were made in the former part of the week, because of the rest that had been previously given, were better than those that were made in the latter part of the week, when the men were tired out." The Sabbath comes—and it bathes the soreness from the limbs, quiets the agitated brain, and puts out the fires of anxiety that have been burning all the week. Our bodies are seven-day clocks; and unless on the seventh day they are wound-up, they run down into the grave. The Sabbath was intended as a savings'-bank; into it we are to gather the resources upon which we are to draw all the week. That man who breaks the Sabbath, robs his own nerve, his own muscle, his own brain, his own bones. He dips up the wine of his own life and throws it away. He who breaks the Lord's day, gives a mortgage to disease and death upon his entire physical estate, and at the most unexpected moment that mortgage will be foreclosed and the soul ejected from the premises. Every gland, and pore, and cell, and finger-nail demand the seventh day for repose. The respiration of the lungs, the throb of the pulses in the wrist, the motion of the bone in its socket, declare: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." There are thousands of men who have had their

lives dashed out against the golden gates of the Sabbath. A prominent London merchant testifies that, thirty years ago he went to London. He says: "I have, during that time, watched minutely, and I have noticed that the men who went to business on the Lord's day, or opened their counting-houses, have, without a single exception, come to failure." A prominent Christian merchant in Boston says: "I find it don't pay to work on Sunday. When I was a boy, I noticed out on Long Wharf there were merchants who loaded their vessels on the Sabbath day, keeping their men busy from morning to night, and it is my observation that they themselves came to nothing. These merchants and their children came to nothing. It does not pay," he says, "to work on the Sabbath." I appeal to your own observation. 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 came either to financial or 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 a moral defalcation in every instance. Forty physicians in London petitioned 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 that 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 ploughed 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 said, "I have proved to you that all this idea about a fatality accompanying Sabbath work is a perfect sham. My crop is gathered, and all is well." But, before many weeks passed, the Lord struck that barn with His lightnings, and away went the Sunday crop.

So great is the moral depression coming upon those who toil upon the Sabbath day, that you may have noticed (if you have not, I call your attention to the fact) that in cases where the public interest demands Sabbath toil, the moral depression is so great that there are but very few who can stand it. For instance,

the police service, without which not one of our houses would be safe, there are but very few who can stand the pressure and temptation of it. In London, where there are 5000 policemen, the statistic is given that in one year 921 of that 5000 were dismissed, 523 were suspended, and 2492 were fined. Now, if the moral depression be so great in occupations that are positively necessary for the peace and prosperity of society, I ask you what must be the moral depression in those cases where there is no necessity for Sabbath work, and where a man chooses worldly business on the Lord's day just because he likes it, or wants to add to his emoluments? During the last war it was found out that those public works which paused on the seventh day turned out more war material than those which worked all the seven days. Mr. Bagnall, a prominent iron merchant, gives this testimony: "I find we have fewer accidents in our establishment, and fewer interruptions now we observe the Lord's day; and at the close of the year, now we keep the Sabbath, I find we turn out more iron and have larger profits than any year when we worked all the seven days." The fact is Sabbath-made ropes will break, and Sabbath-made shoes will leak, and Sabbath-made coats will rip, and Sabbath-made muskets will miss fire, and Sabbath occupations will be blasted. A gentleman said: "I invented a shuttle on the Lord's day. I was very busy, so I made the model of that new shuttle on the Lord's day. So very busy was I during the week that I had to occupy many Sabbaths. It was a great success. I enlarged my buildings; I built new factories; and made hundreds of thousands of dollars; but I have to tell you that all the results of that work on the Sabbath has been to my ruin. I enlarged my building; I made a great many thousands of dollars; but I have lost all, and I charge it to the fact of that Sunday shuttle." I will place in two companies the men in this community who break the Sabbath and the men who keep it, and then I ask you who are the best friends of society? Who are the best friends of morals? Who have the best prospects for this world? Who have the best for the world that is to come? Sabbath morning comes in the household. I suppose that the mere philosopher would say that the Sabbath light comes in a wave current just like any other light; but it does not seem so to me. It seems as if it touched the eyelids more gently, and threw a brighter glow on the mantel ornaments, and cast a better cheerfulness on the faces of the children, and threw a supernatural glory over

the old family Bible. Hail! Sabbath light! We rejoice in it! Rest comes in through the windows, or it leaps up from the fire, or it rolls out in the old arm-chair, or it catches up the body into the ecstasy, and swings open before the soul "the twelve gates which are twelve pearls." The bar of the unopened warehouse, the hinges of the unfastened store window, the quiet of the commercial warehouse seem to say: "this is the day the Lord hath made." Rest for the sewing woman with weary hands, and aching side, and sick heart. Rest for the overtaken workman in the mine, or out on the wall, or in the sweltering factory. Hang up the plane, drop the adze, slip the band from the wheel, put out the fire. Rest for the body, for the mind, and for the soul.

"Welcome, sweet day of rest,
That saw the Lord arise;
Welcome to this reviving breast,
And these rejoicing eyes."

Again I remark: we ought to have in the Sabbath *the joy of domestic reunion and consecration*. 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 hosannas; 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: "That 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 house; they pro-

vide 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 into a world where there are gigantic and overwhelming temptations, that have swamped millions. But in some households, it is not that way. The home beautiful on ordinary days, is more beautiful now that the Sabbath has dawned. There is more joy in the "good morning;" there is more tenderness in the morning prayer. The father looks at the child and the child looks at the father. The little one dares to ask now questions without any fear of being answered: "Don't bother me, I must be off to the store." Now, the father looks at the child and he sees not merely the blue eyes, the arched brow, the long lashes, the sweet lips. He sees in that child a long line of earthly destinies; he sees in that child, an immeasurable eternity. As he touches that child he says: "I wonder what will be the destiny of this little one? I wonder if on this brow will come the coronet of God's redemption or the iron crown of despair? I wonder if I will clasp this little one after all my Sabbaths have passed, and the doom of eternity has been announced? Will that little hand, at last, wave a palm or rattle a chain?" And while this Christian father is thinking and praying, the sweet promise flows through his soul: "of such is the kingdom of heaven." And he feels a joy, not like that which sounds in the dance, or is wafted from the path of the wine-cup, or that which is like "crackling of thorns under a pot;" but the joy of domestic re-union and consecration.

Have I been picturing something that is merely fanciful, or is it possible for you and for me to have such a home as that? I believe it is possible. If we *can* have such a halo of grace and light, and love, and parental faithfulness around about our homes, we can expect for our little ones when they go out in the world, a life of great usefulness, and finally a home in heaven.

I have a statistic that I would like to give you. A great many people, you know, say there is nothing in the Christian discipline of a household. In New Hampshire, there were two neighbourhoods, the one of six families, the other of five families. The six families disregarded the Sabbath. In time, five of these families were broken up by the separation of husbands and

wives; the other, by the father becoming a thief. Eight or nine of the parents became drunkards; one committed suicide, and all came to penury. Of some forty or fifty descendants, about twenty are known to be drunkards, and gamblers, and dissolute. Four or five have been in the state prison. One fell in a duel. Some are in the almshouse. Only one became a Christian, and he, after first having been outrageously dissipated. The other five families that regarded the Sabbath—all were prosperous. Eight or ten of the children are consistent members of the church. Some of them became officers in the church. One is a minister of the Gospel; one is a missionary to China. No poverty among any of them. The homestead is now in the hands of the third generation. Those that have died, have died in the peace of the Gospel. Oh, is that nothing in a household that remarks God's holy day? Can it be possible that those who disregard the holy commandment can be prospered for this life, or have any good hope of the life that is to come?

Again: we ought to have in the Sabbath the joy of Christian assemblage. Where are all those people going on the Sabbath? You see them moving up and down the street? Is it a festal day? people might ask. Has there been some public edict commanding the people to come forth? No, they are only worshippers of God who are going to their places of religious service. In what delicate scale shall I weigh the joy of Christian convocation? It gives brightness to the eye, and a flush to the cheek, and a pressure to the hand, and a thrill to the heart. You see the aged man tottering along on his staff through the aisle. You see the little child led by the hand of its mother. You look around and rejoice that this is God's day, and the communion of saints. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Some familiar tune sets all the soul aquiver and aquake with rapture. You plunge into some old hymn, and all your cares and anxieties are bathed off. The glorious Gospel transports us, the Spirit descends, Jesus appears, and we feel the bounding, spreading, electric joy of Christian convocation.

I look upon the church of God as one vast hosanna. Joy dripping from the baptismal font; joy glowing in the sacramental cup; joy warbling in the anthem; joy beating against the gate of heaven with a hallelujah like the voice of mighty thundering. Beautiful for situation. The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion. It is the day and the place where Christ reviews His troops, bringing them out in companies, and regiments,

and battalions, riding along the line, examining the battle-torn flags of past combat, and cheering them on to future victories. Oh, the joy of Christian assemblage!

I remark, also, we are to have in this day, *the joy of eternal Sabbatism*. 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 wrapt 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 trumpeters of God accompanying the harmony. The light of a better Sabbath gilds the top 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 a 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 pleasure in the street, and on the river bank, and in 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 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 on our shores. I had a friend in Syracuse who lived to be one hundred years of age. He said to me in his ninety-ninth year: "I went across the mountains in the early history of this country. Sabbath morning came. We were beyond the reach of civilization. My comrades were all going out for an excursion. I said: "No, I won't go; it is Sunday!" Why, they laughed. They said: "We haven't any Sunday here." "Oh, yes," I said, "you have; *I brought it with me over the mountains.*"

There are two or three ways in which we war against Sabbath-breaking usages in this day, and the first thing is to get our children right upon this subject, and teach them that the Sabbath-day is the holiest of all the days, and the best and the gladdest. Unless you teach your child under the parental roof to keep the Lord's-day, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine chances out of a thousand it will never learn to keep the Sabbath. You may think to shirk responsibility in this matter, and send your child to the Sabbath-school and house of God; that will not relieve the matter. I want to tell you, in the name of Christ, my Maker, and my Judge, that your example will be more potential than any instruction they get elsewhere; and if you disregard the Lord's-day yourself, or in any wise throw contempt upon it, you are blasting your children with an infinite curse. It is a rough truth, I know, told in a rough way; but it is God's truth, nevertheless. Your child may go on to seventy or eighty years of age; but that child will never get over the awful disadvantage of having had a Sabbath-breaking father or a Sabbath-breaking mother. It is the joy of many of us that we can look back to an early home where God was honored, and when the Sabbath came it was a day of great consecration and joy. We remember the old faces around the table that Sabbath morning. Our hearts melt when we think of those blessed associations, and we may have been off and committed many indiscretions, and done many wrong things; but the day will never come when we forget the early home in which God's day was regarded, and father and mother told us to keep holy the Sabbath.

There is another way in which we can war against the Sabbath-breaking usages of the country at this time, and that is by making our houses of worship attractive, and the religious services inspiring. I plead not for a gorgeous audience chamber. I

plead not for grained rafters, or magnificent fresco; but I do plead for comfortable churches—homelike churches—places where the church-going population behave as they ought to. Make the church welcome to all, however poorly clad they may be, or whatever may have been their past history, for I think the Church of God is not so much made for you who could have churches in your own houses, but for the vast population of our vast cities who are treading on towards death with no voice of mercy to arrest them. Ah, when the prodigal comes into the church, do not stare at him as though he had no right to come; give him the best seat you can find for him. Sometimes a man wakes up from his sin, and he says: "I'll go to the house of God." Perhaps he comes from one motive, perhaps from another. He finds the church dark, and the Christian people frigid (and there are no people on earth who can be more frigid than Christian people when they try), and the music is dull, and he never comes again. Suppose one of these men enters the church. As he comes in he hears a song which his mother sang when he was a boy. He sits down, and some one hands him a book open at—

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me."

"Yes," he says, "I have heard that many times." He sees cheerful Christian people there—every man's face a psalm of thanksgiving to God. He says: "Do you have this so every Sunday? Why, I have heard that the house of God was a doleful place—Christians were lugubrious and repelling. Why, I have really enjoyed myself." The next Sabbath the man is again in the same place. Tears of repentance start down his cheek. He begins to pray; and when the communion table is spread, he sits at it, and some one reaches over and says: "I am surprised to find *you* here. I thought you did not believe in such things." "Ah," he says, "I have been captured. I came in one day and found they were all so loving and cheerful here, that I concluded to come among you. 'Where thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried.'" Ah, you cannot drive men out of their sins; but you can call them out. You can charm them out.

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. A German writer says: “That a man with his family started to the land of his fathers. They travelled six *parasangs*; and at the close of the sixth *parasang* (each *parasang* making four miles, I believe) there was a beautiful tent spread with all kinds of refreshments. They stopped and were refreshed; and rested a day, and then passed on. And having travelled six more *parasangs*, lo! they came to another tent in the desert, richly supplied with provisions, and they ate and were refreshed. They rested a day, and started on again; and at the end of six more *parasangs*, what was their surprise to find a third table.” So it was all the way; by which parable the idea is set forth that at the end of every sixth day, there rises up the glorious tent of Christian rest and refreshment. Do you appreciate it, or is the Sabbath a nuisance and a bore?

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 thousands standing around the throne of Jesus. Hark! I hear the bell of the old kirk on the hillside 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 that 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.”

THE BIBLE RIGHT.

“The statutes of the Lord are right.”—*Psalm xix. 8.*

OLD books go out of date. When they were written, they discussed questions which were being discussed; they struck at wrongs which long ago ceased, or advocated institutions which excite not our interest. Were they books of history, the facts have been gathered from the imperfect mass, better classified and more lucidly presented. Were they books of poetry, they were interlocked with wild mythology and obscure facts, which have gone up from the face of the earth like mists at sunrise. Were they books of morals, civilization does not want to sit at the feet of barbarism, neither do we want Sappho, Pythagoras, and Tully to teach us morals. What do the mass of the people care now for the pathos of Simonides, or the sarcasm of Menander, or the gracefulness of Philemon, or the wit of Christophanes? Even the old books we have left, with two or three exceptions, have but very little effect upon our times. Books are human; they have a time to be born, they are fondled, they grow in strength, they have a middle-life of usefulness, then comes old age, they totter, and they die. Many of the national libraries are merely the cemeteries of dead books. Some of them lived flagitious lives, and died deaths of ignominy. Some were virtuous, and accomplished a glorious mission. Some went into the ashes through inquisitorial fires. Some found their funeral pile in sacked and plundered cities. Some were neglected and died as foundlings at the door of science. Some expired in the author's study, others in the publishers' hands. Ever and anon there comes into our possession an old book, its author forgotten and its usefulness done, and with leathern lips it seems to say: "I wish I were dead." Monuments have been raised over poets and philanthropists. Would that some tall shaft might be erected in honor of the world's buried books. The world's authors would make a pilgrimage thereto, and poetry, and literature, and science, and religion, would consecrate it with their tears.

Not so with one old book. It started in the world's infancy. It grew under theocracy and monarchy. It withstood the storms of fire. It grew under the prophet's mantle and under the fisherman's coat of the apostles. In Rome, and Ephesus, and Jerusalem, and Patmos, tyranny issued edicts against it, and infidelity put out the tongue; and the papacy from its monasteries, and Mohammedanism from its mosques, hurled their anathemas; but the old Bible lived. It came across the British Channel, and was greeted by Wycliff and James I. It came across the Atlantic and struck Plymouth Rock, until like that of Horeb it gushed with blessedness. Churches and asylums have gathered all along its way, ringing their bells, and stretching out their hands of blessing; and this moment there are ten thousand heralds of the cross with their hands on that open, grand, free, old English Bible. But it will not have accomplished its mission until it has climbed the icy mountains of Greenland, until it has gone over the granite cliffs of China, until it has thrown its glow amid the Australian mines, until it has scattered its gems among the diamond districts of Brazil, and all thrones shall be gathered into one throne, and all crowns by the fires of revolution shall be melted into one crown, and this Book shall at the very gate of Heaven have waved in the ransomed empires—not until then will that glorious Bible have accomplished its mission.

In carrying out, then, the idea of my text—"the statutes of the Lord are right"—I shall show you that the Bible is right in authentication, that it is right in style, that it is right in doctrine, that it is right in its effects. Can you doubt the authenticity of the Scriptures? There is not so much evidence that Walter Scott wrote "The Lady of the Lake;" not so much evidence that Shakspeare wrote "Hamlet;" not so much evidence that John Milton wrote "Paradise Lost"—as there is evidence that the Lord God Almighty, by the hands of prophets, evangelists, and apostles, wrote that Book. Suppose a book now to be written which came in conflict with a great many things, and was written by bad men or impostors, how long would such a book stand? It would be scouted by everybody. And I say, if that Bible had been an imposition—if it had not been written by the men who said they wrote it—if it had been a mere collection of falsehoods, do you not suppose that it would have been immediately rejected by the people? If Job, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Paul, and Peter, and John were impostors, they would have been scouted by generations and nations. If that Book has come

down through the fires of centuries without a scar, it is because there is nothing in it disturbable. How near have they come to destroying the Bible? When they began their opposition, there were two or three thousand copies of it—when the violent hostility began against it. Now there are two hundred millions, as far as I can calculate. These Bible truths, notwithstanding all the opposition, have gone into all languages—into the philosophic Greek, the flowing Italian, the graceful German, the passionate French, the picturesque Indian, and the exhaustless Anglo-Saxon. Under the painter's pencil, the birth, and the crucifixion, and the resurrection glow on the walls of palaces; or under the engraver's knife speak from the mantel of the mountain caverns; while stones, touched of the sculptor's chisel start up into preaching apostles and ascending martyrs. Now, do you not suppose, if that Book had been an imposition and a falsehood, it would have gone down under these ceaseless fires of opposition?

Further, suppose that there was a great pestilence going over the earth, and hundreds of thousands of men were dying of that pestilence, and someone should find a medicine that in one day cures ten thousand people, would not everybody acknowledge that that must be a good medicine? Why, someone would say: "Do you deny it? There have been ten thousand people cured by it." I simply state the fact that there have been hundreds of thousands of Christian men and women who say they have felt the truthfulness of that Book, and its power in their souls. It has cured them of the worst leprosy that ever came down on our earth, namely, the leprosy of sin; and if I can point you to multitudes who say they have felt the power of that cure, are you not reasonable enough to acknowledge the fact that there must be some power in the medicine? Will you take the evidence of millions of patients who have been cured; or will you take the evidence of the sceptic who stands aloof, and confesses that he never took the medicine? The Bible intimates that there was a city called Petra, built out of solid rock. Infidelity scoffed at it. "Where is your city of Petra?" Buckhardt and Laborde went forth in their explorations, and they came upon that very city. The mountains stand around like giants guarding the tomb where the city is buried. They found a street in that city six miles long, where once flashed imperial pomp, and which echoed with the laughter of light-hearted mirth on its way to the theatre. On temples, fashioned out of colored stones—some of which have

plushed into the crimson of the rose, and some of which have darkened into the blue of the sky, and some of which have paled into the whiteness of the lily—aye, on column, and pediment, and entablature, and statuary, God writes the truth of that Bible. The Bible says that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and brimstone. "Absurd." Infidels, year after year, said: "It is positively absurd that they could have been destroyed by brimstone. There is nothing in the elements to cause such a shower of death as that." Lieutenant Lynch—I think he was the first man who went out on the discovery, but he has been followed by many others—Lieutenant Lynch went out in exploration, and came to the Dead Sea, which, by a convulsion of nature, has overflown the place where the cities once stood. He sank his fathoming line, and brought up from the bottom of the Dead Sea great masses of sulphur, remnants of that very tempest that swept Sodom and Gomorrah to ruin. Who was right—the Bible that announced the destruction of those cities, or the sceptics who for ages scoffed at it?

The Bible said there was a city called Nineveh, and that it was three days' journey around it, and that it should be destroyed by fire and by water. "Absurd," cried out hundreds of voices for many years; "no such a city was ever built, that it would take you three days' journey to go around. Beside, it could not be destroyed by fire and water; they are antagonistic elements." But Layard, Botta, Bonomi, and Keith go out, and by their explorations they find that city of Nineveh, and they tell us that by their own experiment, it is three days' journey around (according to the old estimate of a day's journey), and that it was literally destroyed by fire and by water—two antagonistic elements—a part of the city having been inundated by the River Tigris (the brick material in those times being dried clay not dissolved); while in other parts, they find the remains of the fire in heaps of charcoal that have been excavated, and in the calcined slabs of gypsum. Who was right—the Bible or infidelity?

Moses intimated that they had vineyards in Egypt. "Absurd," cried hundreds of voices; "you can't raise grapes in Egypt; or, if you can, it is a very great exception that you can raise them." But the traveller goes down, and in the underground vaults at Eilithya he finds painted on the wall all the process of tending the vines, and treading out the grapes. It is all there, familiarly sketched by people who evidently knew all about it, and

saw it all about them every day; and in those underground vaults there are vases still encrusted with the settlings of the wine. You see the vine *did* grow in Egypt, whether it grows there *now* or not.

Thus, you see, while God wrote the Bible, at the same time He wrote this commentary, that "the statutes of the Lord are right" on leaves of rock and shell-bound clasps of metal, and lying on mountain tables, and in the jewelled vase of the sea. In authenticity and in genuineness the statutes of the Lord are right.

Again, the Bible is *right in style*. I know there are a great many people who think it is merely a collection of genealogical tables and dry facts. That is because they do not know how to read the Book. You take up the most interesting novel that was ever written, and if you commence at the four hundredth page to-day, and to-morrow at the three hundredth, and the next day at the first page, how much sense or interest would you gather from it? Yet that is the very process to which the Bible is subjected every day. An angel from heaven, reading the Bible in that way, could not understand it. The Bible, like all other palaces, has a door by which to enter and a door by which to go out. Genesis is the door to go in and Revelations the door to go out. These Epistles of Paul the Apostle are merely letters written, folded up, and sent by postmen to the different churches. Do you read other letters the way you read Paul's letters? Suppose you get a business letter, and you know that in it there are important financial propositions, do you read the last page first, and then one line of the third page, and another of the second, and another of the first? No. You begin with "Dear Sir," and end with "Your's truly." Now here is a letter written from the throne of God to our lost world; it is full of magnificent hopes and propositions, and we dip in here and there and we know nothing about it. Beside that, people read the Bible when they cannot do anything else. It is a dark day, and they do not feel well, and they do not go to business, and after lounging about awhile they pick up the Bible—their mind refuses to enjoy the truth. Or they come home weary from the store or shop, and they feel, if they do not say, it is a dull book. While the Bible is to be read on stormy days, and while your head aches, it is also to be read in the sunshine, and when your nerves, like harp-strings, thrum the song of health. While your vision is clear, walk in this Paradise of truth; and while your mental appetite is good, pluck these clusters of grace.

I am fascinated with the conciseness of that book. Every word is packed full of truth. Every sentence is double-barrelled. Every paragraph is like an old banyan-tree, with a hundred roots and a hundred branches. The Bible was not merely made to sell; it was not presented merely for a trifling and temporary effect. It is a great arch; pull out one stone and it all comes down. There has never been a pearl-diver who could gather up one half of the treasures in any verse. John Halsebach, of Vienna, for twenty-one years, every Sabbath expounded to his congregation the first chapter of the book of Isaiah, and yet did not get through with it. Nine-tenths of all the good literature of this age is merely the Bible diluted.

I am also amazed at the variety of this Book. Mind you, not contradiction, or collision, but variety. Just as in the song you have the basso and alto, and soprano and tenor—they are not in collision with each other, but come in to make up the harmony—so it is in this Book there are different parts of this great song of redemption. The prophet comes and takes one part, and the patriarch another part, and the evangelist another part, and the apostles another part, and yet they all come into the grand harmony—the song of “Moses and the Lamb.” If God had inspired men of the same temperament to write this Book, it might have been monotonous; but David, and Isaiah, and Peter, and Job, and Ezekiel, and Paul, and John, were men of different temperaments, and so, when God inspired them to write, they wrote in their own style. God prepared the Book for all classes of people. For instance, little children would read the Bible, and God knew that, so He allows Matthew and Luke to write sweet stories about Christ with the doctors of the law, and Christ at the well, and Christ at the cross, so that any little child can understand them. Then God knew that the aged people would want to read the Book, and so He allows Solomon to compact a world of wisdom in that book of Proverbs. God knew that the historian would want to read it, and so He allows Moses to give the plain statement of the Pentateuch. God knew that the poet would want to read it, and so He allows Job to picture the heavens as a curtain; and Isaiah the mountains as weighed in a balance, and the waters as held in the hollow of the Omnipotent hand; and God touched David, until in the latter part of the Psalms, he gathers a great choir standing in galleries above each other—beasts and men in the first gallery; above them, hills and mountains; above them, fire and hail and tempest; above

them, sun, and moon, and stars of light; and then on the highest gallery, arrays the hosts of angels; and then standing before this great choir, reaching from the depths of earth to the heights of heaven, like the leader of a great orchestra, he lifts his hands, crying: "Praise ye the Lord. Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord;" and all earthly creatures in this song, and mountains with their waving cedars, and tempests in their thunder and rattling hail, and stars on all their trembling harps of light, and angels on their thrones, respond in magnificent acclaim: "Praise ye the Lord. Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord." God knew that the pensive and complaining world would want to read it, and so he inspires Jeremiah to write: "O, that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears." God knew that the lovers of the wild, the romantic, and the strange would want to read it, so he lets Ezekiel write of mysterious rolls, and winged creatures, and flying wheels of fire. God prepared it for all zones—for the arctic and the tropics, as well as for the temperate zone. Cold-blooded Greenlanders would find much to interest them, and tanned inhabitants at the equator would find his passionate nature boil with the vehemence of heavenly truth. The Arabian would read it on his dromedary, and the Laplander seated on the swift-sled, and the herdsmen of Holland guarding the cattle in the grass, and the Swiss girl reclining amid Alpine crags. Oh, when I see that the Bible is suited in style, exactly suited to all ages, to all conditions, to all lands, I cannot help the conclusion of my text: "The statutes of the Lord are right."

I remark again: the Bible is *right in its doctrines*. Man a sinner, Christ a Saviour—the two doctrines. Man must come down—his pride, his self-righteousness, his worldliness: Christ, the Anointed, must go up. If it had not been for the setting forth of the Atonement, Moses would never have described the creation; prophets would not have predicted; apostles would not have preached. It seems to me as if Jesus, in the Bible, were standing on a platform in a great amphitheatre, and as if the prophets were behind Him, throwing light forward on His sacred person; and as if the apostles and evangelists stood before Him, like foot-lights throwing up their light into His blessed countenance; and then as if all the earth and heaven were the applauding auditory. The Bible speaks of Pisgah, and Carmel, and Sinai, but makes all mountains bow down to Calvary. The flocks led over the Judean hills were emblems

of "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" and the lion leaping out of its lair was an emblem of "the lion of Judah's tribe." I will, in my next breath, recite to you the most wonderful sentence ever written: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." No wonder that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem heaven sympathized with earth, and a wave of joy dashed clear over the battlements, and dripped upon the shepherds in the words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Write it out in letters of silver and gold: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Show me any other book with such a doctrine—so high, so deep, so vast.

Again: the Bible is *right in its effects*. I do not care where you put the Bible it just suits the place. You put it in the hand of a man seriously concerned about his soul. I see people often giving to the serious soul this and that book. It may be very well; but there is no book like the Bible. He reads the commandments, and pleads to the indictment: "Guilty." He takes up the Psalms of David, and says: "They just describe my feelings." He flies to good works. Paul starts him out of that by the announcement: "A man is not justified by works." He falls back in his discouragement. The Bible starts him up with the sentence: "Remember Lot's wife. Grieve not the Spirit. Flee the wrath to come." Then the man, in despair, begins to cry out: "What shall I do? Where shall I go?" and a voice reaches him, saying: "Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Take this Bible, and place it in the hands of men in trouble. Is there anybody here in trouble? Ah, I might better ask, are there any here who have never been in trouble? Put that Bible in the hands of a man who has trouble. He thought God was after him with a rod. How different now it seems. Just as you pick the sweetest berries off the sharpest thorns, so some of the most luscious promises grow on the sharpest thorns. The mother was holding her little sick child in her arms, and Jesus Christ came into the room in the night, and stopped where the child was, and said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now it does not seem as it once did. You thought cruel death had taken your child. Oh, no; it was only the Shepherd taking a lamb out of the cold. "All things work

together for good to those who love God." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." If you ever find a man or woman who has trouble, put that Bible into their hands; there is no salve like it—no catholicon like it.

Put that Bible in the common schools. Palsied be the hand that shall try to take the Bible from the common schools. An educated mind without religion is like a ship without a helm—it is a rushing rail-train without brakes or reversing rod to control the speed. Educate only a man's head, and you make him an infidel. Educate only a man's heart, and you make him a fanatic. Educate them both together, and you have the noblest work of God.

Put this Bible in every house. There it lies on the stand, an unlimited power. Polygamy, socialism, and unscriptural divorce are prohibited. Parents are faithful, and they are honored; children are polite, obedient and Christians. Domestic sorrows are lessened by being divided; domestic joys are increased by being multiplied. Father and mother, take down that long-neglected Bible. Where is it now? Is it in the trunk, or on the upper shelf, or is it in the room in the house where you seldom go, save when you have company, and then not to read the Bible? In the name of the God who will judge the quick and the dead, and by the interests of your immortal soul and the souls of your children, I charge you to-day to take up that old Bible, open it, read for your own life, and read for the life of your children. How can you go out on the dark mountains of death, and take your children along with you, when you have such a glorious lamp to guide you? Put that Bible on every rail-train until all the dark places of our land are illumined by it. Put it on every ship that crosses the sea until the dark homes of heathenism get the light. While I speak there comes to us the horrid yell of heathen worship, and in the face of this day's sun gushed the blood of human sacrifice. Give them the Bible. Unfasten that wife from the funeral pile, since there is no more sacrifice needed. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin." Hold back those children from gaping crocodiles, for Jesus waits to take them to his arms, and bless them. There are several reasons why I preach this sermon. There are so many people in this day who have tried to make you and I believe that the Bible is a dried-up, obselete, outlandish book. I want you to feel, as you go home this morning, that no book that yesterday came out of the printing-presses of the Harpers,

or the Appletons, or the Lippincotts, or the Ticknors was so fresh, or beautiful, or thrilling, or adapted to the times as this very Book from which I preach to-day. I want you to feel that you have in it the best of all treasures. I want you to know that it is to be your counsel while you live, and the only soft pillow under your head when you come to die.

After the battle before Richmond had been over several days, a man was found dead with his hand on the open Bible. The summer insects had taken the flesh from his hand, and there was nothing but the skeleton left; but the skeleton fingers laid on the open page, and on this passage: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Well, the time will come, when all the fine novels we have on our bed-room shelf will not interest us; and all the good histories, and all the exquisite essays, will do us no good. There will be one Book, perhaps its cover worn out, and its leaf yellow with age, under whose flash we shall behold the opening gates of heaven.

EARNESTNESS.

"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."
—*Ecclesiastes* ix. 10.

I WANT to show you that our great need is more earnestness in the spiritual life. In the first place we want more earnestness *in the reading of the Bible*. 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, don't lose that prescription. I am sure if you take the medicine there prescribed you will get well." How you would hold on to that prescription. You would say: "Everything depends upon my getting that prescription 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 round 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.

I remark, that we need more earnestness in the matter of *prayer*. In childhood we begin with: "Now 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. We want more earnestness in our prayers. 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 there 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 sooth 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? This is prayer, and anything short of it is no prayer at all. I saw in one of the English journals a picture of the destruction of the *Northfleet*, a few weeks 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 most of the people perished, three hundred going down to a watery grave. There were a few who got into the boats. I 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. I could almost hear the man cry out: "Let me in! I won't be very heavy! I can't die! I don't want to die here! Just let me in!" Ah, that was prayer; 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 depth of our anguish-stricken soul, offer up a prayer to God for mercy, and pardon, and life.

I remark further, we want more earnestness in the matter of *Christian work*. A brother comes into this house of prayer, and he stands up to speak a word for Christ. How tremulous he is! He says: "I wonder if the people will hear me?" His heart is not thoroughly enlisted. He wonders who will criticize him. He wonders if such and such a person is present. Before he begins to speak for Christ, he looks all around, to be sure such an one is not in the room. How he trembles! After a while he gets through, and he wonders whether he made any mistakes, and he goes away asking his friend; "How did I do to-night? Did I get along well, or did I make a balk?" He is not in earnest. There is another young man beside him. What does he care for rhetoric? He says: "Here are people that I must meet before the throne of God, and I have but three minutes now to talk to them. I don't care what people say. It is between God and my soul, and their souls." A Sabbath-school teacher sits down before her class. She is not in earnest; she has no appreciation of the great work to which she is called. She thinks that it is a fine thing to be a Sabbath-school teacher. She comes in and says to the class: "Fine day!" Then she arranges her apparel; then she gives an extra twist to the curl, and looks at the apparel of all the children in the class.

A minister of the Gospel comes on the Sabbath-day into the ante-room of the church. He is not in earnest. He has just happened to get into the ministry. He says: "I wonder what the newspapers will say to-day? I wonder how many critics there will be in the church? I wonder if that sharp-looking man that sat before me last Sabbath, looking at me through those spectacles, will be there to-day? I wonder if my hair is parted straight? I wonder how my cravat is tied? I wonder if my shoes have the right polish? I wonder if that gesture I made awhile ago is graceful?" The Sabbath goes by, the people disperse to their homes, no saving impression is made, the Sabbath is dead and will not live again until the resurrection. Another man of God comes to the ante-room of the church. He says: "Now there will be two or three or four thousand

people here this morning. What shall I say to them? I may be dead before next Sabbath. The people who will be in church to-day will never be there again. It is my last chance at them. Oh, God, help me now; if Thou never didst help me before, help me to-day." And then he comes before the people, and looks out upon the audience and says: "All these in fifty or seventy years will be gone. They will have heard their last offer of mercy and salvation. The trumpet of judgment will sound and they will stand before the throne and I will be there too. Alas, if on that day, any of them can point to me, and hiss at me, and say: "You didn't tell me the whole truth, you hid the fact that I was a sinner, I didn't know there was any hell. I hardly knew I was an immortal. You told me not of the judgment, and here I am, and the heavens are flaming, and the throne is set, and the doom is being pronounced, and I am lost, and it is your fault." Oh, how different then the preacher feels. How little he cares for what the world says of him. How his soul goes up to God in an agony of earnestness. How little he cares for the gesture, the style of his apparel, or what the critics may say. It is a matter between himself, and his God, and his hearers. I do not know whether, in these different items I have mentioned, I have touched your case; but I simply know that you, as Christian men, have a great responsibility resting upon you, and that you have never labored with that earnestness which ought to have characterized you.

I was going over from Camden to Philadelphia some years ago, very late at night, after a meeting. It was a cold winter night, and I stood on the deck of the ferry-boat, impatient to get ashore. Before the boat came to the wharf, a man who stood on the outside of the chains slipped and dropped into the water. It is the only man that I ever saw overboard. It was a fearful night. The icicles had frozen on the wharf, and they had frozen on the steamer. The question was how to get the man up. The ropes were lowered, and we all stood with fearful anxiety, lest the man should not be able to grasp the rope, and when he grasped it and was pulled on to the deck, and we saw he was safe, although we had never seen him before, how we congratulated him. A life saved! Have we the same earnestness about getting men out of spiritual peril? Do we not go up and down in our prayer-meetings and our Christian work, coldly saying: "Yes, there is a great deal of sin in the world; men ought to do better. I wish the people would become

Christians. I think it is high time that men attended to their eternal interests," and five minutes after we put our head on the pillow, we are sound asleep, or from that consideration, we pass out in five minutes into the utmost mirthfulness, and have forgotten it all. Meanwhile, there is a man overboard—a whole race overboard—how few hands are stretched out to lift men out of the flood, how few prayers offered, how few earnest importunities. How little earnest Christian work.

I do not know how this suits your case, I know it suits mine; but I pray to God that as a result of that service we may buckle on our armor—only a little while more to live; how little no one can know. That man of whom I have read on this slip of paper, has been with us Sabbath by Sabbath, not only in the Tabernacle before it was destroyed, but in the Academy since we have been worshipping there; from strong, stout health he has gone into the eternal world, with what preparation I do not know. I hope that all is well, and that God heard the dying supplication, and that though he will meet us no more in the earthly temples, he will be ready to join in the grander service, which we expect to render when we stand around the throne. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is neither knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave whither we are all hastening."

BIGOTRY.

“Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”—*Romans* xiv. 5.

THERE had been a hot discussion upon the subject of dietetics. There were some vegetarians in Paul's day, who thought it was right to eat nothing but herbs; others thought that men ought to be unlimited in their choice of food. Between these two parties there was a collision. Paul comes in to decide the matter, and says: “Now, let this quarrel stop. You men who want to eat herbs, eat herbs. You men who want to be unlimited in your choice of food, be unlimited in that choice. Your own consciences must decide the matter: ‘Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.’” That is the connection of the text, and it lays down a principle applicable to ten thousand cases of conscience. The religious world is divided into a great variety of parties and sects. Some of them were established by good men, and some by very egotistic men, and some by very bad men. I have no time to name the Calvinists, and the Antinomians, and the Socinians, and Sabbatarians, and Swedenborgians, and Arminians, and Baxterians, and Campbellites, and Dunkers, and Shakers, and Parkerites, and scores of other denominations of religionists. Between some of these there is only a difference of words; between others there is a difference as wide as between truth and error, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell. While our conscience will not allow us to choose some of these beliefs, we must allow to others the liberty of conscience which we demand for ourselves, remembering that they no more differ from us than we differ from them.

I wish to advocate the very largest liberty in matters of religious belief and discussion. In all questions of art, and social life, and politics, and religion, let there be no intolerance, no moving of the previous question, no gag law, no persecution. You know that the air and the sea keep pure by constant circulation, and there is a tendency in religious discussion towards purification and moral health. Between the fourth and six-

teenth century, the Church of God proposed to keep down all error by prohibiting free discussion, and by the strict censorship of the press, and by rack and gibbet, and hot lead down men's throats to keep them orthodox; but the world has found out that you cannot change men's beliefs by twisting off their heads or make them see things differently by putting an awl through their eyes. There is in every man a conscience which will upheave the mountain with which you try to crush it, and, unsinged of the fire, it will make red wings out of the flame on which John Huss mounted to glory. We must let men have differences of theological belief. In those very times that I speak of, between the fourth and sixteenth century, when all religious discussion was prohibited, members of the church went publicly from the house of God to the brothel, and along by consecrated altars there flowed a tide of drunkenness and licentiousness, and abomination, and the very sewers of perdition broke loose, deluging the church with their filth and rottenness. Then the printing-press came and it broke these shackles; but it has also poured upon the earth a great many bad books. After this, and right on the heels of these foes of Christianity, there came a healthful literature such as the world had never seen; and where there was one man to malign the Christian religion, there came twenty to defend it; and in reply to the assaults upon Christianity, there were written, "Butler's Analogy," and "Watson's Apology for the Bible," and "Campbell's Dissertation on Miracles," and "Newton on the Prophecies," and "Law's Theory of Religion," and the "Bridgewater Treatises," and scores of other profound, brilliant, and immortal works, which never would have been written but for the assaults of infidelity. I am not afraid that in this contest between truth and error, truth will be worsted. I am not afraid of error if we place close beside it the truth. Let error run! urged on by sceptic shout and transcendentalist's spur; let it run! God's angels of wrath are in hot pursuit, and quicker than eagle's beak clutches out a hawk's heart, God's vengeance will tear it to pieces! Let it run, if you only let truth run along with it. In this great fight between right and wrong, the right will conquer as surely as that God is stronger than the devil. The Church never has lost anything by generosity on this subject, and we cannot have our own rights of religious belief respected unless we respect the rights of those who differ from us.

I thank God that men do not all think alike on religious

subjects. You cannot see through my eyes. I cannot hear through your ears. No man shall lord it over our consciences. You may have heard of a king who had a great deal of trouble with his subjects. He was afterwards imprisoned, and to while away the time he made watches and clocks; and after he had made them, he tried to make the watches tick alike, and all the clocks strike alike. Of course he failed. Then he said to himself: "What a very foolish king I was! How could I expect to make all these watches tick alike, and all these clocks strike alike, to make my subjects alike?"

I propose, to-night, to speak of *bigotry—its causes, its evils, and its cure*. Men have tried to make us believe that this monster with horns and hoofs is religion. We shall, to-night, try to hunt it down and drag it out of the caverns of darkness, and rip off its hide. Distinguish between bigotry and lawful preference for any religious belief or form. I have no faith in a nothingarian. In a world of tremendous temptation and vicissitude, and with a soul capable of gigantic joy or suffering—a soul that will have to stand before a throne of insufferable brightness in the day when the rocking of the mountains, and the flaming of the heavens, and the upheaval of the sea, will be amid the least excitements, to give an account for every thought, and wish, and preference, and dislike—I say, in such a world, and with these considerations, that man who has no religious preference is mad. We will, by our early education, and by our physical temperament and mental constitution, have proclivities towards certain churches and certain forms of worship. That psalmody which I like might displease you. Some people like to see a minister of Christ in gown, and bands, and surplice; others prefer to see him in plain citizen's apparel. Some people are more impressed when they see a little child presented for baptism, and its white brow is sprinkled with water, in solemn benediction, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; while others are more impressed when the penitent comes up out of the river, his garments dripping with the waters that typify the washing away of sin. Some persons like no noise in prayer—not a whisper—not a word; others, just as good, prefer, by gesticulation and exclamation, to utter their devotional aspirations. Now, let there be no dispute upon this subject. You like one way best, and I like the other way. I have no quarrel with my neighbors. They have quiet in their house; I have quiet in mine. They do not think that the prosperity of their house depends on upsetting

the peace of mine ; nor do I think that the prosperity of my house depends upon destroying theirs.

So it ought to be in the kingdom of Christ—different religious homes, but good neighbourhood. “Peace on earth and goodwill to men.” That is the way it was when the Quaker talked with George Whitefield. They had had some hot words on unimportant things, and the Quaker turned to George Whitefield and said : “George, I am as thou art ; I am for bringing all men to the hope of the Gospel. Therefore, if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my broad brim, I will not quarrel with thee about thy black gown. Give me thine hand.”

In the first place, *bigotry often starts in wrong education in the home circle.* There are very good people who educate their children in the wrong direction in this respect, saying things about other denominations of Christians, and caricaturing them, and throwing slurs upon them, which always have a baleful influence in the household. Sometimes children come up and go out into the world, and look into these churches against which they have been specially warned, and find that in these churches the people love God and keep His commandments, and by a natural reaction they go there. I could mention the names of prominent ministers of the Gospel who once spent much of their time in bombarding certain denominations of Christians, who lived to see their own sons preach the Gospel in those very denominations. But we must admit that instruction in the wrong direction in the household in this respect is most baleful, and that there are little bigots ten years old.

Then *the superior power of any one denomination in a community often makes bigots.* People think that all other churches are wrong, and that theirs is right, because it happens to be more fashionable, more wealthy, or more influential ; and they talk about “our choir,” and “our minister,” and “our church,” and they toss their heads and have a patronizing air, wanting other denominations to know their places. Now, I think it is far better that in every community the great denominations have about equal influence, marching side by side for the world’s conquest. Let us remember that mere outside prosperity and worldly power are no evidence that a church is acceptable to God. Better a barn with Christ in the manger, than a cathedral with arches like those of St. Michael’s, in Lucca, and traceries like those of Bayeux—magnificent harmonies rolling through long-drawn aisles, and an angel from heaven proclaiming from the

pulpit, if there be no Christ in the chancel, and no Christ in the robes. That religion is a poor, mean, starveling thing which is made up by bookbinders and upholsterers. The religion of Christ oftener sits on the curb-stone with Lazarus than in the palace with Dives, and helps Naboth cultivate his vineyard oftener than Ahab rule his kingdom. Men often do the opposite to what people suppose. They sometimes go *up* to hell and *down* to heaven. Dives went up, and Lazarus went down. Do you know where they came out? Transpose the positions.

Further, *ignorance is the mother of bigotry*. Knowledge enlarges the mind. You seldom find an intelligent man who is a thorough bigot; it is the man who *thinks* he knows a great deal, but does not. In the far East, there is an obelisk, I have been told. One side of it is white, another side of it is blue, and another side of it is green. The story says that once some travellers went to look at that obelisk. They did not take the trouble to walk around it, but each looked at one side and came back. The travellers met, and they got into a fierce contest—one saying that that obelisk was white, another that it was blue, and another that it was green. “Stop this contest,” said some one, coming in. “I walked all around that obelisk, and find you are all right and all wrong.” Look out for a man who sees but one side of a question, and takes but one view of anything. Better a man who, by his intelligence and Christian faith, can walk all around the religious subject, and know all sides. If there is any man to be pitied, it is the man who has just one idea in his head—no more, no less. Better an entire blank as we sometimes find it, overthrowing the philosophic theory that an entire vacuum is impossible; better vacuity than just one idea in the head. It wanders up and down, seeking rest, but finding none, in perpetual loneliness and bachelorhood, wailing through the desert of the man’s intellect. Let a man give his life to the discussion of the doctrine of election, or the doctrine of free agency, or the subject of baptism, or the perseverance of the saints, and he will be imbecile in body and in mind. Bigotry puts its hand upon a man’s head and flattens his skull, and makes him lean and cadaverous, and exhausts him. Run up your colleges and your schools and universities. Bigotry cannot live under these influences. You may kill it with sunshine.

Look now at the evils of bigotry. In the first place, *it cripples investigation*. The different denominations were intended, by

holy rivalry and by honest competition, to keep each other wide awake. If one denomination of Christians should garble the word of God, there would be hundreds to cry out against the sacrilege. While each denomination of Christians ought to preach all the doctrines of the Bible, I really think that it is the mission of each denomination more emphatically to preach some one doctrine. For instance, I think it is the mission of the Calvinistic Church to preach the complete sovereignty of God; of the Arminian Church to present man's free agency; of the Episcopal Church to show the importance of order and solemn ceremony; of the Baptist Church to show the necessity of ordinances; of the Congregational Church to show the individual responsibility of its members; of the Methodist to show what holy enthusiasm, and good, hearty congregational singing can accomplish. While, as I say, each denomination ought to present all the doctrines, each denomination ought to make one of those doctrines especially emphatic. Now, bigotry shuts one out from all these lessons. The man will not make an impartial investigation, and he cannot reason. "All others are wrong, and I am right, and there the matter ends." From the glorious realm of God's truth, over which the archangel might fly from eternity to eternity without touching the limits, they shut themselves out, and die like blind moles under a corn-sheaf.

Another evil of bigotry is, that *it prejudices people against Christianity*. The churches of God were not made for war barracks. This perpetual bombardment of other sects drives men away from religion. People are afraid of riots. You go down the street and you see a contest—men fighting with men, and missiles thrown. You hear the report of firearms. You are not foolish enough to go through that street; you go around the block. Well, men have looked off sometimes upon this narrow path to heaven, and they have said: "I believe I will take the broad road. There are so many ecclesiastical brickbats being thrown in that narrow path, and there is so much sharp-shooting, I think I will take the broad road." Ah! my friends, that religion is not worth much which is not tall enough to look over the fence. I have more admiration for a Spanish bull-fight, and believe it to be more merciful and honorable, than the combating of those carnivorous ecclesiastics. Francis the First was so prejudiced against the Lutherans, that he said if there was a drop of Lutheran blood in his veins, he would puncture them with a knife and let them drop out. If men have

such hostility against other denominations of Christians, they drive men from the cross.

So, also, bigotry *hinders the Church's triumph*. How much wasted energy; how many men of large intellect who have given their time to abstract and controversial dispute, when, if they had devoted it in the right direction, they would have been gloriously useful! Their books lie on the shelf of college and State libraries, sleeping the long sleep of ages. Who cares now which of the doctors of divinity got the victory in that thirty years' war about a participle? Suppose there were a common enemy riding up the Narrows to-morrow morning, and our batteries here around New York were to fire into each other, you would cry out, "National suicide!" And yet that very thing is often done in the Church of Christ. While all the navies of darkness have been riding up the bay, sect has been warring with sect, and theological belief with theological belief, and there has been suicide instead of conquest. I go out some summer-day, and I find that there are two bee-hives quarreling with each other. I come up toward them. I do not come near enough to get stung, but I come near enough to hear the contest between them. The one cries out, "That field of clover is the sweetest." The other cries out, "*That* field of clover is the sweetest." I say, "Stop this quarrel. If you think that is the sweetest, go there; if you think *that* is the sweetest, go there. I want you to understand that that hive is the best that gets the most honey." I see different denominations of Christians in contest with each other, some preferring this field of evangelical belief, and others that field. I say, "Take your choice. If you like that evangelical belief the best, take it; if you like this evangelical belief the best, take it; but understand that Christ thinks most of that church which gets the most of the honey of Christian grace in the heart, and the most of the honey of Christian grace in the life."

How are we to war against this bigoted feeling which lingers in the hearts of hundreds and thousands of Christians? We do so by a realization of our *own infirmities and weakness*. If we make so many mistakes upon other things, ought we not to be a little modest in regard to our religious belief? I suppose that the light from the eternal throne, in the Last Day, will show us that there was something wrong in all our creeds.

We will overthrow bigotry by dwelling chiefly upon those things on which we agree, rather than upon those in which we

differ. Here is the great broad platform of the Gospel. I see a man coming up on one side of the platform. He says: "I don't believe in baby-sprinkling." Must I shove him off? Here is another man coming up on this side. He says: "I don't believe in the perseverance of the saints." Must I shove him off? No! Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Then come on! Brother now, brother for ever! The Gospel platform is large enough to hold all who put their trust in my Lord Jesus Christ.

War also against bigotry by realizing that *all denominations of Christians have yielded beneficent institutions and noble men*, and therefore are to be respected. One of the denominations gave to the world a Robert Hall and an Adoniram Judson; another gave a Latimer and a Melville; another a John Wesley and the blessed Summerfield; our own yielded a John Knox and the Alexanders, men of whom the world was not worthy. All these denominations having produced noble men and blessed institutions, they demand our respect. So I cry: "Come on, ye ninety thousand communicants of the Episcopal Church, ye four hundred thousand of the Presbyterian Church, ye nine hundred thousand of the Baptist Church, ye two millions of the Methodist Church—come on! Let us march shoulder to shoulder, for there is a world to be saved, and God demands that you and I help do it.

But more than all will you overcome this evil of bigotry by *toiling in Christian work with men of other beliefs*. Here are two men in hostility. Let them go and kneel by that dying woman and commend Christ to her soul. If they went into that room with antipathies, they will come out with love. Men who toil together in Christian work can never fight in bitter hostility. So I am glad when the spring-time comes, and in the great anniversaries, ministers of Christ and laymen of all denominations gather on one platform, and talk in behalf of the same great cause, and pray in behalf of the same beneficent institutions. Men who toil together must be, somehow, somewhere in sympathy. I do not know that I make this idea plain, so I will illustrate it by something that happened this week. On last Monday morning, at two o'clock, when her nine hundred passengers were sound asleep in their berths, dreaming of home, crash went the *Atlantic* into Mar's Head. Five hundred souls in ten minutes landed in eternity! The rush through the gangways of agonized men and women, the clutching for the

rigging, the plunge of the helpless steamer, the clapping of the hands of the merciless sea over the drowning and the dead, have thrown two continents in anguish. But I see there the brave quartermaster striking out for the rock with the "life-line," and in another place you see the fishermen coming out and picking up the shipwrecked and carrying them into the cabins, and wrapping them up in blankets snug and warm. Here puts out a life-boat; in it a minister of Christ and four oarsmen. Pull! pull! They reach the wreck; they throw a rope; another life is saved! Oh! can the men who toiled on that dark night at the ropes, at the oars, ever forget each other? If there should ever come a time of animosity, would they not think of that dark night, and of the life-line, and of the boats, and of the fishermen? No animosity could be retained in such a memory as that. Well, my friends, our earth has foundered in a worse shipwreck. Sin drove it on the rocks. The old ship has lurched and reared in the tempests of six thousand years. Out with the "life-line!" I do not care what denomination carries it! Out with the life-boat! I do not care what denomination rows it. Plenty of room for all to toil, for all to pray, for all to work. You do your work in your way; I do my work in my way. But know this: that that church and that denomination which is most fearless of surf and tempest, and that brings the most souls to the shore of eternal safety, will be the one upon which God will put the brightest honors, and the one that heaven will greet with the loudest anthem. Toiling in such service side by side, what though we do belong to different denominations, shall we not, by the memory of common hardships, and common toils, and common prayers, and common tears, be sympathetic with each other? Oh! that God would hasten the day when all the great denominations of Christians shall join hands around the cross of Jesus and recite the creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, and in the communion of saints, and in the life everlasting. Amen, and amen."

THE LIFE OF THE LAD.

“Seeing that his life is bound up in the lad’s life.”—*Genesis* xliv. 30

THESE words were spoken by Judah as descriptive of the tenderness and affection which Jacob felt towards Benjamin, the youngest son of that patriarchal family; but they are words just as appropriate to hundreds of parents in this house—“since his life is bound up in the lad’s life.” I have known parents that seemed to have but little interest in their children. A father says: “My son must look out for himself. If he comes up well, all right; if he turns out badly, I cannot help it. I am not responsible for his behaviour. He must take the same risk in life that I took.” As well might the shepherd throw a lamb into a den of lions and then say, “Little lamb, look out for yourself!” It is generally the case that even the beast looks after its young. I have gone through the woods on a summer’s day, and I have heard a great outcry in a bird’s nest, and I have climbed up to see what was the matter; I found out that the birds were starving, and that the mother-bird had gone off, not to come back again. But that is an exception. It is generally the case that the old bird will pick your eyes out rather than let you come nigh its brood. The lion will rend you in twain if you approach too nearly the whelps. The fowl in the barnyard, clumsy-footed and heavy-winged, flies fiercely at you if you come too near the little group, and God intended every father and mother to be the protection and the help of the child. Jesus comes into every dwelling, and says to the father or mother: “You have been looking after this child’s body and mind; the time has come when you ought to be looking after its immortal soul.” I stand before hundreds of people with whom the question, morning, noon, and night is, “What is to become of this child? What will be its history? Will it choose paths of virtue or vice? Will it accept Christ or reject Him? Where will it spend eternity?” I read of a vessel that foundered. The boats were launched; many of the passengers were struggling in the water. A mother with one hand beat the wave, and with the other hand

lifted up her little child towards the lifeboat, crying: "Save my child! save my child!" The impassioned outcry of that mother is the prayer of hundreds of Christian people who sit listening this morning while I speak. I propose to show some of the causes of parental anxiety, and then how that anxiety may be alleviated.

I find the first cause of parental anxiety in the *inefficiency and imperfection of parents themselves*. We have a slight hope, all of us, that our children may escape our faults. We hide our imperfections and think they will steer clear of them. Alas, there is a poor prospect of that. There is more probability that they will choose our vices than choose our virtues. There is something like sacredness in parental imperfections when the child looks upon them. The folly of the parents is not so repulsive when the child looks at it. He says: "Father indulges in it; mother indulges in it; it can't be so bad." Your boy, ten years of age, goes up a back street smoking his cigar—an old stump that he found in the street—and a neighbor accosts him and says: "What are you doing this for? What would your father say if he knew it?" The boy says: "Oh, father does that himself!" There is not one of us this morning that would deliberately choose that his children should in all things follow his example, and it is the consciousness of imperfection on our part as parents, that makes us most anxious for children.

We are also distressed on account of the unwisdom of our discipline and instruction. It requires a great deal of ingenuity to build a house or fashion a ship; but more ingenuity to build the temple of a child's character, and launch it on the great ocean of time and eternity. Where there is one parent that seems qualified for the work, there seem to be twenty parents who miserably fail. Here is a father who says: "My child shall know nothing but religion; he shall hear nothing but religion; and he shall see nothing but religion. The boy is aroused at six o'clock in the morning to recite the Ten Commandments. He is awakened off the sofa on Sunday night to see how much he knows of the Westminster catechism. It is religion, morning, noon, and night. Passages of Scripture are plastered on the bedroom wall. He looks for the day of the month in a religious almanac. Every minister that comes to the house is told to take the boy aside and talk to him, and tell him what a great sinner he is. After a while the boy comes to that period of life, when he is too old for chastisement and too young to know and feel

the force of moral principle. Father and mother are sitting up for the boy to come home. It is nine o'clock at night—ten o'clock—it is twelve o'clock—it is half-past twelve o'clock, and they hear the night-key jingle in the door. They say he is coming. George goes very softly through the hall, hoping to get upstairs before he is accosted. The father says: "George, where have you been?" "Been out!" Yes he *has* been out, and he has been *down*, and he is on the broad road to destruction for this life and the life to come. Father says: "There is no use in the Ten Commandments; the catechism seems to me to be an utter failure." Ah, my friend, you make a very great mistake. You stuffed that child with religion until he could not digest it; you made that which is a joy in many households, an abhorrence in yours. A man in mid-life said to me: "I can't become a Christian. In my father's house I got such a prejudice against religion, I don't want any of it. My father was one of the best men that ever lived, but he had such severe notions about things, and he jammed religion down my throat until I don't want any of it, sir." There have been some who have erred in that direction.

There are households where mother pulls one way and father pulls the other way. Father says: "My son, I told you the first time I caught you in a falsehood, I would chastise you, and now I am going to do it." Mother says: "Don't; let him off this time." In some families it is all scolding and fretfulness with the child; from Monday morning to Saturday night, it is that style of culture. The boy is picked at, and picked at, and picked at. Now, you might better give one sound chastisement, and have done with it, than to indulge in the perpetual scolding and fretfulness. There is more health in one good thunder-storm, than in three or four days of cold drizzle.

Here is a parent who says: "I will not err on the side that parent has erred in being too strict with his children. I will let mine do as they please. If they want to come into prayers, they can; if they want to stay out, they can. If they want to play cards, they can; they can do anything they please, and there shall be no hindrance. Go it! Here are tickets for the opera and theatre, son; take your friends with you; do whatever you desire." One day, a gentleman comes in from the bank to the father's office, and says: "They want to see you over at the bank a minute." Father goes into the bank. The cashier says: "Is that your cheque?" Father looks at it, and says: "No, I never

gave that cheque; I never cross a 'T' in that way; I never make the curl to a 'Y' in that way; it is not my cheque; that's a forgery: send for the police!" "Ah," says the cashier, "don't be so quick; your son did that!" The fact was that the boy had been out in dissipating circles, and ten and fifty dollars went in that direction, and he had been treated, and he had to treat others, and the boy felt he must have five hundred dollars to keep himself in that circle. That night, the father sits up for the son to come home. It is one o'clock before he comes into the hall. He comes in very much flushed, his eye glaring and his breath offensive. Father says: "My son, how can you do so? I have given you everything you wanted, and everything to make you comfortable and happy, and now I find in my old age that you are a spendthrift, a libertine, and a drunkard!" The son says: "Now, father, what's the use of your talking in that way? You told me I might have a good time, and to go it. I have been acting on your suggestion, that's all!" And so one parent errs on one side and another parent errs on the other side, and how to strike a happy medium between severity and too great leniency, and train our sons and daughters for usefulness on earth and bliss in heaven, is a question that agitates every Christian household in my congregation. Where so many good men and women have failed, is it strange that we should sometimes doubt the propriety of our theory and the accuracy of our kind of government.

Again, parental anxiety often arises from an *early exhibition of sinfulness in the child*. The morning glories bloom for a little while under the sun, and then they shut up as the heat comes on; but there are flowers along the Amazon that blaze their beauty for weeks at a time; but the short-lived morning-glory fulfils its mission as well as the Victoria Regia. There are some people who take forty, fifty, or sixty years to develop. Then, there are little children who fling their beauty on the vision and vanish. They are morning-glories that cannot stand the glare of the hot noon sun of trial. You have known all such little children. They were pale; they were ethereal; there was something very wonderfully deep in the eye; they had a gentle foot and soft hand, and something almost supernatural in their behaviour—ready to be wafted away. You had such an one in your household. Gone now! It was too delicate a plant for this rough world. The Heavenly Gardener saw it, and took it in. We make splendid Sunday-school books out of such children,

but they almost always die. I have noticed, for the most part, that children that live sometimes get cross, and pick up bad words in the street, and quarrel with brother and sister, and prove unmistakeably that they are wicked—as the Bible says, going astray from the womb, speaking lies. See the little ones in the Sabbath class, so sunshiny and beautiful. You would think they were always so, but mother, seated a little way off, looks over at those children, and thinks of the awful time she had to get them ready. After the boy or girl comes a little further on in life, the mark of sin upon them is still more evident. The son comes in from a pugilistic encounter in the street, bearing the marks of a defeat. The daughter practises positive deception, and the parent says: “What shall I do? I can’t always be correcting and scolding, and yet these things must be stopped.” It is especially sad if the parent sees his own faults copied by the child. It is very hard work to pull up a nettle that we ourselves planted. We remember that the greatest frauds that ever shook the banking-houses of the country started from a boy’s deception a good many years ago; and the gleaming blade of the murderer is only another blade of the knife with which the boy struck at his comrade. The cedar of Lebanon that wrestles with the blast, started from seed lodged in the side of the mountain, and the most tremendous dishonesties of the world once toddled out from a cradle. All these things make parents anxious.

Anxiety on the part of parents, also, arises from a consciousness that there are *so many temptations thrown all around our young people*. It may be almost impossible to take a castle by siege—straightforward siege—but suppose in the night there is a traitor within, and he goes down and draws the bolt, and swings open the great door, and then the castle falls immediately. That is the trouble with the hearts of the young; they have foes without and foes within. There are a great many who try to make our young people believe it is a sign of weakness to be pure. The man will toss his head and take dramatic attitudes, and tell of his own indiscretions, and ask the young man if he would not like to do the same. And they call him verdant, and they say he is green and unsophisticated, and wonder how he can bear the puritanical straight-jacket. They tell him he ought to break from his mother’s apron-strings, and they say: “I will show you all about town. Come with me. You ought to see the world. It won’t hurt you. Do as you please, but it will be the

making of you." After a while the young man says: "I don't want to be odd, nor can I afford to sacrifice these friends, and I'll go and see for myself." From the gates of hell there goes a shout of victory. Farewell to all innocence—farewell to all early restraints favorable to that innocence which, once gone, never comes back. I heard one of the best men I ever knew, seventy-five years of age, say: "Sir, God has forgiven me for all the sins of my lifetime, I know that; but there is one sin I committed at twenty years of age, that I never will forgive myself for. It sometimes comes over me overwhelmingly, and it absolutely blots out my hope of heaven." Young man, hear it. How many traps there are set for young people. That is what makes parents so anxious. Here are temptations for every form of dissipation and every stage of it. The young man when he first goes into dissipation is very particular where he goes. It must be a fashionable hotel. He could not be tempted into these corner nuisances, with red-stained glass, and a mug of beer painted on the sign-board. You ask the young man to go into that place, and he would say: "Do you mean to insult me?" No, it must be a marble-floored bar-room. There must be no salacious pictures behind the counter; there must be no drunkard hiccuping while he takes his glass. It must be a place where elegant gentlemen come in and click their cut glass and drink to the announcement of flattering sentiment. But the young man cannot always find that kind of place, yet he has a thirst, and it must be gratified. The down grade is steeper now, and he is almost at the bottom. Here they sit in an oyster cellar around a card-table, wheezing, bloated, and bloodshot; with cards so greasy you can hardly tell who has the best hand. But never mind, they are only playing for drink; shuffle away! shuffle away! The landlord stands in his shirt sleeves, with his hands on his hips, watching the game, and waiting for another call to fill up the glasses. It is the hot breath of eternal woe that flushes that young man's cheek. In the jets of gaslight I see the shooting out of the fiery tongue of the worm that never dies. The clock strikes twelve; it is the tolling of the bell of eternity at the burial of a soul. Two hours pass on, and they are all sound asleep in their chairs. Landlord says: "Come, now, wake up; it's time to shut up!" They look up and say: "What?" "It's time to shut up." Push them out into the air. They are going home. Let the wife crouch in the corner, and the children hide under the bed. They are going home!

What is the history of that young man? He began his dissipation at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and completed his damnation in the worst grog shop in Navy Street.

But sin even does not stop here. It comes to the door of the drawing-room. There are men of leprous hearts that go into the very best classes of society. They are so fascinating; they have such a bewitching way of offering their arm. Yet the poison of asps is under their tongue, and their heart is hell. At first their sinful devices are hidden, but after a while they begin to put forth their talons of death. Now, they begin to show really what they are. Suddenly—although you could not have expected it, they were so charming in their manner, so fascinating in address—suddenly a cloud, blacker than was ever woven of midnight or hurricane, drops upon some domestic circle. There is agony in the parental bosom that none but the Lord God Almighty can measure—an agony that wishes that the children of the household had been swallowed by the grave when it would be only a loss of body instead of a loss of soul. What is the matter with that household? They have not had the front windows open in six months or a year. The mother's hair suddenly turned white; the father, hollow-cheeked and bent over prematurely, goes down the street. There has been no death in that family—no loss of property. Has madness seized upon them? No, no! A villain, kid-gloved, patent-leathered, with gold chain and graceful manner, took that cup of domestic bliss, elevated it high in the air until the sunlight struck it, and all the rainbows danced about the brim, and then dashed it down in desolation and woe, until all the harpies of darkness clapped their hands with glee, and all the voices of hell uttered a loud ha! ha! Oh, there are scores and hundreds of homes that have been blasted; and if the awful statistics could be fully set before you, your blood would freeze in a solid cake of ice at the heart. Do you wonder that fathers and mothers are anxious about their children, and that they ask themselves the questions day and night: What is to become of them? What will be their destiny?

I shall devote the rest of my remarks to alleviation of parental anxiety. Let me say to you as parents, that a great deal of that anxiety will be lifted if you will begin early with your children. Tom Paine said: "The first five years of my life I became an infidel." A vessel goes out to sea; it has been five days out; a storm comes on it; it springs a leak; the helm will not work;

everything is out of order. What is the matter? The ship is not seaworthy, and never was. It is a poor time to find it out now. Under the fury of the storm, the vessel goes down, with two hundred and fifty passengers, to a watery grave. The time to make the ship seaworthy was in the dry-dock, before it started. Alas for us, if we wait until our children get out into the world before we try to bring upon them the influence of Christ's religion. I tell you, the dry-dock of the Christian home is the place where we are to fit them for usefulness and for heaven. In this world, under the storm of vice and temptation, it will be too late. In the domestic circle you decide whether your child shall be truthful or false—whether it shall be generous or penurious. You can tell by the way a child divides an apple just what its future history will be. You ought to oversee the process. If the child take nine-tenths of the apple, giving the other tenth to his sister, if he should live to be one hundred, he will be grasping, and want the biggest piece of everything. I stood in a house in one of the Long Island villages, not long ago, and I saw a beautiful tree, and I said to the owner: "That is a very fine tree; but what a curious crook there is in it?" "Yes;" said he; "I planted that tree, and when it was a year old I went to New York, and worked as a mechanic for a year or two, and when I came back I found they had allowed something to stand against the tree, and so it has always had that crook." And so I thought it was with the influence upon children. If you allow anything to stand in the way of moral influence against a child on this side or that side, to the latest day of its life on earth and through all eternity it will show the pressure. No wonder Lord Byron was bad. Do you know his mother said to him, when she saw him one day limping across the floor with his unsound foot: "Get out of my way, you lame brat!" What chance for a boy like that?

Two young men come to the door of sin. They consult whether they will go in. The one young man goes in, and the other retreats. Oh, you say, the last had better resolution. No, that was not it. The first young man had no early good influences; the last had been piously trained, and when he stood at the door of sin discussing the matter, he looked around as if to see some one, and he felt an invisible hand on his shoulder, saying, "Don't go in! don't go in!" Whose hand was it? A mother's hand, fifteen years ago gone to dust. A gentleman was telling me of the

fact that some years ago there were two young men who stopped at the door of the Park Theatre, in New York. The question was whether they should go in. That night there was to be a very immoral play enacted in the Park Theatre. One man went in; the other stayed out. The young man who went in went on from sin to sin, and through a crowd of iniquity and died in the hospital of *delirium tremens*. The other young man, who retreated, chose Christ, went into the Gospel, and is now one of the most eminent ministers of Christ in this country. And the man who retreated gave as his reason for turning back from Park Theatre that night, that there was an early voice within him, saying: "Don't go in! don't go in!" And for that reason, my friends, I believe so much in Bible classes. I wish all the young men and women of my congregation were in the Bible classes. But there is something better than the Bible class, and that is the Sunday-school class. I like it because it takes children at an earlier point; and the infant class I like still better, because it takes children before they begin to walk or talk straight, and puts them on the road to heaven. You cannot begin too early. You stand on the bank of a river floating by. You cannot stop that river, but you travel days and days towards the source of it, and you find, after awhile, where it comes down, dropping from the rock, and with your knife you make a course in this or that direction for the dropping to take, and you decide the course of the river. You stand and see your children's character rolling on with great impetuosity and passion, and you cannot affect them. Go up towards the source where the character first starts, and decide that it shall take the right direction, and it will follow the path you give it.

But I want you to remember, O father, O mother, that it is what you *do* that is going to affect your children, and not what you *say*. You tell your children to become Christians while you are not, and they will not. Do you think Noah's family would have gone into the ark if he had not gone in? They would say: "No, there is something about that boat that is not right; father has not gone in." You cannot push children into the kingdom of God; you have got to pull them in? There has been many a general in a tower or castle looking at his army fighting; but that is not the kind of man to arouse enthusiasm among his troops. It is a Garibaldi or Napoleon I., who leaps into the stirrups and dashes into the conflict, and has his troops

following with wild huzza. So you cannot stand off in your different state and tell your children to go ahead into the Christian life, and have them go. You must yourself dash into the Christian conflict; you must lead them, and not tell them to go. Do you know that all the instruction you give to your children in a religious direction goes for nothing unless you illustrate it in your own life? The teacher at the school takes a copybook, writes a specimen of good writing across the top of the page, but he makes a mistake in one letter of the copy. The boy comes along on the next line, copies the top line and makes the mistake, and if there be fifteen lines on that page, they will have the mistake there was in the copy on the top. The father has an error in his life—a very great error. The son comes along and copies it now, to-morrow, next year, copies it to the day of his death. It is what you *are*, not so much what you *teach*.

Have a family altar. Let it be a cheerful place, the brightest room in your house. Do not wear your children's knees out with long prayers. Have the whole exercise spirited. If you have a melodeon, or an organ, or a piano in the house, have it open. Then lead in prayers. If you cannot make a prayer of your own, take "Matthew Henry's Prayers," or "the Episcopal Prayer-book"—none better than that. Kneel down with your little ones morning and night, and commend them to God. Do you think they will ever get over it? Never. After you are under the sod a good many years, there will be some powerful temptation around that son, but the memory of father and mother at morning and evening prayers will have its effects upon him; it will bring him back from the path of sin and death.

But I want you to make a strict mark, a sharp plain line, between innocent hilarity on the part of your children and a vicious proclivity. Do not think your boys will go to ruin because they make a racket. A glum, unresponsive child makes the worst form of a villain. Children, when they are healthy, always make a racket. I want you, at the very first sign of depravity in the child, to correct it. Do not laugh because it is smart; if you do, you will live to cry because it is malicious. Do not talk of your children's frailties lightly in their presence, thinking they do not understand you; they do understand. Do not talk disparagingly of your child, making him feel that he is a reprobate. Do not say to your little one: "You're the worst child I ever knew." If you do, he will be the worst man you ever knew.

Above all, *pray*. I do not mean mere formal prayer, that amounts to nothing. Often go before God and say: "Here are my dear children. Oh save them. Put their feet on the road to heaven. Thou knowest how imperfectly I am training them; make up what I lack. Lord Jesus Christ, better than anything Thou canst give, give them Jesus." God will hear such a prayer. He said He would: "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." You and I may be gone before the prayers are answered. We may be sepulchred and our bodies mouldered into dust, but do you not think we will hear of it if they come to Christ? When the news flashes through the gates of heaven, we will be the first to catch the tidings. There will be none in all that land so much interested as we will be. Will God keep back the tidings? No, no, no.

Are your children safe for heaven? You can tell better than any one else. I put to you the question: Are your children safe for heaven? I heard of a mother who, when the house was a-fire, in the excitement of the occasion, got out a great many of the valuable things—many choice articles of furniture—but did not think to ask until too late: "Is my child safe?" It was too late then. The flames had encircled all; the child was gone! Oh, my dear friends, when sea and land shall burn in the final conflagration, will your children be safe?

I wonder if what I have said this morning has not struck a chord in some one in this audience who had a good father and mother, but is not yet a Christian? Is that *your* history? Do you know why you came here this morning? God sent you to have that memory revived. Your dear Christian mother, how she loved you! You remember when you were sick, how kindly she attended you; the night was not too long, and you never asked her to turn the pillow, but she did it! You remember her prayers also; you remember how some of you—I do not know where the man is in the audience—how some one here broke his mother's heart. You remember her sorrow over your waywardness; you remember the old place where she did you so many kindnesses; the chairs, the table, the door-sill where you played; the tones of her voice. Why, you can think them back now. Though they were borne long ago on the air, they come ringing through your soul to-day, calling you by the first name. You are not "Mr." to her; it is just your plain first name. Is not this the time when her prayers will be answered? Do you not think that God sent you in to-day to have that memory of her

revived? If you should come to Christ this morning, amid all the throngs of heaven, the gladdest of them would be your Christian parents who are in glory, waiting for your redemption. Angels of God shout the tidings! the lost has come back again; the dead is alive! Ring all the bells of heaven at the jubilee; ring! ring!

“Though parents may in covenant be,
And have their heaven in view;
They are not happy till they see
Their children happy too.”

A CLUSTER OF CAMPHIRE.

"My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi."
Solomon's Song, i. 14

SOLOMON'S SONG has been considered by many as fit only for moonstruck sentimentalists; written by a voluptuary—the story of a man crazed by a fair maiden—fit neither for family prayers nor for churches. Indeed, we must admit that there were years in Solomon's life when he had several hundred more wives than he was entitled to; but he repented of his sin, and God chose him to write some of the best things about Christ that have ever been written. Besides that, I think the criticism of modern times upon the immodesty of the Bible comes with poor grace from an age in which the writings of George Sand have come to their fortieth edition, and Christians cannot get to the prayer-meeting because they have tickets for first-rate seats at the "Black Crook." I think, however, as far as I can see, in my stupidity, that there are things turned out upon the community to-day that bid fair to do more damage than the Songs of Solomon.

Hear, now, one of his fresh and fair descriptions of Jesus. If I had twenty years to preach, I would like to employ ten of them in bringing out to observation those representations of Christ which have as yet been passed by. I do not know why the pulpit should hover over a few types of Christ when there are so many symbols of Jesus that have never been discoursed upon. Why should we employ all our time in examining a few lilies, when the Bible is a great garden filled with fuschias, and with daffodils, and with amarinths, and with evening primroses for the close of the life's day, and crocuses at the foot of the snow-bank of sorrow, and heartsease for the troubled, and "passion-flowers" planted at the foot of a cross, and "morning glories" spreading out under the splendors of the breaking day? Some weeks ago I discoursed to you about "the white hairs of Jesus," and I have been told that some of the newspapers supposed it was a mere fancy of my own—the poor fools not knowing that in Revelation, the first and the fourteenth, the Bible speaks of

Christ, "whose head and whose hairs are white like wool, as white as snow"—symbolizing the eternity of Jesus.

Terraced on the side of the mountains were the vineyards of En-gedi. Oh, they were sweet places! From a shelving of the mountain, four hundred feet high, waters came down in beautiful baptism on the faces of the leaves; the grapes intoxicate with their own wine; pomegranates with juices bursting from the rind; all fruits and flowers and aromatic woods—among the sweetest of these the camphire-plant of the text. Its flowers are in clusters like our lilac—graceful, fragrant, symbolical of Jesus. "For my Beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi."

I will carry out the idea of my text, and in the first place show you that this camphire-plant of the text was a symbol of Christ, *because of its fragrance*. If I had a branch of it, and should wave it in your midst, it would fill all the house with the redolence. The camphor, as we have it, is offensive to some; but the camphire-plant of the text had a fragrance gracious to all. The vineyards of En-gedi bathed in it—the branches, the buds, the blossoms, dripping with sweetness, typical of the sweetness of Christ.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes its sorrows, heals its wounds,
And drives away its fears."

The name of Cæsar means power; the name of Herod means cruelty; the name of Alexander means conquest; the name of Demosthenes means eloquence; the name of Milton means poetry; the name of Benjamin West means painting; the name of Phidias means sculpture; the name of Beethoven means music; the name of Howard means reform; but the name of Christ means *love*! It is the sweetest name that ever melted from lip or heart. As you open an old chest that has been long closed, the first thing that strikes you is the perfume of the herbs that were packed amid the clothing; so there are hundreds of hearts here to-night, which, if opened, would first offer to you the name of Jesus. Oh! He is such a sin-pardoner; such a trouble-soother; such a wound-binder; such a grave-breaker; that the faintest pronunciation of his name rouses up all the incense of the garden, and all the perfume of the tropics, while the soul, in ecstasy of affection, cries out: "My Beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi."

But how shall I talk of the sweetness of Christ's pardon to those who have never felt it; of the sweetness of His comfort to those who have refused His promise; of the sweetness of His face to those who have turned their back upon His love? Now, a great many people may think that this is merely sickly sentimentalism. Jonathan Edwards was a cool man; he was harsh in some of his opinions; he was never afflicted with any sentimental ardor; and yet, when the name of Christ was mentioned, it threw him into a transport. Paul was a cool logician, with nerves unshaken in the Mediterranean shipwreck, a granitic nature, comfortable with the whole world against him, shaking his fist in the face of the governments of earth, and the forces of darkness; yet the thought of Christ thrilled him, transported him, overwhelmed him. John Knox was unbending in his nature, and hard in some respects. The flash of his indignation made the queen shiver and the duchess quake; yet he sat down as a little child at the feet of Jesus. Solomon was surrounded by all palatial splendor—his ships going out from Ezion-geber on voyages of three years, bringing back all the wonders of the world—his parks afloat with myrrh and frankincense, and a-rustle with trees brought from foreign lands—the traces of his stupendous gardens found by the traveller at this day. Solomon sits down in this place to think of Christ, the altogether lovely and the altogether fair; and whilst seated, there comes a breath of the spices and aromatic woods, and of the blossoms, in through the palace window, and he cries out: "My Beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi."

O rich and rare, exquisite and everlasting perfume! Set it in every poor man's window; plant it on every grave; put its leaves under every dying head; wreath its blossoms for every garland; wave its branches in every home; and when I am about to die, and my hand lies cold, and stiff, and white upon the pillow, let no superstitious priest come with mumbling fooleries to put a crucifix of wood or stone in my hand, but rather some plain and humble soul—let him come and put in my dying grasp this living branch, with "clusters of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi."

It is some twenty years now since I found the Lord, and I must in your presence tell you how good He has been to my soul. Often since then I have given Him a hard thrust in His sore side; but He has been patient with me by day and night. It is the grief of my life that I have treated Him so badly; but

He has never let me go. I have seen no wonderful sights, I have heard no wonderful sounds, I have no marvellous experiences: it has been a plain story of patience on His part, and of unworthiness on my part. Some of my dear friends before me have had more rapturous experiences. Christ to them has been the Conqueror on the white horse, or the Sun of Righteousness setting everything ablaze with light, or the Bridegroom coming with lantern and torches. To me, it has been a very quiet and undemonstrative experience. It has been something very sweet, but very still. How shall I describe it? I have it now: "My Beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi."

But, I remark further: this camphire-plant of the text was a symbol of Christ in the fact that *it gives coloring*. From the Mediterranean to the Ganges, the people of the East gathered it, dried the leaves, pulverized them, and then used them as a dye for beautifying garments or their own persons. It was that fact that gave the camphire-plant of the text its commercial value in the time of King Solomon; a type of my Lord Jesus, who beautifies, and adorns, and colors everything He touches. I have no faith in that man's conversion whose religion does not color his entire life. It was intended so to do. If a man has the grace of God in his heart, it ought to show itself in the life. There ought to be this "cluster of camphire" in the ledger, in the roll of Government securities, in the medical prescription, in the law-book. A religion is of no value to a merchant unless it keeps him from putting false labels on his goods; or to the plasterer unless it keeps him from putting up a ceiling which he knows will crack in six months; or to the driver unless it keeps him from lashing his horses to eight miles an hour when the thermometer is at ninety: or to the farmer unless it keeps him from putting the only sound pippins on the top of the barrel; or to the shoemaker unless it keeps him from substituting brown paper for good leather in the soles. In other words: the religion of Christ is good for everything, or it is good for nothing. The grace of God never affects us by piecemeal. If the heart is changed, the head is changed, and the liver is changed, and the spleen is changed, and the hands are changed, and the feet are changed, and the store is changed, and the house is changed, and everything over which the man has any influence comes to a complete and radical change. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a pot of hyacinth to be set in a parlor bay-window

for passers-by to look at, and to be examined only by ourselves when we have company; but it is to be a perfume filling all the room of the heart as "cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi." The trouble is, men do not take their religion with them. The merchant leaves it outside the counter lest it disturb the goods. The housekeeper will not let her religion trail its robes in the kitchen on washing-day. The philosopher will not let his religion come in amid the batteries, lest it get a galvanic shock. But I tell you, unless your religion goes with you everywhere, it goes nowhere. That religion was intended to color all the heart and the life.

But, mark you, it was a *bright color*. For the most part, it was an orange dye made of this camphire-plant, one of the most brilliant of all the colors: and so the religion of Jesus Christ casts no blackness or gloom upon the soul. It brightens up life, it brightens up everything. You who go with sombre countenance, pretending that you are better than I am because of your lugubriousness, cannot cheat me. I know you, you old hypocrite! Pretty case you are for a man who pretends to be more than conqueror! The more religion a man has, the better and the happier it makes him. It is not religion that makes you look gloomy, it is a lack of religion. Those are the kind of men to whom I like to lend money, for I never see them again! There is no more religion in a funeral than there is in a wedding; no more religion in tears than in smiles. David was no better when he said he cried out of the depths of hell, than he was when he said that his mouth was filled with laughter and his tongue with singing. The best men that I have ever known have laughed the loudest. Religion was intended to brighten up all our character. Take out the sprig of cypress from your coat and put in "a cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi." Religion's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." I have found it so. There are hundreds in this house to night who have found it so.

I remark, again: that the camphire-plant of the text was a symbol of Jesus Christ because it is a *mighty restorative*. You know that there is nothing that starts respiration so soon in one who has fainted as camphor, as we have it. Put upon a sponge or handkerchief, the effects are almost immediate. Well, this camphire-plant of the text, though somewhat different from that which we have, was a pungent aromatic, and in that respect it becomes a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the mightiest

of all restoratives. I have carried this camphire-plant into the sick room, after the doctors had held their consultation and said there was no hope and nothing more could be done, and the soul brightened up under the spiritual restorative. There is no fever, no marasmus, no neuralgia, no consumption, no disease of the body, that the grace of God will not help. I wish that over every bed of pain and through every hospital of distress we might swing this "cluster of camphire from the vineyards of En-gedi." Christ's hand is the softest pillow, Christ's pardon is the strongest stimulus, Christ's comfort is the mightiest anodyne, Christ's salvation is the grandest restorative. It makes a man mightier than his physical distress. Nero tarred and put pitch upon the Christians of his day, and then set them on fire, that they might illumine the night round about the palace; but while they were burning and the crowd beneath were jeering, louder than all the noise went up the song of praise and triumph from the dying martyrs. John Bradford came out in the presence of the instrument of torture that was to put him to death and said: "I am a Christian now. I have never been before." And so again and again the Lion of Judah's tribe has torn to pieces the wild beasts of martyrdom.

This grace is also a restorative for the backslider. Who do you mean by that? you say. I mean you who used to frequent the house of God, but seldom go there now; you who once used to pray, but never pray now; you who once sat at the holy communion, but take not the Lord's cup now; I mean you who once rejoiced in Christian society, but now sit amid scoffers. Backslider! Oh, what a suggestive word! Backslider! From what have you slid back? You have slid back from your father's faith, from your early good habits. You have been sliding back from Christ, from the cross—sliding back from heaven. When a man begins to slide, he knows not where he will go. You have been sliding back toward darkness. You have been sliding back toward an unblest grave, toward a precipice, the first ten million miles of which downward are only a small part of the eternal plunge. You were, perhaps, professors in the country. You have made shipwreck in the town. It may be that the club blasted you; it may be that fashionable society destroyed you; it may be the kind of wife whom you married. You have no more hope for heaven now than if you had lived in Central Asia and never heard of Christ and the judgment. Oh! where is that Bible you used to read? Where

is that room where you used to pray? What have you done with that Jesus whose voice you once heard? Oh, murdered hours! Oh, massacred privileges! Oh, dead opportunities! wake up now and shriek in that man's ear until he shall rouse himself from the horrible somnambulism, walking, as he does, fast asleep, within an inch of hell! Oh! that he might cry out to-night: "Golden Sabbaths, come back! Communion seasons, come back! Wooings of the Holy Ghost, come back!" But they will not come. Gone! gone! gone! Sorrow will come, but not they. Temptation will come, but not they. Eternity will come, but not they. Oh, that you might save the few remaining years of your life, and consecrate them to Christ! I have seen sad sights, I have heard sad sounds; but, I tell you, the ghastliest thing outside the gates of the damned is a backslider's death-bed. Do you not feel to-night like having applied to your soul this Divine restorative? Do you not feel like crying out with David: "Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation?" For great sin, great pardon. For deep wounds, omnipotent surgery. For deaf ears, a Divine aurist. For blind eyes, a heavenly oculist. For the dead in sin, the upheaval of a great resurrection. But why should I particularize that class in this audience when we all need this restorative, for we have all wandered and gone away?

The last three or four weeks have been weeks of great rejoicing and thanksgiving to God on my part. The mails that have come to me from England, and Scotland, and Ireland, and Italy, have told me by letters, until I have no more time to read them, of how God has been pleased to bless my poor words to the salvation and comfort of men; and so from different parts of this land, giving me confidence in that old Gospel which my father believed in, and which I have tried, though in much feebleness of soul, to preach to you. Lo! I see to-night, rising up beyond this throng, three hundred thousand souls on this and the other side of the Atlantic to whom these poor words may come as messages of pardon, and peace, and love. Oh, men and women, present or absent! Oh, men and women judgment-bound! Oh, men and women eternity-destined! Oh, men and women Christ-purchased! where are your prayers? where are your outcries for mercy? Do not some of you feel that to-night is the time to begin to pray? Some weeks ago, you remember that terrible scene in this very building because of a slide of snow from the roof, and the cry of "Fire" on the

part of some villain in yon gallery, there was an outcry of horror through the building, and wringing of hands, and some became as dead men, and it was all an imaginary peril—no danger at all. We will never forget that scene—those of us who were here that night. If you were so alarmed when the peril was only imaginary, what will be the condition of those who are unprepared for eternity, when it shall not be a slide of snow, but an avalanche of rocks—Himalaya, Alps, and Andes crushing into demolition; and the conflagration of the last day shall be kindled, and a thousand million voices on earth will cry: “Fire!” and myriads of voices in the sky respond: “Fire!” and on the land and on the sea, and above, and beneath, and everywhere, it shall be: “Fire! fire! fire!” Oh, that Christ would to-night lay hold of that man! Speak, Son of God—speak with that voice that wakes the dead! However calm and placid we may now be, my dear brothers and sisters out of Christ, I must tell you that you are in grinding need, in appalling peril. “Except a man be born again, he cannot—he *cannot* see the kingdom of God.”

THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOL.

MY text is the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, to the last verse of the last chapter of Revelation, inclusive.

The Bible is the king of books—the Koh-i-noor among diamonds—the mightiest force that the hand of God ever projected among the nations. It is a very deep well, from which there comes up enough buckets to slake the thirst of all people, of all ages. You know that flowers and trees are set in nurseries only to be transplanted, and I suppose that all the truths of God's Word are to be transplanted into the lives of men and nations. It was nothing but God's truth that bloomed in the crimson flower of the Reformation; it will be nothing but God's truth that will bloom in the white flower of millennium. In courts of law, the witnesses and the jury, after taking the oath, kiss the Bible to give solemnity to the oath; but it is often a mere matter of cold form. We kiss this holy Book in a very ecstasy of affection. Dear old book! Take from me all others, but leave me this! Deny me all other friendships, but refuse me not this counsellor! Put out all other lights, but extinguish not this. Take from me every other weapon, but leave me this sword with which to conquer. Dear old book! Some have burned thee, and some have spit upon thee with contempt, and some have cast on thee the lie; but thou art my light in darkness, my comfort in trouble, my pillow in death, dear old book!

Now, my friends, this Bible is on trial as a school-book. It was on trial some years ago in Cincinnati, and, but for the negro vote of that city, would have lost the day; but the black men were then in fresh memory of the God who had appeared for them at South Mountain, and Shiloh, and Gettysburg, and all the threats and bribes of politicians could not get them to vote against that book through whose teachings they had been set for ever free. Then, at a later date, this Bible was on trial as a school-book at Hunter's Point. That came nearer home. There it lost the day because those high in authority said the book might be read before school and after school, but not necessarily *within* school. But these were mere incidents of a great cam-

paign which is now roused up between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and from the Canadas to the Gulf, for the expulsion of God's Bible from the common schools. That book is now on trial in your midst, as well as in all the great cities. You are the jurors. Prisoner, look upon the juror! Juror, look upon the prisoner. Guilty or not guilty? As you decide this question, you decide the interests of this country as long as the world stands, and reach an influence across all the ages of eternity. I wish, therefore, this morning, as a Christian minister, and as a Protestant, and as an American citizen, to be heard. If there is ever to be a proper time for this discussion, now is the time. If this book has a baneful influence in our common schools, out with it! Let us gather up all the Old Testaments and all the New Testaments, and look under the school-desks lest there be some stray leaf containing the story of the Saviour's death and resurrection; then let us bring them all out and tear them to pieces, or burn them in the streets. If it is a bad book for the common-school, you have no right to wait a year, or a day, or an hour before you try to put it out from those places, and from that sphere where it is exercising a baleful influence; but if you find out that its influence is just opposite to that—if you find it is a good book for the common school, then command that it stay there; and let that politician, and that Board of Education, in any part of the land, that dare to interfere with it, know that they do so at their own peril: for if that Bible once is taken out of the common school, there are not enough bayonets in this country to fight its way back again. If, at some future time, after the Bible is expelled, the good people of this country should rise up and see that they had made a mistake, and resolve again to enthrone that book in the common school system, it would rouse up such a war as the world has never seen—all Christendom on one side, and all the haters of God and heaven on the other. So I say, if you have any objections to its being hurled out of the common schools, speak out now, or for ever hold your peace.

I propose this morning to give you some reasons why I am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the common-schools. In the first place I am opposed to such expulsion, because *it would decide that a great multitude of the children of this country shall have no moral or religious culture.* You tell me that the family circle and the Sabbath-school are the places for religious culture. I say we must take the community just as it is, and recog-

nize the fact that the vast majority of the people do not read the Bible in their households, and they do not send their children to the Sabbath-school. All that the majority of the children of this country will know about God, and Christ, and eternity, they will learn from the Scripture-lesson of the day-school; and if in the future history of this country, there are to be here, as many have estimated, more than three hundred millions of people, then that Christian man who votes for the expulsion of the Bible from the common school votes that more than two hundred millions of the future population of this country shall have no moral or religious culture! Sirs, do you suppose it is possible to maintain a republic here—a republic of pure-hearted, intelligent freemen with such a small admixture of religious culture? You must take things as they are, and recognize the fact that if the Bible is not read in the common schools, the vast majority of the population will not come in contact with its truths, and by that decree you decide that this shall be a nation of atheists and infidels.

Another reason why I am opposed to its expulsion is, because *it interferes with no man's rights*. You say the Jews are opposed to it. They make no violent opposition. The Jews believe in the Old Testament, and they believe in the spirit of the New Testament. They are only waiting for the Messiah, whom we believe has already come. The Jews make little trouble about it. But, you say, the Roman Catholics object to it. Then, I reply that in 1864, the Pope of Rome decreed that the children of Roman Catholic families in this country should be taken out of our common schools, and the Roman pontiffs throughout this land made proclamation in the same direction, telling their families if they continued their children in the common schools, they should be denied all the rites of their religion. As a consequence, Roman Catholic schools have been established all over the land. Now, I ask, is it fair, is it common sense, to expect that those who go out from our schools and take all their children should have an influence over those who stay in the school and who want our children to read God's Word? If they go out, if they have decided to go out, if a majority have already gone out, is it right that they come back and tell us who stay in that we cannot have our sons and daughters read the Bible? No, no! The very moment they decided to leave the common schools, that very moment they lost their last argument for interference.

Again : *the Bible is the most unsectarian of all books.* It is no more a Protestant Bible than it is a Roman Catholic Bible. Do you know that Wycliffe, and Coverdale, and Matthew, and other learned men were Roman Catholics at the time they made that translation under King Henry VIII., who was himself a Roman Catholic ; and our translation—the King James translation—is substantially the same thing ; so that this book is no more a Protestant book than it is a Roman Catholic book, nor so much.

I have known of no instance where teachers in our public schools have tried to make proselytes. If the Bible be read in a Methodist church, they may give a Methodist twist to it ; if it be read in a Presbyterian church, they may give a Presbyterian twist to it ; if it be read in an Episcopalian church, they may give an Episcopalian twist to it ; but the Bible as read in the common schools, without note or comment, allows every child, unprejudiced, to pick out of the Scripture that form of Church government which it prefers.

Again : I am opposed to this expulsion of the Bible from the common schools because such *expulsion is warring upon the consciences of men.* As the majority of the people in this country are Protestants, I ask whether the conscience of a Protestant is not worth just as much as the conscience of a Roman Catholic ? Now, if you take out the Bible from the schools, you may please our Romish brethren ; but I want you to understand that you assault the best feelings of hundreds and thousands of Christian people in this country, whose hopes for heaven are hung upon that book, and who believe it to be the only safe foundation for a republican form of government. So I come back to the principle I laid down, that the conscience of Protestantism is certainly worth as much as the conscience of Roman Catholicism. You say you will not send your children to the public school if the Bible is read there ; I respond, I will not send mine there if you take the Bible out.

I am also opposed to this expulsion of the Bible from the common schools *because it is the best school-book there is.* Tell me of any book that presents such lessons of virtue, and purity, and charity, and kindness, and patience as that book does. Show me one child in all the millions of children that have been in the common schools of this country—one child that has been so hurt by the story of Joseph, or David, or Mary and Christ. We must let the little children go down in this stream of God's

Word and pluck the lilies from the bank. I want you to understand that a great many of the children who come up to our common schools, come from houses of suffering, and pain, and destitution. Oh! it is a blessed thing to have a teacher in the morning open the Scriptures and read to those little children: "Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Do you not think the little ones could understand it?) Or read, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Will they not understand it? Ah! there are thousands and tens of thousands in our schools who need the comfort and the consolation of this gracious religion. If you do not give it to them there, they will get it nowhere. I want no better companion for my child at school than Timothy and Samuel, no better preacher than Paul; no better mother than Hannah of the Scriptures. Bring all other books and put them in a pyramid; but put the Bible on the top of that pyramid. It is better than any mathematics for discipline; it is better poetry than Milton's; it is better history than Bancroft's; it is better philosophy than Stewart's; it is a better encyclopædia than Appleton's; it is a better biography than Plutarch. The sweetest poems of earth strike their chimes into this canto; and the beauty of the universe blossoms in this royal flower; and the charm of river, and lake, and sea is hung in this crystal. It is an interesting thought to me, that when the clock strikes "nine," and the teacher taps the bell in the schools in this country, the Scriptures are opened, and after the lesson is read, the little heads are bowed in the prayer: "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come"—a whole continent reciting prayers in concert. But now there are influences that come to the doors of our schools and say: "Close that Bible! Stop that prayer! Out with those Christian influences!"

I remark, again, I am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from common schools, *because the right to take the Bible out implies the right to take out every book that acknowledges God or virtue.* I will illustrate. There is no history in your schools in which the hand of God is not recognized in human affairs. Now, there are a great many people who do not believe in God. Therefore, out with all your histories! There is hardly a primer in the schools that does not acknowledge the sanctity of the Sabbath. Then, out with all your primers! The very right to take the Bible from our schools could take any other book, from the old

New-England primer down to the latest geography. Suppose you were on a highway, and a robber met you and said: "Your watch;" you give him your watch. He says: "Your purse;" you give him your purse. He says: "Your gold lead pencil;" you give it. He says: "Your coat;" you give him your coat. Having answered his first demand, he will go on until he leaves you stripped on the highway. Now, there are influences that come to our common schools and say: "God's Bible, let us take it away. It has no business here." Yield that, and another thing will be taken, and another, and another, until you will be stripped of all your civil and religious liberties. The time to take your stand, whether in front of the robber, or of the nefarious influences that would take out the Bible from the school, is at the very start, and say: "No! no! no! it shall not be taken!"

I am further opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the schools, because *it throws dishonor on that book in the estimation of the young people of this country.* Suppose an enactment should now be made that no "Webster's Dictionary," no copy of "Kames' Elements of Criticism," should come into our schools. What would be the immediate suspicion on the part of every child? Why, "Webster's Dictionary" and "Kames' Elements of Criticism" are bad books, and not fit for the schools. When the school governments of this country decree that the Bible is not fit for the common schools, it starts the idea in the minds of tens of thousands of children in this country that the Bible is a dangerous book, and I am opposed to its expulsion on that ground. You have no right to throw dishonor upon this book, and arouse suspicion in the hearts of children all over the land—a suspicion that will never be obliterated.

I go further, and say I am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools, because *the wise men of this country who founded the government, and who have maintained the government, have been opposed to any such thing.* Do you know that the American Congress, just after the foundation of our government, passed a vote for the printing of Bibles, and distributing of them in this country; but finding afterward that they could be imported more cheaply from England, they were brought from there by the Congress of the United States, and scattered among the people, for the reason that these men recognized the fact that you can have no republican form of government without moral and religious culture? I will read you the

opinion of Washington, in his farewell address. He said : .“ Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.” Daniel Webster said : “ It has been held as a fundamental truth, that religion is the only solid basis of morals, and that moral instruction not resting upon this basis is only building upon sand. It is a mockery and an insult to common sense to maintain that a school for the instruction of youth, from which Christian instruction is shut out, is not atheistical and infidel.” Now, my friends, I prefer to stand in the association of men of that class, who have believed in having the Bible in the common schools, rather than to stand in the association of those men, who, born in the ditch of the political caucus, have been cursed to crawl on their belly through the slush and slime of partizanship, demanding the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools in order to please the foreign vote, and anxious to lick the filthy heel of the emigrant before he has time to wash his feet! I contend that the best men and the wisest men in this country, in political as well as in religious spheres, have been in favor of moral and religious culture in the schools, and I take my position on the same platform.

But I have another argument, and a better argument. I contend that *this is a supreme book, from the hand of a Supreme Being, and has a right to go anywhere.* If that Bible was written for all lands and for all ages, who are you to come up and say to the Lord Almighty : “ You may send that book everywhere but not in our common schools ? ” Suppose I went across the water to England, fenced off a few acres of ground, and said : “ Now, the Queen of England may reign over all the land, except these few acres ; she shall not come here.” The police would show me whether she had a right to come there or not. Now, God is King of all the earth, and He has made a proclamation which He intends to reach the ears of the young and the ears of the old ; and it is rebellion against God’s government, and it is secession from the Lord Almighty when a man stands up and says : “ You may have that Bible go in the family or legislative hall, or penitentiary, or court-room, to swear by ; but in these common schools you shall not have the Bible.” The Bible being a supreme book from the hand of a Supreme

Being, has a right to go anywhere, and I consider the argument irresistible.

Again I am opposed to the expulsion, *because the common school is a creation of Protestantism.* Go to Spain, or France, or Italy, and show me a single common school. Not one! The whole spirit of the Church has been against it. I can read you two or three paragraphs. Archbishop Hughes said: "Common schools are nurseries of rationalism, licentiousness, and atheism." He believed in common schools, didn't he? *Freeman's Journal* and the *Tablet*, Catholic newspapers, in column after column, year after year, have been warring against the common school system as we have it. *Freeman's Journal* says: "If the Catholic translation of the books of Holy Writ—if these admirable Bible lessons, and these alone, were to be ruled as to be read in all the public schools, that would not diminish, in any substantial degree, the objections that Catholics have to letting Catholic children attend public schools. We will not subject our Catholic children to your teachers. We will not expose our children to associate with all the children who have a right to attend the public schools." I tell you that the whole spirit of the Roman Catholic Church is adverse to the indiscriminate education in the common schools. Now, if they have not created the system, and if, all along, they are hostile to the system, is it right for them to come in and dictate to us? Suppose I come into your house and say: "I don't like that child's hat, or shoe, or garment." You say: "I don't ask you to like it. That is my child, and I have a right to dress it as I will." And I say the common school is the child of Protestantism, and she has a right to do what she will with her own. But you say: "If that is so, the Roman Catholics will demand that a part of the public funds go to their schools." That I suppose, will, after a while, be the great question in this country. I cannot forestall, but will simply say we might better let the public funds go over to them, and have our common schools supported and maintained by the charities of the Christian Church, than to throw such dishonor upon the word of God, and hurl it from our school system.

I am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools, *because the God of the Bible has taken this country under His especial benediction, and evidently intends it to be a Christian Bible-reading people.* I suppose you have noticed the history of this country. Have you noticed the point in

the world's history at which our country was discovered? Why was it that for ages this land was hidden from the eyes of civilized men? Why did not some adventurer, long before Columbus or Vespucci, pick up this gem out of the sea? They would have been glad to do it. Because the men had not been born who were to people this country. The fires had not been kindled that were to purify them. When God had created a stalwart race, and ordained them for the peopling of this country, and for the laying of the foundation of a higher style of civilization than the world had ever seen, then God dropped the curtain, and this country rose with all its splendors before the vision of the people. Then come down to the American Revolution. Was not the hand of God in the lives of Washington, and Lafayette, and Marion, and Kosciusko, as certainly as in the lives of Aaron, and Caleb, and Joshua, and Moses? Was God any more present at Megiddo and Jericho, than at the White Plains and the Cowpens? Then we come down to the last war. The question with all parties had been: "How shall we get rid of this cancer of American slavery?" Some said: "Steal the slaves." That did not do. Some said: "Try moral suasion." That did not do. Some said: "Separate the nation." That would not do. God came to the problem, and put a sword on one side of that cancer, and a sword on the other side, and lo! it dropped, black and bleeding, and loathsome, into hell—the place it was fit for. God all along, from the first to the last, appeared in behalf of the deliverance of this people. The Pilgrim Fathers, the Huguenots, the Hollanders, took possession of this country in the name of the God of the Bible. Now, suppose I come into your parlor, and I say: "I don't like that book on your stand. I wish you would take it off, or I shall go away." You say: "Go away." I sit down at your table, and see an article of food I despise, and I say: "If you don't throw it out of the window I will go away." You say: "Go away." I am in favor of the largest liberty for men who want to withdraw from my table or the schools. There is plenty of room elsewhere. Let them go to China, or India, Kamschatka, or some land where the Bible has not been. There they can have full liberty—no one to interfere in any wise with them. But, as the God of the Bible has taken possession of this land for His own, He shall have it, and all our institutions. Certainly we will not withhold the most important of them all—the common school.

I am opposed also to the expulsion of the Bible from the

common schools, because intellectual culture without moral culture is worse than no culture at all. "Knowledge is power," for good if consecrated; but it is a power for evil, if unrestrained and unguided by moral principle. Robespierre, and Rousseau, and Byron were illustrations of men with splendid intellect but no moral culture. Better for them they had lived on the very lowest round of ignorance than that they should have risen by their mental qualifications, and cursed the world with their cruelties and nastiness. I tell you we want something more than geographies, and grammars, and vulgar fractions, to prepare our youth for good citizenship. The great curse of the land to-day is the educated villain. These men know enough; they know everything; they know *too* much. But they have no moral restraints. Intelligence without some kind of moral principle is a plague. There is nothing more wonderful than a locomotive. There it stands—axle, piston-rods, crank, cylinders, driving-wheel, throttle-valve. You let the steam on. The machine starts. After it gets under full headway, the engineer jumps off. Now that useful machine becomes an instrument of destruction, crashing death through the villages. There is nothing more beautiful than the human intellect when all its faculties are in full play. How attractive and how mighty! But if there be no moral principle to guide, control, and engineer it, then it works one long line of ruin and desolation through all the communities where it marches. Ignorance is bad, but intelligence is worse if immortal. There is hardly anybody who makes a speech who does not refer to the wonderful things in Greece and Rome. Well, they had great philosophers, and great poets, and orators; but how about their morals? Why is it that when a man is travelling in Italy to-day with his family, he is stopped at the door of the museum by the janitor, who tells him: "You may come in, sir, but not your family?" It is because the sculpture and the painting of those boasted times were abhorrent to all decency, and learned Greece and Rome, and splendid Corinth, and magnificent Pompeii were worse than the "Five Points" in their worst days. It is not what you *know*, it is what you *are*. You had better multiply the moral and religious influences in your school rather than subtract from them. Instead of driving the Bible out, you had better drive the Bible further in.

You will mark very well that I have not in this discourse said one word against the Roman Catholic Church. I simply demand

that the conscience of the Protestant be considered worth just as much as the conscience of the Roman Catholic. I have no faith in the violent assault of that Church; it has never battered down a cathedral, but it has built many cathedrals. Notwithstanding the rough things that have been said against that Church, it has to-day fifty dioceses, five thousand churches, fifty theological seminaries, thirty-five colleges, and more than four million members, and all the bombardment of cathedrals will never amount to anything. I have no fear that the Roman Catholic Church will ever kindle any fire in this country. The inquisition could not live an hour in the blaze of republican light. My trust is in God and in the common school education of the people, if that common school education have a right admixture of moral and Christian principle. But I tell you there is one source of danger, and that is the politicians. Oh! they are the men who are threatening the safety and the very existence of our institutions. They are the men—look out for their machinations and their plans. But the tide will turn. The day of God's justice and the people's vengeance will come for all those who stand in the high places of the earth, trifling with the educational, moral, and religious interests of this people. Ah! there are some of them here to-day. I can tell them by their bloated cheek, and their blood-shot eye, and their lecherous lip. I know them. Oh! you are a miserable crew, you unprincipled politicians! What do you care about the Bible? All you want is votes. The day will come when there will be in all the cities of this country a different state of things. There is a storm of indignation and wrath arising that will sweep this fraudulent, drunken, adulterous crew, who hang around about the city halls, to political perdition, from thence tumbling down into a deeper pit, where all thieves, and pickpockets, and adulterers, and whoremongers have their eternal residence with Satan and Bill Tweed! But, meanwhile, while I warn you against the influence of base politicians in all our cities, and tell you that the chief source of danger in our time is base partizanship, I want this morning, in the name of God and so many Christian people as may be in this house, to protest most solemnly against the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools. Friends of the Bible, wake up! We are asleep, while the foes of that Book are plotting all over this land by day and by night. Do you know this question is going by default? Many of the religious newspapers of the day have gone over to the other side, and many of the Christian ministry

are weak-kneed on the subject. Friends of God, speak out in behalf of King James's translation. "Oh!" they say, "you are behind the time. You ought to believe in progress, like we do. We believe everything is advancing. These sentiments were good enough in the times of Washington, and Lafayette, and Webster, but not for our times." *I believe in progress, but not progress over a precipice!* Better take every other book from the common schools rather than this one. You had better let the arithmetic go; our children can get along without knowing how to count their earthly treasures, but how shall they get along without knowing how to count the treasures that are with God? Better let the geography go; our children can get along without knowing the face of the earth; but how shall they get along without knowing about those hills of light, and those mountains of joy, and those seas of glory before the entranced soul of the Christian? No, no! Have the Bible in the schools. Have it read every morning; have it read with the very best emphasis, and the utmost possible pathos. Let the best reader in the school read it. Let the children listen, and while voices of superstition are crying: "Down with the Book! down with the Book!" lift it higher and higher in the estimation of the little ones as you cry; "Oh! how I love thy law!"

I know not what course others may take on this subject; I know not what position other churches may assume; but as for me, come weal or woe, come approval or scorn, come life or death, set me down here and now as the sworn, uncompromising friend of the Bible. I should consider myself unworthy of my ancestors, the Scotch Covenanters, and the Hollanders, and I should expect to be found friendless at the judgment-seat of Christ, if in this hour, when that Book is on trial, I should prove recreant. May God Almighty wither the hand that attempts to take the Bible from the common schools, and palsy the tongue which to that sentiment dare not say, Amen!

FREE CHURCHES.

“The rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.”—
Proverbs xxii. 2.

NO one class in a community is independent of the other classes. That is not a healthful condition of society in which men stand aloof from each other. That is a better state when people, moving in different circles, at some time come upon a common platform. What is true in the world is true in the church: “the rich and the poor *ought* to meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.” I do not think that the Church of Christ has kept pace with the enterprize of the world. Some years ago, it took a long time to make a nail. The blacksmith would take the bar of iron, thrust it into the hot coals, move the bellows, bring the iron out on the anvil, smite it, clear it, round it, fashion it into nails. It was a long and tedious process; but the iron is put into a machine, and in a moment hundreds of nails are showered upon the floor of the manufactory. Once it required some time to thresh wheat from the straw. The farmer would take the sheaf of wheat, tear off the straw that bound it, scatter it on the floor of the barn, and then the slow flail would pound the wheat out of the straw. Now the horses start, and the machine rumbles, and a sheaf of wheat is threshed instantly. In olden times that was considered a wonderful printing-press which could make 250 impressions in an hour. Now, by our modern steam printing-press, thousands, and tens of thousands, are made in the same length of time. The post-office was formerly a slow affair. Once in two weeks the mail would go from London to Edinburgh, and at about the same distance of time go from New York to Boston; but now, half a dozen times a day, you must look out or you will be run over by the waggons that come down Nassau Street with whole tons of United States mails, seven hundred millions of letters and papers having passed through the public post-offices of this country in one year. So there has been an advance in jurisprudence. In 1846 the constitution of our State changed, improvements were made in the criminal code, in the civil code—law

that would do very well in 1777, not doing at all in 1873. Now, I ask, if the church of God has kept pace with worldly enterprize? with the post-office? with modern railroad transportation? with the arts? with the sciences? with optics? with geology? with astronomy? "Oh," you say, "there is no new principle in religion to be developed." Well, I respond, there is no new principle in science to be developed. They are only the old principles that have come to light and demonstration. There was just as much electricity in the clouds before Benjamin Franklin played kite with the thunderstorm as there has been since. The law of gravitation did not wait for Newton to come. There was just as much power in steam before Fulton discovered it as since. The carboniferous and jurassic strata of the earth did not wait to take their position until Hugh Miller planted his crowbar. So, in matters of religion, if a man comes and says: "I have now discovered an entirely new principle in religion;" I say: "I have no faith in what you are going to say. I have but one standard, and that is the Bible." But if he says: "I have an old Bible principle that I wish to evolve and demonstrate," then, with all the possible attention of my soul, I say: "Hear! hear!"

I propose to-night to argue on behalf of a free church. There are a great many who do not quite understand the plans and policies of such a church. In the first place, I believe in such a church because it seems to me to be *the scriptural idea*. The apostle James says: "If there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring and goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him: 'Sit thou here in a good place,' and say to the other: 'Stand thou there, or sit thou here under my footstool;' are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" In other words, the Apostle James draws a picture. It is a meeting of Christian people; the usher stands at the door; two people come to the door and ask for seats. The usher looks at the one man, examines him from head to foot, sees that his garments are dictated by the recent fashion, and says: "Come here, sir, I'll give you an excellent seat;" takes him far up in front, gives him a seat and says: "I hope you will be very comfortable." Then the usher goes back, sees the other man, scrutinizes him very thoroughly, and says: "Poor coat, worn shoes, old hat; I think you will find a very good place to stand in that corner."

Now, the lightnings of that passage strike such an usher : in other words, you have no right to arrange a man's position in the house of God according to his financial qualifications. Do you suppose that the seats in the tabernacle of olden time, the temple, and the synagogue, were ever rented by worshippers ? Oh, no ; you tell me those were miraculous times. You say in our times churches are such expensive institutions. We want all this costly machinery. Let me tell you no church of the day costs half so much as did the old temple, and yet that temple in olden times was supported by voluntary contributions. When the farmer brought his harvest in he said : " These sheaves are for the Lord." When the flocks were drawn up, he said : " These lambs are for God." When the birds were caught, he said : " These pigeons, and these doves, are for sacrifice." The temple, the tabernacle, all supported by voluntary contributions. But you say men were more generous in those times. No, no ; the world has been advancing all the time ; there has never been so much generosity on earth as now. Do you suppose it would have been possible for the Christian and sanitary commissions that we had during the last war to have prospered in those ancient times ? No, they could not have been supported two thousand, one thousand, or five hundred years ago. They are projected in this Christian age. Now, I say, if in those dark times, and in that wicked city of Jerusalem, the temple could be supported by voluntary contributions, can we not in this Christian age, and in the full blaze of the Gospel light, and when the doctrine of Christian beneficence is so much inculcated, support a plain church ? The fact is, that the modes of constructing church finances have chilled the voluntary principle, and dammed back the charities of the world ; when, if we had gone back to the old Bible plan in all our churches, there would have been larger benevolence and a more extensive support of the institutions of religion. So that I come back now with more emphasis than ever, to say : " If there came into your assembly a man with a gold ring and goodly apparel, and there came in also a poor man with vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him : ' Sit thou there in a good place,' and say to the poor : ' Stand thou thero, or sit here under my footstool,' are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts ?" Oh, how different it would be in all our churches, if instead of having them supported by a few men, we could have the great masse

of the people bring their mites into the Lord's treasury. Some years ago, there was a dark time in a theological seminary, and there were three men talking over the low finances, and one said: "We can't get along. Nobody cares for this institution!" "Oh, you are mistaken," said another, "there are a thousand of us. I am a cipher, and you are a cipher, and *you* are a cipher, and the Lord Jesus Christ is One, and He is standing beside us, and three ciphers beside one make a thousand." In other words, when men band together, in however small numbers for a Christian object, they are mighty before God, and they are mighty in the world. If there be three ciphers with Christ beside them, they will be equal to a thousand men; if there be four, there will be ten thousand; if there be five, there will be one hundred thousand. In other words: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I argue, further, in behalf of a free church, because I think it is the only practical common-sense mode for city evangelization. The church has tried scores of ways. We have gone out with tracts, and with our Bibles and religious books among the people in the destitute parts of the city. Some have refused to take them. Some have burned them up. Some have read them and tried to reform; but as long as we leave them down amid the evil influences by which they are surrounded, and do not bring them into some Christian church—if you reform them fifty times, fifty times they will be unreformed. In other words, here is a man down by the marshes with chills and fever. The physician comes and gives him quinine and stops the chills; but just as long as that man continues to live down by the swamps he will be subjected to the same ailment. Bring him out on the hill-top, where the atmosphere is clear, if you want him to be permanently restored. Now, I say of those people who live in the slums of city destitution, as long as you leave them there they will fall into their old sins; but if you bring them into the healthy atmosphere of a Christian church, then you may hope for their permanent reformation. If you can say to them: "There is a free church, there is a free Bible, there is a free cross, and yonder is a free heaven, they will accept your invitation and come with you.

Mark this, my friends, that when you save the cities, you save the world. When Pekin comes to Christ, all China will come. When Paris surrenders to God, all France will surrender. When London prays, England will pray with her. When New York

bows at the feet of Christ, the United States will bow with her. Save the cities and you save the world.

I knew this city of Brooklyn eighteen years ago. Since then there have been great efforts made for the evangelization of the city, and yet, you know as well as I, that there is more sin in the city to-day, more Sabbath-breaking, and a vaster population who come not under any kind of religious influence. Where is Brooklyn to-day? In the churches? No! Where is New York to-day? In the churches? No! no! no! It is the exception when people go to church. A vast majority of the masses are travelling on down towards death unassisted because uninvited. Now if a surgeon goes into a hospital, and there are three hundred patients, and he cures twenty of them, and the other two hundred and eighty die, I call that unsuccessful treatment. If the church of God has saved some, when I compare the few that have been redeemed, with the vast multitude that have perished, I say it has been a comparative failure; and if the old plan of conducting the church of Christ has failed, let us start the ship on another tack and try another plan. In other words, come back to the Gospel theory, and throw wide open the doors of our church and tell the people to come in, without regard to their past history or their present financial or moral condition.

Again, I argue in behalf of a free church, because there are *three or four classes of people that will especially be touched by it*. Among them will be men who were once very influential in the churches, but who lost their property, and consequently cannot meet the pew-rents. I am not speaking of imaginary cases. I have seen scores of that kind of cases in the city of Brooklyn. In 1837, or in 1857, or 1867, they lost their property. They used to sit near the pulpit. The next year they went further back in the church. The next year further back, and further back as their finances entirely failed them, until at last they sat back by the door; and when the treasurer went down the aisle, he tapped the man's shoulder and said: "If you don't pay up, you will have to vacate this seat." What became of that man? He went out from the house of God. What becomes of the great multitude who once were influential in the Church of God, who having lost their property, cannot meet the pew-rents in the churches? They have gone—some to infidelity—some into lives of dissipation—God only knows where they have gone. Will men of any self-respect go to church under such a state of

circumstances? I tell you, nay. If it were my case, I would stay at home and gather my children about me, and read to them of Christ and a free heaven, out of which a man is never pitched because he cannot pay his pew-rent! At the very time a man most needs the consolation of religion—when his earthly fortunes have failed,—at the very time that he needs most to be told about treasures that never fail, in banks that never break—the Church of God turns its back upon that man, and the work of breaking down, that the Wall Street gamblers began, the Church of God finishes. It seems as if Christ, in the infinity of His fore-knowledge, could not think of a church pretending to love Him that would unanimously bar out the destitute. He said: “The poor ye have always with you.” He made it not merely as a statement, but as a prophecy and a promise; and yet it does really *seem* as if, in this respect, the Lord God had been thwarted.

There is another class of persons to whom a free church will appeal, and that is *the middle classes*. And let me say they are the suffering ones in religious things. The wealthy may purchase religious advantages anywhere; the positively beggared may feel so humiliated, they will be willing to go into a mission chapel: but the middle classes have not money enough to buy positions in the wealthy churches, and they are too proud to go among the beggared. So they stay at home. When I say the middle classes, I mean those whose income just about meets their outgo; and you will immediately see that is the condition of nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand in this city and in every city. The fact is, God does not trust us with money—I mean the majority of us. Your son is at school. You do not give him a large amount of money at the start. You say to the teacher: “Send in the bills.” When the bills come in, you pay for the tuition, you pay for clothing, you pay for travelling expenses. Now, God treats us very much in that way. He clothes us, pays our travelling expenses, shelters us, but never trusts us with a large amount of money. Hence, the middle classes are in a majority—those men in a community are in a majority who, when they have met the butcher’s bill, and the grocer’s bill, and the gas bill, and the clothing bill, and paid their house rent, have nothing left. The wife says to her husband, “My dear, I think we ought to go to church somewhere. Why don’t we take a pew in Dr. Well-to-do’s church?” “Oh,” he says, “we can’t afford it. I have more now to pay than I

can pay. We can't go there. We've got to deny ourselves a little longer. We'll get a little religion, perhaps, at home. We'll occasionally read the Bible, and once in a while go to a funeral, and that won't cost us anything; and we will pick up a little religion here and there, and after a while we may have good luck, and we will then rent a pew and go to heaven respectably." Many a husband and wife have consulted with each other upon matters of church economy, and before taking a pew, the husband said to the wife: "Now, you know that our income only meets our outgo. What are you willing to deny yourself? Will you have this old carpet another year? Will you wear that set of furs another winter? Will you consent to have no more dresses this season?" "No," she says. "Then," he says, "we can't afford religion and we can't afford the church." And so they stay at home. My friends, open the doors of a free church, where men may meet together without insidious comparisons, and they will pour in like the tides of the sea. We have been barring out this class of men from the house of God, and barring them out from the very gate of heaven. The fact is, that the church has become a sort of spiritual insurance company; and the man comes to get a policy, and you take him into a private room and sound the lungs, and listen to the beating of the heart, and then practically—not literally, but practically—you ask him if he is sound on the dollar question, and if he has been afflicted with anything like bankruptcy, and if there has been anything like financial sickness in the family; and if it is all right, you charge him with a great premium, and tell him to be very careful and pay it promptly, for if the policy should run out, that very night he might die, and so lose all the advantages of all the pew-rent he had ever paid, and where his soul would go to would be very uncertain.

There is another class of people to whom a free church will appeal; and that is the *rich*. I am yet to find an intelligent and rich Christian man who does not believe in such an institution. He may doubt the financial success of it; but I am yet to find one such who does not believe in the principle of it. In other words, our moneyed men do not like to see the principles of Wall Street applied to the Church of God. When I say a rich man, I mean a man who has riches—not a man who has gained a little money and who is very anxious lest he will not sufficiently display it—but I mean a man who has a fortune, who masters it, and who has not allowed his fortune to master him.

When you shall throw open the churches of the living God as free churches, then I want to tell you that the gold, and the myrrh, and the frankincense will come down to the feet of Jesus. I am not merely theorizing. We demonstrated it in the old Tabernacle. There were the poor there. God only knows how poor some of them were. I saw them in their garrets without a place to lay their head on. They did not look so at the House of God. They took their last farthing that they might look decent. Then we had the middle classes—men who toiled; some with hand, and some with brain, for brain work is poorly paid in this country. We had many of that class, and they had a hard struggle. Then we had more rich men than we ever had in the old city church—more than we ever expected—men who said: “I will pay for the Gospel not only for myself and my family, but *there* is a man in that pew who cannot afford to pay anything. I will pay for him. *There* is another man; I will pay for him. And instead of sending my money to foreign lands, where I have no doubt it does good, I will preach the Gospel to all those in the same church who cannot afford to purchase religious advantages.” So it was practically demonstrated; and we shall, God willing, on a larger scale demonstrate it in the new Tabernacle. And if you shall be afraid to come to such a place lest you be socially contaminated, I hope you will stay away, lest you contaminate us!

I am in favor of a free church, further, because *all the Providential indications*, so far as we are concerned, are in that direction. It has been the all-absorbing principle in my soul ever since I entered the ministry. It was the thing that brought me to this city. I had a comfortable home in Philadelphia, but this was a Gospel principle I thought I would like to see tried. I came here, and it so happened that all the people who gathered around me were of the same opinion, and so we have been unanimous. We were unanimous in the style of the new church, and about the architecture of the second. We were unanimous about having it free. When we were burned down we were unanimous about reconstruction, and the principle we developed in the old church we will try to develop in the new. Where the old Tabernacle stopped when it burned down, the new Tabernacle will begin when it rises up.

Again, I am in favor of the free church, because it appeals to *men of the world, as no other kind of Church does*. A prominent minister of New York said to me a week or two ago: “There

are no people who come into our churches in New York but Christian people. Somehow we don't get hold of the world." I said: "The majority of those who come into my religious services are of the world, and I think it must be that the free Christian principle is attracting them. In other words, men of the world cannot understand the limitations and the exclusiveness of the house of God. They say: 'If you are brothers and sisters, why don't the rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all.'" "Oh," you say, "those men of the world do not do their duty." I know they do not do their duty; but if this world is to be brought to Christ—if Bibles are to be printed, if churches are to be built, if Christian institutions are to be supported—I ask you is not the dollars of the man of the world worth as much as the dollars of the man of the church? Beside that, we expect these men of the world *en masse* to march after awhile into the kingdom of Christ. Having seen the frank, sympathetic men of the world around me as my companions, I expect they will be my companions when they and I have crossed the flood into the great eternity. I have lived with them in this city, and I expect they will be my neighbors in the better city. I know all their trials and temptations; I know all their business perplexities; I know all their hardships; and I want to stand before them a few years, and tell them of that Christ who will be their security in every financial strait and their bondsman in every crisis, and who when the nations are in a panic and the world ablaze, will declare everlasting dividends of light, and joy, and triumph to all those who have invested their affections in Him.

Men and brethren, brothers and sisters in Christ, are you ready for such a work? That which three years ago I talked to you as a mere theory has become a matter of practical demonstration. The night before the old Tabernacle was burned down, the trustees of my church met together, reviewed the finances, looked at the income, looked at the outgo, and decided that the income exceeded the outgo, proving a free church practicable. That being demonstrated, it was enough for that church. We will take that principle and develop it on a larger scale. God will this year let you strike a blow that will ring through eternal ages. The grandeur of the work to which you have put your hand no language can describe, no imagination can conceive, no plummet sound, no ladder scale. If you shall, in the strength of God, as I think you will, rise up to this work

of giving a free Gospel to the masses of Brooklyn and the masses of this country, it will take eternal ages for you to count up the rewards of your faithfulness. If some may scoff at you, let them scoff; remembering that they scoffed at Nehemiah, and at Daniel, and at Christ, and pronounced them fools, because they could not understand their enterprize. Remember, beside, that there are tens of thousands of good people in this land, and in Britain, who are praying for our success as a Church. Above all, remember that we are under the benediction of Him in whose word we trust and in whose strength we go forward. The mountains may depart, the seas may burn, the stars may scatter, the heavens may double up like parchment, the sun may burn down in the socket, and all the worlds fly in the judgment-day like thistle-down in a tempest; but will God back out of His promises, and betray His discipleship and break His oath? Never! NEVER!

THE LAVER AND LOOKING-GLASSES.

“And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling.”—*Exodus xxxviii. 8.*

WE often hear about the Gospel in John, and the Gospel in Luke, and the Gospel in Matthew, but there is just as certainly a Gospel of Moses, and a Gospel of Jeremiah, and a Gospel of David. In other words, Christ is as certainly to be found in the Old Testament as in the New.

When the Israelites were marching through the wilderness they carried their church with them. They called it the Tabernacle. It was a pitched tent—very costly, very beautiful. The framework was made of forty-eight boards of acacia wood, set in sockets of silver. The curtains of the place were purple, and scarlet, and blue, and fine linen, and were hung with most artistic loops. The candlestick of that tabernacle had shaft, and branch, and bowl of solid gold; and the figure of cherubim that stood there had wings of gold; and there were lamps of gold, and snuffers of gold, and tongs of gold, and rings of gold; so that scepticism has sometimes asked, where did all those precious stones come from? It is not my place to furnish the precious stones; it is only to tell that they were there.

I wish now more especially to speak of the laver that was built in the midst of that ancient tabernacle. It was a great basin from which the priests washed their hands and feet. The water came down from the basin in spouts, and passed away after cleaning. This laver, or basin, was made out of the looking-glasses of the women who had frequented the tabernacle, and who had made these their contribution to the furniture. These looking-glasses were not made of glass, but they were brazen. The brass was of a very superior quality, and polished until it reflected easily the features of those who looked into it. So that this laver of looking-glasses, spoken of in my text, did double work; it not only furnished the water in which the priests washed themselves, but it also, on its shining, polished surface, pointed out the spots of pollution on the face which needed ablution. Now, my Christian friends, as everything

in that ancient tabernacle was suggestive of religious truth, and, for the most part, positively symbolical of such truth, I shall take that laver of looking-glasses, spoken of in the text, as all suggestive of the Gospel, which first shows us our sins as in a mirror, and then washes them away by Divine ablution.

“Oh, happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

Now, my friends, 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 feet, there is no health in us.” That is another showing. The world calls these “defects,” “imperfections,” or “eccentricities,” or “erratic behaviour,” 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 this body of 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 or 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. There, for instance, is ingratitude. Who has not been guilty of that sin? If a man hands us a glass of water, we say, “Thank you;” but for the ten thousand mercies that we are every day receiving from the hand of God, how little expression of gratitude—for thirst slaked, for hunger fed, for shelter, and sunshine,

and sound sleep, and clothes to wear, how little thanks. I suppose there are men, fifty years of age, who have never yet been down on their knees in thanksgiving to God for His goodness! Beside that ingratitude of our heart, there is pride (who has not felt it?)—pride that will not submit to God—that wants its own way—a nature that prefers wrong sometimes instead of right, that prefers to wallow instead of rise up. I do not care what you call that. (I am not going to quarrel with any theologian, or any man who makes any pretension to theology.) I do not care whether you call it total depravity or something else. I simply make the announcement of God's word affirmed and confirmed by the experience of hundreds of people in the house; the imagination of the heart of man is evil from youth. There is none that doeth good; no, not one. We have got a bad nature. We were born with it. We got it from our parents; they got it from their parents. Our thoughts are wrong, our action is wrong, our whole life is obnoxious to God before conversion and after conversion, not one good thing in us but that which the grace of God has planted and fostered. Well, you say: "I can't believe that to be so." Ah, my dear brethren, that is because you have never looked into this laver of looking-glasses. If you could catch a glimpse of your natural heart before God, you would cry out in amazement and alarm. The very first thing the Gospel does is to cut down our pride and self-sufficiency. If a man does not feel his lost and ruined condition before God, he does not want any Gospel. I think the reason there are so few conversions in this day is because the tendency of the preaching is to make men believe they are pretty good anyhow—quite clever, only wanting a little fixing up, a few touches of Divine grace, and then you will be all right, instead of proclaiming the broad, deep truth that Payson, and Baxter, and Whitefield thundered to a race trembling on the verge of infinite and eternal disaster. "Now," says some one, "can this really be true? Have we all gone astray? Is there no good in us?"

In Hampton Court I saw a room where the four walls were covered with looking-glasses, and it made no difference which way you looked, you saw yourself. And so it is in this Gospel of Christ. If you once step within its full precincts you will find your whole character reflected—every feature of moral deformity—every spot of moral taint. If I understand the Word of God, its first announcement is that we are lost. I care not,

my brother, how magnificently you may have been born, or what may have been your heritage or ancestry, you are lost by reason of sin unless you appreciate that truth, and are prepared for the mercy and the pardon of the Gospel. "But," you say, "what is the use of all this, of showing a man's faults when he can't get rid of them?" None! "What was the use of that burnished surface to the laver of looking-glasses, spoken of in the text, if it only showed the spots on the countenance, and the need of washing, and there was nothing to wash with?" Glory be to God, I find this laver of looking-glasses was filled with fresh water every morning, and the priest no sooner looked on its burnished side, and saw his need of cleansing, than he washed and was clean. Glorious type of the Gospel of my Lord Jesus, that first shows a man his sin, and then washes it all away.

I want you to notice that this laver in which the priests washed—this laver of looking-glasses—was filled with *fresh water every morning*. The servants of the tabernacle brought the water in buckets and poured it into this laver. So it is with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; it has a fresh salvation every day. It is not a stagnant pool filled with accumulated corruptions. It is living water which is brought from the eternal rock to wash away the sins of yesterday—of one moment ago. "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 now—a fresh salvation. Suppose a time of war should come, and I could show the government I had been loyal to it twelve years ago, would that excuse me from taking an oath of allegiance now? Suppose you asked 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, present moral health, and yet how many Christians there are seeking to live entirely on 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 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 have 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? Don't you spend so much of your time in hunting in the wardrobe for the old worn-out shoes of Christian profession. Come this morning and take the glittering robe of Christ's righteousness from the Saviour's hand. You were plunged in the fountain of the Saviour's mercy a quarter of a century ago. That is nothing to me; I tell you to wash now in this laver of looking-glasses, and have your soul made clean.

I notice, also, in regard to this laver of looking-glasses spoken of in the text, that the priests always washed *both hands and feet*. The water came down in spouts, so that without leaving any filth in the basin, the priests washed both hands and feet. So the gospel of Jesus Christ must touch the very extremities of our moral nature. A man cannot fence off a small part of his soul, and say: "Now, this is to be a garden in which I will have all the fruit and flowers of Christian character, while outside of it shall be the Devil's commons." No, no; it will be all garden or none. I sometimes hear people say: "He is a very good man except in politics." Then he is not a good man. A religion that will not take a man through an autumn election will not be worth anything to him in June, July, or August. They say he is a useful sort of a man, but he overreached in a bargain. I deny the statement. If he is a Christian anywhere, he will be in his business. It is very easy to be good in the prayer-meetings, with surroundings kindly and blessed, but not so easy to be a Christian behind the counter, when by one skiful twitch of the goods you can hide a flaw in the silk so that the customer cannot see it. It is very easy to be a Christian, with a Psalm-book in your hand, and a Bible in your lap; but not so easy when you go into a shop and falsely tell the merchant you can get these goods at a cheaper rate in another store, so that he will sell them to you cheaper than he can afford to sell them. The fact is, the religion of Christ is all pervasive. If you rent a house, you expect full possession of it. You say: "Where are the keys of those rooms? If I pay for this whole

house, I want possession of these rooms." And the grace of God, when it comes to a soul, takes full possession of a man, or goes away and takes no possession. It will ransack every room in the heart, every room in the life from cellar to attic, touching the very extremities of his nature. The priests washed both hands and feet.

I remark, further, that the laver of looking-glasses spoken of in the text, was a *very large laver*. I always thought from the fact that so many washed there, and also from the fact that Solomon afterwards, when he copied that laver in the temple, built it on a very large scale, that it was large, and so suggestive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation by Him—vast in its provisions. The whole world may come and wash in this laver and be clean.

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 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 be as snow. Now, my brethren, I do not state this to put a premium on great 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 almshouses and wash away their poverty. Let them come up from their graves and wash away their death. If there be anyone 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. In Solomon's temple there were ten lavers and one molten sea;

this great reservoir, in the midst of the temple, filled with water ; these lavers and this molten sea adorned with figures of palm branch, and oxen, and cows, and cherubim. This fountain of God's mercy is a vaster molten sea than that. It is adorned not with palm branches but with the wood of the cross; not with cherubim, but with the wings of the Holy Ghost, and around its great rim all the race may come and wash in the molten sea. I was reading the other day of Alexander the Great, who, when he was very thirsty, and standing at the head of his army, had brought to him a cup of water. He looked upon his host, and said : " I cannot drink this, my men are all thirsty ; " and he dashed it to the ground. Blessed be God, there is enough water for all the lost—enough for captains and host. " Whosoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely ; " a laver broad as the earth, high as the heaven, and deep as hell.

But I notice, also, in regard to this laver of looking-glasses spoken of in the text, that the washing in it was *imperative and not optional*. When the priests came into the tabernacle (you will find this in the 30th chapter of Exodus), God tells them they must wash in that laver or die. The priest might have said : " Can't I wash elsewhere ? I washed in the laver at home, and now you want me to wash here. " God says : " No matter whether you have washed before. Wash in this laver or die. " " But, " says the priest, " there is water just as clean as this, why won't that do ? " " Wash here, " says God, " or die. " So it is with the Gospel of Christ—it is imperative. There is only this alternative : keep our sins and perish, or wash them away and live. But says some one : " Why couldn't 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 there is only one. 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. Instead of quarrelling because there are not more ways, let us be thankful to God that there is one—one name given to 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 a radiant 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.. Oh! my dear friends, I wish I could this morning coax you to accept this Gospel. If you could just take one look in this laver of looking-glasses spoken of in the text, you would begin now spiritual ablutions. You will not feel insulted, will you, when I tell you that you are a lost soul without pardon. Christ offers all the generosity of His nature to you this morning. The love of Christ! I dare not, towards the close of my sermon, begin to tell about it. The love of Christ! Do not talk to me about a mountain; it is higher than that. Do not talk to me about a sea; it is deeper than that. 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 as comfortable as that. A stone on Calvary would have made a soft pillow for the dying head of Christ. 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 those feet that had travelled all over Judea on ministries of mercy! What a hard end for those hands that had 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 all that 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. 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 mind!

“I saw one hanging on a tree,
 In agony and blood,
 Who fixed His languid eyes on me
 As near the Cross I stood.
 Oh, never till my latest breath,
 Will I forget that look;
 He seemed to charm me with his gaze,
 Though not a word He spoke.”

And that is all for you! Oh, can you not love Him? Come around this laver, old and young. It is so burnished you can see your sins, and so deep you can wash them all away. Oh, mourner, here bathe your bruised soul. And sick one, here cool your hot temples in this laver. Peace! Don't you cry any more, dear soul! Pardon for all thy sins, comfort for all thy afflictions. The black cloud that hung thundering over Sinai has floated above Calvary, and burst into the shower of a Saviour's tears.

I saw in the Kensington Gardens, London, a picture of Waterloo, a good while after the battle had passed, and the grass had grown all over the field. There was a dismounted cannon, and a lamb had come up from the pastures and laid sleeping in the mouth of that cannon. So the artist had represented it—a most suggestive thing. Then I thought how the war between God and the soul had ended, and, instead of this announcement, “the wages of sin is death,” there came the words: “my peace I give unto thee;” and, amid the batteries of the law that had once quaked with the fiery hail of death, I beheld the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

“I heard the voice of Jesus say:
 ‘Come unto me and rest;
 Lay down thou weary one, lay down
 Thy head upon my breast.’
 I went to Jesus as I was,
 Weary, and worn, and sad,
 I found in Him a resting place,
 And He has made me glad.”

HEAVEN OR HELL.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.”—*Mark xvi. 16.*

IT has been a question which I have often asked myself during the last three weeks, why it was that God brought me face to face with death on the Atlantic, and yet brought me back to this people alive. There are some questions of Providence which we cannot answer; but that question I have had no trouble in answering. God led me through that process in order that I might come with a more earnest, intense, consecrated, Christ-like ministry to this people, and may God forbid that the process should not have its proper effect upon my soul. I have for years had a memorandum book in which it has been my custom to put down texts of Scripture from which I expected some day to preach. Some of these texts have been in my memorandum book not preached upon for ten years. Among these is the text from which I speak this morning. I have noticed that the time comes in one's ministry for certain subjects. The Spirit of the Lord God has seemed to say to me that this is the subject I ought now to present to this people: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Oh, it is a solemn text—solemn enough for a man to preach his last sermon on. It is a text, the truthfulness of which no one can doubt who believes that Jesus was honest, for they are His own words. It is a text that must reach down to your deepest consciousness, and awake all your anxieties. There is no poetry about it; there is no argument about it. It is a plain statement of two great, momentous, infinite, eternal facts; and while I read this text it seems as though I heard two gates just shut—the gate of the blessed and the gate of the lost—“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.” You see that the text divides all the people in this Tabernacle into two classes—believers and unbelievers. Now, you need not sit back in your seats thinking I am going to give you a dry definition as to what faith is. I have no basket of theological chips to carry to you. Faith is reliance upon the

Lord Jesus Christ. It is a feeling of "I can't save myself, but Christ will do it—has done it. I put my whole weight upon His mercy; throwing away all my sins, my doubts, my fears. I accept everything that Jesus has promised to me personally, and everything that he has done for me personally." That is faith. I hear some one say: "I don't understand after all, what faith is." Don't you? Ten hours of mere human explanation would never make you understand it. That Bible says faith is the gift of God, and He only can explain it, and He explains it in answer to your prayer. He is ready, this moment, to explain it if you will ask for it. Certainly, you are not too proud to ask for that great boon. I pause in the midst of my sermon to give every man, woman, and child in this house an opportunity of uttering a prayer for faith. Let the words be "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief." And lest I should make a mistake in regard to my own experience, I pray that prayer for myself: "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief." Have you all prayed that prayer? You see the text puts you either on the right side or the wrong side, and I want you all to be on the right side. Faith is sometimes an instantaneous act of the soul. This may be the very minute. Let this be the very second when you do believe. Between everlasting heaven and everlasting hell you may decide as quickly as your watch can tick. There is the promise: "Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Throw yourselves flat upon that promise, and you are saved. There is one thing, however, to follow, and that is baptism. Oh, you say: "A little water sprinkled upon my face, or my whole body immersed, won't have any effect upon me. I can be a Christian without being baptized." Can you? I can't. Baptism is not water; it is a public acknowledgment of Jesus Christ, and I cannot be a Christian without publicly announcing my faith in Him. I do not say that *you* cannot. *I* cannot. Suppose that we were at war with a foreign government, and after five years of struggle it were found in regard to any man that he had not uttered any word of patriotism or loyalty, would you have any faith in his patriotism or loyalty? You would say: "I have seen regiment after regiment go past his door, and he never waved his hat. I have seen flags hoisted in his presence, and he never uttered a huzza." Now, my dear brethren, if we have come under the banner of Jesus, I believe we want to make an expression of loyalty, and when Christ reviews His troops on sacramental day, we will say: "I am in that army, and glad to be in it." Put me down as one of the troop.

“All over glorious is my Lord,
 He must be loved and yet adored;
 His worth if all the nations knew,
 Sure the whole earth would love Him too.”

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”—not from the physical consequences of sin. Future repentance of sin will not eradicate those consequences: “His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust” (Job xx. 11). The Psalmist David repented of his sin, and yet we know how bitter, even to the end of life, were the fruits of his transgression of the Divine laws. Oh, young man do not think that future repentance and faith will take away the physical consequences of sin. If a man harness a team of fiery passions to his body, he must ride behind them to the spado line of the grave. His soul may escape and be pardoned in this world; but in this world his body cannot escape. My text has reference to the future world: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;” he shall be saved from *all the consequences of sin*. The body, reconstructed, will be pure and healthy; the soul will be free; one inhabitant of heaven will never say to another inhabitant of heaven tauntingly: “Why, the last time I saw you, you were in a gambling saloon in Boston, or in a low place in New York. What are you doing here?” There will be no reference to the past save to extol the grace that lifted the soul from such a depth to such a height. You see the angels before the throne. You will be as pure as they; pure as the robes they wear; pure as the atmosphere they breathe; as free from sin as the God whom they worship. Holy is the Lord God Almighty, and holy all the redeemed who stand around Him.

The believers spoken of in the text will also be saved from *all toil*. With some of you, life is one long scene of weariness. It is work, work, work. You rise in the morning no more rested than when you laid down at night. Blistered hands, faint heads, aching sides, weak back, weary legs, bruised feet, exhausted strength. Sunday is not long enough for you to get the wrinkles smoothed out of your disposition and the strain of life bathed out of your limbs. Manufacturers let the fires go out on Sunday in their factories; but in your minds and bodies the fires of toil never go out. Oh, thank God, there will be a terminus of it. There will be no burdens carried through that heavenly gate. There will be no rushing about of anxious and overwrought men through those streets. There will be no employer thrusting his thumb through the needlework of the overburdened sewing

girl. No drudgery, but rest. Oh, you sons and daughters of toil, I congratulate you, if you are children of God, on the coming of a long, glorious, eternal holiday. Heaven must seem a different place, it appears to me, to Americans from what it does to other people. There is in this land such a rushing, and jostling, and treading one upon another, that I do not know how some souls will be quiet when they get there. There will have to be a radical change, or they would look upon the river of life as a waste of water power, and be planning some new cornice for the heavenly mansion, or get out some new edition of hymns for the redeemed. There are some people so struck through with everlasting fidget, that I cannot imagine them in heaven except rushing up and down in the street, crying: "Get out of my way, or I will run over you!" But one wave of the beautiful serenity will roll over the redeemed, and they will be in the picked company of the universe at rest.

They will also be *saved from trouble*. What is a tear? You ask the philosopher, and he will tell you it is a drop of limpid fluid secreted by the lachrymal gland. You ask me what a tear is, and I tell you it is sorrow held in solution; it is the language of the world's woe. This is a planet of weeping we are living on. We enter upon life with a cry and leave it with a long sigh. If I could gather up the griefs of all this audience, and put them in one sentence, and then utter it, it would make everything between here and the throne of God shudder and howl. The earth is gashed deep with graves. As at the close of the war, sometimes we saw a regiment of one hundred and fifty men, the fragments of the thousand men that went out; so, as I stand before you, I cannot but realize the fact, that you are the fragments representing thousands of regiments of joyful associations that have been broken up for ever. Oh, this is a world of sorrow! But, blessed be God, there will be no sorrow in heaven. The undertaker will have to have some other business there. In the summer time, our cities have bills of mortality which are frightful—sometimes in New York a thousand deaths in a week. Sometimes it has been two thousand in London; but in that great heavenly city there will be not a single case of sickness or death; not one black dress of mourning, but plenty of white robes of joy; handshaking of welcome but none of separation. Why, if one trouble should attempt to enter heaven, the shining police of the city would put it under everlasting arrest. If all the sorrows of life mailed and sworded under Apollyon should attempt to force that gate, one company from the tower would

strike them back howling to the pit. Room in heaven for all the raptures that ever knocked at the gate, but no room for the smallest annoyance, though slight as a summer insect. Doxology but no dirge. Banquetting but no "funeral baked meats." No darkness at all; no grief at all; no sickness at all; no death at all. A soul waking up in that place will say: "Can it be that I am here? Will my head never ache again? Shall I never stumble over a grave again? Will I never say good-bye to loved ones again? Can it be possible that the stream is past, that the bank is gained, that the glory is begun? Show me the temple where I may worship. Show me Jesus that I may kiss His feet." When the clock of Christian suffering has run down, it will never be wound up again. "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away the tears from their eyes." Oh, I would like nothing else to do from now to the day of my death but to tell the glad tidings of that rest provided for God's people. I love a carol a great deal better than I do a dirge. I don't even like minor tunes. I like tunes that have plenty of gladness and that are jubilant. I am a disciple of the sunshine. I like the shutters of my house open, and all the shades up. And yet it would be hypocrisy—it would be cowardice—for me to stand here this morning and tell you one half of that text and not tell you the other half.

If there is a heaven, there is just as certainly a hell. Suppose you are going along a road, and you ask me about the way, and I told you on the right side there were flowers and parks, and trees, and beautiful fountains; but I did not tell you on the other side there were sometimes wild beasts in the jungle, and of precipices off which you might fall—would I do that which is fair? Oh, what would I do in the day of judgment if it were found out that I preached half the truth, and only half? The Bible says: "So shall it be at the end of the world. The wicked shall be severed from among the just, and they shall be cast into the furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the smoke of that torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." This shall be the portion of all who do not believe in Christ. Whatever may have been their outward excellencies of character, and whatever may have been their worldly positions, the text declares: "He that believeth not shall be damned." Those who are cast away under this sentence will go away from the presence of *the most lovely Being in all this universe*. The Lord Jesus Christ they will never see but once, and that on the

Judgment-day—the day which will be their eternal discomfiture. That Jesus who stood pleading year after year for their love and faith will turn His back upon them, and pass out of their sight for ever. They will be cast out from the companionship of *glorified kindred and friends*. The gulf will be fixed—has been fixed. Alas, my dear friends, if you are on one side of it, and father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter is on the other side. There will be no bridge across that gulf. There will be no swimming across it. Your destinies will be widening—they more and more holy, you more and more sinful. Brighter joys hovering over them, thicker darkness frowning upon you. Then you will think of the time when you sat in the house of God together. You will think of the time when you walked the path of life together, when you mingled in the same joys, when you wept over the same graves, and the same invitation struck the ears of both of you at the same time. Oh, it is an overwhelming thought to me that some who now stand together in the tenderest ties of affection will, unless they repent, or this Bible is a lie, pass their eternity in two different worlds; if these accept of Christ, and those refuse Him, they must inevitably part. The text says so. If you persist in your impenitence, you had better neglect everything, and spend all your time together, for you are hastening on toward the forks of the road at which you must part. So what you have to say, say now, or never say at all. A few more days and nights of companionship, and that communion must be ended. If the Bible can be understood in any place, it must be understood in this place. One moment after death has dropped upon you; the archangel rising on his throne, rallying all the strength of his existence, could not hinder your fall, or change your destiny, or hinder the separation.

“Oh there will be parting, parting, parting,
At the Judgment seat of Christ.”

The old people of the Church remember when they used to sing that in olden times. I heard my father sing it—an old tune gone out of date and an old hymn. They who are cast away will go into the *companionship* of the *worst population that have gone out from this earth*. There are only two worlds—heaven and hell. The believers have all gone, or will go, to heaven, and the unbelievers will go to hell. No compromise of destiny—one thing or the other, just as certain as I stand here, and you sit there. Two worlds! I don't think that in the world of the

lost there will be any cell for the thief, or for the unclean one, or for the murderer. I think there will be one vast community of suffering and crime. The most of Sodom will be there; the most of Babylon will be there. The very slums of earth will empty their population into that place. All the vice of the world, let loose there, will riot, and foam, and fight, and blaspheme. It will be the penitentiary of the universe. If you get in there, you will never get out—you will never get out! and, therefore, it is with so much earnestness I stand here pleading for your life. Oh, to be in such company as that for ever! Believing this, as I do, can I address you in anything but words that come from the depths of my soul? I know that the philosopher of the day has tried to reason this thing out, and rejected the idea, and the doctrine makes people actually venomous. I cannot help it. It is not a fight between men and us; it is a fight between men and God.

If there is a heaven, there is a hell. Those who under that sentence are cast away, will go *into pain*; I don't say mental, or bodily, or both. I am not now discussing it, but it will be unmitigated torture. There can be no other meaning to these chapters about the never-dying worm, and the endless fire; that must mean torture. Fire is torture. There will be pain—infinite pain. The English language is full of words expressive of suffering—such words as “wretchedness,” “heart-break,” “pang,” “torment,” “convulsion,” “agony,” “despair,” “woe.” I will make a ladder of these words, each word a rung, and let it down into this subject to see if I can measure the depth of sorrow which those will have who reject Christ. I let down the ladder, but it does not touch the bottom. I have stood on cliffs, and I have pushed a rock off, and it has gone tumbling down, and after awhile I have heard, when it struck beneath, the echo come to my ear. At other times, I have stood on a precipice so great, that throwing over a stone, I have listened, but there came back no sound. I could not hear when it struck. So I take these words of which I have just spoken, and I throw them over this precipice, and I listen to hear when they strike the bottom. No echo! No echo! Bottomless! Bottomless! Oh, the remorse and chagrin of one who has had ten thousand opportunities of being saved, and yet feels he is lost. Oh, the weariness of one who has been ten million years in anguish, and yet feels it is only just begun! Agony, with its face scarred with ages of suffering, lifting up both hands towards the fiery horizon, crying: “The wrath to come! to come! to come!” After millions of

ages, some soul says: "Isn't it most gone? Isn't it nearly ended? I can't longer endure it. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved. When will it end." And a finger of lightning will write on the sky: "For ever!" and the following thunder-peal echo among the crags of death, "For ever!" Oh, those fire-bells will never stop ringing, because the conflagration will never be done. "They shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 9). Put it down in your memorandum-books, so that you will see that it is not I, but God that says it. Ah, my strength gives way, and my words break down. I can only, my dear hearers, call God to witness that I have this morning told what I think to be the whole truth. I want to save myself, and to save all who hear me. I can't bear the thought that one to whom I have administered the Gospel shall at last miss heaven. If I thought there was one here determined on such ruin, I would come down from this platform, and would seize hold of you and say: "Don't you do it. Jesus wants to be gracious to you. Why will you die when there are so many opportunities for salvation?"

Upon one or the other of these two worlds, I, De Witt Talmage, must soon enter. And you, as certainly. Which shall it be? I am deciding it for myself this morning. My dear brother and sister, I can't decide it for you; you will have to decide it for yourselves. Which shall it be? Lord Jesus, which shall it be? Holy Spirit, which shall it be? Oh, you great throng of dying men and women, which shall it be? I take hold of the rope in God's bell-tower, and I ring this alarm of warning, and this wedding-bell of love. I run my eye over all these seats, and I can say: you may be saved, every one of you. "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else."

Don't go away this morning, and say I announced destruction to any one except to the man that went without Christ. If you have not understood before, now, in this closing moment of my discourse, understand me: "Whosoever will," whatever his sin, if he has gone through the whole catalogue—"whosoever will"—I care not what his age may be, if for eighty years he has been steeped in crime—"whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Mark this: *if you are lost, it is your own fault*. Pardon and heaven are offered to all. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be damned."

CHRIST EVERYTHING

“Christ is all and in all.”—*Col.* iii. 11.

EVERY age of the world has had its historians, its philosophers, its artists, its thinkers, and its teachers. Were there histories to be written? there has always been a Moses, or a Herodotus, or a Xenophon, or a Josephus, to write them. Were there poems to be constructed? there has always been a Job, or a Homer, to construct them. Were there thrones lustrous and powerful to be lifted? there has always been a David or a Cæsar to raise them. Were there teachers demanded for the intellect and the heart? there has been a Socrates, and a Zeno, and a Cleanthes, and a Marcus Antoninus coming forth on the grand and glorious mission. Every age of the world has had its triumphs of reason and morality. There has not been a single age of the world which has not had some decided system of religion; the Platonism, Orientalism, Stoicism, Brahminism, and Buddhism, considering the ages in which they were established, were not lacking in ingenuity and force. Now, in this line of beneficent institutions and of noble men, there appeared a personage more wonderful than any predecessor. He came from a family without any royal or aristocratic pretensions. He became a Galilean mechanic. He had no advantage from the schools. There were people beside Him, day after day, who had no idea that He was going to be anything remarkable, or do anything remarkable. Yet, notwithstanding all this, and without any title or scholarly pretension, or flaming rhetoric, He startled the world with the strangest announcements, ran in collision with solemn priests and proud rulers, and with a voice that run through temple and palace, and over ship's deck and mountain top, exclaimed: “I am the light of the world!” Men were taken all aback at the idea that that hand, yet hard from the use of the axe, and saw, and adze, and hatchet, should wave the sceptre of authority; and that upon that brow, from which they had so often seen him wipe the sweat of toil, there would yet come the crown of unparalleled splendor and of universal dominion. We all know how difficult it is to think, that

anybody who was at school with us in boyhood, has got to be anything great or famous; and no wonder that those who had been boys with Christ in the streets of Nazareth, and seen Him in after years in the days of His complete obscurity, should have been very slow to acknowledge Christ's wonderful mission.

From this humble point the stream of life flowed out. At first it was just a faint rill, hardly able to find its way down the rock; but the tears of a weeping Christ added to its volume, and it flowed on until by the beauty and greenness of its banks you might know the path the crystal stream was taking; on and on, until the lepers were brought down and washed off their leprosy, and the dead were lifted into the water that they might have life, and pearls of joy and promise were gathered from the brink, and innumerable churches gathered on either bank; and the tide flows on deeper, and stronger, and wider, until it rolls into the river from under the throne of God, mingling billow with billow, and brightness with brightness, and joy with joy, and hosanna with hosanna!

I was looking a few days ago at some of the paintings of the late artist, Mr. Kensett. I saw some pictures that were just faint outlines; in some places you would see only the branches of a tree and no trunk, and in another case, the trunk and no branches. He had not finished the work. It would have taken him days, and months, perhaps, to have completed it. Well, my friends, in this world we get only the faintest outline of what Christ is. It will take all eternity to fill up the picture; so loving, so kind, so merciful, so great! Paul does not in this chapter say of Christ, He is good, or He is loving, or He is patient, or He is kind; but in his exclamation of the text he embraces everything when he says: "Christ is all and in all!"

I remark, in the first place, Christ is *everything in the Bible*. I do not care where I open the Bible, I find Jesus. In whatever part 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 that 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 uncleanness." I go back and look at the writings of Job, and I 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 is dumb, so He opens not His mouth." 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 evangelist's story, it is Christ in the apostle's 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 an historian*. Well, if you come as an 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 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.

There are others who come to the Bible merely *as antiquarians*. If you come as an antiquarian, you will find a great many odd things in the Bible; peculiarities of manner and custom—marriage and burials; peculiarities of dress—tunic, sandals, crissing pins, amulets and girdles, and tinkling ornaments. If you come to look at military arrangements, you will find coats of mail, and javelins, and engines of war, and circumvallation, and encampments. If you look for peculiar musical instruments, you will find psalteries, shigionaths, and rams' horns. The antiquarian will find in the Bible curiosities of agriculture, and in commerce, and in art, and in religion, that will keep him absorbed a great while. There are those who come to the Bible as you would to a cabinet of curiosities, and you pick up this and say: "What a strange sword that is;" and "What a peculiar hat this is;" and "What an unlooked for lamp that is;" and the Bible to such becomes a British Museum.

Then there are others who find nothing in the Bible but *the poetry*. Well, if you come as a poet, you will find in this book faultless rhythm, and bold imagery, and startling antithesis, and rapturous lyric, and sweet pastoral, and instructive narrative, and devotional psalm-thoughts, expressed in a style more solemn than that of Montgomery, more bold than that of Milton, more terrible than that of Dante, more natural than that of Wordsworth, more impassioned than that of Pollock, more tender than that of Cowper, more weird than that of Spenser. This great poem brings all the gems of the earth into its coronet, and it weaves the flames of judgment in its garlands, and pours eternal harmonies in its rhythm. Everything this book touches it makes beautiful, from the plain stones of the summer threshing-floor to the daughters of Nahor filling the trough for the camels; and the fish-pools of Heshbon; up to the psalmist praising God with diapason of storm and whirlwind, and Job leading forth Orion, Arcturus and the Pleiades. It is a wonderful poem, and a great many people read it as they do Thomas Moore's "Lalla Rookh," and Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake," and Southey's "Curse of Gehenna." They sit down and are so absorbed in looking at the shells on the shore, that they forget to look off on the great ocean of God's mercy and salvation.

Then there are others who come to this book *as sceptics*. They marshal passage after 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 visions, 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 scepticism. They do not believe it possible that the Bible story should be true that the dumb ass spake, while they themselves prove the thing possible by their own utterances! I am amused beyond bound 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 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 to be wise, they are fools for time,—fools for eternity.

Then, there is another class of persons, who come to the Bible as *controversialists*. They are enormous Presbyterians, or fierce Baptists, or violent Methodists. They cut the Bible to suit their creed, instead of cutting their creed to suit the Bible. If the Scripture thinks as they do, well; if not, so much the worse for the Scriptures. The Bible is merely the whetstone on which they sharpen the dissecting knife of controversy. They come to it as a government in time of war comes to armories or arsenals for weapons and munitions. They have declared everlasting war against all other sects; and they want so many broad-swords, so many muskets, so many howitzers, so many columbiads, so much grape and canister, so many field-pieces, with which to take the field of dispute, for they mean to get the victory though the heavens be darkened with the smoke and the earth rend with the thunder. What do they care about the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ! I have seen some such men come back from an ecclesiastical massacre as proud of their achievement as an Indian warrior boasting of the number of scalps he has taken. I have more admiration for a man who goes forth with his fists to get the championship—for a Heenan or a Morrisey—than I have for these theological pugilists, who make our theological magazines ring with their horrible war-cry. There are men who seem to think the only use of the sword of truth is to stick somebody. There is one passage of the Scriptures that they like better than all others, and that is this: "Blessed is the Lord which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight." Woe to us if we come to God's word as controversialists, or as sceptics, or as *connoisseurs*, or as fault-finders, or merely as poets. Those only get into the heart of God's truth who come *seeking for Christ*. Welcome all such. They will find, coming out from behind the curtain of prophecy, until He stands in the full light of New Testament disclosures, Jesus the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. They will find Him in genealogical table and chrono-

logical calculation, in poetic stanza and in historical narrative, in profound parable and in startling miracle. They will see His foot on every sea, and His tears in the drops of dew on Hermon, and hear His voice in the wind, and behold His words all abloom in the valley between Mount Olivet and Jerusalem. There are some men who come and walk around this temple of truth and merely see the outside. There are others who walk into the porch and then go away. There are others who come in and look at the pictures, but they know nothing what are the chief attractions of the Bible. It is only the man who comes and knocks at the gate, saying: "I would see Jesus"—for him the glories of that book open, and he goes in and finds Christ, and with Him, peace, pardon, life, comfort, and heaven. "All in all is Jesus" in the Bible.

I remark again, that Christ is everything in the *great plan of redemption*. We are slaves; Christ gives deliverance to the captives. 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 wore it. The heights of heaven sing it, and worlds of light to worlds of light, all around the heavens cry: "Glory! glory!"

Let us go forth and gather the trophies for Jesus. From Golconda mines we gather the diamonds; from Ceylon banks we gather the pearls; from all lands and kingdoms we gather precious stones; and we bring the glittering burdens and put them down at the feet of Jesus, and say: "All these are Thine. 'Thou art worthy.'" We go forth again for more trophies, and

into one sheaf we gather all the sceptres of the Cæsars, and the Alexanders, and the Czars, and the Sultans of all royalties and dominions, and then we bring the sheaf of sceptres and put it at the feet of Jesus, and say: "Thou art King of kings, and these Thou hast conquered." And then we go forth again to gather more trophies, and we bid the redeemed of all ages, the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, to come. We ask them to come and offer their thanksgiving, and the hosts of heaven bring crown, and palm, and sceptre, and here by these bleeding feet, and by this riven side, and by this wounded heart, cry: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and for ever." Tell me of a tear He did not weep, of a burden that He did not carry, of a battle that He did not fight, of a victory that He did not achieve. "All in all is Jesus" in the great plan of redemption.

I remark, again: Christ 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 greyhound pack on the scent of deer. From our hearts, in every direction, there are a thousand cords 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 in heavenly pastures, but wrathful, and sombre, and gleaming with terror; they wrap the mountains in fire, and come down braying 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 without 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 poison? Blessed be God that in the Gospel we find this 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. He knows too well what it is to be persecuted, not to help those who are imposed upon. He knows too well what it is to be sick, not to help those who suffer. Aye! He knows too well what it is to die, not to help us in our last extremity. Blessed Jesus! Thou knowest it all. Seeing Thy wounded side, and Thy wounded hands, and Thy wounded feet, and Thy wounded brow, we are sure Thou knowest it all. Oh, when those on whose bosom we used to breathe our sorrows are snatched from us, blessed be God, the heart of Jesus still beats; and when all other lights go out, and the world gets dark, then we see coming out from behind a cloud something so faint we hardly know what it is: but at last we descry it—star of hope, herald of the morning.

There are different kinds of hands. The hand of care may smite you, and the hand of bereavement may crush you into the dust, and the hand of temptation may push you back into the darkness; but there is a hand amidst it so gentle, and it is so kind that it wipeth away all tears from all faces.

WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES.

“Their right hand is full of bribes.”—*Psalms* xxvi. 10.

“Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning.”—*Ecclesiastes* x. 16.

THOSE two passages are descriptive of wickedness in high places. The morals of a nation hardly ever rise higher than the virtue of the rulers. Henry VIII. makes impurity national and popular. A William Wilberforce in the Parliament ennobles and elevates an empire. Sin, epauletted and bestarred, comes to respect and canonization; vice, elevated, is recommended. Malarias rise from the marsh, float upward and away; but moral distempers descend from the mountain to the plain. The “Five Points” and Coal Street disgust men with the bestiality of sin; but dissolute French court and corrupt Congressional delegation put a premium upon crime. The most of the vices of the world are kingly exiles that had a throne once, but, driven out, they have come down in tattered robes to be entertained by the humble and the insignificant.

I do not believe that there is any nation on earth which has more noble-minded and pure-hearted men in places of authority than this nation. There is not a meeting of legislature, or Congress, or cabinet, but has in it the best specimens of Christian character—men whose hands would consume a bribe; whose cheek has never been flushed with intoxication; whose lips have never been smitten of blasphemy, or stung of a lie: men whose speeches against the wrong, and in behalf of the right make us think of the fiery words of the Scottish Covenanters, and of the daring challenge of Martin Luther, and of the red lightning of Micah and Habakkuk. I do not believe that our legislative and political councils are any more corrupt than they were in olden time. I will not believe it so long as I read in history of Aaron Burr, stuffed with corruption until he could hold no more—body, mind, and soul soaked in abomination, the debaucher of the debauched, yet a member of the State Legislature, afterwards Attorney-General, afterwards United States Senator, and, last of all, Vice-President of the Union. You cannot make me believe that political dishonesty is peculiar to our day when I find out

that the Governor of this very State, almost fifty years ago, disbanded the Legislature because it was too corrupt to sit in council; and when, in the State of Massachusetts, there was a man in the gubernatorial chair so offensive that when he made his proclamation for Thanksgiving-day, ended with his own signature as governor, and the stereotyped phrase, "God save the Commonwealth," a minister of Christ, while reading the governor's proclamation for thanksgiving, put this emphasis after reading the proclamation, saying: "Marcus Morton, Governor of Massachusetts. *God save the Commonwealth!*"

There has been a tendency to contrast the past with the present to the advantage of the former; and I suppose, that sixty years from now, political writers will make angels out of us, although the material now seems so very unpromising. But the crimes in high places in olden times are no apology for the crimes in high places in modern times; and I shall, this morning, in the fear of God, and with reference to my last account, unroll before you the scroll of public wickedness.

If there was ever a time when the minister of the Gospel and the philanthropist should speak out, this is the time. King David must feel the rebuke of Nathan; Felix must be made to tremble; sin must be denounced; God must be honored; the nation must be saved. We may hold back the truth on these subjects, and walk with muffled feet lest we wake up some big sinner. But what will we answer in the day when men who have stood in the high places of the earth, warring against God, shall fall like lightning from heaven; or, as John Milton has it—

"Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition."

I stand this morning in the presence of men who hold in their hands the suffrages of the nation, and by whose vote, and by whose printing-press, and by whose social influence, and by whose prayer, the future character of this country is to be decided.

In unrolling, then, this scroll of wickedness in high places, the first thing that I mark especially is *incompetency for office*. If a man seeks for a place and wins it when he is incompetent, he is committing a crime against God and a crime against man. It is not a sin for me to be ignorant of medical science; but if, without medical attainment, I set myself up among professional

men, and trifle, in my ignorance, with the lives of those whose confidence I have won, then my charlatanism becomes high-handed knavery. The ignorance that in the one case was innocence, in the other case becomes a crime. It is not a sin for me to be ignorant of machinery; but if I attempt to engineer a steamer across the Atlantic, amid darkness and hurricane, holding the lives of hundreds of people in my grasp, then the blood of all the shipwrecked is on my garment. But what shall we say of men who attempt to engineer our State and national affairs over the rough waters, without the first element of qualification? men not knowing enough to vote "aye" or "no," until they have looked for the wink of others of their party? So we have had legislative and Congressional committees to make tariffs and homestead-bills, and arrange about the fisheries, and think out the best way of collecting indemnities—men whose incompetency has been the laughing-stock of the country. In this country, to-day, qualification for office is not the question; but, "How much has the man done for the party?" And so, we had a Congressional committee that made one tariff for flaxseed-oil and another for linseed-oil—not knowing, in their stupidity, that flaxseed and linseed-oil are the same thing. No depth or length or breadth of disqualification in this country hinders a man from holding office. The polished civilian of acknowledged integrity, profoundly acquainted with the spirit of our institutions, is run over by the great stampede of men who rush out from their bloated and unthinking ignorance to take the positions of trust in this country. So we have had, in some parts of the country, school commissioners nominated in a grog-shop, hurrahed for by the rabble, hardly able to read their own commissions when they were handed to them; judges of courts, in important cases, giving the charge with so much inaccuracy of phraseology, that the thief in the prisoner's-box was more amused at the stupidity of the bench than alarmed at his own prospective punishment. We arraign, to-day, incapacity for office as one of the crimes to be seen in our national and State councils.

I unroll the scroll a little farther and find *intemperance* and the co-ordinate crimes. I admit there has been some improvement in this thing. The grogshop that used to flourish in the basement of the Capitol, where senators once went to get inspiration for their speeches, has been abolished. There is a Temperance Society in Congress. But the plague is not yet stayed. I knew a man who, only a few years ago, was an example

of integrity, and honored everywhere. Last winter I went to Washington. I had not seen him for years, and I thought I would send my card into the House of Representatives, and call him out. The card went in by the sergeant-at-arms, and my old friend that I had not seen for ten years came out, staggering drunk. In this country, the temptations to intemperance in public life are so great, that more of our men in office die of *delirium tremens*, and the kindred diseases that come from intemperance and an impure life, than from all the other causes combined. There is one weapon that slays more senators and congressmen, and legislators, and common-councilmen, than any other, and that is the bottle. How few of the men who were in prominent political offices twenty-five or thirty years ago, when they died, came to honorable graves? The family physician, to relieve the family and keep them from national disgrace, said it was gout, or it was epilepsy, or it was obstruction of the liver, or it was exhaustion from patriotic service! But God knew it was whisky. It was the same habit that smote the great man down that smote the dark villain in the alley. The one you wrapped up in a coarse cloth, and threw into a rough coffin, and carried out in a box-waggon, and put down in a pauper's grave, without prayer or benediction; the other gathered the pomp of the city, and the name was on the silver plate, and the lordly men walked uncovered beside the hearse with tossing plumes, on the way to a grave soon to be adorned with a marble pillar of four sides, which shall be covered with the story of the man who died of *exhaustion from patriotic services!* The difference between the two was this: The one put an end to his existence with logwood rum at two cents a glass, and the other perished in a beverage at three dollars a bottle. I write both of their epitaphs: on a shingle over the pauper's grave, I write it with a lead-pencil; on the white shaft over a senator's tomb, I cut it with a chisel: "*Slain by strong drink!*"

It is a simple fact that dissipated habits have not, in this country, been a hindrance to a man's getting office: if he is sober sometimes, if the governor can get straight enough to write his message, if the judge's tongue is not positively thick when he delivers the charge, if the vice-president is not drunk when he is sworn in—that will do. So we have had world-renowned secretaries of state carried out drunk from their office, and senators of the United States arrested at midnight in houses of shame for uproarious behavior; judges and jurors and lawyers

by night, while the trial is going on by day, gambling and singing the song of the drunkard. Oh! it is a sad thing to have a hand tremulous with intoxication holding the scales of justice, when the lives of men and the destinies of a nation are in the balance; to have a charioteer with unskilful hands on the reins while the swift destinies of governments are harnessed on a road where governments have been dashed to pieces, and empires have gone down in darkness and woe! 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!"

I unroll the scroll of wickedness in high places still further, and I see the crime of *bribery*. It was that which corrupted Lord Bacon in his magnificent position—it was that which led Chief Justice Thorpe to the gallows. You know as well as I that in the past few years it has been almost impossible to get a law passed by State or National Legislature unless there

was some financial consideration. When a bill has appeared at the door, the question among your representatives has been, "How much money is in this?" Reformers and philanthropists, with some scheme for the elevation of the nation, approach the door of the Legislature or the door of Congress, and are laughed at because their hands are empty. Political bribes offered in the shape of preferment for office: "If you vote so and so, you shall have so and so;" "If you will vote for my bill giving a monopoly to my moneyed institution, then I will vote for your bill giving a monopoly to your moneyed institution;" "Here is a bill with which we shall have a great deal of trouble, but it must go through. Crowd the lobbies with railroad-men, and manufacturers, and contractors. Make an entertainment for the members, and when they are good and drunk, have them promise to vote that way. Put a thousand dollars or five thousand dollars in the hand of this man who will be prudent in the distribution of it. Put two thousand dollars in the hand of this man who will see that 'it does good.' Be very cautious how you approach men. Now, we want only four more votes, and this matter will be all right. Give a thousand dollars to that very intelligent member from Westchester. Give five hundred dollars to that stupid member from Ulster. Now, we have but two more votes to regulate. Give three hundred dollars to this man, and he will be sick and stay at home; then give three hundred to this man, and he will go to the bedside of his great aunt languishing in her last sickness!" The day for the passage of the bill has come. The Speaker thumps his gavel on the desk, and says: "Senators, are you ready for the question? All in favor of this bill that will vote one or two hundred thousand dollars, or a million dollars, into the hands of unprincipled speculators, will say, Aye." Aye! aye! aye! aye! "All opposed, No." "The ayes have it." The money is wasted, the public treasure is gone, business is embarrassed, and our National and State Legislatures become the sewers into which the filth and the vomit of this nation empty themselves. If you think that I exaggerate the matter, go to any of these places just before a bill is to be passed, and learn that I have not more than half represented the truth in the case, and that this crime of bribery is smiting the whole country; depleting your wealth, O you men of affluence! grinding harder your faces, O you children of the poor! The Democratic party filled its cup of iniquity before it went out of

power at the beginning of the war. The Republican party came along, and as it had more opportunity, by reason of the contracts, filled its cup of iniquity in a shorter time; and there they are, two carcasses lying side by side—the Republican party and the Democratic party—putrefied until they have no more power to rot! The bribery during the war is cursing us yet, and I fear will curse us for a century. You know how it was then. If you give me the contract above all others who apply for it, I'll give you ten per cent. of the profits. If you will only pass these worn-out cavalry horses and certify that they are fit for service, I'll give you five thousand dollars bonus." "Bonus" was the word. So it went down to your sons and fathers in the army—rice that was worm-eaten, crackers that were mouldy, garments that were shoddy, meat that was rank, horses that stumbled in the charge, tents that sifted the rain into the faces of the exhausted. But it was all right, for they got the *bonus*!

The argument in behalf of the stability of republics is stronger in my mind now than it ever was. If our Government had not been thoroughly established, all this bribery and theft and outrage would have swamped it for ever. The amount of money that has been spent in this country in railroads that ought never to have been dug, in loans that ought never to have been allowed, in farcical schemes that ought never to have been countenanced, would have swamped any three monarchies.

We sit to-day, this whole nation, under the shadow of Congressional dishonor. The white marble of our beautiful "Capitol" has become the vast mausoleum of the slain. Both political parties implicated. The stables of Augeas, uncleared after three thousand oxen had stood there for thirty years, was a small job for Hercules, compared with what the Poland Committee found of national dirt in the Congressional halls. On that Union Pacific Railroad, many of your representatives took a through ticket to hell. They paid their fare in eighty per cent. dividends. They sold out political influence, honor, Christian principle, and immortal soul. But be careful, my friends, lest you smite the innocent with the guilty. I think the nation is on the track of some men who have not been proven guilty. We take men to be innocent until they be found villainous. I cannot believe that men, after thirty years of integrity, amid temptations where they might have made millions of dollars, would now sell heaven for a few hundred. A solid column of defamers reaching from Brooklyn to Washington, with uplifted

hand in solemn oath, could not make me believe that some of the men arraigned are iniquitous. But, my friends, we must admit that this nation sits to-day in the shadow of national dishonor and Congressional disgrace. The crimes found in public places are only the index of political abandonment. The blotches on the surface only show the disease within. I do not believe the men inculpated in public places to-day are any worse than thousands of the political hucksters who in your legislatures and your congresses have been bought up by moneyed institutions. Some of the finest houses ever built on Fifth Avenue and Beacon Street, and Ritterhouse Square, have been built out of money paid for votes by railroad companies in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. I was glad when the explosion came. Public men will see that they must beware, since there are thunders on the track, and God had said that "He will wound the hairy scalp of him who goeth on still in his trespasses." You throw up your hands and say: "Why, we can't help it." Can't you? If I thought there was nothing for you and me to do, I would not preach this sermon. There are four things for you to do.

First, stand off from all political office unless your own principles are thoroughly settled. Do not go into the blaze of temptation unless you are fire-proof. Common Council, Water Board, Legislative Hall, and Congressional Assemblage have been the damnation of a great many respectable people. But if you go into political life without your principles thoroughly settled, before you get through with it, you will drink, and you will swear, and you will lie, and you will take bribes. "Ah," you say, "that is not complimentary." Well, I always was clumsy at compliments.

The second thing to do is to take the counsel of Paul, and pray for your rulers; pray for all in authority. Do you know that Shadrach and Abednego did not need the Son of God beside them in the fire so much as your rulers do? We pray every Sunday for the President of the United States, because that is in the liturgy. But have we been entirely cleared of all responsibility for the national corruption, from the fact that we have not prayed as we should for our representatives? When I take up the paper and see this awful defalcation in character, I feel just as I did when I saw the account of the wreck of the *Northfleet* a short time ago in English waters—the *Northfleet*, run down by a strong steamer; for those men were crashed into by

temptations, with fiery furnace and thundering wheel-bucket ; and there was no lifeboat. Pray for your rulers.

In the next place, be faithful at the ballot-box. Do not stand on your dignity and refuse to vote because the rabble go. Put on your old clothes and elbow your way through the unwashed, and the wretched, and the abandoned, and go to the polls. Cast your own vote. Make up your mind in a Christian way as to who are the best men for office ; then vote for the man who loves God and hates rum, and believes in having the Bible read every day as long as the world stands, in all our common schools. Refuse to vote, or vote the wrong way, and you sin against the graves of the men who died for the government, and you sin against your children, who may live to feel the curse of your negligence or your political dishonesty.

But I have a better prescription than all. It is the fourth thing that I have to say in the way of counsel, and that is *evangelize the people*. Gospelize this country, and you will have pure representatives and pure men everywhere. I have no faith in the conversion of an old politician. I never knew one to be converted. I suppose the grace of God can do it, but seldom tries it. I should be no more surprised to see the Pope of Rome and the cardinals come in and sit down on the "anxious seat" in a Methodist meeting house than I would be to see a long row of politicians converted. What work we have to do we are to do with the great masses of the people who cast the votes, and with our children who are coming up to be the sovereigns. That woman who, this afternoon, in the Sabbath-school class, teaches six boys how to be Christians does more for our political future than all the fine essays that were ever written about the Constitution, or the arrangement of the American Senate for holding stock of the Credit Mobilier. I want you to understand there is work for you and me to do. Change men's hearts, and their lives will be right. There were good men this last week in Cooper Institute, New York, trying to have the Christian religion recognized in the constitution of the United States. But, my friends, you get the people converted by the grace of God, and I do not care about the mere technicality of a constitutional recognition. What we want in this country is just four revivals—revivals that come like those in the days of Nettleton, and Jonathan Edwards, and George Whitefield. We want four revivals at once : one starting from the north, rolling south ; one starting from the south, rolling north ; one starting from the east, rolling

west ; one starting from the west, rolling east. And then I want to stand on the spot where the four seas meet, that I may shout : " Hallelujah ! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." " Hal- lelujah ! for the kingdoms of this world are becoming the king- doms of our Lord Jesus Christ." But remember, that if there be forty millions of people in this country, upon you personally rests a forty-millionth of the responsibility. The least thing you can do for the country is to contribute toward it a heart changed by the grace of God, and a life all pure. Remember, that it is not as nations we are at last to be judged, but as indi- viduals, each man answering for himself in that day when monarchies and republics alike shall perish, and the earth itself shall become a heap of ashes, scattered in the blast of the nostrils of the Lord God Almighty.

LIFE AT HOME.

“Let them learn first to show piety at home.”—1 Tim. v. 4.

A CHURCH within a church, a republic within a republic, a world within a world, is spelled by four letters—Home! If things go right there, they go right everywhere; if things go wrong there, they go wrong everywhere. The door-sill of the dwelling-house is the foundation of church and state. A man never gets higher than his own garret or lower than his own cellar. In other words, domestic life overarches and underguides all other life. The highest house of congress is the domestic circle; the rocking-chair in the nursery is higher than a throne. George Washington commanded the forces of the United States, but Mary Washington commanded George. Chrysostom's mother made his pen for him. If a man should start out and run seventy years in a straight line, he could not get out from under the shadow of his own mantelpiece. I therefore talk to you this morning about a matter of infinite and eternal moment when I speak of your home.

As individuals, we are fragments. God makes the races in parts, and then he gradually puts us together. What I lack, you make up; what you lack, I make up; our deficits and surpluses 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 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 Princetown 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 Institute, Dr. M'Cosh gives to Scotland the strong bones of theology, Dr. Guthrie clothes them with a throbbing heart and warm flesh. The diffi-

culty 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 depends 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 we 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. The home organization is most beautifully constructed. Eden has gone; the bowers are all broken down; the animals that Adam stroked with his hand that morning when they came up to get their names have since shot forth tusk, and sting, and growled panther at panther; and mid-air iron beaks plunge, till with closed wing and eyeless sockets the twain come whirling down from under the sun in blood and fire. Eden has gone, but there is just one little fragment left. It floated down on the river Hiddekel out of Paradise. It is the marriage institution. It does not, as at the beginning, take away from him a rib. Now it is an addition of ribs.

This institution of marriage has been defamed in our day. Socialism, and polygamy, and Mormonism, and the most damnable of all things, Freeloivism, have been trying to turn this earth into a Turkish harem or a great Salt Lake City. While the pulpits have been comparatively silent, novels—their cheapness only equalled by their nastiness—are trying to educate; have taken upon themselves to educate this nation in regard to holy marriage, which makes or breaks for time and eternity. Oh, this is not a mere question of residence or wardrobe. It is a question charged with gigantic joy or sorrow—with heaven or hell. Alas, for this new dispensation of George Sand. Alas, for this mingling of the night-shade with the marriage garlands. Alas, for the venom of adder's spit into the tankards. Alas for the white frosts of eternal death that kill the orange blossoms. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is to assert what is right and to assert what is wrong. Attempt has been made to take this in-

stitution which was intended for the happiness and elevation of the race, and make it a mere commercial enterprize—an exchange of houses, and lands, and equipage—a business partnership of two. Stuffed up with the stories of romance and knight-errantry, and unfaithfulness, and feminine angelhood, the two after a while have roused up to find that, instead of the Paradise they dreamed of, they have got nothing but a Van Amburgh's menagerie, filled with tigers and wild cats. Eighty thousand divorces in Paris in one year preceded the worst revolution that France ever saw. It was only the first course in that banquet of hell; and I tell you what you know as well as I do, that wrong notions on the subject of Christian marriage are the cause at this day of more moral outrage before God and man than any other cause.

There are some things that I want to bring before you. I know there are those of you who have had homes set up for a great many years, and notwithstanding the hardships and trials that come to them you would not surrender them; and then there are those here who have just established their home. They have only been in it a few months or a few years. Then there are those who will, after a while, set up for themselves a home, and it is right that I should speak out upon these themes.

My first counsel is to you: *have Jesus in your new home*—if it is a new home; and let Him who was a guest at Bethany be in your household; let the Divine blessing drop upon your every hope, and plan, and expectation. Those young people who begin with God end with heaven. Have on your right hand the engagement ring of the Divine affections. If one of you be a Christian, let that one take the Bible and read a few verses in the evening time, and then kneel down and commend yourself to Him who setteth the solitary in families. I want to tell you that the destroying angel passes by without touching or entering the door-post sprinkled with the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Why is it that in some families they never get along, and in others they always get along well? I have watched such cases and have come to a conclusion. In the first instance, nothing seemed to go pleasantly, and after a while there came devastation, domestic disaster, or estrangement. Why? They started wrong. In the other case, although there were hardships, and trials, and some things that had to be explained, still things went on pleasantly until the very last. Why? They started right.

My second advice to you in your home is, to exercise to the very last possibility of your nature *the law of forbearance*. 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 faith
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something, every day they live,
To pity and perhaps forgive."

I advise, also, that you make your chief pleasure circle around about that home. It is unfortunate when it is otherwise. If the husband spends the most of his nights away from home, of choice and not of necessity, he is not the head of the household;

he is only the cashier. If the wife throw the cares of the household into the servant's lap, and then spend five nights of the week at the opera or theatre, she may clothe her children with satins, and laces, and ribbons that would confound a French milliner, but they are orphans. Oh, it is sad when a child has no one to say its prayers to, because mother has gone off to the evening entertainment. In India they bring children and throw them to the crocodiles, and it seems very cruel; but the jaws of New York and Brooklyn dissipation are swallowing down more little children to-day than all the monsters that ever crawled upon the banks of the Ganges. I have seen the sorrow of a godless mother on the death of a child she neglected. It was not so much grief that she felt from the fact that the child was dead, as the fact that she had neglected it. She said: "If I had only watched over and cared for the child, I know God would not have taken it." The tears came not, it was a dry blistering tempest—a scorching simoom of the desert. When she wrung her hands, it seemed as if she would twist her fingers from their sockets; when she seized her hair, it seemed as if she had in wild terror, grasped a coiling serpent with her right hand. No tears! Comrades of the little one came in and wept over the coffin; neighbors came in, and the moment they saw the still face of the child the shower broke. No tears for her. God gives tears as the summer rain to the parched soul; but in all the universe the driest, the hottest, the most scorching, and consuming thing is a mother's heart if she has neglected her child when once it is dead. God may forgive her, but she will never forgive herself. The memory will sink the eyes deeper into the sockets, and pinch the face, and whiten the hair, and eat up the heart with vultures that will not be satisfied, for ever plunging deeper their iron beaks. Oh, you wanderers from your home, go back to your duty! The brightest flowers in all the earth are those which grow in the garden of a Christian household, clambering over the porch of a Christian home.

I advise you also to *cultivate sympathy of occupation*. Sir James M'Intosh, 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

D D

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 battles. 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 o'clock in the afternoon, and gets a large amount of money for doing nothing. That 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 got himself into habits that upset him, going down in the maelstrom, taking his wife and children with him. There are a good many trains running from earth to destruction. They start all the hours of the day, and all the hours of the night. There are the freight trains—they go very slowly, and very heavily; and there are the accommodation-trains going on towards destruction, and they stop very often, and let a man get out when he wants to. But genteel idleness is an express train: Satan is the stoker, and Death is the engineer; and though one may come but in front of it, and swing the red flag of "danger," or the

lantern of God's Word, it makes just one shot into perdition, coming down the embankment with a shout, and a wail, and a shriek,—crash, crash! There are two classes of people sure of destruction; first, those who have nothing to do; secondly, those who have something to do, but who are too lazy or too proud to do it.

I have one more word of advice to give to those who would have a happy home, and that is: *let love preside in it*. When your behavior in the domestic circle becomes a mere matter of calculation—when the caress you give is merely the result of deliberate study of the position you occupy, happiness lies stark dead on the hearth-stone. When the husband's position as head of the household is maintained by loudness of voice, by strength of arm, by fire of temper, the republic of domestic bliss has become a despotism that neither God nor man will abide. Oh, ye who promised to love each other at the altar, how dare you commit perjury? Let no shadow of suspicion come on your affection. It is easier to kill that flower, than it is to make it live again. The blast from hell that puts out that light leaves you in the blackness of darkness for ever.

Here is a man and wife; they agree in nothing else, but they agree they will have a home. They will have a splendid house, and they think that if they have a house they will have a home. Architects make the plan, and the mechanics execute it; the house to cost one hundred thousand dollars. It is done. The carpets are spread: lights are hoisted; curtains are hung; cards of invitation sent out. The horses in gold-plated harness prance at the gate; guests come in and take their places; the flute sounds; the dancers go up and down; and with one grand whirl, the wealth, and the fashion, and the mirth of the great town wheel amid the pictured walls. Ha! this is happiness. Float it on the smoking viands; sound it in the music; whirl it in the dance; cast it on the snow of sculpture; sound it up the brilliant stairway; flash it in chandeliers. Happiness indeed! Let us build on the centre of the parlor floor a throne to happiness; let all the guests, when come in, bring their flowers, and pearls, and diamonds, and throw them on this pyramid, and let it be a throne; and then let Happiness, the queen, mount the throne, and we will stand around, and all chalices lifted, we will say: "Drink, O queen; live for ever!" But the guests depart, the flutes are breathless, the last clash of the impatient hoofs are heard in the distance, and the twain of the household

come back to see the queen of Happiness on the throne amid the parlor floor. But, alas! as they come back, the flowers have faded, the sweet odors have become the smell of a charnel-house, and instead of the queen of Happiness there sits there the gaunt form of Anguish, with bitter lip, and sunken eye, and ashes in her hair. The romp of the dancers who have left seems crumbling yet, like jarring thunders that quake the floor and rattle the glasses of the feast rim to rim. The spilt wine on the floor turns into blood. The wreaths of plush have become wriggling reptiles. Terrors catch tangled in the canopy that overhangs the couch. A strong gust of wind comes through the hall, and the drawing-room, and the bed-chamber, in which all the lights go out. And from the lips of the wine-beakers come the words: "Happiness is not in me!" And the arches respond; "It is not in me!" And the silenced instruments of music, thrummed on by invisible fingers, answer: "Happiness is not in me!" And the frozen lips of anguish break open, and seated on the throne of wilted flowers, she strikes her bony hands together, and groans: "It is not in me!"

That very night, a clerk with a salary of a thousand dollars a year—only one thousand—goes to his home, set up three months ago, just after the marriage-day. Love meets him at the door; love sits with him at the table; love talks over the work of the day; love takes down the Bible, and reads of Him who came our souls to save; and they kneel, and while they are kneeling—right in that plain room, on that plain carpet—the angels of God build a throne, not out of flowers that perish and fade away, but out of garlands of heaven, wreath on top of wreath, amaranth on amaranth, until the throne is done. Then the harps of God sounded, and suddenly there appeared one who mounted the throne with eye so bright, and brow so fair, that the twain knew it was Christian love. And they knelt at the foot of the throne, and putting one hand on each head, she blessed them and said: "Happiness is with me!" And that throne of celestial bloom withered not with the passing years; and the queen left not the throne till one day the married pair felt stricken in years—felt themselves called away, and knew not which way to go, and the queen bounded from the throne, and said: "Follow me: and I will show you the way up to the realm of everlasting love." And so they went up to sing songs of love and walk on pavements of love, and to live together in mansions of love, and to rejoice for ever in the truth, that God is love.

THE GARDEN OF GARDENS.

"I am come into my garden."—*Solomon's Song*, v. 1.

CHRIST said this to the Church, using a figure that seems very fresh and suggestive this morning, now as the blossoms begin to start, and the parks are alive with birds migrating northward, and our yards are being planted and trimmed. If you have been in the outskirts of the city this morning, as I have been, now that the veil of the darkness and the storm is taken away, you have seen Christ walking amid the hyacinths, and under the tree branches, and in the gardens, and you have heard His voice more distinctly than you hear my own, saying: "I am come into My garden."

The world has had a great many beautiful gardens. Charlemagne added to the glory of his reign by decreeing that they be established all through the realm—decreeing even the names of the flowers to be planted there. Henry IV., at Montpelier, established gardens of bewitching beauty and luxuriance, gathering into them Alpine, Pyrenean, and French plants. One of the sweetest spots on earth was the garden of Shenstone, the poet. His writings have made but little impression on the world; but his garden, "the Leasowes," will be immortal. To the natural advantage of that place was brought the perfection of art. Arbor, and terrace, and slope, and rustic temple, and reservoir, and urn, and fountain, here had their crowning. Oak, and yew, and hazel put forth their richest foliage. There was no life more diligent, no soul more ingenious than that of Shenstone, and all that diligence and genius were brought to the adornment of that one treasured spot. He gave three hundred pounds for it; he sold it for seventeen thousand. And yet, I am to tell you this morning of a richer garden than any I have mentioned. It is the garden spoken of in my text, the garden of the Church, which belongs to Christ, for my text says so. He bought it, He planted it, He owns it, and He shall have it. Walter Scott, in his outlay at Abbotsford, ruined his fortune; and now, in the crimson flowers of those gardens, you can almost think or imagine that you see the blood of that old man's broken heart. The payment of the last one hundred thousand pounds sacrificed

him. But I have to tell you that Christ's life and Christ's death were the outlay of this beautiful garden of the Church of which my text speaks. Oh, how many sighs, and tears, and pangs, and agonies! Tell me, ye women who saw him hang! Tell me, ye executioners who lifted Him and let Him down! Tell me, thou sun that didst hide, ye rocks that fell! "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians v. 25). If then the garden of the Church belongs to Christ, certainly he has a right to walk in it. Come then, O blessed Jesus, this morning, walk up and down these aisles, and pluck what Thou wilt of sweetness for Thyself.

The Church, in my text, is appropriately compared to a garden, because it is a place of choice flowers, of select fruits, and of thorough irrigation.

That would be a strange garden in which there were no flowers. If nowhere else, they would be along the borders, or at the gateway. The homeliest taste will dictate something, if it be the old-fashioned hollyhock, or dahlia, or daffodil, or corcopsis; but if there be larger means, then you will find the Mexican cactus and dark-veined arbutelion, and blazing azalea, and clustering oleander. Well, now, Christ comes to His garden, and He plants there some of the brightest spirits that ever flowered upon the world. Some of them are violets, unobtrusive, but sweet as heaven. You have to search and find them. You do not see them very often, perhaps, but you find where they have been by the brightening face of the invalid, and the sprig of geranium on the stand, and the new window-curtains keeping out the glare of the sunlight. They are, perhaps, more like the ranunculus, creeping sweetly along amid the thorns and briars of life, giving kiss for sting, and many a man who has had in his way some great black rock of trouble, has found that they have covered it all over with flowery jessamine running in and out amid the crevices. These Christians in Christ's garden are not like the sunflower, gaudy in the light; but whenever darkness hovers over a soul that needs to be comforted, there they stand, night-blooming cereuses. But in Christ's garden there are plants that may be better compared to the Mexican cactus—thorns without, loveliness within—men with sharp points of character. They wound almost everyone that touches them. They are hard to handle. Men pronounce them nothing but thorns, but Christ loves them, notwithstanding all their sharpnesses. Many a man has had very hard ground to culture, and it has only been through severe toil he has raised even the smallest crop of grace.

A very harsh minister was talking with a very placid elder, and the placid elder said to the harsh minister: "Doctor, I do wish you would control your temper." "Ah," said the minister to the elder, "I control more temper in five minutes than you do in five years." It is harder for some men to do right than for others to do right. The grace that would elevate you to the seventh heaven might not keep your brother from knocking a man down. I had a friend who came to me and said: "I dare not join the Church." I said: "Why?" "Oh," he said; "I have such a violent temper. Yesterday morning, I was crossing very early at the Jersey city ferry, and I saw a milkman pour a large amount of water into the milk can, and I said to him: 'I think that will do,' and he insulted me, and I knocked him down. Do you think I ought to join the Church?" Nevertheless, that very same man, who was so harsh in his behavior, loved Christ, and could not speak of sacred things without tears of emotion and affection. Thorns without, but sweetness within—the best specimen of Mexican cactus I ever saw.

There are others planted in Christ's garden, who are always ardent, always radiant, always impressive—more like the roses of deep hue that we occasionally find called "giants of battle"—the Martin Luthers, St. Pauls, Chrysostoms, Wickliffs, Latimers, and Samuel Rutherfords. What in other men is a spark, in them is conflagration. When they sweat, they sweat great drops of blood. When they pray, their prayer takes fire. When they preach, it is a Pentecost. When they fight, it is a Thermopylæ. When they die, it is a martyrdom. You find a great many roses in the gardens, but only a few "giants of battle." Men say: "Why don't you have more of them in the Church?" I say: "Why don't you have in the world more Napoleons, and Humboldts, and Wellingtons?" God gives to some ten talents, to another one.

In this garden of the Church, which Christ has planted, I also find the *snowdrops*, beautiful but cold looking, seemingly another phase of the winter. I mean those Christians who are precise in their tastes, unimpassioned, pure as snowdrops and as cold. They never shed any tears, they never get excited, they never say anything rashly, they never do anything precipitately. Their pulses never flutter, their nerves never twitch, their indignation never boils over. They live longer than most people; but their life is in a minor key. They never run up to "C" above the staff. In their music of life they have no staccato passages. Christ planted them in the Church, and they must be of some service, or they would not be there; snowdrops, always snowdrops.

But I have not told you of the most beautiful flower in all this garden spoken of in the text. If you see a "century," plant your emotions are started. You say: "Why, this flower has been a hundred years gathering up for one bloom, and it will be a hundred years more before other petals will come out." But I have to tell you of a plant that was gathering up from all eternity, and that nineteen hundred years ago put forth its bloom never to wither. It is the passion-plant of the cross! Prophets foretold it. Bethlehem shepherds looked upon it in the bud; the rocks shook at its bursting; and the dead got up in their winding-sheets to see its full bloom. It is a crimson flower—blood at the roots, blood on the branches, blood on all the leaves. Its perfume is to fill all the nations. Its breath is heaven. Come, oh winds, from the north, and winds from the south, and winds from the east, and winds from the west, and bear to all the earth the sweet-smelling savor of Christ my Lord.

"His worth, if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole earth would love Him too."

Again: the Church may be appropriately compared to a garden because it is a *place of select fruits*. That would be a strange garden which had in it no berries, no plums, or peaches, or apricots. The coarser fruits are planted in the orchard, or they are set out on the sunny hillside; but the choicest fruits are kept in the garden. So in the world outside the Church, Christ has planted a great many beautiful things—patience, charity, generosity, integrity; but He intends the choicest fruits to be in the garden, and if they are not there, then shame on the Church. Religion is not a mere flowering sentimentality. It is a practical, life-giving, healthful fruit—not posies, but apples. "Oh," says somebody, "I don't see what your garden of the Church has yielded." Where did your asylums come from? and your hospitals? and your institutions of mercy? Christ planted every one of them; He planted them in His garden. When Christ gave sight to Bartimeus, He laid the corner-stone of every blind asylum that has ever been built. When Christ soothed the demoniac of Galilee, He laid the corner-stone of every lunatic asylum that has ever been established. When Christ said to the sick man: "Take up thy bed and walk," He laid the corner-stone of every hospital the world has ever seen. When Christ said: "I was in prison, and ye visited Me," He laid the corner-stone of every prison-reform association that has ever been formed. The Church of Christ is a glorious garden,

and it is full of fruit. I know there is some poor fruit in it. I know there are some weeds that ought to be thrown over the fence. I know there are some crab-apple trees that ought to be cut down. I know there are some wild grapes that ought to be uprooted; but are you going to destroy the whole garden because of a little gnarled fruit? You will find worm-eaten leaves in Fontainebleau, and insects that sting in the fairy groves of the Champs Elysées. You do not tear down and destroy the whole garden because there a few specimens of gnarled fruit. I admit there are men and women in the Church who ought not to be there; but let us be just as frank, and admit the fact that there are hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands of glorious Christian men and women—holy, blessed, useful, consecrated, and triumphant. There is no grander collection in all the earth than the collection of Christians. There are Christian men in this house, whose religion is not a matter of psalm-singing and church-going. To-morrow morning that religion will keep them just as consistent and consecrated on “exchange” as it ever kept them at the Communion-table. There are women here this morning of a higher type of character than Mary of Bethany. They not only sit at the feet of Christ, but they go out into the kitchen to help Martha in her work, that she may sit there too. There is a woman who has a drunken husband, who has exhibited more faith, and patience, and courage, than Hugh Latimer in the fire. He was consumed in twenty minutes. Hers has been a twenty years’ martyrdom. Yonder is a man who has been fifteen years on his back, unable even to feed himself, yet calm and peaceful as though he lay on one of the green banks of heaven, watching the oarsmen dip their paddles in the crystal river! Why, it seems to me this moment, as if St. Paul threw to us a pomologist’s catalogue of the fruits growing in this great garden of Christ—love, joy, peace, patience, charity, brotherly kindness, gentleness, mercy—glorious fruit, enough to fill all the baskets of earth and heaven.

I have not told you of the better tree in this garden, and of the better fruit. It was planted just outside Jerusalem a good while ago. When that tree was planted, it was so split, and bruised, and barked, men said nothing would ever grow upon it; but no sooner had that tree been planted, than it budded, and blossomed, and fruited, and the soldiers’ spears were only the clubs that struck down that fruit, and it fell into the lap of the nations, and men began to pick it up and eat it, and they found in it an antidote to all thirst, to all poison, to all sin, to all

death—the smallest cluster larger than the famous one of Eshcol, which two men carried on a staff between them. If the one apple in Eden killed the race, this one cluster of mercy shall restore it.

Again : the Church in my text is appropriately called a garden, because *it is thoroughly irrigated*. No garden could prosper long without plenty of water. I have seen a garden in the midst of a desert, yet blooming and luxuriant. All around was dearth and barrenness ; but there were pipes, aqueducts reaching from this garden up to the mountains, and through those aqueducts the water came streaming down and tossing up into beautiful fountains, until every root, and leaf and flower were saturated. That is like the Church. The Church is a garden in the midst of a great desert of sin and suffering ; but it is well irrigated, for “our eyes are unto the hills, from whence cometh our help.” From the mountains of God’s strength there flow down rivers of gladness. There is a river, the stream whereof shall make glad the city of our God. Preaching the Gospel is one of these aqueducts. The Bible is another. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are aqueducts. Water to slake the thirst, water to restore the faint, water to wash the unclean, water tossed high up in the light of the sun of righteousness, showing us the rainbow around the throne. Oh ! was there ever a garden so thoroughly irrigated ? You know that the beauty of Versailles and Chatsworth depends very much upon the great supply of water. I came to the latter place (Chatsworth) one day when strangers are not to be admitted ; but by an inducement, which always seemed as applicable to an Englishman as an American, I got in, and then the gardener went far up above the stairs of stone, and turned on the water. I saw it gleaming on the dry pavement, coming down from step to step until it came so near I could hear the musical rush, and all over the high, broad stairs it came foaming, flashing, roaring down, until sunlight and wave in gleesome wrestle tumbled at my feet. So it is with the Church of God. Everything comes from above ; pardon from above, joy from above, adoption from above, sanctification from above. Oh ! that now God would turn on the waters of salvation, that they might flow down through this heritage, and that to-day we might find this very place to be “Elim, with twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm-trees.”

Hark ! I hear the latch of the garden gate, and I look to see who is coming. I hear the voice of Christ : “I am come into my garden.” I say : “Come in, O Jesus, we have been waiting for Thee ; walk all through the paths. Look at the flowers ;

look at the fruit; pluck that which Thou wilt for Thyself." Jesus comes into the garden, and up to that old man, and touches him, and says: "Almost home, father; not many more aches for thee; I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee; take courage a little longer, and I will steady thy tottering steps, and I will soothe thy troubles and give thee rest; courage, old man." Then Christ goes up another garden-path, and He comes to a soul in trouble, and says: "Peace! all is well. I have seen thy tears; I have heard thy prayer. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He will preserve thy soul. Courage, O troubled spirit." Then I see Jesus going up another garden-path, and I see great excitement among the leaves, and I hasten up that garden-path to see what Jesus is doing there, and lo! He is breaking off flowers, sharp and clean, from the stem, and I say: "Stop, Jesus, don't kill those beautiful flowers." He turns to me and says: "I have come into My garden to gather lilies, and I mean to take these up to a higher terrace, and for the garden around My palace, and there I will plant them, and in better soil, and in better air; they shall put forth brighter leaves and sweeter redolence, and no frost shall touch them for ever." And I looked up into His face, and said: "Well, it is His garden, and He has a right to do what He will with it. Thy will be done!"—the hardest prayer a man ever made.

I notice that the fine gardens sometimes have high fences around them, and I cannot get in. It is so with the king's garden. The only glimpse you ever get of such a garden is when the king rides out in his splendid carriage. It is not so with this garden—this King's garden. I throw wide open the gate, and tell you all to come in. No monopoly in religion. Whosoever will, may. Choose now between a desert and a garden. Many of you have tried the garden of this world's delight. You have found it has been a chagrin. So it was with Theodore Hook. He made all the world laugh. He makes us laugh now when we read his poems; but, he could not make his own heart laugh. While in the midst of his festivities, he confronted a looking-glass, and he saw himself, and said: "There, that is true. I look just as I am, done up in body, mind, and purse." So it was with Shenstone, of whose garden I told you at the beginning of my sermon. He sat down amid those bowers, and said: "I have lost my road to happiness. I am angry, and envious, and frantic, and despise everything around me, just as it becomes a madman to do." Oh, ye weary souls, come into

Christ's garden to-day, and pluck a little "heart's-ease." Christ is the only rest and the only pardon for a perturbed spirit. Do you not think your chance has almost come? You men and women who have been waiting year after year for some good opportunity in which to accept Christ, but have postponed it five, ten, twenty, thirty years, do you not feel as if now your hour of deliverance, and pardon, and salvation, had come? Oh, man, what grudge hast thou against thy poor soul, that thou wilt not let it be saved? I feel as if salvation must come this morning in some of your hearts.

Some years ago, a vessel struck on the rocks. They had only one life-boat. In that life-boat the passengers and crew were getting ashore. The vessel had foundered, and was sinking deeper and deeper, and that one boat could not take the passengers very swiftly. A little girl stood on the deck, waiting for her turn to get into the boat. The boat came and went, came and went, but her turn did not seem to come. After awhile she could wait no longer, and she leaped on the taffrail, and then sprang into the sea, crying to the boatman: "Save me next! Save me next!" Oh, how many have gone ashore into God's mercy, and yet you are clinging to the wreck of sin. Others have accepted the pardon of Christ, but you are in peril. Why not, this morning, make a rush for your immortal rescue, crying until Jesus shall hear you, and heaven and earth ring with the cry: "Save me next! Save me next!" Now is the day of salvation. Now! Now!

This Sabbath is the last for some of you. It is about to sail away for ever. Her bell tolls. The planks thunder back in the gangway. She shoves off. She floats out towards the great ocean of eternity. Wave farewell to your last chance for heaven. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. Invited to revel in a garden, you die in a desert. May God Almighty, before it is too late, break that infatuation.

THE END,

8

