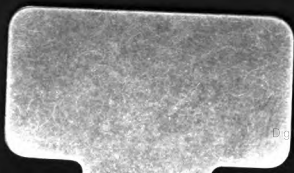
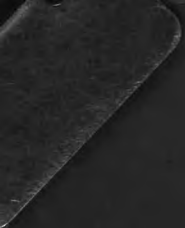


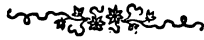


TALMAGE'S  
SERMONS

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SWIMMING FOR LIFE.







*Swimming for Life.*

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FOURTH SERIES.

TALMAGE'S SERMONS.



# SWIMMING FOR LIFE:

BEING A

FOURTH SERIES OF SERMONS,

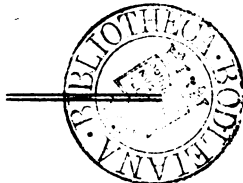
BY THE

*Rev. T. DE WITT TALMAGE:*

AUTHOR OF,

*"Crumbs Swept Up," "The Abominations of  
Modern Society," "Around the Tea-Table,"  
"Sports that Kill," "Daily Thoughts and  
Readings," &c.*

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## P R E F A C E .

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**T**HE demand for the three volumes of my Sermons already issued, has exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and testimony has been fully borne to the great Spiritual good accomplished by their being so freely read by all classes of society. This result is very gratifying and amply repays me for my labour, as I derive no pecuniary benefit from their sale.

At the urgent solicitation of friends, I now send forth another volume, "*Swimming for Life*," trusting that through the influence of its pages many souls now struggling in the deep waters of sin, may be enabled to land safely on the heavenly shore of life's Jordan, where the shining ones ever await them with a glorious welcome.



## TALMAGE'S SERMONS.



### SWIMMING FOR LIFE.

*"He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim."*—  
ISAIAH xxv. 11.

**T**HE fisherman seeks out unfrequented nooks. You stand all day on the bank of a wide river in the broiling sun, and fling out your line and catch nothing, while the expert angler breaks through the jungle, and goes by the shadow of the solitary rock, and in a place where no fisherman has been for ten years throws out his line, and comes home at night, his face shining and his basket full. I do not know why we ministers of the Gospel need always be fishing in the same stream, and preaching from the same texts that other people preach from. I cannot understand the policy of the minister who, in Blackfriars, London, England, every week for thirty years preached from the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is an exhilaration to me when I can come across a theme which I feel has not yet been treated, and my text is one of that kind. There are *paths in God's word* that are well beaten by Christian feet. When men want to quote Scripture, they quote the old passages that everybody has heard. When they want a chapter read, they read a chapter that all the

other people have been reading, so that the Church to-day is ignorant of three fourths of the Bible. You go into the Louvre, at Paris. You confine yourself to one corridor of that opulent gallery of paintings. As you come out your friend says to you : "Did you see that Rembrandt?" "No." "Did you see that Reubens?" "No." "Did you see that Titian?" "No." "Did you see that Raphael?" "No." "Well," says your friend, "then you didn't see the Louvre." Now, friends, I think we are too much apt to confine ourselves to one of the great corridors of this gallery of Scripture truth, and so much so that there are not three persons in the house to-night who have ever noticed the all-suggestive and powerful picture in the words of my text.

This text represents God as a strong swimmer, striking out to push down iniquity and to save the souls of men. "He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim." The figure is bold and many-sided. Most of you know how to swim. Some of you learned it in the city school, where this art is taught; some of you, in boyhood, in the river near your father's house; some of you since you came to manhood or womanhood, while summering on the beach of the sea. You step down in the wave, you throw your head back, you bring your elbows to the chest, you put the palms of your hands downward and the soles of your feet outward, and you push through the water as though you had been born aquatic. It is a grand thing to know how to swim, not only for yourself, but because you will after awhile, perhaps, have to help others. I do not know anything more stirring or sublime than to see some man like Norman McKenzie leaping from the ship *Madras* into the sea to save Charles Turner, who had dropped from the royal yard while trying to loosen the sail, bringing him back to the deck amid the huzzas of the passengers and the crew. If a man has not enthusiasm enough to cheer in such circumstances he deserves himself to drop into the sea and have no one help him. The Royal Humane Society of England was established in 1774, its object to applaud and reward those who should pluck up life from the

deep. Any one who has performed such a deed of daring has all the particulars of that bravery recorded in a public record, and on his breast a medal done in blue and gold, and bronze; anchor, and monogram, and inscription telling to future generations the bravery of the man or woman who saved a soul from drowning. But, my friends, if it is such a worthy thing to save a body from the deep, I ask you if it is not a worthier thing to save an immortal soul? And you shall see to-night, the Son of God step forth for this achievement. "He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim."

In order to understand the full force of this figure, you need to realize, first of all, that our race is in a sinking condition. You sometimes hear people talking of what they consider the most beautiful words in our language. One man says it is "home," another man says it is the word "mother," another says it is the word "Jesus;" but I will tell you the bitterest word in all our language, the word most angry and baleful, the word saturated with the most trouble, the word that accounts for all the loathsomeness and the pang, and the outrage, and the harrowing; and that word is "Sin." You spell it with three letters, and yet those three letters describe the circumference and pierce the diameter of everything bad on earth and in perdition. Sin! it is a *sibilant word*. You cannot pronounce it without giving the hiss of the flame or the hiss of the serpent. Sin! And then if you add three letters to that word it describes every person in this house, and every one in the world—sinner. That is you and me. We have outraged the law of God; not occasionally, or now and then, but perpetually. The Bible declares it. Hark! it thunders, two claps; "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." What the Bible says our own conscience affirms. After Judge Morgan had sentenced Lady Jane Grey to death, his conscience troubled him so much for the deed, that he became insane, and all through his insanity he kept saying: "Take her away from me! Lady Jane Grey. Take her away!



Lady Jane Grey." It was the voice of his conscience. And no man ever does anything wrong, however great or small, but his conscience brings that matter before him, and at every step of his misbehaviour it says : "Wrong, wrong." Sin is a leprosy, sin is a paralysis, sin is a consumption, sin is pollution, sin is death. Give it a fair chance and it will swamp you, body, mind and soul for ever. In this world it only gives a faint intimation of its virulence ; but after for a thousand quadrillion of years it has ransacked your soul—what then ? You see a patient in the first stages of typhoid fever. The cheek is somewhat flushed, the hands somewhat hot, preceded by a slight chill. "Why," you say, "typhoid fever does not seem to be much of a disease." But wait until the patient has been six weeks under it, and all his energies have been wrung out, and he is too weak to lift his little finger, and his intellect is gone, then you see the full havoc of the disease. Now sin in this world is an ailment which is only in its very first stages ; but after the grave, it is rending, blasting, all-devouring, all-consuming, eternal typhoid. Oh, if we could see our unpardoned sins as God sees them, our teeth would chatter, and our knees would knock together, and our respiration would be choked, and our heart would break. If your sins are unforgiven, they are bearing down on you, and you are sinking—sinking away from happiness, sinking away from God, sinking away from everything that is good and blessed, *sinking for ever*.

Then what do we want ? A swimmer ! A strong swimmer ! A swift swimmer ! And, blessed be God, in my text we have Him announced. "He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim." You have noticed that when a swimmer goes out to rescue any one, he puts off his heavy apparel. He must not have any such impediment about him if he is going to do this great deed. And when Christ stepped forth to save us, He shook off the sandals of heaven, and His feet were free : and He laid aside the robe of eternal royalty, and His arms were free ; and then He stepped down into the wave of our transgression, and it came up over His wounded feet,

and it came up above the spear stab in His side,—aye, it dashed to the lacerated temple, the high-water mark of His anguish. Then, rising above the flood, “He stretched forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim.”

If you have ever watched a swimmer, you notice that his whole body is brought into play. The arms are flexed, the hands drive the water back, the knees are active, the head is tossed back to escape strangulation, the whole body is in propulsion. And when Christ sprang out into the deep to save us, He threw His entire nature in it—all His Godhead, His omniscience, His goodness, His love, His omnipotence—head, heart, eyes, hands, feet. We were so far out on the sea, and so deep down in the waves, and so far out from the shore, that nothing short of an entire God could save us. Christ leaped out for our rescue, saying: “Lo! I come to do Thy will,” and all the surges of human and Satanic hate beat against Him, and those who watched Him from the gates of heaven feared He would go down under the wave, and instead of saving others would Himself perish; but putting His breast to the foam, and shaking the surf from His locks, He came on, on, until He is to-night within the reach of every one here. Eye omniscient, heart infinite, arm omnipotent. Mighty to save, even unto the uttermost. Oh, it was not half a God that trampled down bellowing Gennesaret. It was not a quarter of a God that mastered the demons of Gadara. It was not two-thirds of a God that lifted up Lazarus into the arms of his over-joyed sisters. It was not a fragment of a God who offered pardon and peace to all the race. No. This mighty swimmer threw His grandeur, His glory, His might, His wisdom, His omnipotence, and His eternity into this one act. It took *both hands of God* to save us,—both feet. How do I prove it? On the cross, were not both hands nailed? On the cross, were not both feet nailed? His entire nature involved in our redemption!

If you have lived much by the water, you notice also that if any one is going out to rescue the drowning, he must be independent, self-reliant, able to go alone. There may be a

time when he must spring out to save one, and he cannot get a life-boat, and if he goes out and he has not strength enough to bear himself up, and bear another up, he will sink, and instead of dragging one corpse out of the torrent you will have two to drag out. When Christ sprang out into the sea to deliver us, He had no life-buoy. His Father did not help Him. Alone in the wine-press. Alone in the pang. Alone in the darkness. Alone in the mountain. Alone in the sea. O, if He saves us, He shall have all the credit, for "there was none to help." No oar. No wing. No ladder. When Nathaniel Lyon fell in the battle charge in front of his troops, he had a whole army to cheer him; when Marshal Ney sprang into the contest, and plunged in his spurs till the horse's flanks spurted blood, all France applauded him. But Jesus alone! "Of the people there was none to help." All forsook Him and fled." O, it was not a flotilla that sailed down and saved us. It was not a cluster of gondolas that came over the wave. It was one Person, independent and alone, "spreading out His hands among us as a swimmer spreadeth forth his hands to swim."

Behold then to-night the spectacle of a drowning soul and Christ the swimmer. I believe it was in 1848, when there were six English soldiers of the Fifth Fusiliers who were hanging to the bottom of a capsized boat—a boat that had been upset by a squall three miles from shore. It was in the night; but one man swam mightily for the beach, guided by the dark mountains that lifted their top through the night. He came to the beach. He found a shoreman who consented to go with him and save the other men, and they put out. It was some time before they could find the place where the men were; but after awhile they heard their cry: "Help! help!" and they bore down to them, and they saved them, and brought them to shore. O, that to-night our cry might be lifted long, loud, and shrill, till Christ the swimmer shall come and take us lest we *drop a thousand fathoms down*; for a man who will not pray will perish.

If you have been much by the water, you know very well that when one is in peril help must come very quickly or it

will be of no use. One minute may decide everything. Immediate help the man wants or no help at all. Now, that is just the kind of a relief the sinner wants. The case is urgent, imminent, instantaneous. See that soul sinking. Son of God, lay hold of him! It is his last hour of mercy. Be quick! be quick! O, I wish you all understood how urgent this Gospel is. There was a man in the navy at sea who had been severely whipped for bad behaviour, and he was maddened by it, and he leaped into the sea, and no sooner had he leaped into the sea than, quick as lightning, an albatross swooped upon him. The drowning man, brought to his senses, seized hold of the albatross and held on. The fluttering of the bird kept him on the wave until relief could come. Would that to-night the dove of God's convicting, converting, and saving Spirit might flash from the throne upon your soul, and that you, taking hold of its potent wing, might live and live for ever.

I want to persuade you to-night to lay hold of this strong Swimmer. "No," you say, "it is always ruin." There is not a river or a lake but has a calamity resultant from the fact that when a strong swimmer went out to save a sinking man, the drowning man clutched him, threw his arms around him, pinioned his arms, and they both went down together. When you are saving a man in the water you do not want to come up by his face; you want to come up by his back. You do not want him to take hold of you while you take hold of him. But, blessed be God, Jesus Christ is so strong a Swimmer, He comes, not to our back, but to our face, and He asks us to throw around Him the arms of our love, and then promises to take us to the beach, and He will do it. Do not trust that plank of good works. Do not trust that shivered spar of your own righteousness. Christ only can give you transportation. Turn your face upon Him to-night as the dying martyr did in olden days when he cried out: "None but Christ! None but Christ!" Jesus has taken millions to the land, and He is willing to take you there. O, what hardness to shove Him back when He has been swimming all the way from the throne of God to where you are to-night, and is

ready to swim all the way back again, taking your redeemed spirit. I have sometimes thought what a spectacle the ocean bed will present when in the last day the water is all drawn off. It will be a line of wrecks from beach to beach. There is where the harpooners went down. There is where the line of battle ships went down. There is where the merchantmen went down. There is where the steamers went down ;—a long line of wrecks from beach to beach. *What a spectacle* in the last day when the water is drawn off! But O, how much more solemn if we had an eye to see the spiritual wrecks and places where they foundered. You would find thousands along these streets. Coming here, to-night, if you had such superb eyesight, standing at the door while yet this room was empty, you might then have seen thousands of such marks of wreck scattered all through these pews, the places where on other Sabbaths immortal men were invited to heaven and refused it. Christ came down in their awful catastrophe, putting out for their soul, “spreading forth His hands as a swimmer spreadeth forth his hands to swim ;” but they thrust Him in the sore heart, and they smote His fair cheek, and they perished ; the storm and the darkness swallowing them up. O, are there any here now who feel that they are sinking ? Do they feel the need of a Divine arm ? Christ is ready now to step out for their present, and their eternal salvation. I ask you to lay hold of this Christ, and lay hold of Him now. You will sink without Him. Lay hold of Him. O that God this moment might break the madness of those who will not have the mercy and the favour of that Christ who is the only Saviour the world ever has had or ever will have. Say, do you want to die ? Do you covet ruin ? Do you despise heaven ? Have you lifted the poniard with which to stab the life of your immortal soul ? O, sinner, thou knowest not where thou art. On the verge of what woe. On the waves of what sea. Sinking. Sinking. Sinking. From horizon to horizon not one sail in sight. Only one strong swimmer, with head flung back and arms outspread as “he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim.” O that God would lead you into the peace and

hope of the Gospel. You will never have so fair a chance as this very one in which to accept of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hear a great many in the audience saying: "Well, I would like to be a Christian to-night. I am going to work to become a Christian." My brother, you being wrong. When a man is drowning, and a stronger swimmer comes out to help him, he says to the man: "Now be quiet. Put your arm on my arm or on my shoulder, but don't struggle, don't try to help yourself, and I'll take you ashore. The more you struggle and the more you try to help yourself, the more you impede me. Now be quiet and I'll take you ashore. When Christ, the strong swimmer, comes out to save a soul, the sinner says: "That's right. I am glad to see Jesus, and I am going to help Him. I am going to do this, that, and the other thing that will help Him; I am going to pray more, and that will help Him; I am going to weep extravagantly over my sins, and that will help Him." No, my brother, it will not. Stop your doing. Christ will do all or none. *You cannot lift an ounce*, you cannot move an inch, in this matter of your redemption. This is the difficulty which keeps thousands of souls out of the kingdom of heaven. It is because they cannot consent to let Jesus Christ begin and complete the work of their redemption. "Why," you say, "then is there nothing for me to do?" Only one thing have you to do, and that is to lay hold of Christ, and let Him achieve your salvation and achieve it all. I do not know whether I make the matter plain or not. I simply want to show you that a man cannot save himself, but that the Almighty Son of God can do it, and will do it, if you ask Him. O, fling your two arms, the arms of your trust and love, around this omnipotent swimmer of the cross.

My sermon is about ended, and the stenographer has taken it down with his pencil. O that the Holy Spirit might write it on all your hearts. How many will be saved through this particular service? How many will be lost? These are the two questions with which I came upon this platform. After the benediction there will be two mighty currents,—one current bearing mightily towards heaven, the other bearing

mightily towards hell ; and in one or the other of these currents you will be caught. In the one you will be carried out to where it empties into the ocean whose waves are fire, and whose ships are fire, and whose beach is fire ; or you will be carried down in a current which will empty into a sea whose surges beat eternal music against the throne of God. O, it is a solemn minute. Have you ever seen them trying to resuscitate a half-drowned person ? You remember the manipulation. You remember they tried every possible art. You remember how they knelt down and put their lips to the lips of the insensible patient and breathed and breathed, trying to get the lungs to work, and at last, when he just gave one feeble sigh, they shouted all around the room : "He lives ! he lives !" And now, to-night, your drowning soul, O sinner, I hope is by the grace of Christ to be resuscitated. We have gathered around you. Would that this might be the hour when you begin to live. The Lord Jesus Christ steps down, He gets on His knee, He puts His lip to your lip, and would breathe pardon, and life, and heaven into your immortal soul. God grant that this hour there may be thousands of souls resuscitated from this awful spiritual drowning. I stand on the deck of the old Gospel ship amid a crowd of passengers, and yet my soul is wrung with sorrow because I see some of you overboard and I cannot help you. May the living Christ this hour put out for your rescue, "spreading forth His hands in the midst of you, as a swimmer spreadeth forth his hands to swim." O that salvation might come to your house this night. You want religion yourselves, and your families need the same religion. Another opportunity for heaven is closing, closing, closing.

"Ye sinners, seek His grace,  
His wrath ye cannot bear ;  
Fly to the shelter of His love,  
And find salvation there."



## THE RUSHING OF TEARS.

*"And they called the name of that place Bochim."*—

JUDGES ii. 5.

JESUS preached at least one sermon to the ancient Israelites in the wilderness. He appeared not with the look that Leonardo de Vinci ascribes to Him in the Milan fresco, nor that which Tiberius gives Him in the emerald intaglio, nor as Paul de la Roche and Albrecht Durer sketch Him, but in the shape of an angel. There was a great audience in the open air. The surrounding galleries of the mountains were filled with the people. Christ, in the form of an angel, preaches to these Israelites about how He had brought them out from Egypt into Canaan; and while he is preaching they can hear again the snapping of their chains, and see the crystallization of the Red Sea into towers of triumph for them, and into a sarcophagus of death for their pursuers. And again they saw quails all round about when they wanted meat; and again the rock seems to break into water as they wanted drink; and again they see the cloudy pillar that beckoned them when they wanted a supernatural commander-in-chief; and they think of how Canaan put clusters in their lap and song in their mouth, and the trees dropped with honey, and the full-uddered cattle, coming up from the pastures, yielding delicious supply. Oh, what a change between the dusty brick-kilns of Egypt, where they had toiled under a task-master, and this land of Canaan, full of music, and mirth, and gardens, and sunshine. But Jesus, in the form of an angel, goes on, and in the second head of His discourse He tells them how they had wickedly made an alliance with the Canaanites, and as He displays the height and depth of their ingratitude, they hang their heads, and one deep sigh after another is heard. Here, an aged man, overwhelmed with memories, groans aloud; and yonder, a young man responds to it in like exclamation. Soon the tears start in all the eyes of that great audience—tears of sorrow, tears of contrition, tears of peril—and the whole congregation breaks



down into sobbing and wailing, and wring their hands, and make outcry that pierces the heavens. Alas, what a spectacle! Hundreds of thousands of people in lamentation. "And they called the name of that place Bochim," or the place of weeping.

If this hour we could realize God's goodness toward us, and our conduct toward Him, a great grief would seize upon this audience, and on these aisles repentance would meet remorse, and remorse would meet ingratitude, and memories of the past would jostle the fears of the future, and the silence of this occasion would be broken by sobs, and groans, and shrieks, and the place would be called a Bochim. Oh, may God's Omnipotent Spirit now shake this audience with arousal and conviction, as though it were the heart of one man. Amen! So let it be, Lord Jesus.

I have, in the first place to remark, that many of these Christian people have reason for *a good deal of mourning*.

What have you been doing these ten, twenty, thirty, forty years? Did not God lead you out of Egypt? Did He not part for you the Red Sea of trouble, and has He not rained manna all around about your camp? Did He not divide the Jordan of death for your loved ones, until they went through dry-shod, not wetting even the soles of their feet? Has He not put clusters of blessings upon your table, and fed you with the finest of the wheat? Mercies above you. Mercies beneath you. Mercies on the right hand, and mercies on the left hand. Mercies before you. Mercies behind you. Mercies within you. And yet, we must confess, we have, like the Israelites, made a league with the world. Three-fourths of our Christian life has been wasted. Opportunities for usefulness gone for ever. Golden sickles placed in our hand, yet no harvest reaped. Silken nets of the Gospel at our disposal, yet no fish caught. Going along toward heaven, while there are a thousand millions of the race unwarned, unblessed, unsaved. Our path toward heaven a zig-zag path, now on the Lord's side, now on the world's side—"hale fellows well met" with men who despise God. The beach strewn with vessels breaking on the rocks, and we too cowardly to wade

down waist deep, or even ankle deep, and give a hand to those who are struggling in the surf lying across the path toward heaven, until men have come up where we are, and stumbled over us, and fallen, never to rise. Has not this been the history of many here? The robes of our Christian profession scattered with the blood of lost souls; God holding us responsible for sorrows that we did not appease, and for ruin that we did not avert. Oh, that God would to-night break our hearts with the fact of our inconsistencies as professors of religion, and rouse us up to self-scrutiny, and an imploration, and a lamentation, that would make this place a *Bochim*, a place of weeping. I believe that there are souls in hell that would not have been there if you and I had done our duty. Oh, weep for our derelictions! weep for our wanderings! weep for our lost opportunities that will never return!

There is great reason for sadness on the part of some of these parents when they look over their families. You know that there must be a mighty change in your household before you can all live together in eternity. A few years at the most, and the separation must take place. Your common sense teaches you that, if there be two paths, and they diverge, and after the point of divergence they keep on in a straight line, they go farther and farther off from each other; and, as by inexorable mathematical law, as well as by moral law, if one goes to the right, in a religious sense, and the other to the left, they cannot come together. Can you sit to-night placidly and contemplate an eternal separation from any of your loved ones? Things are looking that way. Their opportunities of salvation less and less. Your opportunities of plying them with religious motives less and less. The prospect that God's invitation will continue to them, less and less. The day of their mercy almost gone, yet they have not put up one earnest prayer, or repented of one sin, and not given one hopeful sign, and death coming to snap the conjugal bond, and break up the fraternal and the filial tie. Oh, sister, canst thou bear to think of being for eternity away from thy brother? 'Oh, wife, for unending ages away from

thy husband? Christian mother, is your daughter on the wrong side? Christian father, will you be on the right hand of the Judge at the last, and see your son on the left hand, far away, *chained and captives trudging off?*

Are you ready for such a farewell word? Is there anything that can pay you for it? The comforts of your present home, your domestic reunions? No, no. There is nothing on earth that can pay for that. I announce what I believe will be the history of some families represented in this house to-night; part of the family will spend eternity in heaven, and part of the family will spend an eternity in hell! Oh, if that thought could come with its overwhelming power upon you, as it ought, there would be a shudder through this audience, and you would sweat as though it were great drops of blood. Parents would cry out to God, and cry out to the people: "Save my children!" The wife would cry out: "Save my husband!" The sister would cry out: "Save my brother!" And this audience would be struck with a wild tempest of agony, and this place would be a Bochim, for weeping. Oh, there has been a very great change in some of the families in my Church during the last two or three weeks. Some of them have come into the kingdom, but left others outside. There have been cases where the husband has chosen Christ, and the wife has resisted Divine mercy. Last Sabbath night, in the adjoining room, an aged woman came in. I said: "Are you seeking the salvation of your soul?" She said: "No, I have sought and found. I came in to ask your prayers for my sons. They are on the wrong road." O Lord Jesus are we to be parted from any we have loved? Will some of us be saved and some of us be lost? Which one will it be missing, missing, missing for eternity? Oh, bow your head in silent prayer, and ask God for the redemption of all the loved ones of the household. Lay hold of God in an importunate petition now. Hush! Let it be a moment of silent prayer all through the audience.

I say farther: there are impenitent souls here who ought to be sad from the fact that there are sins they have committed that cannot be corrected either in this world or the

world to come. I am not speaking of the unpardonable sin; but I will illustrate what I mean. Suppose there is a man in this audience that to-night, at fifty years of age, becomes a Christian, but he has been all his life on the other side. He is a father. He comes to Christ to-night; but can he arrest the fact that for twenty or thirty years, over his children, he was wielding a wrong influence, and they have started in the wrong direction? Suppose a company of ship-owners started a sea captain with an imperfect chart and with an unseaworthy vessel, and after the vessel has been gone five days they feel sorry about it, and wish they had not let the vessel go out in that way. Does that make any difference to those who have gone out? No! In the first storm the captain and the crew go down. And if you come to God in the latter part of your life, when you have given your children an impulse in the wrong direction, those, ten, or fifteen, or twenty years of example in the wrong direction will be mightier than the few words you can utter now in the right direction. So it is with the influence you have had anywhere in community. If you have all these years given countenance to those who are neglecting religion, *can you correct that?* Your common sense says no. Here is an engineer on a locomotive. He is taking a long train of cars loaded with passengers. He comes on and sees a red flag. He says: "What do I care for the red flag?" He pushes on the train, and comes to another red flag. He says: "I don't care for the red flag." After a while he sees that the bridge is down; but he is by a marsh, and he leaps and is not damaged. Does that stop the train? No! It goes on crash! crash! crash! That is the history of some men who have been converted to-night. I congratulate them, but I cannot hide the fact that they started a train of influences in the wrong direction; and though in the afternoon of their life, they may leap off the train, the train goes on. A man said to me during the week: "I am fifty-three years of age, and I have made up my mind that it is time for me to become a Christian." I congratulated him in coming; but, I must say to all those who come in the afternoon of life you

have let your best chances go—there is no hiding that—your best talents gone, your best opportunities of usefulness gone. You cannot hide the fact that you have had only one life to live on earth, and you have thrown the most of it away. It is enough to make one weep most bitter tears ; it is enough to make this house a very *Bochim*.

So, also, there is occasion for sadness in the peril that surrounds every unforgiven soul. "Oh," you say : "it is a starlight night. The wind is blowing from the west. All is fair. There is no danger." I am not speaking of temporal, but of spiritual, danger. You say : "I don't see any spiritual danger." Then I remember that summer before last, on shipboard at evening time, we were romping up and down the decks with laughter, and shout, and song. We were a very merry party at eventime ; but in a few hours there were between seven hundred and eight hundred people groaning and crying, and shrieking at what seemed the foundering of the ship. Sails all gone. Booms lost. Lifeboats crushed to kindling-wood on the side of the vessel. On the blanched cheeks of the captain, crew, and passengers, one word written : "Shipwreck !" And so you may go on placidly, smoothly, gaily for awhile in your sin, but the hurricane will swoop upon your souls. Perils from above and perils from beneath push you to the abyss. Out of Christ not one moment's safety. Without God, without hope. Oh, what an orphanage, what an exile, what a desolation ! Who will go your bail ? Who will help out your immortal spirit ? Moan ! moan ! for thy lost estate.

Have you not had a chance for heaven ? "Ah," you say : "that is the worst of it. That is what makes me weep." Was your father bad ? Was your mother wicked ? "No," you say. "Say nothing against my mother. If there was ever a good woman, she was one ; and I remember how, in her old days, and when bent with years, and in her plain frock, she knelt down and prayed for my soul, and with her apron wiped away the tears. I can never forget it. She is gone now, and I gave her no intimation that I would ever meet her again. Oh, I have trampled on her broken heart.

I am a wretch undone. Who will pray for me? I am so sick of sin. I am so weary of the world!" *No wonder you weep*, for the greatest condemnation of the last day will be for those who had pious parents and who resisted their admonition. Oh! to go through a lost eternity carrying the remembrance of a family altar at which you were taught to kneel, and the "Now I lay me down to sleep" that you were taught to pray, and the death-bed of father and mother where with their last words they importuned you to do your duty! Oh! that memory will be heavier than the chain; *that* will be hotter than the fire. May God Almighty keep us from the overwhelming woe that comes down upon that man's head who tramples on a father's counsel and on an old mother's prayer.

But what is a sadder thought is, that some of these people not only stay out of the kingdom of God themselves, but they will not let their children come in. I have to charge some parents who are here with the fact that they hinder their loved ones from coming into the kingdom. If you would only give them one encouraging word, or if you would only get out of the way with your worldly example, they would have some chance. But no; you stay back from Christ and the Church, yourselves, and you keep them back. Oh! father, mother, if you are determined to go down to death, do not take your children with you. If you will not stand back, say: "I am going to take the plunge, but don't *you* do it." You sound no alarm. They are in the same boat with you. You are rowing on towards an eternal Niagara. You have almost come to the plunge, and yet you drop not the oars, you clutch not the side of the boat. You cry not out to the shore for help. You trip them up. You know it is an easy thing to trip one up, especially if he comes at a bounding gait; and you see your loved ones coming on towards heaven, and you put out your foot and they fall over it into a sinful life here, and after twenty, thirty, forty years have passed will fall deeper down, and it will be known for ever that you tripped them up. Oh! by the solemn birth-hour when your life was spared and another given, by the

memories of the family hearth, by the account which you must give at the last day for your performance of your duty in regard to those children, I implore you not to hinder them. "But," you say, "I do not hinder them." You do. Your children feel it. Christians feel it. Angels of God feel it, The Lord Jesus Christ feels it. That father and mother who stay away from Christ themselves are bringing on all controlling and potential influence to keep their children back. There are parents here, all wrapped up in worldliness and fashion, who are actually blocking up the way to heaven for the entire family. They think more of the trimmings on their hats and the jewels on their fingers than of the souls of the immortals for which they must answer when the world is on fire. Oh, that the prophet's rod would strike the rock to-night and make it weep, and that this place might be a Bochim—parents praying for their children, children praying for their parents, the husband praying for the wife, the wife praying for the husband, the pastor praying for the people, the people praying for the pastor, this whole audience whelmed with one wave of penitence and pardon! Oh parent! coming up at the last day, how will you stand it if these children grow up into lives of sin, living to old age in impenitence, and then meeting you in the judgment, deliberately charge you with the ruin of their soul, saying: "You never invited me to Christ. You stood in my way. You gave a wrong example. Father, mother, you ruined my soul?"

But I remember that there are tears of joy as well as tears of sorrow, and how the foundations of the deep would break up to-night if one hundred or one thousand souls in this audience would march up and take the kingdom of heaven! This place has been a Bochim. It was last Sabbath, here and in the adjoining room. It was last Monday. It was last Wednesday. It was last Friday. It was this morning. It is now a Bochim for weeping for joy. Right here, on this very seat, last Sabbath night, there sat a sea-captain. He seemed very restless under the sermon. I thought he was offended, and would go out. When the service was closed

he came into the adjoining room, his face shining with joy, and he told us that on that night, *He had found Christ*, and then he told how, during the gale at sea, he vowed to be a Christian, but when the sea went down and the storm was past he forgot his vow. "Now," he says, "I start for heaven." He could not keep the story to himself. He was telling to those who were around about him in the room what a joyful thing it was to follow Christ. Oh! it was a Bochim all around about where the man stood, and he said as he passed out of the door: "Pray for me. I sail to-morrow for San Domingo." The same night there came a child, her face radiant with gladness, holding her father by the hand. She had found the Saviour the week before. Now she was bringing her father. He also found Jesus. Then the man who said he was "past feeling" asked us to pray for him. And then there were aged ones who came in the eleventh hour and got Divine pardon; and there were altars set up in families where there had never been any prayer; and lips that had never spoken the name of Jesus, save in blasphemy, have been all this week singing: "There's none like Jesus. Oh, hallelujah!" And the place has been a Bochim.

But there are some who have not come. They will not come. They will not repent. They will not pray. They will not ask any one else to pray for them. Their hearts are too proud. With a stout grip they seize the door of God's mercy and shut it against their souls. They lay hold of the rope of the bell, so that they may strike the death-knell of their own immortal spirit. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and they are not saved." Floating out farther and farther into the darkness, I wave them one last farewell, and I feel helpless when I stand before them. I think of no other argument drawn from death, judgment, or eternity, or the cross of the Son of God, and I feel very much as the people did on Long Island coasts some years ago when a vessel was driving on the rocks. The people on shore could do nothing. They saw the danger and knew the shipwreck was coming, and ran up and down the beach wringing their hands. So to-night I see these vessels coming for the rocks.



I cannot help them. I run up and down the shore crying; "Stand off. Put back! Stop, stop!" But it seems to do no good.

I rejoice that there will be whole families to-night that will come to Jesus. In Georgia, some years ago, there were two men who had broken their mother's heart by lives of dissipation. They went home to see her. It came the time for them to go back, and they said: "Now, mother, we go back to-night at nine o'clock." "Well," she said, "boys" (however old they may get they are never anything but boys to a mother)—she said: "Boys, go to church; they're going to have religious service there." Her heart was aching for their salvation, but she did not want to tell them. "Oh!" they said, "we're going off at nine o'clock." "Well," she said, "you will hear the stage-horn blow, and you can then go out and take the stage." So they went; but before the stage-horn blew *they heard a different sound*. It was that which pealed forth from the silver trumpet of the Gospel, and their souls quaked under the sound. They did not go away that night; and on the following night, when, at the close of the service, the minister of Christ asked that all those who were seeking their soul's salvation should come up and kneel at the altar, the first that started were these two men; and they knelt there asking for salvation; and while they were kneeling there, there was an aged woman who arose in the midst of the audience, her face all saturated with tears, and the people said; "Who is she? Who is she? Why does she stand up and disturb the assembly? All the rest are sitting." Oh, she had a right to stand up. She was the Christian mother of these two young men. She had prayed for their salvation so long, she had a right to stand and look as they knelt down at the foot of Divine mercy. She had sown in tears—she had a right to reap in tearful joy. And to-night, if the prodigals would only come and kneel down at the foot of the cross, there would be others standing up to watch. The world might stand up and scoff, but there would be others standing up with different motives—parents standing up to watch as the prodigals came. They

would be glad with an infinite gladness, if their children were saved. And there would be companions in life who would rejoice as *their* companion came. They would say: "Now, we are one for ever. Married on earth to be married in heaven." The angels of God would stand, harp in hand, watching, and ready to strike the symphony. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself would stand watching—Him of the crushed foot, and the mingled brow, and the cleft heart, saying: "My soul is satisfied. I have loved thee with an everlasting love." There would be tears of joy mingling with tears of sorrow, and it would be told in the ages to come that on this Sabbath night, between these walls, because of the weeping over sin, and the weeping over pardon, the place was a Bochin

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## THE PROCESSION HALTED.

*"Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare HIM stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."—LUKE vii. 12—15.*

THE text calls us to stand at the gate of the city of Nain. The streets are full of business and gaiety, and the ear is deafened with the hammers of mechanism and the wheels of traffic. Work, with its thousand arms, and thousand eyes, and thousand feet, fills all the street, when suddenly the crowd parts, and a funeral passes. Between the wheels of work and pleasure there comes a long procession of mourning people. Who is it? A trifer says: "Oh, it is nothing but a funeral. It may have come up from the hospital of

the city, or the almshouse, or some low place of the town ;” but not so, says the serious observer. There are so many evidences of tired bereavement that we know at the first glance some one has been taken away greatly beloved ; and to our inquiry : “ Who is this that is carried out with so many offices of kindness and affection ?” the reply comes : “ The only son of his mother, and she a widow.” Stand back and let the procession pass out ! Hush all the voices of mirth and pleasure ! Let every head be uncovered ! Weep with this passing procession, and let it be told through all the market places and bazaars of Nain, that in Galilee, to-day, the sepulchre hath gathered to itself “ the only son of his mother, and she a widow.”

There are two or three things that, in my mind, give especial pathos to this scene. The first is, *he was a young man* that was being carried out. To the aged, death becomes beautiful. The old man halts and pants along the road where once he bounded like the roe. From the midst of immedicable ailment and sorrows, he cries out : “ How long, oh Lord, how long ?” Foot-sore and hardly bestead on the hot journey, he wants to get home. He sits in the church and sings, with a very tremulous voice, some tune he sang forty years ago, and longs to join the better assemblage of the one hundred and forty and four thousand, and the thousands of thousands who have passed the flood. How sweetly he sleeps the last sleep. Push back the white locks from the wrinkled temples ; they will never ache again. Fold the hands over the still heart ; they will never toil again. Close gently the eyes ; *they will never weep again.*

But this man that I am speaking of was a young man. He was just putting on the armour of life, and he was exulting to think how his sturdy blows would ring out above the clangour of the battle. I suppose he had a young man’s hopes, a young man’s ambition, and a young man’s courage. He said : “ If I live many years, I will feed the hungry and clothe the naked. In this city of Nain, where there are so many bad young men, I will be sober, and honest, and pure, and magnanimous, and my mother shall never be ashamed of me.” But all these

prospects are blasted in one hour. There he passes lifeless in the procession. Behold all that is left on earth of the high-hearted young man of the city of Nain.

There is another thing that adds very much to this scene, and that is he was an only son. However large the family flocks may be, we never could think of sparing one of the lambs. Though they may all have their faults, they all have their excellencies that commend them to their parental heart ; and if it were peremptorily demanded of you to-day, that you should yield up some of your children out of a very large family, you would be confounded, and you could not make a selection. But this was an only son, around whom gathered all the parental expectations. How much care in his education. How much caution in watching his habits. He would carry down the name to other times. He would have entire control of the family property long after the parents had gone to their last reward. He would stand in society a thinker, a worker, a philanthropist, a Christian. No, no. It is all ended. Behold him there. Breath is gone. Life is extinct. The only son of his mother.

There was one other thing that added to the pathos of this scene, and that was his mother was a widow. The main hope of that home had been broken, and now he was come up to be the staff. The chief light of the household had been extinguished, and this was the only light left. I suppose she often said, looking at him : "There are only two of us." Oh, it is a grand thing to see a young man step out in life, and say to his mother : "Don't be down-hearted. I will, as far as possible, take father's place, and as long as I live you shall never want anything." But alas ! it is not always that way. Sometimes the young people get tired of the old people. They say they are queer ; that they have so many ailments ; and they sometimes wish them out of the way. A young man and his wife sat at the table, their little son on the floor playing beneath the table. The old grandfather was very old, and his hand shook so, they said : "You shall no more sit with us at the table." And so they gave him a place in the corner, where day by day he ate out of an earthen

bowl—everything put into that bowl. One day his hand trembled so much he dropped it, and it broke, and the son, seated at the elegant table in midfloor, said to his wife : Now we'll get father a wooden bowl, and that he can't break." So a wooden bowl was obtained, and every day old grand-father ate out of that, sitting in the corner. One day, while the elegant young man and his wife were seated at their table, with chased silver and all the luxuries, and their little son sat upon the floor, they saw the lad whittling, and they said : " My son, what are you doing there with that knife ?" " Oh," said he, " I—I'm making a trough for my father and mother to eat out of when they get old !"

But this young man of the text was not of that character. He did not belong to that school. I can tell it from the way they mourned over him. He was to be the companion of his mother. He was to be his mother's protector. He would return now some of the kindness he had received in the days of childhood and boyhood. Aye, he would with his strong hand uphold that form already enfeebled with age. Will he do it? No. In one hour all that promise of help and companionship is gone. *There is a world of anguish* in that one short phrase, " The only son of his mother, and she a widow."

Now, my friends, it was upon this scene that Christ broke. He came in without any introduction. He stopped the procession. He had only two utterances to make : the one to the mourning mother, the other to the dead. He cried out to the mourning one : " Weep not : " and then, touching the bier on which the son lay, He cried out : " Young man, I say unto thee, Arise ! And he that was dead sat up."

I learn two or three things from this subject ; and first, that Christ *was a man*. You see how that sorrow played upon all the chords of his heart. I think we forget this too often. Christ was a man more certainly than you are, for He was a perfect man. No sailor ever slept in ship's hammock more soundly than Christ slept in that boat on Gennesaret. In every nerve and muscle, and bone, and fibre of His body—in every emotion and affection of His heart—in

every action and decision of His mind, He was a man. He looked off upon the sea just as you look off upon the waters. He went into Martha's house just as you go into a cottage. He breathed hard when He was tired, just as you do when you are exhausted. He felt after sleeping out a night in the storm just like you do when you have been exposed to a tempest. It was just as humiliating for Him to beg bread as it would be for you to become a pauper. He felt just as much insulted by being sold for thirty pieces of silver as you would if you were sold for the price of a dog. From the crown of the head to the sole of his foot He was a man. Oh, when the thorns were twisted for His brow, they hurt Him, just as much as they would hurt your brow, if they were twisted for it. He took not on Him the nature of angels ; He took on Him the seed of Abraham. *Ecce Homo*—Behold the man !

But I must also draw from this subject that *He was a God*. Suppose that a man should now attempt to break up funeral obsequies. He would be seized by the law, he would be imprisoned, if he were not actually slain by the mob before the officers could secure him. If Christ had been a mere mortal, would He have had a right to come in upon such a procession ? Would He have succeeded in His interruption ? He was more than a man, for when He cried out : "I say unto thee, arise ! He that was dead sat up." Oh, what excitement there must have been thereabouts. The body had lain prostrate. It had been mourned over with agonizing tears, and yet now it begins to move in the shroud, and to be flushed with life ; and at the command of Christ he rises up and looks into the faces of the astonished spectators. Oh, this was the work of a God. I hear it in His voice ; I see it in the flash of His eye ; I behold it in the snapping of death's shackles ; I see it in the face of the rising slumberer ; I hear it in the outcry of all those who were spectators of the scene. If, when I see my Lord Jesus Christ mourning with the bereaved, I put my hands on His shoulders, and say : "My brother," now that I hear Him proclaim supernatural deliverances, I look up into His face and say with Thomas ;

“My Lord and my God.” Do you not think He was a God? A great many people do not believe that, and they compromise the matter, or they think they compromise it. They say He was a very good man, but He was not a God. That is impossible. He was *either a God or a wretch*, and I will prove it. If a man professes to be that which he is not, what is he? He is a liar, an imposter, a hypocrite. That is your unanimous verdict. Now, Christ professed to be a God. He said over and over again He was a God, took the attributes of a God, and assumed the works and offices of a God. Dare you now say He was not? He was a God or He was a wretch. Choose ye. Do you think I cannot prove by this Bible that He was a God? If you do not believe the Bible, of course there is no need of my talking with you. There is no common data from which to start. Suppose you do believe it? Then I can demonstrate that He was Divine. I can prove that He was creator (John i. 3): “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” He was eternal (Rev. xxii. 13): “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” I can prove He was omnipotent (Heb. i. 10): “The heavens are the work of Thine hands.” I can prove He was omniscient (John ii. 25): “He knew what was in man.” Oh, yes, He is a God. He cleft the sea, He upheaved the crystalline walls along which the Israelites marched. He planted the mountains. He raises up governments and casts down thrones, and marches across nations, and across worlds, and across the universe. Eternal, omnipotent, unhindered, and unabashed. That hand that was nailed to the cross holds the stars in a leash of love. That head that dropped on the bosom, in fainting and death, shall make the world quake at its nod. That voice that groaned in the last pang shall swear before the trembling world that time shall be no longer. Oh, do not insult the common sense of the race, by telling us that this glorious person was only a man, in whose presence the paralytic arm was thrust out well, and the devils crouched, and the lepers dropped their scales, and the tempests folded their wings, and the

boy's satchel of a few loaves made a banquet for five thousand, and the sad procession of my text broke out in congratulation and hosanna.

Again, I learn from this subject that Christ was a sympathizer. Mark you, this was a city funeral. In the country, when the bell tolls, they know all about it for five miles around, and they know what was the matter with the man, how old he was, and what was his last experiences. They know with what temporal prospects he has left his family. There is no haste, there is no indecency, in the obsequies. There is nothing done as a mere matter of business. Even the children come out as the procession passes, and look sympathetic, and the tree-shadows seem to deepen, and the brooks weep in sympathy as the procession goes by. But, mark you, this that I am speaking of was a city funeral. In great cities the cart jostles the hearse, and there is mirth and gladness and indifference as the weeping procession goes by. In the city of Nain it was a common thing to have trouble, and bereavement, and death. Christ saw it every day there. Perhaps that very hour there were others being carried out ; but this frequency of trouble did not harden Christ's heart at all. *He stepped right out*, and He saw this mourner, and He had compassion on her, and He said : " Weep not." Now I have to tell you, oh, bruised souls, and there are many here to-day (have you ever looked over an audience like this and noticed how many shadows of sorrow there are ? You cannot, where you sit, see them, but I can from where I stand), I come to all such to-day and say : " Christ meets you, and He has compassion on you, and He says : ' Weep not.' " Perhaps with some it is financial trouble. " Oh ! " you say, " it is such a silly thing for a man to cry over lost money." Is it ? Suppose you had a large fortune, and all luxuries brought to your table, and your wardrobe was full, and your home was beautified by music, and sculpture, and painting, and thronged by the elegant and educated, and then some rough misfortune should strike you in the face, and trample your treasures, and taunt your children for their faded dress, and send you into commercial circles an underling where



once you waved a sceptre of gold, don't you think you would cry then ? I think you would. But Christ comes and meets all such to-day. He sees all the straits in which you have been thrust. He observes the sneer of that man who once was proud to walk in your shadow and glad to get your help. He sees the protested note, the uncanceled judgment, the foreclosed mortgage, the heart-breaking exasperation, and He says : "Weep not," I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I will never let you starve. From my hand the fowls of heaven peck all their food. And will I let you starve ? Never—no, my child, never."

Or perhaps this tramp at the gate of Nain has an echo in your own bereft spirit. You went out to the grave, and you felt you never could come back again. You left your heart there. The white snow of death covered all the garden. You listen for the speaking of voices that will never be heard again and the sounding of feet that will never move in your dwelling again, and there is this morning, while I speak, a dull, heavy, leaden pressure on your heart. God has dashed out the light of your eyes, and the heavy spirit that that woman carried out of the gate of Nain is no heavier than yours. And you open the door, but he comes not in. And you enter the nursery, but she is not there. And you sit at the table, but there is a vacant chair next to you. And the sun does not shine as brightly as it used to, and the voices of affection do not strike you with so quick a thrill, and your cheek has not so healthy a hue, and your eye has not so deep a fire. Do I not know ? Do we not all know ? There is an unlifted woe on your heart. You have been carrying out your loved one beyond the gate of the city of Nain. But look yonder. Some one stands watching. He seems waiting for you. As you come up He stretches out His hand of help. His voice is full of tenderness, yet thrills with eternal strength. Who is it ? The very One who accosted the mourner at the gate of Nain, and He says : "Weep not."

Perhaps it is a worse grief than that. It may be a *living* home trouble that you cannot speak about to your best friend. It may be some domestic unhappiness. It may be an evil

suspicion. It may be the disgrace following in the footsteps of a son that is wayward, or a companion who is cruel, or a father that will not do right ; and for years there may have been a vulture striking its beak into the vitals of your soul, and you sit there to-day feeling it worse than death. It is. It is worse than death. And yet there is relief. Though the night may be the blackest, though the voices of hell may tell you to curse God and die, look up and hear the voice that accosted the woman of the text, as it says : " Weep not."

" Earth has no sorrow  
That heaven cannot cure."

I learn again from all this that Christ is *the master of the grave*. Just outside the gate of the city Death and Christ measured lances, and when the young man rose, Death dropped. Now we are sure of our resurrection. Oh ! what a scene it was when that young man came back ! The mother never expected to hear him speak again. She never thought that he would kiss her again. How the tears started and her heart throbbed as she said : " Oh my son, my son, my son ! " And that scene is going to be repeated. It is going to be repeated ten thousand times. These broken family circles have got to come together. These extinguished household lights have got to be rekindled. There will be a stir in the family lot in the cemetery, and there will be a rush into life at the command : " Young man, I say unto thee, arise ! " As the child shakes off the dust of the tomb and comes forth fresh, and fair, and beautiful, and you throw your arms around it and press it to your heart, angel to angel will repeat the the story of Nain : " He delivered him to his mother." Did you notice that passage in the text as I read it ? " He delivered him to his mother." Oh, ye troubled souls ! oh, ye who have lived to see every prospect blasted, paled, scattered, consumed ! wait a little. The seed-time of tears will become the wheat harvest. In a clime cut of no wintry blast, under a sky palled by no hurtling tempest, amid redeemed ones that weep not, that part not, that die not, friend will come to friend, and kindred will join kindred, and the

long procession that marches along the avenues of gold will lift up their psalms as again and again it is announced that the same One who came to the relief of this woman of the text came to the relief of many a maternal heart, and repeated the wonders of resurrection and "delivered him to his mother." Oh ! that will be the harvest of the world. That will be the coronation of princes. That will be the Sabbath of eternity.

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### THINGS WE NEVER GET OVER.

*"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."*—MATTHEW xii. 31, 32.

*"He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."*—HEBREWS xii. 17.

LET it be understood at the outset that the Protestant pulpit has no revelation not given to the Protestant pew. The minister of Christ has no right to lord it over the consciences of men. When we preach, we do not utter edicts; we only offer opinions. Let the old mother of harlots from the Vatican issue the *fiat* that makes the people bow down into the dust; but in this land, and in this age, where King James's translation is in almost every hand and in almost every house, let every man understand that he has a right, equally with others, to interpret the Word of God for himself, asking only Divine illumination.

As sometimes you gather the whole family around, in the evening, to hear some interesting book read, so to-night we gather—a great Christian family group—to study this

text ; and now may one and the same lamp cast its glow on all this vast circle of immortal souls.

You see from the first passage that I read, that there is a sin against the Holy Ghost for which a man is never pardoned. Once having committed it, he is bound hand and foot for the dungeons of despair. Sermons may be preached to him, songs may be sung to him, prayers may be offered in his behalf ; but all to no purpose. He is a captive for this world and a captive for the world that is to come. Do you suppose that there is any one in this house to-night that has committed that sin ? All sins are against the Holy Ghost ; but my text speaks of *one* especially. It is very clear to my own mind that the sin against the Holy Ghost was the ascribing of the works of the Spirit to the agency of the devil in the time of the apostles. Indeed, the Bible distinctly tells us that. In other words, if a man had sight given to him, or if another was raised from the dead, and some one standing there should say : "This man got his sight by satanic power, the Holy Spirit did not do this, Beelzebub accomplished it ;" or, "This man raised from the dead was raised by satantic influence," the man who said that dropped down under the curse of the text, and had committed the fatal sin against the Holy Ghost. Now I do not think it possible in this day to commit that sin. I think it was possible only in apostolic times. But it is a very terrible thing ever to say anything against the Holy Ghost, and it is a marked fact that our race have been marvellously kept back from that profanity. You hear a man swear by the name of the Eternal God, and by the name of Jesus Christ, but you never heard a man swear by the name of the Holy Ghost. There are those in this house who fear they are guilty of the unpardonable sin. Have you such anxiety ? Then I have to tell you positively that *you have not committed that sin*, because the very anxiety is a result of the movement of the gracious Spirit, and your anxiety is proof positive, as certainly as anything that can be demonstrated in mathematics, that you have not committed the sin that I have been speaking of. I can look off upon this audience and feel that

there is salvation for all. It is not like when they put out with those life-boats from the *Loch Earn* for the *Ville du Havre*. They knew there was not room for all the passengers, but they were going to do as well as they could. But to-night we man the life-boat of the Gospel, and we cry out over the sea: "Room for all." Oh that the Lord Jesus Christ would this hour, bring you all out of the flood of sin and plant you on the deck of this glorious old Gospel craft. But while I have said I do not think it is possible for us to commit the particular sin spoken of in the first text, I have by reason of the second text to call your attention to the fact that there are sins which, though they may be pardoned, are in some respects irrevocable, and you can find no place for repentance, though you seek it carefully with tears. Esau had a birthright given him. In olden times it meant not only temporal but spiritual blessing. One day Esau took this birthright and traded it off for something to eat. Oh the folly! But let us not be too severe upon him, for some of us may have committed the same folly. After he had made the trade, he wanted to get it back. Just as though you to-morrow morning should take all your notes, and bonds, and Government securities, and should go into a restaurant, and in a fit of recklessness and hunger throw all those securities on the counter and ask for a plate of food, making that exchange. This was the one that Esau made. He sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and he was very sorry about it afterwards; but "he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

There is an impression in almost every man's mind that somewhere in the future there will be a chance where he can correct all his mistakes. Live as we may, if we only repent in time, God will forgive us, and then all will be as well as though he had never committed sin. My discourse shall come in collision with that theory. I shall show you, my friends, as God will help me, that there is such a thing as unsuccessful repentance; that there are things done wrong that always stay wrong, and for them you may seek some place of repentance, and seek it carefully, but never find it,

Belonging to this class of irrevocable mistakes is *the folly of a misspent youth*. We may look back to our college days and think how we neglected chemistry, or geology, or botany, or mathematics. We may be sorry about it all our days. Can we ever get the discipline or the advantage that we would have had had we attended to those duties in early life? A man wakes up at forty years of age and finds that his youth has been wasted, and he strives to get back his early advantages. Does he get them back? the days of boyhood, the days in college, the days under his father's roof? "Oh!" he says: "If I could only get those times back again, how I would improve them!" My brother, you will never get them back. They are gone, gone. You may be very sorry about it, and God may forgive so that you may at last reach heaven; but you will never get over some of the mishaps that have come to your soul as a result of your neglect of early duty. You may try to undo it; you cannot undo it. When you had a boy's arms, and a boy's eyes, and a boy's heart, you ought to have attended to those things. A man says at fifty years of age: "I do wish I could get over these habits of indolence." When did you get them? At twenty or twenty-five years of age. You cannot shake them off. They will hang to you to the very day of your death. If a young man, through a long course of evil conduct, undermines his physical health, and then repents of it in after life, the Lord may pardon him; but that does not bring back good physical condition. I said to a minister of the Gospel last Sabbath night at the close of the service: "Where are you preaching, now?" "Oh!" he says: "I am not preaching. I am suffering from the physical effects of early sin. I can't preach now; I am sick." A consecrated man he now is, and he mourns bitterly over early sins; but that does not arrest their bodily effects. The simple fact is, that men and women often take twenty years of their life to build up influences that require all the rest of their life to break down. Talk about a man beginning life when he is twenty-one years of age; talk about a woman beginning life when she is eighteen years of age!

Ah, no ! In many respects that is the time they close life. In nine cases out of ten, all the questions of eternity are decided before that. Talk about a majority of men getting their fortunes between thirty and forty ! They get or lose their fortunes between ten and twenty. When you tell me that a man is just beginning life, I tell you that he is just closing it. The next fifty years will not be of as much importance to him as the first twenty. Now, why do I say this ? Is it for the annoyance of those who have only a baleful retrospection ? You know that is not my way. I say it for the benefit of these young men and women. I want them to understand that eternity is wrapped up in this hour ; that the sins of youth we never get over ; that you are now fashioning the mould in which your great future is to run ; that a minute, instead of being sixty seconds long, is made up of everlasting ages. You see what dignity and importance this gives to the life of all our young folks. Why, in the light of this subject, life is not something to be frittered away, not something to be smirked about, not something to be danced out, but something to be weighed in the balances of eternity. Oh, young man ! the sin of last night, the sin of to-night, the sin of to-morrow *will reach over ten thousand years*—aye, over the great and unending eternity. You may, after awhile, say : “I am very sorry. Now I have got to be thirty or forty years of age, and I do wish I had never committed those sins.” What does that amount to ? God may pardon you : but undo those things you never will, you never can.

In this same category of irrevocable mistakes I put *all parental neglect*. We begin the education of our children too late. By the time they get to be ten or fifteen we wake up to our mistakes and try to eradicate this bad habit of the child ; but it is too late. That parent who omits in the first ten years of the child's life to make an eternal impression for Christ, never makes it. The child will probably go on with all the disadvantages which might have been avoided by parental faithfulness. Now you see what a mistake that father or mother makes who puts off to late in life adherence

to Christ. Here is a man who, at fifty years of age, says to you : "I must be a Christian ;" and he yields his heart to God and sits in the house of prayer to-night a Christian. None of us can doubt it. He goes home and he says : "Here, at fifty years of age, I have given my heart to the Saviour. Now I must establish a family altar." What ? Where are your children now ? One in Boston, another in Cincinnati, another in New Orleans. And you, my brother, at your fiftieth year, going to establish your family altar. Very well ; better late than never ; but alas ! alas ! that you did not do it twenty-five years ago.

When I was in Chamouni, Switzerland, I saw in the window of one of the shops a picture that impressed my mind very much. It was a picture of an accident that occurred on the side of one of the Swiss mountains. A company of travellers, with guides, went up some very steep places—places which but few travellers attempted to go up. They were, as all travellers are there, fastened together with cords at the waist, so that if one slipped, the rope would hold him—the rope fastened to the others. Passing along the most dangerous point, one of the guides slipped, and they all slipped down the precipice ; but after awhile, one more muscular than the rest struck his heels into the ice and stopped ; but the rope broke, and down, hundreds and thousands of feet, the rest went. And so I see whole families bound together by ties of affection, and in many cases walking on slippery places of worldliness and sin. The father knows it and the mother knows it, and they are bound all together. After awhile they begin to slide down, steeper and steeper and the father becomes alarmed and he stops, planting his feet on the "Rock of Ages." He stops, but the rope breaks, and those who were tied fast to him by moral and spiritual influences once, go over the precipice. Oh ! there is such a thing as coming to Christ soon enough to save ourselves, but not soon enough to save others. How many parents wake up in the latter part of life to find out the mistake ! The parent says : "I have been too lenient," or, "I have been too severe in the discipline of my children. If



I had the little ones around me again, how different I would do!" You will never have them around again. The work is done, the bent to the character is given, the eternity is decided. I say this to young parents—those who are twenty-five, or thirty, or thirty-five years of age. Have the family altar to-night. How do you suppose that father felt as he leaned over the couch of his dying child, and the expiring son said to him: "Father, you have been very good to me. You have given me a fine education, and you have placed me in a fine social position; you have done everything for me in a worldly sense; but, father, you never told me how to die. Now I am dying, and I am lost."

In this category of irrevocable mistakes I place also *the unkindness done to the departed*. When I was a boy, my mother used to say to me sometimes: "De Witt, you will be sorry for that when I am gone." And I remember just how she looked, sitting there, with cap and spectacles, and the old Bible in her lap; and she never said a truer thing than that, for I have often been sorry since. While we have our friends with us, we say unguarded things that wound the feelings of those to whom we ought to give nothing but kindness. Perhaps the parent, without inquiring into the matter, boxes the child's ears. The little one who has fallen in the street comes in covered with dust, and as though the first disaster were not enough, she whips it. After awhile the child is taken, or the parent is taken, or the companion is taken, and those who are left say: "Oh if we could only get back those unkind words; those unkind deeds. If we could only recall them;" but you cannot get them back. You might bow down over the grave of that loved one, and cry, and cry, and cry. The white lips would make no answer. The stars shall be plucked out of their sockets, but these influences shall not be torn away. The world shall die, but there are some wrongs immortal. The moral of which is, take care of your friends while you have them, spare the scolding, be economical of the satire, shut up in a dark cave from which they shall never swarm forth all the words that have a sting in them. You will wish you had some day—very soon you will—perhaps to-

morrow. Oh yes. While with a firm hand you administer parental discipline, also administer it very gently, lest some day there be a little slab in Greenwood, and on it chiselled "Our Willie," or "Our Charlie," and though you bow down prone to the grave, and seek a place of repentance, and seek it carefully with tears, you cannot find it.

There is another sin that I place in the class of irrevocable mistakes, and that is *lost opportunities of getting good*. I never come to a Saturday night but I can see during that week that I have missed opportunities of getting good. I never come to my birthday but I can see that I have wasted many chances of getting better. I never go home on Sabbath from the discussion of a religious theme without feeling that I might have done it in a more successful way. How is it with you? If you take a certain number of bushels of wheat and scatter them over a certain number of acres of land, you expect a harvest in proportion to the amount of seed scattered. And I ask you to-night, have the sheaves of moral and spiritual harvest corresponded with the advantages given? How has it been with you? You may make resolutions for the future, but past opportunities are gone. In the long procession of future years all those past moments will march; but the archangel's trumpet that wakes the dead will not wake up for you one of those privileges. Esau has sold his birth-right, and *there is not wealth enough* in the treasure-houses of heaven to buy it back again. What does that mean? It means that if you are going to get any advantage out of this Sabbath-day, you will have to get it before the hand wheels around on the clock to twelve to-night. It means that every moment of our life has two wings, and that it does not fly like a hawk, in circles, but in a straight line from eternity to eternity. It means that though other chariots may break down or drag heavily, this one never drops the brake, and never ceases to run. It means that while at other feasts the cup may be passed to us, and we may reject it, and yet after awhile take it, the cup-bearers to this feast never give us but one chance at the chalice, and rejecting that, we shall "find no place for repentance, though we seek it carefully with tears."

There is one more class of sins that I put in this category of irrevocable offences, and that is *lost opportunities of usefulness*. There comes a time when you can do a good thing for Christ. It comes only once. Your business partner is a proud man. In ordinary circumstances say to him : "Believe in Christ," and he will say : "You mind your business and I'll mind mine." But there has been affliction in the household. His heart is tender. He is looking around for sympathy and solace. Now is your time. Speak, speak, or for ever hold your peace. There is a time in farm life when you plant the corn and when you sow the seed. Let that go by, and the farmer will wring his hands while other husbandmen are gathering in the sheaves. You are in a religious meeting, and there is an opportunity for you to speak out for God. You say : "I must do it." Your cheek flushes with embarrassment. You rise half way, but you cower before men, whose breath is in their nostrils, and you shrink back, and the opportunity is gone, and all eternity will feel the effect of your silence. Try to get back that opportunity ! You cannot find it. You might as well try to find the fleece that Gideon watched, or take in your hand the dew that came down on the locks of the Bethlehem shepherds, or to find the plume of the first robin that went across Paradise. It is gone ; it is gone for ever. When an opportunity for personal repentance or of doing good passes away, you may hunt for it, you cannot find it. You may fish for it, it will not take the hook. You may dig for it you cannot bring it up. Remember what I tell you on this the second night in June, 1874, that there are wrongs and sins that can never be corrected : that our privileges fly not in circles, but in a straight line ; that the lightnings have not as swift feet as our privileges when they are gone, and let an opportunity of salvation go by us an inch, the one hundredth part of an inch, the thousandth part of an inch, the millionth part of an inch, and no man can overtake it. Fire winged seraphim cannot come up with it. The eternal God Himself cannot catch it.

I stand before those who have a glorious birthright. Esau's was not so rich as yours. Sell it once and *you sell it for ever*,

The world wants to buy it. Satan wants to buy it. Listen for a moment to these brilliant offers, and it is gone.

Why do I tell you these truths? I have stood before you year after year telling you these things. Some have yielded their hearts to God and a glorious crop of souls has been reaped; but this audience of immortal men and women, are they all prepared for the great future? I could stand here and play a sweeter harp. I could talk of the gates of pearl, and the walls of precious stones, and the crowns of light. What is the use of talking of those things to those who have no preparation for that land, and who are on the wrong road? And so I stand here Sabbath after Sabbath endeavouring to persuade you to give up your sin, and seek after God, and be at peace with Him.

I remember the story of the lad on the *Arctic* some years ago—the lad Stewart Holland. A vessel crashed into the *Arctic* in the time of a fog, and it was found that the ship must go down. Some of the passengers got off in the life-boats, some got off on rafts; but three hundred went to the bottom. During all those hours of calamity, Stewart Holland stood at the signal gun, and it sounded across the sea, boom! boom! The helmsman forsook his place, the engineer was gone, and some fainted, and some prayed, and some blasphemed, and the powder was gone, and they could no more let off the signal gun. The lad broke in the magazine, and brought out more powder, and again the gun boomed over the sea. Oh, my friends, I behold many of you in immortal peril. Sickness will come down after awhile upon you, death will come upon you, judgment will come upon you, eternity will come upon you. Some, having taken the warning, have gone off in the life-boat, and they are safe; but others are not making any attempt to escape. So I stand at this signal gun of the Gospel, sounding the alarm, beware! beware! “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” The wrath to come! The wrath to come! Boom! Boom! Fly to the hope of the Gospel. Jesus waits. He stretches out His arms to all this auditory, and cries to-night with a tenderness I have never heard before: “Come unto me, all ye

who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That is what you want, sinful, tempted, bruised, and dying soul! May the Lord help you to accept the mercy, and the solace, and the salvation of the Gospel! Hear it, that your soul may live!

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## BARTERING FOR ETERNITY.

"*Buy the truth and sell it not.*"—PROV. xxiii. 23.

CHRIST never forgot the occupation of the people to whom He spake. His metaphors and illustrations were apt to be drawn from the every-day business of the people whom He addressed. Speaking to the fishermen, He said: "The Gospel is a net laid down into the sea." Addressing himself to the farmers, He said: "A sower went forth to sow, and some of the seed fell on good ground, and some on thorny ground." That He might attract the attention of the shepherds, He tells the parable of the lost sheep, and how the shepherd went out in the wilderness to bring it home to the fold. In order that the plainest woman who ever mixed bread might not be in doubt as to what He meant, He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, or yeast, which leavens the whole lump." Indeed, there were no learned allusions, there was no profound disquisition, there was no acute analysis in the addresses of Christ. They were merely a plain talk from a heart overflowing with love for the people, in a way that all the people understood. There is hardly a style of mind that is not susceptible to illustration. One Sabbath I was preaching on an Indian reservation to an audience of Indians. I was trying at that time to impress upon them the fact that childhood generally indicated the character of manhood. They did not seem to understand, until I told them, that a *crooked young tree makes a crooked old tree*, and then their eyes flashed with intelligence.

When my text says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not," it employs an illustration which ought to attract the attention of all those directly or indirectly engaged in merchandise. Would to God that we were all as wise in managing the matters of the soul as we are in worldly traffic. I want, this morning, to give some of the characteristics of a wise spiritual merchant.

In the first place, I remark that the wise spiritual merchant *will not neglect to take an account of stock.*

We are coming towards the first of January, and all our business men will be absorbed. They who ordinarily go over at eight or nine o'clock in the morning to business will go at seven, and if you happen to be in the street some night at eleven or twelve o'clock you will meet them, and if you ask "Why are you coming home so late!" they will say, "We are taking an account of stock." Every wise business man does that. Once a year all the goods must be handled, and every shelf must be ransacked, and the remnants must be unrolled, and the dusty bundles unwrapped, and everything in the store must be upturned. Once a year the business man wants to know how things stand. He reviews the books, writes them up, and draws out on a fair balance sheet all his worldly circumstances: so many goods, so many liabilities: so much capital that is comparatively worthless, so much that can be easily turned into cash; so many debts, so many bills out that are perfectly good, so many that are doubtful. In other words, he looks over all the affairs of the year, and knows just what position he occupies. Now, my friends, ought we not to be just as scrutinising in the matters of the soul? The Rothschilds or the Stewarts never did a business of such infinite importance as that going on in the heart of every man and woman in this audience. There are the goods—the faculties and energies and passions of your soul. There are the liabilities to temptation, to danger, and death. Can it be that we have never taken an account of stock? Can it be that we have been running this tremendous business for eternity, and never drawn out our affairs on a balance-sheet? I know such a review is not pleasant.

Neither does any merchant find it agreeable to take an account of stock. You all put the day off as long as you can. You do not know what it may reveal to you. You say, "There may come up something in review that I don't want to know, and yet, after all, I must, as a business man, attend to it." And though you put it off as long as you can, you after a while say ; "Boys, we'll go and take an account of stock." Many a man has been surprised at the close of that operation to find how poorly he was off. Ah ! it is just as unpleasant to review our spiritual condition. The fact is we are insolvent. We owe debts we can never pay. We have been running this business of the soul so poorly, that we have got to be wound up. We can't pay one cent on a dollar. We can't answer for one of ten thousand of our transgressions. There has never in worldly affairs been such a miserable failure in Wall-street or State-street as we have made in spiritual affairs. *We owe God everything.* We have paid Him nothing ; some of us have never tried to pay Him anything.

But sometimes, when a man is thoroughly cornered in business matters, and he says : "I must stop payment," while he is sitting in his store or office thoroughly discouraged, there is a rap at the door. "Come in," he says. An old friend enters. He says : "I hear you are in great difficulty ; how much money will get you out of this embarrassment ?" "Well," you say, "five thousand dollars would." He says : "Here it is," bank—pay so and so. The man is delivered from all his commercial distresses. Just so, while we are sitting down disheartened on account of our sin, and feeling that there is no hope, there is a rap at the door of the heart ; it is Jesus coming in. He says : "What do you want ?" We answer : "We want pardon ; we want peace ; we want the eternal salvation of the Gospel." Jesus says : "There it is." The debts are paid, the obligations are cancelled. Now, we do business on an infinite capital. Now, we have on paper the name of the King. Now all the banks of eternity are ready with their loans. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes ;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake  
I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”

I remark again, the wise spiritual merchant will be on his *guard against burglars*. How long it takes you to lock up your store at night. You put your valuables in the safe, you shut to the door, you turn the lock, you try it afterwards to be sure it is fastened, you bolt and rebolt your doors. You have a watchman, perhaps, at the store. You charge the police when they go up and down, once in a while to look in. In addition to that, perhaps, you have a burglar alarm, so that the opening of a window or door in the night, with a great rattle will wake up the watchman. Perhaps you have a watch-dog under the counter, who feels the responsibility of the store resting on his shaggy neck, his mouth down between his paws. If there be the least sound, he lifts one ear, he lifts his head, he rises up, and then lies down again with a growl, as much as to say : “ I wish it had been somebody.” Would to God we were as wise in regard to spiritual burglaries. There are a thousand temptations around about our soul, ready to blow it up : ready to blast it ; ready to push the bolt and steal the infinite and immortal treasure. The apostle says : “ What I say unto one, I say unto all—watch.” That is, look out for burglars. Here comes a thief stealing our Christian belief, and it is very easy to lose it, but it is not so easy to get it back again. Let it once be gone, and all the detectives of earth cannot fetch it back. Alas for the man who, once believing in Christianity, now rejects it ! He tries to be satisfied ; but the most doleful thing on earth is a religion without Jesus Christ in it. If there are any spies at the door of your heart, if any of those burglars are trying to break in the windows of your soul, you had better fly at them with infinite vehemence, and ask the Lord God to help you in the arrest.

Here is another trying to break in and steal your patience. It puts something explosive in your temper and tries to blow



it up. Here you have a casket of diamonds, made of days and hours and months of precious time. Oh, how many burglars there are around trying to steal those diamonds. Temptations to pride, temptations to self-indulgence, temptations to neglect the great things of eternity, make up a gang of desperadoes that have broken out of the jail of hell, and prowling around our soul trying to steal this treasure, and, in the name of God, I bid you arm against them. They have taken many of the spoils already, and I cry : "*Stop thief;*"

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

I remark, again, that the wise spiritual merchant will *watch the state of the markets*. When the business man takes up the paper in the morning, he does not first look at the marriages and deaths, or the editorials. He looks at the price current. Before ten o'clock, merchants all know whether gold has gone up or down, whether the goods they have on the shelf have increased or decreased in value. A man might say ; " It is nothing to me how others do business, or what prices others get, I shall go straight on without any reference to anybody else in business." You know that would be the precursor of bankruptcy. He watches the markets ; he cannot afford to be indifferent. Now, I say we ought to be just as alert in looking at the spiritual markets. We ought to know whether the cause of God in the earth is going up or down. No man can be independent of the general state of morals and of religion in a community. For this reason, every intelligent Christian will be examining the churches, the schools, and the benevolent organizations. The failure of a crop in Russia, or of a bank in London, or the breaking out of a war in India, affects prices in the New

York market, and the conversion of one soul in Central Africa ought to leave its impression on every intelligent Christian in Brooklyn. It is my business this morning to proclaim to you the state of the spiritual markets, and I tell you the cause of God is advancing. The people are buying the truth, and are not so disposed to sell it as they used to be. The ships of Tarshish are coming into the harbour of God, and the gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, are showering down at the feet of Jesus. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is rising. The nations are bidding for this Gospel, and the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver.

If this religion of Christ is advancing in value, and must continue advancing, your business judgment will tell you the larger the investment you make in it the better. Other values may have depressions, but these Gospel values *always will be on the advance*. Sometimes the government comes on the marts of business and upsets the planning of the gold gamblers, and vindicates justice and the rights of the people, and the Lord God Almighty is the mightiest of financiers, and He will scatter to the four winds of heaven all the plotters of iniquity, and he will vindicate his government, and make His own children the princes of eternity.

Oh, these spiritual values—men do not know how to estimate them. You give a dollar to a Christian object and say: "That's gone, I'll never hear of that again." You give twenty-five dollars to worldly gratification, and you think you have made a good investment. Have you? Of the twenty-five dollars you gave to the worldly gratification you will hear nothing; but that one dollar has been an investment that will go on accumulating interest, and adding compound interest, until it will take the mightiest intelligence of heaven to estimate what is the value of that dollar rolling on through all eternity until the banking houses of heaven cannot hold the accumulation. We cannot understand now God's way of estimating things. The woman who sells in her thread and needle store one thousand dollars' worth a year, cannot estimate the plans of a man who sells two millions of dollars'

worth of goods a year. God's projects are too vast for us. We talk of one man buying a railroad, or of another buying half a city : why the Lord Jesus Christ bought the whole earth and paid for it in one day—paid for it in tears and agony and blood ! You talk about vast corporations, and moneyed institutions, and powerful companies ; but the richest company in all the universe is the company of Christ's disciples, and the poorest one of them will be a millionaire to all eternity. I take one of these bonds of the company, and I tear off just one coupon, and hand it to you, and you read on that coupon these words : "*All are yours.*" If a man wants a better dividend than that, I do not know where he will get it.

Again, I remark that the wise spiritual merchant is *careful to get a profit out of everything that passes through his hands.* You go into the store. You see the roll of nankeen, or the barrel of sugar, or the string of bananas, or the coil of ship cable. Before the merchant lets them pass out of his hands, he will make a profit out of them. If he has paid ten cents a yard for something, he will get twelve or fifteen ; if he has paid twenty-five cents for a pound, he will get thirty. Now, I say *the wise spiritual merchant* will get a spiritual advantage out of everything that comes across him—from all sorrows, all perplexities, all vexations. He will take these harrows and furnaces of trouble, and from them get an everlasting profit. Affliction has failed of its object if it does not leave a soul worth more than when it came. It is very interesting to get into confidential conversation with a man who has gained a large property, and to have him tell you just how he made his money ; but it is more interesting to get into the confidence of an old Christian, and have him tell you just how he accumulated his wealth of Christian character. He will say : "My property went down in 1857, but I came out of that trouble with infinite resources of spiritual comfort and strength." He will say : "I was sick for three months and could not do a stroke of work ; and when I came forth I was as weak as a child, and staggered along the street ; but oh, my soul had the

strength of a giant." And he will tell you of the dark day that came in his household when a loved one was carried out, and he felt that everything was gone with it; and on his way back from the cemetery Jesus met him and said: "Weep not, I will make up for thy loss; I will more than make up for it. Why, those little feet are already bounding along the corridors of heaven. That hand is already sweeping the harp-string of glory." Jesus took that afflicted father to the verge of the grave and bid him look down into it, and instead of a grave it became a chest of immortal brilliants; and as he ran his hand up and down the gate of the sepulchre he found it hard, cold, rusty iron; but Jesus touched it and it became solid pearl—bars of pearl—bolts of pearl, hinges of pearl, and lo! it was the gate of heaven. "All things work together for good to those who love God;" and I pray the Lord Almighty that whatever misfortune, whatever vexation, whatever trial, whatever bereavements pass through our soul, we may reap from them a spiritual tariff that will make us richer while we live on earth, and glad through all eternity.

I remark again, that the wise spiritual merchant will not take any *unnecessary risks*. Before the ship goes out of the harbour, application is made to the marine insurance company; the Board of Underwriters say it is all right, the insurance papers are signed and delivered; it is the only safe way to do. Twelve hours after the ship gets beyond the Hook, it might perish, and the whole thing might be a total loss. A man will not take such a risk for himself. You have your store insured; you have your stock of goods insured. If the insurance runs out on Saturday, you do not wait until Monday to renew it. You say, on Sunday the whole thing may perish in a conflagration. You cannot afford to take the risk. Somebody shows you an operation by which you might make perhaps, five thousand dollars; but you say: "Perhaps I might not. Perhaps I might lose that and ruin my credit. I can't take the risk." So you do not enter into the enterprise. Oh that we were as wise in taking spiritual risks. We will, after a while, founder on

the sea of death. *What is the amount of our policy?* How will we come out of that disaster? Suppose a man says: "I am not ready now for eternity, but I mean to be." Let us calculate the risk; not as a minister talks to the people, but as one business man talks to another; let us calculate the risk that man runs. The lungs may congest; the brain may be fevered; the foot may slip; a brick may fall from the workman's hod; ferry boats may collide; a frightened horse may dash over him; a pistol may go off accidentally; poisoned air may be breathed; the reason may topple; the heart may stop. The man who stays away from Jesus Christ, and makes no preparation for eternity, runs ten thousand risks, infinite risks, every day of his life. After Lord Byron died, they cut his heart out, and put it in a beautiful case; and some people, who were infatuated with the man, thought that there was in that heart in the case some wonderful charm; and the Greeks carried it out into battle and it was lost—lost in the swamps, and never heard of. It was considered an ominous and a terrible loss. But, my friends, it was only a dead heart. What was that compared with the loss of a *living, immortal soul?* Christ saw that soul from eternity, and travelling in the greatness of His strength across all the ages, He comes to save it, and stands this morning in its presence. Will you let Him save it? Oh, this soul that you have beating within your breast—this soul of tremendous faculties, a soul that can soar higher than angel's wing ever flew, or sink deeper than devil's foot ever plunged—a soul that will soon weigh anchor for a ceaseless voyage—a soul for which all the armies of light with drawn swords, and all the battalions of the darkness, with the artillery of death, are contending; and while the battle rages there are songs and curses, opening of gates of light, and slamming-to of prison doors. Oh, my God, have I such a soul? How shall I defend it? How shall I hide it? In what cave of the mountain shall I secrete it? Rather than surrender that soul, I must pass the stream; I must go through the fire; I must climb the rocks; I must station myself in some defile of the mountain, and, with immortal

courage and persistence, fight against those influences that would capture my soul and destroy it.

Blessed be God, in Jesus Christ the soul is safe. There is no risk for that soul that is in Christ's keeping. All other banks may fail, all other securities may prove worthless, but the greater the rush upon this Bank, the wider the doors will open. As earthly gold depreciates, this treasure will rise in value. After all earthly shares have failed, heaven will declare its large dividend. Long after the last stock exchange of earth has been disbanded, "the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." If you have made these spiritual investments, I congratulate you. They will increase in value while you live; they will be worth more in eternity than they are now. I bid you be of good cheer. Look out that none of your treasures are stolen. Are there some here who have never bought the truth? or, after buying it, have you sold it? Let me say you are not wise. The Indian who sells a thousand acres of land for one poor string of beads, makes a better bargain than that man who wins the world but loses his soul.

James Montgomery solemnly asks :

"What is the thing of greatest price  
The whole creation round?  
That which was lost in Paradise,  
That which in Christ was found."

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## *THE LAST ACT OF THE TRAGEDY.*

*"And the people stood beholding."*—LUKE xxiii. 35.

**T**H**E**R**E** is nothing more wild and ungovernable than a mob. Some of the older people in the audience may remember the excitement in New York during the riot which the people went howling through the streets at the time Macready stood on the stage of the Astor-place opera-house,

Those of you who have read history may remember the excitement in Paris during the time of Louis XVI., and how the mob rushed up and down frantically. To this day you may see the marks of the bullets that struck the palace as the Swiss guards stood defending it. There is a wild mob going through the streets of Jerusalem. As it passes along it is augmented by the multitudes that come out from the lanes and the alleys to join the shout, and the laughter, and the lamentation of the rioters, who become more and more ungovernable as they get towards the gates of the city. Fishermen, hirelings of the high priests, merchant princes, beggars, mingle in that crowd. They are passing out now through the gates of the city. They come to a hill white with the bleached skulls of victims—a hill that was itself the shape of a skull, covered with skulls, and called Golgotha, which means the place of a skull. Three men are to be put to death—two for theft, one for treason, having claimed to be king of the Jews. Each one carries his own cross, but one of them is so exhausted from previous hardship that He faints under the burden, and they compel Simon of Cyrene, who is supposed to be in sympathy with the condemned man, to take hold of one end of the cross and help Him to carry it. They reach the hill. The three men are lifted in horrid crucifixion. When the mob are howling, and mocking, and hurling scorn at the chief object of their hate, the darkness hovers, and scowls, and swoops upon the scene, and the rocks rend with terrific clang, and choking wind, and moaning cavern, and dropping sky, and shuddering earthquake declare, in whisper, in groan, in shriek : “*This is the Son of God.*”

I propose to speak of the two groups of spectators around the cross—the *friendly* and the *unfriendly*. In the unfriendly group were the Roman soldiers. Now it is a grand thing to serve one's country. There is not an Englishman's heart but thrills at the name of Havelock, brave for Christ and brave for the British Government. When there was a difficult point to take, the officers would say : “Bring out the saints of old Havelock.” I think, if Paul had gone into

military service, he would have eclipsed the heroism of the Cæsars, and the Alexanders, and the Napoleons of the world by his bravery and enthusiasm. There is a time to be at peace, and there is a time when a Christian has to fight. I do not know of a graver or braver thing than for a young man, when it is demanded of him, to turn his back upon home, and quiet, and luxury, and, in the service of his country, go forth to camp, and field, and carnage, and martyrdom. It was no mean thing to be a Roman soldier : it was no idle thing. You know what revolutions dashed up against the walls of that empire. You know to what conquest she devoted herself, flinging her war-eagles against the proudest ensigns. But the noblest army has in it sneaks, and these were the men who were detailed from that army to attend to the execution of Christ. Their dastardly behaviour puts out the gleam of their spears, and covers their banner with obloquy. They were cowards. They were ruffians. They were gamblers. No noble soldier would treat a fallen foe as they treated the captured Christ. Generally there is respect paid to the garments of the departed. It may be only a hat, or a coat, or a shoe, but it goes down in the family wardrobe from generation to generation. Now that Christ is to be disrobed, who shall have His coat ? Joseph of Arimathea would have liked to have had it. Mary, the mother of Jesus, would have liked to have had it. How fondly she would have hovered over it, and when she must leave it, with what tenderness she would have bequeathed it to her best friend. It was *the only covering of Christ* in darkness and storm. That was the very coat that the woman touched when from it there went out virtue for her healing. That was the only wedding garment he had in the marriage of Cana, and the storms that swept Galilee had drenched it again and again. And what did they do with it ? They raffled for it. We have heard of men who gambled away their own garments, who gambled away their children's shoes, who gambled away the family Bible, who gambled away their wife's last dress : but it adds to the ghastliness of a Saviour's humiliation and the horror of crime,



when I hear Jesus in His last moments declaring: "They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots."

In this unfriendly group around the cross also were *the rulers, and the scribes, and the chief priests*. Lawyers, and judges, and ministers of religion in this day are expected to have some respect for their office. In this land, where the honours of the judiciary sometimes come to besotted politicians and men noted for drunkenness—even in this land, where we live, it is an unheard-of thing that a judge comes down from the bench and strikes a prisoner in the face. No minister of religion would scoff at or mock a condemned criminal. And yet the great men of that land seemed to be equal to any ruffianism. They were vieing with each other as to how much scorn and Billingsgate they could cast into the teeth of the dying Christ. Why, the worst felon, when his enemy has fallen, refuses to strike him. But these men were not ashamed to strike Jesus when He was down. So it has been in all ages of the world that there have been men in high positions who despised Christ and His Gospel. What Popes have issued their anathemas! What judgment-seats have kindled their fires! What inquisitions have sharpened their sword! "Not this man, but Barabbas: now Barabbas was a robber." Against the Christian religion have been brought the historical genius of Gibbon, and the polish of Shaftesbury, and the kingly authority of Frederick of Prussia, and the brilliancy of John, Earl of Rochester, and the stupendous intellect of Voltaire. Innumerable pens have stabbed it, and innumerable books have cursed it, and that mob that hounded Christ from Jerusalem to "the place of a skull" has never been dispersed, but is augmenting yet, as many of the learned men of the world, and great men of the world, come out from their studies, and their laboratories, and their palaces, and cry: "Away with this man! away with Him!" The most bitter hostility which many of the learned men of this day exercise in any direction they exercise against Jesus Christ,

the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, without whom we will die for ever.

In this group of enemies surrounding the cross, in this unfriendly group, I also find *the railing thief*. It seems that he twisted himself on the spikes; he forgot his own pain in his complete antipathy to Jesus. I do not know what kind of a thief he was. I do not know whether he had been a burglar, or a pickpocket, or a highwayman; but our idea of his crimes is aggravated when we hear him blaspheming the Redeemer. Oh, shame indescribable! Oh, ignominy unsupportable! Hissed at by a thief! In that ridicule I find the fact that there is a hostility between sin and holiness. There cannot be, there never has been, any sympathy between honesty and theft, between purity and lasciviousness, between zeal and indolence, between faith and unbelief, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell. And when I see a good man going out to discharge his duty, and he is enthusiastic for Christ, and I see persecution after him, and scorn after him, and contempt after him, I say: "Hark! another hiss of the dying thief!" And when I see Holiness going forth in her white robes, and Charity, with great heart and open hand, to take care of the sick, and help the needy, and restore the lost, and I find her lashed with hyper-criticism, and jostled of the world, and pursued from point to point, and caricatured with low witticisms, I say: "Aha! another hiss of the dying thief!" It is a sad thing to know that this malefactor died just as he had lived. People nearly always do. Have you never remarked that? There is but one instance mentioned in all the Bible of a man repenting in the last hour. All the other men who lived lives of iniquity, as far as we can understand from the Bible, died deaths of iniquity. If you live a drunkard's life, you will die a drunkard: the defrauder dies a defrauder; the idler dies an idler; the blasphemer dies a blasphemer; the slanderer dies a slanderer; the debauchee dies a debauchee. As you live you will die, in all probability. Do not, therefore, make your soul believe that you can go on in a course of sin, and then in the last moment repent. There is such a thing as death-bed re-

pentance, but I never saw one—I never saw one. God in all this Bible presents us only one case of that kind, and it is not safe to risk it, lest our case should happen not to be the one amid ten thousand.

“Repent ! the voice celestial cries,  
 No longer dare delay ;  
 The wretch that scorns the mandate dies,  
 And meets the fiery day.”

But there were rays of light that streamed into the crucifixion. As Christ was on the cross and looked down on the crowd of people, He saw some very warm friends there. And that brings me to the remarking upon the friendly group that were around the cross. And the first in all that crowd was His mother. You need not point her out to me. I can see by the sorrow, the anguish, the woe, by the up-thrown hands ! That all means mother ! “Oh,” you say : “why didn’t she go down to the foot of the hill and sit with her back to the scene ? It was too horrible for her to look upon.” Do you not know when a child is in anguish or trouble, it always makes a heroine of a mother ? Take her away, you say, from the cross. You cannot drag her away. She will keep on looking ; as long her son breathes she will stand there looking. Oh what a scene it was for a tender-hearted mother to look upon. How gladly she would have sprung to His relief. It was her son. Her son ! How gladly she would have clambered up on the cross and hung there herself if her son could have been relieved. How strengthening she would have been to Christ if she might have come close by Him and soothed Him. Oh, there was a good deal in what the little sick child said, upon whom a surgical operation of a painful nature must be performed. The doctor said : “That child wont live through this operation unless you encourage him. You go in and get his consent.” The father told him all the doctor said, and added : “Now, John, will you go through with it ? Will you consent to it ?” He looked very pale, and he thought a minute, and said : “Yes, father, if you will hold my hand I will !”

So the father held his hand and let him straight through the peril. Oh woman, in your hour of anguish, who do you want with you? Mother. Young man, in your hour of trouble, who do you want to console you? Mother. If the mother of Jesus could have only taken those bleeding feet into her lap! If she might have taken the dying head on her bosom! If she might have said to Him: "It will soon be over, Jesus—it will soon be over, and we will meet again and it will be all well." But no, she dared not come up so close. They would have struck her back with their hammers. They would have kicked her down the hill. *There can be no alleviation* at all. Jesus *must* suffer and Mary *must* look. I suppose she thought of the birth-hour in Bethlehem. I suppose she thought of that time when with her boy in her bosom she hastened on in the darkness in the flight towards Egypt. I suppose she thought of His boyhood when He was the joy of her heart. I suppose she thought of the thousand kindnesses He had done her, not forsaking her or forgetting her even in His last moments; but turning to John and saying: "There is mother; take her with you. She is old now. She cannot help herself. Do for her just as I would have done for her if I had lived. Be very tender and gentle with her. Behold thy mother!" She thought it all over; and there is no memory like a mother's memory, and there is no woe like a mother's woe.

There was another friend in that group, and that was Simon the Cyrenian. He was a stranger in the land, but had been long enough to show his favoritism for Christ. I suppose he was one of those men who never can see anybody imposed upon but he wants to help him. "Well, Simon," they cried out, "you are such a friend to Jesus, help Him to carry the cross. You see Him fainting under it." So he did. A scene for all the ages of time and all the cycles of eternity; a cross with Jesus at the one end of it and Simon at the other, suggesting the idea to you, oh troubled soul, that no one need ever carry a whole cross. You have only half a cross to carry. If you are in poverty, Jesus was poor, and He comes and takes the other end of the cross. If you

are in persecution, Jesus was persecuted, and He comes and takes the other end of the cross. If you are in any kind of trouble, you have a sympathising Redeemer. Oh how the truth flashed upon my soul this morning. Jesus at one end of the cross and the soul at the other end of the cross ; and when I see Christ and Simon going up the hill together, I say we ought to help each other to carry our burdens. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." If you find a man in persecution, or sickness, or in business trouble, go right to him and say : "My brother, I have come to help you. You take hold of one end of this cross and I will take hold of the other end of the cross, and Jesus Christ will come in and take hold of the middle of the cross ; and after awhile there will be no cross at all."

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

But there was another marked personage in that friendly group. That was the penitent malefactor. He was a thief, or had been ; no disguising that fact. All his crimes came upon him with relentless conviction. What was he to do ? "Oh," he says, "what shall I do with my sins upon me ?" and he looks around and sees Jesus, and sees compassion in His face, and he says : "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." What did Jesus do ? Did He turn and say : "You thief ! I have seen all your crimes, and you have jeered and scoffed at me, now die for ever ?" Did He say that ? Oh no ; Jesus could not say that. He says : "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." I sing the song of mercy for the chief of sinners. Murderers have come and plunged their red hands in this fountain, and they have been made as white as snow. The prodigal that was off for twenty years has come back and sat at his father's table. The ship that has been tossed in a thousand storms floats into this harbour. The parched and sunstruck soul comes under the shadow of this rock. Tens of thousands

who were as bad as you and I have been, have put down their burdens and their sins at the feet of this blessed Jesus.

“The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day ;  
And there may I, as vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away.”

But there was another friendly group. I do not know their names : we are not told : but we are simply told there were many around the cross who sympathised with the dying sufferer. Oh the wail of woe that went through that crowd when they saw Jesus die. You know the Bible says if all the things Jesus did were recorded the world would not contain the books that would be written. It implies that what we have in the Bible are merely specimens of the Saviour's mercy. We are told that one blind man got his eyesight. I suppose He cured twenty that we are not told of. When He cured the one leper whose story is recorded, He might have cured twenty lepers. Where He did one act of kindness mentioned, He must have done a thousand we do not know about. I see those who received kindnesses from Him standing beneath the cross, and one says : “Why, that is the Jesus that bound up my broken heart.” And another standing beneath the cross says : “That is the Jesus that restored my daughter to life.” Another looks up and says : “Why that is Jesus who gave me my eyesight.” And another looks up and says : “That is the Jesus who lifted me up when I was sick ; oh, I can't bear to see Him die.” Every pelt of the hammer drove a spike through their hearts. Every groan of Christ opens a new fountain of sorrow. They had better get on with that crucifixion quickly or it will never take place. These disciples will seize Christ and snatch Him from the grasp of those bad men, and take those ringleaders of the persecution and put them up in the very place. Be quick with those nails. Be quick with that gall. Be quick with those spikes, for I see in the sorrow and the wrath of those disciples a

storm brewing that will burst on the heads of those persecutors.

To-day we come and we join the friendly crowd. *Who wants to be on the wrong side?* I cannot bear to be in the unfriendly group. There is not a man or a woman in this house who wants to be in the unfriendly group. I want to join the other group. We come while they are bewailing, and join their lamentations. We see that brow bruised; we hear that dying groan; and, while the priests scoff, and the devils rave, and the lightnings of God's wrath are twisted into a wreath for that bloody mount, you and I will join the cry, the supplication, of the penitent malefactor: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Oh, the pain, the ignominy, the ghastliness, the agony; and yet the joy, the thrilling, bounding, glorious hope! *Son of Mary! Son of God!*

Is there one here who will reject this atonement made for the people; not for one man here and one man there, but for all who will accept it?

There was a very touching scene among an Indian tribe in the last century. It seemed that one of the chieftains had slain a man belonging to an opposite tribe, and that tribe came up and said: "We will exterminate you unless you surrender the man who committed that crime." The chieftain who did the crime stepped out from the ranks, and said: "I am not afraid to die, but I have a wife and four children, and I have a father aged, and a mother aged, whom I support by hunting, and I sorrow to leave them helpless." Just as he said that, his old father from behind stepped out and said: "He shall not die. I take his place. I am old and well stricken in years. I can do no good. I might as well die. My days are almost over. He cannot be spared. Take me." And they accepted the sacrifice. Wonderful sacrifice, you say; but not so wonderful as that found in the Gospel; for we deserved to die, aye, we were sentenced, when Christ, not worn out with years, but in the flush of His youth, said: "Save that man from going down to the pit; I am the ransom! Put his burdens on My shoulders. Let His

stripes fall on My back. Take My heart for his heart. Let Me die, that he may live." Shall it be told to-day in heaven that, notwithstanding all those wounds, and all that blood, and all those tears, and all that agony, you would not accept him ?

"Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty maker, died  
For man, the creature's, sin.

Thus might I hide my blushing face  
While His dear cross appears,  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness  
And melt my eyes in tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay  
The debt of love I owe ;  
Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
"Tis all that I can do."

Oh, Lord Jesus, we accept Thee. We all accept Thee now. There is no hand in all this great audience lifted to smite Thee on the cheek now. No one will spear Thee now. No one will strike Thee now. Come in, Lord Jesus ! Come quickly.

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## THE STORMING OF THE TEMPLE OF BERITH.

*"And Abimelech gat him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him ; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him : What ye have seen me do, make haste*



*and do as I have done. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died.*"—JUDGES ix. 48, 49.

**A**BIMELECH is a name malodorous in Bible history, and yet full of profitable suggestion. Buoys are black and uncomely, but they tell where the rocks are. The snake's rattle is hideous, but it gives timely warning. From the piazza of my summer home, night by night, I saw a lighthouse fifteen miles away, not placed there for adornment, but to tell mariners to stand off from that dangerous point. So all the iron-bound coast of danger is marked with Saul, and Herod, and Rehoboam, and Jezebel, and Abimelech. These bad people are mentioned in the Bible not only as warnings, but because there were sometimes flashes of good conduct in their lives worthy of imitation. God sometimes drives a very straight nail with a very poor hammer.

The city of Shechem had to be taken, and Abimelech and his men were to do it. I see the dust rolling up from their excited march. I hear the shouting of the captains and the yell of the besiegers. The swords clack sharply on the parrying shields, and the vociferation of two armies in death grapple is horrible to hear. The battle goes on all day; and as the sun is setting Abimelech and his army cry; "Surrender!" to the beaten foe. And unable longer to resist, the city of Shechem falls; and there are pools of blood, and dis-severed limbs, and glazed eyes looking up begging for mercy that war never shows, and dying soldiers with their head on the lap of mother, or wife, or sister, who have come out for the last offices of kindness and affection; and a groan rolls across the city, stopping not, because there is no spot for it to rest, so full is the place of other groans. A city wounded! A city dying! A city dead! Wail for Shechem all ye who know the horrors of a sacked town!

As I look over the city, I can find only one building standing, and that is the temple of the god Berith. Some soldiers

outside of the city in a tower, finding that they can no longer defend Shechem, now begin to look out for their own personal safety, and they fly to this temple of Berith. They get within the door, shut it, and they say : " Now, we are safe. Abimelech has taken the whole city, but he cannot take this temple of Berith. Here we shall be under the protection of the gods." Oh, Berith, the god ! do your best for these refugees. If you have eyes, pity them. If you have hands, help them. If you have thunderbolts, strike for them. But how shall Abimelech and his army take this temple of Berith and the men who are there fortified ? Will they do it with sword ? Nay. Will they do it with spear ? Nay. With battering ram, rolled up by hundred-armed strength, crashing against the walls ? Nay. Abimelech marches his men to a wood in Zalmon. With his axe he hews off a limb of a tree, and puts that limb upon his own shoulder, and then he says to his men : " You do the same." They are obedient to their commander. There is a struggle as to who shall have axes. The whole wood is *full of bending boughs*, and the crackling, and the hacking, and the cutting, until every one of the host has a limb of a tree cut down, and not only that, but has put it upon his shoulder just as Abimelech showed him how. Are these men now all armed with the tree branch ? The reply comes : " All armed." And they march on. Oh, what a strange army, with what strange equipment. They come up to the foot of the temple of Berith, and Abimelech takes his limb of a tree and throws it down ; and the first platoon of soldiers come up and they throw down their branches ; and the second platoon, and the third, until all around about the temple of Berith there is a pile of tree branches. The Shechemites look out from the window of the temple upon what seems to them childish play on the part of their enemies. But soon the flints are struck, and the spark begins to kindle the brush, and the flame comes up all through the pile, and the red elements leap to the casement, and the wood-work begins to blaze, and one arm of flame is thrown up on the right side of the temple, and another arm of flame is thrown up on the left side of the temple, until they

clasp their lurid palms under the wild night sky, and the cry of "Fire!" within, and "Fire!" without, announces the terror, and the strangulation, and the doom of the Shechemites, and the complete overthrow of the temple of the god Berith. Then there went up a shout, long and loud, from the stout lungs and swarthy chests of Abimelech and his men, as they stood amid the ashes and the dust crying: "Victory! Victory!" Or, as the text has it: "And Abimelech gat him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him: What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died."

Now I learn first from this subject, *the folly of depending upon any one form of tactics in anything we have to do for this world or for God.* Look over the weaponry of olden times—javelins, battle-axes, harbegeons, and show me a single weapon with which Abimelech and his men could have gained such complete triumph. It is no easy thing to take a temple thus armed. I saw a house yesterday where, during revolutionary times, a man and his wife kept back a whole regiment hour after hour, because they were inside the house, and the assaulting solders were outside the house. Yet here Abimelech and his army come up, they surround this temple, and they capture it without the loss of a single man on the part of Abimelech, although I suppose some of the old Israelitish heroes told Abimelech: "You are only going up there to be cut to pieces." Yet you are willing to testify to-day that by no other mode—certainly not by ordinary modes could that temple so easily, so thoroughly, have been taken. Fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, in Jesus Christ, what the Church most wants to learn, this day, is that any plan is right, is lawful, is best, which helps to overthrow the temple of sin, and capture this world for

God. We are very apt to stick to the old modes of attack. We put on the old-style coat of mail. We come up with the sharp, keen, glittering steel spear of argument, expecting in that way to take the castle ; but they have a thousand spears where we have ten. And so the castle of sin stands. Oh, my friends we will *never capture this world* for God by any keen sabre of sarcasm, by any glittering lances of rhetoric, by any sapping and mining of profound disquisition, by any gunpowdery explosions of indignation, by sharp shootings of wit, by howitzers of mental strength made to swing shell five miles, by cavalry horses gorgeously caparisoned pawing the air. In vain all the attempts on the part of these ecclesiastical foot soldiers, light horsemen, and grenadiers.

My friends, I propose, this morning, a different style of tactics. Let each one go to the forest of God's promise and invitation, and hew down a branch, and put it on his shoulder, and let us all come around these obstinate iniquities, and then, with this pile, kindled by the fires of a holy zeal and the flames of a consecrated life, we will burn them out. What steel cannot do, fire may. And I, this morning, announce myself in favour of any plan of religious attack that succeeds—any plan of religious attack, however radical, however odd, however unpopular, however hostile to all the conventionalities of Church and State. If one style of prayer does not do the work, let us try another style. If the Church music of to-day does not get the victory, then let us make the assault with a backwoods chorus. If a prayer-meeting at half-past seven in the evening does not succeed, let us have one as early in the morning as when the angel found wrestling Jacob too much for him. If a sermon with the three authorised heads does not do the work, then let us have a sermon with twenty heads, or no head at all. We want more heart in our song, more heart in our alms-giving, more heart in our prayers, more heart in our preaching. Oh for less of Abimelech's sword and more of Abimelech's conflagration ! I had often heard

“There is a fountain filled with blood”

sung artistically by four birds perched on their Sunday roost in the gallery, until I thought of Jenny Lind, and Nillson, and Sontag, and all the other warblers ; but there came not one tear to my eye, nor one master emotion to my heart. But one night I went down to the African Methodist meeting-house in Philadelphia, and at the close of the service a black woman, in the midst of the audience, began to sing that hymn, and all the audience joined in, and we were floated some three or four miles nearer heaven than I have ever been since. I saw with my own eyes that "fountain filled with blood,"—red, agonizing, sacrificial, redemptive, and I heard the crimson splash of the wave as we all went down under it.

"For sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains."

Oh, my friends, the Gospel is not a syllogism ; it is not casuistry, it is not polemics, or the science of squabble. It is blood-red fact ; it is warm-hearted invitation ; it is leaping, bounding, flying good news ; it is efflorescent with all light ; it is rufescent with all summery glow ; it is aborescent with all sweet shade. I have seen the sun rise on Mount Washington, and from the Tip-top House ; but there was no beauty in that compared with the day-spring from on high when Christ gives light to a soul. I have heard Parepa sing : but there was no music in that compared with the voice of Christ when He said : "Thy sins are forgiven thee ; go in peace." Good news ! Let every one *cut down a branch* of this tree of life and wave it. Let him throw it down and kindle it. Let all the way from Mount Zalmon to Shechem be filled with the tossing joy. Good news ! This bonfire of the Gospel shall consume the last temple of sin, and will illumine the sky with apocalyptic joy, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Any new plan that makes a man quit his sin, and that prostrates a wrong, I am as much in favour of as though all the doctors, and the bishops, and the archbishops, and the synods, and the academical gowns-

men of Christianity sanctioned it. The temple of Berith must come down, and I do not care how it comes.

Still further, I learn from this subject *the power of example*. If Abimelech had sat down on the grass, and told his men to go and get the boughs, and go out to the battle, they would never have gone at all, or if they had, it would have been without any spirit or effective result ; but when Abimelech goes with his own axe and hews down a branch, and with Abimelech's arm puts it on Abimelech's shoulder, and marches on, then, my text says, all the people did the same. How natural that was. What made Garibaldi and Stonewall Jackson the most magnetic commanders of this century ? They always rode ahead. Oh, the overcoming power of example. Here is a father on the wrong road : all his boys go on the wrong road. Here is a father who enlists for Christ ; his children enlist. I saw in some of the picture galleries of Europe, that before many of the great works of the masters—the old masters—there would be sometimes four or five artists taking copies of the pictures. These copies they were going to carry with them, perhaps, to distant lands ; and I have thought that your life and character are a masterpiece, and it is being copied, and long after you are gone it will bloom or blast in the homes of those who knew you, and be a Gorgon or a Madonna. Look out what you say. Look out what you do. Eternity will hear the echo. The best sermon ever preached is a holy life. The best music ever chanted is a consistent walk. If you want others to serve God, serve Him yourself. If you want others to shoulder their duty, shoulder yours. Where Abimelech goes his troops go. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob. The father good, it was easy enough for the son and grandson to be good. Ahaziah begat Joash, and Joash begat Jeroboam. The father bad, it was easy enough for the son and grandson to be bad. Oh, start out for heaven to-day, and your family will come after you, and your business associates will come after you, and your social friends will join you. With one branch of the tree of life for a baton, marshal

just as many as you can gather. Oh, the infinite, the semi-omnipotent power of a good or a bad example !

I saw the other day, near the beach, a wrecker's machine. It was a cylinder with some holes at the side, made for the thrusting in of some long poles with strong leverage ; and when there is another vessel in trouble or going to pieces out in the offing, the wreckers shoot a rope out to the suffering men. They grasp it, and the wreckers turn the cylinder, and the rope winds around the cylinder, and those who are shipwrecked are saved. So at your feet, to-day, there is an influence with *a tremendous leverage*. The rope attached to it swings far out into the billowy future. Your children, your children's children, and all the generations that are to follow, will grip that influence, and feel the long-reaching pull long after the figures on your tombstone are so near worn out that the visitor cannot tell whether it was in 1874, or 1774, or 1674, that you died.

Still further, I learn from this subject *the advantage of concerted action*. If Abimelech had merely gone out with a tree branch, the work would not have been accomplished, or if ten, twenty, or thirty men had gone ; but when all the axes are lifted, and all the sharp edges fall, and all these men carry each his tree branch down and throw it about the temple, the victory is gained—the temple falls. My friends, where there is one man in the Church of God at this day shouldering his whole duty, there are a great many who never lift an axe or swing a blow. It seems to me as if there were ten drones in every hive to one busy bee ; as though there were twenty sailors sound asleep in the ship's hammock to four men on the stormy deck. It seems as if there were fifty thousand men belonging to the reserve corps, and only one thousand active combatants. Oh, we all want our boat to get over to the golden sands ; but the most of us are seated either in the prow or in the stern, wrapped in our striped shawl, holding a big-handled sunshade, while others are blistered in the heat, and pull until the oar-locks groan, and the blades bend till they snap. Oh, you religious sleepy-heads, wake up ! While we have in our church a great

many who are toiling for God, there are some too lazy to brush the flies off their heavy eyelids. You have laid so long in one place that the ants and caterpillars have begun to crawl over you! I should not wonder if some of this church membership should wake up in hell. What do you know, my brother, about a living Gospel made to storm the world? Now, my idea of a Christian is a man on fire with zeal for God; and if your pulse ordinarily beats sixty times a minute when you think of other themes, and talk about other themes, if your pulse does not go up to seventy-five or eighty when you come to talk about Christ and heaven, it is because you do not know the one, and have a poor chance of getting to the other.

In a former charge, one Sabbath, I took into the pulpit the church records, and I laid them on the pulpit and opened them, and said: "Brethren, here are the church records. I find a great many of you whose names are down here are off duty." Some were afraid I would read the names, for at that time some of them were deep in the worst kind of oil stocks, and were idle as to Christian work. But if the ministers of Christ in Brooklyn, and New York, and in all the cities, to-day, should bring the church records into the pulpit and read, oh, *what a flutter there would be!* There would not be fans enough in church to keep the cheeks cool. I do not know but it would be a good thing if the minister once in a while should bring the church records in the pulpit and call the roll, for that is what I consider every church record to be—merely the muster-roll of the Lord's army; and the reading of it should reveal where every soldier is and what he is doing. Suppose, in military circles, on the morning of battle, the roll is called, and out of a thousand men only a hundred men in the regiment answered. What excitement there would be in the camp! What would the colonel say? What high talking there would be among the captains, and majors, and the adjutants! Suppose word came to headquarters that these delinquents excused themselves on the ground that they had overslept themselves, or that the morning was damp and



they were afraid of getting their feet wet, or that they were busy cooking rations. My friends, this is the morning of the day of God Almighty's battle! Do you not see the troops? Hear you not all the trumpets of heaven and all the drums of hell? Which side are you on? If you are on the right side, to what cavalry troop, to what artillery service, to what garrison duty do you belong? In other words, in what Sabbath-school do you teach? in what prayer-meeting do you exhort? to what penitentiary do you declare eternal liberty? to what almshouse do you announce the riches of heaven? What broken bone of sorrow have you ever set? Are you doing nothing? Is it possible that a man or woman sworn to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ is doing nothing? Then hide the horrible secret from the angels. Keep it away from the book of judgment. If you are doing nothing, do not let the world find it out, lest they charge your religion with being a false face. Do not let your cowardice and treason be heard among the martyrs about the throne, lest they forget the sanctity of the place and curse your betrayal of that cause for which they agonized and died.

May the eternal God rouse us all to action! As for myself, I feel I would be ashamed to die now and enter heaven until I have accomplished something more decisive for the Lord that bought me. I have thought on this, the first Sabbath after the summer vacation, I would like to join with you in an oath, with hand high uplifted to heaven, swearing new allegiance to Jesus Christ, and to work more for His cause and kingdom. Oh! brethren, how swiftly the time does go by! It seems to me I never saw such a swift summer—never a summer that had such nimble feet. It seems to me as if the years had gained some new power of locomotion—a kind of speed electric. Last Sabbath was an awful day to me. I had nothing to do but to think, and when I thought of how little I had accomplished for Christ, and of how short a time yet remained to work for Him, my head grew dizzy and my heart ached, and I felt as if I must fly into your presence and utter this rallying cry for Jesus.

If, this afternoon, you take a short sleep (and you are entitled to it, for God intended the Sabbath not only for rest for the soul, but rest for the body), you will at least have one or two hours in which to lay out a plan for Christian work in this ecclesiastical year. Husband and wife, talk with each other. Brothers and sisters, resolve upon some new work for Christ. On your knees cry unto God: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and *stay on your knees* until you get the answer. Are you ready to join with me in some new work for Christ? I feel that there is such a thing as claustral piety, that there is such a thing as insular work; but it seems to me that what we want now is concerted action. The temple of Berith is very broad, and it is very high. It has been going up by the hands of men and devils, and no human enginery can demolish it; but if the fifty thousand ministers of Christ in this country should each take a branch of the tree of life, and all their congregations should do the same, and we should march on and throw these branches around the great temples of sin, and worldliness, and folly, it would need no match, or coal, or torch of ours to touch off the pile, for, as in the days of Elijah, fire would fall from heaven and kindle the bonfire of Christian victory over demolished sin. It is kindling now! Huzzah! The day is ours!

Still further, I learn from this subject the danger of false refuges. As soon as these Shechemites got into the temple, they thought they were safe. They said: "Berith will take care of us. Abimelech may batter down everything else; he cannot batter down this temple where we are now hid." But very soon they heard the timbers crackling, and they were smothered with smoke, and they miserably died. And you and I are just as much tempted to false refuges. The mirror this morning may have persuaded you that you have a comely cheek; your best friends may have persuaded you that you have elegant manners; Satan may have told you that you are all right; but bear with me if I tell you that if unpardoned you are all wrong. I have no clinometer by which to measure how steep is the inclined plane you are

descending, but I know it is very steep. "Well," you say : "if the Bible is true, I am a sinner. Show me some refuge. I will step right into it." I suppose every person in this audience this moment is stepping into some kind of refuge. Here you step in the tower of good works. You say : "I shall be safe here, in this refuge." The battlements are adorned ; the steps are varnished ; on the wall are pictures of all the suffering you have alleviated, and all the schools you have established, and all the fine things you have ever done. Up in that tower you feel you are safe. But here you not the tramp of your unpardoned sins all around the tower ! They each have a match. They are kindling the combustible material. You feel the heat and the suffocation. Oh ! may you leap in time, the Gospel declaring : "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." "Well," you say : "I have been driven out of that tower ; where shall I go ?" Step into this tower of indifference. You say : "If this tower is attacked, it will be a great while before it is taken." You feel at ease. But there is an Abimelech, with ruthless assault, coming on. Death and his forces are gathering around, and they demand that you surrender everything, and they clamour for your immortal overthrow, and they throw their skeleton arms in the window, and with their iron fists they beat against the door, and while you are trying to keep them out you see the torches of Judgment kindling, and every forest is a torch, and every mountain a torch, and every sea a torch, and while the Alps, and Pyrennees, and Himalayas turn into a live coal, blown redder and redder by the whirlwind breath of a God omnipotent, what will become of your refuge of lies ?

"But," says some one, "you are engaged in a very mean business, driving us from tower to tower." Oh, no ! I want to tell you of a Gibraltar that never has been and never will be taken ; of a wall that no Satanic assault can scale ; of a bulwark that the judgment earthquakes cannot budge. The Bible refers to it when it says : "In God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms." Oh ! fling yourself into it. Tread down unceremoniously everything that

intercepts you. *Wedge your way there.* There are enough hounds of death and peril after you to make you hurry. Many a man has perished just outside the tower, with his foot on the step, with his hand on the latch. Oh! get inside. Not one surplus second have you to spare. Quick, quick, quick!

There are some who gave me a farewell shake of the hand when I went off two months ago who are not here to-day. Where are they? When in the closing service I opened my hymn-book and found the place, they opened their hymn-book and found the same place. I open my book to-day; they do not open theirs. Great God, is life such an uncertain thing? If I bear a little too hard with my right foot on the earth, does it break through into the grave? Is this world which swings at the speed of thousands of miles an hour around about the sun going with tenfold more speed towards the judgment day? Oh, I am overborne with the thought, and in the confusion I cry to one and I cry to the other; "O time! O eternity! O the dead! O the judgment day! O Jesus! O God!" But catching at the last apostrophe, I feel that I have something to hold on to; for "in God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms." And exhausted with my failure to save myself, I throw my whole weight of body, mind, and soul on this Divine promise, as a weary child throws itself into the arms of its mother; as a wounded soldier throws himself on the hospital pillow; as a pursued man throws himself into the refuge: for "in God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." I can speak no more for the gladness. Oh for a flood of tears with which to express the joy of this eternal rescue!

## THE OLD CORN OF CANAAN.

*"And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land."*—JOSHUA v. 12.

ONLY those who have had something to do with the commissariat of an army know what a job it is to feed and clothe five or six thousand men. Well, there is such a host as that marching across the desert. They are cut off from all army supplies. There are no rail trains bringing down food or blankets. Shall they all perish? No. The Lord comes from heaven to the rescue, and He touches the shoes and the coats which in a year or two would have been worn to rags and tatters, and they become storm-proof and time-proof; so that after forty years of wearing, the coats and the shoes are as good as new. Besides that, every morning there is a shower of bread—not sour and soggy, for the rising of that bread is made in heaven, and celestial fingers have mixed it and rolled it into balls, light, flaky, and sweet, as though they were the crumbs thrown out from a heavenly banquet. Two batches of bread made every day in the upper mansion—one for those who sit at the table with the King, and the other for the marching Israelites in the wilderness. I do not very much pity the Israelites for the fact that they had only manna to eat. It was, I suppose, the best food ever provided. I know that the ravens brought food to hungry Elijah; but I should not so well have liked those black waiters. Rather would I have had the fare that came down every morning in buckets of dew,—clean, sweet, God-provided edibles. But now the Israelites have taken their last bit of it in their fingers, and put the last delicate morsel of it to their lips. They look out and there is no manna. Why this cessation of heavenly supply? It was because the Israelites had arrived in Canaan, and they smelled the breath of the harvest fields, and the crowded barns of the country were thrown open to them. All the inhabitants had fled, and in the name of the Lord of Hosts the Israelites took possession of everything. Well, the threshing-floor is cleared, the

corn is scattered over it, the oxen are brought round in lazy and perpetual circuit until the corn is trampled loose ; then it is winnowed with a fan, and it is ground, and it is baked, and lo ! there is enough bread for all the worn-out host : “ And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land.”

The bisection of this subject leads me, first, to speak of especial relief for especial emergency ; and, secondly, of the old corn of the Gospel for ordinary circumstances.

If these Israelites crossing the wilderness had not received bread from the heavenly bakeries, there would first have been a long line of dead children half buried in the sand ; then there would have been a long line of dead women waiting for the jackals ; then there would have been a long line of dead men unburied, because there would have been no one to bury them. It would have been told in the history of the world that a great company of good people started out from Egypt for Canaan, and were never heard of—as *thoroughly lost in the wilderness* of sand as the *City of Boston* and the *President* were lost in the wilderness of waters. What use was it to them that there was plenty of corn in Canaan, or plenty of corn in Egypt ? What they wanted was something to eat right there, where there was not so much as a grass-blade. In other words, an especial supply for an especial emergency. This is what some of you want. The ordinary comfort, the ordinary direction, the ordinary counsel, do not seem to meet your case. There are those who feel that they must have an omnipotent and immediate supply, and you shall have it.

Is it pain and physical distress through which you must go ? Does not Jesus know all about pain ? Did He not suffer it in the most sensitive part of head, and hand, and foot ? He has a mixture of comfort, one drop of which shall cure the worst paroxysm. It is the same grace that soothed Robert Hall when, after writhing on the carpet in physical tortures, he cried out : “ Oh, I suffered terribly, but I didn't cry out while I was suffering, did I ? Did I cry out ? ” There is no such nurse as Jesus—His hand the gentlest, his foot

the lightest, His arm the strongest. For especial pang, especial help.

Is it approaching sorrow? Is it long, shadowing bereavement that you know is coming, because the breath is short, and the voice is faint, and the cheek is pale? Have you been calculating your capacity or incapacity to endure widowhood, or childishness, or a disbanded home, and cried: "I cannot endure it?" Oh, worried soul, you will wake up amid all your troubles and find around about you the sweet consolation of the Gospel as thickly strewn as was the manna around about the Israelitish encampment. Especial solace for especial distress.

Or is it a trouble past, yet present! A silent nursery! A vacant chair opposite you at the table? A choking sense of loneliness? A blot of grief so large that it extinguishes the light of the sun, and puts out bloom of flower, and makes you reckless as to whether you live or die? Especial comfort for that especial trial. Your appetite has failed for everything else. Oh, try a little of this wilderness manna. "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee." "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth you." "Can a mother forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will not I."

Or is it the grief of a dissipated companion? There are those here who have it, so I am not speaking in the abstract, but to the point. You have not whispered it, perhaps, to your most intimate friend; but you see your home going away gradually from you, and unless things change soon it will be entirely destroyed. Your grief was well depicted by a woman, presiding at a woman's meeting last winter in Ohio, when her intoxicated husband staggered up to the platform, to her overwhelming mortification and the disturbance of the audience, and she pulled a protruding bottle from her husband's pocket, and held it up before the audience and cried out: "There is the cause of my woe. There are the tears and the life-blood of a drunkard's wife." And then looking up to heaven, she said: "*How long, O Lord, how*

*long?"* and then, looking down to the audience, cried : "Do you wonder I felt strongly on this subject ; Sisters, will you help me ?" And hundreds of voices responded : "Yes, yes, we will help you." You stand, some of you, in such a tragedy to-day. You cannot even ask him to stop drinking. It makes him cross, and he tells you to mind your own business. Is there any relief in such a case ? Not such as is found in the rigmarole of comfort ordinarily given in such cases. But there is a relief that drops in manna from the throne of God. Oh, lift up your lacerated soul in prayer, and you will get Omnipotent comfort. I do not know in what words the soothing influence may come, but I know that for special grief there is especial deliverance. I give you two or three passages. Try them on. Take that which best fits your soul. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." "All things work together for good to those who love God." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I know there are those who, when they try to comfort people, always bring the same stale sentiment about the usefulness of trial. Instead of bringing a new plaster for a new wound, and fresh manna for fresh hunger, they rummage their haversack to find some crumb of old consolation, when from horizon to horizon the ground is white with the new-fallen manna of God's help not five minutes old !

But after fourteen thousand six hundred consecutive days of falling manna—Sundays excepted—the manna ceased. Some of them were glad of it. You know they had complained to their leader, and wondered that they had to eat manna instead of onions. Now the fare is changed. Those people in that army under forty years of age had never seen a corn-field, and now, when they hear the leaves rustling, and see tassels waving, and the billows of green flowing over the plain as the wind touched them, it must have been a new and lively sensation. "Corn !" cried the old man, as he husked an ear. "Corn !" cried the children, as they counted the shining grains. "Corn !" shouted the vanguard of the host, as they burst open the granaries of the affrighted population the granaries that had been left in the possession of the



victorious Israelites. Then the fire was kindled, and the ears of corn were thrust into it, and fresh and crisp, and tender, were devoured by the hungry victors ; and bread was prepared, and many things that can be made out of flour regaled the appetites that had been sharpened by the long march : " And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land."

Blessed be God, we stand in just such a field to-day ; the luxuriant grain coming above the girdle, the air full of the odours of the ripe old corn of the Gospel Canaan. " Oh !" you say, " the fare is too plain." Then I remember you will soon get tired of a fanciful diet. While I was in Paris I liked for a while the rare and exquisite cookery ; but I soon wished I was home again, and had the plain fare of my native land. So it is a fact that we soon weary of the syrups, and the custards, and the whipped foam of fanciful religionists, and we cry, " Give us plain bread made out of the old corn of the Gospel Canaan." *That is the only food* that can quell the soul's hunger.

There are men here this morning who hardly know what is the matter with them. They have tried to get together a fortune and larger account at the bank, and to get investments yielding larger percentages. They are trying to satisfy their soul with a diet of bank notes and government securities. There are others here who have been trying to get famous, and have succeeded to a greater or less extent ; and they have been trying to satisfy their soul with the chopped feed of magazines and newspapers. All these men are no more happy now than before they made the first thousand pounds—no more happy now than when for the first time they saw their names favourably mentioned. They cannot analyze or define their feelings ; but I will tell them what is the matter : they are hungry for the old corn of the Gospel. That you must have, or be pinched, and wan, and wasted, and hollow-eyed, and shrivelled up with an eternity of famine.

The infidel scientists of this day are offering us a different kind of soul food ; but they are, of all men, the most miserable. I have known many of them ; but I never knew

one of them who came within a thousand miles of being happy. The great John Stewart Mill provided for himself a new kind of porridge, but yet, when he comes to die, he acknowledges that his philosophy never gave him any comfort in days of bereavement, and in a roundabout way he admits that his life was a failure. So it is with all infidel scientists. They are trying to live on telescopes, and crucibles, and protoplasm, and they charge us with cant, not realizing that there is no such intolerable cant in all the world as this perpetual talk we are hearing about "positive philosophy," and "the absolute," and "the great-to-be," and "the everlasting no," and "the higher unity," and "the latent potentialities," and "the cathedral of the immensities." I have been translating what these men have been writing, and I have been transcribing what they have been doing, and I will tell what it all means. It means that they want to kill God! And my only wonder is that God has not killed them. I have, in other days, tasted of their confections, and I come back and tell you to-day that there is no nutriment, or life, or health in anything but the bread made out of the old corn of the Gospel. What do I mean by that? I mean that Christ is the bread of life, and, taking Him, you live for ever.

But, you say, corn is of but little practical use unless it is threshed, and ground, and baked. I answer, this Gospel corn has gone through that process. When on Calvary all the hoofs of human scorn came down on the heart of Christ, and all the flails of Satanic fury beat Him long and fast, was not the corn threshed? When the mills of God's indignation against sin caught Christ between the upper and nether rollers, was not the corn ground? When Jesus descended into hell, and the flames of the lost world wrapped Him all about, was not the corn baked? Oh, yes! Christ is ready. His pardon all ready; His peace all ready; *everything ready in Christ.* Are you ready for Him?

You say: "That is such a simple Gospel!" I know it is. You say you thought religion was a strange mixture of elaborate compounds. No, it is so plain that any abecedarian may understand it. In its simplicity is its power. If you could,

this morning, realize that Christ died to save from sin, and death, and hell, not only your minister and your neighbour, and your father and your child, but y-o-u, it would make this hour like the judgment-day for agitations, and, no longer able to keep your seat, you would leap up, crying : "*For me ! FOR ME !*"

A new convert said : "I could not sleep, thinking over that passage, 'Whosoever believeth on the Son hath life ;' and so I got up, and lighted a candle, and found my Bible, and read it over : 'Whosoever believeth on the Son hath life.'" "Why," says some one, "didn't you know that was in the Bible before?" "Oh, yes," he replied : "I knew it was in the Bible, but I wanted to see it with my own eyes, and then I rested." God grant that you, my brother, may see it with your own eyes, and hear it with your own ears, and feel it with your own heart, that you are a lost soul, but that Christ comes for your extrication. Can you not take that truth and digest it, and make it a part of your immortal life ? It is only bread.

You have noticed that invalids cannot take all kinds of food. The food that will do for one will not do for another. There are kinds of food which will produce, in cases of invalidism, very speedy death. But you have noticed that all persons, however weak they may be, can take bread. Oh, soul sick with sin, invalid in your transgressions, I think this Gospel will agree with you. I think if you cannot take anything else, you can take this. Lost—found ! Sunken—raised ! Condemned—pardoned ! Cast out—invited in ! That is the old corn of the Gospel.

You have often seen a wheel with spokes of different colours, and when the wheel was rapidly turned all the colours blended into a rainbow of exquisite beauty. I wish I could, this morning, take the peace, and the life, and the joy, and glory of Christ, and turn them before your soul with such speed and strength that you would be enchanted with the revolting splendours of that name which is above every name —the name written once with tears of exile and in blood of

martyrdom, but written now in burnished crown, and lifted sceptre, and trans-angelic throne.

There is another characteristic about bread, and that is you never get tired of it. There are people here seventy years of age who find it is just as appropriate for their appetite as they did when, in boyhood, their mother cut a slice of it clear around the loaf. You have not got tired of bread, and that is a characteristic of the Gospel. Old Christian man, *are you tired of Jesus?* If so, let us take His name out of our Bible, and let us with pen and ink erase that name wherever we see it. Let us cast it out of our hymnology, and let "There is a Fountain," and "Rock of Ages" go into forgetfulness. Let us tear down the communion table where we celebrate His love. Let us dash down the baptismal bowl where we were consecrated to Him. Let us hurl Jesus from our heart, and ask some other hero to come in. Let us say: "Go away, Jesus; I want another companion, another friend, than Thou art." Could you do it? The years of your past life, aged man, would utter a protest against it, and the graves of your Christian dead would charge you with being an ingrate, and your little grandchildren would say: "Grandfather, don't do that. Jesus is the One to whom we say our prayers at night, and who is to open heaven when we die? Grandfather don't do that." Tired of Jesus? The Burgundy rose you pluck from the garden is not so fresh, and fair, and beautiful. Tired of Jesus? As well get weary of the spring morning, and the voices of the mountain stream, and the quiet of your own home, and the gladness of your own children. Jesus is bread and the appetite for that is never obliterated.

I notice, in regard to this article of food, you take it three times a day. It is on your table morning, noon, and night, and if it is forgotten, you say: "Where is the bread?" Just so certainly you need Jesus three times a day. Oh, do not start out without Him; do not dare to go out of the front door; do not dare to go off the front steps, without first having communed with Him. Before noon there may be perils that will destroy body, mind and soul for ever. You cannot af-

ford to do without Him. You will during the day be amid sharp hoofs and swift wheels, and dangerous scaffoldings threatening the body, and traps for the soul that have taken some who are more wily than you. When they shove a vessel from the dry-dock, they break against the side of it a bottle of wine. That is a sort of superstition among sailors. But oh, on the launching of every day, that we might strike against it at least one earnest prayer for Divine protection. That would not be superstition : that would be Christian. Then at the apex of the day, at the tip-top of the hours, equi-distant from morning and night, look three ways. Look backward to the forenoon ; look ahead to the afternoon ; look up to that Saviour who presides over all. You want bread at noon. You may find no place in which to kneel amid the cotton bales and the tierces of rice ; but if Jonah could find room to pray in the whale's belly, most certainly you will never be in such a crowded place that you cannot pray. Bread at noon ! When the evening hour comes, and your head is buzzing with the day's engagements, and your whole nature is sore from the abrasion of rough life, and you see a great many duties you have neglected, then commune with Christ, asking His pardon, thanking Him for His love. That would be a queer evening repast at which there was no bread.

This is the nutriment and life of the plain Gospel that I commend to you. I do not know how some of our ministers make it so intricate, and elaborate, and mystifying a thing. It seems as if they had a sort of mongrelism in religion—part humanitarianism, part spiritualism, part nothingarianism ; and sometimes you think they are building their temple out of the "Rock of Ages," but you find there is no rock in it at all. It is stucco. The Gospel is plain. It is bread. There no fogs hovering over this river of life. All the fogs hover over the marsh of human speculation. If you cannot tell when you hear a man preach whether or not he believes in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, it is because he does not believe in it. If, when you hear a man preach, you cannot tell whether or not he believes that sin is inborn, it is because

he does not think it is congenital. If, when you hear a man talk in pulpit or prayer-meeting, you cannot make up your mind whether or not he believes in regeneration, it is because he does not believe in it. If, when you hear a man speak on religious themes, you cannot make up your mind whether or not he thinks the righteous and the wicked will come out at the same places, it is because he really believes their destinies are conterminous. *Do not talk to me* about a man being doubtful about the doctrines of grace. He is not doubtful to me at all. Bread is bread, and I know it the moment I see it. I had a corn-field which I cultured this summer with my own hand. I did not ask once in all the summer: "Is this corn?" I did not hunt up the *Agriculturist* to get a picture of corn. I was born in sight of a corn-field, and I know all about it. When these Israelites came to Canaan and looked off upon the fields, the cry was: "Corn! Corn!" And if a man has once tasted of this heavenly bread he knows it right away. He can tell this corn of the Gospel Canaan from "the chaff which the wind driveth away." I bless God so many have found this Gospel corn. It is the bread of which if a man eat he shall never hunger. I set the gladness of your soul to the tunes of "Ariel" and "Antioch." I ring the wedding bells, for Christ and your soul are married, and there is no power on earth or in hell to get out letters of divorcement.

But alas for the famine-struck. Enough corn, yet it seems you have no sickle to cut it, no mill to grind it, no fire to bake it, no appetite to eat it. Starving to death, when the plain is golden with magnificent harvest. My brother, if your friends had acted so crazily about worldly things as you have acted about spiritual things, you would have sent them before this to Bloomingsdale Insane Asylum. You do not seem to realize the hunger that is gnawing on your soul, the precipices on the edge of which you walk, the fires into which you run. Oh, the insanity, the awful madness, of a man that will not take Christ. When I think of the risks you run, it seems as if I must rush from the pulpit and take you by the shoulder and tell you of what is come and how little you are ready for it.

This summer I rode some thirteen miles to see the *Alexander da Valley*, a steamer that was beached near Southampton, Long Island, last winter. It was a splendid vessel. As I walked up and down the decks, and in the cabins, I said ; "What a pity that this vessel should go to pieces, or be lying here idle." The coast wreckers had spent several thousand pounds trying even to get her off, and succeeded once ; but she came back again to the old place. While I was walking on deck every part of the vessel trembled with the beating of the surf on one side. Since then I heard that that vessel, which was worth fifty thousand pounds, had been sold for seven hundred pounds, and is to be knocked to pieces. They had given up the idea of getting her to sail again. How suggestive that is to me ! There are those here who are aground in religious things. Once you started for heaven, but you are now aground. Several times we thought we had started you again heavenward, but you soon got back to the old place, and there is not much prospect you will ever reach the harbours of the blessed. I fear it will be after awhile said in regard to some of you : "No use. No use. To be destroyed without remedy." God's wreckers will pronounce you a hopeless case. *Beached for eternity!* And then it will be written in heaven, concerning some one of your size, and complexion, and age and name, that he was invited to be saved, but refused the offer, and starved to death within sight of the fields and granaries full of the Old Corn of Canaan.

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### ASTRAY FROM THE FOLD.

*"All we like sheep have gone astray : we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."*—ISAIAH liii. 6.

**I**N ninety years, at the longest, all this audience will be in heaven or hell. This service will decide the eternity for some who are present. This will be the last sermon that some of you will ever hear. I have a nature somewhat

poetic, and I might try to please you with a trope, and metaphor, and simile ; but I dare not under such circumstances. I do not think that God ever gave to any man greater fondness for mirth than I have, and yet I dare not indulge it amid these considerations. This night is a life struggle and a death grapple, and woe be to that man who shall try to divert this august assemblage from the one issue.

The first part of my text is an indictment. "All we like sheep have gone astray." Says some one : Can't you drop the first word ?" And some one rises and looks off and says : "There is a man who is a blasphemer, he is astray. And yonder is a man who is impure, and he is astray. And yonder is a man who is fraudulent, and he is astray." Sit down, my brother, and look at home, for the first word of the text take you and me as well as the rest : " *All* we like sheep have gone astray."

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



"There is a happy land  
Far, far away,  
Where saints in glory stand  
Bright, bright as day."

Did you find comfort in your business associations? Did the grass grow very thick around about your insurance office, or your broker's shop, or your retail store, or your importing establishment? God help the man that has nothing but business to comfort him! Your business, instead of soothing you, exasperated you, and wore you out, and left you limp as a rag, and made you mad. You got money, but *you got no peace*; and so far from getting a fit pasture for a starving nature, you found none of it in the world; and the further you went, the more blasted the heath, and the sharper the rocks, and the thicker the nettles. They insulted you with garbage when you wanted bread. Their flatteries were like the lick of a lion's tongue, which takes off the flesh that it licks. A great English actor stood on the stage, and thunders of applause from the galleries greeted his impersonations, and yet he was utterly chagrined because one man sat asleep before him; and with indignation he cried out: "Wake up, sir!" So in your life, there has been some little annoyance that has more than overpowered all your brilliant congratulations. You went away from God and peace with the idea of finding better pasturage, and your adventure has been a failure. You found yourself browsing amid sharp and stinging misfortune. Oh, the world is a good rack from which a horse may pick his forage; and it is a good trough from which the swine may crunch their mess; but it affords no satisfactory food for a soul blood-bought and immortal.

I have noticed, also, that the sheep get astray by being frightened with the dogs. The hound gets in the field. The poor things are frenzied. They forget their path and dart away, and are torn of the hedges and plashed of the ditch. They do not get home that night. They never get home unless the farmer goes after them and brings them back. Oh, man, that is the way you got astray. In 1857, or in the fall

of 1873, you became almost an atheist. You said: "Where is God, that He allows an honest man to go down, and thieves to prosper?" And you were dogged for the rent, and dogged by the banks, and you were dogged by creditors; and some of you went into misanthropy, and some of you took to strong drink, and some of you fled from all Christian associations; and in that way the sheep got astray. Oh, man, that was the last time for you to leave God. How could you stand amid your foundering fortunes and all your scattering hopes with no God to comfort, no God to explain, no God to deliver? I wonder you are not dead, for I cannot understand how a boat can live an hour unhelped in such a chopped sea.

I do not know by just what process you got astray: but the Bible announces it, and your partial consciousness on the subject reaffirms it, that you, like sheep, have gone astray; and if you could see yourself to-night as God sees you, your soul would burst into a tempest of agony, and you would throw up your arms as though you were sinking, and you would pelt the heavens with one loud and awful cry of "God have mercy!" But the sad thing about your case is, you do not realize you are fully astray. All the batteries of Mount Sinai are unlimbered above you and are aimed at your soul. As, when Sebastopol was assaulted, there were two Russian frigates burning in the harbour all night, throwing a lurid glare on the trembling fortress, so you stand to-night amid a cannonade, and a darkness, and a conflagration, and an accumulation of peril that make the wings of God's hovering angels shudder to the tip. Oh, hear you not, see you not, the fiery belch of the great guns! "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

But the last part of my text opens a door wide enough to let us all out, and wide enough to let all heaven in. Sound it on the organ, with all the stops out! Thrum it on the

harp, with all the strings attuned ! Let earth tell it to heaven, and heaven tell it back again to earth : "On Him, on Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all." I am glad the prophet did not waste any time in telling us who he meant by "Him." It is Him of the manger. Him of the bloody sweat. Him of the crucifixion agony. Him of the resurrection throne. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Says some one : "That is not generous. Let every one bear his own burdens." And *there is something in that*. If I owe a debt, and I have money to pay it, and I come to you and ask you to cancel my obligation, you would be right in saying to me : "Pay your own debts." If I am walking along the street with you, and we are both hale and hearty, and I want you to carry me, you are right in saying : "Walk on your own feet." But suppose you and I were in a regiment together, and I was fearfully wounded in the battle, and I fell unconscious at your feet with gun-shot fractures and dislocations, five bullets having struck me at once—you would say to your comrades : "Here, this man is helpless. Let us carry him to the ambulance ; let us take him out to the hospital." And you would take me up in your arms, and I would be a dead weight, and you would beckon to the corps of the ambulance : "Bring your waggon around this way, and take this man to the hospital." You would put me in the ambulance, and you would have done your duty. Would it have been mean to let you carry me then ? You certainly would not have been so unkind as not to carry me. Now, that is Christ to the soul. If we could pay our spiritual obligations we might go up to God and say : "Lord, there is so much debt, and here I have the means with which to cancel it. Now cross it all out." The debt is paid. But the fact is we are pierced through and through with the sabres of sin. We have gone down under the hot fire, and we are helpless and undone. We will die on the field unless some help comes to us. God sends His ambulance, yea, He dispatches His only Son to carry us out, and bind up our gashes, and take us home. "On Him, on Him the Lord hath laid the

iniquity of us all." Oh, my friends, we were a dead weight in Christ's arms ; all our sins above us ; all our chains on us. If Christ raises us at all it will not be by the tips of the fingers, it will not be with one arm ; it will be by getting down on one knee, and putting around us His omnipotent arms, and throwing all the energy of His Godhead into one dead lift that He will raise us up to honour, and glory, and immortality. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

Is there any man in the house who is under the delusion that he can carry his own sins ? You cannot. You cannot. You might as well try to transport a boulder of the sea, or carry on one shoulder the Alleghanies, and on the other shoulder Mount Washington. You cannot carry one of your sins into the eternal world, and carry it peacefully. Most certainly you cannot carry a whole lifetime of transgression. Oh, then to-night let us shift the burden. Jesus stoops down, and He looks into your face, and says : "I come to carry your sins and your sorrows. Put them upon My bleeding back. I have come through all these lacerating days, and through all these tempestuous nights. My tongue bitten with pain, the blood bursting from My brow, to carry your sins, and throw them down over the precipice. Put those sins upon Me ; put them upon Me." "And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Who here wants to keep his sins ? They have almost pestered your life out. Sometimes they have made you cross and unreasonable, and spoiled the joy of your days and the peace of your nights. There are men in this house, to-night, who have been riddled with sin. You know this world can give you no solace. It is all gossamery and volatile, and as to eternity, it is to you a black and suffocating midnight ; and you writhe under the stings of a conscience which promises you no rest here and no rest hereafter. And yet you do not pray, and you do not repent, and you do not weep, although this very night may be the one in which you shall lift the shriek of the soul that takes the long, last plunge. There have been people who have come into this Tabernacle,

and heard the Gospel—for *I preach nothing else*,—and refused it, and gone out, and they died, and their voice comes to us to-night from the darkness, saying: “Take the Gospel. I missed my chance. Your day lasts—mine is closed. Woe is me. I am undone. Who will shove back this bolt? Who will put out this fire?” And the caverns forlornly echo: “Who? who?” And the destroyed souls clutch for the worm that dies not to tear it from the vitals, and they clutch into the air as for a hope they cannot reach. Then crouching amid the furnaces, crying: “All this for ever! for ever! for ever! for ever! for ever!” Oh, my brother, that is what sin has done for them, and that is what sin will do for you unless you lay hold “on Him on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquities of us all.”

Blessed be God, to-night there is a fair chance for every man in this Tabernacle. If at this moment this meeting could be thrown open, and you could all speak, you would, I think, hear a man in the gallery say: “I had all elegant surroundings, I had the best education, I have moved in most brilliant circles all my days, I thought I was all right, I had a life of outward morality; but one day something whispered in my ear: ‘You are a sinner,’ and I saw that my hands were red with the blood of the Son of God, and I cried for mercy, and I found it; and that is true what you have been saying to-night: ‘On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.’” And a man in this gallery would say: “I was one of the worst drunkards in New York. When I came home at night, my children cowered. When they put out their hands to me for a kiss, I struck them; and when my wife protested against the maltreatment, I kicked her into the street. Oh! I have had all the hunger, and the bruises, and the tremors—all the estate of a drunkard’s woe. But one night, I was going along by a Methodist meeting-house, and I said: ‘I’ll go in and see what they are doing.’ I went to scoff, but I was overwhelmed with the scene, and I cried for mercy, and then and there found it—the pardoning mercy of God—and it is all true what you have been saying to-night: ‘On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.’ I lifted my family out of the depths to

which they were sunken, and now my wife sings all day at her work, and my little children come two blocks down the street to greet me home. And, sir, my house has been a heaven ever since I have become a changed man." Away back in the gallery, if the meeting were still open, a sister would cry out: "I went far astray. I took the leap from which few ever come back. I saw the storm that howls over a lost soul; but Jesus met me one dark night on the street, and He said: 'Go home, poor thing, go home! Your father is waiting for you, your mother is waiting for you—go home, poor thing.' And though I was too weak to pray, I just cried out all my sins and sorrow on the heart of Him 'on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'" If the meeting were still kept open, a young man seated before me would say: "I was born in the country. I had a good bringing up. I had every advantage. I came to town and got a situation, and one night, in the Broadway Theatre, I met some fellows who did me no good. They dragged me through all the sewers of sin, and I was ashamed to go back, I looked so badly. I lost my place. I lost everything. Sister wrote to me, and father wrote to me, and mother wrote to me: but I didn't answer their letters, for my hand trembled so I knew they would think from the writing there was something the matter. One day a Christian young man put his hand on my shoulder, and said: 'George, come with me, and I will do you good.' I looked up into his face to see whether he was joking or not, and I saw he was in real earnest, so I fixed myself up as well as I could, and I buttoned my coat over my ragged vest, and I went to the meeting; and an old man got up to pray, who looked just like my father, and I sobbed out, and they were so kind and so sympathetic, I could hold out no longer; and there and then I gave my poor wasted body, and my poor bruised soul to Him 'on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'"

Oh, brother, gone so far astray that no one pities you, without your looking at your hand to see whether it is washed or not, without your looking at your hand to see whether it is fevered with sin or not, without your looking at your hand to

see whether it is bloated or not, put it in my hand and let me give you one good, warm-hearted, brotherly, Christian grip. You cannot get on any longer with your sins. "Oh," said a man to me this morning, as I went out of the church, "what shall I do? what shall I do?" If he be in the house to-night, I say to him—if there be others in the house in the same temptation, in the same undone condition, I say to you: let Jesus take your sins all away. You do not want to keep them any longer. They have for you too hard a bed. They have mingled for you too bitter a cup. Oh, Jesus, take them away—take these sins all away—take them out of sight. Away with the accursed things, we want no more to do with them.

\ But who comes here to night? Some one with a slow, and weary, and painful step, the mantle of the night over His brow and over His shoulders. I cannot recognise who He is; but coming under the flash of the chandeliers, the mantle of darkness falls from the face, and falls from the shoulders, and see who it is. It is Jesus, the Son of God! And I say: "Art thou weary?" and He says: "Weary with the world's woe." And I say: "From whence didst Thou come?" And He says: "From Calvary." And I say: "Didst Thou come alone?" And He says: "I have trodden the wine-press alone." And I say: "For what purpose hast thou come?" and He says: "I have come on a blood-red errand, to take away the sin of all this people." And I look over the audience and I say: "Lord Jesus, canst Thou carry the sins of all this people?" and He says: "Yes, put them upon my shoulder." And then feeling my own sins, I take them first and put them upon Jesus, and I say: "Canst Thou endure more than that?" and He says: "Yea, more." And then there are scores of people in this house that come and bring their sins and put them upon His back; and then there are hundreds that come and bring their sins and put them on His back; and then there are thousands here that come and bring their sins and put them upon His back, and I say: "Canst thou carry any more?" and He says: "Yea, more." But the Sabbath is nearly done, and so Jesus is departing. Make

room for Him through the aisle. Swing open the door and let Him pass out. He is carrying our sins. We shall never see them again. He will throw them into the abysm. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

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## *A CLUSTER FROM ESCHOL.*

*"And they came unto the brook of Eschol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff."—NUMBERS xiii. 23.*

THE long trudge of the Israelites across the wilderness was almost ended. They had come to the borders of the promised land. Of the six hundred thousand adults who started from Egypt for Canaan, how many do you suppose got there? Five hundred thousand? Oh, no. Not two hundred thousand, nor one hundred thousand, nor fifty, nor twenty, nor ten; but only two men. Oh, it was a ruinous march that God's people made; but their children were living and they were on the march, and now that they had come up to the borders of the promised land, they were very curious to know what kind of a place it was, and whether it would be safe to go over. So a scouting party is sent out to reconnoitre, and they examine the land, and they come back bringing specimens of its growths. Just as you came back from California, bringing to your family a basket of pears, or plums, or apples, to show what monstrous fruit they have there, so this scouting party cut off the biggest bunch of grapes they could find. It was so large one man could not carry it, and they thrust a pole through the cluster, and there was one man at either end of the pole, and so the bunch of grapes was transported. I was, some time ago, in a luxuriant vineyard. The vine-dresser had done his work. The vine had clambered up and spread its wealth all over the arbour. The sun and shower had mixed a cup which the vine drank until



with flushed cheek it lay slumbering in the light, cluster against the cheek of cluster. The rinds of the grapes seemed almost bursting with the juice in the warm lips of the autumnal day, and it seemed as if all you had to do was to lift a chalice towards the cluster and its life-blood would begin to drip away. But, my friends, in these rigorous climes, we know nothing about large grapes. Strabo states that in Bible times and in Bible lands there were grape-vines so large that it took two men with outstretched arms to reach round them, and he says there were clusters two cubits in length, or twice the length from the elbow to the tip of the long finger. And Achaicus, dwelling in those lands, tells us that during the time he was smitten with fever one grape would slake his thirst for the whole day. No wonder, then, that in these Bible times two men thought it worth their while to put their strength together to carry down one cluster of grapes from the promised land.

But this morning I bring you a larger cluster from the heavenly Eschol—a cluster of hopes, a cluster of prospects, a cluster of Christian consolations: and I am expecting that one taste of it will rouse up your appetite for the heavenly Canaan. During the past summer some of this congregation have *gone away never to return*. The aged have put down their staff and taken up the sceptre. Men in mid-life came home in July and August, from office or shop, and did not go back again, and never will go back again. And the dear children, some of them, have been gathered in Christ's arms. He found this world too rough a place for them, and so He has gathered them in. And oh, how many wounded souls there are—wounds for which this world offers no medicament, and unless from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ there shall come a consolation, there will be no consolation at all.

I have thought, therefore, I would not be doing my duty unless from God's Word I brought a cluster of Christian condolence to the people. Oh, that the God of all comfort would help me while I preach, and that the God of all comfort would help you while you hear.

First, I console you with the Divinely sanctioned idea that your departed friends are *as much yours now as they ever were*. I know you sometimes get the idea in your mind, when you have this kind of trouble, that your friends are cut off from you, and they are no longer yours ; but the desire to have all our loved ones in the same lot in the cemetery is a natural desire, a universal desire, and, therefore, a God-implanted desire, and is mightily suggestive of the fact that death has no power to break up the family relations. If our loved ones go away from our possession, why put a fence around our lot in the cemetery ? Why the gathering of four or five names on one family monument ? Why the planting of one cypress-vine so that it covers all the cluster of graves ? Why put the husband beside the wife, and the children at their feet ? Why the bolt on the gate of our lot, and the charge to the keepers of the ground to see that the grass is cut, and the vine attended to, and the flowers planted ? Why not put our departed friends in one common field of graves ? Oh, it is because they are ours. That child, O stricken mother ! is as much yours this morning as in the solemn hour when God put it against your heart, and said as of old : "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." It is no mere whim. It is a Divinely-planted principle in the soul, and God certainly would not plant a lie, and He would not culture a lie ! Abraham would not allow Sarah to be buried in a stranger's grounds, although some very beautiful ground was offered him a free gift ; but he pays four hundred shekels for Machpelah, the cave and the trees overshadowing it. That grave has been well kept, and to-day the Christian traveller stands in thoughtful and admiring mood, gazing up Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah are taking their long sleep of four thousand years. Your father may be slumbering under the tinkling of the bell of the Scotch kirk. Your brother may have gone down in the ship that foundered off Cape Hatteras. Your little child may be sleeping on the verge of the flowering western prairie ; yet God will gather them all up, however widely the dust may be scattered. Nevertheless, it is pleasant

to think that we will be buried together. When my father died, and we took him out and put him down in the graveyard of Somerville, it did not seem so sad to leave him there, because right beside him was my dear, good, old, beautiful, Christian mother, and it seemed as if she said: "I was tired, and I came to bed a little early. I am glad you have come; it seems as of old." Oh, it is a consolation to feel that when men come, and with solemn tread *carry you out to your resting-place*, they will open the gate through which some of your friends have already gone, and through which many of your friends will follow. Sleeping under the same roof, at last sleeping under the same sod. The autumnal flowers that drift across your grave will drift across theirs; the bird-songs that drop on their mound will drop on yours; and then, in starless winter nights, when the wind comes howling through the gorge, you will be company for each other. The child close up to the bosom of its mother. The husband and wife re-married; on their lips the sacrament of the dust. Brothers and sisters, who used in sport to fling themselves on the grass, now again reclining side by side in the grave, in flecks of sunlight sifting through the longlithe willows. Then at the trumpet of the archangel to rise side by side, shaking themselves from the dust of ages. The faces that were ghastly and fixed when you saw them last all aflush with the light of incorruption. The father looking around on his children, and saying: "Come, come, my darlings, this is the morning of the resurrection." Mrs. Sigourney wrote beautifully with the tears and blood of her own broken heart:

"There was a shaded chamber,  
A silent watching band,  
On a low couch a suffering child  
Grasping her mother's hand.

But mid the grasp and struggle,  
With shuddering lips she cried,  
'Mother, oh, dearest mother,  
Bury me by your side.'

Only one wish she uttered,  
As life was ebbing fast,  
'Sleep by my side, dear mother,  
And rise with me at last.'

Oh, yes, we want to be buried together. Sweet art-type of everlasting residence in each other's companionship.

When the wrecker went down into the cabin of the lost steamer, he found the mother and the child in each other's arms. It was sad, but it was beautiful, and it was appropriate. Together they went down. Together they will rise. One on earth. One in heaven. Is there not something cheering in all this thought, and something to impress upon us the idea that the departed are ours yet—ours for ever?

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

trains—spirits coming—spirits going—coming—going—coming—going. That friend of yours who died this summer—do you not suppose he told all the family news about you in the good land to the friends who are gone? Do you not suppose that when there are hundreds of opportunities every day for them in heaven to hear from you that they ask about you? that they know your tears, your temptations, your struggles, your victories? Aye, they do. Perhaps during the last war you had a boy in the army, and you got a pass and you went through the lines and you found him, and, the regiment coming from your neighbourhood, you knew most of the boys there. One day you started for home. You said: "Well, now, have you any letters to send? any messages to send?" And they filled your pockets with letters, and you started home. Arriving home, the neighbours came in, and one said: "Did you see my John?" and others: "Did you see George?" "Do you know anything about my Frank?" And then you brought out the letters and gave them the messages of which you had been the bearer. Do you suppose that angels of God, coming down to this awful battle-field of sin, and sorrow, and death, and meeting us and seeing us, and finding out all about us, carry back no message to the skies? *O, there is consolation in it!* You are in present communication with that land. They are in sympathy with you now more than they ever were, and they are waiting for the moment when the hammer-stroke shall shatter the last claim of your earthly bondage and your soul shall spring upward; and they will stand on the heights of heaven and see you come; and when you are within hailing distance your other friends will be called out, and, as you flash through the pearl-hung gate, their shout will make the hills tremble: "Hail! ransomed spirit, to the city of the blessed."

I console you still further with the *idea of a resurrection*. I know there are a great many people who do not accept this because they cannot understand it; but, my friends, there are two stout passages—I could bring a hundred, but two swarthy passages are enough—and one David will strike

down the largest Goliath. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth." The other swarthy passage is this: "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall arise first." Oh, there *will* be such a thing as a resurrection.

You ask me a great many questions I cannot answer about this resurrection. You say, for instance: "If a man's body is constantly changing, and every seventh year he has an entirely new body, and he lives on to seventy years of age, and so has had ten different bodies, and at the hour of his death there is not a particle of flesh within him that was there in the days of his childhood—in the resurrection, which of the ten bodies will come up, or will they all arise?" You say: "Suppose a man dies and his body is scattered in the dust, and out of that dust vegetables grow, and men eat the vegetables, and cannibals slay these men and eat them, and cannibals fight with cannibals until at last there shall be a hundred men who shall have within them some particles that started from the dead body first named, coming up through the vegetable, through the first man who ate it, and through the cannibals who afterwards ate him, and there be more than a hundred men who have rights in the particles of that body—in the resurrection how can they be assorted when these particles belong to them all? Who will be all? You say: "There is a missionary buried in Greenwood, and when he was in China he had his arm amputated—in the resurrection, will that fragment of the body fly sixteen thousand miles to join the rest of the body?" You say: "Will it not be a very difficult thing for a spirit coming back in that day to find the myriad particles of its own body, when they may have been scattered by the winds or overlaid by whole generations of the dead—looking for the myriad particles of its own body, while there are a thousand million other spirits doing the same thing, and all the assortment to be made within one day?" You say: "If a hundred and fifty men go into a place of evening entertainment, and leave their hats and overcoats in the hall, when they come back it is almost

impossible for them to get the right ones, or to get them without a great deal of perplexity. And yet you tell me that myriad myriads of spirits in the last day will come and find myriads, and myriads, and myriads of bodies." Have you any more questions to ask? any more difficulties to suggest? any more mysteries? *Bring them on?* Against a whole battalion of scepticism I will march these two champions: "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth." "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." You see I stick to these two passages. Who art thou, oh fool, that thou repliest against God? Hath he promised, and shall He not do it? Hath he commanded, and shall He not bring it to pass? Have you not confidence in His omnipotence? If He could, in the first place, build my body, after it is torn down can He not build it again?

"Oh," you say; "I would believe that if you would explain it. I am not disposed to be sceptical, but explain how it can be done." My brother, you believe a great many things you cannot explain. You believe your mind acts on your body. Explain the process. This seed planted comes up a blue flower. Another seed planted comes up a yellow flower. Another seed planted comes up a white flower. Why? Why that wart on your finger? Tell me why some cows have horns, and other cows have no horns. Why, when two obstacles strike each other in the air, do you hear the percussion? What is the subtle energy that solves a solid in a crucible? What makes the notches on an oak-leaf different from any other kind of leaf? What makes this orange-blossom, on this platform, different from that rose? How can the almightiness which rides on the circles of the heaven, find room to turn its chariot on the tuft of a heliotrope? Explain these. Can you not do it? Then I will not explain the resurrection. You explain one half of the common mysteries of every-day life, and I will explain all the mysteries of the resurrection. You cannot answer me very plain questions in regard to ordinary affairs. I am not ashamed to say that

I cannot explain God, and the judgment, and the resurrection. I simply accept them as facts, tremendous and infinite.

Before the resurrection takes place, everything will be silent. The mausoleums and the labyrinths silent. The graveyards silent. The cemetery silent, save from the clashing of hoofs and the grinding of wheels as the last funeral procession comes in. No breath of air disturbing the dust where Persepolis stood, and Thebes, and Babylon. No winking of the eyelids long closed in darkness. No stirring of the feet that once bounded the hill-side. No opening of the hand that once plucked the flower out of the edge of the wild wood. No clutching of swords by the men who went down when Persia battled and Rome fell. Silence from ocean beach to mountain cliff, and from river to river. The sea singing the same old tune. The lakes hushed to sleep in the bosom of the same great hills. No hand disturbing the gate of the long-barred sepulchre. All the nations of the dead motionless in their winding sheets. Up the side of the hills, down through the trough of the valleys, far out in the caverns across the fields, deep down into the coral places of the ocean depths where Leviathan sports with his fellows,—everywhere, layer above layer, height above height, depth below depth—dead! dead! dead! But in the twinkling of an eye, as quick as that, as the archangel's trumpet comes pealing, rolling, reverberating, crashing across continents and seas, *the earth will give one fearful shudder* and the door of the family vault, without being unlocked, will burst open; and all the graves of the dead will begin to throb and heave like the waves of the sea; and the mausoleum of princes will fall into the dust; and Ostend and Sebastopol, and Austerlitz and Gettysburgh, stalk forth in the lurid air; and the shipwrecked rise from the deep, their wet locks looming above the billow; and all the land and all the sea become one moving mass of life—all generations, all ages with upturned countenances,—some kindled with rapture and others blanched with despair, but gazing in one direction, upon one object, and that *the throne of resurrection!*



On that day you will get back your Christian dead. There is where the comfort comes in. They will come up with the same hand, and the same foot, and the same entire body ; but with a perfect hand, and a perfect foot, and a perfect body ; corruption having become incorruption, mortality having become immortality. And oh, the re-union ; oh, the embrace after so long an absence. Comfort one another with these words.

While I present these thoughts this morning, does it not seem that heaven comes very near to us, as though our friends, whom we thought a great way off, are not in the distance but close by ? You have sometimes come down to a river at night-fall, and you have been surprised how easily you could hear voices across that river. You shouted over to the other side of the river, and they shouted back. It is said that, when George Whitefield preached in Third-street, Philadelphia, one evening time, his voice was heard clear across to the New Jersey shore. When I was a little while chaplain in the army, I remember how at even-tide we could easily hear the voices of the pickets across the Potomac, just when they were using ordinary tones. And as we come to-day and stand by the river Jordan that divides us from our friends who are gone, it seems to me we stand on one bank and they stand on the other, and it is only a narrow stream, and our voices go and their voices come. Hark ! Hush ! I hear distinctly what they say : "These are they who come out of great tribulation, and they had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Still the voice comes across the water, and I hear : "We hunger no more, we thirst no more ; neither shall the sun light on us, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leads us to living fountains of water, and God wipeth away all tears from our eyes." May God, by His infinite grace, soothe you with an omnipotent comfort.

## RUN FOR YOUR LIFE.

*“Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.”—GEN. xix. 17.*

FOR the most part, the lakes of the earth are the darlings of the mountains—their necks garlanded with wild flowers and their foreheads flashing in the sun; but their is one lake loathsome and God-forsaken, and exiled from all that is beautiful. The modern traveller finds it. It lies down accursed; no tinged shells adorn its banks; no fish live in its stenchful waters. The waterfowl, for the most part, do not fly anywhere near its surface, and the bather comes up out of it encrusted with the salt and sick with the taste of the water. Bitter, briny, sulphurous, dark, it seems as if the shadows of past desolation chased each other across it, and the traveller, struck through with melancholy, hastens from its presence, perhaps taking a few pieces of nitre and sulphur to show the barrenness of the place. Where that lake now spreads out, thirteen cities once stood—among them Sodom. It would be unpardonable if, in this presence, I recounted the crimes of that city. Suffice it to say that the citizens were so bad they mobbed an angel that came down on an errand of mercy. Lot resolved to leave the city, but did not make much haste. He had miles to travel, and, at the rate at which he was going, death would have dashed upon him before he got to the mountains. And so the angel seizes him, pushes him on, pulls him out, urges him forward, crying, in the words of my text: “Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.” Well, *the fatal day came*. The morning as bright as ever, perhaps; the citizens, as usual, reckless, unclean, and blasphemous. What do they care about their coming doom? There is no God, or if there be, who fears Him? Suddenly there is a flame in the sky, and the volcano rocks and upheaves the bitumen that underlies all that region of country, throwing it up to the surface, and this com-

bustible material coming in the presence of the fire immediately ignites ; and amid the falling flame, and upheaving asphaltum, and the suffocating stench of the brimstone, and the bursting thunder, and the roaring, crackling, all-consuming hurricane of God's wrath, Sodom shrieked its last curse and died !

My friends, God hates sin just as much now as He did then, and it behoves you and it behoves me to leave our transgressions, and start, not with snail's pace, not with deliberate walk, but at the top of our speed, for rescue ; the angel that helped Lot out of trouble meantime taking us by the arm, and crying in our ears : "Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." What is the sin that we must hasten from ? Sin is just one thing. The legislature makes an enactment ; a man offends against it, and he is incarcerated. You make a law in your household ; your child wilfully disobeys, and punishment follows. God makes a law ; we have all broken it, and hence we are all sinners ; and in consequence of that sin we must be punished unless there be some pardon offered—unless there be some door of escape set before us. Blessed be God, there is one !

My text in the first place, suggests *urgency on the part of all those who would induce people out of their sins*. Why was not the angel more polite ? Why did not he coolly and formally invite Lot and his wife to leave that city ? The angel, so far from that, seized hold of him, pulled him out, pulled him on with irresistible force. The angel was in earnest. Oh, does not the world, looking upon us and seeing our coldness, come to the conclusion that we do not believe what we say ? If unpardoned men were in such peril as the Bible says they are, and we believe it, would we be such precisionists, so cold, and stolid, and unemotional ? Suppose a blind man were on a rail-track, and you saw a train coming, would you go up to him and say : "My dear friend, a machine commonly called a locomotive, invented by James Watt, is making very rapid revolutions towards the place where you are, and and unless you change your course of pedestrianism, it will

be soon decided which of the two is the stronger?" Would you do that? Ah no; men are not so stolid about temporal peril. You would cry: "*Get out of the way. The cars are coming!*" And yet when it is spiritual danger we use so much circumlocution, and so much caution, and come with so timid a tread towards the place where men are imperilled, that they actually don't believe we think there is peril, although there are spiritual and eternal disasters coming on in long trains, flying as swiftly as the hours, swiftly as the seconds, ready to crush for ever. If we realized it, would not we stamp our foot, and cry: "*Man, immortal, look out for eternity!*" If there be no danger in rejecting Christ, we might as well drop our anxiety; but if there is danger, let us cry the alarm. The world knows at this day that we who profess the faith of Christ, standing in our prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, and pulpits, act as if religion were a fiction. Oh for something of the urgency of the angel that came to Lot; not coolly discussing with him the chemical properties of the storm that was coming, but laying hold of him with both hands, pulling him on, pushing him out, and crying with an emphasis that must have sent him at the top of his speed: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

My subject also suggests that the mere *starting gives no security*. Lot had started out of the city, but he might have perished half-way before he got to the mountains. Men start for heaven, but do not always get there. If my house be burning, and I take a bucket of water and put out the flames in this, and that, and yonder room, while I leave the flames in another room, I might as well have wasted no strength and brought no buckets of water at all. The whole thing will be consumed. And if a man is only half saved, he is not saved at all. Ten thousand men start for the kingdom of Christ, but do not get there. They either start too late, or stop before they get there. The *Cambria* started for Scotland, but did not go into port. The *City of Boston* came out from Liverpool harbour with flags flying, but the ocean

keeps the awful secret of its burial. There is such a thing as starting for a place and not getting there. There was not one inch of safety anywhere between Sodom and the mountain of refuge. Lot might as well have stayed in his own home, and perished there, as to have perished outside the city.

Last Sabbath night, there were men here who started for the kingdom. Have they got there? Let me say to all such as have not reached that place: there is no rock of shelter where you are; no promise of safety where you are; overtaken by the storm here, you perish. A man has been very sick, doctors have attended him carefully, and he comes up to life again, begins to walk out; but he takes a cold, has a relapse, and in twelve hours he is a dead man. There are men who have been almost cured of their sin; they begin to get well, the heavenly Physician stayed day after day by their soul, they had almost recovered, but not quite; there came on them a cold draught from the world, there came a relapse, and they were gone. I hear men saying in the audience: "Lord, I will believe, I will be a Christian." Will you, now? If not now, to-morrow will take you into the whirl of business and gaiety, and you may never think of these things again. There is a man who, forty years ago, became almost a Christian, but not quite. What would have become of the Prodigal Son if he had stopped half-way between the swine trough and his father's house? Why, he might better not have started, but stayed down where he was. The carrots that the swine eat are better than nothing at all. Oh, to have started for heaven and to get there! If there are any in this house who are in this position I now describe, let me say that you are no more safe in this half-and-half experience than you were in the time before you began to think, and so I sound the tocsin: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

The text suggests further, that a man, after being persuaded out of sin, *sometimes looks back*. Lot's wife looked back and perished. Lot himself would have looked back had it not

been for the warning of the text. It is very natural that they should. It was their home. All her friends were there ; all his friends were there. We become attached to the city of our residence, notwithstanding all its sins. Still it was wrong for them to look back. God forbade it. But are there not persons in this day who start out of their sins yet look back wistfully for occasional indulgence? Here is a man who started for heaven a year ago. He had been given to dissipation ; he has looked back. You are drinking too hard. I believe a moderate drinker may get into heaven, but a hard drinker, never ! “No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.” The snake catches the eye of the bird on the limb : it begins to tremble, and soon slips from the tree branch, and begins to fly down toward the serpent, and soon it is caught in the terrible folds and is gone. The wine cup has been your fascination. You have by it been brought down from the circles in which you once moved, and come down nearer and nearer to the day of your destruction, and after awhile you will be caught in the coils of that which “biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” *Oh, man, give up drinking, or give up heaven!* There is your choice. A man stood on the scaffold about to be executed, and the sheriff pulling out his watch, said : “You have five minutes to say what you have to say. The dying man said : “Rum ruined me. I had a little brother. I loved him very much. He was a bright-eyed lad. I came home one day intoxicated. My little brother was picking berries in the garden, and for some reason I got mad at him, and I took up an iron rake and with one stroke I killed him. Now I am to die for it, and you ask me what I have to say. It is this : never, never, never touch anything that can intoxicate.” Alas, if once you start for heaven and look back to your early dissipations !

Here is another who has made shipwreck in another direction : it has been the house of shame. That Sodom will be the eternal damnation of your soul unless you quit it. “As an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks ; till a dart strike through his liver.” So says God in Proverbs, shall be the doom of all the impure.

Another man is captured by *the convivialities of life*. He has chosen better associates, but says: "I guess I will go down to the room and see the boys a little while." He goes down, and is there one or two hours, and in those two hours he loses all his good resolutions and all serious impressions. They are witty, they are brilliant, they are smart there; but they are bad, and they ruined him. Oh, how many have started out of associates, and looked back. Oh, be not among them. "Escape for thy life."

My text suggests that some men, having started, *loiter by the way*. They tarry in the plain. They are too lazy to get on. You know that men, in order to get on in this world, must deny themselves, and work hard; must go through drudgery, that after awhile they may have luxuries. But there are some men too lazy for this life and too lazy to win heaven. If we get to heaven it will be by gathering up all the energies of our souls and hurling them ahead in one persistent direction. I have seen within the past week or two people in this church start for heaven, but *they loitered by the way*, so that ten thousand years would not be long enough for them to get there. In mid-ocean, on the *China* going out at midnight, the "screw" stopped. "What's the matter?" everybody cried. People rushed out to see why the "screw" had stopped in mid-ocean. Something wrong, or it would not stop in the middle of the Atlantic. So it is a bad sign when men voyaging towards heaven stop half-way. It is a sign of infinite peril.

I don't exactly know why Lot and his wife loitered by the way. I think Lot's wife looked back because she thought after all, it might be a hoax—that there might be no destruction of the city, and she said to herself: "Wouldn't we feel silly if our property should be confiscated and the city stand undamaged?" Just so there are men now who say it is all talk about a judgment and a long eternity; it is all a hoax. I don't wonder that a man says that who does not believe the Bible; but if a man believe the Bible, I don't know how he can say that, because this Bible declares God will turn into hell all the nations that forget Him, and will sweep with

the hail of His vengeance the refuges of lies. In the peroration of His sermon on the Mount, Christ told how some houses are on the rock and stand, and other houses are on the sand and fall. Sodom must perish ; sin must be crushed and the whole world acclaim the justice of God.

Perhaps Lot and his wife thought there was no hurry. They may have said : " There is no sign in the heaven ; there never was a more beautiful day than this. We suppose that when the time comes, there will be some signs of it. There will be a rumbling in the earth, or there will be an ominous shadow on the hills." They were mistaken. I suppose it came in an eye-twinkle. One moment mirth and song, the next volcanic eruption, and bursting cloud, and horrible obliteration. Men now tarry in the plain of sin and say : " There is no hurry. What if your breath should stop ? Where would you be ? Where would you go ? I don't ask you to take my poor words about the brevity and uncertainty of life, Ask any commercial man whose kind of business necessitates that he calculate the length of human life—ask him in his business what he thinks of the uncertainty of human existence. " Oh," says some man : " I shall repent on my sick bed." Will you ? The last sickness, as far as I have observed it, is generally divided into two parts. The first half of that final sickness is spent in the expectation of getting well, in the discussion of doctors and different styles of medicines ; the last half in delirium, or in stupidity, or a consternation which prohibits religious thought. So that I take it for granted that *the poorest place on earth* for a man to repent of sin and prepare for heaven, is on his death-bed. In the first half of that sickness he will expect to get well, and in the last half of it he will not be fit to think. What a foolish thing it is to tarry in the plain, when more people perish between Sodom and the mountains than actually perish inside the city. A gentleman was telling me, a night or two ago, walking up the street, of a lady who said : " I will repent and turn to God in six months. I have made up my mind deliberately to that, and when I make up my mind I stick to it. In six months I mean to be a Christian." Three



of the six months passed along, and one evening, at the expiration of the three months, she said to some one who was talking on serious subjects : "Just three months more and I will attend to it." The next morning they knocked at her door. She gave no answer. They went in. She had passed up to reckon with God. Oh, man immortal ! woman immortal ! tarry not in the plain. If it were a mere matter of temporal peril, I could not help but be interested in you. If I saw your house kindling with flame, I could not help but cry out : "Fire, fire !" If I saw you smitten with some terrible disease, I would run for medicament ; but when I find it is the soul that is in disease and in peril, I feel like coming, and with almost a violence of earnestness crying : "Why will you die ?"

Lot and his wife were in peril. If they stayed in the city, what would become of them ? Would it be the loss of an arm, or foot, or eye ; Oh, no ; it would be death utter ; and before the disasters passed from that city the people had perished in their homes, and in the streets. "Lest thou be consumed," the angel cried out. They who die in their sins are consumed ; they are struck down with none to deliver.

Lot started for the mountains. He knew if he got there, all would be safe. The storm could not take him there, could not destroy him. Jesus Christ is the mountain of our refuge. His side is the cleft rock in which we may hide. To the mountains ! to the mountains ! No storm of death can chase you there. Everlastingly safe are all those who put their trust in Him. Oh, make haste ! Tighten thy girdle for the race. Lay aside all impediments, and may God give the speed of lightning to thy feet ! "Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

## THE CHRISTIAN AT THE BALLOT-BOX.

*"Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefor they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out: Great is Diana of the Ephesians."—ACTS xix. 32, 33, 34.*

**E**PHESUS was upside down. A manufacturer of silver boxes for holding heathen images had called his labourers together to discuss the behaviour of one Paul, who had been in public places assaulting image worship, and consequently very much damaging that particular business. There was great excitement in the city. People stood in knots along the streets, violently gesticulating and calling each other hard names. Some of the people favoured the policy of the silversmith; other people favoured the policy of Paul. There were great moral questions involved; but these did not bother them at all. The only question about which they seemed to be interested was concerning the wages and the salaried positions. The silversmith and his compeers had put up factories at great expense for the making of these silver boxes, and now, if this new policy is to be inaugurated, the business will go down, the labourers will be thrown out of employment, and the whole city will suffer. Well, what is to be done? "Call a convention," says some one; for in all ages a convention has been a panacea for public evils. The convention is called, and as they want the largest room in the city they take the theatre. Having there assembled, they all want to get the floor, and they all want to talk at once. You know what excitement that always makes in a convention where a great many people want to talk at once. Some cried one thing, some cried another. Some wanted to denounce, some wanted to resolve. After awhile a prominent

man gets the floor, and he begins to speak ; but they very soon hiss him down, and then the confusion rises into worse uproar, and they begin to shout all of them together, and they keep on until they are red in the face and hoarse in the throat, for two long hours crying out : “ Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! ”

That whole scene reminds me of the excitement we have almost every autumn at the elections. While that goddess Diana has lost her worshippers, and her temples have gone into the dust, the American people want to set up a god in place of it, and they want us all to bow down before it ; and that god is Political Party. Considering our superior civilization, I have to declare to you that the Ephesian idolatry was *less offensive in the sight of God* than is this all-absorbing American partizanship. While there are honest men, true Christian men, who stand in both political parties, and who come into the autumnal elections resolving to serve their state, or the nation in the best possible way, I have noticed also that with many it is a mere contest between the ins and the outs—those who are in trying to stay in and keep the outs out, and those who are out trying to get in and thrust the ins out. And one party cries : “ Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! ” and the other party cries : “ Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! ” neither of them honest enough to say : “ Great is my pocket-book ! ”

Once or twice a year it is my custom to talk to the people about public affairs from what I call a Christian standpoint, and this morning I have chosen for that duty. I hope to say a practical word. History tells us of a sermon once preached amid the highlands of Scotland—a sermon two hours long—on the sin of luxury, where there were not more than three pairs of shoes in the audience : and during our last war a good man went into a hospital distributing tracts, and gave a tract on “ The Sin of Dancing ” to a man whose both legs had been amputated ! But I hope this morning to present an appropriate and adapted word, as next Tuesday, at the ballot-box, great affairs are to be settled. The Rev. Dr. Emmons, in the early history of our country, in Massa-

chusetts, preached about the election of Thomas Jefferson to the presidency. The Rev. Dr. Mayhew, of Boston, in the early days of our republic, preached about the repeal of the Stamp Act. There are times when ministers of Christ must look off upon public affairs and discuss them. We need go back to no example. Every man is, before God responsible for his own duty. If the Norwegian boasts of his home of rocks, and the Siberian is pleased with his land of perpetual snow ; if the Roman thought that the muddy Tiber was the favoured river in the sight of heaven, and if the Laplander shivers out his eulogy of his native clime ; and if the Chinese have pity for anybody born outside the flowery kingdom, shall not we, born under these fair skies, and standing day by day amid these glorious civil and religious liberties, be public-spirited ? I propose to tell the people very plainly what I consider to be their Christian duty at the ballot-box.

First : *Set yourselves against all political falsehood.* The most monstrous lies ever told in this country are during the elections. I stop at the door of a Democratic meeting and listen, and hear that the Republicans are thieves. I stop at the door of a Republican-meeting and listen, and hear that the Democrats are scoundrels. Our public men are microscopized, and the truth distorted. *Who believes a tenth part of what he reads or hears in the autumnal elections ?* Men who, at other seasons of the year, are more careful in their speech, become pedlars of scandal. In the far east there is a place where, once a year, they let the people do as they please and say what they please, and the place is full of uproar, misrule, and wickedness, and they call it the "Devil's day." The nearest approximation to that in this country has been the first Tuesday in November. The community at such times seems to say : "Go to, now ; let us have a good time at lying." Prominent candidates for office are denounced as renegade and inebriate. A small lie will start in the corner of a country newspaper, and keep on running until it has captured the printing presses of the whole continent. What garbling of speeches ! What misinterpretation of

motives ! What misrepresentation of individual antecedents ! To capture the unwary, you shall have a ticket with a Democratic heading and Republican names following, and then a Republican heading with Democratic names following, and the poor man will stand at the polls bewildered ; at last, perhaps, voting for those whom he has been three weeks vociferously denouncing. Oh, Christian men, frown upon this political falsehood. Remember that a political lie is as black as any other kind of a lie. God has recorded all the falsehoods that have been told at the city, state, or national elections since the foundation of this government, and, though the perpetrators and their victims may have gone into the dust, in the last day judgment will be awarded. The falsehoods that Aaron Burr breathed into the ear of Blennerhasset, the slanders that Lieut.-Gen. Gage proclaimed about George Washington, the misrepresentations in regard to James Monroe, are as fresh on God's Book to-day as the lie that was printed last week about Samuel J. Tilden or Governor Dix. "And all liars shall have their place in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Again : *I counsel you as Christian men to set yourselves against the misuse of money in political campaigns.* Of the tens of thousands of dollars already spent this autumn, how much of the amount do you suppose has been properly used? You have a right to spend money for the publishing of political tracts, for the establishment of organizations for the carrying out of what you consider to be the best ; you have a right to appeal to the reason of men, by argument and statistics, and by facts ; but he who puts a bribe into the hand of a voter, or plies weak men with mercenary and corrupt motives, *commits a sin against God and the nation.* Bribery is one of the most appalling sins of this country. God says : "Fires shall consume the tabernacles of bribery." Have nothing to do with such a sin, O Christian man ! Fling it from the ballot-box. Hand over to the police the man who attempts to tamper with your vote, and remember that elections that cannot be carried without bribes ought never to be carried at all.

Again: *I ask you as Christian men to set yourselves against the dissipation that hovers over the ballot box,* Let me say that no man can afford to go into political life who is not a teetotaler. Hot political discussion somehow creates an unnatural thirst, and hundreds of thousands of men have gone down into drunkenness through political life. After an exciting canvass through the evening you must "take something," and rising in the morning with less animation than usual you must "take something," and going off among your comrades through the forenoon you meet political friends and you must "take something," and in the afternoon you meet other political friends and you must "take something," and before night has come something has taken you. There are but few cases where men have been able to stand up against the dissipations of political life. Joseph was a politician, but he maintained his integrity. Daniel was a politician, but he was a teetotaler to the last. Abraham was a politician, but he was always characterized as the father of the faithful. *Moses was a politician;* the grandest of them; but he honoured God more than he did the Pharaohs. And there are hundreds of Christian men now in the political parties maintaining their integrity, even when they are obliged to stand amid the blasted, lecherous, and loathsome crew that sometimes surround the ballot-box; these Christian men doing their political duty, and then coming back to the prayer-meetings and Christian circles as pure as when they went out. But that is not the ordinary circumstance; that is the exception. How often you see men coming back from the political conflict, and their eye is glazed, and their cheek has an unnatural flush, and they talk louder than they usually do, and at the least provocation they will bet, and you say they are convivial or they are exceedingly vivacious, or you apply some other sweet name to them; but God knows they are drunk! Some of you, a month or six weeks ago, had no more religion than you ought to have, and after the elections are over, to calculate how much religion you have left will be a sum in vulgar fractions. Oh, the pressure is tremendous.

How many mighty intellects have gone down under the dissipation of politics. I think of one who came from the West. He was able to stand out against the whole American Senate. God had given him faculties enough to govern a kingdom, or to frame a constitution. His voice was terrible to his country's enemies, and a mighty inspiration in the day of national peril. He was in a fair way to become our president; but twenty glasses of strong drink a day were his usual allowance, and he went down into the habits of a confirmed inebriate. Alas for him. Though a costly monument has been reared over his resting-place, and though in the presence of the laying of the corner-stone there stood military and ecclesiastical dignitaries, the young men of this country shall not be denied the lawful lesson that the agency by which the world was robbed of one of its mightiest intellects, and our country of one of its ablest constitutional defenders, was the dissipation of political life. You want to know who I mean? Young man, ask your father when you get home. Oh, the adverse tide is fearful, and I warn you against it.

You need not go far off to find the worn-out politician. Here he is stumbling along the highway, his limbs hardly able to hold him up. Bent over and pale with exhausting sickness. Surly to anybody who accosts him. His last decent article of apparel pawned for strong drink. Glad if, when going by a grocery, some low acquaintance invites him in to take a sip of ale, and then wiping his lip with his greasy sleeve, *kicked off the steps* by men who once were proud to be his constituents. Manhood obliterated. Lip blistered with a curse. Scars of brutal assault on cheek and brow. Foul-mouthed. A crouching, staggering, wheezing wretch. No friends. No God. No hope. No heaven. That is your worn-out politician. That is what some of you will become unless by this morning's warning, and the mercy of God, your steps are arrested. Oh, there are no words enough potent, enough consuming, enough damning to describe the horrible drunkenness that has rolled over this land, and that has bent down the necks of some of the mightiest intellects until they have been compelled to drink out of the trough of

bestiality and abomination. I warn young men against political life unless they are teetotalers and consecrated Christian men.

Again : *I counsel you that when you go to the ballot-box at the city, or the state, or the national elections, you recognize God and appeal to Him for His blessing.* There is a power higher than the ballot-box, than the gubernatorial chair, than the presidential White House. It is high time that we put less confidence in political platforms and more confidence in God. See what a weak thing is human foresight. How little our wise men seem to know. See how, every autumn, thousands of men who are clambering up for higher positions are turned under. God upsets them. Every man, every party, every nation, has a mission to perform. Failing to perform it, down he goes, down it goes. God said to the House of Bourbon : "Remodel France and establish equity." House of Bourbon would not do it. Down it went. God said to the House of Stuart : "Make the English people free, God-fearing, and happy." House of Stuart would not do it. Down it went. God said to the House of Hapsburg : "Rule Austria in righteousness, and open the prison houses until the captives shall go free." House of Hapsburg refuses to do it. Down it goes. God says to the political parties in this day : "By the principles of Christianity, remodel, govern, educate, save the people." Failing to do that, down they go, burying in their ruins their disciples and advocates. God can spare all the political intriguers of this day, and can raise up another generation who shall do justice and love mercy. If God could spare Luther before the Reformation was done, and if He could spare Washington before free government had been fully tested, and if He could spare Howard before more than one out of a thousand dungeons had been alleviated, and if He could spare Robert McCheyne just as Scotland was gathering to his burning utterances, and if He could spare Thomas Clarkson while yet millions of his fellow men had chains rusting to the bone, then *He can spare any man*, and He can spare any party. That man, who through cowardice or blind idolatry of party forsakes the cause of righteousness,



goes down, and the armed battalions of God march over him.

Oh, Christian men, take out your Bible this afternoon, and in the light of that Word, make up your mind as to what is your duty as citizens. Remember that the highest kind of a patriot is a Christian patriot. Consecrate yourselves first to God, then you will know how to consecrate yourselves to your country. All these political excitements will be gone. Ballot boxes and gubernatorial chairs and continents will smoke in the final conflagration ; but those who love God and do their best, shall come to lustrous dominion after the stars have ceased their shining, and the ocean has heaved its last billow, and the closing thunder of the judgment-day shall toll at the funeral of the world ! Oh, prepare for that day ! Next Tuesday questions of the State will be settled ; but there comes a day when the questions of eternity will be decided. You may vote right and may get the victory at the ballot-box, and yet suffer eternal defeat. After you have cast your last vote, where will you go to ? In this country there are two parties. You belong to the one or the other of them. Likewise in eternity there will be two parties, and only two. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal." To which party will you belong ? God grant that, while you look after the welfare of the land in which God has graciously cast your lot, you may not forget to look after your soul—blood-bought, judgment-bound, immortal ! God save the people !



## SNOW WATER AND ALKALI INSUFFICIENT.

*"If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."*—JOB. ix. 30, 31.

**A**LBERT BARNES—honoured be his name on earth and in heaven—went straight back to the original writing of my text, and translated it as I have now quoted it giving substantial reasons for so doing. Although we know better, the ancients had an idea that in snow-water there was a special power to cleanse, and that a garment washed and rinsed in it would be as clean as clean could be; but if the plain snow-water failed to do its work, then they would take lye, or alkali, and mix it with oil, and under that preparation they felt that the last impurity would certainly be gone. Job, in my text, in most forceful figure, sets forth the idea that all his attempts to make himself pure before God were a dead failure, and that unless we are abluted by something better than earthly liquids and chemical preparations, we are loathsome and in the ditch. "If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."

You are now sitting for your picture. I turn the camera obscura of God's Word full upon you, and I pray that the sunshine falling through the skylight may enable me to take you just as you are. Shall it be a flattering picture or shall it be a true one? You say: "Let it be a true one." The first profile that was ever taken was taken three hundred and thirty years before Christ, of Antigonus. He had a blind eye, and he compelled the artist to take his profile, so as to hide the defect in his vision. But since that invention, three hundred and thirty years before Christ, there have been a great many profiles. Shall I, to-night, give you a one-sided view of yourselves, a profile, or shall

it be a full-length portrait, showing you how you stand before heaven, and earth, and hell? If God will help me by His almighty grace, I shall give you that last kind of a picture.

When I first entered the ministry, I used to write my sermons all out and read them, and run my hand along the line lest I should lose my place. I have hundreds of those manuscripts. Shall I ever preach them? Never; for in those days I was somehow overmastered with the idea I heard talked all around about of the dignity of human nature, and I adopted the idea, and I evolved it, and I illustrated it, and I argued it; but coming on in life, and having seen more of the world, and studied better my Bible, I find that early teaching was faulty, and that there is *no dignity in human nature* until it is reconstructed by the grace of God. Talk about vessels going to pieces on the Skerries, off Ireland! There never was such a shipwreck as in the Gihon and the Hiddekel, rivers of Eden, where our first parents foundered. Talk of a steamer going down with five hundred passengers on board! What is that to the shipwreck of twelve hundred million souls; We are by nature a mass of uncleanness and putrefaction, from which it takes all the omnipotence and infinitude of God's grace to extricate us. "If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and my own clothes shall abhor me."

I remark, in the first place, that some people try to cleanse their soul of sin in the snow-water of *fine apologies*. Here is one man who says: "I am a sinner; I confess that; but I inherited this. My father was a sinner, my grandfather, my great-great-grandfather, and all the way back to Adam, and I couldn't help myself." My brother, have you not, every day in your life, added something to the original estate of sin that was bequeathed to you? Are you not brave enough to confess that you have sometimes surrendered to sin which you ought to have conquered? I ask you whether it is fair play to put upon our ancestry things for which we ourselves are personally responsible? If your nature was

askew when you got it, have you not sometimes given it an additional twist? Will all the tombstones of those who have preceded us make a barricade high enough for eternal defences? I know a devout man who had blasphemous parentage. I know an honest man whose father was a thief. I know a pure man whose mother was a waif of the street. The hereditary tide may be very strong, but there is such a thing as stemming it. The fact that I have a corrupt nature is no reason why I should yield to it. The deep stains of our soul can never be washed out by the snow-water of such insufficient apology.

Still further says some one: "If I have gone into sin, it has been through my companions, my comrades, and associates; they ruined me. They taught me to drink. They took me to the gambling hell. They plunged me into the house of sin. They ruined my soul." I do not believe it. God gave to no one the power to destroy you or me. If a man is destroyed he is self-destroyed, and that is always so. Why did you not break away from them? If they had tried to steal your purse, you would have knocked them down; if they had tried to purloin your gold watch, you would have riddled them with shot; but when they tried to steal your immortal soul, you placidly submitted to it.

Still further, some persons apologize for their sins by saying: "We are a great deal better than some people. You see people all around about us that are a great deal worse than we." You stand up columnar in your integrity, and look down upon those who are prostrate in their habits and crimes. What of that, my brother? If I failed through recklessness and wicked imprudence for one thousand pounds, is the matter alleviated at all by the fact that somebody else has failed for one hundred thousand pounds, and somebody else for two hundred thousand pounds? Oh, no. If I have the neuralgia, shall I refuse medical attendance because my neighbour has virulent typhoid fever? The fact that his disease is worse than mine—does that cure mine? If I, through my foolhardiness, leap off into eternal woe, does it break the fall to know that others leap off a higher cliff into

deeper darkness? When the Hudson River rail-train went through the bridge at Spuyten Duyvel did it alleviate the matter at all that instead of two or three people being hurt there were seventy-five mangled and crushed? Because others are depraved, is that any excuse for my depravity? Am I better than they? Perhaps they had worse temptations than I have had. Perhaps their surroundings in life were more overpowering. Perhaps, oh man, if you had been under the same stress of temptation, instead of sitting here to-night you would have been looking through the bars of a penitentiary. Perhaps, oh woman, if you had been under the same power of temptation, instead of sitting here to-night, you would be tramping the street, the laughing stock of men and the grief of the angels of God, dungeoned, body, mind, and soul, in the blackness of despair. Ah, do not let us solace ourselves with the thought that other people are worse than we. Perhaps in the future, when our fortunes may change, unless God prevents it, we may be worse than they are. Many a man after thirty years, after forty years, after fifty years, after sixty years, has gone to pieces on the sand-bars. Oh, instead of wasting our time in hypercriticism about others, let us ask ourselves the questions, where *we* stand? what are *our* sins? what are *our* deficits? what are *our* perils? what *our* hopes? Let each one say to himself: "Where will I be? Shall I range in summery fields, or grind in the mills of a great night? Shall it be anthem or shriek? Shall it be with God or fiends! Where? Where?" Some winter morning you go out and see a snowbank in graceful drifts, as though by some heavenly compass it had been curved, and, as the sun glints it, the lustre is almost insufferable—and it seems as if God had wrapped the earth in a shroud with white plaits woven in looms celestial. And you say: "Was there ever anything so pure as the snow, so beautiful as the snow?" But you brought a pail of that snow and put it upon the stove, and melted it, and you found that there was a sediment at the bottom, and every drop of that snow-water was riled, and you found that the snow-bank had gathered up the impurity of the field, and that, after all

it was not fit to wash in. And so I say it will be if you try to gather up these contrasts and comparisons with others, and with these apologies attempt to wash out the sins of your heart and life. It will be an unsuccessful ablution. Such snow-water will never wash away a single stain of an immortal soul.

But I hear some one say : "I will try something better than that. I will try the force of a *good resolution*. That will be more pungent, more caustic, more extirpating, more cleansing. The snow-water has failed, and now I will try the alkali of a good, strong resolution." My dear brother, have you any idea that a resolution about the future will liquidate the past ? Suppose I owed you a thousand pounds, and I should come to you to-morrow, and say : "Sir, I will never run in debt to you again ; if I should live thirty years I will never run in debt to you again ;" will you turn to me and say : "If you will not run in debt in the future I will forgive you the thousand pounds." Will you do that ? No ! nor will God. We have been running up a long score of indebtedness with God. If for the future we should abstain from sin, that would be no defrayment of past indebtedness. Though you should live from this time forth pure as an archangel before the throne, that *would not redeem the past*. God, in the Bible, distinctly declares that He "will require that which is past,"—past opportunities, past neglects, past wicked words, past impure imaginations, past everything. The past is a great cemetery, and every day is buried in it. And here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five graves. They are the dead days of 1873. Here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five more graves, and they are the dead days of 1872. And here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five more graves, and they are the dead days of 1871. It is a vast cemetery of the past. But God will rouse them all up with resurrectionary blast, and as the prisoner stands face to face with juror and judge, so you and I will have to come up and look upon those departed days face to face, exulting in their smile or cowering in their frown. "Murder will out" is a proverb that stops too short.

Every sin, however small as well as great, will out. In hard times, years ago, it is authentically stated a manufacturer was on the way, with a bag of money, to pay off his hands. A man, infuriated with hunger, met him on the road, and took a nail with a nail in it from a paling fence, and struck him down, and the nail, entering the skull, instantly slew him. Thirty years after the murderer went back to that place. He passed into the graveyard, where the sexton was digging a grave, and while he stood there the spade of the sexton turned up a skull, and lo! the murderer saw a nail protruding from the back part of the skull, and as the sexton turned the skull it seemed with hollow eyes to glare on the murderer, and he, first petrified with horror, stood in silence, but soon cried out: "Guilty! Guilty! O God!" The mystery of the crime was over. The man was tried and executed. My friends, all the unpardoned sins of our lives, though we may think they are buried out of sight and gone into a mere skeleton of memory, will turn up in the cemetery of the past, and glower upon us with their misdoings. I say all our unpardoned sins. Oh, have you done the preposterous thing of supposing that good resolutions for the future will wipe out the past. Good resolutions, though they may be pungent and caustic as alkali, have no power to neutralise a sin—have no power to wash away a transgression. It wants something more than earthly chemistry to do this. Yea, yea, though "I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."

You see from the last part of this text that Job's idea of sin was very different from that of Lord Byron or Eugene Sue, or George Sand, or M. J. Michelet, or any of the hundreds of writers who have done up iniquity in mezzotint, and garlanded the wine cup with eglantine and rosemary, and made the path of the libertine end in bowers of ease instead of on the hot flagging of infernal torture. You see that Job thinks that *sin is not a flowery parterre*: that it is not a table-land of fine prospects; that it is not music, dulcimer,

violoncello, castanet, and Pandean pipes, all making music together. No. He says it is a ditch, long, deep, loathsome, stenchful, and we are all plunged into it, and there we wallow, and sink, and struggle, not able to get out. Our robes of propriety and robes of worldly profession are saturated in the slime and abomination, and our soul, covered over with transgression, hates its covering, and the covering hates the soul, until we are plunged into the ditch, and our own clothes abhor us.

I know that some modern religionists caricature sorrow for sin, and they make out an easier path than the "pilgrim's progress" that John Bunyan dreamed of. The road they travel does not travel where John's did, at the City of Destruction, but at the gate of the university; and I am very certain that it will not come out where John's did, under the shining ramparts of the celestial city. No repentance; no pardon. If you do not, my brother, feel that you are down in the ditch, what do you want of Christ to lift you out? If you have no appreciation of the fact that you are astray, what do you want of Him who came to seek and save that which was lost? Yonder is the *Scotia*, the swiftest of the Cunarders, coming across the Atlantic. The wind is abaft, so that she has not only her engines at work, but all sails up. I am on board the *Spain*, of the National line. The boat-davits are swung around. The boat is lowered. I get into it with a red flag, and cross over to where the *Scotia* is coming, and I wave the flag. The captain looks off from the bridge, and says: "What do you want?" I reply: "I come to take some of your passengers across to the other vessel; I think they will be safer and happier there." The captain would look with indignation, and say: "Get out of the way, or I will run you down." And then I would back oars, amid the jeering of two or three hundred people looking over the taffrail. But the *Spain* and the *Scotia* meet under different circumstances after awhile. The *Scotia* is coming out of a cyclone; the life-boats all smashed; the bulwarks gone; the wheel off; the vessel rapidly going down. The boat-swain gives his last whistle of despairing



command. The passengers run up and down the deck, and some pray, and all make a great outcry. The captain says: "You have about fifteen minutes now to prepare for the next world." "No hope!" sounds from stem to stern, and from the ratlines down to the cabin. I see the distress. I am let down by the side of the *Spain*. *I push off as fast as I can* towards the sinking *Scotia*. Before I come up people are leaping into the water in their anxiety to get to the boat, and when I have swung up under the side of the *Scotia*, the frenzied passengers rush through the gangway until the officers, with axe, and clubs, and pistols, try to keep back the crowd, each wanting his turn to come next. There is but one life-boat, and they all want to get into it, and the cry is: "Me next! me next!" You see the application before I make it. As long as a man going on in his sin feels that all is well, that he is coming out at a beautiful port, and has all sail set, he wants no rescue; but if under the flash of God's convicting spirit he shall see that by reason of sin he is dismayed and water-logged, and going down into the trough of a sea where he cannot live, how soon he puts the sea-glass to his eye and sweeps the horizon, and at the first sign of help cries out: "I want to be saved. I want to be saved now. I want to be saved for ever." No sense of danger, no application for rescue.

Oh, that God's eternal spirit would flash upon us a sense of our sinfulness. The Bible tells the story in letters of fire, but we get used to it. We joke about sin. We make merry over it. What is sin? Is it a trifling thing? Sin is a vampire that is sucking out the life-blood of your immortal nature. Sin? It is a Bastille that no earthly key ever unlocked. Sin? It is expatriation from God and heaven. Sin? It is grand larceny against the Almighty, for the Bible asks the question: "Will a man rob God?" answering it in the affirmative. This Gospel is a writ of replevin to recover property unlawfully detained from God.

The bell at the cemetery gate tolls. The procession goes through, and ropes are wrapped around the casket, and the casket lowered five or six feet; but the body inside the

casket is no more dead than is every man until he has been regenerated by the grace of God. It is not I say so, but the Bible, which pronounces us *dead*, dead—in trespasses and sins. The maniac who puts around his brow a bunch of straw, and thinks it is a crown, and holds in his hand a stick and thinks it is a sceptre, and gathers up some pebbles, and thinks they are diamonds, is no more beside himself than is every one who has not accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour ; for the Bible, in the parable, intimates that every prodigal is beside himself, in phantasia, in delirium, in madness. *The Bible is not complimentary* in its language. It does not speak mincingly about our sins. It does not talk apologetically. There is no vermilion in its style. It does not cover up our transgressions with blooming metaphor. It does not sing about them in weak falsetto ; but it thunders out : “The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Every one has gone back. He has altogether become filthy. He is abominable, and filthy, and drinketh in iniquity like water.” And then the Lord Jesus Christ flings down at our feet this humiliating catalogue : “Out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, evil speaking, blasphemy.” Oh there is a text for your rationalist to preach from. Oh the dignity of human nature ! There is an element of your science of man that the anthropologist never has had the courage to touch, and the Bible, in all the ins and outs of the most forceful style, sets forth our natural pollution, and represents iniquity as a frightful thing, as an exhausting thing, as a loathsome thing. It is not a mere bemiring of the feet it is not a mere befouling of the hands, it is going down, head and ears under, in a ditch until our own clothes abhor us.

My brethren, shall we stay down where sin thrusts us ? We cannot afford to. I have, to-night, to tell you that there is something purer than snow-water, something more pungent than alkali, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin. Aye, the river of salvation, bright, crystalline, and heaven-born, rushes though this audience

with billowy tide, strong enough to wash your sins completely and for ever away. Oh Jesus, let the dam that holds it back now break, and the floods of salvation roll over us.

“Let the water and the blood,  
From thy side a healing flood,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.”

*The Lord Jesus Christ bends over you* to-night, and, offers you His right hand, proposing to lift you up, first making you whiter than snow, and then raising you to glories that never die. “Billy,” said a Christian bootblack to another, “when we come up to heaven, it won’t make any difference that we’ve been bootblacks here, for we shall get in, not somehow or other, but, Billy, we shall get straight through the gate.” Oh, if you only knew how full, and free, and tender is the offer of Christ, this night you would all take Him without one single exception ; and if all the doors of this house were locked save one, and you were compelled to make egress by only one door, and I stood there and questioned you, and the Gospel of Christ had made the right impression upon your heart to-night, you would answer me as you went out, one and all : “Jesus is mine, and I am His.” Oh that this might be the night when you would receive Him.

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## OUT OF THE IVORY PALACES.

“*All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces.*”—PSALMS xlv. 8.

**A**MONG the grand adornments of the city of Paris is the church of Notre Dame, with its great towers, and elaborate rose-window, and sculpturing of the last judgment, with the trumpeting angels and rising dead ; its battlements of quatrefoil ; its sacristy, with ribbed ceiling and statues of saints. But there was nothing in all that

building which more vividly appealed to my plain republican tastes than the costly vestments which laid in oaken presses, robes that had been embroidered with gold and been worn by popes and archbishops on great occasions. There was a robe in which Pius VII. had appeared at the crowning of the first Napoleon. There was also a vestment that had been worn at the baptism of Napoleon II. As our guide opened the oaken presses and brought out these vestments of fabulous cost, and lifted them up, the fragrance of the pungent aromatics in which they had been preserved filled the place with a sweetness that was almost oppressive. Nothing that had been done in stone more vividly impressed me than these things that had been done in cloth, and embroidery, and perfume.

But now, my friends, I open the drawer of this text, and I look upon the kingly robes of Christ; and as I lift them flashing with eternal jewels, the whole house is filled with the aroma of these garments, which "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

In my text the King steps forth; His robes rustle and blaze as He advances. His pomp, and power, and glory overmaster the spectator. More brilliant is He than Queen Vashti moving amid the Persian princesses; than Marie Antoinette on the day when Louis XVI. put upon her the necklace of eight hundred gems: than Anne Boleyn the day when Henry VIII. welcomed her to his palace. All beauty and all pomp forgotten, while we stand in the presence of this imperial glory. King of Zion. King of earth. King of heaven. King for ever! His garments not worn out, not dust bedraggled, but radiant, and jewelled, and redolent. It seems as if they must have been pressed a hundred years amid the flowers of heaven. The wardrobes from which they have been taken must have been sweet with clusters of camphire and frankincense, and all manner of precious wood. Do you not inhale the odours? Aye, aye. They "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces,"

Your first curiosity to-night is *to know why the robes of Christ are odorous with myrrh.* This was a bright-leaved Abyssinian plant. It was tri-foliated. The Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, and Jews bought and sold it at a high price. The first present that was ever given to Christ was a sprig of myrrh, thrown on His infantile bed in Bethlehem; and the last gift that Christ ever had was myrrh pressed into the cup of His crucifixion. The natives would take a stone and bruise the tree, and then there would exude a gum that would saturate all the ground beneath. This gum was used for purposes of merchandise. One piece of it, no longer than a chesnut, would whelm a whole room with odours. It was put in closets, in chests, in drawers, in rooms, and its perfume adhered almost interminably to anything that was anywhere near it. So, when in my text I read that Christ's garments smell of myrrh, I immediately conclude the exquisite sweetness of Jesus. I know that to many He is only like any historical person. Another John Howard. Another Frederick Oberland. Another Confucius. *A Grand subject for a painting.* A heroic theme for a poem. A beautiful form for a statue. But to those who have heard His voice, and felt His pardon, and received His benediction, He is music, and light, and warmth, and thrill, and eternal fragrance. Sweet as a friend sticking to you when all else betray. Lifting you up while others try to push you down. Not so much like morning-glories, that bloom only when the sun is coming up, nor like "four-o'clocks," that bloom only when the sun is going down; but like myrrh, perpetually aromatic; the same morning, noon, and night, yesterday, today, for ever. It seems as if we cannot wear Him out. We put on Him all our burdens, and afflict Him with all our griefs, and set Him foremost in all our battles, and yet He is ready to lift, and to sympathize, and to help. We have so imposed upon Him, that one would think in eternal affront He would quit our souls; and yet to-night He addresses us with the same tenderness, dawns upon us with the same smile, pities us with the same compassion. There is no name like His for us. It is more imperial than Cæsar's,

more musical than Beethoven's, more conquering than Charlemagne's, more eloquent than Cicero's. It throbs with all life. It weeps with all pathos. It groans with all pain. It stoops with all condescension. It breathes with all perfume. Who like Jesus to set a broken bone, to pity a houseless orphan, to nurse a sick man, to take a prodigal back without any scolding, to illumine a cemetery all ploughed with graves, to make a queen unto God out of the lost woman of the street, to catch the tears of human sorrow in a lachrymal that shall never be broken? Who has such an eye to see our need, such a lip to kiss away our sorrow, such a hand to snatch us out of the fire, such a foot to trample our enemies, such a heart to embrace all our necessities? I struggle for some metaphor with which to express Him. He is not like the bursting forth of a full orchestra; that is too loud. He is not like the sea when lashed to rage by the tempest; that is too boisterous. He is not like the mountain, its brow wreathed with the lightnings; that is too solitary. Give us a softer type, a gentler comparison. We have seemed to see Him with our eyes, and to hear Him with our ears, and to touch Him with our hands. Oh that to-night He might appear to some other one of our five senses. Aye, the nostril shall discover His presence. He comes upon us like spice gales from heaven. Yea, His garments smell of pungent, lasting, and all pervasive myrrh.

Oh that you all knew His sweetness! How soon you would turn from your revels. If the philosopher leaped out of his bath in a frenzy of joy, and clapped his hands, and rushed through the streets because he had found the solution of a mathematical problem, how will you feel, leaping from the fountain of a Saviour's mercy and pardon, washed clean and made white as snow, when the question has been solved: "How can my soul be saved?" Naked, frost-bitten, storm-lashed soul, let Jesus this night throw around thee the "garments that smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

Your second curiosity is to know *why the robes of Jesus are odorous with aloes*. There is some difference of opinion about

where these aloes grew, what is the colour of the flower, what is the particular appearance of the herb. Suffice it for you and me to know that aloes mean bitterness all the world over; and when Christ comes with garments bearing that particular odour, they suggest to me *the bitterness of a Saviour's suffering*. Were there ever such nights as Jesus lived through—nights on the mountain, nights on the sea, nights in the desert? Who ever had such a hard reception as Jesus had? A hostelry the first, an unjust trial in *oyer* and *terminer* another, a foul-mouthed, yelling mob the last. Was there a space on His back as wide as your two fingers where He was not whipped? Was there a space on His brow an inch square where He was not cut by the briars? When the spike struck at the instep, did it not go clear through to the hollow of the foot? Oh, long, deep, bitter pilgrimage! Aloes! aloes!

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

All this for Himself? All this to get the fame in the world of being a martyr? All this in a spirit of stubbornness, because He did not like Augustus? No, no. All this because He wanted to pluck you and me from hell. Because He wanted to raise you and me to heaven. Because we were lost, and He wanted us found. Because we were blind, and He wanted us to see. Because we were serfs, and He wanted us manumitted. Oh ye in whose cup of life the

saccharine has predominated ; oh ye who have had bright and sparkling beverages, how do you feel towards Him who in your stead, and to purchase your disenthralment, took the aloes, the unsavoury aloes, the bitter aloes ?

Your third curiosity is *to know why these garments of Christ are odorous with cassia.* This was a plant that grew in India and the adjoining islands. You do not care to hear what kind of a flower it had or what kind of a stalk. It is enough for me to tell you that it was used medicinally. In that land and in that age, where they knew but little about pharmacy, cassia was used to arrest many forms of disease. So when in my text we find Christ coming with garments that smell of cassia, it suggests to me the healing and curative power of the Son of God. "Oh," you say, "now you have a superfluous idea. We are not sick. Why do we want cassia ? We are athletic. Our respiration is perfect. Our limbs are lithe, and in these autumnal days we feel we could bound like the roe." I beg to differ, my brother, from you. None of you can be better in physical health than I am, and yet I must say we are all sick. I have taken the diagnosis of your case, and have examined all the best authorities on the subject, and I come now to tell you that you are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, which have not been bound up or mollified with ointment. The marasmus of sin is on us—the palsy, the dropsy, the leprosy. The man that is expiring to-night in Fulton-street, the allopathic and homœopathic doctors having given him up, and his friends now standing around to take his last words, is no more certainly dying as to his body than you and I are dying, unless we have taken the medicine from God's apothecary. All the leaves of this Bible are only so many prescriptions from the Divine Physician, written, not in Latin, like the prescriptions of earthly physicians, but written in plain English, so that a man, though a fool, need not err therein. Thank God that the Saviour's garments smell of cassia. If you have not taken this healing medicine of the Gospel, *you are dying a death* which will not, perhaps, put your body into the cemetery just now, but you are dying a death which



will leave the soul in a grave whose headstone is inscribed with this epitaph : "In Memoriam : Here lies a man who missed heaven. This is the second death. Born some years ago on earth ; died last night in eternity."

"There is a death whose pang  
Outlasts the fleeting breath ;  
Oh, what eternal horrors hang  
Around the second death !"

Suppose a man were sick, and there was a phial on his mantel-piece with medicine he knew could cure him, and he refused to take it. What would you say of him ? He is a suicide. And what do you say of that man who to-night, sick in sin, has the healing medicine of God's grace offered him and refuses to take it ? If he dies, he is a suicide. People talk as though God took a man and led him out to darkness and death ; as though He brought him up to the cliffs and then pushed him off. Oh, no. When a man is lost it is not because God pushed him off ; it is because he jumps off. In olden times a suicide was buried at the cross-roads, and the people were accustomed to throw stones upon his grave. So it seems to me there may be in this house to-night a man who is destroying his own soul, and as though the angels of God were here to bury him at the point where the roads of life and death cross each other, throwing upon the grave the broken law and a great pile of misimproved privileges, so that those going by may look at the fearful mound and learn what a suicide it is when an immortal soul, for which Jesus died, puts itself out of the way.

When Christ trod this planet with foot of flesh, the people rushed after Him—people who were sick, and those who, being so sick they could not walk, were brought by their friends. Here I see a mother holding up her little child, and saying : "Cure this croup, Lord Jesus. Cure this scarlet fever." And others saying : "Cure this ophthalmia. Give ease and rest to this spinal distress. Straighten this club foot." Christ made every house where He stopped a dispensary. I do not believe that in the nineteen centuries that

have gone by since then, His heart has got hard. I feel that we can come to-night, with all our wounds of soul, and get His benediction. Oh Jesus, here we are. We want healing. We want sight. We want health. We want life. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Blessed be God that Jesus Christ comes through this assemblage now, His "garments smelling of myrrh"—that means fragrance—"and aloes"—they mean bitter sacrificial memories—"and cassia"—that means medicine and cure; and according to my text, He comes "out of the ivory palaces."

You know, or if you do not know I will tell you now, that some of the palaces of olden times were adorned with ivory. Ahab and Solomon had their homes furnished with it. The tusks of African and Asiatic elephants were twisted into all manner of shapes, and there were stairs of ivory and chairs of ivory, and tables of ivory, and floors of ivory, and pillars of ivory, and windows of ivory, and fountains that dropped into basins of ivory, and rooms that had ceilings of ivory. Oh, white and overmastering beauty. Green tree branches sweeping the white curbs. Tapestry trailing the snowy floors. Brackets of light flashing on the lustrous surroundings. Silvery music rippling to the beach of the arches. The mere thought of it almost stuns my brain, and you say: "Oh, if I could only have walked over such floors! If I could have thrown myself in such a chair! If I could have heard the drip and dash of those fountains!" *You shall have something better than that* if you only let Christ introduce you. From that place He came, and to that place He proposes to transport you; for His "garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, *out of the ivory palaces.*"

Oh, what a place heaven must be! The Tuilleries of the French, the Windsor Castle of the English, the Spanish Alhambra, the Russian Kremlin, are dungeons compared with it. Not so many castles on either side the Rhine as are ivory palaces on both sides of the river of God. One for the angels, insufferably bright, winged, fire-eyed, tempest-charioted. One for the martyrs, with blood-red robes from under the altar. One for the King, the steps of His palace the crowns of the

Church Militant. One for the singers who leads the one hundred and forty and four thousand. One for you, ransomed from sin. One for me, plucked from the burnings. Oh, the ivory palaces !

To-night it seems to me as if the windows of those palaces were illumined for some great victory, and I look in and see climbing the stairs of ivory, and walking the floors of ivory, and looking from the windows of ivory, some whom we knew and loved on earth. Yes, I know them. There are father and mother, not eighty-two years and seventy-nine years, as when they left us, but blithe and young as on their marriage day. And there are brothers and sisters, merrier than when we used to romp across the meadows together. The cough gone. The cancer cured. The erysipelas healed. The heart-break over. Oh, how fair they are in the ivory palaces! And your dear little children that went out from you ; Christ did not let one of them drop as He lifted them. He did not wrench them from you. No ; they went as from one they loved well to One whom they loved better. If I should take your little child and press its soft face against my rough cheek, I might keep it a little while ; but when you, the mother, came along, it would struggle to go with you. And so you sat holding your dying child when Jesus passed by in the room, and the little one sprang out to greet Him. That is all. Your Christian dead did not go down into the dust, and the gravel, and the mud. Though it rained all that funeral day, and the water came up to the wheel's hub as you drove out to the cemetery, it made no difference to them, for they stepped from the home here to the home there, right into the ivory palaces. All is well with them. All is well.

When I was thinking out this sermon, and had got to about this point, there was a knock at my door, and I received a telegram from a very dear ministerial friend. It read : "My wife just died. Funeral next Tuesday. Will you be one of the pall-bearers ?" I telegraphed immediately : "I will." Who could hold back at such a time ? I knew I could carry my part of the burden. It is not a dead weight that you lift when you carry a Christian out. Jesus makes the bed up

soft with velvet promises, and He says : " Put her down here very gently. Put that head, which will never ache again, on this pillow of hallelujahs. Send up word that the procession is coming. Ring the bells. Ring ! Open your gates, ye ivory palaces." And so your loved ones are there. They are just as certainly there, having died in Christ, as that you are here. There is only one thing more they want. Indeed, there is one thing in heaven they have not got. They want it. What is it ? Your company. But oh, my brother, *unless you change your tack* you cannot reach that harbour. You might as well take the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, expecting in that direction to reach Toronto, as to go in the way some of you are going, and yet expect to reach the ivory palaces. Your loved ones are looking out of the windows of heaven to-night, and yet you seem to turn your back upon them. You do not seem to know the sound of their voices as well as you used to, or be moved by the sight of their dear faces. Call louder, ye departed ones ! Call louder from the ivory palaces !

When I think of that place, and think of my entering it, I feel awkward ; I feel as sometimes when I have been exposed to the weather, and my shoes have been bemired, and my coat is soiled, and my hair dishevelled, and I stop in front of some fine residence where I have an errand ; I feel not fit to go in as I am, and sit among polished guests. So some of us feel about heaven. We need to be washed, we need to be rehabilitated before we go into the ivory palaces. Eternal God, let the surges of Thy pardoning mercy roll over us ! I want not only to wash my hands and my feet, but, like some skilful diver standing on the pier-head, who leaps into the wave and comes up at a far distant point from where he went in, so I want to go down, and so I want to come up. O Jesus, wash me in the waves of Thy salvation ?

And here I ask you to solve a mystery that has been oppressing me for twenty-five years. I have asked it of doctors of divinity who have been studying theology half a century, and they have given me no satisfactory answer. I have turned over all the books in my library, but got no solution to

the question, and to-night I come and ask you for an explanation. By what logic was Christ induced to exchange the ivory palaces of heaven for the crucifixion agonies of earth? I shall take the first thousand million years in heaven to study out that problem. Meanwhile and now, taking it as the tenderest and mightiest of all facts that Christ did come; that He came with spikes in His feet, came with thorns in His brow, came with spears in His heart, to save you and me. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." O Christ! whelm this audience with Thy compassion! Mow them down like summer grain with the harvesting sickle of Thy grace! Ride through, to-night, the conqueror, "Thy garments smelling of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

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### A BASKET OF SUMMER FRUIT.

*"And He said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, a basket of summer fruit."*—AMOS viii. 2.

A STOUT-CHESTED, swarthy-limbed, brave-hearted man was called out to rebuke Israel. His name was Amos. He had been brought up amid sheep and cattle, and in addition to his occupation as herdsman, he had the business of gathering sycamore-fruit—a very difficult business, because, if the fruit were not properly ripened, and just before its maturing it were not punctured with the teeth of an iron comb, then the fruit would be bitter and thoroughly unpalatable. Having always lived in the country, when Amos comes to write or to speak, his allusions are rural—full of threshing-floor, and sheaf-laden carts, and grass-hoppers, and mowings, and orchards, and vineyards, and, in my text: "a basket of summer fruit." Just what kind of fruit this was I do not know, whether sycamore-fruit, or pomegranates, figs; but I do know

that God meant for Israel, and means to-night for us, the truth that spiritual blessing, like summer fruit, must be used immediately, or it will perish.

Last I week I saw farmers out on Long Island gathering their winter apples: and if these apples are carefully put away they will last until next spring. You know there are pears which are better two or three months after they are taken from the orchard than at the time they drop. And there were clusters of grapes yesterday that went in from the harbour, that will next Christmas or Thanksgiving-day hang above the banquet. But my text compares our opportunities of repentance and return to more perishable products. Aye, it sets before you in graphic vision a basket of *summer* fruit.

Many of you remember, a few years ago, when the peach crop suddenly ripened, and all the rail trains and steamers coming to our city were laden with the delicious product. The fruit was dead ripe, and not able to wait until the glutted markets were cleared, and so there were hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of the fruit thrown into the streets, and into the rivers, and carted back again to enrich the soil. O the perishable nature of summer fruit. It is so much like our spiritual blessings, which must be used immediately, or never used at all. To-night, instead of having you wandering around as through the stalls of an agricultural fair, I would have you, with profound and agitated feelings of soul, look upon this text as depicting your last chance for heaven, as it is all suggestively set forth. "Behold a basket of summer fruit."

Was this statement of the text the blundering comparison of a man not used to literary composition? Do you think the analogy will hold out? Is there any similarity between the Gospel and summer fruit? O, yes. They both in the *first place, mean health*. God every summer doctors the ailments of the world by the orchards and groves. The failing of the orchards is a license to all kinds of diseases, and plenty of fruit ordinarily means improved sanitary condition. So this Gospel means health. It makes a man

mighty for work, and strong for contest. It cures spiritual ailments. It helps the soul that is decrepid, bound on in the road to heaven. It is juvenescence. It is convalescence. It kindles the eyes with brilliant anticipations. It thrills the soul with glories to come. It is not a weak sentimentality. It helped Paul to stand *unblanched on the deck* of the foundering corn ship, and it helped Luther nail his defiant "Theses" against the door of the electoral college, the thumping of his hammer echoing through all the ages. It has helped ten thousand souls to spring through flood and fire to glories immortal. O, it is a swarthy Gospel. Mighty in itself it makes men mighty. It gives one overmastering power in the day of trouble. The Church cries out to Christ in the Canticles: "Comfort me with apples," and so to-night I shake down upon you a whole orchard of fruit, while I read that the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, brotherly kindness, charity. Gather it up from the ground—large, round, luscious. Take it home with you—"a basket of summer fruit."

I notice that the analogy also is found in the fact that summer fruit is *pleasant to the eye and the taste*. So the Gospel, when a man rightly sees it and tastes it, is very pleasant. Whether summer fruit be piled up in the orchard, or on the barn floor, or on the platter of the table, the commingling of green, and gold, and red, and brown, in the cheek of the fruit is very fascinating. You know that some artists deal chiefly with pictures of fruit; and while Corregio delights to sketch physical beauty, and Turner drops the sea-foam on the canvas, and Cuypp drives up his cattle at evening tide, and Rosa Bonheur catches by the halter the rearing steeds at the "Horse Fair," and Edwin Landseer whistles us the dogs, there are many of our modern painters who are putting all their power on fruit pieces, and I do not wonder at it. There is a beauty in fruit indescribable. So it is with the Gospel of Christ. It charms the young and the old, the well and the sick, the wise and the ignorant. It has the glitter of the wave, the aroma of flowers, the fascination of music. It is the luxury of the ages. Religion is not

an abbess—is not a cenobite. “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

In June, 1815, there was a very noble party gathered in a house in St. James's-square, London. The prince Regent was present, and the occasion was made fascinating by music, and banqueting, and by jewels. While a quadrille was being formed, suddenly all the people rushed to the windows. What is the matter? Henry Percy had arrived with the news that Waterloo had been fought, and that England had won the day. The dance was abandoned; the party dispersed; lords, ladies, and musicians rushed into the street, and, in fifteen minutes from the first announcement of the good news, the house was emptied of all its guests. O ye who are seated at the banquet of this world, or whirling in its gaieties and frivolities, if to-night you could hear the sweet strains of the Gospel trumpet announcing Christ's victory over sin, and death, and hell, you would rush forth, glad in the eternal deliverance. The Waterloo against sin has been fought, and our Commander-in-chief hath won the day. O, the joy of this salvation! *I do not care* what metaphor, what comparison you have; bring it to me that I may use it. Amos shall bring one simile, Isaiah another, David another, John another. Beautiful with pardon. Beautiful with peace. Beautiful with anticipations. I spread out the heaped up, large, round, luscious “basket of summer fruit.”

You have noticed that *if summer fruit is not taken immediately, it soon fails*. First, the speck; then a multiplication of defects; after awhile a softening that is offensive; and then it is all flung out. So I have to tell you that all religious advantages, all Gospel opportunities, all religious privileges, while they are beautiful and attractive, perish right speedily if you do not take them. I suppose you have noticed how swiftly the days and years go by. Every day seems to me like “a basket of summer fruit:” the morning sky is vermilion, the noonday is opaline, the evening cloud is fire-dyed. Every day has its cluster of blessings and its fruity branches of opportunities. But how soon they are gone!



Where is 1873? 1870? 1860? 1850? Gone as thoroughly as the fruit which dropped from the trees and rotted last August. Every year may have its characteristic. In one the war broke out; in another the locusts made terrible ravages; in another the yellow fever raged: but I care not what be the characteristics, they are all gone save one. Of the six thousand years of this world's existence, only one is left. Aye, ten months of that is gone, or nearly gone, and the tongue in the clock of the months will soon strike twelve, and then this year will be as dead as all its predecessors. In your library, you put the historical volumes side by side, volume first, volume second, volume third, volume fourth; and the history of the past is made up of six thousand volumes three hundred and sixty-five pages in each of the volumes, and in the last day, at one flash, you will read all of them. Time, how swiftly it goes! Gray hairs are here and there upon you, and some of you know it not. The "crow's-foot" is coming nearer up towards the corner of the eye. You stoop more than you used to do. You have been discussing as to the propriety of wearing glasses. You are going from the thirties into the forties, and from the forties into the fifties, and from the fifties into the sixties, and from the sixties into the seventies. The colour is going out of the "basket of summer fruit." The curculio of trouble hath left the mark of its sting. The work of decay has begun, and the full basket of human life will soon be emptied into the trench of the grave. When I first became anxious about my soul, there was a soliloquy I read in Mr. Pike's "Address to the Unsaved." It was a soliloquy on this very subject. It represented a man dying, and as he was dying, the clock struck. As the clock struck, the man was startled, and he cried out: "O time, it is fit that thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou gone for ever? A month! O for a week! I ask not for a year, though *an age were too short* for the work I have to do. Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future throws my thought on the past. I turn and turn, and find no ray. If thou didst feel one half the mountain that is on my heart, thou wouldst struggle with

the martyr for his stake, and bless heaven for the flame that is not an unquenchable fire. O, Thou blasphemed, yet, most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge, if it hide me from Thy frown !”

Still further, I remark *upon the perishable nature of all religious surroundings*. You sometimes go into a religious association and you say : “Isn’t this beautiful. How many ripe, religious experiences. Why, it is like ‘a basket of summer fruit.’” But do you not know, my brother, that all these Christian associations fade away from the soul? Your Christian father and mother, who have been holding beneficent influences over you, do you not realize they are going away from you? Do you not notice that they do not get over sickness as soon as they used to? Are you not aware of the fact that they do not get over a cold as quickly as once? The fact is that they have made more prayers for you than they will ever make again. They have passed the last mile-stone on the road home, and if you are going to get any benefit from that “basket of summer fruit,” get it now, or get it never. Some of you do not know what it is to stand and look down upon the still and rigid features of a Christian father or a Christian mother. I do. In five minutes you will think of all the unkind words you ever said to them. You may cover up the coffin with wreathes, and crosses, and crowns; but you cannot make anything attractive out of it. It is trouble, and nothing but trouble, for those who sit and sigh with the consciousness that these dear lips will never pray for you again, and those lips will never sympathize with you again. When you stoop down and kiss for the last time the wrinkled brow just before the lid is screwed on, you will think of what I tell you to-night, O, if father and mother be still alive with their Christian influences, cherish them while you may. Take their example. Be profited by their prayers. They are ripe for heaven and cannot stay. The “basket of summer fruit” will soon be gone.

So also it is, my friends, with all God’s offers of mercy and salvation. Are you to-night under the infatuation that those

privileges are going to be continued? O no. Every opportunity of salvation seems to be restless until it gets away from us. Going away, the sermons; going away, the songs; going away, the strivings of God's Eternal Spirit. The fruits of immortal life, fair and luscious, are no sooner set before the soul than they disappear. The Theban legion consisted of six thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six men. Maximian decreed that that host should be decimated—that is, every tenth man should be put to the sword. So it was done; but the soldiers did not submit to the kingly authority, and so another decimation took place, and the work went on until all of the six thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six men had perished. Now, I do not know how many people may be in this house to-night, but *it is an army*. It is going to be decimated. One out of every ten will soon be gone, and after that the work will go on; and again one out of every ten will be gone, and again the decimation will take place, until not a single person in this house to-night will be alive. Our bodies, some of them, will be in Greenwood, in Laurel Hill, in Mount Auburn, in Oaklands, in Grey Friars churchyard, in the village cemetery; but your souls will be in one of two places, the names of which I need not mention, for they rush upon you this moment with thunderous articulation and emphasis.

Many have missed their chance. Now there is no hiding that fact—they have missed their chance. They came in and looked at the "basket of summer fruit." They admired the gracefulness of the wicker work; the delicacy of the rind; the greenness of the leaves. They went off. They came back and admired again. But one day they came, and they found that all the glory had faded, and that the fruit had been thrown out. They came to a certain evening. They saw the sun set. They never saw the sun rise again. The pastor pronounced upon them the benediction. It was the last benediction they ever heard. They took their last step, spoke their last word, breathed their last breath, they missed their last chance. Fortunately for us their voice is not strong enough to ring up until we can hear it, or it would make life

on earth intolerable with the wailing. The wall is so thick that we hear not one word of their pang. Perished! Perished! They talk no more about there being time enough yet. They have no time. They worry no longer about the inconsistencies of Christians; they are looking after their own condition. They no more argue that there is no such a thing as a lost soul; they have felt the pang that comes from a fall ten thousand fathoms down. O sceptical man, go out and persuade them that there is no retribution for a soul that forgets God. Break open the gate, dash through the fire: leap the intervening cliff, and cry out to them: "There is no hell!" and ten thousand voices will answer back: "There is. See you not the gate? Feel you not the sorrow? We have been here five hundred years, and yet the woe has just begun. Go back and tell all you have seen. Tell them that we once were as they are, and that they, unless they repent, shall be as we are ourselves. We had the fruits of life set before us, fair as "a basket of summer fruit," but we would not take them, and we everlastingly died. Lost! Lost!

My friends, the practical question is now: Will you miss your chance? The offer of salvation is now extended to us, It will not always be continued. The day of grace will be past. The probability is that there are some in this audience who will miss their opportunity. I put my hand on your pulse, and I find that *the fever has begun*. I look upon your brow, and I find the shadow of impending doom. I listen to your breath, and I find it is suggestive of the last gasp. Some of you will be lost! See! you are falling now—down from heaven, from life, from peace—down, down. I remember reading how Leonidas, with three hundred men, stood in the pass between Eta and the sea, fighting back the Persian hosts. The Persian hosts come on. They trampled him down. O that God, to-night, would arm me, a poor, weak man, with a supernatural courage, to stand in the pass of this glorious Sabbath hour, and dispute with this army that I see before me, the way to death. Halt! ye infatuated souls. I swing the two-edged sword both ways. Halt! Halt! Take not one step more on this downward path. Why will ye die

when there is no use in it ! Are you so charmed with pain, and sin, and sorrow, and woe, that you will wade through the foaming billows of perdition to win them ? Is there nothing in the systematic tears of friends, nothing in the sacrificial blood of the Son of God, nothing in the death-bed experiences of those whom you have loved, nothing in the crash of the judgment avalanche, to make you think.

I can tell from the way the country sexton rings the bell, when he is about to stop ringing it. When he begins to ring, the music comes softly out on the air ; the bell fills all the air with music. He lays hold with strong pull ; but after awhile, when the horses have been tied, and the people have gathered, then there is some distance of time between the strokes of the bell. It gets slower and slower, for he has begun to toll, and after awhile it stops. O sinner, how swiftly the invitations of the Gospel came to you ! Call after call. Invitation after invitation. Floods of them. Floods of them. How merrily the bell did ring. But it seems as if with some of you God's patience is exhausted ; as if His mercy were almost gone. The bell rings slower to-night than it ever rang before, and as if about to stop. Aye, it seems to have come to the dying toll. Thrice more it will speak—perhaps only thrice. Toll ! Toll ! Toll !

It was to set forth this solemn truth that religious advantages, while they last, are attractive, but very soon leave us, that God let down to Amos the herdsman, in vision, the beautiful but perishable basket of summer fruit.

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## *PHEBE PALMER, THE EVANGELIST.*

*"I go to prepare a place for you."*—JOHN xiv. 2.

**A**MONG the most startling stories ever recited are those connected with the adventures of the Western emigrant. In the days before the rail-train showered its sparks upon the darkness of the wilderness, people put out on foot, or in slow and cumbrous waggons, from our Eastern

homes, and in the wild thickets of the far West sought to clear for their families a home. Ofttimes leaving their tender little ones in the New England village, with blanket, and gun, and axe, they dared the forest, terrible with bear's bark, and panther's scream, and the war-whoop cry of scalping savages. After awhile the trees were felled, and the underbush was burned, and the farm was cleared, and the house was built. Then word came back here, saying that everything was ready. The family would get into the waggon and start on at a slow pace for a very long journey. After awhile, some evening tide, the shout of recognition was heard, and by the fire of the great black log the newly-arrived would recount the exciting experiences of the way.

Well, my friends, we are all about to become emigrants to a far country. This is no place for us to stay. Our older brother, Jesus, Him of the scarred brow and the blistered feet, has gone ahead to build our mansion and to clear the way for us, and He sends a letter back, saying He has it all ready; and I break the seal of that letter and read to you these words: "I go to prepare a place for you."

I might put it in another shape. A young man resolves to build a home for himself. He has pledged himself in one of the purest of earthly attachments. He toils no more for himself than for the one who will share with him the results of his industrious accumulation. After awhile the fortune is made, the house is built, the right hands are joined, the blessing is invoked, the joy is consummated. So Jesus, the lover of our souls, has been toiling to make a place for us. He is fitting up our mansion. He is gathering around it everything that can possibly enchant the soul, and after awhile He will say: "It is all ready now," and He will reach down His hand and take up to His fair residence "the Church, which is the Lamb's wife." "I go to prepare a place for you."

"But," says some one, "that implies that *heaven is a place*. I have heard a great many people say it was merely a condition, and that wherever the souls of the righteous are, there is Heaven." Absurd idea! Christ ascended to heaven, and

there must have been a heaven to go to. Elijah went up to heaven, and there must have been a heaven for him to go to. The Bible was not written merely for philologists and hair splitters, but for common-sense people, and the plain reading of my text implies not only that heaven is a condition, but that it is a glorious locality. "I go to prepare a *place* for you."

Where is heaven? It is the question which every intelligent Christian sometimes asks, and he especially asks it in time of bereavement. When his loved ones go away from him, you say they are in heaven; but he says: "Where is heaven?" You know there are a great many theories in regard to it. The Mahommedans think that the good Moslems, as soon as they leave this life, come to a fragrant pool of water fed by streams from Paradise. They drink out of that fragrant pool, and their thirst is assuaged. Then they go into Paradise, and the trees have bells hanging on the branches, chiming whenever the air strikes them. They gaze upon the tree of life, which they say has so broad a shadow that it takes a swift horse one hundred years to race across it. They think that there is a river made up of wine and honey, flowing between banks of camphor, over beds of musk. They suppose that every spirit that goes into the future world has many attendants, with baskets and with chalices of pure gold. They suppose that the inhabitant of the future world sits down to a great banquet without any satiety, so that after a hundred years of eating and drinking the appetite is as good as at the moment the soul sat down. That is the Mahommedan heaven.

The Hindoo thinks that heaven is all around about—merely a change of body. A vulture dies and his spirit enters a man. The man dies and his spirit enters the vulture; and after great many transmigrations of the soul, it is absorbed in the spirit of the great Brahm. Our forefathers thought heaven to be a place of pastimes, heroic strife, and great banqueting; spirits would fight and be wounded, and then come to the celestial streams and wash off their wounds, and they would be well again; then they would sit down at a banquet

and drink wine out of the skull of their enemies, and rise up and romp, and dance, and play.

The aborigines of America think heaven to be situated beyond the great mountains. After you get beyond the great mountains, there is a great river, and after you have passed that great river, there is a vast country, and after you have passed that wide country, there is a world of water, and in that world of water there are a thousand isles, beautiful with streams and trees, and there are buffalo and deer there, and all the departed red man has to do is to whistle up his dogs, and go-a-shooting to all eternity.

I mention these things because I want you to know it is impossible for a man to get any idea of heaven without the Bible, and to kindle in your soul a feeling of gratitude to God that you have this lamp, not only for your pathway here, but to throw its glories upon the world that is to come. There is, however, among Christian people, *great difference of opinion* as to where heaven is or will be. Some of the best Christian people think that this world is to be the final residence of the righteous. I can see how God could take all the rigours out of our climate, and all repulsions out of our world, and make it fair, and bright, and beautiful, and fit for eternal occupancy. But I cannot adopt the theory. It seems to me the world is not large enough for heaven. Considering all the myriads that have gone, and all the myriads that are to go, there would not be room enough on the continents and on the seas for such a great host. Besides that, heaven is already in existence. Tens of thousands of people have gone into it. It cannot be that all our departed friends are floating about in space, waiting for our world to get filled up, in order that they may have a heaven. O no. They are there now. Christ said; "I go to prepare a place for you," and if eighteen centuries ago He began the work, I think it is done now. Besides that, the Bible declares that the world, and all the things that are therein, will be burned up; and if a thing is burned up you cannot repair it, and you cannot make it a fit residence for the righteous. If it is first destroyed, it will be an entirely new world. Besides that, the elements of disso-



lution are already in our world. I refer not to the coal mines in the south, which have been twenty years on fire. I refer not to the vapours coming up from the hot springs, showing great heat underneath, but to the common geological idea that the centre of this world is already on fire. Besides, there is all about a subtle fluid which, if decomposed or set loose from other combinations, would shatter this world into pieces so small that nothing but the eye of the Infinite God could find the splinters of the wreck. It would destroy mountains, and seas, and air. So it will require no omnipotent pry to lift up the mountains in the last day. It will not require the blast of the red-hot furnace of God's indignation to set the sea on fire. It will not require the grip of almightiness to pull down the pillar of this world. God has only to take His hands off it, and it is gone. The mere cessation of operation on God's part would be the cause of the wreck. Besides that, other worlds have burned. Fifteen hundred stars have disappeared. The astronomer, through his telescope, again and again has seen the conflagration of a world. Why not our world burn up? Aye, *I adapt the theory* that Peter declares in his epistle when he says: "The world and all that is therein shall be burned up."

There are other Christinn people who suppose that each sun is to be the heaven of the surrounding system. You know that there are sisterhoods of worlds that join each other in bands of light around some great central orb, and Christian people have supposed that these surrounding worlds were merely schools in which souls went to be prepared for the central light, the central sun; and there is a Bible intimation that is not at all inconsistent with that idea; for, while planets have day and night, and heat and cold, showing the possibility of growth and dissolution, the sun has no night, and that corresponds with the Bible statement about heaven: "There shall be no night there." Still I reject the idea, because if the sun of each system were the heaven of the system we should have a multitude of Paradises, and the words of my text could not be true: "I go to prepare a place"—that is, *one* place—"for you."

There is one other theory consonant with the Bible and consonant with science, and I like anything that is proved by both these books, or is not inharmonious with either of them. Modern discovery shows that the planets go around the sun, and that the sun and the planets—indeed all the celestial systems—go in one direction and in one circle, all going around about some one great central world; a world vast beyond all astronomical calculation; a world vast enough by power of gravitation, to wheel the whole universe around it. As our sun, our little sun, is five hundred times larger than the earth and the planets, thus wheeling them around it, so then, I suppose, the great central world of which I speak is five hundred times larger than all the other worlds put together, so as to wheel them around it. You must believe in the existence of such a central world, unless you reject all scientific exploration and deduction. That world, stupendous beyond arithmetic, beyond words, beyond imagination, I believe is heaven. From all parts of the universe the souls of the dead will fly to that centre. That shall gather up all the resources, and splendours, and glories that God ever created or redeeming love ever achieved. Gradually the worlds will expire; not only ours but those and these, and finally all save two—the one great central world of which I speak, and a world of darkness; the first the residence of the righteous, the other the abode of the wicked. You say this theory makes *heaven a great way off*. No! No! We calculate distance by the time taken to traverse it, and the departed spirit will not take the millionth part of a second to get there.

But here I have to tell you that I do not much care where heaven is. All I want is to get there myself, and get these people there. Christ is there, and the angels of God are there, and all my Christian kindred who have departed are there.

“No grief can turn that day to night  
The darkness of that land is light!”

Into that world how many of our loved ones have gone. We have sent delegations into it. This morning I wish to

speaking more especially of one who went out from amongst us,—a Christian woman known all the world over. She has just entered into that glorious world that vast world where Christ is. Among the Hannah Mores, and Charlotte Elizabeths, and the Mrs. Adoniram Judsons, and the Mrs. Fletchers, Phebe Palmer has taken her place, radiant as any of them—perhaps more radiant than them all. It seems to me she must have had a very easy entrance. She did not have to crowd through. When half-and-half Christians come up to the gate of heaven methinks they have to squeeze in, that the gate grazes them on both sides, or close behind them, catching the skirts of their garment. Not so with her. An abundant entrance was administered unto her. I think a mandate went forth: "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, and let her come through." O, I should have liked to have stood somewhere near the gate, to have heard the multitudinous shout that greeted her from all the armies of the saved.

I cannot, as a minister of the most high God, allow such a life to be passed, and such a death to be witnessed, without, as far as I may, prolonging the echo.

I admired her as the discoverer of what is called, rightly, or wrongly, "the higher life." Columbus no more certainly discovered our new world than Phebe Palmer discovered that new world of light, and love, and joy, and peace which she spoke of. Columbus did not create this new world; he only pointed it out. Phebe Palmer did not create "the higher life;" she only exhibited it. She showed to the Church of God that there were *mountain peaks of Christian satisfaction* that it had never attained, and created in the souls of us who have not reached that elevation a longing for the glorious ascent. For thirty-seven years—longer than the life, perhaps of the majority of people present to-day—every Tuesday she had a meeting, the sole object of which was the elevation of the standard of Christian holiness; and there were hundreds of Christian ministers who came in and sat down at her feet and got her blessing, and went out stronger for Christian combat. It was no rare thing, in her evangelistic meetings

in the United States and Europe, to have ministers of the Presbyterian Church, and the Baptist Church, and the Methodist Church, and the Episcopal Church, and all the Churches, coming and kneeling down at the altar, bemoaning their unbelief and their coldness, and then rising up, saying: "I have got it—the blessing." Some caricatured and said there was no such thing as "a higher life" of peace and Christian satisfaction; but she lived long enough to see the whole Christian Church waking up to this doctrine, and thousands, and tens of thousands, coming on the high table-land where once she stood, she herself having passed on now, higher up, that she may still beckon us on, crying: "Up this way! Up this way!" Glorious soul of Phebe Palmer! Synonym of holiness unto the Lord!

I am also amazed at the number of conversions under her ministry. She was as far removed as possible from those females who go through the land bawling about their rights, neglecting their home duties, having their husbands hold their hats and shawls while they make speeches in behalf of their rights of suffrage, or in behalf of a seat in Congressional halls—these restless women, marriage to whom would be pandemonium. As far as the north pole is from the south pole, Phebe Palmer was from all them. Always accompanied by her husband, she went out to serve Christ, and she wanted no higher right than this, the grandest right ever given to man or woman—the right to commend the Lord Jesus Christ to a dying world. Modestly and in Christian consecration she went forth to serve God. It will take eternal ages to tell the story of her evangelistic labours. Newcastle, Sunderland, Penrith, Macclesfield, Darlington, Isle of Wight, still feel *her overmastering influence*. In her Christian meetings a young man rose up and said: "Why I have got a new nature; and the timid woman exclaimed: "Do you think Christ will have me?" and the evangelist put her arms around her neck, and said: "Yes, Jesus will have you." And another cried out: "O, what a fool I have been all my days to reject Christ." And the Duke of Wellington's blind soldier, seventy years of age, both eyes put out in battle, was led by

a little child to the communion rail, and while prayer was being offered, on his blasted vision eternal light broke in. And the soldier in the Queen's employ, drafted for India, stood up in the meeting, in the red jacket uniform, and said : "Pray for me wherever I go, that I may be faithful. You look at my red jacket, but if you could see under it you would see a white and blood-washed robe." At Windsor the musicians of the Queen's band, instruments under arm, stopped and looked and listened, and then and there heard the voice of Christ from this woman's lips, and took Christ back with them to the palace. And the police that stood at the door too, listening, even they surrendered themselves to the Lord who bought them. Places of iniquity cowered before her. At North Shields, a man who kept intoxicating liquors for sale said ; "I don't know why Dr. and Mrs. Palmer came here to bother me. Before they came to this place, I used to draw off half a barrel of beer every night for my customers. Now I scarcely draw off a quart." Sixty souls saved one night in Sunderland under her work. Six hundred souls brought to God at her call in Manchester. One thousand souls, through her, finding redeeming love at Madeley. Three thousand four hundred and forty-four brought to God in the district of Newcastle. Twenty-five thousand souls saved under the instrumentality of Phebe Palmer ! What a record for earth and heaven ! What an array for the judgment-day ! What a doxology for the one hundred and forty and four thousand ! What a mountain of coronets flung down at the feet of Jesus ! I am amazed also at her power of prayer. We dabble in it once in awhile, but do not know much about the art. Phebe Palmer got what she asked for because she knew how to ask. Sailing up towards Liverpool, with her husband, she prays God that some one may meet them on the beach, and welcome them to England. Coming up by the shore there is a man in the garb of a minister, standing. She says : "There is a man who has come to welcome us to England." The boat strikes the dock, and the minister steps on board and says ; "Is this Dr. and Mrs. Palmer ? Welcome to the shores of old England !" Worn out physically with her

Christian exertions, she asks for strength. *God gives it to her.* Labouring in some place amid great obstacles, she asks that that night a great multitude may be saved ; and a multitude press into the side-room, repenting, praying, believing, rejoicing. On the way home from England a man falls overboard. She sees him floating almost a mile away. She cries mightily unto God for that man's rescue, saying : " Save him, and I will point him to Christ, and I will try to have him become a Christian." And she prayed in an agony that he might be saved, and, by what seemed a miraculous effort, he was saved and brought on deck, and the evangelist did her work with him. Starting with the safe promise that the Lord never lies, she found out the secret of all-prevailing and all-conquering prayer. O Thou who hearest prayer, teach us how to pray ! I believe that one hundred Phebe Palmers would bring the millenium to-morrow morning.

But the shepherdess, crook in hand, has gone home to rest by the still waters. The loving wife, the gentle sister, the Christian mother, the flaming evangelist, is dead. One would have supposed that, after so useful a life, the Lord would have allowed her to pass off easily. No. Ten weeks of great anguish, a complication of diseases adding pang to pang. It seemed as if Christ had said : " Now, on this death-bed, I will demonstrate that my grace is sufficient for everything and can bear up under everything." It seemed as if Christ had said : " Now here is a royal gem for a royal palace. I have been fifty years busy with it, polishing it, and polishing it, and now only a few more cuttings of the chisel and a few more raspings of the file, and it will be as rare a gem as was ever prepared in all the centuries. Ten weeks of pain are nothing before an eternity of jubilation !" At half-past two o'clock on the afternoon of November the second, God put up His tools, and said : " The work of polishing is done. *Let her go now.*"

Her life was a song ; her death a " Hallelujah Chorus." In her last sickness she said : " I am fully saved. I have not a single doubt. Hallelujah to God and the Lamb ! When a daughter said : " Do you see me, ma ?" she said : " I see

no one but Jesus, but I shall soon *see the King in his beauty*. Glory be to the Father ! Glory be to the Son ! Glory be to the Holy Ghost !” When they bathed her fevered hands she said : “ I shall soon bathe my hands in the life-giving waters.” On the last morning, as she woke up, she said : “ O death ! where is Thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ?” Then she pronounced the apostolic benediction, a benediction for her husband, for her children, for the Church universal, and for the world whose redemption she had tried to hasten : “ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all for ever. Amen.” And Phebe Palmer was dead !

No, no, no ; not dead. She lives ! she lives ! It seems to me as if I could almost see her standing this morning on the battlements of heaven, waving the triumph, calling down to us through the sweet Sabbath air ; and I wave back to her. Hail ! ransomed spirit. Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !

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## THE OVERFLOWING CUP.

“ *My cup runneth over.*”—PSALMS xxiii. 5.

EVERY few years we have people critical of the Thanksgiving proclamation. They say : “ We have nothing to be thankful for. Commerce down ; manufactures dull ; commercial prospects blasted. Better have a day for fasting than a day for feasting.” Indeed, have you nothing to be thankful for ? Does your heart beat ? Do your eyes see ? Do your ears hear ? Did you breakfast this morning ? Did you sleep last night ? Are the glorious heavens above your head ? Is the solid earth beneath your feet ? Have you a Bible, a Christ, a proffered heaven ? Aye, those of us who are the worst off, have more blessing than we appreciate, and “ our cup runneth over.”

There is a table spread to-day across the top of the two great ranges of mountains which ridge this continent—a

table which reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific seas. It is the Thanksgiving table of the nation. They come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and sit at it. On it are smoking the products of all lands, birds of every aviary, cattle from every pasture, fish from every lake, feathered spoils from every farm. The fruit baskets bend down under the product plucked from the peach fields of New Jersey, the apple orchards of Western New York, the orange groves of Florida, the vineyards of Ohio, and the nuts threshed from New England woods. The bread is white from the wheat fields of Illinois and Michigan, the banqueters are adorned with California gold, and the table is agleam with Nevada silver, and the feast is warmed with the fire grates heaped up with Pennsylvania coal. The hall is spread with carpets from Lowell mills, and to-night the lights will flash from bronzed brackets of Philadelphia manufacture. The fingers of Massachusetts girls have hung the embroidery ; the music is the drumming of ten thousand mills accompanied by the shout of children let loose for play, and the gladness of harvesters driving barnward the loads of sheaves, and the thanksgivings of the nation which crowd the celestial gates with doxologies, until the oldest harper of heaven cannot tell where the terrestrial song ends and the celestial song begins.

Welcome, Thanksgiving-day ! Whatever we may think of New England theology, we all like New England Thanksgiving-day. What meant the rush last night to the depots and the long rail trains darting their lanterns along the tracks of the Stonington and Providence, Boston and Lowell, New Haven and Springfield, Plymouth and South Braintree railroads ? Ask the happy group in the New England farmhouse. Ask the rustics in the cabin among the Green Mountains. Ask the New England villagers whose song of praise this morning comes over the Berkshire hills. O, it is a great day of national festivity. Clap your hands, ye people, and shout aloud for joy. Through the organ pipes let there come down the thunder of a nation's rejoicing. Blow the cornet ! Wave the palm branches ! O, that men would praise the Lord for



His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. "My cup runneth over."

I propose to speak to you this morning about Thanksgiving in the house, Thanksgiving in the hovels of the poor, Thanksgiving in the Church, Thanksgiving in the city, Thanksgiving in the nation. Without stopping to ring your door-bell, I come into your house, and I look around and see what God has been doing for you during the past year. You say: "Come in. I am *very glad to see you*. Sit down in this arm-chair, or on this sofa, and make yourself at home." O no, my friends, I cannot stop. I just want to look around and see what God has been doing for you in your home. "O," you say, "our home is not so large now as the one we used to have." I answer what is that? It is a great deal of trouble to keep a large house clean. Besides that, a small house is so cozy. Besides that, it is a bad thing for children to have a luxuriant starting, for when they get out into the world and are married, they then begin to talk about the way they used to have it, and say: "I haven't been accustomed to such cramped up apartments." Bless God if you have a snug, cozy home. But I step into your parlour, and I find there the evidences of refinement, and culture, and friendship. The sofas and chairs are not always empty. Sympathizing friends sit here when you have trouble. Mirthful friends sit here when you are in good cheer. This chandelier will flash down upon social gathering, and upon Christmas tree, and upon merry-making. These keys have often been thrummed by your children and there is in the portfolio on the music rack many a well-worn song of "Old Oaken Bucket" and "Old Arm-Chair;" and while your grandfathers entertained their guests under rough hewn rafters and on bare floors, you have a parlour in which are the evidences of painter's pencil, and engraver's knife, and sculptor's chisel, and I stand in the midst of all this refinement and elegance of your parlour and demand your thanksgiving unto the Lord.

I go on to the next room and step into your nursery, and I am greeted with the shout and laughter of your children. They romp; they hide; they clap their hands. I get down

on the floor and play with them. What bright eyes ! What merry hearts ! What swift feet ! God bless them ! Their little troubles dissolve in a tear. Their little enmities are gone after a minute's pouting. Busy all day, without fatigues, they fall asleep chattering and wake up singing. And the little baby has its realm, waving its sceptre over the parental heart, and you look down in its wondering eyes and see whole worlds of promise there, and think to yourself, "Those little hands will smooth my locks when they get gray, and those little feet will run for me when I am sick, and those eyes will weep for me when I am gone." O, hush him to sleep with a holy song. Let him know the name of Jesus long before he can pronounce it. Thank God to-day that upon your home has come the brightness of childhood, and drop a tear of grief for those who weep over a despoiled cradle and toys that never will be caught up again by little hands now still, alas, for ever.

I step from this room into the dining-hall. You have not invited me to dine with you, but I come right in without invitation and sit down at your table to-day. I do not see any signs of starving around here, although you talk so much about hard times. Besides that, it seems to me you have all the world waiting upon you. The cabinet makers have prepared with great toil the furniture ; the farmers worried themselves almost to death in raising the wheat from which this bread was made ; the sailor was lashed to the mast to bring you those foreign luxuries ; whole herds and flocks at different times have fallen under the knife of the butcher to please your palate ; the miners toiled in damp and darkness to get the coal that warms your dining-room to-day. Summer sun, and driving snow, and howling tempest have sent their contributions to your table to-day. None of your children are crying for bread in vain. The barrel of meal has not wasted ; the cruise of oil has not failed. *Bread enough and to spare*, while many have perished with hunger. O do not, to-day, draw your knife across the sharpening steel until you have sent up one word of thanksgiving to the Lord who has given you all these mercies ; and if you are not ac-

customed to asking a blessing at the table, I think this day will be a good one in which to begin, and if you cannot think of anything else to say, then take the words of my text : " My cup runneth over."

I step out from your dining-hall into your library, and see your table covered with books, and magazines, and newspapers fresh from the publishing houses. It seems to me really as if the historians, and the fabulists, and the pamphleteers, and the philosophers of the world were waiting your bidding. Here, on this historic shelf of your library, you have Bancroft, and Prescott, and Macaulay to tell you the rude story of early America, or describe the wonders of Mexican scenery, or call back the eloquence of the old Parliaments that death long ago dissolved with more than the imperiousness of Cromwell. And here is your poetic shelf, on which stand Dr. Young with his weeping harp, and Walter Scott sounding the Highland bagpipe, and Longfellow ringing out the war-whoop through "Hiawatha," and William Cullen Bryant mingling the moan of the wild woods with the call of the brown thresher. And here is the shelf that Dickens has all to himself, from "Oliver Twist" to "Edwin Drood," avenging the world's sorrows, weeping the world's sins, exposing the world's hypocrisies, winning the world's applause. Thank God for books—plenty of them—books to make you study, books to waft you into reverie, books to make you weep, books to make you laugh, books in cloth, books in morocco, in satin, in gold ; books of travel, of anecdote, of memoir, of legend ; books scrolled, and starred, and wreathed and columned ; books about insects, about birds, about shells, about everything. Books for the young, books for the old. "O," says some one, "I have not all these luxuries ; I have not all these comforts of the parlour, of the nursery, of the dining-hall, of the library." But, my brother, most certainly you know something of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that sweet, tender, joyous, triumphant word, "*Home!*" Do not look at it as a place merely to stay in, as the lion looks at the lair, or the fox his burrow, or the eagle his eyrie. Do not call it your apartments,

or your lodgings, or your domicile, but—by all the memory of those who are gone ; by the memory of the old people, whether here or there ; for the sake of childhood ; for the sake of all that is good, and pure, and true, and blessed—call it *home*.

O gather your families together to-day. If you have a musical instrument, open it ; if you have not, open your heart—the best of all musical instruments—and while the Lord listens, and the memory of the past rushes through your soul : “O give thanks unto the Lord ; for He is good ; for His mercy endureth for ever ;” and let each one clap his hands, and say for himself : “My cup runneth over.”

I pass on now to look at Thanksgiving in the hovels of the poor. No banquet smoking on their table. It is a sad thing to see a poor man, the evening before Thanksgiving, looking into a full grocery window, while he thinks of his destitute home. O it is hard to be hungry in a world with ripe orchards, and luxuriant harvests, and herds of cattle driven to the slaughtering. It is hard to be cold in a world where the forests are waiting for the axe-man, and the mines are waiting for the miners. It is a hard thing to be unclad in a world where there are so many swift cylinders in motion, so many manufactories of goods, and where the fox, and the beaver, and the Arctic bear, and the Siberian squirrel are dying in order that men may have their furs. To-day *do not stuff yourself* to surfeiting without thinking of those who are gaunt with hunger ; do not put your feet up by the warm register without thinking, at least once, of those whose last scuttle of coal is gone. When, to-night, you turn on the gas full head, and it glitters along the wall in bubbles of fire, do not forget to think of those whose last candle has hissed in the socket. If you have nothing better than an old jacket, or a worn-out pair of shoes, or a coat that has been patched until it has become “a coat of many colours,” give something this day to the poor. There are two things that I should like to have my Lord Jesus Christ say to me in the last day : “I was hungry, and ye fed me.” “I was naked, and ye clothed me,” God help the poor !

But I pass on now, and look at Thanksgiving in the church. Last Thanksgiving we were churchless. We had a wall partly up, a pile of bricks, a heap of lumber. That was about our position. It was a doleful day to me. I wandered about with my coat collar up, and rubbing my frost-bitten right ear, and there was not, in all the day, anything that looked like Thanksgiving save the dinner, and that was not as good as usual. We felt like the Israelites in captivity, and would, like them, have hung our harps on the willows, but for the reason our organ was burned up, and we had no harp, and no willows to hang it on. But where are we to-day? Is this our roof? Are these our altars? Is this our spiritual home? How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob? "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death." With organ, with cornet, with multitudinous shout of great congregation, express this day your praise to God: "Our cup runneth over." But better than all material structure is the spiritual blessing that descended, and the six hundred souls who, during these nine months, have stood up at this altar, connecting themselves with our membership—the blessing still hovering—and at every service immortal souls saved. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." I know there are those who think the church is a museum of antediluvian fossils. They think it did very well once, but it is behind the times. That is not your opinion. You love, first, your home, and next, your church. O ye descendants of the men who were hounded amid the Highlands of Scotland, and who fell at Bothwell-bridge; O ye sons and daughters of the men who came across wintry seas to build their log churches in the American wilderness; O ye sons and daughters of those who stood in the awful siege of Leyden, and shouted the martyr's triumph in the horrors of the Brussels market-place; O ye descendants of the men whose garments were dyed in the wine-press of Saint Bartholomew Massacre; ye sons and daughters of the

fire, what do you think, to-day, of a quiet church, and a free pulpit, and a gospel winged with mercy and salvation? What imperial edict forbids our convocation? What sword thirsts for our blood? What fires are kindled for our torture? None. Defended by the law, invited by the Gospel, baptized by the Spirit, we are here to-day free men of the State, free men of God. Glorious Church! "Twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm-trees." "My cup runneth over." O this day bring the richest thanksgiving garland, and put it upon the brow of Him who bought the Church, died for your sins, and prepared for you a grand and glorious inheritance. Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of a Saviour.

But I pass on and consider *thanksgiving in the city*. It is five years since I came to live in this city. I have seen many cities on both sides the sea, but I have never seen any I like quite so well as this. What quiet Sabbaths. What large and beautiful churches. What a costly and magnificent Mercantile Library. What a glory our Academy of Music. What institutions of learning—Packer, the Polytechnic, the Adelphi, and our glorious common schools, with the Bible in them. Our long lines of streets, beautifully shaded. Our Park, with its arborescent drives, and its affluence of flowers and its sculptured bridges, and its exquisite lake. Prospered city. Our Mayor honourable, Our judges just. Our police efficient. Beautiful Brooklyn. Blessed for ever be her great population. When we get the bridge done, we will go over and make New York just like it. But after all, I think New York is as moral a city as there is under the sun, considering the number of its population. We are one city after all, on both sides of the East River. There are a great many people who think that the worst city on earth is the combined city of New York and Brooklyn; and I don't know but that some people, from the exaggeration in regard to it, may land at the foot of Cortlandt-street, and rush up to the Hudson River Railroad Depot, telling the hackman all the way to whip up the horses, lest some scourge come upon them before they get through the town. I don't

know but that some countrymen coming to our city, from the stories that have been told about us, may keep looking over both shoulders lest they be garroted somewhere between Fulton Ferry and the City Hall. I think the politicians are responsible for that exaggerated statement of the way things are in this city. I really think it is a grand city, a beautiful city to live in. Under different administrations of politics it is. We have tried all kinds, the one perhaps as good as the other; the chief difference between the two parties, I have found out, being that that one steals most which has the longest opportunity to steal. The change of administration often being the relief which a man gets when he changes from rheumatism to neuralgia! Still, notwithstanding all these things, I think this a fair city to live in; I don't think there is a better city under the sun. Thank God you live here, and that you can to-day boast, as Paul did, that you are the inhabitant of no mean city.

I pass on once more to look at Thanksgiving in the nation. Peace all through the land. The Indians quiet in the plains. No foreign guns coming up through the Narrows. Insurrection in New Orleans conquered by a revolution at the ballot-box. The South at last satisfied that the wrongs of the last six years will be righted. No American slavery to fight about. By a revolution in national politics, both political parties put upon their good behaviour; that party which does the most for the people in the next year and a-half winning the Presidential chair and the national supremacy. In 1857 there were four thousand two hundred and fifty-seven failures, to the amount of two hundred and sixty-five million, eight hundred and eighteen thousand dollars. People said: "We'll never get out of it." Yet in two years there was not a vestige left of that great commercial disaster. The wheels flew, and the feet of American enterprise tramped on, and we soon got over it. *Then came the dark days* of 1861, when there were five thousand nine hundred and thirty-five business failures, amounting to one hundred and seventy-eight million, six hundred and thirty-two thousand, one hundred and seventy dollars. Then people

threw up their hands and said: "We shall never get over this." And yet the largest fortunes of the country have been made since then, and our national prosperity has increased beyond the capacity of any arithmetic to state it. If God brought us out of the trouble of 1857, and out of the misfortunes of 1861, is He not strong enough to bring us out of the troubles of 1874? He will. He will. I believe the prosperities that are yet to come will soon put out of sight all our past national accumulations. Our national debt is rapidly dwindling. Added to all, the fact that we have one hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles of coal, and another one hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles of iron, it seems to me that the metals of the earth are to-day, as with the golden lips of California, and the silver tongue of Nevada, promising the fact that there shall be no end to our national resources.

But look at the harvests. I do not suppose that for more than three or four times within the memory of anybody here there have been such harvests as we have had this year. The grain fields have passed their harvests above the veto of drought and deluge. The freight cars are not large enough to bring down the grain to the seaboard. The canal boats are crowded with bread stuffs. Hark to the rushing of the wheat through the great Chicago corn "elevators." Hark to the rolling of the hogsheads to the Cincinnati pork packers. Enough to eat and at cheap prices. Enough to wear and of home manufacture. If some have and some have not, then may God help those who have to hand over something to those who have not. Clear the track for the rail-trains that come down, bringing the wheat, and the barley, and the oats, and the hops, and the leather, and everything for man, and everything for beast.

I cannot, I dare not, detain you any longer from the home group. The housekeepers will be angry with me if I keep you until the viands are cold. Set the chairs to the table—the easy chairs for grandfather and grandmother, if they be still alive; the high chair for the youngest and the least. Then put out your hand to take the full cup of thanks-



giving; bring it towards your lips, your hands trembling with emotion, and if the chalice shall spill on the cloth, do not be chagrined, but look up thankfully to heaven and say • “My cup runneth over.”

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## PEOPLE TO BE FEARED.

“*Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.*”—PSALMS lxxx. 12, 13.

BY this homely but expressive figure, the text sets forth the bad influences which in olden time broke in upon God's heritage, as with swine's foot trampling, and as with swine's snout uprooting the vineyards of prosperity. What was true then is true now. There have been enough trees of righteousness planted to overshadow the whole earth, had it not been for the axe-men who hewed them down. The temple of truth would long ago have been completed, had it not been for the iconoclasts who defaced the walls and battered down the pillars. The whole earth would have been an Eshcol of ripened clusters, had it not been that “the boar has wasted it, and the wild beast of the field devoured it.”

I propose to point out to you those whom I consider to be *the uprooting and devouring classes of society*. First, *the public criminals*. You ought not to be surprised that these people make up a large portion in many communities. The vast majority of the criminals who take ship from Europe come into our own port. In 1869, of the forty-nine thousand people who were incarcerated in the prisons of the country, thirty-two thousand were of foreign birth. Many of them were the very desperadoes of society, oozing into the slums of our cities, waiting for an *opportunity to riot and steal*

and debauch, joining the large gang of American thugs and cut-throats. There are in this cluster of cities—New York, Jersey City, and Brooklyn—four thousand people whose entire business in life is to commit crime. That is as much their business as jurisprudence, or medicine, or merchandise is your business. To it they bring all their energies of body, mind, and soul, and they look upon the interregnums which they spend in prison as so much unfortunate loss of time, just as you look upon an attack of influenza or rheumatism which fastens you in the house for a few days. It is their lifetime business to pick pockets, and blow up safes and shoplift, and ply the panel game, and they have as much pride of skill in their business as you have in yours when you upset the argument of an opposing counsel, or cure a gun-shot fracture which other surgeons have given up, or foresee a turn in the market, so that you buy goods just before they go up twenty per cent. It is their business to commit crime, and I do not suppose that once in a year the thought of the immorality strikes them. Added to these professional criminals, American and foreign, there is a large class of men who are more or less industrious in crime.

In one year the police in this cluster of cities arrested ten thousand people for theft, and ten thousand for assault and battery, and fifty thousand for intoxication. Drunkenness is responsible for much of the theft, since it confuses a man's ideas of property, and he gets his hands on things that do not belong to him. Rum is responsible for much of the assault and battery, inspiring men to sudden bravery, which they must demonstrate though it be on the face of the next gentleman. *Seven millions of dollars'* worth of property stolen in this cluster of cities in one year! You cannot, as good citizens, be independent of that fact. It will touch your pocket, since I have to give you the fact that these three cities pay seven million dollars' worth of taxes a year to arraign, try, and support the criminal population. You help to pay the board of every criminal, from the sneak-thief that snatches a spool of cotton, up to some man who enacts a

"Black Friday." More than that, it touches your heart in the moral depression of the community. You might as well think to stand in a closely confined room where there are fifty people and yet not breathe the vitiated air, as to stand in a community where there is such a great multitude of the depraved without somewhat being contaminated. What is the fire that burns your store down compared with the conflagration which consumes your morals? What is the theft of the gold and silver from your money safe compared with the theft of your children's virtue?

We are all ready to arraign criminals. We shout at the top of our voice: "Stop thief!" and when the police get on the track we come out, hatless and in our slippers, and assist in the arrest. We come around the bawling ruffian and hustle him off to justice, and when he gets in prison, what do we do for him? With great gusto we put on the handcuffs and the hobbles; but what preparation are we making for the day when the handcuffs and the hobbles come off? Society seems to say to these criminals: "Villain, go in there and rot," when it ought to say: "You are an offender against the law, but we mean to give you an opportunity to repent; we mean to help you. Here are Bibles, and tracts, and Christian influences. Christ died for you. Look, and live."

Vast improvements have been made by introducing industries into the prison; but we want something more than hammers and shoe-lasts to reclaim these people. Aye, we want more than sermons on the Sabbath-day. Society must impress these men with the fact that it does not enjoy their suffering, and that it is attempting to reform and elevate them. The majority of criminals suppose that society has a grudge against them, and they in turn have a grudge against society. *They are harder in heart* and more infuriate when they come out of jail than when they went in. Many of the people who go to prison go again, and again, and again. Some years ago, of fifteen hundred prisoners who during the year had been in Sing Sing, four hundred had been there before. In a house of correction in the country,

where during a certain reach of time there had been five thousand people, more than three thousand had been there before. So, in one case the prison, and in the other case the house of correction, left them just as bad as they were before. The secretary of one of the benevolent societies of New York saw a lad fifteen years of age who had spent three years of his life in prison, and he said to the lad : "What have they done for you to make you better ?" "Well," replied the lad, "the first time I was brought up before the judge, he said : 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And then I committed a crime again, and I was brought up before the same judge, and he said : 'You rascal !' And after awhile I committed some other crime, and I was brought before the same judge, and he said : 'You ought to be hanged.'" That is all they had done for him in the way of reformation and salvation. "O," you say, "these people are incorrigible." I suppose there are hundreds of persons this day lying in the prison bunks who would leap up at the prospect of reformation, if society would only allow them a way into decency and respectability. "O," you say, "I have no patience with these rogues." I ask you, in reply, how much better would you have been under the same circumstances ? Suppose your mother had been a blasphemer and your father a sot, and you had started life with a body stuffed with evil propensities, and you had spent much of your time in a cellar amid obscenities and cursing, and if at ten years of age you had been compelled to go out and steal, battered and banged at night if you came in without any spoils, and suppose your early manhood and womanhood had been covered with rags and filth, and decent society had turned its back upon you, and left you to consort with vagabonds and wharf-rats—how much better would you have been ? I have no sympathy with that executive clemency which would let crime run loose, or which would sit in the gallery of a court-room weeping because some hard-hearted wretch is brought to justice ; but I do say that the safety and life of the community demand more potential influences in behalf of public offenders.

Within five minutes' walk of where I now stand, there is a prison, enough to bring down *the wrath of Almighty God* on this city of Brooklyn. It is the Raymond-street jail. It would not be strange if the jail fever should start in that horrible hole, like that which raged in England during the session of the Black Assize, when three hundred perished—judges, jurors, constables, and lawyers. Alas that our fair city should have such a pest-house. I understand the sheriff and the jail-keeper do all they can, under the circumstances, for the comfort of these people; but five and six people are put into a place where there ought to be but one or two. The air is like that of the Black Hole of Calcutta. As the air swept through the wicket, it almost knocked me down. No sunlight. Young men who had committed their first crime crowded in among old offenders. I saw there one woman, with a child almost blind, who had been arrested for the crime of poverty, who was waiting until the slow law could take her to the almshouse, where she rightfully belonged; but she was thrust in there with her child amid the most abandoned wretches of the town. Many of the offenders in that prison sleeping on the floor, with nothing but a vermin-covered blanket over them. Those people crowded and wan, and wasted, and half-suffocated, and infuriated. I said to the men: How do you stand it here?" "God knows," said one man "we have to stand it." O, they will pay you when they get out. Where they burned down one house, they will burn three. They will strike deeper the assassin's knife. They are this minute plotting worse burglaries. Raymond-street goal is the best place I know of to manufacture foot-pads, vagabonds, and cut-throats. Yale College is not so well calculated to make scholars, nor Harvard so well calculated to make scientists, nor Princeton so well calculated to make theologians, as Raymond-street goal is calculated to make criminals. All that those men do not know of crime after they have been in that dungeon for some time, Satanic machination cannot teach them. Every hour that goal stands, it challenges the Lord Almighty to smite this city. I call upon the people to rise in their wrath and demand a re-

formation. I call upon judges of our courts to expose that infamy. I call upon the Legislature of the State of New York, now in session, to examine and appease that outrage on God and human society. I demand, in behalf of those incarcerated prisoners, fresh air and clear sunlight, and, in the name of Him who had not where to lay His head, a couch to rest on at night. In the insufferable stench and sickening surroundings of that Raymond-street jail there is nothing but disease for the body, idiocy for the mind, and death for the soul. Stifled air, and darkness, and vermin never turned a thief into an honest man.

We want men like John Howard and Sir William Blackstone, and women like Elizabeth Fry, to do for the prisons of the United States what those people did in other days for the prisons of England. I thank God for what Isaac T. Hopper, and Doctor Wines, and Mr. Harris, and scores of others have done in the way of prison reform; but *we want something more radical* before upon this city will come the blessing of Him who said: "I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Again: in this class of uprooting and devouring population are *untrustworthy officials*. "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy kings are children and thy princes drink in the morning." It is a great calamity to a city when bad men get into public authority. Why was it that in New York there was such unparalleled crime between 1866 and 1871? It was because the judges of police in that city, for the most part, were as corrupt as the vagabonds that came before them for trial. Those were the days of high carnival for election frauds, assassination and forgery. We had the "Whiskey Ring," and the "Tammany Ring," and the "Erie Ring." There was one man during those years that got one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars in one year for serving the public. In a few years' it was estimated that there were fifty millions of public treasure squandered. In those times the criminal had only to wink to the judge, or his lawyer would wink for him, and the question was decided for the defendant. Of the eight thou-

sand people arrested in that city in one year, only three thousand were punished. These little matters were "fixed up," while the interests of society were "fixed down." You know as well as I that a criminal who escapes only opens the door for other criminalities. When the two pickpockets snatched the diamond pin from the Brooklyn gentleman in a Broadway stage, and the villains were arrested, and the trial was set down for the General Sessions, and then the trial never came, and never anything more was heard of the case, the public officials were only bidding higher for more crime. It is no compliment to public authority when we have in all the cities of the country, walking abroad, men and women notorious for criminality, unwhipped of justice. They are pointed out to you in the street day by day. There you find what are called the "fences,"—the men who stand between the thief and the honest man, sheltering the thief, and at great price handing over the goods to the owner to whom they belong. There you will find those who are called the "skimmers," the men who hover around Wall-street, with great sleight of hand in bonds and stocks. There you find *the funeral thieves*, the people who go and sit down and mourn with families and pick their pockets. And there you find the "confidence men," who borrow money of you because they have a dead child in the house and want to bury it, when they never had a house nor a family; or they want to go to England and get a large property there, and they want you to pay their way, and they will send the money back by the very next mail. There are the "harbour thieves," the "shoplifters," the "pickpockets," famous all over the cities. Hundreds of them with their faces in the "Rogues' Gallery," yet doing nothing for the last five or ten years but defraud society and escape justice. When these people go unarrested and unpunished, it is putting a high premium upon vice, and saying to the young criminals of this country, "What a safe thing it is to be a great criminal." Let the law swoop upon them. Let it be known in this country that crime will have no quarter, that the detectives are after it, that the police club is being brandished, that the iron door

of the prison is being opened, that the judge is ready to call on the case. Too great leniency to criminals is too great severity to society. When the President pardoned the wholesale dealer in obscene books, he hindered the crusade against licentiousness ; but when Governor Dix refused to let go Forster the assassin, who was condemned to the gallows, he grandly vindicated the laws of God and the dignity of the State of New York.

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

The police stations of this cluster of cities furnish annually two hundred thousand lodgings. For the most part, these



two hundred thousand lodgings are furnished to able-bodied men and women—people as able to work as you and I are. When they are received no longer at one police station, because they are “repeaters,” they go to some other station, and so they keep moving around. They get their food at house doors, stealing what they can lay their hands on in the front basement while the servant is spreading the bread in the back basement. They will not work. Time and again, in the country districts, they have wanted hundreds and thousands of labourers. These men will not go. They do not want to work. I have tried them. I have set them to sawing wood in my cellar, to see whether they wanted to work. I offered to pay them well for it. I have heard the saw going for about three minutes, and then I went down, and lo, the wood, but no saw ! They are the pest of society, and they stand in the way of the Lord’s poor, who ought to be helped, and must be helped, and will be helped. While there are thousands of industrious men who cannot get any work, these men who do not want any work come in and make that plea. I am in favour of the restoration of the old-fashioned whipping-post for just this one class of men who will not work ; sleeping at night at public expense in the station house ; during the day, getting their food at your door-step. Imprisonment does not scare them. They would like it. Blackwell’s Island or Sing Sing would be a comfortable home for them. They would have no objection to the almshouse, for they like thin soup, if they cannot get mock-turtle. I propose this for them : on one side of them put some healthy work ; on the other side put a raw hide, and let them take their choice. I like for that class of people the scant bill of fare that Paul wrote out for the Thessalonian loafers : “ If any work not, neither should he eat.” By what law of God or man is it right that you and I should toil day in and day out, until our hands are blistered, and our arms ache, and our brain gets numb, and then be called upon to support what in the United States are about *two million loafers* ? They are a very dangerous class. Let the public authorities keep their eyes on them.

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

There is a vast underground New York and Brooklyn life that is appalling and shameful. It wallows and steams with putrefaction. You go down the stairs, which are wet and decayed with filth, and at the bottom you find the poor victims on the floor, cold, sick, three-fourths dead, slinking into a still darker corner under the gleam of the lantern of the police. There has not been a breath of fresh air in that room for five years, literally. The broken sewer empties its contents upon them, and they lie at night in the swimming filth. There they are, men, women, and children ; blacks, whites ; Mary Magdalen without her repentance, Lazarus without his God ! These are "the dives" into which the pick-pockets and the thieves go, as well as a great many who would like a different life but cannot get it. These places are the sores of the city, which bleed perpetual corruption. They are the underlying volcano that threatens us with a Caraccas earthquake. It rolls, and roars, and surges, and heaves, and rocks, and blasphemes, and dies. And there are only two outlets for it : the police court and the Potter's Field.

In other words, they must either go to prison or to hell. O, you never saw it, you say.

*You will never see it* until on the day when these staggering wretches shall come up in the light of the judgment

throne, and while all hearts are being revealed, God will ask you what you did to help them.

There is another layer of poverty and destitution, not so squalid, but almost as helpless. You hear the incessant wailing for bread, and clothes, and fire. Their eyes are sunken. Their cheek-bones stand out. Their hands are damp with slow consumption. Their flesh is puffed up with dropsies. Their breath is like that of the charnel-house. They hear the roar of the wheels of fashion over head, and the gay laughter of men and maidens, and wonder why God gave to others so much and to them so little. Some of them thrust into an infidelity like that of the poor German girl who, when told in the midst of her wretchedness that God was good, said: "No, no good God. Just look at me. No good God."

In this cluster of cities, whose cry of want I this day interpret, there are said to be, as far as I can figure it up from the reports, about two hundred and ninety thousand honest poor who are dependent upon individual, city, and state charities. If all their voices could come up at once, it would be a groan that would shake the foundations of the city, and bring all earth and heaven to the rescue. But, for the most part, it suffers unexpressed. It sits in silence, gnashing its teeth, and sucking the blood of its own arteries, waiting for the judgment-day. O, I should not wonder if on that day it would be found out that some of us had some things that belonged to them; some extra garment which might have made them comfortable in these cold days; some bread thrust into the ash barrel that might have appeased their hunger for a little while; some wasted candle or gas-jet that might have kindled up their darkness; some fresco on the ceiling that would have given them a roof; some jewel which, brought to that orphan girl in time, might have kept her from being crowded off the precipices of an unclean life; some New Testament that would have told them of Him who "came to seek and save that which was lost." O, this wave of vagrancy and hunger, and nakedness that dashes against our front doorstep; I wonder if you hear it and see it as much as I hear it

and see it. This last week *I have been almost frenzied* with the perpetual cry for help from all classes and from all nations, knocking, knocking, ringing, ringing, until I dare not have more than one decent pair of shoes, nor more than one decent coat, nor more than one decent hat, lest in the last day it be found that I have something that belongs to them, and Christ shall turn to me and say : "Inasmuch as ye did it *not* to these, ye did it *not* to Me." If the roofs of all the houses of destitution could be lifted so we could look down into them just as God looks, whose nerves would be strong enough to stand it? And yet there they are. The forty-five thousand sewing-women in these three cities, some of them in hunger and cold, working night after night, until sometimes the blood spurts from nostril and lip. How well their grief was voiced by that despairing woman who stood by her invalid husband and invalid child, and said to the city missionary : "I am down-hearted. Everything's against us ; and then there are other things." "What other things?" said the city missionary. "O," she replied, "my sin." What do you mean by that?" "Well," she said, "I never hear or see anything good. It's work from Monday morning to Saturday night, and then when Sunday comes I can't go out, and I walk the floor, and it makes me tremble to think that I have got to meet God. O, sir, it's so hard for us. We have to work so, and then we have so much trouble, and then we are getting along so poorly ; and see this wee little thing growing weaker and weaker ; and then to think that we are getting no nearer to God, but floating away from Him. O, sir, I do wish I was ready to die."

I should not wonder if they had a good deal better time than we in the future, to make up for the fact that they had such a bad time here. It would be just like Jesus to say : "Come up and take the highest seats. You suffered with Me on earth ; now be glorified with Me in heaven." O Thou weeping One of Bethany ! O Thou dying One of the cross ! Have mercy on the starving, freezing, homeless poor of these great cities !

I have preached this sermon for four or five practical reasons : Because I want you to know who are the uprooting classes of society. Because I want you to *be more discriminating in your charities*. Because I want your hearts open with generosity, and your hands open with charity. Because I want you to be made the sworn friends of all city evangelization, and all newsboys' lodging-houses, and all Howard missions, and Children's Aid Societies. Aye, I have preached it because I want you this week to send to the Dorcas Society all the cast-off clothing, that, under the skilful manipulation of our wives and mothers, and sisters, and daughters, these garments may be fitted on the cold, bare feet, and on the shivering limbs of the destitute. I should not wonder if that hat that you give should come back a jewelled coronet, or if that garment that you this week hand out from your wardrobe should mysteriously be whitened, and somehow wrought into the Saviour's own robe, so in the last day He would run His hand over it, and say : "I was naked and ye clothed Me." That would be putting your garments to glorious uses.

But more than that, I have preached the sermon because I thought in the contrast you would see how very kindly God had dealt with you, and I thought that thousands of you would go to-day to your comfortable homes, and sit at your well-filled tables, and at the warm registers, and look at the round faces of your children, and that then you would burst into tears at the review of God's goodness to you, and that you would go to your room this afternoon and lock the door, and kneel down and say : "O Lord, I have been an ingrate ; make me Thy child. O Lord, there are so many hungry and unclad and unsheltered to-day, I thank Thee that all my life Thou hast taken such good care of me. O Lord, there are so many sick and crippled children to-day, I thank Thee mine are well, some of them on earth, some of them in heaven. Thy goodness, O Lord, breaks me down. Take me once, and for ever. Sprinkled as I was many years ago at the altar while my mother held me,

now I consecrate my soul to Thee in a holier baptism of repenting tears.

“ For sinners, Lord, Thou cam’st to bleed,  
And I’m a sinner vile indeed ;  
Lord, I believe Thy grace is free,  
O magnify that grace in me.”

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## THE RED CORD IN THE WINDOW.

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

IF you have any idea that I have chosen this text because it is odd, you do not know me nor the errand on which I come. Eternity is too near, and life too short, for men to take texts merely because they are peculiar. I take this because it is full of the old Gospel.

There is a very sick and sad house in the city of Jericho. What is the matter? Is it poverty? No. Worse than that. Is it leprosy? No. Worse than that. Is it death? No. Worse than that. A daughter has forsaken her home. By what infernal plot she was induced to leave I know not; but they look in vain for her return. Sometimes they hear a footstep very much like hers, and they start up, and say: “She comes!” but only to sink back again into disappointment. Alas! Alas! The father sits by the hour, with his face in his hands, saying not one word. The mother’s hair is becoming gray too fast, and she begins to stoop so that those who saw her only a little while ago in the street know her not now as she passes. The brothers clench their fists, swearing vengeance against the despoiler of the home. Alas! will the poor soul never come back? There is a long, deep shadow over all the household. Added to this there is an invading army six miles away, just over the river, coming on to destroy the city; and what with the loss of their child,

and the coming on of that destructive army, I think the old people wished that they could die. That is the first scene in this drama of the Bible.

In a house on the wall of that city is the daughter. That is her home now. Two spies have come from the invading army to look around through Jericho, and see how best it may be taken. Yonder is the lost child, in that dwelling on the wall of the city. The police hear of it, and soon there is the shuffling of feet all around about the door, and the city government demands the surrender of those two spies. First, Rahab—for that was the name of the lost child—first, Rahab secretes the two spies, and gets their pursuers off the track; but after awhile she says to them: "I will make a bargain with you. I will save your life if you will save my life, and the life of my father and my mother, and my brothers, and my sisters, when the victorious army comes upon the city." O, she had not forgotten her home yet, you see. The wanderer never forgets home. Her heart breaks now as she thinks of how she has maltreated her parents, and she wishes she were back with them again, and she wishes she could get away from her sinful enthrallment; and sometimes she looks up in the face of the midnight, *bursting into agonizing tears.* No sooner have these two spies promised to save her life, and the life of her father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters, than Rahab takes a scarlet cord and ties it around the body of one of the spies, brings him to the window, and as he clammers out—nervous lest she have not strength to hold him—with muscular arms such as woman seldom has, she let him down, hand over hand, in safety to the ground. Not being exhausted, she ties the cord around the other spy, brings him to the window, and just as successfully lets him down to the ground. No sooner have these men untied the scarlet cord from their bodies than they look up, and they say: "You had better get all your friends in this house—your father, your mother, your brothers, and your sisters; you had better get them in this house. And then, after you have them here, take this red cord which you have put around our bodies, and tie it across the window;

and when our victorious army comes up, and see that scarlet thread in the window they will spare this house and all who are in it. Shall it be so?" cried the spies. "Aye, aye," said Rahab, from the window, "it shall be so." That is the second scene in this Bible drama.

There is a knock at the door of the old man. He looks up, and says: "Come in," and lo! there is Rahab, the lost child; but she has no time to talk. They gather in excitement around her, and she says to them: "Get ready quickly, and go with me to my house. The army is coming! The trumpet! Make haste! Fly! The enemy!" That is the third scene in this Bible drama.

The hosts of Israel are all around about the doomed city of Jericho. Crash! goes the great metropolis, heaps on heaps. The air suffocating with the dust, and horrible with the screams of a dying city. All the houses flat down. All the people dead. Ah no, no. On a crag of the wall—the only piece of the wall left standing—there is a house which we must enter. There is a family there that have been spared. Who are they? Let us go in and see. Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, her sisters all safe, and the only house left standing in all the city, What saved them? Was the house more firmly built? O no; it was built in the most perilous place—on the wall; and the wall was the first thing that fell. Was it because her character was any better than any of the other population of the city? O no. Why then was she spared, and all her household? Can you tell me why? O, it was the scarlet line in the window. That is the fourth scene in this Bible drama.

When the destroying angel went through Egypt it was the blood of the lamb on the door-posts that saved the Israelites; and now that vengeance has come upon Jericho it is the same colour that assures the safety of Rahab and all her household. My friends, *there are foes coming upon us*, more deadly and more tremendous, to overthrow our immortal interests. They will trample us down and crush us out for ever, unless there be some skilful mode of rescue open. The



police of death already begin to clamour for our surrender ; but, blessed be God, there is a way out. It is through the window, and by a rope, so saturated with the blood of the cross that it is as red as that with which the spies were lowered ; and if once our souls shall be delivered, then, the scarlet cord stretched across the window of our escape, we may defy all bombardment, earthly and satanic.

In the first place, carrying out the idea of my text, we must stretch this scarlet cord *across the window of our rescue*. There comes a time when a man is surrounded. What is that in the front door of his soul ? It is the threatenings of the future. What is that in the back door of his soul ? It is the sins of the past. He cannot get out of either of those door ways. If he attempts it he will be cut to pieces. What shall he do ? Escape through the window of God's mercy. That sunshine has been pouring in for many a day. God's inviting mercy. God's pardoning mercy. God's all-conquering mercy. God's everlasting mercy. But you say, the window is so high. Ah, there is a rope, the very one with which the cross and its victim were lifted, That was strong enough to hold Christ, and it is strong enough to hold you. Bear all your weight upon it, all your hopes for this life, all your hopes for the life that is to come. Escape now through the window. "But," you say, "that cord is too small to save me ; that salvation will never do at all for such a sinner as I have been." I suppose that the rope with which Rahab let the two spies to the ground was not thick enough ; but they took that or nothing. And, my dear brother, that is your alternative. There is only one scarlet line that can save you. There have been hundreds and thousands who have been borne away in safety by that scarlet line, and it will bear you away in safety. Do you notice what a very narrow escape those spies had ? I suppose they came with flustered cheek and with excited heart. They had a *very* narrow escape. They went in the broad door of sin ; but how did they come out ? They came out of the window. They went up by the stairs of stone ; they came down on a slender thread. And so, my friends, we go easily and unabashedly into sin, and

all the doors are open ; but if we get out at all it will be by being let down over precipices, wriggling and helpless, the strong grip above keeping us from being dashed on the rocks beneath. It is easy to get into sin, young man. It is not so easy to get out of it.

A young man, to-night, goes to the marble counter of the bar-room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. He asks for a brandy smash—called so, I suppose, because it smashes the man that takes it. There is no intoxication in it. As the young man receives it he does not seem to be at all excited. It does not give any glossiness to the eye. He walks home in beautiful apparel, and all his prospects are brilliant. That drink is not going to destroy him, *but it is the first step* on a bad road. Years have passed on, and I see that young man after he has gone the whole length of dissipation. It is midnight, and he is in a hotel—perhaps the very one where he took the first drink. He is in the fourth story, and the delirium is on him. He rises from the bed and comes to the window, and it is easily lifted ; so he lifts it. Then he pushes back the blinds and puts his foot on the window sill. Then he gives one spring, and the watchman finds his disfigured body, unrecognizable, on the pavement. O, if he had only waited a little—if he had come down on the scarlet ladder that Jesus holds from the wall for him, and for you, and for me ; but no, he made one jump, and was gone. A minister of Christ was not long ago dismissed from his diocese for intoxication, and in a public meeting at the West he gave this account of his sorrow. He said ; “ I had a beautiful home once : but strong drink shattered it. I had beautiful children ; but this fiend of rum took their dimpled hands in his and led them to the grave. I had a wife—to know her was to love her ; but she sits in wretchedness to-night while I wander over the earth. I had a mother, and the pride of her life was me ; but the thunder-bolt struck her. I now have scarcely a friend in the world. Taste of the bitter cup I have tasted, and then answer me as to whether I have any hatred for the agency of my ruin. Hate it ! I hate the whole damning traffic. I would to God to-night that every distillery was in flames, for then in the

glowing sky I would write in the smoke of the ruin : " Woe to him that putteth the bottle to his neighbour's lips ! " That minister of the Gospel went in through the broad door of temptation ; he came out of the window. And when I see the temptations that are about us, and when I know the proclivity to sin in every man's heart, I see that if any of us escape it will be a very narrow escape. O, if we have, my friends, got off from our sin, let us tie the scarlet thread by which we have been saved across the window. Let us do it in praise of Him whose blood dyed it that colour. Let it be in announcement of the fact that we shall no more be fatally assaulted. " There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. " Then let all the forces of this world come up in cavalry charge, and let spirits of darkness come on an infernal storming party attempting to take our soul, this rope twisted from these words, " The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, " will hurl them back defeated for ever.

Still further : we must take this red cord of the text and stretch it *across the window of our households*. When the Israelitish army came up against Jericho, they said : " What is that in the window ? " Some one said : " *That is a scarlet line.* " " O, " said some one else, " that must be the house that was to be spared. Don't touch it. " That line was thick enough, and long enough, and conspicuous enough to save Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and her sisters—the entire family. Have our households as good protection ? You have bolts on the front door and on the back, and fastenings to the window, and perhaps burglar alarms, and perhaps an especial watchman blowing his whistle at midnight before your dwelling ; but all that cannot protect your household. Is there on our houses the sign of a Saviour's sacrifice and mercy ? Is there a scarlet line in the window ? Have your children been consecrated to Christ ? Have you been washed in the blood of the atonement ? In what room do you have family prayers ? Show me where it is you are accustomed to kneel. The sky is black with the coming deluge. Is your family inside or outside of the ark ?

It is a sad thing for a man to reject Christ ; but to lie down in the night of sin, across the path to heaven. so that his family come up and trip over him into an infinity of horrors—that is the longest, the deepest, the mightiest. It is a sad thing for a mother to reject Christ ; but to gather her family around her, and then take them by the hand and lead them out into paths of worldliness, away from God and heaven—O, it will take all the dirges of earth and hell to weep out that agony. I suppose there are in this church to-night families represented where there has not been an audible prayer offered for ten years. There may be geranium and cactus in the window, and upholstery hovering over it, and childish faces looking out of it ; but there is no scarlet thread stretched across it. Although that house may seem to be on the finest street in all the city, it is really on the edge of a marsh across which sweep most poisonous malarias, and it has a sandy foundation, and its splendour will come down, and great will be the fall of it. A home without God ! A prayerless father ! An undevout mother ! Awful ! awful ! Is that you ? Will you keep on, my brother, on the wrong road, and take your loved ones with you ? May God arrest you before you complete the ruin of those whom you ought to save. You see I talk plainly to you, just as I would have you talk plainly to me. Time is so short that we cannot waste any of it on apologies, or indirections, or circumlocutions. You owe to your children, O father, O mother, more than food, more than clothing, more than shelter—you owe them the example of a prayerful, consecrated, pronounced, out-and-out Christian life. You cannot afford to keep it away from them.

Now, as I stand here, you do not see any hands outstretched towards me, and yet there are hands on my brow and hands on both my shoulders. They are hands of parental benediction. It is quite a good many years ago now since we folded those hands as they began the last sleep on the banks of the Raritan, in the village cemetery ; but those hands are stretched out towards me to-night, and they are just as warm and they are just as gentle as when I sat at their knee at five years of age. And I shall never shake off those hands. I

do not want to. They have helped me so much a thousand times already, and I do not expect to have a trouble or a trial between this and my grave where those hands will not help me. *It was not a very splendid home*, as the world calls it; but we had a family Bible there, well worn by tender perusal; and there was a family altar there, where we knelt morning and night: and there was a holy Sabbath there; and stretched in a straight line or hung in loops or festoons, there was a scarlet line in the window. O the tender, precious, blessed memory of a Christian home! Is that the impression you are making upon your children? When you are dead—and it will not be long before you are—when you are dead, will your child say: “If there ever was a good Christian father, mine was one. If there ever was a good Christian mother, mine was one?” Will they say that after you are dead? Standing some Sabbath night in church preaching the glorious Gospel, as I am trying to do, will they tell the people in that day how there are hands of benediction on their brow and hands of parental benediction on both their shoulders?

Still further: we want this scarlet line of the text drawn *across the window of our prospects*. I see Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brothers, and sisters looking out over Jericho, the city of palm-trees, and across the river, and over at the army invading, and then up to the mountains and the sky. Mind you, this house was on the wall, and I suppose the prospect from the window must have been very wide. Besides that, I do not think that the scarlet line at all interfered with the view of the landscape. The assurance it gave of safety must have added to the beauty of the country. To-night, my friends, we stand or sit in the window of earthly prospects, and we look off towards the hills of heaven and the landscape of eternal beauty. God has opened the window for us, and we look out; but how if we do not get there? If we never get there, better never to have had even this faint glimpse of it. We now only get a dim outline of the inhabitants.

We now only here and there catch a note of the exquisite harmony.

But blessed be God for this scarlet line in the window. That tells me that the blood of Christ bought that home for my soul, and I shall go there when my work is done here. And as I put my hand on that scarlet line, everything in the future brightens. My eyesight gets better, and the robes of the victors are more lustrous, and our loved ones who went away some time ago—they do not stand any more with their backs to us, but their faces are this way and their voice drops through this Sabbath air, saying with all tenderness and sweetness: "Come! Come! Come!" And the child that you think of as only buried—why, there she is, and it is May-day in heaven; and they gather the amaranth, and they pluck the lillies, and they twist them into a garland for her brow, and she is one of the May queens of heaven. O do you think they could see our wavering to-night? It is quite a pleasant night outdoors, pretty clear, not many clouds in the sky, quite starlight. *I wonder if they can see us* from that good land? I think they can. If from this window of earthly prospects we can almost see them, then from their towers of light I think they can fully see us. And so I wave them the glory, and I wave them the joy, and I say: "Have you got through with all your troubles?" and their voices answer: "God hath wiped away all tears from our eyes." I say, "is it as grand up there as you thought it would be?" and the voices answer: Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him." I say: "Do you have any more struggle for bread?" and they answer: "We hunger no more, we thirst no more." And I say: "Have you been out to the cemetery of the golden city?" and they answer: "There is no death here." And I look out through the night heavens, and I say: "Where do you get your light from, and what do you burn in the temple?" and they answer: "There is no night here, and we have no need of candle or of star." And I say: "What book do you sing out of?" and they answer: "The Hallelujah Chorus."

And I say : " In the splendour and magnificence of the city, don't you ever get lost ?" and they answer : " The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leadeth us to living fountains of water." O how near it seems to-night. Their wings—do you not feel them ? Their harps—do you not hear them ? And all that through the window of our earthly prospects, across which stretcheth the scarlet line.

Be that my choice colour for ever. Is it too glaring for you ? Do you like the blue because it reminds you of the sky, or the green because it makes you think of the foliage, or the black because it has in it the shadows of the night ? I take the scarlet because it shall make me think of the price that was paid for my soul. O the blood ! the blood ! the blood of the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. Through it we escape sin. Through it we reach heaven. Will you let it atone for you ? Believe in it and you will live. Refuse it and you die. Will you accept it, or will you pull over on you the eternal calamity of rejecting it !

I see where you are. You are at the cross roads to-night. The next step decides everything. Pause before you take it; but do not pause too long lest the wind of God's justice slam shut the door that has been standing open so long. I hear the thunder of God's artillery. I hear the blast of the trumpet that wakes the dead. Look out ! Look out ! For in that day, and in our closing moment on earth, better than any other defence or barricade, however high or broad or stupendous, will be one little, thin, scarlet thread in the window.

## UNIVERSALISM versus THE BIBLE.

*"Woe to those who sew pillows to the armholes."*—EZEK. xiii. 18.

THE Chaldeans were to capture Jerusalem. God said so. False prophetesses denied it, and to quell the anxieties of the people employed a significant symbol by sewing little pillows under the arms, as much as to say: "Whenever you feel these soft pads at the armsleeve, bethink yourselves all shall be easy and well." But alas for the delusion! Not withstanding all the smoothness of the prophecy, Jerusalem went down in darkness, and fire, and blood.

It is not more certain that you are here this morning, not more certain that that is a window, not more certain that that is a ceiling, not more certain that that is a chair, not more certain that that is a carpet, than it is certain that God has declared destruction to the finally impenitent. Universalism comes out and tries to quell this fear, and wants to sew two pillows under my armsleeves, and wants to sew two pillows under your armsleeves. It shall not do it. God helping me, I shall, this morning, put before my own soul and yours the absorbing facts, and I shall try to snatch the pillow of false peace from under the arms of my auditors, and show you what the perils are, that you may one and all escape them. Suppose there were some real danger ahead, and a man comes into your house, and says; "There is no peril; be at peace!" and another neighbour comes in, and says: "There is a peril, and I know how you can escape it, and I come to tell you;" which is the best friend and the best neighbour? Why, the latter, of course, and I want to act his part to-day.

There are two branches of Universalism: one made of the Restorationists, who, while they admit there may be some punishment in the future world, say it will come to an end, and the soul, through a process of reformation, will come up at last into light, and joy, and peace, and victory; but the vast majority of the Universalists that I have met in the



world believe that there is no future punishment at all, and that, whatever may have been our character in this world, the moment we step across the line into the future world we are completely happy ! People need not tell me that is not Universalism. I take it not from books ; I take it from my own observation and my frequent converse with men who have adopted such theories. However, all Universalists agree in saying that the human race will all eventually be happy.

I shall, this morning, show you that Universalism, under any shape, is unscriptural, unreasonable, *destructive of good morals*, withering to all earnestness in soul saving, and the means of eternal catastrophe to a great many. You say : "Do you think to impose upon us, this morning, by bringing out that old obsolete book, the Bible—a book fit only for grandmothers in their second childhood—and propose to prove anything by that ?" I respond by saying it is most reasonable to expect that God would give this race some kind of a revelation. Well, if God has given a revelation, which is it ? I can now think of only five books that pretend to be Divine revelations ; the Koran, the Shaster, the Zend-Avesta, the Confucius writings, and the Bible. Which of those five books do you prefer to believe a Divine revelation ? The vast majority of the people in the audience say : "Give us the Bible. We take that." Will you stand by it through all this argument of the morning ? "Yes," you say. So will I stand by it. Having made up our minds that this is the Binding Statute in the case, now I solemnly empanel all this audience as a jury for the trial, and I shall proceed to open the cause and to call the witnesses.

To prove that there is such a thing as future punishment, I first call up Dives the lost. Let him be sworn. He was a man of great influence in the world. There is no reason why he should falsify. *Question* : "Dives, is there a perdition ?" *Answer* : "Yes, I have just come from it. It is torment. I can't get anything there to cool my tongue. I want a drop of water but I can't get it. Do send word to my five brothers, that they come not into suffering." Universalism

tries to impeach this witness by saying it is all allegory. Lazarus the saved is the Gentile converted, and Dives, who lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment, is the Jew whose spiritual privileges were cut off in this world! If the Lord Jesus Christ were going to make an allegory He would not make one so imbecile as that. I do not wonder that Universalists have wrenched that passage until they got red in the face, to make it mean something else; but in all ages of the past, and in all ages of the future, the common-sense reading of that Scripture is that Lazarus went to heaven and Dives went to hell, and there was a gulf fixed between them that they could never cross over.

The next witness I call in the case is an old bent-over man. It is Paul the Apostle. *Question*: "Paul, is there a perdition?" *Answer*: "In flaming fire taking vengeance upon those who know not God."

The next witness is a gray-bearded man, clothed in rough hair cloth. It is Isaiah the prophet. *Question*: "Isaiah, is there such a place as perdition?" *Answer*: "Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." The next witness looks as though he may have been very ruddy and beautiful once, but he has lost his beauty and ruddiness through much family trouble. It is David—David the psalmist. *Question*: "David, is there any perdition?" *Answer*: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

The next witness is a very mild and lovable man. It is John the inspired. *Question*: "John, is there any such place as perdition?" *Answer*: "They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Almighty God, poured without mixture in the cup of His indignation." And he stops a moment to take breath, and then he says: "They shall be tormented in fire and brimstone in the presence of the angels." And he stops again to take breath, and then says: "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

*But the most important witness* is to come. He comes with feet blistered by the long way, with sickly looks from sleeplessness and exposure. It is the Son of God, He before

whom we bow down ourselves, not worthy even to kiss His feet, and we say in all reverence : " O Jesus, is there a perdition ?" And He answers : " At the end of the world the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." And after stopping a moment He says : " The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then He stops a moment, and He resumes : " Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

" Enough !" you say. " Isaiah, and David, and Paul, and John, and Christ, are enough." But I will not stop here. I bring you a documentary evidence in the parable of the tares, already referred to in Christ's testimony. You remember in the parable of the tares that some people were thrown into a furnace of fire, while it says the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Do you know how the Universalists have squeezed and distorted that passage ? They have done so until they have made the furnace to be Jerusalem, and those who are to shine forth as the sun in their Father's kingdom are the Jews who did not happen to get killed in the earthly wars—an interpretation that would throw any audience into convulsions of laughter if the awfulness of the theme did not forbid merriment.

You said you would take the Bible for the standard of this trial. Gentlemen of the jury, now I hold you to your word, and I demand that you admit the awful truth that there is a future punishment. " But," says the Restorationists, " we admit there is a future punishment, but it comes to an end." My good friends, when will it come to an end ? I think we shall have to call back some of the witnesses we have sworn in this case. " John, the inspired, what is the duration of that punishment ?" He answers : " The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever.*" How long is that ? I call up Isaiah again. " Isaiah,

how long does this punishment last ?” “Their worm *dieth not*, their fire *is not quenched*.” I call up Paul again. He says : “They shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction in the presence of the Lord.” I ask reverently, again, the Lord Jesus Christ how long this punishment lasts, and He replies : “These shall go into *everlasting* punishment.” And He says again : “Depart, ye cursed, into *everlasting* fire.” I leave it to your common sense what that means, what it must mean.

“But,” say a great many, “you ought to go back to the Greek, and find out that that word everlasting don’t mean what you have been representing it to mean.” So there are persons who could not parse a Greek sentence to *save themselves from being hanged*, and who do not know the difference between *kappa* and *epsilon*, who talk about Greek. I reply, if there had been a great difference between the original and our translation, God would before this have given it to us in plain English so that we who do not know Greek could understand it. You cannot make me believe that God would keep the truth as to our eternal destiny covered in a heap of Greek roots. Do you want to be learned ? Come now and let us all be learned together, and go back and read that passage : “These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*.” The same Greek word in one place is translated “everlasting,” and in the other “eternal ;” and if you bedwarf the word “everlasting,” you must bedwarf the word “eternal.” If you dwindle up the sufferings of the lost, then you must dwindle up the rejoicings of the saved. The same effort which would break a chain would snap a harp-string. The same effort that would up-tear a dungeon would pull down a mansion. The same effort that would stop a groan would choke a hallelujah. “These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*.” If in the one case the sufferings are not to be eternal, in the other case the rejoicings are not to be eternal. But there is nothing that makes me so tired as being learned, and so I come back from the Greek to the plain English translation, good enough for you and good enough

for me. This Bible says that a man who commits the unpardonable sin shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come. What does that mean? Where is your restoration after the grave? "He shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come." You Restorationists, put your hand-screw on that. Try to twist that around, so it shall not mean what God here makes it to mean. Shall neither be forgiven in this world nor in the world that is to come!

O, my friends, either throw overboard your Bible or throw overboard Universalism. I press you to that choice to-day, and you must make it. The whole Bible is against Universalism. Ezekiel is against it. Jeremiah is against it. Isaiah is against it. David is against it. Matthew is against it. Mark is against it. Luke is against it. John is against it. Romans is against it. Corinthians is against it. Thesalonians is against it. Revelation is against it. Now, I do not at this moment say that the Bible is inspired or even a virtuous book; but I do say, if the Bible is right, then Universalism is wrong—awfully wrong, outrageously wrong, infinitely wrong, everlastingly wrong. *Still further: Universalism is unreasonable.* Here is a railroad map. There is a long line of railroads reaching from New York to California. There is a line of railroads reaching from New York to Boston. There is a line of railroads reaching from New York to Philadelphia. They will come out at the same place. "No," you say, "they do not." You tell me that one ends in Boston, and the other in Philadelphia, and the other in San Francisco, I deny it. If you want me to believe that, prove it. "Well," you say, "I can very easily prove it. One railroad goes north, and the other south, and the other goes west." "Oh," I say, "you are right. I admit you are right. I yield the position." In other words, you argue that railroads that go in opposite directions cannot come out at the same place. Now, here are two roads for the soul's travel. The one is faith in Christ, helpful services to others, a struggle for consecration, and doing better all the way up. That is one road. Howard went that road. Wilberforce went that road.

Paul went that road. Ten thousand times ten thousand went that road. Here is the other road. It starts with the rejection of Jesus Christ. It keeps on in sin and in rebellion against God all the way through. Robespierre went on that road. Nero went on that road. All the bad people that have ever lived and died have gone on that road, and the two roads being in opposite directions, they must come out at opposite termini. Nothing but moral insanity can make you think any differently. By inexorable geometry, by common sense, by a calculation plainer than that twice three are six, you come to the conclusion that opposite directions of travel must bring opposite eternal destinies.

“But,” say the Restorationists, “the punishment in the lost world, which we admit, is reformatory, and the souls that go there will gradually struggle up into thorough felicity.” Absurdity infinite! Two Sabbaths ago, while I stood in this place, talking, among other things, about the outrages of the Raymond-street Jail—outrages which, I have been informed by prominent official authority in this city, I did not more than half state—at that very moment there was a girl of fifteen years in that Raymond-street Jail imploring that she might be in a cell alone. She said: “These wretches around here are telling me filthy stories all the time. I can’t stand it here. I want to be alone.” She knew what every one knows, that bad associations are not reformatory. And yet you try to make me believe that in that world, where all the desperadoes and abandoned have gone, the soul is going to get better. Will the thieves make it honest? Will the libertines make it pure? Will the blasphemers make it holy? *The perdition of ungodly men* is a very poor reform school. By inevitable law you know that bad society makes people worse, and that Herod on earth was mild and beautiful compared with what he is now, and that the men who died on the scaffold for their crimes were benefactors and philanthropist compared with their present character. Worse, and getting worse. But if from that world they struggle out—have any of them got out yet?—will Robespierre be in heaven in time to welcome the grand-

children of the men he butchered? Will James Fisk be in heaven in time to welcome the widows and orphans whose property he swamped in a Wall-street panic? O, what a delicious, savory place heaven would be if the wretches who went down into their graves unwashed got there. You have a child in heaven, you have a sister in heaven—do you think of them as being in that kind of society?

If, as the great majority of the Universalists argue, there is hell, tell me then where the people of Sodom and Gomorrah went? If all is fair beyond the line of this world, irrespective of our character here, then the men who stole Charlie Ross, and who were shot for their crimes, are better off to-day than the parents who sit, frenzied with grief, waiting for the pattering of the feet of the little captive; then Ananias was better off than Sapphira, for he lied first, and so beat his wife three or four minutes into glory. *There is a hell.* Your common sense declares it.

Still further: Universalism is willingly or unwillingly, the *abettor of bad morals.* It is the high-priest of suicide. How many people there have been who have got tired of their troubles, and said; "Here I must get out of these troubles. I will just take my own life, then I will be free. There is nothing between me and glory but a phial of laudanum or a revolver;" and so he swallowed the laudanum or cracked the revolver, and that has been the end of it. He steps right over into glory. He has been taught so. You know that all those who in their right mind commit suicide—for I speak not of those who are deranged and take their own lives, they are not responsible for anything they do—but I say that the majority of those who in their seeming right mind take their own lives, leave a letter on the table, saying: "Meet me in heaven." They are going right over. O, if that doctrine be true, why do not some of you who have been struggling with overwhelming troubles put an end to them, and buy an overdose of *belladonna* on your way home, or this afternoon leap from the top of your house and get straight into glory?

"For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin ?”

Why does he not do it ! It is because the man knows that, if in his sane moments he takes his own life, *he drops into ruin*. A man near Utica, New York, sent for his pastor, a Universalist minister, and said to him : “ If I should die now would I go to heaven ?” “ Most certainly,” the minister replied. “ You think there is no possible doubt about it ?” “ None at all, sir.” “ Well,” said the man, “ I have had trouble enough, now I am going away from it. I am going to leave the world, and I am going now ; and he drew a pistol and put it to his own temple, when the minister clutched his arm and said : “ Stop ! stop ! there may be a hell.” Then the man turned to the minister and said : “ You preach what you don’t believe. You are a deceiver.” If there be a man in this house to-day who has at any time had the idea of taking his own life, let me persuade you not to sit down and write : “ Meet me in heaven ;” you will not go there. The fact that there is a perdition is the mightiest moral restraint that the world has ever felt. When you try to upset this doctrine of a future place of punishment you are abetting crime. Universalist Churches in our cities are surrounded by so many Churches of other kinds that you cannot see their full influence ; but in the New England villages, or the villages at the far West, where there is only one Church, and that a Universalist Church, or where the Universalist Church is dominant over all others—in such villages, inevitably and always, you find profane swearing, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, lust, and every form of abomination, rampant. Give the doctrine of Universalism full swing in any village, or in any city, and it consumes it—financially, morally, and spiritually. I have seen its effects again and again in the villages at the West, where it left not one green thing. I tell you that doctrine is the foe of God and man ; and, come fair or foul, I hold it up in the presence of this audience for your denunciation. “ Thou shalt not surely die,” was the first plaister that the devil ever spread ; but he spread it so large there is enough to salve the consciences of ages,



Still further: Universalism is *withering to all earnestness in soul-saving*. What is the matter with a great many of the Protestant Churches to-day? They have this disease of Universalism in a milder form. They adopt the Heidelberg Catechism or the Westminster Assembly, or they sit in Methodist conference, or in Baptist associations; but there is so much Universalism in the air, they are cowed down. They dare not preach a rugged Gospel. They say "heaven" with a shout, but *they say "hell" with a whisper*, so that the people do not know exactly what they did say, and the Calvinists think they said "hell," and the restorationists think they said "bell," and the merchants think they said "sell," and so they are all satisfied. O, I abhor this namby-pambyism in religion. What is the reason we do not have any more conversions in our Churches? It is because we do not sufficiently preach rewards and punishments. We tell the righteous it shall be well with them; but not in the same emphasis do we tell the wicked it shall be ill with them. Why did Samuel Davis and Nettleton, and Baxter, and the Wesleys, and Whitfield, and Osborne, and Daniel Baker count the conversions under their ministry by tens and tens of thousands! It was because their sermons rang with the doxologies of the saved, and crackled with the fires of the lost. Did you ever hear of a great awakening in a Universalist Church? Never. What would they get wakened about? They are all safe, always have been safe, always will be. What is the use of the jailor's rushing through between the falling walls of the prison, crying: "What must I do to be saved?" He was safe before the prison began to rock. What is the use of the sinking man's crying: "Lord, save; I perish?" Stop your noise. The water is not up to your chin! What is the use of making such a fuss about three thousand souls saved on the day of Pentecost? They were as saved before as they were after. What did Paul mean when he feared becoming a cast-away? Cast-away on what coast? The coast of everlasting love? Why are the wicked in the last day represented as crying out: "Rocks and mountains fall on us, and hide us from the face of the Lamb?" No danger! O,

if we want to bring souls to Jesus Christ, men and women of God, we must tell the whole truth, and hide none of it. What means that picture, in some of the old books, representing Martin Luther almost bent double by a paroxysm of earnestness while he is preaching about men's souls? What meant Thomas Chalmers, standing in his Edinburgh pulpit, warning people to flee from the wrath to come until he actually foamed at the mouth? Why did John Summerfield and Robert McCheyne preach themselves so early in the grave? Why was it that when Mr. Venn described the perils of an immortal soul, history tells us the audience "dropped like slacked lime?" Why was Edward Payson so anxious for the salvation of men that his doctors said his body was in a continuous fever? O, my brethren, what we in the ministry most want is to *be aroused, convicted, melted*, re-baptized, surcharged with the power of the Lord God Almighty. Swinich said a thing that made me quake body, mind, and soul, when I first read it. He said: "It is an awful thing to fall into a hell from under a pulpit; but what an awful thing to fall into hell *out of a pulpit.*" O, that God would give us grace to see the infinite sham of modern Universalism, and give us wisdom to stop sewing pillows under the armsleeves. O, my soul, wake up! Ministers of Jesus Christ, in the United States, of Great Britain, wake up! There *is* a hell, and it is our place to keep people out of it.

Still further: Universalism has ruined for eternity a great many souls. East-south-east of Boston there is a lighthouse called Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. It was with great difficulty that the Government, in 1857, put down but four stones, and in 1858 they put down but six layers of stone; but after awhile the work was accomplished. It is very important that there should be a lighthouse there. When the wind is blowing from the north-east, and ships are coming on toward Boston Harbour, if they happen to miss the harbour they go on that rock but for the lighthouse. I see one of the freight line of the Cunarders coming on towards Boston harbour. The wind is north-east. There are a hundred passengers on board the vessel. I slyly get into Minot's Ledge Lighthouse

I go up the winding stairs until I come to the top, and with a hammer I break the glass, and I blow out the light. The captain of the Cunarder is pacing the deck, not knowing exactly what to do. "The wind is from the north-east," he says. "It is getting pretty late to go in to-night, but we are not anywhere near Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. I am a little confused about the lights along the coast, but I think I will try it." Hark! There is a grating on the bottom of the steamer. There is a quiver from stem to stern. Then there is a keeling over, and a *crash!* All lost! All lost! Whose fault was it? The captain's? No. Never a braver man walked the deck. Was it the 'crew's? No. They were faithful fellows. Whose fault? *Mine*, for I blew out the light. Now, let me say that every minister of the Gospel and every Christian man is a lighthouse-keeper. Upon him is a greater responsibility than ever rested upon the man who keeps the Bell Rock Light-house, off Scotland, or the Barne-gat, or Hatteras Lighthouse. God has kindled a great illumination on all the rocks of danger, saying: "Stand off! Yonder is your harbour. Yonder is your wharf. Yonder are your friends, waiting to greet you. Rocks here—nothing but rocks. Stand off!" What does Universalism do? It comes up, and blows out the light. It says: "Sail on. There are no rocks for immortal shipwreck. Sail on. All is well. All is well." O, what a responsibility. I would rather be the engineer of a rail-train with four or five hundred passengers coming on when the drawbridge is off, and know it, and yet not stop, than a Universalist minister taking a whole Church with him off the brink, giving them no warning, blowing no trumpet, never crying out; "The rocks! The rocks!" Universalism is *a deception as high as heaven* and deep as hell, and if it be let alone, it will ruin half the race. But it is not going to be let alone. The Church of God, as it rises up to its mission, will cry the alarm to the people, and there will go up prayer to God, so that He will flash upon the nations these tremendous realities.

If I live forty years to preach, and I expect to preach forty years longer, I want to spend the whole time in setting before

men the two destinies of eternal life and eternal darkness. But if I should not live as long as that, and if this should be the last sermon I shall ever preach, as it may be, then I want you to take this as my dying testimony : there is a heaven—there is a hell. Accept of Christ and you reach the one ; reject Him, and you drop headlong into the other.

But it is time for this jury to render their verdict. I have shown you that Universalism is unscriptural ; unreasonable ; that it is destructive to good morals ; that it is withering to all earnestness in saving souls ; that it is the eternal discomfiture of a great many people. In courts of law, when the jury come in, they stand and render their verdict, the foreman giving the verdict, and the clerk of the court writing it down ; but in this religious assemblage you must render the verdict in silence, seated, so far as you have room to be seated, God listening and angels recording.

If what I have said this morning is true, what are you going to do about it ? What step will you take ? My soul has been wrung with the awfulness of this theme. If God had not helped me, I should have fallen down between my chair and your pew ; but I did not dare to hold back the theme. As I expect to meet my Maker, and my Judge, I did not dare to hide any of the truth ; but I was all the time sustained with the idea that I could, before I got through, tell you how to get off from your peril ; and that if I pointed you to the flaming sword, it was only to show you a refuge ; and if I showed you a chasm it was only to show you a bridge over it. The Lord Jesus to-day breaks through all obstacles, and runs against the opposing spears, and tramples on the sharpened spikes, and springs into the midst of this assembly, and throws His arms around you, and begs you to be saved. Will you shake Him off ? Will you hurl Him on his back ? Will you trample on Him, putting one foot on His holy heart and the other on His mangled brow, and *from the corpse of a murdered Christ* will you leap into woe ? Stop ! Stop ! Stop ! Jesus came to save you. By the tears that ran down His scarred cheek, by the blood that oozed from His whipped back, by the sweat of agony that stood out in beads upon His

brow, by the dying groan which broke the heart of the rocks and made the sun faint dead away in the heavens—I beg you to accept of the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. O, fling not away your immortal soul when so much has been done to ransom it. When you may be saved, why will you be lost? Some one suggested to me yesterday that there were some persons who consoled themselves by saying: “If I am to be lost, there will be a great many others with me, so I won't care so much.” O, what a poor philosophy! When the Lake Shore railroad cars went off the track a year or two ago, and a hundred and fifty people were crushed, was it any mitigation of the sorrow that there were a hundred and fifty instead of one man? When three years ago, five hundred miles off Newfoundland, we thought our ship was making the last plunge, did the screams of seven hundred frenzied passengers mitigate the horrors of that night? O, no. If there is any man determined to be lost, better be lost alone than in a crowd; their sorrow added to your sorrow, their disaster added to your disaster. I cannot believe that there are any in this house who will be such fools as to reject the only salvation offered them this day in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Infinite Redeemer. I do not know whether my cheek turns pale at the thought; but I do know that my heart quakes as I cry out with Isaiah: “Who among us can dwell in devouring fire? Who of us can lie down in eternal burnings?” Men and women; there is only one name given under heaven among men, whereby you may be saved, and that is Jesus. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Depend upon it, if you are lost it will not be God's fault. He has done everything to save you. It will not be Christ's fault. He has pleaded with blood-red earnestness for your salvation. It will not be the Holy Spirit's fault. He has this day stirred and entreated you mightily. If you are lost it will be your own fault. You will forge your own chains. You will write your own death-warrant. You will bolt and bar the door of heaven, and doubly bolt it, and doubly bar against your own

soul, and you might as well this day, if that is your determination, make your valedictory, saying ; “ Farewell, O Church of God ! I don’t want the comfort of your sacraments. Farewell, O Holy Bible ! I don’t want your illumination. Farewell, O Holy Ghost ! bother me no more about the great future. Farewell, O heaven ! I don’t want to hear thy clapping cymbals, nor to mingle in thy hallelujahs. Farewell, O my glorified kindred—father, mother, sister, brother, and my dear children who broke my heart when they went away from me. Farewell ! Keep no longer a seat for me by your side at the heavenly banquet. I am not coming. I take another road. I make another choice. Across these spaces I fling this kiss of everlasting separation. Good-bye, good-bye. This is my eternal valedictory !”

“ There is a death whose pang  
Outlasts the fleeting breath ;  
O, what eternal horrors hang  
Around the second death !

“ Lord God of truth and grace,  
Teach us that death to shun :  
Lest we be banished from Thy face,  
And evermore undone.”

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## THE LAMP.

“ *Thy word is a lamp.*”—PSALM cxix. 105.

FROM six o'clock last evening until six o'clock this morning darkness rested on our part of the earth, and every few hours there rolls a wave of natural night all over the nations. With lamps, and chandeliers, and torches, and lanterns, we try to drive out the night from houses and churches, and stores, and shops. He who invents a new kind of light invents his own fortune and the fortune of his children. But there is a night of sin, and suffering, and shame, which needs

another kind of illumination. Ancient philosophy made a lamp, but it was a dead failure, and the people kept crying out : "Give us a light ! give us a light !" After awhile prophet, and evangelist, and apostle made a lamp. A coal from heaven struck it into a blaze, and uncounted multitudes of people with an open Bible before them cry out in rapture and in love : "Thy word is a lamp."

When, a few years ago, there was a great accident in Hartley Colliery, England, and two hundred persons lost their lives, the Queen telegraphed down to the scene of disaster ; "Can we give you any help ? Will you be able to get the men out ? How many are lost ? Give my sympathy to all the bereft." What consolation it was to the families who stood amid the consternation and the terror, that the throne of England throbbed in sympathy with their disaster ! But I have to tell you to-day a more glorious truth, and that is, from the throne of God the King of heaven and earth telegraphs down through this Bible into the dungeons of our sin and suffering a message of pardon, of love, of sympathy, of comfort, of eternal life. Like some lighthouse on high promontory, blessed by ships passing through darkness and storm, so on the heights of God's love and grace there flames forth a light upon the great sea of man's wretchedness and of God's providence, so that angels on their way earthward, and ransomed spirits on their way heavenward, and devils on their way hellward, pass through its flash, crying : "*Thy word is a lamp.*"

You have four or five Bibles in your house—perhaps ten, perhaps twenty. They are such common property you do not appreciate them. If you had only one Bible, and for that you paid five hundred dollars—the price that was paid in olden time for a copy of the Scriptures—then you would more thoroughly appreciate it. I was once a colporteur for a few months in a vacation, and I came into a home of destitution. I saw a woman there eighty-five years of age, and I said to her : "May I give you a Bible ?" "O," she replied : "a Bible would be of no use to me. I can't see to read. I used to read, but for twenty years I haven't been able to read a

word." I pulled out of my satchel one of the copies of the Psalms of David and the New Testament in great, large, round type, and I said : "Now put on your spectacles and see if you can't read this." She wiped her spectacles and put them on. "O, yes" she said : "Why I can see after all. I am very thankful to you. Why, yes, I see it : 'I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my'—O, yes, I can read it, I can read it." I wish that God to-day would make the Bible as new and fresh to us as it was to her !

I want to show you that the Bible is a lamp—a parlour lamp, a street lamp, a store lamp, a church lamp, a sepulchral lamp.

In parlours all aflash with gaslight, and gleaming mirror, and blazing chandelier, and candelabra, there may be Egyptian darkness ; while in some plain room, which a frugal hand has spread with hospitality and refinement, this one Lamp may cast a glow that makes it a fit place for heavenly coronations. We invoke no shadows to fall upon the hilarities of life. We would not have every song a dirge, and every picture a martyrdom, and every step a funeral pace. God's lamp hung in the parlour would chill no joy, would rend no harmony, would check no innocent laughter. On the contrary, it would bring out brighter colours in the picture ; it would expose new gracefulness in the curtains ; it would unroll new wreaths from the carpet ; it would strike new music from the harp ; it would throw new polish into the manners ; it would kindle with light borrowed from the very throne of God all the refinements of society. O, that the Christ who was born in a barn would come to our parlour ! We need His hand to sift the parlour music. We need His taste to assort the parlour literature. We need His voice to conduct the parlour conversation. We are apt to think of religion as being a rude, blundering thing, not fit to put its foot upon Axminster, or its clownish hands on beautiful adornments, or lift its voice amid the artistic and refined ; so, while we have Jesus in the nursery when we teach our children to pray, and Jesus in the dining-hall when we ask His blessing upon our food, and Jesus in the sitting-room when we have family



prayers, it is a simple fact that from ten thousand Christian homes in this country Christ is from one end of the year to the other shut out of the parlour. O, that housekeepers understood that the grace of God is the greatest accomplishment, and that no seat is too luxuriant for religion to sit in, and no arch too grand for religion to walk under, and no circle *too brilliant for religion* to move in. If Christianity at last is to walk up the streets of heaven with seraphim and archangel, it is good enough to go anywhere where you go or where I shall go. To purify the heart, to cleanse the life, to culture the taste, to expurgate all hypocrisy, and falsehood, and sham, we must have the Bible in the parlour. When Christian people come to spend an evening, they talk about the weather, and they talk about the scandal, and they talk about the crops, and they talk about the markets; but they do not talk about God, and Christ, and heaven. The thing we most want to-day in all our parlours is the lamp of the Bible.

Still further: the Bible is the *street lamp*. When night comes down on the city, crime goes forth to its worst achievements. Not only to show honest citizens where to walk, but to hinder the burglar, and assassin, and highwayman, and pickpocket, we must have artificial lights all over the city. I remember what consternation there was in Philadelphia when one night the gasworks was out of order and the whole city sat in darkness. Between eleven o'clock at night and three o'clock in the morning, in the dark and unlighted places of the town, crime has its holiday. If the lamplighter ceased his work for the week, the town would rot. But there is a darkness beyond all power of gaslight. What is the use of police-station, and almshouse, and watchman's club, if there be no moral and religious influence to sanction the law, and to purify the executive, and to hang over legal enactment the fear of God and an enlightened public opinion. When in a city crime runs rampant, and virtue is at a discount, and jails are full, and churches are empty, and the nights are hideous with the howl and the whoop of drunkards, and the saloons boil over with scum, and public officials think more of a bribe

than they do of their own conscience, and when great tides of wickedness set down the streets—the first want of such a city as that is the street lamp of the Bible. Did you ever stand in a church tower and look down upon a city at night? It is overwhelming. But you feel that beneath all that brilliancy of gaslight there is a surging sea of want, and suffering, and woe. History says that Dionysius had a great cave built for his prisoners. He was a cruel man, and he used to go to the top of the cave, put his ear to the opening and listen, and the groans and the sighings of the prisoners came up into his ear and *made music for him*. God stands at the head of our world, but for a different purpose, and with a different heart. He puts His ear to the dungeon, and every sigh comes up, stirring His sympathies, and every groan wounding His heart; and He listens and listens all night long. There is but one lamp that can throw light into the dungeon where the prisoner groans, into the hovel where the beggar pines, into the cellar where the drunkard wallows, into the alley where the libertine putrefies, into the madhouse where the maniac raves. Travellers in Africa tell us that they have seen serpents—a vast number of them—coiled together, and piled up in horrid fold above horrid fold; and then they would hear hundreds of them hissing at once, and the sight and the sound was appalling and unbearable. But if you should take the wickedness of our best of cities, and bring it all together in one place, and pile it up fold upon fold, it would be a hissing horror and ghastliness that no human eye could look at without being blasted, and no human ear could hear without being stunned.

Now, how will all these scenes of iniquity in our cities be overcome? They will not be overcome until the Church, and the school, and a Christian printing-press kindle all around about us God's street lamp of the Bible. Send the Bible down that filthy alley, if you would have it cleansed. Send it against those decanters, if you would have them smashed. Send it against those chains, if you would have them broken. Send it through all the ignorance of the city, if you would have it illumined as by a flash from heaven's

morning. The Bible can do it—will do it. Gather all the ignorance and the wickedness, and the vice of our cities in one great pile—Alps above Alps, Pyrenees above Pyrenees, Himalaya above Himalaya—and then give one little New Testament full swing against the side of that mountain, and down it would come, Alps after Alps, Pyrenees after Pyrenees, Himalaya after Himalaya. What is the difference between New York and Pekin? What is the difference between London and Madras? What is the difference between Edinburgh and Canton? No difference, save that which the Bible makes. O, city missionary; O, philanthropist; O, Christian, go everywhere, and kindle up these great street lamps of the Gospel; and our city, purified and cleansed, will proclaim what the Psalmist so long ago declared: “Thy Word is a lamp.”

I know there are people who suppose that the vice of our cities is going to conquer the virtue of the people. I *do not believe it*. Let error and vice run, if you only let truth run along with them. Urged on by sceptic's shout, and transcendentalist's spur, let error run! God's angels of wrath are in hot pursuit, and quicker than eagle's beak clutcheth out a hawk's heart, God's vengeance will tear it to pieces. Let it run, if you only let God's Word run along with it.

Still further: the Bible is the best *store lamp*. Blessed is the merchant who under its glow reads his ledger, and transacts his business, and pockets his gains, and suffers his losses. It may be well to have a fine sky-light, to have a magnificent glass show-window, by night to have bronzed brackets spouting fire in a very palace of merchandize; but if you have not this eternal lamp you had better quit keeping store. What is the reason so many who started in merchandize, with good principles, and fair prospects, and honourable intentions, have become gamblers, and defrauders, and knaves, and desperadoes, and liars, and thieves? They did not have the right kind of a store lamp. Why is it, in our day, merchandize is smitten with uncertainty, and three-fourths of the business of our great cities is only one huge species of gambling, and society is upturned by false assignments, and two-

third acts, and repudiations, and imperilled trust-funds, and fraudulent certificates of stock, and wild schemes in railroads without any track, and banks without any capital, and cities without any houses, and joint-stock companies without any conscience? And why are ten thousand of our business men ridden with a night-mare enough to crush Hercules and Prometheus? It is the want of a right kind of store lamp. What ruined the merchant princes of Tyre—that great city of fairs, and bazaars, and palaces; her vessels of trade with cedar masts, and embroidered sails, and ivory benches, driven by fierce blasts on Northern waters, and then dropping down on glassy Indian seas; bringing wine from Helbon, and chariot cloths from Dedan, and gold and spices from Rahmah, and emerald and agate from Syria; her waters foaming with innumerable keels; her store-houses bursting with the treasures of all nations—that queen of cities, on a throne of ivory and ebony, under a crown of gold, and pearl, and diamond, and carbuncle, and chrysopras? The want of a right kind of store lamp. If the principles of religion had ruled in her trade, do you suppose that dry rot would have sunk the ships, and that vermin would have eaten up her robes, and that God's mills would have ground up the agate, and that fishermen would dry their nets on the rocks which once were aquake with the roar and tread of a great metropolis? *O, what thrones have fallen*, what monuments have crumbled, what fleets have sunk, what statues have been defaced, what barbarisms have been created, what civilization retarded, what nations damned, all for the want of the right kind of a store lamp. Men of business! take your Bibles with you tomorrow morning. Place them in your store or shop. Do not be ashamed if anybody at noon finds you reading the Scriptures. It is safe always to do business by its teachings. There was a young man in a store in Boston, standing behind the counter, selling goods. A gentleman came in, and asked for some Middlesex cloths. "O," said the young man, "we haven't any Middlesex cloths, but here is something just as good." "No," replied the gentleman, "I don't want them;" and he passed out. The head of the firm came down

to the young man, and said ; "What did that man want ?" "He wanted Middlesex cloths," replied the young man. "Why didn't you tell him they were Middlesex cloths ?" "Because they were not, sir." "Then you can take your hat, and leave." The young man took his hat, and left. He went into merchandize in Cincinnati, went on up till he became a merchant prince, and not more eminent for wealth than for piety. God will never let a young man suffer for doing right. Full justice may not be done him in this world ; but in the last day, before an assembled universe, it will be found out whether or not they were Middlesex cloths.

Still further : the Bible is the best *church lamp*. I care not how many chandeliers there may be in a church, how many brilliant lights there may be, the Word of God is the best church lamp. O, is there anything more beautiful than an audience gathered on the Sabbath for Christian worship ? There may be no dazzle of theatric assemblage, there may be no glitter of foot-lights, there may be no allegoric images blossoming from pit to dome ; but there is something in the place and in the occasion that makes it supernatural. In the light of this lamp I see your faces kindle with great joy. Glorious church lamp, this Bible. Luther found it in the cloister at Erfurt, and he lifted it until the monasteries and cathedrals of Germany, and Italy, and France, and England, and the world saw its illumination. It shone under the breast-plate of sacerdotal authority ; and in the mosques of Turkey, and in the pagodas of India, and in the ice huts of Greenland, and in the mud hovels of Africa, and in the temples of China, God's regenerated children, in musical Tamil, and sweet Italian, and nasal Chinese, and harsh Choctaw, cried out : "Thy Word is a lamp." It throws its light on the pulpit, making a bulwark of truth ; on the baptismal cup, until its waters *glitter like the crystals of heaven*. It strikes penitence into the prayers and gladness into the thanksgiving. It changes into a church John Bunyan's prison, and Covenanter's cave, and Calvin's castle, and Huss's stake, and Hugh McKail's scaffold of martyrdom. Zwinglius carried it into Switzerland, and John Wickfield

into England, and John Knox into Scotland, and Jehudi Ashman into Africa. Begone ye scoffers ! Down to the lowest pit, ye emissaries of darkness ! for by the throne of an omnipotent judgment I declare it that all iniquity shall fall, and all bondage be broken, and all wounds be healed, and all darkness be dispelled, when God's truth shall go forth "as a lamp that burneth." We want no sappers or miners to level the wall ; we want no axemen or engineers to prepare the way ; we want no glittering steel, or booming gun, or howling Hotchkiss shell to get us the victory, for the mountains are full of horses and chariots of fire. Hallelujah ! for the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not wonder that the stranger who sat the other day beside me in the rail-car reading his Bible, after he had concluded his reading, closed it, and kissed it, and put it in his pocket. There have been times when you did the same. When all else failed you, it was so bright, it was so loving, it was so sympathetic a book that you too kissed it.

Still further : the Bible is a *sepulchral lamp*. You know that the ancient Egyptians used to keep lights burning in the tombs of their dead. These lights were kept up for scores, even hundreds of years. Friends would come from generation to generation and put oil in the lamps, and it was considered a disaster if those lamps went out. You and I will some day go down into the house of the dead. Some have looked upon it as an unknown land, and when they have thought of it, their knees have knocked together and their hearts fainted. There were whole generations of men that had no comfort about death, no view of the eternal world, and whenever they brought their friends and put them away into the dust, they said, without any alleviation : "This is horrid, this is horrid." And it was. The grave is *the deepest, ghastliest pit* that a man ever looks in, unless the lamp of God's word flashes into it. For whole ages men thought that the sepulchre was a den where a great monster gorged himself on human carcasses. "I will put an end to that," said Jesus of Nazareth : "I with mine own voice go down and make darkness flee ;" and

as He stepped out from the gate of heaven, all the graveyards of earth cried: "Come! Come!" And He came down, bringing a great many beautiful lights, and above this babe's grave He hung a light, and over this mother's tomb He hung a light, and over this wife's grave He hung a light, and over all the sleeping-places of the Christian dead He hung a light. Then He uttered His voice, and it ran along under the ground from city to city, and along under the sea from continent to continent, until mausoleum, and sarcophagus, and sepulchre throbbled with the joy—"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And now if Greenwood, and Laurel Hill, and Mount Auburn could break their beautiful silence and should speak, their lips of bronze and granite would break forth in the strains of my text: "Thy word is a lamp."

O ye bruised souls! O ye who have been cutting yourselves among the tombs! O ye who have been sowing seed for the resurrection day! O ye of the broken heart! I come out to-day and put in your hand this glorious Gospel lamp. It will throw a glow of consolation over your bereft spirit. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the the morning." "They that sow in tears will reap in joy." Rabbi Mier went of from home to be gone for a few days, and left two beautiful boys. While he was gone the two lads died. Rabbi Mier returned, not knowing that anything had happened. His Christian wife knew he would be overcome with grief, and she met him at the door and said to him: "My husband, I once had two beautiful jewels loaned to me. I had them for a little while. And do you know, while you were gone the owner came for them. Ought I to have given them?" "Of course," said Rabbi Mier: "you ought to have given them up, you say they were only loaned." Then she called her husband to the side-room and removed the cloth that covered the dead children. After Rabbi Mier had for a few moments given way to his grief, he rose up and said: "Now *I know what you meant* by the borrowed jewels. 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.'" And so Rabbi Mier was comforted.

Let this sepulchral light gild all the graves of your dead. May this lamp of the text be set in all your parlours, in all your streets, in all your stores, in all your churches, in all your sepulchres ! Amen.

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## UNITARIANISM *versus* THE BIBLE

*"Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."*—ROMANS ix. 5.

PAUL was a reckless man in always telling the whole truth ; it mattered not who it hit or what theological system it upset. In this one sentence he makes a world of trouble for all Arians and Socinians, and gives a cud for scepticism to chew on for the next thousand years. We must proceed skilfully to twist this passage of Scripture, or we shall have to admit the Deity of Jesus Christ. I roll up my sleeves for the work, and begin by saying, perhaps this is a wrong version. No, all the versions agree—Syriac, Ethiopic, Latin, Arabic. Perhaps this word God means a being of great power, but not the Deity. It is God "over all." But perhaps this word God refers to the first person of the Trinity—God the Father. No ; it is "*Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*" Whichever way I take it, and when I turn it upside down, and when I try to read it in every possible shape, I am compelled to leave it as all have been compelled to leave it who have gone before me, an incontrovertible proof of the eternal and magnificent Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. "*Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*"

About the differences between the evangelical denominations of Christians, I have no concern. If I could by the turning over of my hand decide whether finally all the world shall be Methodists, or Baptists, or Episcopalians, or Congregationalists, or Presbyterians, I would not turn over my



hand ; but between Unitarianism, which disbelieves the deity of Christ, and Trinitarianism, which argues His Divine nature, there is a difference as wide as eternity. If Christ be not a God, then we are base idolators. If Christ be God, then those who deny it are blasphemers. To that Christological question we come this morning, and may God help us to do right in a question where mistake is infinite.

I suppose we are all willing to take the Bible as our standard. It requires as much faith to be an infidel as to be a Christian ; but it is faith in a different direction. The Christian believes in the statements of Moses and Isaiah, and David, and Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and Paul. The infidel believes in the statement of the Freethinkers. We have faith in one class of men ; they have faith in another class of men. But as I suppose the vast majority of the people in the audience this morning are willing to take the Bible as their guide in morals and religion, I shall make this book my starting point.

You may be aware that the two great generals who have marshalled the largest army of Unitarian troops are Strauss and Renan. The multitudes of the slain under them will never be counted until the day when the archangel sounds *the roll call of the resurrection*. These men, and all men who have sympathy with them, begin by attacking the fortress of the miracles. They know that when once they have captured that fortress, Christianity must surrender. The great German exegete says that all the miracles are myths. The great French exegete says that all the miracles are legends. They must somehow or other explain away everything supernatural in the Bible—everything supernatural in the life of Christ—though to accomplish that they must go up the greatest absurdity. They prefer the miracles of human nonsense rather than the grand miracles of Jesus Christ. They say, for instance, that the miraculous birth of Christ was a myth, just as it is a fanciful idea that Romulus was born of Rhea Sylvia and the god Mars. They say that Christ did not feed five thousand with a few loaves of bread ; that is only a myth which got mixed up with the distribution of

twenty loaves among a hundred people by Elisha. They say Christ did not turn the water into wine; that was only an improvement on the old Egyptian plague by which water was turned into blood. They say no star pointed down to the manger where Jesus laid; that was only the flash of passing lantern. They say that Christ's sweating drops of blood in Gethsemane was not very astonishing, for He had been exposed to the night, and had been taken suddenly physically ill. They say no tongues of fire sat on the heads of the disciples at the Pentecost; it was only a great thunder-storm, and the air was full of electricity, and it snapped and flew all around about the heads of the disciples. They say that Mary and Martha, and Lazarus, and Christ made up their minds it was necessary to get up an excitement in order to forward their religion, and so they resolved to play funeral, and Lazarus consented to be the corpse, and Mary and Martha consented to be mourners, and Christ consented to be the chief operator. I, of course, put it in my own words, but state accurately their meaning. They say that the four Gospels are spurious, written by superstitious or lying men, and that they were backed up by people who were to die and actually did die for a thing they did not believe. Now I take back the limited remark I made a moment ago, and say that it requires a thousandfold more credulity and faith to be an infidel than to be a Christian, and that if Christianity demands that the whale swallow Jonah, then scepticism demands that Jonah swallow the whale.

I propose this morning to show you, so far as the Lord may help me, that Jesus Christ is God. I shall prove it, first, from what inspired men say of Him; then from what He said of Himself; then from His wonderful achievements. "*Get a good fat text to start with,*" said Dr. Dudlow, our grand old theological professor. If I never had such a text before, I have one this morning: "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Not over Solomon's throne; not higher than David's throne; not higher than Cæsar's; not higher than the Henrys', than the Fredericks', than the Louis', than Napoleon's, than Victoria's. O, yes.

Gather all those thrones and pile them up, and my text over-spans them as easily as a rainbow spans the mountain-top. "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

The Bible says : "all things were made by Him." Stop ! Does not that prove too much ? He did not make the Mediterranean, did He ? not Mount Lebanon ? nor the Alps ? not Mount Washington ? not the earth ? not the stars ? not the universe ? Yes, "all things were made by Him." And lest we should be so stupid as not to understand it, the apostle concludes by saying : "Without Him was not anything made that was made." Why, then, He must have been a God.

The Bible says : "At the name of Jesus Christ every knee shall bow, of things on earth, and things in heaven." See all heaven coming down on their knees—martyrs on their knees, apostles on their knees, confessors on their knees, the archangel on his knees. Before whom ? A man ? No, a God.

The Bible goes on to say that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Malayan, Bornesian, Mexican, Persian, Italian, German, Spanish, French, English—every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Why, He must be a God. The Bible says : "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Men change ; the body changes entirely in seven years, the mind changes, the heart changes ; but "Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He must be a God.

Philosophers say that it is gravitation, the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which keep the worlds from clashing and from demolition ; but Paul says that Christ's arm is the axle on which everything turns, and that His hand is the socket in which everything is set ; "*upholding*, holding all things by the word of His power." He must be a God.

But I go on in the next place and see what Christ said of Himself. Every person ought to know more about himself than anybody else does. If I ask you where you were born, and you say : "I was born in Chester, England, or Dublin, or

New Orleans." I would believe you. Why? Because you ought to know—it is a matter that pertains to yourself. If I ask you whether you can lift three or four hundred pounds, and you said yes, I would believe you. You ought to know. If I ask you how much money you have—a hundred or a hundred thousand dollars—and you tell me, I believe you, because you, being an honest man, will tell me truth. Now I ask if Christ ought not to know whether or not He is God? I ask his age. He says, in so many words: "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" Abraham had been dead two thousand and twenty-eight years. Was Christ two thousand and twenty-eight years old? He says so. In Revelations He says: "I am Alpha;" Alpha being the first letter of the Greek alphabet, it was as much as to say: "I am the A of the great alphabet of all the centuries." Ought not He to know?

Could Christ be in a thousand places at the same time? He said so. He intimates that He can be in Madras, in Stockholm, in Pekin, in San Francisco, in Constantinople at the same time. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them." The faculty of everywhereativeness, is it a human or a Divine attribute? Lest we should think that this power of everywhereativeness should give out, Christ intimates that He is going to keep on, and that on the day before the world is burned up He will be in all the prayer-meetings in Europe, Africa, and North and South America; for He declares in so many words: "Lo! I am with you always, even *unto the end of the world!*" He is a God! He is a God!

He takes Divine honours. He calls himself the Lord of men, the Lord of angels, the Lord of devils. Is He not? If He is not, then He is the grandest fraud that was ever enacted. To-morrow morning, a man comes into your store in New York and he says: "I am Mr. Laird, the great ship-builder of Liverpool. I built the *Alabama*. I have built a great many fine ships." You treat him with a great deal of consideration; but you find out after awhile that he is not Mr. Laird, and that he never built anything. What is that

man? An impostor. Now Christ said that he built the earth—built all things. Did He build the earth or did He not? If He did, He was a God; if He did not, He was an impostor. A man with a Jewish countenance and German accent comes into your store. He says: "I am Rothschild, the banker, of London. I hold the wealth of nations in my vest pocket. I loaned that money to Italy and to Austria." You treat him with a great deal of consideration for awhile; but suppose you find out that he is not a banker, that he does not own a single dollar in all the world? What is that man? An impostor. Now Christ comes and He says He owns this world, He owns the next, He owns all the glories of land and sea, He professes to be vast in His possessions. Is He in the possession of all these things? Does He own them all? If He does not, what is He? *An impostor.* A man with venerable aspect and gray beard comes into the White House at Washington. He says to the President, "I am King William of Germany. I have come over *incognito* for the purpose of recreation and amusement. I gained the victory at Sedan. I have castles in Berlin and Dresden." Suppose after awhile the President finds that he has no castles, and that he is not the King; what is he then? An impostor. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ professed to be King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. If He was not, what was He? I appeal to your common sense. He was either God, or He was a villain. Strauss saw that alternative, and he says that Christ was sinful in taking homage that did not belong to Him. Renan saw that alternative, and says that Christ, not through his own fault, but through the fault of others, lost some of the purity of His conscience, and slyly intimates that dishonourable women may have damaged His soul. Anything but admit that Christ is God.

I have shown you that Christ was God, from what inspired men have said of Him and from what He said of Himself; now I want to show you that He was God from His wonderful achievements. I suppose that all believe the Bible. If you do not, what do you do in the Brooklyn Tabernacle?

Why do you not go over to-day and join the infidel club in Broadway? Why do you not go and kiss the foot of the new statue of Tom Payne they are rearing in Boston! Why do you not take your hat, and not stealing the hymn-book, go out and find associates among men who do not believe in the Word of God, the only foundation for good government and for common honesty? We in this church are among the deluded souls and the narrow-heads who believe the whole Bible, and take it down in one swallow as easily as you pick up a ripe strawberry. Supposing that you admit the Bible to be true, let us go out and see the Saviour's achievements—surgical, alimentary, marine, mortuary.

Surgical achievements? Did you ever, in all the scientific journals of the world, see such wonderful operations as He performed? He used no knife. He carried no splints. He employed no compress. He never made a patient squirm under cauterization. He never tied an artery, and yet, behold Him. With one word He stuck fast Malchus's amputated ear. He stirred dust and spittle into a salve, with which he made the man who was born blind, without optic nerve, cornea, or crystalline lens, open his eyes on the glorious sunlight. He beat music on the drum of the deaf ear. He straightened a woman who, through contraction of muscles, had been bent almost double for nigh two decades. He made a man who had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years shoulder his mattress and walk off. Sir Astley Cooper, Abernethy, and Valentine Mott stood powerless before a withered arm. This *Doctor of Omnipotent surgery* comes up to the man with the lifeless, useless, shrivelled arm, and He says to him: "Stretch forth thy hand." The man stretched it for just as good as the other. This was a God! This was a God!

Alimentary achievements? A lad comes with five loaves with which he expected to make a speculation; perhaps having bought them for five pennies' and expecting to sell them for ten pennies, and thus double his money. Lo! Christ takes those loaves, and from them performs a miracle with which he satisfies seven thousand famishing people. When

the Saviour's mother went into a neighbour's house to help get up a wedding-party, and by a calculation she saw that they had made a mistake in the amount of beverage that was requisite, she calls Christ for help ; and Christ, to relieve the awkward embarrassment, not through slow decay of fermentation, but by one word, makes a hundred and thirty gallons of pure wine.

Marine achievements ? Do you not remember how He brought around a whole school of fish into the net of the men who were mourning over their poor luck, and how they had to halloo to the people in the other boat, and then both ships were loaded to the water's edge with game, so that the sailors had to walk cautiously from larboard to starboard lest the boat sink. And then when the squall came down through the mountain gorge to the water, and Gennessaret with long white locks of foam rose up to battle it, and the vessel dropped, into the trough, and shipped a sea, and the loosened sails cracked in the tornado ; how Christ rose from the back part of the vessel, and came on across the staggering ship until He came to the prow ; and wiping the spray from His forehead, hushed the crying tempest on the knee of His omnipotence. O, was it a man who wrestled down the storm ? Was it a man who, with both feet trampled Gennessaret into a smooth floor ?

But look at his mortuary achievements. Let all the psychologists and anatomists of the world go to Westminster Abbey, and try to wake Queen Elizabeth, or Henry VIII. All the ingenuity of man never yet brought the dead to life. But look at that dead girl at Capernaum. What a pity that she should die so early, and when the world is so fair. She is only twelve years old. Feel at the hands. Feel at the brow. Dead. Dead. The house is full of uproar and wailing. What does Christ do ? He comes and takes that little girl by the hand, and no sooner has He touched her hand than her eyes open, and her heart starts, and the white lily of death flushes into the red rose of life, and she rushes into the arms of her rejoicing relatives. Who was it that raised her up ? Was it a man, or was it a God ?

What is that crying in Bethany? Mary crying, Martha crying, Jesus crying, and the neighbours crying, *What is the matter?* Lazarus is dead. The sisters think they will never again see him, never have him sit at the table again. Poor things! Since their father died they have depended upon Lazarus for almost everything. Jesus comes down to the excavation in the rock, in one of the side niches of which Lazarus sleeps in death. Jesus generally spoke in gentle articulations, but now He lets out His voice to full strength, until it rings through all the labyrinths and avenues of the rock: "Lazarus, come forth!" And Lazarus slides down from the side niche into the main avenue of the rock, and stands a living man before the abashed and confounded spectators. Who was it that stood at the mouth of that cave, and uttered that potent word? Was it a man? Tell that to the lunatics in Bloomingdale Asylum. It was Christ, the everywhere present, the everlasting, the omniscient, the omnipotent God! But there is one test which will show you whether Christ is God or not. The recital of that one verse ought to blanch the cheeks of some with alarm, and kindle the faces of others with eternal sunrise: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." The world will be stunned by a blow that will make it stagger mid heaven; the stars will scatter like dried leaves in an equinox; the graveyards will unroll the bodies, and the clouds will unroll the spirits, and soul and flesh will come together in incorruptible conjunction. Hark to the loud wash of the retreating sea, and the baying of the advancing thunders, and the sweeping of winged cohorts! Smoke and darkness, and fire and earthquake, and shouting, shouting, shouting, wailing, wailing, wailing. On the one side, in piled up galleries of light, are the one hundred and forty and four thousand—yea, the quintillions of the saved; and as they take their seats, I feel as if I must drop under the insufferable radiance. On the other side is piled up, in galleries of thunder-cloud, the frowning, glaring, dying populations of the wrath to come. Before me, and between the two galleries, is a throne. It is very high. It stands on two burnished pillars—justice and mercy. It is



stupendous with awards and condemnations. Look ; but half hide your eyes, lest they be put out in the excess of vision. There is a throne, but no one is seated on it. Who shall occupy it ? Will you go up and take it ? "No," you say : "I am only dust and ashes." Show me some man that is fit to take it, in all ages. Lord Mansfield ? No. Solomon ? No. Isaiah ? No. Paul ? No. Their foot would consume at the first touch of the step of that throne. Even Gabriel dare not go up on it. Michael the archangel, would rather bow down, pulling his right wing over his left, and both over his face, and cry : "Holy !" But here is one ascending that throne. *His back is toward us.* He goes step above step, height above height, until He comes to the apex. Then, turning around, so that all nations can see Him, we behold it is Christ ; and all earth, and heaven, and hell, fall on the knee, and cry out : "It is a God ! It is a God !"

There is great comfort in my subject. It is God who came down in Jesus Christ to save us. Do you think only a man could have made an atonement for millions of the race ? Does your common sense teach you that ? I tell you if Christ is not God the redemption of our race is a dead failure. We want a Divine arm to lift our burden. We want a Divine endurance to carry our pang. We want a Divine expiation to take away our sin ; and "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

God also comes down in Christ to comfort you. Sometimes our troubles are so great, human sympathy does not seem to be sufficient for them. O ye who cried all last night because of loneliness and bereavement, I want to tell you that it is your Maker and your God that comes this day to comfort you. When there are children in the house, and the mother dies, then you know that the father has to be more gentle than ever, and he has to act two parts in that household. And it seems as if the Lord Jesus Christ looked down and saw your helplessness, and he proposed to be both father and mother to your sick soul. He comes in the strength of the one, and in the tenderness of the other, and He says ; "As a father pitieth his children so I pity you. As one whom

his mother comforteth so I will comfort you." O, do you not feel the hush of that Divine lullaby? Put down your tired head on the heaving bosom of that Divine compassion, and let Him put His arms around you, and say: "O, widowed soul, I will be thy husband and thy God. O, orphaned ones, I will be your protector. Don't cry. Don't cry." And then He will put His hand on your eyelids, and sweep that hand down on the cheek, wiping away all the tears of loneliness and bereavement. O, what a loving, tender, sympathetic God has come for us. I do not ask you, this morning, to lay hold of God; you may be too weak for that. I do not ask you even to pray; you may be too bewildered for that. I only ask you just to let go, and fall back into the arms of everlasting strength.

You and I will soon hear the click of the latch of the sepulchre. We want an Almighty Christ to go with us. I wonder if the friend of Lazarus will be about. Our friends will take us with strong arms, and lay us down in the dust; but they cannot bring us back again. I would *be scared with infinite fright* if I thought I should have to stay there for ever. But no. Christ will come with a glorious iconoclasm, and split and grind up the granite, and let us come out. O, the resurrection! What kind of a resurrection will it be?

A young woman was recently dying, without any hope, and she said to her mother in the closing hour: "Mother, I am going away from you, and I am so afraid." When you leave this world, when you bid farewell to those with whom you have been associated, and in the last great day, will you be afraid? If we have on that day Christ, the Omnipotent Saviour, on our side, all shall be well. If the resurrection comes upon a spring day, and all the flowers are blooming around our graves, how pleasant it would be to take up the brightest one of all those flowers and put in the scarred hand of Him who died for us; to gather up the most redolent of them all, and twist them into a garland for the brow that was struck with the thorns. On that day, when Jesus is surrounded by all the dominions of the saved, we will see what an awful libel it was when men said that Christ was only a man; and

then you will declare with unparalleled emphasis : " Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." O, would you not like to join in that " Amen," ye who believe this Christ is the eternal God ? You shall have my permission. Let your " Amen" be the doxology of this whole assemblage ! " Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen " [Thousands of voices : " Amen ?"]

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## THE RELIGION OF GHOSTS.

*" Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night : and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee."*—I. SAM. xxviii. 7, 8.

TROUBLE to the right of him, and trouble to the left of him, Saul knew not what to do. As a last resort, he concluded to seek out a spiritual medium, or a witch, or anything that you please to call her—at any rate, a woman who had communication with the spirits of the eternal world. It was a very difficult thing to do, for Saul had either slain all the witches, or compelled them to stop business. A servant, one day, said to King Saul : " I know of a spiritual medium down at the village of En-dor." " Do you ?" said the king. Night falls. Saul, putting off his kingly robes, and putting on the dress of a plain citizen, with two servants, goes out to hunt up this spiritual medium. It was no easy thing for Saul to disguise himself, for the tallest people in the country only came up to his shoulder, and I think from the strength of the man and the way he bore himself, he must have been well-proportioned. It must have been a frightful thing to see a man walking along in the night eight or nine feet high. I suppose, as the people saw him pass, they said : " Who is

that? He is as tall as the king"—having no idea that in such a plain dress there really was passing the king. Saul and his servants after awhile reach the village, and they say: "I wonder if this is the house;" and they look in and they see the haggard, weird, and shrivelled up spiritual medium sitting by the light, and on the table sculptured images, and divining rods, and poisonous herbs, and bottles, and vases. They say: "Yes, this must be the place." One loud rap brings the woman to the door, and as she stands there, holding the candle or lamp above her head, and peering out into the darkness, she says: "Who is here?" The tall king informs her that he has come to have his fortune told. When she hears that she trembles, and almost drops the light, for she knows there is no chance for a fortune-teller or spiritual medium in all the land. But Saul having sworn that no harm shall come to her, she says: "Well, who shall I bring up from the dead?" Saul says—"Bring up Samuel." That was the prophet who had died a little while before. I see her waving her wand, or stirring up some poisonous herbs in a cauldron, or hear muttering over some incantations, or stamping with her foot, as she cries out to the realm of the dead: "Samuel! Samuel!" Lo, the freezing horror! The floor of the tenement opens, and the grey hairs float up, and the forehead, the eyes, the lips, the shoulders, the arms, the feet, the entire body of dead Samuel, wrapped in sepulchral robe, appearing to the astonished group, who stagger back and hold fast, and catch their breath, and shiver with terror. The dead prophet, white and awful from the tomb, begins to move his ashen lips, and he glares upon King Saul, and cries out: "What did you bring me up for? Why did you break my long sleep? What do you mean, King Saul?" Saul, trying to compose and control himself, makes this stammering and affrighted utterance, as he says to the dead prophet: "The Lord is against me, and I have come to you for help. What shall I do?" The dead prophet stretched forth his finger to King Saul and said: "Die to-morrow! Come with me into the sepulchre. I am going now. Come, come with me!" And lo! the floor again opens, and the feet of

the dead prophet disappear, and the arms, and the shoulders, and the forehead. The floor closes. Nothing is left in the room but Saul and the two servants, and the spiritual medium, and the sculptured images, and the divining-rods, and the bottles, and the vases, and the poisonous herbs. O, that was an awful seance !

I learn first from this subject that *Spiritualism is a very old religion*. It is natural that people should want to know the origin and the history of a doctrine which is so widespread in all the villages, towns, and cities of the civilized world, getting new converts every day—a doctrine with which many of you are already tinged. *Spiritualism in America* was born in 1847, in Hydesville, Wayne County, New York, when one night there was a loud rap heard against the door of Michael Weekman ; a rap a second time, a rap a third time ; and all three times, when the door was opened, there was nothing found there, the knocking having been made seemingly by invisible knuckles. In that same house there was a young woman who had a cold hand passed over her face, and there being seemingly no arm attached to it, ghostly suspicions were excited. After awhile Mr. Fox and his family moved into that house, and then every night there was a banging at the door ; and one night Mr. Fox said : “ Are you a spirit ? ” Two raps answering in the affirmative. “ Are you an injured spirit ? ” Two raps, answering in the affirmative. And so they found out, as they say, that it was the ghost or spirit of a pedlar who had been murdered in that house, many years before, for his five hundred dollars. Whether the ghost of the dead pedlar had come there to collect his five hundred dollars, or his bones, I cannot say, not being a spiritualist ; but there was a great racket at the door, so Mr. Weekman declared, and Mrs. Weekman, and Mr. Fox, and Mrs. Fox, and all the little Foxes. The excitement spread. There was a universal rumpus. The Hon. Judge Edmonds declared, in a book, that he had actually seen a bell start from the top shelf of a closet, heard it ring over the people that were standing in the closet ; then, swung by invisible hands, it rang over the people in the back par-

lour ; and floated through the folding-doors to the front parlour, rung over the people there, and then dropped on the floor. N. P. Talmage, Senator of the United States, afterwards Governor of Wisconsin, had his head completely turned with spiritualistic demonstrations. A man, as he was passing along the road, said that he was lifted up bodily, and carried toward his home, through the air, at such great speed he could not count the posts on the fences as he passed ; and as he had a hand-saw and a square in his hand, they beat, as he passed through the air, most delightful music. And the tables tipped, and the stools tilted, and the bedsteads raised, and the chairs upset, and it seemed as if the spirits everywhere had gone into the furniture business ! Well, the people said : “ We have got something new in this country ; it is a new religion.” O no, my friends. Thousands of years ago we find in our text *a spiritualistic seance*. Nothing in the spiritualistic circles of our day has been more strange, mysterious, and wonderful than things which have been seen in the past centuries of the world. In all the ages there have been necromancers, those who consult with the spirits of the departed ; charmers, those who put their subjects in a mesmeric state ; sorcerers, those who by taking poisonous drugs see everything, and hear everything, and tell everything ; dreamers, people who in their sleeping moments can see the future world and hold consultation with spirits ; astrologers, who could read a new dispensation in the stars ; experts in palmistry, who can tell by the lines in the palm of your hand your origin and your history. From a cave on Mount Parnassus, we are told, there was an exhalation that intoxicated the sheep and the goats that came anywhere near it, and a shepherd approaching it was thrown by that exhalation into an excitement in which he could foretell future events and hold consultation with the spiritual world. Yea, before the time of Christ the Brahmins went through all the table-moving, all the furniture excitement, which the spirits have exploited in our day ; precisely the same thing, over and over again, under the manipulations of the Brahmins. Now, do you say that Spiritualism is different from these ? I answer,

all these delusions I have mentioned belong to the same family. They are exhumations from the unseen world. What does God think of all these delusions? He thinks so severely of them that He never speaks of them but with livid thunders of indignation. He says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." And lest you might make some important distinction between Spiritualism and witchcraft, God says, in so many words: "There shall not be among you a consulter of familiar spirits, or wizard, or necromancer; for they that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." And He says again: "The soul of those who seek after such as have familiar spirits, and who go whoring after them, I will set myself against them, and he shall be cut off from among his people." The Lord Almighty, in a score of passages, which I have not now time to quote, utters his indignation against all this great family of delusions. After that be a Spiritualist if you dare!

Still further: we learn from this text *how it is that people fall into Spiritualism*. Saul had *enough trouble to kill ten men*. He did not know where to go for relief. After awhile he resolved to go and see the witch of En-dor. He expected that somehow she would afford him relief. It was his trouble that drove him there. And I have to tell you now that Spiritualism finds its victims in the troubled, the bankrupt, the sick, the bereft. You lose your watch, and you go to the fortune-teller to find where it is. You are sick with a strange disease, and you go to a fortune-teller doctor to find out by a lock of hair what is the matter with you. You lose a friend, you want the spiritual world opened, so that you may have communication with him. In a highly-wrought, nervous, and diseased state of mind, you go and put yourself in that communication. That is why I hate Spiritualism. It takes advantage of one in a moment of weakness, which may come upon us at any time. We lose a friend. The trial is keen, sharp, suffocating, almost maddening. If we could marshal a host, and storm the eternal world, and recapture our loved one, the host would soon be marshalled. The house is so lonely. The world is so dark. The separation is so insuffer-

able. But Spiritualism says : " We will open the future world, and your loved one can come back and talk to you." Though we may not hear his voice, we may hear the rap of his hand. So, clear the table. Sit down. Put your hands on the table. Be very quiet. Five minutes gone. Ten minutes. No motion of the table. No response from the future world. Twenty minutes. Thirty minutes. Nervous excitement all the time increasing. Forty minutes. The table shivers. Two raps from the future world. The letters of the alphabet are called over. The departed friend's name is John. At the pronunciation of the letter "J," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "O," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "H," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "N," two raps. There you have the whole name spelled out. J-o-h-n, John. Now, the spirit being present, you say : "*John, are you happy?*" Two raps give an affirmative answer. Pretty soon the hand of the medium begins to twitch and toss, and begins to write out, after paper and ink are furnished, a message from the eternal world. What is remarkable, the departed spirit, although it has been amid the illuminations of heaven, cannot spell as well as it used to ! It has lost all grammatical accuracy, and cannot write as distinctly. I received a letter through a medium once. I sent it back. I said : " Just please to tell those ghosts they had better go to school and get improved in their orthography!" Now, just think of spirits, that the Bible represents as enthroned in glory, coming down to crawl under the table, and break crockery, and ring tea-bells before supper is ready, and rap the window shutter on a gusty night. Is there any consolation in such poor, miserable work compared with the thought that our departed Christian friends, got rid of pain and languishing, are in the radiant society of heaven, and that we shall join them there, not in a stifled and mysterious half-utterance, which makes the hair stand on end and the cold chills creep the back, but in an unhindered and illimitable delight.

" And none shall murmur or misdoubt,  
When God's great sunrise finds us out."



Yes, my friends, Spiritualism comes to those who are in trouble and sweeps them into its delusions. Saul, in the midst of his disaster, went to the witch of En-dor. The vast majority of those who have gone to spiritual mediums have been sent there through their misfortunes.

I learn still farther from this subject, that *Spiritualism and Necromancy are affairs of the darkness*. Why did not Saul go in the day? He was ashamed to go. Besides that, he knew that this spiritual medium, like all her successors, performed her exploits in the night. The Davenport, the Fowlers, the Foxes, the spiritual mediums of all ages, have chosen the night or a darkened room. Why? The majority of their wonders have been swindles, and *deception prospers best in the night*.

Some of the performances of spiritual mediums are not to be ascribed to fraud, but to some occult law that after awhile may be demonstrated. But I believe that now nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand achievements on the part of spiritual mediums are arrant and unmitigated humbug. The mysterious red letters that used to come out on the medium's arm were found to have been made by an iron pencil that went heavily over the flesh, not tearing it, but so disturbing the blood, that it came up in great round letters. The witnesses of the *seance* have locked the door, put the key in their pocket, arrested the operator, and found out, by searching the room, that hidden levers moved the tables. The sealed letters that were mysteriously read without opening, have been found to have been cut at the side, and then afterwards slyly put together with gum arabic; and the medium who, with a heavy blanket over his head, could read a book, has been found to have had a bottle of phosphoric oil, by the light of which anybody can read a book; and ventriloquism, and legerdemain, and sleight of hand, and optical delusion account for nearly everything. Deception being the main staple of Spiritualism, no wonder it chooses darkness.

You have all seen strange and unaccountable things in the night. Almost every man has at some time had a touch of

hallucination. Some time ago, after I had been over tempted to eat something indigestible before retiring at night, after retiring I saw the president of one of the prominent colleges astride the foot of the bed, while he demanded of me a loan of five cents ! When I awakened I had no idea it was anything supernatural. And I have to advise you, if you hear and see strange things at night, to stop eating hot mince pie and take a dose of bilious medicine. It is an outraged physical organism, and, not to deceive the very elect after sundown, does nearly all its work in the night. The witch of En-dor held her *seances* at night ; so do all the witches. Away with this religion of spooks. *Spiritualism is a curse to its disciples.*

Still further : I learn from my text that *Spiritualism is doom and death to its disciples.* King Saul thought that he would get help from the "medium ;" but the first thing that he sees makes him swoon away, and no sooner is he resuscitated than he is told he must die. Spiritualism is doom and death to everyone that yields to it. It ruins the body. Look in upon an audience of spiritualists. Cadaverous. Weak. Nervous. Exhausted. Hands clammy and cold. Nothing prospers but long hair—soft marshes yielding rank grass. Spiritualism destroys the physical health. Its disciples are ever hearing startling news from the other world. Strange beings crossing the room in white. Table fidgetty, wanting to get its feet loose as if to dance. Voices sepulchral and ominous. Bewildered with raps. I never knew a confirmed spiritualist who had a healthy nervous system. It is incipient epilepsy and catalepsy. Destroy your nervous system and you might as well be dead. I have noticed that people who are hearing raps from the future world have but little strength left to bear the hard raps of this world. It is an awful thing to trifle with one's nervous system. It is so delicate—it is so far-reaching—its derangements are so terrible. Get the nervous system a jangle, and so far as your body and soul are concerned, the whole universe is a jangle. Better in our ignorance experiment with a chemist's retort that may smite us dead, or with an

engineer's steam boiler that may blow us to atoms, than experiment with the nervous system. A man can live with only one lung, or with no eyes, and be happy, as men have been under such afflictions ; but woe be to the man whose nerves are shattered. Spiritualism smites first of all, and mightily, against the nervous system, and so makes life miserable.

I indict Spiritualism also, because *it is a social and marital curse*. The worst deeds of licentiousness and the worst orgies of obscenity have been enacted under its patronage. The story is too vile for me to tell. I will not pollute my tongue nor your ears with the recital. Sometimes the civil law has been evoked to stop the outrage. Families innumerable have been broken up by it. It has pushed off hundreds of young women into a life of profligacy. It talks about "elective affinities," and "affinital relation," and "spiritual matches," and adopts the whole vocabulary of free-lovism. In one of its public journals it declares "*marriage is the monster curse of civilisation.*" "It is a source of debauchery and intemperance." If Spiritualism could have its full swing, it would turn this world into a pandemonium of carnality. It is an unclean, adulterous, damnable religion, and the sooner it drops into the hell from which it rose, the better both for earth and heaven. For the sake of man's honour and woman's purity, I say let the last vestige of it perish for ever. I wish I could gather up all the raps it has ever heard from spirits blest or damned and gather them all on its own head in one thundering rap of annihilation !

I further indict Spiritualism for the fact that *it is the cause of much insanity*. There is not an asylum between Bangor and San Francisco which has not the torn and bleeding victims of this delusion. Go into any asylum, I care not where it is, and the presiding doctor, after you have asked him : "What is the matter with that man ?" will say : "Spiritualism demented him ;" or "What is the matter with that woman ?" he will say : "Spiritualism demented her." It has taken down some of the brightest intellects. It swept off into mental midnight judges, senators, governors, ministers of

the Gospel, and one time came near capturing one of the presidents of the United States. At Flushing, near this city, a man became absorbed with it, forsook his family, took his only fifteen thousand dollars, surrendered them to a spiritual medium in New York, attempted three times to put an end to his own life, and then was incarcerated in the State Lunatic Asylum, where he is to day a raving maniac. Put your hand in the hand of this witch of En-dor, and she will lead you to bottomless perdition, where she holds her everlasting *seance*. Many years ago the steamer *Atlantic* started from Europe for the United States. Getting mid-ocean the machinery broke, and she floundered around day after day, and week after week, and for a whole month after she was due people wondered, and finally gave her up. There was great anguish in the cities, for there were many who had friends aboard that vessel. Some of the women in their distress, went to the spiritual mediums, and inquired as to the fate of that vessel. The mediums called up the spirits, and the rappings on the table indicated the steamship lost, with all on board. *Women went raving mad*, and were carried to the lunatic asylum. After awhile one day a gun was heard off Quarantine. The flags went up on the shipping, and the bells of the churches were rung. The boys ran through the streets, crying: "Extra! The *Atlantic* is safe!" There was the embracing as from the dead, when friends came again to friends; but some of those passengers went up to find their wives in the lunatic asylum, where this cheat of infernal Spiritualism had put them. A man in Bellevue Hospital, dying from wounds made by his own hand, was asked why he tried to commit suicide, and he said: "The spirits told me to." Parents have strangled their children, and when asked why they did it, replied: "Spiritualism demanded it." It is the patronizer and forager for the mad-house. Judge Edmonds, in Broadway Tabernacle, New York, delivering a lecture in behalf of Spiritualism, admitted, in so many words: "There is a fascination about consultation with the spirits of the dead that has a tendency to lead people off from their right judgment, and to

instil into them a fanaticism that is revolting to the natural mind."

It not only ruins its disciples, but it ruins the mediums also, only give it time. The Gaderean swine, on the banks of the Lake of Galilee, no sooner became spiritual mediums than down they went, in an avalanche of pork, to the consternation of all the herdsmen. The office of a medium is bad for a man, bad for a woman, bad for a beast.

I bring against this delusion a more fearful indictment : *it ruins the soul immortal.* First, it makes a man a quarter of an infidel ; then it makes him half an infidel ; then it makes him whole infidel. The whole system as I conceive it, is founded on the insufficiency of the Word of God as a revelation. God says the Bible is enough for you to know about the future world. You say it is not enough, and there is where you and the Lord differ. You clear the table, you shove aside the Bible, you put your hand on the table, and say : "Now let spirits of the future world come and tell me something the Bible has not told me." And although the Scriptures say : "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar," you risk it, and say : "Come back, spirit of my departed father ; come back, spirit of my departed mother, of my companions, of my little child, and tell me some things I don't know about you and about the unseen world." If God is ever slapped square in the face, it is when a spiritual medium puts down her hand on the table, invoking spirits departed to make a revelation. God has told you all you ought to know, and how dare you be prying into that which is none of your business ? You cannot keep the Bible in one hand and Spiritualism in the other. One or the other will slip out of your grasp, depend upon it. *Spiritualism is adverse to the Bible* in the fact that it has in these last days called from the future world Christian men to testify against Christianity. Its mediums call back Lorenzo Dow, the celebrated evangelist, and Lorenzo Dow testifies that Christians are idolaters. Spiritualism calls back Tom Payne, and he testifies that he is stopping at the same house in heaven

with John Bunyan. They call back John Wesley, and he testifies against the Christian religion which he all his life gloriously preached. Andrew Jackson Davis, the greatest of all the spiritualists, comes to the front and declares that the New Testament is but "the dismal echo of a barbaric age," and the Bible only "one of the pen and ink relics of Christianity." They attempt to substitute the writings of Swedenborg, and Andrew Jackson Davis, and other religious balderdash, in the place of this old Bible. I have in my house a book which was used in this very city in the public service of spiritualists. It is well worn with much service. I open that book, and it says: "What is our baptism? Answer: Frequent ablutions of water. What is our inspiration? Plenty of fresh air and sunlight. What is our prayer? Abundant physical exercise. What is our love-feast? A clear conscience and sound sleep." And I find from the same book that the chief item in their public worship is gymnastic exercise, and that whenever they want to rouse up their souls to a very high pitch of devotion they sing page sixty-five: "The night has gathered up her moonlit fringes;" or page sixteen: "Come to the woods, heigho!" You say you are not such a fool as that; but you will be if you keep on in the track you have started.

"But," says some one, "wouldn't it be of advantage to hear from the future world? Don't you think it would strengthen Christians? There are a great many Materialists who do not believe there are souls; but if spirits from the future world should knock and talk over to us, they would be persuaded." To that I answer, in the ringing words of the Son of God: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Now I believe, under God, that this sermon will save many from disease, insanity, and perdition. I believe these are the days of which the Apostle spake when he said: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits." I think my audience, as well as other audiences in this day, need to have reiterated in their

conquered. O there is need of a radical change. Something must be done, and I shall show this morning that the great—aye, as I have already said, the dying—need of the Church is a great awakening.

I learn this need, in the first place, from the *coldness in the majority of Church members*. If a religious society have a thousand members, eight hundred of them are sound asleep. If it have five hundred members, four hundred are lethargic. If the Christians can rally—that is, the professed Christians—for communion day, and succeed in not dropping the wine cup, how many of them are satisfied? If it be a choice between Christ and the world, the world has it. You know it as well as I do. If a religious meeting be on a certain night, and on that same night there be an extraordinary operatic entertainment, or a social gathering, or a literary club, or a political meeting, or a Free Mason Society, or an Odd Fellow's association, you know which they go to. God there fairly demonstrating that while such professed Christians pretend to be on His side, they are really on the other side; for there is a point-blank issue between Christ and the world, and the world has it. You know very well whether you are a professed Christian or not; you know very well that the dividing line between the Church and the world to-day is—like the equator, or the arctic or antarctic circle—an imaginary line, and that there are men and women sworn of God who sit discussing infinitesimal questions: "Shall we dance? Shall we play cards? Shall we go to the theatre? Shall we attend the opera?" while there are five hundred millions of the race going down to darkness unwarned. These sham Christians will go on, occasionally taking a little religion with the tip end of their fingers, sauntering on lazily towards the bar of Christ, until they come in front of God's swift revolving mill, and find themselves to be "the chaff which the wind driveth away." *O how much dead wood we have* in all our Churches. The Day of Judgment will make a fearful thinning out among professed Christians. I suppose it will be found on that day that there are hundreds of thousands of men who have their names on the Church books

who really made religion a second-rate or third-rate thing : living for themselves, unmindful of God and the salvation of the race, and then tumbling over the embankment where Judas went, and Achan went, and where all those shall go who do not make religion the primordial thing—the first and last matter of the soul. O worldly professor of religion, vacillating professor, idle professor, tremble before God to-day. Do you not know that if you die as you are, all the communion-tables at which you have ever sat will lift up hands of blood, crying for your condemnation ? And your neglected Bible, and your prayerless pillow, will cry : “Go down ! go down !” You pretended to have religion, but you had none. Out of the seven days of the week, you gave not five hours to Christ. You broke your sacramental oath. Go down ! go down ! And the fieriest and mightiest thunderbolt of God’s indignation that is ever forged will smite you into darkness. O I would rather be the man, in the last day, who has never seen a church, than you who professed to be so much, and to do so much, and yet did nothing. You shall perish in the day when God’s wrath is kindled but a little. O worldly professor of religion—and there are hundreds of them here to-day, I am aiming at the mark—if you could to-day realize your true condition, and your true position before God, you would bite your lip until the blood came ; you would wring your hands until the bones cracked ; you would utter a cry that would send this whole audience to their feet with a horror. May God wake you up, worldly professor of religion, before you wake up in the barred and flaming dungeons of a destroyed eternity. When you look abroad and see lethargy among the professors of religion almost all the world over, do you not see that there is a need that the bugles, and the cymbals, and the drums, and the trumpets of all earth and heaven call upon the Church to wake up all those dormant professors of religion ? “Awake, thou that sleepest ; awake, and Christ shall give thee life.”

Still further : I see a need for a great awakening in the fact that *those of us who preach the Gospel have so little enthusiasm and zeal compared with what we ought to have.*



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so little en-  
ight to have.

Now you see the gun kicks. I say, we who preach the Gospel have so little zeal and enthusiasm for Christ compared with what we ought to have. O, it is a tremendous thing to stand before an audience on Sabbath days, realizing the fact that the majority of them will believe what you say about God, and the soul, and the great future. Suppose a man asked of you the road to a certain place, and you carelessly and falsely told him, and afterwards you heard that through lack of right direction that man was lost on the mountains, fell over the rocks, and lost his life. You could not forgive yourself. You would say: "I wish I had taken more time with that man. I wish I had given him such specific directions that he would not have been lost. How sorry I feel about it." But O, to misdirect the eternal interests of a large congregation! How cold and stolid we stand in our pulpits, actually sometimes priding ourselves on our deliberation, when we have no right to be cold, and ought to be almost frantic with the perils that threaten our hearers. So much so, that some of us give no warning at all, and we stand Sabbath after Sabbath, talking about "human development," and *we pat men on the back*, and we please them, and we hide eternal retribution, and we sing them all down through the rapids to the last plunge. Or, as the poet has it:—

"Smooth down the stubborn text to ears polite,  
And snugly keep damnation out of sight!"

O, my brethren in the ministry—for I see them always in the audience—my brethren in the ministry, we cannot afford to do that way. If you prophesy good things, smooth things, to your people, without regard to their character, what chance will there be for you in the day when you meet them at the bar of God? You had better stand clear of them then. They will tear you to pieces. They will say: "I heard you preach five hundred times, and I admired your philosophic disquisition, and your graceful gestures, and your nicely moulded sentences, curvilinear and stelliform, and I thought you were the prince of proprieties; but you didn't help me prepare for this day. Cursed be your rhetoric, cursed be your art. I am

going down, and I'll take you with me. It is your fault ; witness all the hosts of heaven and all the hosts of darkness, it is your fault, sir ;" and the chorus will come up from all worlds : " His fault ! his fault !" All of us who preach this Gospel need to speak as though the pulpit quaked with the tramp of eternal realities, as though beneath us were the bursting graves of the resurrection morn, as though rising above us, tier above tier, were the myriads of heaven looking down, ready to applaud our fidelity, or hiss at our stolidity, while coming through the Sabbath air were the long, deep, harrowing groan of the dying nations that are never dead. May God with a torch from heaven set all the pulpits of England and Scotland, and Ireland, and the United States on fire. As for myself standing here in this presence this morning, I feel as if I had never begun to preach. If God will forgive me for the past, I will do better for the future.

" 'Tis not a cause of small import  
The pastor's care demands ;  
But what might fill an angel's heart,  
It filled a Saviour's hands.

" They watch for souls for which the Lord  
Did heavenly bliss forego ;  
For souls that must for ever live  
In raptures or in woe."

Still further ; I see a need for a great awakening in the fact that *the kingdom of God is making such slow progress*. I simply state a fact when I say that in many places the Church is surrendering and the world is conquering. Where there is one man brought into the kingdom of God through Christian instrumentality, there are ten men dragged down by dissipations. Fifty grog shops built to one Church established. Literary journals in different parts of the country filled with scum, and dandruff, and slag, controlled by the very scullions of society, depraving everything they put their hands on. Three hundred and ten newspapers, journals, and magazines in New York, and more than two hundred of them depraving to the public taste, if not positively inimical

to our holy Christianity. Look abroad and see the surrender, even on the part of those that pretend to be Christian Churches, to Spiritualism and Humanitarianism, and all the forms of devilism. If a man stand in his pulpit and say that unless you be born again you will be lost, do not the tight kid gloves of the Christian, diamonds bursting through, go up to their forehead in humiliation and shame? It is not elegant. A mighty host in the Christian Church, positively professing Christianity, do not believe in the Bible, out and out, in and in, from the first word of the first verse of the first chapter of the book of Genesis, down to the last word of the last verse of the last chapter of the book of Revelation. And when, a few Sabbaths ago, I stood in this pulpit and said: "I fear that some of this audience will be lost for the rejection of Christ," why there were four or five of the daily papers that threw up their hands in surprise at it. O, we have magnificent Church machinery in this country; we have sixty thousand American ministers, we have costly music, we have great Sunday-schools; and yet I give you the appalling statistics that in the last twenty-five years, laying aside last year, the statistics of which I have not yet seen—within the last twenty-five years the Churches of God in this country have averaged *less than two conversions a year* each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the Churches, How soon, at that rate, will this world be brought to God? We gain two; we lose four. Eternal God, what will this come to? I tell you plainly that while here and there a regiment of the Christian soldiery is advancing, the Church is falling back for the most part, and falling back, and falling back, and if you do not come to complete rout—aye, to ghastly Bull Run defeat—it will be because some individual Churches hurl themselves to the front, and ministers of Christ, trampling on the favour of this world and sacrificing everything, shall snatch up the torn and shattered banner of Emanuel, and rush ahead, crying: "On! on! This is no time to run; this is the time to advance."

I see, still further, the need of a great awakening in *the multitudinous going down of unforgiven souls*. Since many

of you came on the stage of action, a whole generation has gone into the gates of eternity. Your opportunity to act upon them is gone. They have disappeared from the churches, from the stores, the shops, the streets, from the homes. Many of them are now—what is the use of my hiding the fact and being the coward in regard to it—no, I will tell you just as it is—many of them going out of this world without one item of preparation. Their souls dropped flat into the lost world. That is, if the Bible is true, and I am supposing it is. You, O Christian man, had an opportunity of meeting them. You did meet them. You talked with them on other subjects. You had an opportunity of saying the saving word, and you did not say that saving word. Just think of that! O, where is the fountain where, with sleeve rolled up, we may wash our hands from the blood of souls? There is no need, perhaps, of mourning over that just now. We cannot change it. They are dead and they are destroyed—those who believed not in Christ—they are destroyed. The only question is, whether, as Christian men and women, we can now interrupt the other procession that is marching down, and will, after awhile, if unarrested by God's grace, fall off. There are going out from our stores hundreds of thousands of clerks; going out from our factories hundreds of thousands of operatives; there are going out of our colleges hundreds of thousands of students; there are going out of our fields hundreds of thousands of husbandmen, to join the ranks of death. They are fighting their way down. They storm and take every impediment put in their way, and who will throw himself in the way of this stampede of dying men and women—who, crying: "Halt, halt!" If there be eight hundred millions of the race unblessed, and the Churches average two souls saved in a year, will you let this generation go down, and the next, and the next?

I need not rehearse in this presence what God has done for us as an individual Church. You have heard with your own ears the cries for mercy, and you have seen the raining tears of repentance for the last eighteen months. I do not believe that there is any Church in this land that owes God

## A VIEW FROM A PALACE WINDOW.

*"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity."*—  
ECC. xii. 8.

**W**HEN a book is placed in your hands, the first question you ask is: "Who wrote it?" Not all the political astuteness, and classic grace, and unparalleled satire of Junius's Letters can satisfy you, because you do not know who Junius was—whether John Horne Tooke, or Bishop Butler, or Edmund Burke. Mightier than a book always is the man who wrote the book.

Now, who is the author of this text? King Solomon. It seemed as if the world exhausted itself on that man. It wove its brightest flowers into his garland. It set its richest gems in his coronet. It pressed the rarest wine to his lip. It robed him in the purest purple and embroidery. It cheered him with the sweetest music in that land of harps. It greeted him with the gladdest laughter that ever leaped from mirth's lip. It sprinkled his cheek with spray from the brightest fountains. Royalty had no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, flowers no sweetness, song no melody, light no radiance, upholstery no gorgeousness, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no metal, architecture no grandeur, but it was all his. Across the thick grass of the lawn, fragrant with tufts of camphire from En-gedi, fell the long shadows of trees brought from distant forests. Fish-pools, fed by artificial channels that brought the streams from hills far away, were perpetually ruffled with fins, and golden scales shot from water cave to water cave with endless dive and swirl, attracting the gaze of foreign potentates. Birds that had been brought from foreign aviary glanced and fluttered among the foliage, and called to their mates far beyond the sea. From the royal stables there came up the neighing of twelve thousand horses, standing in blankets of Tyrian purple, chewing their bits over troughs of gold, waiting for the king's order to be

brought out in front of the palace, when the official dignitaries would leap into the saddle for some grand parade, or, harnessed to some of the fourteen hundred chariots of the king, the fiery chargers, with flouanting mane and throbbing nostril, would make the earth jar with the tramp of hoofs and the thunder of wheels. While within and without the palace you could not think of a single luxury that could be added, or of a single splendour that could be kindled, down on the banks of the sea the dry docks of Ezion-geber rang with the hammers of the shipwrights who were constructing larger vessels for a still wider commerce, for all lands and climes were to be robbed to make up Solomon's glory. No rest till his keels shall cut every sea, his axemen hew every forest, his archers strike every rare wing, his fishermen whip every stream, his merchants trade in every bazaar, his name be honoured by every tribe; and royalty shall have no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, song no melody, light no radiance, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no metal, upholstery no gorgeousness, architecture no grandeur, *but it was all his.* "Well," you say, "if there is any man happy, he ought to be." But I hear him coming out through the palace, and see his robes actually encrusted with jewels, as he stands in the front and looks out upon the vast domain. What does he say? King Solomon, great is your dominion, great is your honour, great is your joy? No. While standing there amid all that splendour, the tears start, and his heart breaks, and he exclaims: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." What! Solomon not happy yet? No, not happy.

I learn from this subject, in the first place, that *official position will never give solace to a man's soul.* I know there have been very happy men in high positions, such as Wilberforce, as Theodore Frelinghuysen, as Governor Briggs, as Prince Albert. But the joy came not from their elevated position; it came from the Lord God whom they tried to serve. This man Solomon was king thirty-five years. All the pleasure that comes from palatial residence, from the flattery of foreign diplomatists, from universal sycophancy,



all that affluence, he writes the words of my text : "Vanity of vanities ; all is vanity." Alas ! if that man could not find in all his worldly possessions *enough to satisfy his immortal soul*, no amount that you and I will ever gather by the sweat of our brow, or by the strength of our arm, will make us happy. I have been amused to hear people when they start in life say at what point in life they will be contented with worldly possessions. One man says : "I want to get twenty thousand dollars, and I will be satisfied." Another : "I want to get fifty or a hundred thousand, or a million, and then I will be satisfied. Then I will say to my soul : 'Now, just look at that block of storehouses. Just look at those Government securities. Just look at those bonds and mortgages. Just look what lucrative investments you have. Now my soul, take thine ease ; eat, drink, and be merry !' " Thou fool ! If you are not happy now with the smaller possessions, you will never be with the larger possessions. If with decent and comely apparel you are not grateful to God, you would be ungrateful if you had a prince's wardrobe crowded till the hinges burst. If you sat this morning at your table, the fare was so poor you complained, you would not be satisfied though you sat down to partridge and pine-apple. If you are not contented with an income to support comfortably your household, you would not be contented though your income rolled in on you fifty or a hundred thousand dollars a year. It is not what we get, it is what we *are*, that makes us happy or miserable. If that is not so, how do you account for the fact that many of those who fare sumptuously every day are waspish and dissatisfied, and overbearing, and foreboding, and cranky, and uncompromising ; with a countenance in which wrath always lowers, and a lip which scorn curls ; while many a time in the summer eventide you see a labouring man going home in his shirt sleeves, with a pail on his arm and a pickaxe over his shoulder, his face bright with smiles, and his heart with hope, and the night of his toil bright with flaming auroras ? It is an illustration and proof of the fact that it is not outward condition that makes a man happy. A man came to Roths-

child, the great London banker and said : "You must be a thoroughly happy man." He said : "Happy ? Me happy ? Happy when, just as I am going to dine, a man sends me a note, saying : If you don't send me five hundred pounds before to-morrow-night, I will blow your brains out.' Me happy ?"

O, I wish this morning I could by the power of the Lord Almighty, break the infatuation of those men who are neglecting the present sources of satisfaction, hoping that there is to be something in the future for them of a worldly nature that will satisfy their souls. The heart right, all is right. The heart wrong, all is wrong. But I ask you to higher riches : to crowns that never fade, to investments that always declare dividends. Come up this day and get it,—the riches of God's pardon, the riches of God's mercy, the riches of God's peace. Blessed are all they who put their trust in Him.

I go still further, and learn from this subject that *learning and science cannot satisfy the soul*. You know that Solomon was one of the largest contributors to the literature of his day. He wrote one thousand and five songs. He wrote three thousand proverbs. He wrote about almost everything. The Bible says distinctly he wrote about plants, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that groweth out of the walls ; and about birds, and beasts, and fishes. No doubt he put off his royal robes, and put on hunter's trapping, and went out with his arrows to bring down the rarest specimens of birds ; and then with his fishing apparatus he went down to the stream to bring up the denizens of the deep, and plunged into the forest, and found the rarest specimens of flowers ; and then he came back to his study and wrote books about zoology, the science of animals ; about ichthyology, the science of fishes ; about ornithology, the science of birds ; about botany the science of plants. Yet, notwithstanding all his achievements he cries out in my text : "Vanity of vanities ; all is vanity." Have you ever seen a man try to make learning and science his God ? Did you ever know such a fearful autobiography as that of John Stuart Mill, a man who prided

himself on his philosophy, and had a wonderful strength of intellect ; yet now, after his death, his autobiography goes forth to the world showing that his whole life was a gigantic wretchedness. We have seen men go out with mineralogist's hammer, and geologist's pry, and botanist's knife, and ornithologist's gun, and storm the kingdom of nature in her barred castles of cave, and grove, and forest ; and if there is any heaven on earth, it is that. With your eyes prepared for all beautiful sights, and your ears for all sweet sounds, and your soul for all great thoughts, if you go forth in the place where God breathes in the aroma of flowers, and talks in the wind's rustling, and sings in the roar of forest and mountain cataract, then you know why Linnæus spent his life amid plants, and Cuvier found intelligent converse among beasts, and Werner grew exhilarant among minerals, and Audubon revelled among birds, and Agassiz found untravelled worlds of thought in a fish. But every man who has testified, after trying the learning and science of the world for a solace, testified that it is an insufficient portion. The philosopher has often wept in astronomer's observatory, and chemist's laboratory, and botanist's herbarium. There are times when the soul dives deeper than the fish, and soars higher than the bird, and though it may be enraptured with the beauties of the natural world, it will long after trees of life that never wither, and fountains that never dry up, and stars that shall shine after the glories of our earthly nights have gone out for ever. O, what discontents, what jealousies, what uncontrollable hate has sprung up among those who depended upon their literary success. How often have writers, with their pens plunged into the hearts of their rivals—pens sharper than scymetars, striking deeper than bayonets. Voltaire hated Rousseau. Charles Lamb could not endure Coleridge. Waller warred against Cowley. The hatred of Pluto and Zenophon is as immortal as their works. Corneille had an utter contempt for Racine. Have you ever been in Westminster Abbey ? In the "Poet's Corner," in Westminster Abbey, sleep Drayton the poet, and a little way off, Goldie, who said the former was not a poet. There sleep Dryden,

and a little way off, poor Shadwell, who pursued him with a fiend's fury. There is Pope, and a little way off is John Dennis, his implacable enemy. They never before came so near together without quarrelling. Byron had all that genius could give a man, and that literary applause could give a man, and yet a later poet most graphically describes both his genius and his grief by saying :

The nations gazed, and wondered much, and praised :  
Critics before him fell in humble plight,  
Confounded fell : and made debasing signs  
To catch his eye ; and stretched, and swelled themselves  
To bursting nigh, to utter bulky words  
Of admiration vast : and many, too—  
Many that aimed to imitate his flight,  
With weaker wing—unearthly fluttering made,  
And gave abundant sport to after days.

Great man ! the nations gazed, and wondered much,  
And praised : and many called his evil good.  
Wits wrote in favour of his wickedness :  
And kings to do him honour took delight.  
Thus full of titles, flattery, honour, fame :  
Beyond desire, beyond ambition full,  
He died—He died of what ? Of wretchedness.  
Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump  
Of fame ; drank early, deeply drank ; drank draughts  
That common millions might have quenched—then died  
Of thirst, because there was no more to drink.

I come to learn one more lesson from my subject, and that is *that there is no comfort in the life of a voluptuary*. I dare not draw aside the curtain that hides the excesses into which Solomon's dissoluteness plunged him. Though he waved a sceptre over others, there arose in his own soul a tyrant that mastered him. With a mandate that none dare disobey, he laid the whole land under tribute to his iniquity. Delilah sheared the locks of that Samson. From that princely seraglio there went forth a ruinous blight on the whole nation's chastity ; but after awhile remorse, with feet of fire,

leaped upon his soul, and with body exhausted, and loathsome, and dropping apart with putrefaction, he staggers out from the hell of his own iniquity to give warning to others. O how many have ventured out on that wild sea of sensuality, driven by fierce winds of passion, hurled against rocks, swallowed in the whirl of hell's maelstrom ; that was the last of them. No ! that was not the last of them. Everlastingly ruined, with their passions unsubdued and burning on the soul fiercer than unquenchable fire, they shall writhe in a torture that shall make the cheek of darkness pale, and utter a blasphemy that shall shock devil's damned. O how many young men have gone on that path of sin because it seemed blooming with tropical splendour, and the sky was bright, and the air was balm, and from the castles that stood on the shore of glittering seas there came ringing up laughter as merry as the waves that dashed on the crags beneath. By some infernal spell their eye was blinded and their ear was stopped, or they would have heard the clank of chains and the howl of woe, and across their vision would have passed spectres of the dead, with shrouds gathered up about faces blistered with pain, and eyes starting from their sockets in agony. But, alas ! they saw it not, they heard it not, until from the slippery places the long, lean, skeleton hands of despair reached up and snatched them down, destroyed without despair ! Has this sorcerer cast its eye on you ? O young man, have you been once and again to the places were the pure never go ? Have you turned your back upon a mother's prayer and a sister's love, and while I speak does your conscience begin to toll dismally the burial of your purity and honour ? *Put back now or never.* Put back ! That shadow that falls upon your soul is from no passing cloud, but from a night deep, starless, eternal. God's eye watcheth thy footsteps. A little further on and no tears can wash out thy sin, and no prayer will bring a pardon. Put back now or never ! I tear off the garlands which hide this death's head, and hold before you to-day the reeking skull of sinful pleasure. Nations have gone down under this sin. Exhumed cities on broken pillars, and on temple walls have

preserved in infamous sculpture the memory of scenes before which the antiquarian turns his head and asks if there be a God where so long has slept His vengeance. The world still trembles under the weight of this behemoth of iniquity, and from the myriad graves in which it holds the scarred carcasses of the slain lifts up its hands, crying : " How long, O Lord, how long ?" From Christian circles, from the very altars of God, the ranks of ruin are made up. They march on with scorched feet over a pathway of fire, the ground trembling with earthquake, and the air hot with the breath of woe, and sulphureous with the fleet lightnings of God's wrath. Scorpions strike out at every step, and the " worm that never dies" lifts its awful crest, with horrid folds to crush the debauched. O, there is no peace in the life of a voluptuary. Solomon, answers. " None ! none !"

But, my friends, if there is no complete satisfaction in worldly office, in worldly wealth, in worldly learning, in sinful indulgence—where is there any ? Has God turned us out on a desert to die ? Ah, no ; look at this one that comes this morning—this fair one. Immortal garlands on her brow. The song of heaven bursting from her lips ! " Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." In Christ is peace. In Christ is pardon. In Christ is everlasting joy, and nowhere else.

" Substantial comfort will not grow,  
In nature's barren soil ;  
All we can boast till Christ we know,  
Is vanity and toil.

" But where the Lord has planted grace,  
And made his glories known ;  
There fruits of heavenly joy and peace,  
Are found, and there alone."



## SALVE FOR THE SORE HEART.

*"And his disciples went and told Jesus."*—MATT. xiv. 12.

AN outrageous assassination has just taken place. To appease a revengeful woman, King Herod ordered the death of that noble, self-sacrificing Christian, John the Baptist. The group of disciples were thrown into grief and dismay. They felt themselves utterly defenceless. There was no authority to which they could appeal, and yet grief must always find expression. If there be no human ear to hear it, then the agonized soul will cry it aloud to the winds, and the woods, and the waters. But there was an ear that was willing to listen. There is a tender pathos, and at the same time a most admirable picture, in the words of my text: "They went and told Jesus." He could understand their grief, and He immediately soothed it. Our burdens are not more than half so heavy to carry if another shoulder is thrust under the other end of them. Here we find Christ, His brow shadowed with grief, standing amid the group of disciples, who, with tears, and violent gesticulations, and wringing of hands, and outcry of bereavement, are expressing their woe. Raphael, with his skilful brush putting upon the wall of a palace some scene of sacred story, gave not so skilful a stroke as when the plain hand of the evangelist writes: "They went and told Jesus."

The old Goths and Vandals came down from the North of Europe, and they upset the gardens, and they broke down the altars, and swept away everything that was good and beautiful. So there is ever and anon in the history of all the sons and daughters of our race an incursion of rough-handed troubles that come to plunder, and ransack, and put to the torch all that men highly prize. There is no cave so deeply cleft into the mountain as to allow us shelter, and the foot of fleetest courser cannot bear us beyond the quick pursuit. The arrows they put to the string fly with unerring dart, until we fall pierced and stunned. It seems to me that there has

never been so many trials in my congregation as now ; so many bereaved hearts ; so many borne down in worldly and spiritual trouble. But I feel that I bring to you a most appropriate message. I mean to bind up all your griefs into a bundle, and set them on fire with a spark from God's altar. The same prescription that cured the sorrow of the disciples will cure all your heart-aches. I have read that when Godfrey and his army marched out to capture Jerusalem, as they came over the hills, at the first flash of the pinnacles of that beautiful city, the army that had marched in silence lifted a shout that made the earth tremble. O, you soldiers of Jesus Christ, marching on toward heaven, I would that today, by some gleam of the palace of God's mercy and God's strength, you might be lifted into great rejoicing, and that before this service is ended you might raise one glad hosanna to the Lord.

In the first place, I commend the behaviour of these disciples to all those in this audience *who are sinful and unpar-doned*. There comes a time in almost every man's history when he feels from some source that he has an erring nature. The thought may not have such heft as to fell him. It may be only like the flash in an evening cloud just after a very hot summer day. One man, to get rid of that impression, will go to prayer ; another will stimulate himself by ardent spirits, and another man will dive deeper in secularities. But sometimes a man cannot get rid of these impressions. The fact is, when a man finds out that his eternity is poised upon a perfect uncertainty, and that the next moment his foot may slip, he must do something violent to make himself forget where he stands, or else fly for refuge. If there are any here who have resolved that they would rather die of this awful cancer of sin than to have the heavenly Surgeon cut it out, let me say, my dear brother, you mingle for yourself a bitter cup. You fly in the face of your everlasting interests. You crouch under a yoke and you bite the dust, when, this moment, you might rise up a crowned conqueror. Driven, and perplexed, and harrassed as you have been by sin, go and tell Jesus. To relax the grip of death from your soul, and



plant your unshackled feet upon the golden throne, Christ let the tortures of Calvary's mount transfix Him. *With the beam of his own Cross* He will break down the door of your dungeon. From the thorns of His own crown He will pick enough gems to make your brow blaze with eternal victory. In every tear on His wet cheek ; in every gash of His side ; in every long, blackening-mark of laceration from shoulder to shoulder ; in the grave-shattering, heaven-storming death groan, I hear Him say : " Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "O," but you say, "instead of curing my wound you want to make another wound, namely, that of conviction." Have you never known a surgeon to come and find a chronic disease, and then with sharp caustic burn it all out ? So the grace of God comes to the old sore sin. It has long been rankling there, but by Divine grace it is burned out through these fires of conviction, "the flesh coming again as the flesh on a little child ;" "where sin abounded, grace much more aboundeth." With the ten thousand unpardoned sins of your life, this morning go and tell Jesus. You will never get rid of your sins in any other way ; and remember that the broad invitation which I extend to you will not always be extended. I was reading of King Alfred, who, in the days long before the modern time-pieces were invented, used to divide the day into three parts, eight hours each, and then had three wax candles, By the time the first candle had burned to the socket, eight hours had gone, and when the second candle had burned to the socket, another eight hours had gone, and when all the three candles were gone out, then the day had passed. O, that some of us, instead of calculating our days, and nights, and years by any earthly time-piece, might calculate them by the numbers of opportunities and mercies which are burning down and burning out, never to be relighted, lest at last we be amid the foolish virgins who cry : "Our lamps have gone out."

Again : I commend the behaviour of the disciples *to all who are tempted*. I have heard men in mid-life say they had never been led into temptation. If you have not felt temptation it is because you have not tried to do right. A man

hopped and handcuffed, as long as he lies quietly, does not test the power of the chain ; but when he rises up, and with determination resolves to snap the handcuffs or break the hople, then he finds the power of the iron. And there are men who have been for ten, and twenty, and thirty years bound hand and foot of evil habit, who have never felt the power of the chain, because they have never tried to break it. It is very easy to go down with the stream and with the wind, lying on your oars ; but you just turn around, and try to go against the wind and the tide, and you will find it is a very different matter. As long as we go down the current of our evil habits we seem to get along quite smoothly ; but after awhile we turn around, and head the other way toward Christ, and pardon, and heaven ; O, then how we have to lay to the oars ! You all have your temptation. You have one kind, you another, you another, not one person escaping. It is all folly for you to say to some one : "I could not be tempted as you are." The lion thinks it is so strange that the fish should be caught with a hook. The fish thinks it is so strange that the lion should be caught with a trap. You see some man with a cold, phlegmatic temperament, and you say : "I suppose that man has not any temptation." Yes, as much as you have. In his phlegmatic nature he has a temptation to indolence, and censoriousness, and over-eating and drinking ; to sink down into a great latitude and longitude of fattiness ; a temptation to ignore the great work of life ; a temptation to lay down an obstacle in the way of all good enterprises. The temperament decides the style of temptation ; but sanguine or lymphatic, you will have temptation. Satan has a grappling-hook just fitted for your soul. A man never lives beyond the reach of temptation. You say when a man gets to be seventy or eighty years of age he is safe from all satanic assault. You are very much mistaken. A man at eighty-five years of age has as many temptations as a man at twenty-five. They are only different styles of temptation. Ask the aged Christian whether he is never assaulted of the powers of darkness. If you think you have conquered the power of temptation you are very much mis-

taken. I was reading this morning of Pope Sixtus, who when he was cardinal, pretended he was very weak and sickly. and if they elevated him to the office or chair of the Pope, he would only occupy it a little while, for he would soon be gone. He crawled upon his crutches to the chair, and once having attained it, he was strong again. He said : " It was well for me while I was looking for the keys of St. Peter that I should stoop ; but now I have found them, why should I stoop any longer ? " and he threw away his crutches and was well again. How illustrative of the power of temptation. You think it is a weak and crippled influence ; but give it a chance and it will be a pope, it will be a tyrant in your soul, it will grind you to atoms. No man has finally and for ever overcome temptation until he has left the world. But what are you to do with these temptations ? Tell everybody about them ? Ah, what a silly man you would be ! As well might a commander in a fort send word to the enemy which gate of the castle is least barred, as for you to go and tell what all your frailties are, and what all your temptations are. The world will only caricature you, will only scoff at you. What then, must a man do ? When the wave strikes him with terrific dash, shall we have nothing to hold on to ? In this contest with " the world, the flesh and the devil, " shall a man have no help ? no counsel ? My text indicates something different. In those eyes that wept with the Bethany sisters. I see shining hope. In that voice which spoke until the grave broke and the widow of Nain had back her lost son, and the sea slept, and sorrow stupendous woke up in the arms of rapture, in that voice I hear the command and the promise : " Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee. " Why should you carry your burdens any longer ? O, you weary soul, Christ has been in all this conflict. He says : " My grace shall be sufficient for you. You shall not be tempted above that you are able to bear. " Therefore with all your temptations, go, as these disciples did, and tell Jesus.

Again : I commend the behaviour of the disciples to all those *who are abused, and slandered, and persecuted.* When

Herod put John to death, the disciples knew that their own heads were not safe. And do you know that every John has a Herod? There are persons in life who do not wish you very well. Your misfortunes are honeycombs to them. Through their teeth they hiss at you, misinterpret your motives, and would be glad to see you upset. No man gets through life without having a pommelling. Some slander comes after you, horned, and tusked, and hoofed, to gore and trample you; and what are you to do? I tell you plainly that all who serve Christ must suffer persecution. It is the worst sign in the world for you to be able to say: "I haven't an enemy in the world." A woe is pronounced in the Bible against the one of whom everybody speaks well. If you are at peace with the whole world, and everybody likes you and approves your work, it is because you are an idler in the Lord's vineyard, and are not doing your duty. All those who have served Christ, however eminent, have been maltreated at some stage of their experience. You know it was so in the time of George Whitfield, when he stood and invited men into the kingdom of God. What did the learned Doctor Johnson say of him? He pronounced him a miserable mountebank. How was it when Robert Hall stood and spoke as no uninspired man ever did speak of the glories of heaven? and as he stood Sabbath after Sabbath preaching on these themes his face kindled with the glory. John Foster, a Christian man, said of this man: "Robert Hall is only acting, and the smile on his face is a reflection of his own vanity." John Wesley turned all England upside down with Christian reform, and yet the punsters were after him, and the meanest jokes in England were perpetrated about John Wesley. What is true of the pulpit is true of the pew; it is true of the street, it is true of the shop, and the store. All who live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. And I set it down as the very worst sign in all your Christian experience, if you are, any of you, at peace with all the world. The religion of Christ is war! It is a challenge to "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and if you will buckle on the whole armour of God, you will find a great host disputing

your path between this and heaven. But what are you to do when you are assaulted, and slandered, and abused, as I suppose nearly all of you have been in your life? Go out and hunt up the slanderer? O, no, silly man. While you are explaining away a falsehood in one place, fifty people will just have heard of it in other places. *I counsel you to another course.* While you are not to admit any opportunity of setting yourselves right, I want to tell you this morning of One who had the hardest things said about Him, whose sobriety was disputed, whose mission was scouted, whose companionship was denounced, who was pursued as a babe, and spit upon as a man, who was howled at after he was dead. I will have you go unto Him with your bruised soul, in some humble, child-like prayer, saying; "I see Thy wounds—wounds of head, wounds of feet, wounds of heart. Now, look at my wounds and see what I have suffered, and through what battles I am going, and by those wounds of Thine, sympathize with these." And He will sympathize, and He will help. Go and tell Jesus!

Again: I commend the behaviour of the disciples to all *who may have been bereaved.* How many in garb of mourning! If you could stand at this point where I am standing and look off upon this audience, how many signals of sorrow you would behold. God has His own way of taking apart a family. We must get out of the way for coming generations. We must get off the stage that others may come on, and for this reason there is a long procession reaching down all the time into the valley of shadows. This matter of emigration from time into eternity is so vast an enterprise, that we cannot understand it. Every hour we hear the clang of the sepulchral gate. The sod must be broken. The ground must be ploughed for resurrection harvest. Eternity must be peopled. The dust must press our eyelids. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." This emigration from time into eternity keeps three-fourths of the families of the earth in desolation. The air is rent with farewells, and the black-tasselled vehicles of death rumble through every street. The body of the child that was folded so closely to the

mother's heart is put away in the cold and the darkness. The laughter freezes to the girl's lip, and the rose scatters. The boy in the harvest field of Shunam says: "My head, my head," and they carry him home to die on the lap of his mother. Widowhood stands with tragedies of woe struck into the pallor of the cheek. Orphanage cries in vain for father and mother. O, the grave is cruel! With teeth of stone, it clutches for its prey. Between the closing gates of the sepulchre, our hearts are mangled and crushed. Is there any earthly solace? None. We come to the obsequies, we sit with the grief-stricken, we talk pathetically to their soul; but soon the obsequies have passed, the carriages have left us at the door, the friends who stayed for a few days are gone, and the heart sits in desolation listening for the little feet that will never again patter through the hall, or looking for the entrance of those who will never come again—sighing into the darkness. Ever and anon coming on some book or garment, or little shoe or picture, that arouses former association, almost killing the heart. Long days and nights of suffering that wear out the spirit, and expunge the bright lines of life, and give haggardness to the face, and draw the flesh tight down over the cheek-bone, and draw dark lines under the sunken eye, and the hand is tremulous, and the voice is husky and uncertain, and the grief is wearing, grinding, accumulating, exhausting. Now, what are such to do? Are they merely to look up into a brazen and unpitying heaven? Are they to walk a blasted field unfed of stream, unsheltered by overarching trees? Has God turned us out on the barren commons to die? O, no! no! no! He has not. He comes with sympathy, and kindness, and love. He understands all our grief. He sees the height, and the depth, and the length, and the breadth of it. He is the only one that can fully sympathize. Go and tell Jesus. Sometimes when we have trouble we go to our friends and we explain it, and they try to sympathize; but they do not understand it. They cannot understand it. But Christ sees all over it, and all through it. He not only counts the tears and records the groans, but before the tears started, before the groans began,

Christ saw the inmost hiding-place of your sorrow, and He takes it, and He weighs it, and He measures it, and He pities it, with an all absorbing pity, Bone of our bone. Flesh of our flesh. Heart of our heart. Sorrow of our sorrow. As long as He remembers Lazarus's grave He will stand by you in the cemetery. As long as He remembers His own heart-break, He will stand by you in the laceration of your affections. When he forgets the foot-sore way, the sleepless nights, the weary body, the exhausted mind, the awful cross, the solemn grave, then He will forget you, but not until then.

Often when we were in trouble we sent for our friends ; but they were far away, they could not get to us. We wrote to them : "Come right away," or telegraphed : "Take the next train." They came at last, yet were a great while in coming. *But Christ is always near*—before you, behind you, within you. No mother ever threw her arms around her child with such warmth and ecstasy of affection as Christ has shown towards you. Close at hand—nearer than the staff upon which you lean, nearer than the cup you put to your lip, nearer than the handkerchief with which you wipe away your tears—I preach Him an ever present, all sympathizing, compassionate Jesus. How can you stay away one moment from Him with your griefs ? Go now ! Go and tell Jesus !

It is often that our friends have no power to relieve us. They would very much like to do it ; but they cannot disentangle our finances, they cannot cure our sickness and raise our dead ; but glory be to God that He to whom the disciples went has all power in heaven and on earth, and at our call He will balk our calamities, and, at just the right time, in the presence of an applauding earth and a resounding heaven, will raise our dead. He will do it. He is mightier than Herod. He is swifter than the storm. He is grander than the sea. He is vaster than eternity. And every sword of God's omnipotence will leap from its scabbard, and all the resources of infinity be exhausted, rather than that God's child shall not be delivered when he cries to Him for rescue. Suppose your child was in trouble : how much would you

endure to get him out ? You would go through any hardship. You would say : " I don't care what it will cost ; I must get him out of that trouble." Do you think God is not so good a father as you ! Seeing you are in trouble, and having all power, will He not stretch out His arm and deliver you ? He will. He is mighty to save. He can level the mountain and divide the sea, and can extinguish the fire and save the soul. Not dim of eye, not weak of arm, not feeble of resources, but with all eternity and the universe at His feet. Go and tell Jesus. Will you ? Ye whose cheeks are wet with the night-dew of the grave ; ye who cannot look up ; ye whose hearts are dried with the breath of a sirocco ; in the name of the religion of Jesus Christ, which lifts every burden, and wipes away every tear, and delivers every captive, and lightens every darkness, I implore you now, *go and tell Jesus.*

I was reading of a little child who went with her father, a sea captain, to sea, and when the first storm came the little child was very much frightened, and in the night rushed out of the cabin and said : " Where is father ? where is father ?" Then they told her ; " Father is on deck guiding the vessel and watching the storm." The little child immediately returned to her berth and said : " It's all right, for father's on deck, O, ye who are tossed and driven in this world, up by the mountains and down by the valleys, and at your wits' end, I want you to know the Lord God is guiding the ship. Your Father is on deck. He will bring you through the darkness into the harbour. Trust in the Lord. Go and tell Jesus. Let me say that if you do not you will have no comfort here, and you will for ever be an outcast and a wanderer. Your life will be a failure. Your death will be a sorrow. Your eternity will be a disaster. But if you go to Him for pardon and sympathy, all is well. Everything will brighten up, and joy will come to the heart, and sorrow will depart ; your sins will be forgiven and your foot will touch the upward paths ; and the shining messengers that report above what is done here will tell it until the great arches of God resound



with the glad tidings, if now, with contrition and full trustfulness of soul, you will only go and tell Jesus.

But I am oppressed, when I look over this audience, at the prospect that some may not take this counsel, and go away unblessed. I cannot help asking what will be the destiny of these people? So I never care whether it comes into the text or not: I never leave my place on this platform without telling them that now is the time, and to some, perhaps, the last.

Xerxes looked off on his army. There were two million men—perhaps the finest army ever marshalled. Xerxes rode along the lines, reviewed them, came back, stood on some high point, looked off upon the two million men, and burst into tears. At that moment, when every one supposed he would be in the greatest exultation, he broke down in grief. They asked him why he wept. “Ah,” he said: “I weep at the thought that so soon all this host will be gone.” So I stand looking off upon this host of immortal men and women, and realize the fact, as perhaps no man can, unless he has been in a similar position, that soon the places which know you now will know you no more, and you will be gone—*whither?* WHITHER? There is a stirring idea which the poet put in very peculiar verse when he said:

“’Tis not for man to trifle: life is brief,  
 And sin is here;  
 Our age is but the falling of a leaf—  
 A dropping tear.  
 Not many lives, but only one have we—  
 One, only one;  
 How sacred should that one life ever be—  
 That narrow span.”



## THE RESERVOIRS SALTED.

*“And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord: I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day.”—2 KINGS ii. 19—22.*

IT is difficult to estimate how much of the prosperity and health of a city are dependent upon good water. The day when, through well-laid pipes and from safe reservoir, an abundance of water is brought into the city, is appropriately celebrated with oration and pyrotechnic display. Thank God every day for clear, bright, beautiful, sparkling water, as it drops in the shower, or tosses up in the fountain, or rushes out at the hydrant.

The city of Jericho, notwithstanding all its physical and commercial advantages, was lacking in this important element. There was enough water, but it was diseased, and the people were crying out by reason thereof. Elisha the prophet comes to the rescue. He says: “Get me a new cruse; fill it with salt and bring it to me.” So the cruse of salt was brought to the prophet, and I see him walking out to the general reservoir, and he takes the salt and throws it into the reservoir, and lo! all impurities depart, through a supernatural and Divine influence, and the waters are good, and fresh, and clear, and all the people clap their hands and lift up their faces in their gladness. Water for Jericho—clear bright, beautiful, God-given water!

For several Sabbath mornings I have pointed out to you the fountains of municipal corruption, and this morning I propose to show you what are the means for the rectification of those fountains. There are four or five kinds of salt that

have a cleansing tendency. So far as God may help me this morning, I shall bring a cruse of salt to the work, and empty it into the great reservoir of municipal crime, sin, shame, ignorance, and abomination.

In this work of cleansing our cities, I have first to remark that *there is a work for the broom and the shovel that nothing else can do.* There always has been an intimate connection between iniquity and dirt. The filthy parts of the great cities are always the most iniquitous parts. *The first thing that a bad man does* when he is converted is thoroughly to wash himself. There were, this morning, on the way to the different churches, thousands of men in proper apparel who, before their conversion, were unfit in their Sabbath dress. When on the Sabbath I see a man uncleanly in his dress, my suspicions in regard to his moral character are aroused, and they are always well founded. So as to allow no excuse for lack of ablution, God has cleft the continents with rivers and lakes, and has sunk five great oceans, and all the world ought to be clean. Away, then, with the dirt from our cities, not only because the physical health needs an ablution, because all the great moral and religious interests of the cities demand it as a positive necessity. A filthy city always has been and always will be a wicked city.

Another corrective influence that he would bring to bear upon the evils of our great cities is *a Christian printing press.* The newspapers of any place are the test of its morality or immorality. The newsboy, who runs along the street with a roll of papers under his arm, is a tremendous force that cannot be turned aside nor resisted, and at his every step the city is elevated or degraded. The hungry, all-devouring public mind must have something to read, and upon editors, and authors, and book-publishers, and parents, and teachers rest the responsibility of what they shall read. Almost every man you meet has a book in his hand or a newspaper in his pocket. What book is it you have in your hand? What newspaper is it you have in your pocket? Ministers may preach, reformers may plan, philanthropists may toil for the elevation of the suffering and the criminal, but until all the

newspapers of the land and all the booksellers of the land set themselves against an iniquitous literature—until then we will be fighting against fearful odds.

Every time the printing cylinders turn, they make the earth quake. From them goes forth a thought like an angel of light to feed and bless the world, or like an angel of darkness to smite it with corruption, and sin, and shame, and death. May God, by His omnipotent Spirit, purify and elevate the printing press!

I go further, and say that *we must depend upon the school for a great deal of correcting influence.* The community can no more afford to have ignorant men in its midst than it can afford to have uncaged hyenas. Ignorance is the mother of hydra-headed crime. Intellectual darkness is generally the precursor of moral darkness. I know there are educated outlaws—men who, through their sharpness of intellect, are made more dangerous. They use their fine penmanship in signing other people's names, and their science in ingenious burglaries, and their fine manners in adroit libertinism. *They go their round of sin* with well-cut apparel, and dangling jewellery, and watches of eighteen carats, and kid gloves. They are refined, educated, magnificent villains. But that is the exception. It is generally the case that the criminal classes are as ignorant as they are wicked. For the proof of what I say, go into the prisons and the penitentiaries, and look upon the men and women incarcerated. The dishonesty in the eye, the low passion in the lip, are not more conspicuous than the ignorance in the forehead. The ignorant classes are always the dangerous classes. Demagogues marshal them. They are helmless, and are driven before the gale.

When parents are so bestial as to neglect the duty of educating their children, I say the law, with a strong hand, at the same time, with a gentle hand, ought to lead these little ones into the light of intelligence and good morals. It was a beautiful *tableau* when in our city a few weeks ago, a swarthy policeman, having picked up a lost child in the street, was found appeasing its cry by a stick of candy he

had bought at the apple-stand. That was well done, and beautifully done. But, O! these thousands of little ones through our streets, who are crying for the bread of knowledge and intelligence. Shall we not give it to them? The officers of the law ought to go down into the cellars, and up into the garrets, and bring out these benighted little ones, and put them under educational influences; after they have passed through the bath and under the comb, putting before them the spelling-book, and teaching them to read the Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Our city ought to be father and mother both to these outcast little ones. As a recipe for the cure of much of the woe, and want, and crime of our city, I give the words which Thorwaldsen had chiselled on the open scroll in the hand of the statue of John Guttenberg, the inventor of the art of printing: "Let there be light!"

Still further: *reformatory societies are an important element in this rectification of the public fountains.* Without calling any of them by name, I refer more especially to those which recognize the physical as well as the moral woes of the world. There was *pathos and a great deal of common sense* in what the poor woman said to Dr. Guthrie when he was telling her what a very good woman she ought to be. "O," she said, "if you were as hungry and cold as I am, you could think of nothing else." I believe the great want of our city is the Gospel and something to eat! Faith and repentance are of infinite importance; but they cannot satisfy an empty stomach! You have to go forth in this work with the bread of eternal life in your right hand, and the bread of this life in your left hand, and then you can touch them, imitating the Lord Jesus Christ, who first broke the bread and fed the multitudes in the wilderness, and then began to preach, recognizing the fact that while people are hungry they will not listen, and they will not repent. We want more common sense in the distribution of our charities; fewer magnificent theories, and more hard work. In the last war, a few hours after the battle of Antietam, I had a

friend who was moving over the field, and who saw a good Christian man distributing tracts. My friend said to him : "This is no time to distribute tracts. There are three thousand men around here who are bleeding to death, who have not had bandages put on. Take care of their bodies, then give them tracts." That was well said. Look after the woe of the body, and then you will have some success in looking after the woes of the soul.

Still further : *the great remedial influence is the Gospel of Christ.* Take that down through the lanes of suffering. Take that down amid the hovels of sin. Take that up amid the mansions and palaces of your city. That is the salt that can cure all the poisoned fountains of public iniquity.

Think of the thousands of children without any home. They sleep under the stoops, in the burned-out safe, in the waggons in the street, on the barges, wherever they can get a board to cover them. And in the summer they sleep all night long in the parks. Their destitution is well set forth by an incident. A city missionary asked one of them ; "Where is your home ?" Said he : "I don't have no home, sir." "Well, where are your father and mother ?" "They are dead, sir." "Did you ever hear of Jesus Christ ?" "No, I don't think I ever heard of Him ?" "Did you ever hear of God ?" "Yes, I've heard of God. Some of the poor people think it kind of lucky at night to say something over about that before they go to sleep. Yes, sir, I've heard of Him." Think of a conversation like that in a Christian city !

How many are waiting for you to come out in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ and rescue them from wretchedness here ! A man was trying to talk with a group of these outcasts, and read the Bible, and trying to comfort them, and he said : "My dear boys, when your father and your mother forsake you, who will take you up ?" They shouted : "The perlice, sir ; the perlice !" O that the Church of God had arms long enough and heart warm enough to take them up. How many of them there are ! As I was thinking of the subject this morning, it seemed to me as though

there were a great brink, and that these little ones with cut and torn feet were coming on towards it. And here is a group of orphans. O fathers and mothers, what do you think of these fatherless and motherless little ones. No hand at home to take care of their apparel, no heart to pity them. Said one to one, when the mother died: "Who will take care of my clothes now?" The little ones are thrown out in this great, cold world. They are shivering on the brink like lambs on the verge of a precipice. Does not your blood run cold as they go over it?

And here is another group that comes on towards the precipice. They are the children of besotted parents. They are worse off than orphans. Look at that pale cheek: woe bleached it. Look at that gash across the forehead: the father struck it. Hear that heart-piercing cry: a drunken mother's blasphemy compelled it. And we come out and we say: "O ye suffering, peeled and blistered ones, we come to help you." "Too late!" cry thousands of voices. "The path we travel is steep down, and we can't stop. Too late!" and *we catch our breath* and we make a terrific outcry. "Too late!" is echoed from the garret, and the cellar, and the gin-shop. "Too late!" It *is* too late, and they go over.

Here is another group, an army of neglected children. They come on towards the brink, and every time they step ten thousand hearts break. The ground is red with the blood of their feet. The air is heavy with their groans. Their ranks are being filled up from all the houses of iniquity and shame. Skeleton Despair pushes them on towards the brink. The death-knell has already begun to toll, and the angels of God hover like birds over the plunge of a cataract. While these children are on the brink they halt, and throw out their hands, and cry: "Help! help!" O Church of God, will you help? Men and women bought by the blood of the Son of God, will you help? while Christ cries from the heavens: "Save them from going down; I am the ransom."

I stopped the other day in the street and just looked at the face of one of those little ones. Have you ever examined

the faces of the neglected children of the poor? Other children have gladness in their faces. When a group of them rush across the road, it seems as though a spring gust had unloosened an orchard of apple blossoms. But these children of the poor. There is but little ring in their laughter, and it stops quick, as though some bitter memory tripped it. They have an old walk. They do not skip or run up on the lumber just for the pleasure of leaping down. They never bathed in the mountain stream. They never waded in the brook for pebbles. They never chased the butterfly across the lawn, putting their hat right down where it was. Childhood has been dashed out of them. Want waved its wizard wand above the manger of their birth, and withered leaves are lying where God intended a budding giant of battle. Once in awhile one of these children gets out. Here is one for instance. At ten years of age he is sent out by his parents, who say to him: "Here is a basket—now go off and beg and steal." The boy says: "I cant steal." They kick him into a corner. That night he puts his swollen head into the straw; but a voice comes from heaven, saying: "Courage, poor boy, courage." Covering up his head from the bestiality, and stopping his ear from the cursing, he gets on and up better and better. He washes his face clean at the public hydrant. With a few pennies got at running errands, he gets a better coat. That night the boy says: "*God help me, I can't go back;*" and quicker than ever mother flew at the cry of a child's pain, the Lord responds from the heavens: "Courage, poor boy, courage." His bright face gets him a position. After awhile he is a second clerk. Years pass on, and he is first clerk. Years pass on. The glory of young manhood is on him. He comes into the firm. He goes on from one business success to another. He has achieved great fortune. He is the friend of the Church of God, the friend of all good institutions, and one day he stands talking to the Board of Trade or to the Chamber of Commerce. People say: "Do you know who that is? Why, that is a merchant prince, he was once a homeless boy." But God says in regard to him something better than that: "These are they



which came out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." O, for some one to write the history of boy heroes and girl heroes who have triumphed over want and starvation, and filth and rags. Yea, the record has already been made—made by the hand of God; and when these shall come at last with songs and rejoicing, it will take a very broad banner to hold the names of all the battle-fields on which they got the victory. O, I tell you they are worth saving.

Some years ago, a roughly-clad, ragged boy came into my brother's office in New York, and said: "Mr. Talmage, lend me five dollars." My brother said: "Who are you?" The boy replied: "I am nobody. Lend me five dollars." "What do you want to do with five dollars?" "Well," the boy replied, "my mother is sick and poor, and I want to go into the newspaper business, and I shall get a home for her, and I will pay you back." My brother gave him the five dollars, of course never expecting to see it again; but he said: "When will you pay it?" The boy said: "I will pay it in six months, sir." Time went by, and one day a lad came into my brother's office, and said: "There's your five dollars." "What do you mean? What five dollars?" inquired my brother. "Don't you remember that a boy came in here six months ago and wanted to borrow five dollars to go into the newspaper business?" "O yes, I remember. Are you the lad?" "Yes," he replied. "I have got along nicely. I have got a nice home for my mother (she is sick yet,) and yet I am as well clothed as you are, and there's your five dollars." *O was he not worth saving?* Why, that lad is worth fifty such boys as I have sometimes seen moving in elegant circles, never put to any use for God or man. Worth saving! I go farther than that, and tell you they are not only worth saving, but they are being saved. In one reform school, through which two thousand of these little ones passed, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-five turned out well. In other words, only five of the two thousand turned out badly. There are thousands of them who, through Christian societies, have been translated to beautiful homes

all over this land, and there are many who, through the rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, have already won the crown. A little girl was found in the streets of Baltimore and taken into one of the reform societies, and they said to her: "What is your name?" She said: "My name is Mary." "What is your other name?" She said: "I don't know." So they took her into the reform society, and as they did not know her last name they always called her "Mary Lost," since she had been picked up out of the street. But she grew on, and after awhile the Holy Spirit came to her heart, and she became a Christian child, and she changed her name; and when anybody asked her what her name was, she said: "It used to be Mary Lost; but now, since I have become a Christian, it is Mary Found."

For this vast multitude, are we willing to go forth from this morning's service, and *see what we can do*, employing all the agencies I have spoken of for the rectification of the poisoned fountains? We live in a beautiful city. The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage; and any man who does not like a residence in Brooklyn, must be a most uncomfortable and unreasonable man. But, my friends, the material prosperity of a city is not its chief glory. There may be fine houses and beautiful streets, and that all be the garniture of a sepulchre. Some of the most prosperous cities of the world have gone down, not one stone left upon another. But a city may be in ruins long before a tower has fallen, or a column has crumbled, or a tomb has been defaced. When in a city the churches of God are full of cold formalities and inanimate religion; when the houses of commerce are the abode of fraud and unholy traffic; when the streets are filled with crime unarrested, and sin unenlightened, and helplessness unpitied—that city is in ruins, though every church were a St. Peter's and every moneyed institution were a Bank of England, and every library were a British Museum, and every house had a porch like that of Rheims, and a roof like that of Amiens, and tower like that of Antwerp, and traceried windows like those of Freiburg.

My brethren, our pulses beat rapidly the time away, and soon we will be gone ; and what we have to do for the city in which we live we must do right speedily, or never do it at all. In that day, when those who have wrapped themselves in luxuries and despised the poor, shall come to shame and everlasting contempt, I hope it may be said of you and me that we gave bread to the hungry, and wiped away the tear of the orphan, and upon the wanderer of the street we opened the brightness and benediction of a Christian home ; and then, through our instrumentality, it shall be known on earth and in heaven, that Mary Lost become Mary Found !

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## GOOD-BYE TO THE WORLD.

*“ The time of my departure is at hand.”—2 TIM. iv. 6.*

THE way out of this world is so blocked up with coffin, and hearse, and undertaker's spade, and screw-driver, that the Christian can hardly think as he ought of the most cheerful passage in all his history. We hang black instead of white over the place where the good man gets his last victory, We stand weeping over a heap of chains which the freed soul has shaken off, and we say : “ Poor man ! What a pity it was he had to come to this.” Come to what ? By the time people have assembled at the obsequies, that man has been three days so happy that all the joy of earth accumulated would be wretchedness beside it ; and he might better weep over you because you have to stay, than you weep over him because he has to go. It is a fortunate thing that a good man does not have to wait to see his own obsequies, they would be so discordant with his own experience. If the Israelites should go back to Egypt and mourn over the brick-kilns they once left, they would not be any more silly than

that Christian who should forsake heaven and come down and mourn because he had to leave this world. Our ideas of the Christian's death are morbid and sickly. We look upon it as a dark hole in which a man stumbles when his breath gives out. This whole subject is odorous with varnish and disinfectants, instead of being sweet with mignonette. Paul, in my text, takes that great clod of a word, "death," and throws it away, and speaks of his "departure," a beautiful, bright, suggestive word, descriptive of every Christian's release.

Now, departure implies a starting-place, and a place of destination. When Paul left this world, what was the starting-point? It was a scene of great physical distress. It was the Tullianum, the lower dungeon of the Mamertine prison. The top dungeon was bad enough—it having no means of ingress or egress but through an opening in the top. Through that the prisoner was lowered, and through that came all the food, and air, and light received. It was a terrible place, that upper dungeon; but the Tullianum was the lower dungeon, and that was still more wretched, the only light, and the only air coming through the roof, and that roof the floor of the upper dungeon. That was Paul's last earthly residence. It was a dungeon just six feet and a-half high. It was a doleful place. It had the chill of long centuries of dampness. It was filthy with the long incarcerations of miserable wretches. It was there that Paul spent his last days on earth, and it is there that I see him to-day, in the fearful dungeon, shivering, blue with the cold, waiting for that old overcoat which he had sent for up to Troas, and which they had not yet sent down, notwithstanding he had written for it. If some skilful surgeon should go into that dungeon where Paul is incarcerated, we might find out what are the prospects of Paul's living through the rough imprisonment. In the first place, he is an old man, only two years short of seventy. At that very time when he most needs the warmth, and the sunlight, and the fresh air, *he is shut out from the sun.*

What are those scars on his ankles? Why, those were gotten when he was fast, his feet in the stocks. Every time

he turned, the flesh on his ankles started. What are those scars on his back? You know he was whipped five times, each time getting thirty-nine strokes—one hundred and ninety-five bruises on the back (count them!) made by the Jews with rods of elm wood, each one of the one hundred and ninety-five strokes bringing the blood. Look at Paul's face and look at his arms. Where did he get those bruises? I think it was when he was struggling ashore amid the shivered timbers of the shipwreck. I see a gash in Paul's side. Where did he get that? I think he got that in the tussle with highwaymen, for he had been in peril of robbers, and he had money of his own. He was a mechanic as well as an apostle, and I think the tents he made were as good as his sermons. There is a wanness about Paul's looks. What makes that? I think a part of that came from the fact that he was for twenty-four hours on a plank in the Mediterranean Sea, suffering terribly, before he was rescued; for he says positively: "I was a night and a day in the deep." O, worn-out, emaciated old man, surely you must be melancholy. No constitution could endure this and be cheerful; but I press my way through the prison until I come up close to where he is, and by the faint light that streams through the opening I see on his face a supernatural joy, and I bow before him and I say; "Aged man, how can you keep cheerful amid all this gloom?" His voice startles the darkness of the place as he cries out: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." Hark! what is that shuffling of feet in the upper dungeon? Why, Paul has an invitation to a banquet, and he is going to dine to-day with the King. Those shuffling feet are the feet of the executioners. They come and they cry down through the hole of the dungeon: "Hurry up, old man. Come now, get yourself ready." Why, Paul was ready. He had nothing to pack up. He had no baggage to take. He had been ready a good while. I see him rising up, and straightening his stiffened limbs, and pushing back his white hair from his creviced forehead, and see him looking up through the hole in the roof of the dungeon into the face of his executioner, and hear him say: "I am

now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." Then they lift him out of the dungeon, and they start with him to the place of execution. They say: "Hurry along, old man, or you will feel the weight of our spear. Hurry along." "How far is it," says Paul, "we have to travel?" "Three miles." O, three miles is a good way for an old man to travel after he has been whipped and crippled with maltreatment. But they soon get to the place of execution—Acquæ Salvia—and he is fastened to the pillar of martyrdom. It does not take any strength to tie him fast. He makes no resistance. O Paul, why not now strike for your life? You have a great many friends here. With that withered hand just launch the thunderbolt of the people upon those infamous soldiers. No! Paul was not going to interfere with his own coronation. He was too glad to go. I see him looking up in the face of his executioner, and as the grim official draws the sword, Paul calmly says: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." But I put my hand over my eyes. I want not to see that last struggle. *One sharp, keen stroke*, and Paul *does* go to the banquet, and Paul *does* dine with the King.

What a transition it was! From the malaria of Rome to the finest climate in all the universe—the zone of eternal beauty and health. His ashes were put in the catacombs of Rome, but in one moment the air of heaven bathed from his soul the last ache. From shipwreck, from dungeon, from the biting pain of the elm-wood rods, from the sharp sword of the headsman, he goes into the most brilliant assemblage of heaven, a king among kings, multitudes of the sainthood rushing out and stretching forth hands of welcome; for I do really think that, as on the right hand of God is Christ, so on the right hand of Christ is Paul, the second great in heaven.

He changed kings likewise. Before the hour of death, and up to the last moment, he was under Nero, the thick-necked, the cruel-eyed, the filthy-lipped; the sculptured features of that man bringing down to us, to this very day, the horrible possibilities of his nature—seated as he was amid pictured

marbles of Egypt, under a roof adorned with mother-o'pearl, in a dining-room which by machinery was kept whirling day and night with most bewitching magnificence ; his horses standing in stalls of solid gold, and the grounds around his palace lighted at night by his victims, who had been bedaubed with tar and pitch and then set on fire to illumine the darkness. That was Paul's king. But the next moment he goes into the realm of Him whose reign is love, and whose courts are paved with love, and whose throne is set on pillars of love, and whose sceptre is adorned with jewels of love, and whose palace is lighted with love, and whose lifetime is an eternity of love. When Paul was leaving so much on this side the pillar of martyrdom to gain so much on the other side, do you wonder at the cheerful valedictory of the text : "The time of my departure is at hand ?"

Now, why cannot all the old people of my congregation have the same holy glee as that aged man had ? Charles I., when he was combing his head, found a grey hair, and he sent it to the Queen as a great joke ; but old age is really no joke at all. For the last forty years you have been dreading that which ought to have been an exhilaration. You say you most fear the struggle at the moment the soul and body part. But millions have endured that moment, and why may not we as well. They got through with it, and so can we. Besides this, all medical men agree in saying that there is probably no struggle at all at the last moment,—not so much pain as the prick of a pin, the seeming signs of distress being altogether involuntary. But you say : "It is the uncertainty of the future." Now, child of God, do not play the infidel. After God has filled the Bible till it can hold no more with stories of the good things ahead, better not talk about uncertainties. But you say ; "I cannot bear to think of parting from friends here." If you are old, you have more friends in heaven than here. Just take the census. Take some large sheet of paper and begin to record the names of those who have emigrated to the other shore ; the companions of your school days, your early business associates, the friends of mid-life, and those who more recently went away. Can it

be that they have been gone so long you do not care any more about them, and you do not want their society? O no. There have been days when you have felt that you could not endure it another moment away from their blessed companionship. They have gone. You say you would not like to bring them back to this world of trouble even if you had the power. It would not do to trust you. God would not give you resurrection power. Before to-morrow morning you would be rattling at the gates of the cemetery, crying to the departed: "Come back to the cradle where you slept! come back to the hall where you used to play! come back to the table where you used to sit!" And there would be a great burglary in heaven. No, no. God will not trust you with resurrection power; but He compromises the matter, and says: "You cannot bring them where you are, but you can go where they are." They are *more lovely now than ever*. Were they beautiful here, they are more beautiful there.

Besides that, it is more healthy there for you than here, aged man; better climate there than these hot summers, and cold winters, and late springs; better hearing; better eyesight; more tonic in the air; more perfume in the bloom; more sweetness in the song. Do you not feel, aged man, sometimes as though you would like to get your arm and foot free? Do you not feel as though you would like to throw away spectacles, and canes, and crutches? Would you not like to feel the spring, and elasticity, and mirth of an eternal boyhood? When the point at which you start from this world is old age, and the point to which you go is eternal juvenescence, aged man, clap your hands at the anticipation, and say in perfect rapture of soul: "The time of my departure is at hand."

I remark again: all those ought to feel this joy of the text who have a *holy curiosity to know what is beyond this earthly terminus*. And who has not any curiosity about it? Paul, I suppose, had the most satisfactory view of heaven, and he says: "It doth not appear what we shall be." It is like looking through a broken telescope: "Now we see through a glass darkly." Can you tell me anything about that place?



You ask me a thousand questions about it that I cannot answer. I ask you a thousand questions about it that you cannot answer. And do you wonder that Paul was so glad when martyrdom gave him a chance to go over and make discoveries in that blessed country ?

I hope some day, by the grace of God, to go over and see for myself, but not now. No well man, no prospered man, I think, wants to go now. But the time will come, I think, when I shall go over. I want to see what they do there, and I want to see how they do it. I do not want to be looking through the gates ajar for ever. I want them to swing wide open. There are ten thousand things I want explained : about you, about myself, about the government of this world, about God, about everything. We start in a plain path of what we know, and in a minute come up against a high wall of what we do not know. I wonder how it looks over there ? Somebody tells me it is like a paved city—paved with gold ; and another man tells me it is like a fountain, and it is like a tree, and it is like a triumphal procession ; and the next man I meet tells me that it is all figurative. I really want to know, after the body is resurrected, what they wear and what they eat ; and I have an immeasurable curiosity to know what it is, and how it is, and where it is. Columbus risked his life to find this continent, and shall we shudder to go out on a voyage of discovery which shall reveal a vaster and more brilliant country ? John Franklin risked his life, to find a passage between icebergs, and shall we dread to find a passage to eternal summer ? Men in Switzerland travel up the heights of the Matternhorn with alpine-stock, and guides, and rockets, and ropes, and getting half-way up, stumble and fall down in a horrible massacre. They just wanted to say they had been on the tops of those high peaks. And shall we fear to go out for the ascent of the eternal hills, which start a thousand miles beyond where stop the highest peaks of the Alps, and when in that ascent there is no peril ? A man, doomed to die, stepped on the scaffold, and said, in joy : “Now in ten minutes I will know the great secret.” One minute after the vital functions ceased, the little child that died last

night knew more than Jonathan Edwards, or St. Paul himself before they died. Friends, *the exit from this world*, or death, if you please to call it, to the Christian is glorious explanation. It is demonstration. It is illumination. It is sunburst. It is the opening of all the windows. It is shutting up the catechism of doubt, and the unrolling of all the scrolls of positive and accurate information. Instead of standing at the foot of the ladder and looking up, it is standing at the top of the ladder and looking down. It is the last mystery taken out of botany, and geology, and astronomy, and theology. O, will it not be grand to have all questions answered? The perpetually recurring interrogation-point changed for the mark of exclamation. All riddles solved. Who will fear to go out on that discovery, when all the questions are to be decided which we have been discussing all our lives? Who shall not clap his hands in the anticipation of that blessed country, if it be no better than through holy curiosity? crying: "The time of my departure is at hand."

I remark again; we ought to have the joy of the text, because leaving this world *we move into the best society of the universe*. You see a great crowd of people in some street, and you say: "Who is passing there? What general, what prince, is going up there?" Well, I see a great throng in heaven. I say: "Who is the focus of all that admiration? Who is the centre of that glittering company?" It is Jesus, the champion of all worlds, the favourite of all ages. Do you know what is the first question the soul will ask when it comes through the gate of heaven? I think the first question will be: "Where is Jesus, the Saviour that pardoned my sin; that carried my sorrows; that fought my battles; that won my victories?" O radiant One! how I would like to see Thee: Thou of the manger, but without its humiliation; Thou of the cross, but without its pangs; Thou of the grave, but without its darkness. The Bible intimates that we will talk with Jesus in heaven just as a brother talks with a brother. Now what will you ask Him first? I do not know. I can think what I would ask Paul first if I saw him in heaven.

I think I would like to hear him describe the storm that came upon the ship when there were two hundred and seventy-five souls on the vessel, Paul being the only man on board cool enough to describe the storm. There is a fascination about a ship and the sea that I never shall get over, and I think I would like to hear him talk about that first. But when I meet my Lord Jesus Christ, of what shall I first delight to hear Him speak? Now I think what it is. I shall first want to hear the tragedy of His last hours; and then Luke's account of the crucifixion, and Mark's account of the crucifixion, and John's account of the crucifixion will be nothing, while from *the living lips of Christ* the story shall be told of the darkness that fell, and the devils that arose, and the fact that upon His endurance depended the rescue of a race; and there was darkness in the sky, and there was darkness in the soul, and the pain became more sharp, and the burdens became more heavy, until the mob began to swim away from the dying vision of Christ, and the cursing of the mob came to His ear more faintly, and His hands were fastened to the horizontal piece of the cross, and His head fell forward in a swoon as He uttered the last moan and cried: "It is finished!" All heaven will stop to listen until the story is done, and every harp will be put down, and every lip closed, and all eyes fixed upon the Divine narrator, until the story is done; and then, at the tap of the baton, the eternal orchestra will rise up, finger on string of harp, and lips to the mouth of trumpet, and there shall roll forth the oratorio of the Messiah: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing and riches, and honour and glory and power, world without end!"

"What He endured, O who can tell,  
To save our souls from death and hell?"

When there was between Paul and that magnificent personage only the thinness of the sharp edge of the sword of the executioner, do you wonder that he wanted to go? O my Lord Jesus, let one wave of that glory roll over this auditory to-night. Hark, I hear the wedding bells of heaven ringing

now. The marriage of the Lamb has come, and the bride has made herself ready. I wish I could take that word "death" and grind it to pieces, and substitute in its place "departure"—"departure." The word is just as appropriate for the sinner as it is for the Christian. O sinner, when do you go, for what will you depart? It cannot be up the way Paul went, unless you have Paul's Saviour. How long will your journey be? At what house will you stop? In what society will you mingle? What will be your destiny? Listen! Listen! Again I hear the bells ringing; but it is a fire-bell tolling for the conflagration that never goes out. I hear the drums beating; but it is the funeral march of a soul. "And there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

A man in the street was fatally injured, and was carried into the nearest house. He says: "I have often heard of people who died unprepared, but I never thought I would be one of them. What must I do to be saved?" But before the answer came, life was extinct. Death was departure for him—but O! for what place?

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## WRECKED FOR TWO WORLDS.

*"Lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I COR. ix., 27.*

**M**INISTERS of religion may finally be lost. The apostle, in the text, indicates that possibility. Gown, and surplice, and cardinal's red hat are no security. Cardinal Wolsey, after having been petted by kings and having entertained foreign ambassadors at Hampton Court, died in darkness. One of the most eminent ministers of religion that this country has ever known plunged into sin and died, his heart—*post mortem* examination—found to have been, not figuratively, but literally, broken. O, ministers of Christ, because

we have diplomas of graduation, and hands of ordination on the head, and address consecrated assemblages, that is no reason why we shall necessarily reach the realm celestial. The clergyman must go through the same gate of pardon as the layman. The preacher may get his audience into heaven, and he himself miss it. There have been cases of shipwreck where all on board escaped excepting the captain. Alas ! if, having "preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." God forbid it.

I have examined some of the commentaries to see what they thought about this word "castaway," and I find that they differ in regard to the figure used, while they agree in regard to the meaning. So I shall make my own selection, and take it in a nautical and seafaring sense, and show you that men may become spiritual castaways, and how finally they drift into that calamity.

We are a seaboard town. You have all stood on the beach. Many of you have crossed the ocean. Some of you have managed vessels in great stress of weather. There is a sea-captain ! and there is another, and yonder is another, and there a goodly number of you who, though once you did not know the difference between a brig and a barque, and between a diamond knot and a sprit-sheet-sail knot, and although you could not point out the weather-cross jack brace, and though you could not man the fore clue-garnets, now you are as familiar with a ship as you are with your right hand, and if it were necessary you could take a vessel clear across to the mouth of the Mersey without the loss of a single sail. Well, there is *a dark night in your memory* of the sea. The vessel became unmanageable. You saw it was scudding towards the shore. You heard the cry : "Breakers ahead ! Land on the lee bow !" The vessel struck the rock, and you felt the deck breaking up under your feet, and you were a castaway, as when the *Hercules* drove on the coast of Caffraria, as when the Portugese brig went staving, splitting, grinding, crashing on the Goodwins. But whether you have followed the sea or not, you all understand the figure when I tell you that there are men, who, by their sins and tempta-

tions, are thrown helpless ! Driven before the gale ! Wrecked for two worlds ! Cast away ! cast away !

By talking with some sailors, I have found out that there are three or four causes for such a calamity to a vessel. I have been told that it sometimes comes *from creating false lights on the beach*. This was often so in olden times. It is not many years ago, indeed, that vagabonds used to wander up and down the beach, getting vessels ashore in the night throwing up false lights in their presence and deceiving them, that they might despoil and ransack them. All kinds of infernal arts were used to accomplish this. And one night, on the Cornish coast, when the sea was coming in fearfully, some villains took a lantern and tied it to a horse, and led the horse up and down the beach, the lantern swaying to the motion of the horse, and a sea-captain in the offing saw it, and made up his mind that he was not anywhere near the shore, for he said : " There's a vessel—that must be a vessel, for it has a moveable light," and he had no apprehension until he heard the rocks grating on the ship's bottom, and it went to pieces, and the villains on shore gathered up the packages and treasures that were washed to the land. And I have to tell you that there are a multitude of souls ruined by false lights on the beach. In the dark night of man's danger, Universalism goes up and down the shore, shaking its lantern, and men look off and take that flickering and expiring wick as the signal of safety, and the cry is : " Heave the main topsail to the mast ! All is well !" when sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. So there are all kinds of lanterns swung on the beach—philosophical lanterns, educational lanterns, humanitarian lanterns. Men look at them, and are deceived, when there is *nothing but God's eternal light-house* of the Gospel that can keep them from becoming castaways. Once, on Wolf Crag light-house, they tried to build a copper figure of a wolf with its mouth open, so that the storms beating into it, the wolf would howl forth the danger to mariners that might be coming anywhere near the coast. Of course it was a failure. And so all new inventions for the saving of man's soul are

unavailing. What the human race wants is a light bursting forth from the cross standing on the great head-lands—the light of pardon, the light of comfort, the light of heaven. You might better go to-night, and destroy all the great light-houses on the dangerous coasts—the Barnegat light-house, the Fastnet Rock light-house, the Sherryvore light-house, the Longship's light-house, the Hollyhead light-house—than to put out God's great ocean lamp—the Gospel. Woe to those who swing false lanterns on the beach till men crash in and perish. Cast away ! cast away !

By talking with sailors I have heard also, that sometimes ships come to this calamity by the *sudden swoop of a tempest*. For instance, a vessel is sailing along in the East Indies, and there is not a single cloud on the sky ; but suddenly the breeze freshens, and there are swift feet on the ratlines, and the cry is : “ Way, haul away there ! ” but before they can square the booms and tarpaulin the hatchways, the vessel is groaning and creaking in the grip of a tornado, and falls over into the trough of the sea, and broadside rolls on to the beach and keels over, leaving the crew to struggle in the merciless surf. Cast away ! cast away ! And so I have to tell you that there are thousands of men destroyed through the sudden swoop of temptations. Some great inducement to worldliness, or to sensuality, or to high temper, or to some form of dissipation, comes upon them. If they had time to examine their Bible, if they had time to consult with their friends, if they had time to deliberate, they could stand it ; but the temptation came so suddenly—a euroclydon on the Mediterranean, a whirlwind of the Carribean. One awful surge of temptation, and they perish. And so we often hear the old story : “ I hadn't seen my friend in a great many years. We were very glad to meet. He said I must drink, and he took me by the arm and pressed me along, and filled the cup until the bubbles ran over the edge, and in an evil moment *all my good resolutions were swept away*, and to the outraging of God and my own soul, I fell.” Or the story is : “ I had hard work to support my family. I knew that by one false entry, by one deception, by one embezzlement, I

might spring out free from all my trouble ; but the temptation came upon me so fiercely I could not think. I did wrong, and having done wrong once, I could not stop." O, it is the first step that costs ; the second is easier ; and the third ; and so on to the last. Once having broken loose from the anchor, it is not so easy to tie the parted strands. How often it is that men perish for the reason that the temptation comes from some unexpected quarter. As vessels lie in Margate Roads, safe from southwest winds ; but the wind changing to the northeast, they are driven helpless and go down. O that God would have mercy upon those upon whom there comes the sudden swoop of temptation, that they perish not, becoming for this world and the world to come, cast away ! cast away !

By talking with sailors I have found out also that some vessels come to this calamity *through sheer recklessness*. There are three million men who follow the sea for a living. It is a simple fact that the average of human life on the sea is less than twelve years. This comes from the fact that men by familiarity with danger sometimes become reckless—the captain, the helmsman, the stoker, the man on the look-out becomes reckless, and in nine out of ten shipwrecks it is found out that some one was awfully to blame. So I have to tell you that men lose their souls through sheer recklessness. There are thousands of my friends in this house to-night who do not care where they are in spiritual things. They do not know whether they are sailing toward heaven or toward hell, and the sea is black with piratical hulks that would grapple them with hooks of steel, and blind-fold them, and make them "walk the plank." They do not know what the next moment may bring forth. Drifting in their theology. Drifting in their habits. Drifting in regard to all the future. No God, no Christ, no settled anticipations of eternal felicity ; but all the time coming nearer and nearer to a dangerous coast. Some of them are on fire with evil habit, and they shall burn on the sea, the charred hulk tossed up on the barren beach of the lost world. Many of them with great troubles, financial troubles, domestic troubles,



social troubles ; but they never pray for comfort. With an aggravation of sin that stirs up the ire of God, *they pray for no pardon.* They do not steer for the light-ship that dances in gladness at the mouth of Heaven's harbour ; reckless as to where they come out, drifting further from God, further from early religious influences, further from their present happiness, further from heaven ; and what is the worst thing about it is, that they are taking their families along with them, and if one perish, perhaps they will all perish, and the way one goes, the probability is they will all go. Yet no anxiety. As unconscious of danger as the passengers on board the *Arctic* one moment before the *Yesta* crashed into her. Wrapped up in the business of the store, not remembering that soon they must quit all their earthly possessions. Absorbed in their social position, not knowing that very soon they will have attended the last levee, and whirled in the last schottische. They do not deliberately choose to be ruined ; neither did the French frigate *Medusa* aim for the Arguin Banks, but there it went to pieces. O ye reckless souls ! I wish that to-night I could wake you up with some great perturbation. The perils are so augmented, the chances of escape are so few ; you will die just as certainly as you sit there, unless you bestir yourself. I fear, my brother, you are becoming a castaway. You are making no effort, you are putting forth no exertion for escape. You throw out no oar. You take no soundings. You watch no compass. You are not calculating your bearings while the wind is abaft, and yonder is a long line of foam bounding the horizon, and you will be pushed on toward it, and thousands have perished there, and you are driving in the same direction. Ready about ! Down helm ! Hard down ; or in the next five minutes, or four minutes, or three minutes, or two minutes, or one minute you may be a castaway. O, unforgiven soul, if you could see your peril before God to-night on account of your lifetime sin and transgression, there would be fifty men who would rush through this aisle crying for mercy, and there would be fifty who would rush through that aisle crying for mercy, and they would be as men are when they rush

across the deck of a foundering ship, and there would be thousands of arms tossed up from the galleries ; and as these Christian men rose up to help them, it would be as when a vessel drives on the rocks, and on the shore the command is ; " Man the life-boat ! Man the life-boat ! Pull, my lads, pull ! A steamer with two hundred on board making the last plunge !" *Why does your cheek turn pale,* and your heart pound until, listening, you hear it ? It is because, my dear brother, you realize that because of your lifetime sin and rejection of God's mercy you are in peril, and I really believe there are thousands of people in this house this moment, saying within themselves : " What shall I do ?" Do ? Do ? Why, my brother, do what any ship does when it is in trouble. Lift a distress signal. There is a flash and a boom. You listen and you look. A vessel is in trouble. The distress gun is sounded, or a rocket is sent up, or a blanket is lifted, or a bundle of rags—anything to catch the eye of the passing craft. So if you want to be taken off the wreck of your sin, you must lift a distress signal. Rise. Lift your hand. Cry out for mercy. The publican lifted the distress signal when he cried : " God, be merciful to me, a sinner !" Peter lifted the distress signal when he said : " Lord, save me, I perish !" The blind man lifted the distress signal when he said : " Lord, that my eyes may be opened." The gaoler lifted the distress signal when he said : " What must I do to be saved ?" And help will never come to your soul until you lift such a signal as that. You must make some demonstration, give some sign, make some heaven-piercing outcry for help, lifting the distress signal for the Church's prayer, lifting the distress signal for heaven's pardon. Pray ! Pray ! The voice of the Lord to-night sounds in your ears : " In Me is Thy help." Too proud to raise such a signal, too proud to be saved.

There was an old sailor thumping about in a small boat in a tempest. The larger vessel had gone down. He felt he must die. The surf was breaking over the boat, and he said : " I took off my life belt that it might soon be over, and I thought somewhat indistinctly about my friends on shore, and then I bid them good-by like, and I was about sinking

back and giving it up, when I saw a bright star. The clouds were breaking away, and there that blessed star shone down on me, and it seemed to take right hold of me ; and somehow, I cannot tell how it was, but somehow, while I was trying to watch that star, it seemed to help me and seemed to lift me." O, drowning soul, see you not the glimmer between the rifts of the storm-cloud ? Would to God that that light might lay hold of you to-night.

"Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem,  
When suddenly a star arose,  
It was the star of Bethlehem !"

O, ye castaways, God is doing everything to save you. Did you ever hear of Lionel Luken ? He was the inventor of the insubmergible life-boat. All honour is due to his memory by sea-faring men, as well as by landmen. How many lives he saved by his invention. In after days that invention was improved, and one day there was a perfect life-boat, the *Northumberland*, ready at Ramsgate. The life-boat being ready, to test it the crew came out and leaped on the gunwale on one side to see if the boat would upset ; it was impossible to upset it. Then, amid the huzzas of excited thousands, that boat was launched, and it has gone and come, picking up a great many of the shipwrecked. But I have to tell you to-night of a *grandeur launching*, and from the dry-docks of heaven. Word came up that a world was beating on the rocks. In the presence of the potentates of heaven the life-boat of the world's redemption was launched. It shoved off the golden sands amid angelic hosanna. The surges of darkness beat against it brow, but it sailed on, and it comes in sight to-night. It comes for you, it comes for me. Soul ! soul ! get into it. Make one leap for heaven. This is your last chance for life. Let that boat go past, and there remains nothing but fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary.

I am expecting that there will be whole families here to-night who will get into that life-boat. In 1833 the *Isabella* came ashore off Hastings, England. The air was filled with

sounds—the hoarse sea trumpet, the crash of the axes, and the bellowing of the tornado. A boat from the shore came under the stern of the disabled vessel. There were women and children on board that vessel. Some of the sailors jumped into the small boat and said: “Now give us the children.” A father who stood on deck took his first-born and threw him to the boat. The sailors caught him safely, and the next, and the next, to the last. Still the sea rocking, the storm howling. “Now,” said the sailors, “now the mother;” and she leaped, and was saved. The boat went to the shore; but before it got to the shore the landsmen were so impatient to help the suffering people that they waded clear down into the surf, with blankets and garments and promises of help and succour. I have to hope to-night that a great many of the families here are going to be saved, and saved all together. Give us that child for Christ, that other child, that other. Give us the mother, give us the father, the whole family. They must all come in. All heaven wades in to help you. I claim *this whole audience for God*. I pick not out one man here nor one man there: I claim this whole audience for God. There are some of you who, thirty years ago were consecrated to Christ by your parents in baptism. Certainly I am not stepping over the right bound when I claim you for Jesus. Then there are many here who have been seeking God for a good while, and am I not right in claiming you for Jesus? Then there are some here who have been further away. I saw you come in to-night in clusters—two, three, and four men together—and you drink, and you swear, and you are bringing up your families without any God to take care of them when you are dead. And I claim you, my brother; I claim all of you. You will have to come to-night to the throne of mercy. God’s Holy Spirit is striving now with you irresistibly. Although there may be a smile on your lip, there is agitation and anxiety in your heart. You will not come at my invitation; you will come at God’s command.

(At this part of Mr. Talmage’s sermon a noise occurred which disturbed the whole congregation.) What! are you

so afraid when there is no danger at all? Will the slamming shut of a window startle six thousand souls? Would to God that you were as cautious about eternal perils as you are about the perils of time. If that slight noise sends you to your feet, what will you do when the thunders of the last day roll through earth and sky, and the mountains come down in avalanche of rock? You cry out for the safety of your body; why not cry out for the safety of your soul? You will have to pray sometime; why not begin now, while all the ripe and purple clusters of Divine promise bend over into your cup rather than postpone your prayer until your chance is past, and the night drops, and the sea washes you out, and for ever, and for ever, and for ever, you become a castaway?

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### *HONEY FROM A STRANGE HIVE.*

*“And, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.”—JUDGES xiv. 8.*

A GIANT, unarmed, is on his way to Timnath. Turning aside from the road and sauntering in the jungles, suddenly a lion, with terrific roar, springs upon him. Seizing the uprearing monster by the jaws, with iron grip he twists and wrenches them apart, leaving the lion dead by the roadside. What the ordinary hunter does with trap, and trained elephants, and armed band, and firearms skillfully aimed at the prey, this giant did with his two hands. About a year after, going along by that place, he very naturally turned aside to see the carcase of the lion he had slain. A strange sight. There were the bones, and honey in the hollow of the skeleton. What a strange hive in which to gather honey. You might think it peculiar that bees, which are the most cleanly of all insects, should select such a place as that. Not strange at all. In that hot climate, and where there are so

many other insects, in a few days all marks of death and pollution have gone from the carcase, and the skeleton is as pure and clean as the boxes in which bees in our day gather the wealth of garden, and meadows, and orchards. It was a whole year after when the giant came along, and out of the bleached skeleton got that honey for himself and for his comrades.

Well, my friends, a lion has met you in the way—a lion fiercer than that which, putting its mouth to the ground, makes the Numidian jungle quake with its bellowing. Some monster bereavement has come upon you, and with merciless paw struck down your loved one, dragging him off into the dark jungles of death. All unarmed, you felt unable to cope with the grizzly, gaping, all-devouring monster; but after you had prayed awhile you rose in the strength of God and destroyed that monster trouble. You snapped it in twain, you trampled it under your foot. You left it by the road-side. And coming along that way to-day you see that all the promises of God have swarmed there, and the bleached skeleton of the slain monster is filled with honey from all the gardens of heaven. The jaws of the monster that gaped upon you have become the hive of sweetest Christian consolation. To bring a platter of that honey to all bereaved souls who may be in this house to-day is my work, first bringing it in general, and then to one specific trouble, the service this morning being *in memoriam*.

I think there is no sweeter or more potent consolation than the fact that we are to be re-associated in the future world with our Christian friends. I shall bring no passage to prove such a fact. That I have done in other sermons. I shall take it all for granted, supposing you believe it, only trying to show you what are the uses of such a warm-hearted Christian theory. I would to God, while we are thinking about it, the Church on earth might seem to respond to the Church in heaven. During the last war I was down for a little while in the army, and I noticed in the night-time that one division of the army would signal to the other division; and there were times in the night when the sky seemed writ-

ten all over with letters and words of fire, one division signalling to another division. And so I would have it now, the Church on earth signalling its joy to heaven, and heaven signalling back its joy to earth; for we are different divisions of one great host:

“One army of the living God,  
To His command we bow;  
Part of the host have crossed the flood,  
And part are crossing now.”

This idea of future association with our departed friends is honey out of the slain lion. In the first place, this consideration *exalts and gives stability to Christian friendship*. If our association is only a matter of five, or ten, or thirty years, it is not worth much. Can it be that our attachment to each other has such short arms that it cannot reach across the grave? We go into a railway train, and we sit down for a few hours beside a stranger and talk with him. Then he leaves at one station, and we leave at another. He never thinks of us again: we never think of him again. Is that a type of our Christian attachment? O no. We are in heaven to rise up amid infinite congratulations to renew our association. The only difference between our acquaintanceship here and our acquaintanceship there, will be that there we shall know each other better and love each other more. Death will not strike anything out of our association but its imperfections. Wading down into the river of death, it will only bathe off our impurities. If you now count me to be your friend, when I shall have quit all my sins, and follies, and imperfections, and my entire nature is uplifted before the throne of God, you will have for me a millionfold greater attachment. If my friendship to you is merely because you invite me to grand entertainments, or because you allow me to have your name on the back of my notes, such a mercenary and half-hearted attachment as that *cannot stride across the grave*. But this communing of heart with heart, this mingling of sympathy with sympathy, this feeling which leads us to carry each others' burdens, and weep each others'

sorrows, and laugh in each others' joy—all these are prophecies of eternal intimacy. You and I may soon part, we may pitch our tents in different zones, our graves may be cleft in opposite sides of the earth ; but the scene in which we now mingle will be removed under milder skies. And so I strike hands with you to-day in a friendship which shall bloom immortal after the mountains have crumbled, and the stars that flower in celestial gardens shall have wilted in the hot breath of a judgment-day.

Again : this idea of future association *ought to assuage our bereavements*. There is not a family in this house to-day that has not heard the tramp of the pall-bearers. There is hardly a house on all these streets that has not had its craped door-bell. I look into its upturned faces to-day, and see the marks of many griefs. They have wrinkled your brow. They have dropped a shadow under your eye. They have taken the colour out of your cheek. There have been awful agonies of separation that have gone crashing down through the heart strings. This world is not so bright as it used to be before such and such a light was put out. You walk with listless step along places where once you danced with delight. The spring grass of this April day would have been above your grave but for the consolation of the thought that you would be reunited with the departed in the better world. The dying one spake of that heavenly greeting, and for that hour you are waiting—waiting while the home is desolate ; waiting while the years go tediously by ; waiting while the heart continues to break—and you shall not be disappointed. Your lives shall join again. Hand to hand. Heart to heart. Jubilee to jubilee. Throne to throne. Hallelujah to hallelujah.

The most frequent trial that comes across the families of the earth is the loss of children. The vast majority of the race may not reach manhood and womanhood. Infantile diseases are the gauntlet they cannot run. It seems as if this world were too chill, and cold, and drear for the flowers of childhood, so the heavenly gardener takes them in. You



look down as you think of the little one that God took out of your cradle. At the moment when he was the most promising—at that moment the blast came. *O! that was a grief*—the closing of the lids over the blue eyes that shall never sparkle again at your coming. That was a heart-rending—the putting of the burial flowers that some playmate had brought into the hand that used to pluck its own wild flowers from the field, and gather them in bunches and wear them in her flaxen hair. And sometimes you sit down and look at the floor by the hour, until within the small pattern of the carpet at which you stare there come bounding in with mirth and gladness the feet that have long been still; and you wake up in the midnight as though you had heard the call of a loved one, as though it were a cry of distress: “Mother! mother!” but you fall back, for it is all a dream. O, I wish I could to-day hang one picture in your nursery, hang it right over the place where your little ones used to play; hang it right between the windows up against which they used to press their sunny faces—a picture of the heavenly greeting. You know how it was after you had been absent a long while, and coming home, they saw you before you got up to the front of the house and they shouted: “They have come! they have come!” and they held to your dress, and told you a hundred things at once, and almost blocked up your entrance to the house with their gladness. So, methinks, it will be when you at last enter heaven’s gate, the shout will be: “She’s come! she’s come!” and they will put garlands on your brow, and palms in your hands, and clap, and sing, waking up heaven to brighter gladness with their sweet voices and their bounding feet, and their jubilant hosannahs.

“How shall we know them, the infant race?  
 How will the mother her loved one trace?  
 By the thrill which when first he smiled,  
 Came o’er her soul, will she know her child?”

O, glorious anticipation, that with all our Christian dead, whether young or old, we shall meet again. Be patient, therefore. No trouble, no comfort. No cross, no crown.

No battle, no victory. No slain lion of assault, no hived honey of Christian consolation.

Again : this consideration *gives great peace to the dying.* The step out of this world into the next is a very mysterious step ; and though we are promised brilliant escort, some very good people shudder about dying. But how different that passage seems in one's history if he realizes that he is going from a home circle here to a home circle there ; that one moment after he has said "Good-night" to friends on earth he says "Good-morning" to friends in heaven. O, this irradiates the pallid cheek of the dying. This rekindles the lustre of the closing eye. This lifts the hand as though to join in the heavenly handshaking. It is the thought that he is surrounded by friends now, and will be surrounded by friends there. It is the thought that he is only going from one room to another in "*The house of many mansions.*" Just as when you get into a boat, and some one on the shore steadies you while you get in, and some one in the boat helps you, so it will be when you come to die : there will be friends here to help you off and friends there to help you in. You know very well that if you are to cross a swift stream you need to take sight by some bluff, or tree, or fixed object ; and so, when we come down to cross the swift currents of death, we had just better put our eye upon the highlands crowned with the castles of our own loved ones, and then pull and pull for the beach.

"Steer this way, brother,  
Steer straight for me ;  
Here, safe in heaven,  
I am waiting for thee."

Under this anticipation, Death, no more a lion, bears to us chalices of honey.

I bring the consolation of this subject especially to the friends of Gasherie De Witt, on this and the other side of the Atlantic. I parted with him three years ago at Victoria station, England. Many of you parted with him at the Cunard wharf in Jersey City. Others of you parted with

him at the door of the village church in Belleville. Others of you parted with him in the last moment at the foot of Mont Blanc. But we shall meet again. He was a man worth meeting. Eighteen years ago he first dawned upon me in the parsonage at Belleville, where he had come to welcome me to my new home. Since then I have been with him in a great variety of circumstances, and, beginning by thinking well of him, I have loved him more and more as the years rolled by. He was born to be a leader, and by common consent men fell into line. He was aglow of enthusiasm, and flamed when advocating the right or denouncing the wrong. He did not take things by slow besiegement, but by storm. While others planned, he both planned and executed. With his own hand he made his fortune ; but though the money came rapidly, the more rapidly did his heart enlarge. He had done the work of an octogenarian at mid-life. He was one of the few men who can do many things well. Whether advocating the building of a railroad, or inventing a new machine, or hunting in a Southern forest, or speaking in a legislative hall, or advocating a temperance reform, or wielding a painter's pencil, or arousing a Church meeting, he was an expert, a marksman, a *connoisseur*, an agitator, a commander. *He was always right and never afraid*; well-balanced, yet quick ; conservative where things ought to be preserved, radical where they ought to be destroyed. He was impatient of time-serving people ; explosive with red-faced indignation at anything like meanness ; tearfully tender with suffering ; a bubbling well of sympathy ; a many-keyed soul on which you might play anthem or dirge, battle march or lullaby. But I think the master-passion of his soul was Christian generosity. He gave to his elder son counsel that I have never heard of being given in a dying hour, and that was : "Be generous." He went everywhere, searching for sick ministers, and feeble Churches, and struggling young men. It was his life to help somebody. At the dedication of our first Tabernacle he arose six times in the audience to make contribution, his tongue thick with that paralysis which helped after awhile to end his life. I

went to him and laid before him the policy of a Lay College, the object of which should be the education of laymen for practical Christian work in all denominations. He slapped his hand on his knee, and said: "That's just what we want. I have been waiting for something of that kind for twenty years. The ministers cannot do this work all alone. You must get the troops massed and the private Christians of all denominations drilled for work. Go ahead, Talmage, and I'll back you." And he did back me with his money, and with his prayers, and with his counsel, from his dying pillow sending me stirring words of encouragement. The tide of influence through that institution set in motion will roll on for ever. Many souls have already been brought to God through the instrumentality of the men who have been trained there. That institution would not have been formed but for the financial encouragement of Mr. De Witt. A colony of Chinese came near his residence, and at his own expense he opened a school to educate them for God and heaven, and in the long procession that followed him on the funeral day there was nothing more impressive than the saddened faces of those Chinese, as they marched on after the dead body of their benefactor.

That man turned his back on his elegant mansion, and went out for the most dismal work that a man ever does—the hunting up of his lost health. He sought for it in England, in Germany, in Italy, in Switzerland, staying long enough in the Christian chapels of foreign countries to help them with his money and with his prayers; staying long enough in the picture-galleries of Dresden to copy with his own hands some of the works of the great masters, astonishing the native artists with his skill; then coming to Geneva, Switzerland, to lie down and die *in awful physical excruciation*. It seemed as if God said to him: "Your search for health amid the mountains of this world is a failure. Now, come up higher; breathe a better air. In the deep fountains of the rock bathe off all your physical tortures. There is no sorrow that heaven cannot cure." Some of his last utterances have been preserved. You would like to hear them.

They are more jubilant than sad ; some of them exquisitely poetic, others have the call of a clarion : "This is evidently the end. My Saviour is coming for me. God will bless you and raise you up protectors." There had been for three days one of the high mountain winds which we had feared would annoy him, but dared not allude to it, for fear of drawing his attention to it. He did not seem to notice it. Sunday morning broke clear, beautiful, and still, with a light fall of snow covering the whole landscape. He kissed me, and said : "I have no pain this morning, and my whole soul is in perfect peace. Thank God for this blessed peace. He giveth His beloved sleep. O, my dear wife, it is only the parting that I dread. We have been together so many years, so many happy years : but my Saviour is close to me now, my blessed, precious Saviour." And he put out his arms as though he would clasp Him, while his whole face lighted up with love. "I welcome Thee, I embrace Thee. He will keep you, give you friends, keep our children always. Tell my dear mother I would have come to her if I could, but God ordered it otherwise. It will be only a short time before we shall meet again, and I will watch over her till then if I can. Praise God for His mercy in raising up to me friends on both sides the ocean from among His children. This is the happiest day of my life. Notwithstanding the anguish of body there is perfect happiness within. The storms among the mountains are all over. There is perfect quiet. So it is with my life. Not that I have had particular storms, but the storms of my life are over now, and there is only perfect peace." He lay still for a few minutes, and commenced again : "There is a new, pure covering over Mont Blanc. Down over all the mountains and valleys it covers everthing—all. That is an emblem of the new, pure covering over my life—the covering Jesus has given me. God grant it may cover everything—all." He wanted the girls to sing "Rock of Ages," and "Just as I am." They did so, and at the end of every verse he seem to pour his whole soul out in uttering the words, "*O, Lamb of God, I come.*" He was just expressing his regret, Monday morning, that he had done so little for

Jesus, when a letter came from the Lay College telling him of its prosperity, and containing a resolution offered by the professors and students at a special meeting, expressing their gratitude for his sympathy and co-operation, and their earnest sympathy in his trial, and their longing for his return. This letter was very comforting, recalling to his mind that he had done some very efficient work for the Master after all. Wednesday evening, at eight or nine o'clock, he dropped out of his suffering into a quiet slumber which ended with three long-drawn breaths at half-past twelve.

So Gasherie De Witt was emancipated. So he woke up. So he began to live. So he ascended. He came along where death was, and "behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion." If I had ten thousand tears I would not weep one of them for our departed friend. He might better weep over our bondage than we over his liberation. I save my tears for myself and for the friends whom he has left behind. Alas for the home! beautiful but devastated. The pictures are there, and the books are there, and all the familiar surroundings are there; but he who made the pictures, and he who bought the books, and he who planned the house, and he who laid out the grounds comes not up the hill, nor is his quick, strong footstep heard in the doorway. May the Lord Almighty comfort you to-day. He who helped your husband and your father to die will help you in this sore bereavement. O, widowed soul; O, orphaned children; O, mourning kindred, in God is thy refuge, and beneath thee are the everlasting arms.

I see in the audience a goodly number of his village neighbours and business associates. They have come in this morning from Belleville. You must have started early to join in this service. You are my acquaintances as well. Some of you the first parishioners I ever had. How do you do to-day, my old Belleville friends? Your presence rolls in upon me the memories of the past. I baptized in infancy some of those maidens. I united some of you in holy marriage. I buried some of your dead. I welcomed some of you into the kingdom of Christ. Good old days we used to

have together, did we not? And now, after so long a separation, we meet to-day to bend over the same sorrow and to learn the lessons of the same providence. *You knew and loved Gasherie De Witt.* You will never hear his voice again in the village councils, nor will you greet him again to your firesides. But you do not have to stop and guess as to where he has gone. You know that if there is any such place as heaven, he is there; if there is any such being as God, Gasherie De Witt is with Him. O, my friends, aspire after the same high residence. When you quit your abodes on the banks of the beautiful Passiac, may you go up to walk on the margin of the river of life with your old friends and companions, and have explained to your everlasting satisfaction why Gasherie De Witt was put to so much pain, and why he must die so far away from home, and why he must go away from his family, and the Church, and the world, at a time when they could so poorly afford to spare him.

To all this throng to-day there comes a lesson. Among the last words of this man were these words: "There is no hope to live by or die by but the Christian hope." Do you believe it? If so, to-day seek your eternal salvation. If you should this moment be hurled out of life, would you be ready? Not all ready. In proportion to the brightness of a Christian's death-bed is the darkness of a sinner's death-bed. He sings no song. He sees no light. He leaves behind him no consolation. Death to him is a wild catastrophe. He goes out of the world stumbling out of it, feeling his way into the blackness of darkness for ever. O, dying soul! try something better. Standing to-day, as I do, in the brilliant halo that surrounds a Christian's death-bed, the cry of desolated hearts overpowered by the chanting of angelic cohorts come to fetch a good man home, I commend to you Gasherie De Witt's Redeemer. May God this moment overshadow you with His saving presence. May Christ this moment take you captive by His love. May the Holy Ghost this moment overwhelm you with His striving.

So shall the swarms of trouble that come to buzz, and sting, and poison your soul leave for you the saccharine of immortal

flowers. For while the honey of this world's consolation often nauseates and sickens, like that of Trebizond, because the bees make it out of the rhododendron, the honey of Christ's Gospel gives life and health like that which drips from the delicious combs of Mount Ida and Chamouni.

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### STRIPPING THE SLAIN.

*"And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa."—1 SAMUEL xxxi. 8.*

SOME of you were at South Mountain, or Shiloh, or Ball's Bluff, or Gettysburg, and I ask you if there is any sadder sight than a battle-field after the guns have stopped firing? I walked across the field of Antietam just after the conflict. The scene was so sickening I shall not describe it. Every valuable thing had been taken from the bodies of the dead, for there are always vultures hovering over and around about an army, and they pick up the watches, and the memorandum books, and the letters, daguerreotypes, and the hats, and the coats, applying them to their own uses. The dead make no resistance. So there are always camp followers going on and after an army, as when Scott went down into Mexico, as when Napoleon marched up toward Moscow, as when Von Moltke went to Sedan. There is a similar scene in my text. Saul and his army had been horribly cut to pieces. Mount Gilboa was ghastly with the dead. On the morrow the stragglers came on to the field, and they lifted the lachet of the helmet from under the chin of the dead, and they picked up the swords and bent them on their knee to test the temper of the metal, and they opened the wallets and counted the coin. Saul lay dead along the ground, eight or nine feet in length, and I suppose the cowardly Philistines, to show their bravery,



*leaped upon the trunk of his carcase, and jeered at the fallen slain, and whistled through the mouth of the helmet. Before night, those cormorants had taken everything valuable from the field: "And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa."*

Before I get through to-night, I will show you that the same process is going on all the world over, and every day, and that when men have fallen, Satan and the world, so far from pitying them or helping them, go to work remorselessly to take what little is left, thus *stripping the slain*.

There are tens of thousands of young men every year coming from the country to our great cities. They come with brave hearts and grand expectations. They think they will be Rufus Choates in the law, or Drapers in chemistry, or A. T. Stewarts in merchandize. The country lads sit down in the village grocery, with their feet on the iron rod around the red-hot stove, in the evening, talking over the prospects of the young man who has gone off to the city. Two or three of them think that perhaps he may get along very well and succeed, but the most of them prophecy failure; for it is very hard to think that those whom we knew in boyhood will ever make any stir in the world. But our young man has a fine position in a dry-goods store. The month is over. He gets his wages. He is not accustomed to have so much money belonging to himself. He is a little excited, and does not exactly know what to do with it, and he spends it in some places where he ought not. Soon there comes up new companions and acquaintances from the bar-rooms and the saloons of the city. Soon that young man begins to waver in the battle of temptation, and soon his soul goes down. In a few months, or a few years, he has fallen. He is morally dead. He is a mere corpse of what he once was. The harpies of sin snuff up the taint and come on the field. His garments gradually give out. He has pawned his watch. His health is failing him. His credit perishes. He is too poor to stay in the city, and he is too poor to pay his way home to the country. Down! down! Why do the low

fellows of the city now stick to him so closely? Is it to help him back to a moral and spiritual life? O, no. I will tell you why they stay; they are the Philistines stripping the slain.

Do not look where I point, but yonder stands a man who once had a beautiful home in this city. His house had elegant furniture, his children were beautifully clad, his name was synonymous with honour and usefulness; but *evil habit knocked at his front door*, knocked at his back door, knocked at his parlour door, knocked at his bedroom door. Where is the piano? Sold to pay the rent. Where is the hat-rack? Sold to meet the butcher's bill. Where are the carpets? Sold to get bread. Where is the wardrobe? Sold to get rum. Where are the daughters! Working their fingers off in trying to keep the family together. Worse and worse, until everything is gone. Who is that going up the front steps of that house? That is a creditor, hoping to find some chair or bed that has not been levied upon. Who are those two gentlemen now going up the front steps? The one is a constable, the other is the sheriff. Why do they go there? The unfortunate is morally dead, socially dead, financially dead. Why do they go there? I will tell you why the creditors, and the constables, and the sheriffs go there. They are, some on their own account, and some on account of the law, stripping the slain.

An ex-member of Congress, one of the most eloquent men that ever stood in the House of Representatives, said in his last moments: "This is the end. I am dying—dying on a borrowed bed, covered by a borrowed sheet, in a house built by public charity. Bury me under that tree in the middle of the field, where I shall not be crowded, for I have been crowded all my life." Where were the jolly politicians and the dissipating comrades who had been with him, laughing at his jokes, applauding his eloquence, and plunging him into sin? They have left. Why? His money is gone, his reputation is gone, his wit is gone, his clothes are gone, everything is gone. Why should they stay any longer? They have completed their work. They have stripped the slain,

There is another way, however, of doing that same work. Here is a man who, through his sin, is prostrate. He acknowledges that he has done wrong. Now is the time for you to go to that man and say : "Thousands of people have been as far astray as you are, and got back." Now is the time for you to go to that man, and tell him of the omnipotent grace of God that is sufficient for any poor soul. Now is the time to go to tell him how swearing John Bunyan, through the grace of God, afterwards came to the celestial city. Now is the time to go to that man and tell him how profligate Newton came, through conversion, to be a world-renowned preacher of righteousness. Now is the time to tell that man that multitudes who have been pounded with all the flails of sin, and *dragged through all the sewers of pollution*, at last have risen to positive dominion of moral power. You do not tell him that, do you ? No. You say to him : "Loan you money ? No. You are down. You will have to go to the dogs. Lend you a shilling ? I would not lend you twopence to keep you from the gallows. You are debauched. Get out of my sight now. Down ; you will have to stay down." And thus those bruised and battered men are sometimes accosted by those who ought to lift them up. Thus the last vestige of hope is taken from them. Thus those who ought to go and lift and save them are guilty of stripping the slain.

The point I want to make is this : *sin is hard, cruel, and merciless*. Instead of helping a man up it helps him down ; and when, like Saul and his comrades, you lie on the field, it will come and steal your sword, and helmet, and shield, leaving you to the jackal and the crow.

But the world and Satan do not do all their work with the outcast and abandoned. A respectable, impenitent man comes to die. He is flat on his back. He could not get up if the house were on fire. Adroitest medical skill and gentlest nursing have been a failure. He has come to his last hour. What does Satan do for such a man ? Why he fetches up all the inapt, disagreeable, and harrowing things in his life. He says : "Do you remember those chances you had for heaven, and missed them ? Do you remember all those lapses

in conduct? Do you remember all those opprobrious words, and thoughts, and actions? Don't remember them, eh? I'll make you remember them." And then he takes all the past and empties it on that death-bed, as the mail bags are emptied on the post-office floor. The man is sick. He cannot get away from them. Then the man says to Satan; "You have deceived me. You told me that all would be well. You said there would be no trouble at the last. You told me if I did so and so you would do so and so. Now you corner me, and hedge me up, and submerge me in everything evil." "Ha! ha!" says Satan, "I was only fooling you. It is mirth for me to see you suffer. I have been for thirty years plotting to get you just where you are. It is hard for you now—it will be worse for you after awhile. It pleases me. Lie still, sir. Don't flinch or shudder. Come now, I will tear off from you the last rag of expectation. I will rend away from your soul the last hope. I will leave you bare for the beating of the storm. It is my business to strip the slain."

While men are in robust health, and their digestion is good, and their nerves are strong, they think their physical strength will get them safely through the last exigency. They say it is only cowardly women who are afraid at the last, and cry out for God. "Wait till I come to die. I will show you. You won't hear me pray, nor call for a minister, nor want a chapter read me from the Bible." But after the man has been three weeks in a sick room his nerves are not so steady, and his worldly companions are not anywhere near to cheer him up, and he is persuaded that he must quit life, *his physical courage is all gone*. He jumps at the fall of a tea-spoon in a saucer. He shivers at the idea of going away. He says: "Wife, I don't think my infidelity is going to take me through. For God's sake don't bring up the children to do as I have done. If you feel like it, I wish you would read a verse or two out of Fanny's Sabbath-school hymn book or New Testament." But Satan breaks in, and says; "You have always thought religion trash and a lie; don't give up at the last. Besides that, you cannot, in the hour you have to live, get off on that track. Die as you lived. With my great black

wings I shut out that light. Die in darkness. I rend away from you that last vestige of hope. It is my business to strip the slain."

A man who had rejected Christianity, and thought it all trash, came to die. He was in the sweat of a great agony, and his wife said: "We had better have some prayer." "Mary, not a breath of that," he said. "The lightest word of prayer would roll back on me like rocks on a drowning man. I have come to the hour of test. I had a chance, and I forfeited it. I believed in a liar, and he has left me in the lurch. Mary, bring me Tom Paine, that book that I swore by and lived by, and pitch it in the fire, and let it burn and burn as I myself shall soon burn." And then, with the foam on his lip, and his hands tossing wildly in the air, he cried out: "Blackness of darkness! O, my God, too late!" And the spirits of darkness whistled up from the depth, and wheeled around and around him, stripping the slain.

Sin is a luxury now; it is exhilaration now; it is victory now. But after awhile it is collision; it is defeat; it is extermination; it is jackalism; it is robbing the dead; it is stripping the slain.

Give it up, to-night; give it up. O, how you have been cheated on, my brother, from one thing to another. All these years you have been under an evil mastery that you understood not. What have your companions done for you? What have they done for your health? Nearly ruined it by carousal. What have they done for your fortune? Almost scattered it by spendthrift behaviour. What have they done for your reputation? Almost ruined it with good men. What have they done for your immortal soul? Almost insured its overthrow. You are hastening on toward the consummation of all that is sad. To-night you stop and think, but it is only for a moment, and then you will tramp on, and at the close of this service you will go out, and the question will be: "How did you like the sermon?" and one man will say: "I liked it very well," and another man will say: "*I didn't like it at all;*" but neither of the answers will touch the tremendous fact that, if impenitent, you are going at

eighteen knots an hour towards shipwreck ! Yea, you are in a battle where you will fall ; and while your surviving relatives will take your remaining estate, and the cemetery will take your body, the messengers of darkness will take your soul, and come and go about you for the next ten million years, stripping the slain.

Many are crying out : " I admit I am slain, I admit it." On what battle-field, my brothers ? By what weapon ? " Polluted imagination," says one man ; " Intoxicating liquor," says another man ; " My own hard heart," says another man. Do you realize this ! Then I come to tell you that the omnipotent Christ is ready to walk across this battle-field, and revive, and resuscitate, and resurrect your dead soul. Let him take your hand, and rub away the numbness ; your head, and bathe off the aching ; your heart, and stop its wild throb. He brought Lazarus to life ; He brought Jairus's daughter to life ; He brought the young man of Nain to life, and these are three proofs anyhow that He can bring you to life.

When the Philistines came down on the field, they stepped between the corpses, and they rolled over the dead, and they took away everything that was valuable ; and so it was with the people that followed after our army at Chancellorsville, and at Pittsburg Landing, and at Stone River, and at Atlanta, stripping the slain ; but the Northern and Southern women—God bless them—came on the field with basins and pads, and towels, and lint, and cordials, and Christian encouragement ; and the poor fellows that lay there lifted up their arms and said : " O, how good that does feel since you dressed it ;" and others looked up and said : " O, how you make me think of my mother ;" and others said : " Tell the folks at home I died thinking about them !" and another looked up and said : " Miss, won't you sing me a verse of ' Home, Sweet Home,' before I die ?" And then the tattoo was sounded, and the hats were off, and the service was read : " I am the resurrection and the life," and in honour of the departed the muskets were loaded, and the command given : " Take aim—fire !" And there was a shingle set up at the head of the grave with

the epitaph of Lieutenant—— in the Fourteenth Massachusetts Regulars," or "Captain —— in the Fifteenth Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers." And so to-night, across this great field of moral and spiritual battle, the angels of God come walking among the slain, and there are voices of comfort, and voices of hope, and voices of resurrection, and voices of heaven.

O, the slain ! the slain ! Christ is ready to give life to the dead. He will make the deaf ear to hear, the blind eye to see, the pulseless heart to beat, and the damp walls of *your spiritual charnel house* will crash into ruin at His cry : "Come forth !" I verily believe there are souls in this house who are now dead in sin, who in half an hour will be alive for ever. There was a thrilling dream, a glorious dream—you may have heard of it. Ezekiel closed his eyes, and he saw two mountains, and a valley between the mountains. That valley looked as though there had been a great battle there, and a whole army had been slain, and they had been unburied ; and the heat of the land, and the vultures coming there, soon the bones were exposed to the sun, and they looked like thousands of snow drifts all through the valley. Frightful spectacle ! The bleaching skeletons of a host ! But Ezekiel still kept his eyes shut ; and lo, there were four currents of wind that struck that battle-field, and when those four currents of wind met, the bones began to rattle ; and the foot came to the ankle, and the hand came to the wrist, and the jaws clashed together, and the spinal column gathered up the ganglions and the nervous fibre, and all the valley wriggled, and writhed, and throbbed, and rocked, and rose up. There, a man coming to life. There, a hundred men. There, a thousand ; and all falling into line, waiting for the shout of their commander. Ten thousand bleached skeletons springing up into ten thousand warriors, panting for the fray. I hope that instead of being a dream it may be a prophecy of what we shall see here to-night. Let this north wall be one of the mountains, and the south wall be taken for another of the mountains, and let all the aisles and the pews be the valley between, for there are thousands here to-night without

one pulsation of spiritual life. I look off in one direction, and they are dead. I look off in another direction, and they are dead. Who will bring them to life? Who shall rouse them up? If I should halloo at the top of my voice I could not wake them. Wait a moment! Listen! There is a rustling. There is a gale from heaven. It comes from the north, and from the south, and from the east, and from the west. It shuts us in. It blows upon the slain. There, a soul begins to move in spiritual life; there, ten souls; there, a score of souls; there, a hundred souls. The nostril throbbing in Divine respiration, the hands lifted as though to take hold of heaven, the tongue moving as in prayer and adoration. Life! immortal life coming into the slain. Ten men for God—fifty—a hundred—a regiment—an army for God. O, that we might have such a scene here to-night. In Ezekiel's words, and in almost a frenzy of prayer, I cry: "Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon the slain."

You will have to surrender your heart to-night to God. *You cannot take the responsibility* of fighting against the Spirit in this crisis which will decide whether you are to go to heaven or hell—to join the hallelujahs of the saved, or the lamentations of the lost. You must pray. You must repent. You must this night fling your sinful soul on the pardoning mercy of God. *You must.* I see your resolution against God giving way. Your determination wavering. I break through the breach in the wall and follow up the advantage gained, hoping to rout your last opposition to Christ, and to make you "ground arms" at the feet of the Divine Conqueror. O, you must! You must! The moon does not ask the tides of the Atlantic ocean to rise. It only stoops down with two great hands of light, the one at the European beach, and the other at the American beach, and then lifts the great laver of molten silver. And God, it seems to me, is now going to lift this audience to newness of life. Do you not feel the swellings of the great oceanic tides of Divine mercy? My heart is in anguish to have you saved. For this I pray, and preach, and long, glad to be called a fool for Christ's sake, and your salvation. Some one replies: "Dear me, I do wish I could



have these matters arranged with my God. I want to be saved. God knows I want to be saved ; but you stand there talking about this matter and you don't show me how." My dear brother, the work has all been done. Christ did it with His own torn hand, and lacerated foot, and bleeding side. He took your place, and died your death, if you will only believe it, only accept Him as your substitute. "But," you say : "how am I to get up that feeling ?" I reply, that the Holy Spirit is ready to help you up to that feeling, if you will only ask Him here and now.

What an amazing pity that any man should go from this house unblessed, when such a large blessing is offered him at less cost than you would pay for a pin—"without money and without price." I have driven down to-night with the Lord's ambulance to the battle-field where your soul lies exposed to the darkness and the storm, and I want to lift you in, and drive off with you towards heaven. O, Christians, by your prayers help to lift these wounded souls into the ambulance. God forbid that any should be left on the field, and that at last eternal sorrow, and remorse, and despair, should come around their soul like the bandit Philistines to the field of Gilboa, stripping the slain.



### *THE MUSIC OF TWO SYLLABLES.*

*"A name which is above every other name."*—PHIL. ii. 9.

**T**HIS was one of Paul's rapturous and enthusiastic descriptions of the name of Jesus. There are merely human names that thrill you through and through. Such a name was that of Henry Clay to the Kentuckian, William Wirt to the Virginian, Daniel Webster to the New Englander. By common proverb we have come to believe that there is nothing in a name, and so parents sometimes present their

children for baptism regardless of the title given them, and not thinking that that particular title will be either a hindrance or a help. Strange mistake. You have no right to give to your child a name that is lacking either in euphony or moral meaning. It is a sin for you to call your child Jehoikim or Tiglath-Pileser. Because you yourself may have an exasperating name is no reason why you should give it to those who come after you. But how often we have seen some name, filled with jargon, rattling down from generation to generation, simply because some one a long while ago happened to be afflicted with it. Institutions and enterprises have sometimes without sufficient deliberation taken their nomenclature. Mighty destinies have been decided by the significance of a name. There are men who all their life long toil and tussle to get over the influence of some unfortunate name. While we may, through right behaviour and Christian demeanour, outlive the fact that we were baptized by the name of a despot, or an infidel, or a cheat, how much better it would have been if we could have started life without any such encumbrance. When I find the Apostle, in my text, and in other parts of his writing, breaking out in ascriptions of admiration in regard to the name of Jesus, I want to inquire what are some of the characteristics of that appellation. And O, that the Saviour himself, while I speak, might fill me with His own presence, for we never can tell to others that which we have not ourselves felt.

First, this name of Jesus is *an easy name*. Sometimes we are introduced to people whose name is so long and unpronounceable that we have sharply to listen, and to hear the name given to us two or three times, before we venture to speak it. But within the first two years the little child clasps its hands, and looks up, and says: "Jesus." Can it be, amid all the families in this Church, there is one household where the little ones speak of "father," and "mother," and "brother," and "sister," and not of "the name which is above every name?" Sometimes we forget the titles of our very best friends, and we have to pause and think before we can recall the name. But can you imagine any freak of in-

telleet in which you could forget the Saviour's designation? *That word Jesus* seems to fit the tongue in every dialect. When the voice in old age gets feeble, and tremulous, and indistinct, still this regal word has potent utterance. When an aged man was dying, and he had lost his memory of everything else, one of his children said to him: "Father, do you know me?" He replied: "No, I don't know you." And another child came and asked the same question, and got the same answer, and another, and another. Then the minister of Christ came in and said to the dying man: "Father, do you know me?" He replied: "No, I do't know you." Then said the minister: "Do you know Jesus?" "O, yes," said the old man. "I know Jesus. 'Chief among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely.'" Yes, in all ages, in all languages, and the world over, it is an easy name.

"Jesus, I love Thy charming name,  
'Tis music to my ear ;  
Fain would I sound it out so loud  
That heaven and earth might hear."

Still further: I remark it is *a beautiful name*. You have noticed that it is impossible to dissociate a name from the person who has the name. So there are names that are to me repulsive—I do not want to hear them at all—while those very names are attractive to you. Why the difference? It is because I happen to know persons by those names who are cross, and sour, and snappish, and queer, while the persons you used to know by those names were pleasant and attractive. As we cannot dissociate a name from the person who holds the name, that consideration makes Christ's name so unspeakably beautiful. No sooner is it pronounced in your presence than you think of Bethlehem, and Gethsemane, and Golgotha, and you see the loving face, and hear the tender voice, and feel the gentle touch. You see Jesus, the one who, though banquetting with heavenly hierarchs, came down to breakfast on the fish that rough men had just hauled out of Genessaret; Jesus, the one who, though the clouds are the dust of His feet, walked foot-sore on the road to Emmaus.

Just as soon as the name is pronounced in your presence, you think of how the shining One gave back the centurion's daughter, and how He helped the blind man to the sunlight, and how He made the cripple's crutch useless, and how He looked down into the babe's laughing eyes, and, as the little one struggled to go to Him, flung out His arms around it, and impressed a loving kiss on its brow, and said : "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Beautiful name—Jesus! It stands for love, for patience, for kindness, for forbearance, for self-sacrifice, for magnanimity. It is aromatic with all odours and accordant with all harmonies. Sometimes I see that name, and the letters seem to be made out of tears, and then again they look like gleaming crowns. Sometimes they seem to me as though twisted out of the straw on which He lay, and then as though built out of the thrones on which His people shall reign. Sometimes I sound that word "Jesus," and I hear coming through the two syllables the sigh of Gethsemane and the groan of Calvary ; and again I sound it, and it is all a-ripple with gladness and a-ring with hosanna. Take all the glories of book-bindery, and put them around the page where that name is printed. On Christmas morning wreath it on the wall. *Let it drip* from harp's string and thunder it out in organ's diapason. Sound it often, sound it well, until every star shall seem to shine it, and every flower shall seem to breathe it, and mountain and sea, and day and night, and earth and heaven acclaim in full chant : "Blessed be His glorious name for ever. The name that is above every name."

"Jesus, the name high over all,  
In heaven and earth and sky."

To the repenting soul, to the exhausted invalid, to the Sunday-school girl, to the snow-white octogenarian, it is beautiful. The old man comes in from a long walk, and tremblingly opens the doors, and hangs his hat on the old nail, and sets his cane in the usual corner, and lies down on a couch, and says to his children and grandchildren : "My dears, I am going to leave you." They say : "Why, where

are you going, grandfather ?” “ I am going to Jesus.” And so the old man faints away into heaven. The little child comes in from play, and throws herself on your lap, and says: “ Mamma, I am so sick, I am so sick.” And you put her to bed, and the fever is worse and worse, until in some midnight she looks up into your face and says : “ Mamma, kiss me, good-bye, I am going away from you.” And you say : “ My dear, where are you going to ?” And she says : “ I am going to Jesus.” And the red cheek which you thought was the mark of the fever, only turns out to be the carnation bloom of heaven ! O, yes ; it is a sweet name spoken by the lips of childhood, spoken by the old man.

Still further : *it is a mighty name.* Rothschild is a potent name in the commercial world, Cuvier in the scientific world, Irving a powerful name in the literary world, Washington an influential name in the political world, Wellington a mighty name in the military world ; but tell me any name in all the earth so potent to awe, and lift, and thrill, and rouse, and agitate, and bless, as this name of Jesus. That one word unhorsed Saul, and flung Newton on his face on ship's deck, and to-day holds a hundred million of the race with omnipotent spell. That name in England to-day means more than Victoria ; in Germany, means more than King William ; in France, means more than Thiers or MacMahon ; in Italy, means more than Garibaldi or Victor Emanuel. I have seen a man bound hand and foot in sin, Satan, his hard task-master, in a bondage from which no human power could deliver him, and yet at the pronunciation of that one word he dashed down his chains and marched out for ever free. I have seen a man overwhelmed with disaster, the last hope fled, the last light gone out : that name pronounced in his hearing, the sea dropped, the clouds scattered, and a sunburst of eternal gladness poured into his soul. I have seen a man hardened in infidelity, defiant of God, full of scoff and jeer, jocosely of the judgment, reckless of an unending eternity, at the mere pronunciation of that name blanch, and cower, and quake, and pray, and sob, and groan, and believe, and rejoice. O, it is a mighty name ! At its utterance *the last wall of sin will*

*fall*, the last temple of superstition crumble, the last Juggernaut of cruelty crash to pieces. That name will first make all the earth tremble, and then it will make all the nations sing. It is to be the password at every gate of honour, the insignia on every flag, the battle shout in every conflict. All the millions of the earth are to know it. The red horse of carnage seen in apocalyptic vision, and the black horse of death, are to fall back on their haunches, and the white horse of victory will go forth, mounted by Him who hath the moon under His feet, and the stars of heaven for his tiara. Other dominions seem to be giving out ; this seems to be enlarging. Spain has had to give up much of its dominion. Austria has been wonderfully depleted in power. France had to surrender some of her favourite provinces. Most of the thrones of the world are being lowered, and most of the sceptres of the world are being shortened ; but every Bible printed, every tract distributed, every Sunday-school class taught, every school founded, every Church established, is extending the power of Christ's name. That name has already been spoken under the Chinese wall, and in Siberian snow-castle, and in Brazilian grove, and in eastern pagoda. That name is to swallow up all other names. That crown is to cover up all other crowns. That empire is to absorb all other dominations :

“ All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail,  
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale ;  
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,  
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.

Still further : *it is an enduring name*. You clamber over the fence of the graveyard and pull aside the weeds, and you see the faded inscription on the tombstone. That was the name of the man who once ruled all that town. The mightiest names of the world have either perished or are perishing. Gregory VI., Sancho of Spain, Conrad I. of Germany, Richard I. of England, Louis XVI. of France, Catharine of Russia—mighty names once, that made the world tremble ; but now, none so poor as to do them reverence, and to the great mass

of the people they mean absolutely nothing ; they never heard of them. But the name of Christ is to endure for ever. It will be perpetuated in art, for there will be other Bellinis to depict the Madonna ; there will be other Ghirlandjos to represent Christ's baptism ; there will be other Bronzino's to show us Christ visiting the spirits in prison ; other Giotto's to appall our sight with the crucifixion. The name will be preserved in song, for there will be other Alexander Popes to write the "Messiah," other Dr. Youngs to portray His triumph ; other Cowpers to sing His love. It will be preserved in costly and magnificent architecture, for Protestantism is yet to have its St. Marks and its St. Peters. That name will be preserved in the literature of the world, for already it is embalmed in the best books, and there will be other Dr. Paleys to write the "Evidences of Christianity," and other Richard Baxters to describe the Saviour's coming to judgment. But above all, and more than all, that name will be embalmed in the memory of all the good of earth and all the great ones of heaven. Will the delivered bondman of earth ever forget who freed him ? Will the blind man of earth forget who gave him sight ? Will the outcast of earth forget who brought him home ? No ! No ! *To destroy the memory of that name of Christ, you would have to burn up all the Bibles and all the churches on earth, and then in a spirit of universal arson go through the gate of heaven, and put a torch to the temples, and the towers and the palaces, and after all that city was wrapped in awful conflagration, and the citizens came out and gazed on the ruin—even then, they would hear that name in the thunder of falling tower and the crash of crumbling wall, and see it inwrought in the flying banners of flame, and the redeemed of the Lord on high would be happy yet and cry out : "Let the palaces and the temples burn, we have Jesus left !"* "Blessed be His glorious name for ever and ever. The name that is above every name."

Have you ever made up your mind by what name you will call Christ when you meet Him in heaven ? You know he has many names. Will you call him Jesus, or the Anointed

One, or the Messiah, or will you take some of the symbolical names which on earth you learned from your Bible ?

Wandering some day in the garden of God on high, the place a-bloom with eternal springtide, infinite luxuriance of rose, and lily, and amaranth, you may look up into His face and say : " My Lord, Thou art the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley."

Some day, as a soul comes up from earth to take its place in the firmament, and shine as a star for ever and ever, and the lustre of a useful life shall beam forth tremulous and beautiful, you may look up into the face of Christ and say : " My Lord, Thou art a brighter star—the Morning Star—a star for ever."

Wandering some day amid the fountains of life that toss in the sunlight and fall in crash of pearl and amethyst in golden and crystalline urn, and you wander up the round-banked river to where it first tingles its silver on the rock, and out of the chalices of love you drink to honour and everlasting joy, you may look up into the face of Christ and say : " My Lord, Thou art the Fountain of Living Water."

Some day, wandering amid the lambs and sheep in the heavenly pastures, feeding by the rock, rejoicing in the presence of Him who brought you out of the wolfish wilderness to the sheepfold above, you may look up into His loving and watchful eye, and say : " My Lord, Thou art the Shepherd of the Everlasting Hills."

But there is another name you may select. I will imagine that heaven is done. Every throne has its king. Every harp has its harper. Heaven has gathered up everything that is worth having. The treasures of the whole universe have poured into it. The song full. The ranks full. The mansions full. Heaven full. The sun shall set a-fire with splendour the domes of the temples, and burnish the golden streets into a blaze, and be reflected back from the solid pearl of the twelve gates, and *it shall be noon in heaven*, noon on the river, noon on the hills, noon in all the valleys—high noon. Then the soul may look up, gradually accustoming itself to the vision, shading the eyes as from the almost in-



sufferable splendour of the noonday light, until the vision can endure it, then crying out : "Thou art the Sun that never sets !"

At this point I am staggered with the thought that notwithstanding all the charm in the name of Jesus, and the fact that it is so easy a name, and so beautiful a name, and so potent a name, and so enduring a name, there are people in this house to-day who find no charm in those two syllables. O, come this day and see whether there is anything in Jesus. I challenge those of you who are farther from God to come at the close of this service and test with me whether God is good, and Christ is gracious, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent. I challenge you to come and kneel down with me at the altar of mercy. I will kneel on one side of the altar and you kneel on the other side of it, and neither of us will rise up until our sins are forgiven, and we ascribe, in the words of the text, all honour to the name of Jesus—you pronouncing it, I pronouncing it—the name that is above every name.

" His worth if all the nations knew,  
Sure the whole earth would love Him too."

O, that God this morning, by the power of His Holy Spirit, would roll over you a vision of that blessed Christ, and you would begin to weep, and pray, and believe, and rejoice. You have heard of the warrior who went out to fight against Christ. He knew he was in the wrong, and while waging the war against the Kingdom of Christ, an arrow struck him and he fell. It pierced him in the heart, and lying there, his face to the sun, his life-blood running away, he caught a handful of the blood that was rushing out in his right hand, and held it up before the sun and cried out ; "O Jesus, Thou hast conquered !" And if to-day the arrow of God's Spirit piercing your soul, you felt the truth of what I have been trying to proclaim, you would surrender now and for ever to the Lord who bought you. Glorious name ! I know not whether you will accept it or not ; but I will tell you one thing here and now, in the presence of angels and men, I take Him to be my Lord, my God, my pardon, my peace, my

life, my joy, my salvation, my heaven ! “Blessed be His glorious name for ever. The name that is above every name.” “Hallelujah ! unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen and Amen and Amen.”

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## THE WRECK OF THE SCHILLER.

*“They ran the ship aground: and the forepart stuck fast and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.”—ACTS xxvii. 41.*

CAUGHT in a typhoon ! Before yet the chronometer was invented, a vessel is cracking to pieces on the coast of a Mediterranean island. The cargo of corn is spoiled, and worse than that, two hundred and twenty-six passengers are beside themselves with terror. At the first bump of the ship everything was in consternation. She went on, bow first, and the waves cried : “Come, let us tear this old hulk to pieces.” The sea beat against the stern, dashed the spray clear over the deck crowded with affrighted passengers. Rudder, yards, mast, bulwark knocked away. Everything going to demolition. “They ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves.”

There are some points of striking analogy between that wreck and the one which stunned our ears a few days ago. Both vessels carried freight and passengers ; both were crowded with people—the one with two hundred and seventy-six on board, the other with three hundred and eighty-five on board. Both were caught in the grip of a tempest. From both the sailors tried to escape in small boats, giving no chance to the passengers. Both lost their reckoning. Both went aground in the night,

The *Schiller* started from our port on the 28th of April, bound for Plymouth, England, and Hamburg, Germany. It was the popular season for trans-Atlantic voyage, and the people went on the ship; invalids in search of health, pleurists expecting merriment in foreign capitals, merchants on commercial errand, artists bound for the picture galleries of Dresden and Florence, adopted citizens going back to visit the land of their nativity and the graves of their fathers. They had gone three thousand miles of voyage successfully, and expected on the morrow to wake up in the calm English harbour. Some of them were sleeping, and dreaming of home, of wife, of child, and others of mountains and cities beyond the sea. A dense mist comes upon the ocean. The storm halloos amid the rigging. Yet all seems safe. Two men on the look-out. Two men at the wheel. Two men pacing the captain's bridge. Yet all the time making for the rocks. O! stop her before she strikes. One turn of the wheel will save the ship. The howl of the storm drowns the tolling of the fog-bell in Bishop Rock Lighthouse. Still on and on, until without a moment in which to give warning, or wake up the passengers from their berths, or swing the small boats from their davits, that vessel of three thousand six hundred tons burden strikes the rock, once, twice, three times, four times, and goes down! Between the first plunge and the last the rockets are flung, and the guns are sounded, and a few passengers clamber up in the rigging; but there is no safe retreat there, for soon the mast, with its clusters of precious human life tangled in the cordage, begins to bend and reel in the gale, and then cracks, and with awful plunge dashes into the sea. Meanwhile the captain makes a brave attempt with loaded and firing pistols to keep the life-boats for the passengers. He gathers some of them up on his bridge; but after having done all he could for the saving of the people on the ship, he wraps himself in a winding sheet of surf, and lies down beside them in *that great democracy of sepulchre*. Beautiful women, and swarthy men, and sweet children, side by side, are dead. There she lies, the *Schiller*, under a mound of blue seas, the jutting reef, the

tombstone, buried in the place where lie the skeletons of the *Thames* steamer, and the *Duro*, and the English *Admiral*, waiting for the day when the sea shall give up its dead. Let the waves tramp up the sad beach in solemn procession, and two continents uncover the brow over this burial of the *Schiller* with three hundred and forty-two passengers, without any warning gone out to meet their God.

Let us learn first from this disaster what *a sad thing it is for people to lose their reckoning*. Captain Thomas, through the report from the log-book which recorded the distances and courses sailed, judged that he was at least two miles off from the Scilly rocks ; but he did not really know where he was. He mistook, and that mistake flung hundreds of souls into the eternal world, and the whole civilized world into mourning. So there are those here to-day who have lost their reckoning. They know not where they are. They say : "So many miles have I voyaged since I was launched on the ocean of life, and so many miles more will I voyage before I get to the coast of eternity." Part of their calculation is right, and part of their calculation is wrong, and they have lost their reckoning. They know not how they stand toward God, or their Bible, or their duty, or heaven. They are sailing on thoughtlessly when they may be within two minutes of the reef. Alas ! that men should make a mistake for eternity, now running on one rock, now running on the other rock, and with the quadrant of God's Word in their hand, by which they might have calculated the latitude ; in an evil hour their watchfulness asleep in the cabin, like the corn ship of the text, or the *Schiller* of last week, going aground, one shivering horror. O ! slow your engines. Throw out your bower anchor. Stop stock-still until you find out where you are, near what reef, by what coast, on the verge of what shipwreck. There is only one channel leading into the celestial harbour, and that is not a wide channel. "Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." God forbid that any one of us should lose our reckoning.

Again : I see in this disaster *what a dense fog can do*. This calamity was only half a mile from Bishop Rock

Lighthouse. It is a granite structure, one hundred and forty-seven feet high, and has one of the best and brightest dioptric lights, a multiplication of refracted rays. When the sun sets, the keeper strikes that light, and it blazes all through the darkness, and in ordinary weather throws out its glow fourteen miles upon the sea. "Well," you say, "there might have been some excuse for a vessel going on those rocks in Queen Anne's time, as the vessels did under the brave Sir Cloudsley Shovel, when nine ships of the line broke to pieces and *two thousand soldiers perished*, for then there were no lights on the rock." But how was it possible, says some one not conversant with all the circumstances, "that a steamer should have been ruined there within half a mile of Bishop Rock Lighthouse?" O, there was a fog on the sea. Captain Thomas, and First Officer Hilliers, and Second Officer Pollman could not see a quarter of the length of that steamer, and if there had been fifty lighthouses on the rock they would not have done any good.

Here I get a hint of the way men lose their souls, driving into ruin ; for there are scores of men in this day, and institutions, whose whole business seems to be to create a great spiritual fog. Men and women do not go on to death a-purpose : it is because they are cheated, they are deceived, they are mystified, they are befogged. We have in this day the Herbert Spencer fog about life, which he says is "the combination of heterogeneous changes, both simultaneous and successive, in correspondences with external co-existences and sequences !" We have the Huxley fog about protoplasm. We have the Darwinian fog about the anthropomorphous origin of our race, and our dear old grandfathers, the gorilla and chimpanzee. The fog of Materialism, the fog of Pantheism, the fog of Rationalism, the fog that Strauss, and Shenkel, and Renan have thrown all around the head of Christ. Anything but believe that God, by His power, made the worlds, and that the Bible is plenary inspired, and that Christ is the omnipotent Son of God come to save sinners. There is one funeral that these wisecracks would like to attend, and be both pall-bearers and grave-diggers, and that the

decease and burial of the Lord God Almighty. They do not think the universe is large enough for Him and them, and so they are trying to crowd Him back, and crowd Him off the precipices of the universe, and in trying to do so they create a great spiritual fog, and the hundreds who went down on the *Schiller* were as nothing compared with the thousands, and the hundreds of thousands, who in this great philosophical vapouring have been wrecked suddenly and for ever. One hour after the vessel spoken of struck in the English Channel, the fog lifted, and the survivors saw Bishop Rock Lighthouse, and I would that to-day a fresh gale from heaven might sweep earth and sky of all philosophical obscurations, and that the dioptric light of God's Word might flash its illumination across all kingdoms. O, come out of the speculative fog, man! Take the Bible for all you ought to know and can know. Come out of the darkness and sit in the sunlight of our glorious Christianity. Stop your religious guessing. When in this day I see people all around me drenched, and soaked, and floundering in the dense mist of modern scepticism, I am but more in love than ever before with the comfortable religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. O, that these wiseacres would come and sit down for half-an-hour, and study and absorb the three first questions and answers of Brown's "Shorter Catechism," which some of us learned at four years of age: "Who made you? God. Who redeemed you? Christ. Who sanctified you? The Holy Ghost." May the Sun of Righteousness scatter the fog.

Again: in the recent disaster I find an illustration of *what is vicarious sacrifice*. Captain Thomas might have got off to the land safely, in all probability. There were two small boats that reached the shore. Why did he not take one of them at the very beginning of the disaster? Why did he not take some buoyant part of the ship and float to a place of safety? He might have said: "No man can reimburse me for the loss of my life. This is a time when every man must look out for himself." No. He stayed there amid the hurricane, pistol in hand, determined that the women and the children should get into those life-boats, and no one else,

And I hear the crack, crack, of the firearms, and I hear him crying out : "Stand back now, and let the passengers be saved ! Stand back !" And then I see him gathering some of the sufferers on his bridge, and then I see him going down for still another errand in their behalf, when a wild surge sweeps him off into the merciless Atlantic. All the survivors agree in stating that a brave man perished that night. Come ye who do not know what the pulpit mean when they talk about vicarious sacrifice. It means one dying for others. It means Captain Thomas dying for the survivors of the *Schiller*. It means the Lord Jesus Christ dying for you and me. Christ knew that we must go down without His interposition. He might have gone safely back to heaven, saying : "I have done enough for that race. I cannot afford to die on that wretched cross ;" and the angels of God would have taken Him by the arms and lifted Him into the sky. But no. There he stands in the midnight hurricane of God's wrath against sin, looking off upon our foundering souls, and He launches the life-boat and tells us to be off for the shore, while He expires. Christ sinking that we might rise ; Christ dying that we might live. For the first ten million years heaven will not get through talking about it. And yet, amazing fact ! we will not get into the life-boat though it has come, and we see the oars pulling away, taking from us our last chance, and we will not leap into it. The tears, and the sufferings, and the dying anguish of the Son of God, so far as we are concerned, a dead failure, and, instead of pleading for us at the last because of our outrage thereof, demanding our complete and eternal overthrow. It is marvellous that Jesus died. There is only one marvel that comes anywhere near equalling it, and that is our rejection of His mercy. O, that this morning God's Spirit would show the people of this audience how thorough is the ruin of a man who will not have Christ.

The present Eddystone Lighthouse stands very firmly, but that was not the character of the first structure that stood on that dangerous point. There was an eccentric man, by the name of Henry Winstantly, who built a very fantastic light-

house at that point in 1696, and when it was nearly done he felt so confident that it was strong, that he expressed the wish that he might be in it in the roughest hurricane that ever blew in the face of heaven. And *he got his wish*. One November night, in 1703, he and his workmen were in that lighthouse when there came down the most raging tempest that has ever been known in that region. On the following morning the people came down to see about the lighthouse. Not a vestige of the wall, not a vestige of the men. Only two twisted iron bolts, showing where the lighthouse had stood. So there are men building up their fantastic hopes, and plans, and enterprises, and expectations, thinking they will stand for ever, saying : "We don't want any of the defences of the Gospel. We can stand for ourselves. We are not afraid. We take all the risks and we defy everything ;" and suddenly the Lord blows upon them and they are gone. Only two things left—a grave and a lost soul.

But I learn also from this sad providence *how near people can come to a happy destination and yet not reach it*. They expected next day to be in Plymouth harbour. Only a few more pacings of the deck by the captain, and then the four blades of the screw would cease their revolutions, and the steamer would stop. Almost in, and yet those people did not live to see Plymouth harbour. They landed at the bottom of the sea. So men sometimes come very near the harbour of God's mercy, but do not quite get into it. They expected to land, we expected they would land ; but they strike on some fatal hindrance and perish. Last Sabbath there were in this house persons who were almost Christians, who never will be fully Christians. They got along just so far, and then some violent jerk of resolution stopped them. They thought religion would not be dignified to them, or they thought that it might disorganize their worldly business, or they thought they might compromise their reputation among some of their friends, or they thought they had got on so far toward the religious hope that they were saved. No, no. Remember the *Schiller* ! Paul saw two boats, and one was called "Altogether" and the other was called "Almost," and



he saw the "Altogether" go into port, flags flying, and he saw the "Almost" founder at sea. Not quite a Christian is to be no Christian at all. To lift one's hand toward Christ and yet not to take hold of Him is to be a castaway. Some of you, some time ago, wept over sin. I saw anxiety on some or your countenances. Your lips moved as if in prayer. I thought you were going to be saved. I have changed my mind. You disastrously stopped. You struck a reef. Remember the *Schiller* !

Again : I learn that *when our time is up we have to go*. Those people were sure of a safe arrival. Everything promised it. They were in as stout an iron steamer as ever goes across the Atlantic. It had seven water-tight compartments. There were eight small boats on the side. They had a skilful and long-experienced commander. Yet the Lord decided that between ten o'clock at night and five o'clock in the morning three hundred and forty-two souls should pass out of life, and He executed that decision. And so the time of our exit out of this life is appointed. You cannot tell mine nor I yours. The whole thing is uncertain, and I am glad it is. If we knew the year and the day when we were to leave this life, we would be disqualified for work, and we would be saying : "Now we have another year less to live, and another week less to live, and another day less to live," and we would be nervous and morbid, and a nuisance to ourselves and to others. But while it is uncertain to us it is not uncertain to God. He has appointed the time. The utmost prudence on our part cannot avert it. When that moment comes we may be on the land, we may be on the sea ; but a message from the next world will be put in our hand, and though nobody else will see it, we will see it, and read it, and respond to it, and tramp away. The call will be so inexorable that we must be off. And yet we act as though we had an infallible life-belt that would hold us up in any wave. We act as if we were as invulnerable as Achilles—with the heel encased. We do not realize that our final moment is coming toward us as straight as a bird ever flies. We feel cool, and unconcerned, and indifferent, as though we had a thousand

years to live on earth and the nine hundred and ninety-ninth would be as favourable for this work as any of its predecessors. Meanwhile our comrades and best friends are dropping around us like slacked lime ; every afternoon, between two and five o'clock, the processions going toward the cemeteries, and we not realizing that we will, after awhile, be silent leaders in some such procession. So near eternity and yet no fittedness. Startling warnings passing out of mind. The shriek of the *Schiller*, like that of the *Arctic* and the *Atlantic* and the *Ville du Havre*, forgotten. The trouble is, we do not realize that the very poorest hour in which to equip ourselves for eternity is the last hour. Of all the thousands and thousands of hours in our whole life, there is not one so poorly fitted for this work as the closing hour, and yet we choose the poorest out of all for this preparation. What chance had those people to pray on that vessel, awakened suddenly out of sleep, the waves of the ocean dashing through the gaping sides of the steamer ? Some of them, indeed, got a few moments by clambering up into the rigging ; but alas ! if they put off the work of the soul's salvation till that moment, when, in undress, they swung in the ratlines on the careening ship until the smoke-stack fell, and the foremast fell, and the mainmast fell, and there was a plash and a gurgle, and all was over. How much better, my brother, it would be for you to prepare now for that eternity which may any moment break in upon you as suddenly as it did upon them. Unless your heart is radically changed by the grace of God, and Christ is your personal Saviour, the plunge of the *Schiller* in the English Channel was only a feeble type of the deeper going down of your immortal spirit. Why not now repent and believe, and pray and live ? This disaster demands your arousal. Wake before it be too late. Remember the *Schiller*!



## THE KNELL OF NINEVEH.

*"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."*—  
JONAH iii. 4.

**O**N the banks of the Tigris there is a great capital, sixty miles in circumference, surrounded by a wall broad enough to allow three chariots to go abreast ; fifteen hundred turrets, each two hundred feet high, carrying aloft the grandeur of the city. There are six hundred thousand inhabitants. The metropolis is not like our crowded cities ; but gardens wreath the homes of private citizens with tropical blaze of colour, wet with the spray of falling waters, and there are pasture fields, on which cattle browse, in the very midst of the city. It is a delicious climate, even in midsummer never rising to more than seventy degrees. Through the gates of that city roll the commerce of Eastern and Western Asia. On its throne sits Sardanapalus, his every meal a banquet, his every day a coronation. There are polished walls of jasper and chalcedony, bewildering with arrow-head inscriptions and scenes of exciting chase and victorious battle. There are mansions adorned with bronze, and vases, and carved statues of ivory, and ceilings with mother-of-pearl, and mantel enamelling, and floors with slabs of alabaster. There are other walls with sculptured flowers, and panelling of Lebanon cedar, and burnished copper, and doorways guarded by winged lions. The city roars with chariot wheels, and clatters with swift hoofs, and is all a-rush and a-blaze with pomp, and fashion, and power. The river Tigris bounds the city on one side, and moat and turretted wall bound it on the other sides, and there it stands defiant of earth and heaven. Fraud in her store-houses. Uncleanliness in her dwellings. Obscene display in her theatres. Iniquity everywhere. Nineveh the magnificent. Nineveh the vile. Nineveh the doomed.

One day, a plain-looking man comes through the gate into that city. He is sunburned as though he had been under the browning process of a sea voyage. Indeed, he had been

wrecked, and picked up by such a life-boat as no other man ever rode in—a whale's fins and flukes being to him both oars and rudder. The man had been trying to escape his duty of preaching a disagreeable sermon ; but now, at last, his feet strike the street of that city. No sooner has he passed under the shadow of the wall and entered it, than clearing his throat, for loud and distinct utterance, he begins ; and the water-carrier sets down his jug, and the charioteer reins in the steeds, and the soldiers on the top of the wall break ranks to look and listen, while his voice shivers through the avenue, and reverberates amid the dwelling of potentate and peasant, as he cries out : " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown ! " The people rush out of the market-places and to the gates to listen to the strange sound. The king invites the man to tell the story amid the corridors of the palace. The courtiers throng in and out amid the statues, and pictures, and fountains, listening to the startling message : " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." "*What is that fellow about ?*" say some of the people. " Is he a madman escaped from his keepers ? He must be an alarmist, who is announcing his morbid fears. He ought to be arrested, and put in the prison of the city." But still the man moves on, and still the cry goes up : " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." There is no madness in his eye, there is no fanaticism in his manner, but only a Divine authority, and a terrible earnestness which finally seizes the whole city. People rush from place to place and say : " Have you seen that prophet ? What does he mean ? Is it to be earthquake, or storm, or plague, or besiegement of foreign enemy ? " Sardanapalus puts off his jewelled array and puts on mourning, and the whole city goes down on its knees, and street cries to street, and temple to temple, and the fifteen hundred turrets join the dirge : " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." A black covering is thrown over the horses and the sheep and the cattle. Forage and water are kept from the dumb brutes so that their distressed bellowings may make a dolorous accompaniment to the lamentation of six hundred thousands souls,

who wring their hands, and beat their temples, and throw themselves into the dust, and deplore their sin, crying out : "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown?"

God heard that cry. He turned aside from the affairs of eternal state, and listened. He said : "Stop! I must go down and save that city. It is repenting, and cries for help, and they shall have it, and Nineveh shall live." Then the people took down the timbrels, and loosened the foot of the dance, and flung new light on the panels of alabaster, and started the suppressed fountains, and the children clapped their hands ; and from Sardanapalus on the throne, clear down to the keeper of the city gate, where brown-faced Jonah first went in with his thrilling message, there were song and laughter, and congratulation, and festivity, and jubilee. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way ; and God repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them ; and He did it not."

I learn, in the first place, from this subject *the precision and punctuality of the Divine arrangement*. You will see that God decided exactly the day when Nineveh's lease of mercy should end. If Jonah preached that sermon on the first day of the month, then the doom was to fall upon Nineveh on the tenth day of the next month. So God decides what shall be the amount of our rebellion. Though there may be no sound in the heavens, He has determined the length of His endurance of our sin. It may be forty days, it may be forty hours, it may be forty minutes, it may be forty seconds. The fact that the affairs of God's government are infinite and multifarious is no reason why He should not attend to the minutiae. God no more certainly decided that on June 15th, 1215, England should have her *Magna Charta* ; nor that on the 4th of July, 1776, the Declaration of Independence should go forth ; nor that at half-past eleven o'clock at night on the 14th of December, 1799, George Washington should die ; nor that forty days after Jonah preached that sermon, Nineveh's chance for mercy should end unless she repented, than He has decided the point beyond which you and I cannot pass and still obtain the Divine clemency. What careful walking

this ought to make for those who are unsaved, lest the hour-glass of their opportunity be almost empty. Men and women do not lose their souls through putting off repentance for ever, but only by putting it off one second after the time is up. They propose to become Christian in mid-life, but they die in youth ; or they propose in old age to be Christians, but they die in mid-life ; or on the forty-first day they will attend to the matter but on the fortieth Nineveh is overthrown.

Standing on ship's deck amid a coil of chains, sailors roughly tell you to stand back "if you do not want your limbs broken, or by the chains *be hurled overboard* ; for they are going to let out the anchor, and when the anchor does go the chains make the deck smoke with their speed. As swiftly our time runs away from us. Now it seems coiled all around us in a pyramid of years, and days, and minutes, but they are going, and they will take us off with their lightning velocity. If I should by some supernatural revelation to-night tell you just how long or how brief will be your opportunity for repentance and salvation, you would not believe me. You would say : "I shall have tenfold that time ; I shall have a hundredfold that time." But you will not have more ; you will have less. You have put off repentance so long that you are going to be very much crowded in this matter of the soul's salvation. The corner of time that is left you is so small that you will hardly have room to turn around in it. You are like an accountant who has to have a certain number of figures added up by four o'clock in the afternoon. It is two full, round hours' work, and it is a quarter past three o'clock, and yet he has not begun. You are like a man in a case of life and death, five miles from the depot, and the train starts in thirty minutes, and you have not harnessed the horse. You are like a man who comes to the bridge across the Naugatuck River in time of a freshet. The circumstances are such that he must go across. The bridge quivers, the abutment begins to give way ; but he stands, and halts, and waits, until the bridge cracks in twain and goes down, hoping then that on the floating timbers he may get over to the other shore.

God is not looking inertly and unconcernedly upon the position you occupy. Just as certainly as there is a bank to the East River, just so certainly there is a bank to the river of your opportunity. The margin is fixed. There will be a limit to God's forbearance. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Still further : I learn from this subject that *religious warning may seem preposterous*. Now, we think that our city is safe from all foreign invasion. We have Fort Hamilton, the Battery, Fort Lafayette, and half a dozen strongholds, but the City of Nineveh had fifteen hundred turrets, and they were all strongholds. Then it had for a natural defence the Tigris, and it was not an easy thing for an army to swim across that river under the shadow of a wall on which stood a defending army ; and yet it was through that impregnable city that Jonah went, uttering the warning words of my text. It must at first have seemed preposterous to a great many of the people. So it is now that religious warning seems to many an absurdity. It is more to them a joke than anything else. "Repent ? Prepare ? Was there ever a man with stronger health than I have ? Vision clear, hearing alert, lungs stout, heart steady. Insurance companies tell me I shall have seventy years of life. My father and mother were both long lived. Feel the muscle in my arm." Ah, my brother, it is not preposterous when I come out to tell you that you need to make preparation for the future. I have noticed that it is the invalids who live on. They take more care of their health, and so they outlive the robust and athlete. I have noticed in my circle of acquaintances, for the last few years, that five robust and athlete men go out of life to one invalid. Death prides himself on the strength of the cattle he takes. "Boast not thyself of the morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Dr. Eddy, the eloquent missionary secretary, died the other day from swallowing a small flake of an oyster shell. Emillius Lepidus lost his life by having his toe wounded. A splinter may be lancet sharp enough to bleed our life away. Look out ! The slip of a railway train from the track, the rush of

a runaway horse through the street, any one of ten thousand perils may be upon you. "In such a day and hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh." *Your opportunity for repentance* is almost over. "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Still further : I learn from my subject that *God gives every man a fair chance for his life*. The iniquity of Nineveh was accumulating. It had been rolling up and rolling up. There the city lay—blotched, seething, festering under the sun. Why did not God put an end to its iniquity ? Why did not God unsheath some sword of lightning from the scabbard of a storm-cloud, and slay it ? Why did He not with some pry of an earthquake throw it into the tomb where Caraccas and Lisbon now lay ? Why did He not submerge it with the scorn of His indignation, as He did Herculaneum and Pompeii ? It was because He wanted to give the city a fair chance. You would have thought that thirty days would have been enough to repent in, or twenty days, or ten days. Aye, you would have said : "If that city don't quit its sin in five days it never will." But see the wide margin. Listen to the generosity of time. "Yet forty days !"

Be frank, my brother, and confess to-night that God is giving you a fair chance for safety, a better chance than He gave to Nineveh. They had one prophet. You have heard the voices of fifty. They had one warning. You have had a thousand. They had forty days. Some of you have had forty years. Sometimes the warnings of God have come upon your soul soft as the breath of lilies and frankincense, and then again as though hurled from a catapult of terrific providence. God has sometimes led you to see your unsaved condition while you were walking amid perils, and your hair stood on end, and you stopped breathing ; you thought your last moment had come. Or, through protracted illness, He allowed you in many a midnight to think over this subject—when all was still save the ticking of the clock in the hall and the beating of your own anxious heart. Warned that you were a sinner. Warned that you needed a Divine Saviour. Warned of coming retribution. Warned of an eternity



crowded with splendour or catastrophe. Warned by the death of those with whom you were familiar. Warned day after day, and month after month, and year after year—warned, warned, warned. O! my dear brother, if your soul is lost, in the day of judgment you will have to acknowledge “no man in Brooklyn ever had a better chance for heaven than I had. I was preached to, and prayed for, and Divinely solicited. I was shewn the right, and fully persuaded of it; but I did not act and I did not believe, and now, in the presence of a burning earth and a flying heaven, I take the whole responsibility. Hear me, men! Angels! Devils!—I took the life of my own soul; and I did it so thoroughly that it is done for ever. And now I trudge off over the hot desert and under the burning sky—a suicide! A suicide!”

Yes, I think you have all been warned; but if up until this very hour you have happened to escape such intimation, to-night I ring it in your ears: “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

Still further: I learn from this subject that *when the people repent, the Lord lets them off*. While yet Nineveh was on its knees, and Sardanapalus sat in the ashes, and the unfed cattle were yet moaning in the air, and the people were yet deploring their sin, God reversed the judgment, and said: “Those people have repented. Let them live!” And the news flew. The gardens saved. The palaces saved. Six hundred thousand people saved. A belt of sixty miles of city saved. Let the news be flung from one wall to the other; from the east wall, clear over to the west wall. Let the bells ring. Let the cymbals clap. Let flags be flung out from all the fifteen hundred turrets. Let the king’s lamp-lighters kindle up the throne-room. “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that He had said that he would do unto them; and He did it not.” In other words, *when a sinner repents, God repents*. The one gives up his sins: the other gives up his judgments. The moment that a man turns to God, the relation of the whole universe towards him is changed, and the storms, and the lightnings, and the thunders,

and the earthquakes, and the grandeurs of the judgment day, and the realities of the eternal world, all become his coadjutors. God and the angels come over on his side. Repent, give up your sin and turn to God, and you will be saved. "Ah," says some one, "that's a tough thing to do." "I have been drinking," says some one ; or, "I have been unchaste," says some one ; or, "I have been blasphemous," says another ; or, "I have been a Sabbath breaker," says another ; or, "I have a hard heart," says another, "and now you ask me to give up my sin. I cannot do it—and I wont do it." Then you will die. That is settled. But somebody else says : "I will give up my sin, and I will now take the Lord for my portion." You will live. That is just as certainly settled. You will to-night either have to fling away sin or fling away heaven. The one is a husk—the other is a coronet. The one is a groan—the other is an anthem. The one is a sting—the other is an illumination. Christ's fair complexion, of which his contemporaries wrote, is gone, and His face is red, and His hands are red, and His feet are red with the rushing blood of His own suffering endured to get you out of sin, and death and hell. Oh, will you to-night implore Him to let His suffering take the place of your ill desert ? If you will, all is well, and you may now begin to twist garlands for your brow, for you are already a victor. All heaven comes surging upon your soul in the announcement : "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Now, will you do it ? I care nothing for a sermon unless it has an application, and this is the application : will you do it ? "Ah," says some one, "I believe that is right. I mean some day to surrender the entirety of my nature to God. It is reasonable. I mean to be a Christian, but not now." That is what thousands of you are saying. I am afraid if you do not give your heart to God to-night, you never will. You may have heard of the ship *Rebecca Goddard* that came near one of our ports this last winter. They were all scoured up and ready for the landing, when coming almost into the harbour, an ice-floe took the ship and pushed it out to sea, and it drifted about two or three days, and there was great suffering, and one was

frozen dead at his post. How near they got into the harbour, and yet *they did not get in*. How many there are here to-night who feel they are almost in the harbour of God's mercy. Why do you not come ashore, lest some ice-floe of sin and worldliness drive you out again to the sea, and you die in the rigging? I throw you this rope to-night. I hurl you this warning. Make fast to heaven now. This moment is vanishing, and with it may go everything; and so I run up and down through this audience with the banner of the cross: Rally, immortal men, rally!

"But," says some one in the house, "I won't take your advice. I'll risk it. I defy God. Here I take my stand, and I ask no odds either of earth or heaven." Let me tell such that you are in a battle where you will be worsted, "Yet forty days!" Perhaps thirty days. Perhaps ten days. Perhaps three days. Perhaps one day. The horses that drag on that chariot of doom are lathered with the foam of a great speed, and their hoofs clip fire from the flinty road, and their nostrils throb with the hot haste as they dash on. Get out of the way, or the wheels will roll over you. You cannot endure the ire of an incensed God. Throw yourselves down on your knees now and pelt the heavens with blood-red cries for mercy. The terminal chance is going; the last, the last chance is going, going. O, wake up before you wake up among the lost. May God Almighty, by His Eternal Spirit, wake you up.

There is a story running indistinctly through my mind of a maiden whose love was doomed to be put to death when the curfew bell struck nine o'clock at night, and she thought that if she could keep that bell from ringing for a little while her lover and friend would be spared. And so under the shadow of the night she crept up into the tower and laid hold of the tongue of the bell. After awhile the sexton came up to the tower and put his hand on the rope, and waited for the right moment to come; and then by the light of his lantern and his watch he found it was nine o'clock, and he seized the rope and he pulled, and the bell turned, but in silence, and the maiden still held on to the tongue of the

bell swinging back and forth wildly through the belfry, and the-curfew bell rang not, and so time was gained and pardon arrived, and a precious life was saved. O, it seems to me as if there were those here doomed to death. You have condemned yourselves. It seems to me as if the death knell of your immortal soul were about to strike. The angel of God's justice has his hand on the rope, and yet I seize the tongue of that bell, and I hold on, hoping to gain a little time, and I cry out: "O God, not yet! not yet!" hoping that time may be gained and pardon may fly from the throne and your soul may live. May the God who saved Nineveh save you. But some of you have put it off so long that I fear your time is up.



When one who holds communion with the skies,  
Has fill'd his urn where the pure waters rise,  
And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
'Tis even as if an angel shook his wings ;  
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,  
And tells us where his treasure is supplied.

COWPER.



TEXT.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
Genesis xix. 17.	Run for your Life . . . . .	107
Numbers xiii. 23.	A Cluster from Eschol . . . . .	97
Joshua ii. 21.	The Red Cord in the Window . . . . .	183
Joshua v. 12.	The Old Corn of Canaan . . . . .	78
Judges ii. 5.	The Rushing of Tears . . . . .	17
Judges ix. 48, 49.	The Storming of the Temple of Berith . . . . .	65
Judges xiv. 8.	Honey from a Strange Hive . . . . .	296
1 Samuel xxviii. 7. 8.	The Religion of Ghosts . . . . .	228
1 Samuel xxxi. 8.	Stripping the Slain . . . . .	309
2 Kings ii. 19—22.	The Reservoirs Salted . . . . .	271
Job ix. 30, 31.	Snow Water and Alkali Insufficient . . . . .	123
Psalms xxiii. 5.	The Overflowing Cup . . . . .	160
Psalms xlv. 8.	Out of the Ivory Palaces . . . . .	132
Psalms lxxx. 12, 13.	People to be Feared . . . . .	170
Psalms cxix. 105.	The Lamp . . . . .	207
Proverbs xxiii. 23.	Bartering for Eternity . . . . .	46
Isaiah xxv. 11.	Swimming for Life . . . . .	7
Isaiah liii. 6.	Astray from the Fold . . . . .	68
Ecclesiastes xii. 8.	A View from a Palace Window . . . . .	250
Ezekiel xiii. 18.	Universalism Versus the Bible . . . . .	193
Amos viii. 2.	A Basket of Summer Fruit . . . . .	142
Jonah iii. 4.	The Knell of Nineveh . . . . .	336
Malachi iii. 1.	The Dying need of the Church . . . . .	241
Matthew xii. 31, 32.	Things we never get over . . . . .	36
Matthew xiv. 12.	Salve for a Sore Heart . . . . .	260
Luke vii. 12—15.	The Procession Halted . . . . .	27
Luke xxiii. 35.	The Last Act of the Tragedy . . . . .	55
John xiv. 2.	Phoebe Palmer, the Evangelist . . . . .	150
Acts xix. 32, 33, 34.	The Christian at the Ballot-Box . . . . .	115
Acts xxvii. 41.	The Wreck of the Schiller . . . . .	327
Romans ix. 5.	Unitarianism Versus the Bible . . . . .	217
Corinthians ix. 27.	Wrecked for Two Worlds . . . . .	289
Philippians ii. 9.	The Music of Two Syllables . . . . .	318
2 Timothy iv. 6.	Good-Bye to the World . . . . .	280

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