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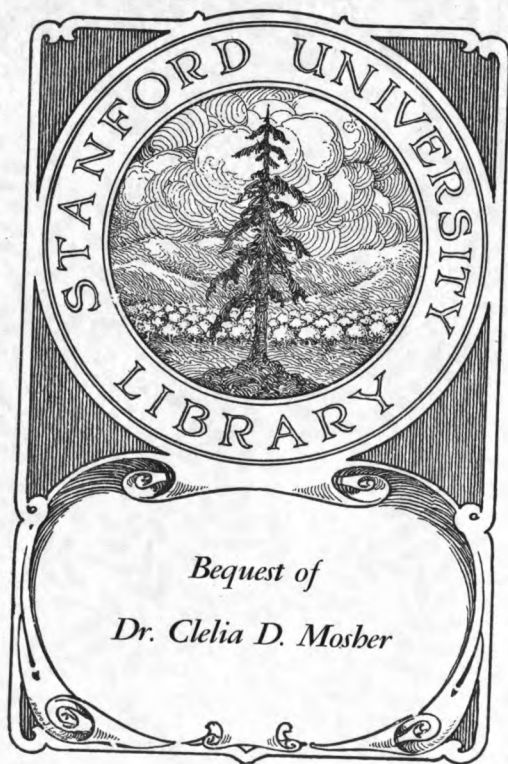
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Traps for Men.

T. DEWITT TALMAGE.



Bequest of
Dr. Clelia D. Mosber

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Sarah Brewitt Mosher,
Albany,
N. Y.



Yours
T. De Witt Taft

TRAPS FOR MEN;

OR,

The Pitfalls of Life.

BY

T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF

"Crumbs Swept Up;" "Around the Tea Table;" "Sports that Kill;"
"Night Sides of City Life;" "Foes of Society;" Etc., Etc.

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1878.

W. PAUL BROWN

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The following discourses were stenographically reported, and by me revised for publication, expressly for Messrs. J. Fairbanks & Co., Chicago, Ill., who are the only authorized publishers.

T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

Brooklyn, Nov. 19, 1878.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

In issuing "TRAPS FOR MEN" from our press, we do it in the conviction that the Christian Community, and the great American public in general, will appreciate these soul-stirring discourses on the temptations of city life, with the exposure of the traps and pitfalls that tempt our youth from the path of rectitude. They are written in his strongest descriptive powers—sparkling with graceful images and illustrative anecdotes, terrible in their earnestness, uncompromising in denunciation of sin and wickedness among the high and low, sparing none—and are Dr. Talmage's best efforts in his earnest, aggressive warfare on the abominations of society, every page burning with an eloquent entreaty for a better, purer life, and are of intense interest to all who look for the advancement and higher development of the human race. This work is the ONLY REVISED AND AUTHORIZED publication of Dr. Talmage's discourses.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

Thomas DeWitt Talmage was born in 1832, in Bound Brook, Somerset County, N. J. His father was a farmer of much vigor and consistency of character; his mother a woman of noted energy, hopefulness and equanimity. Both parents were in marked respects characteristic. Differences of disposition and methods blended in them into a harmonious, consecrated, benignant and cheery life. The father won all the confidence and the best of the honors a hard-sensed truly American community had to yield. The mother was that counseling and quietly provident force which made her a helpmeet indeed and her home the center and sanctuary of the sweetest influences that have fallen on the path of a large number of children, of whom four sons are all ministers of the Word. From a period ante-dating the Revolution, the ancestors of our subject were members of the Reformed Dutch Church, in which Dr. Talmage's father was the leading lay office bearer through a life extended beyond fourscore years. The youngest of the children, it seemed doubtful at first whether DeWitt would follow his brothers into the ministry. His earliest preference was the law, the studies of which he pursued for a year after his graduation with honors from the University of the City of New York. The faculties which would have made him the greatest jury advocate of the age were, however, preserved for and directed toward the pulpit by an unrest which took the very sound of a cry within him for months, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." When he submitted to it the always ardent but never urged hopes of his honored parents were realized. He entered the ministry from the New Brunswick Seminary of Theology. As his destiny and powers came to manifestation in Brooklyn, his pastoral life prior to that was but a preparation for it. It can, therefore, be indicated as an incidental stage in his career rather than treated at length as a principal part of it. His first settlement was at Belleville, on the beautiful Passaic, in New Jersey. For three years there he underwent an excellent practical education in the conventional ministry. His congregation was about the most cultivated and exacting in the rural

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regions of the sterling little state. Historically, it was known to be about the oldest society of Protestantism in New Jersey. Its records, as preserved, run back over 200 years, but it is known to have had a strong life the better part of a century more. Its structure is regarded as one of the finest of any country congregation in the United States. No wonder: it stands within rifle-shot of the quarry from which Old Trinity, in New York, was hewn. The value (and the limits) of stereotyped preaching and what he did *not* know came as an instructive and disillusionizing force to the theological tyro at Belleville. There also came and remained strong friendships, inspiring revivals, and sacred counsels.

By natural promotion three years at Syracuse succeeded three at Belleville. That cultivated, critical city furnished Mr. Talmage the value of an audience in which professional men were predominant in influence. His preaching there grew tonic and free. As Mr. Pitt advised a young friend, he "risked himself." The church grew from few to many—from a state of coma to athletic life. The preacher learned to go to school to humanity and his own heart. The lessons they taught him agreed with what was boldest and most compelling in the spirit of the revealed Word. Those whose claims were sacred to him found the saline climate of Syracuse a cause of unhealth. Otherwise it is likely that that most delightful region in the United States—Central New York—for men of letters who equally love nature and culture, would have been the home of Mr. Talmage for life.

The next seven years of Mr. Talmage's life were spent in Philadelphia. There his powers got "set." He learned what it was he could best do. He had the courage of his consciousness and he did it. Previously he might have felt it incumbent on him to give to pulpit traditions the homage of compliance—though at Syracuse "the more excellent way," any man's *own* way, so that he have the divining gift of genius and the nature atune to all high sympathies and purposes—had in glimpses come to him. He realized that it was his duty and mission in the world to make *it* hear the gospel. The church was not to him in numbers a select few, in organization a monopoly. It was meant to be the conqueror and transformer of the world. For seven years he wrought with much success on this theory, all the time realizing that his plans could come to fullness only under conditions that enabled him to build from the bottom up an organization which could get nearer to the masses and which would have no precedents to be afraid of as ghosts in its path. Hence he ceased from being the leading preacher in Philadelphia to become in Brooklyn the leading preacher in the world.

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His work for nine years here, know all our readers. It began in a cramped brick rectangle, capable of holding 1,200, and he came to it on "the call" of nineteen. In less than two years that was exchanged for an iron structure, with raised seats, the interior curved like a horse shoe, the pulpit a platform bridging the ends. That held 3,000 persons. It lasted just long enough to revolutionize church architecture in cities into harmony with common sense. Smaller duplicates of it started in every quarter, three in Brooklyn, two in New York, one in Montreal, one in Louisville, any number in Chicago, two in San Francisco, like numbers abroad. Then it burnt up, that from its ashes the present stately and most sensible structure might rise. Gothic, of brick and stone, cathedral-like above, amphitheatre-like below, it holds 5,000 as easily as one person, and all can hear and see equally well. In a large sense the people built these edifices. Their architects were Leonard Vaux and John Welch respectively. It is sufficiently indicative to say in general of Dr. Talmage's work in the Tabernacle, that his audiences are always as many as the place will hold; that twenty-three papers in Christendom steadily publish his entire sermons and Friday night discourses, exclusive of the dailies of the United States; that the papers girdle the globe, being published in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Belfast, Toronto, Montreal, St. John's, Sidney, Melbourne, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Raleigh, New York, and many others. To pulpit labors of this responsibility should be added considerable pastoral work, the conduct of the Lay College, and constantly recurring lecturing and literary work, to fill out the public life of a very busy man.

The multiplicity, large results and striking progress of the labors of Dr. Talmage have made the foregoing more of a brief narrative of the epochs of his career than an account of the career itself. It has had to be so. Lack of space requires it. His work has had rather to be intimated in generalities than told in details. The filling in must come either from the knowledge of the reader or from intelligent inferences and conclusions, drawn from the few principal facts stated, and stated with care. This remains to be said: No other preacher addresses so many constantly. The words of no other preacher were ever before carried by so many types or carried so far. Types give him three continents for a church, and the English-speaking world for a congregation. The judgment of his generation will of course be divided upon him just as that of the next will not. That he is a topic in every newspaper is much more significant than the fact of what treatment it gives him. Only men of genius

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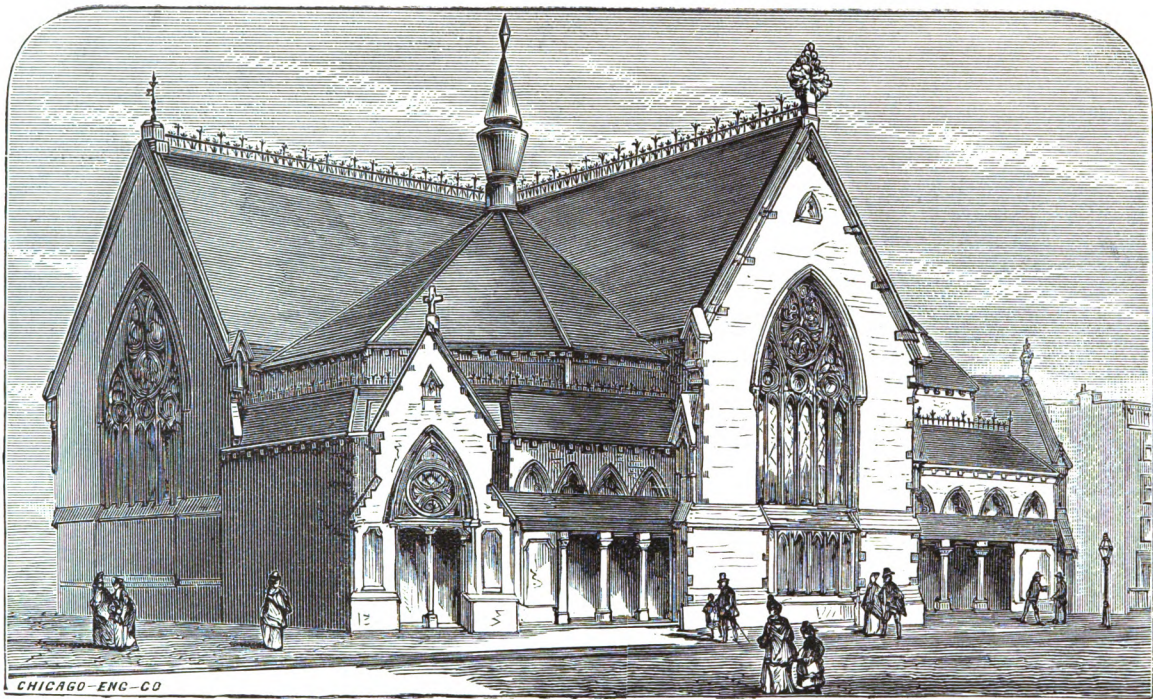
are universally commented on. The universality of the comment makes friends and foes alike prove the fact of the genius. That is what is impressive—as for the quality of the comment, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be much more a revelation of the character behind the pen which writes it than a true view or review of the man. This is necessarily so. The press and the pulpit in the main are defective judges of one another. The former rarely enters the inside of the latter's work. There is acquaintanceship, but not intimacy between them. Journals find out the *fact* of a preacher's power in time. Then they go looking for the causes. Long before, however, the masses have felt the causes and have realized, not merely discovered, the *fact*. The penalty of being the leaders of great masses has, from Whitefield and Wesley to Spurgeon and Talmage, been to serve as the target for small wits. A constant source of attack on men of such magnitude always has been and will be the presses which, by the common consent of mankind, are described and dispensed from all consideration, when they are rated Satanic. Their attacks confirm a man's right to respect and reputation, and are a proof of his influence and greatness. It can be truly said that while secular criticism in the United States favorably regards our subject in proportion to its intelligence and uprightness, the judgment of foreigners on him has long been an index to the judgment of posterity here. No other American is read so much and so constantly abroad. His extraordinary imagination, earnestness, descriptive powers and humor, his great art in grouping and arrangement, his wonderful mastery of words to illumine and alleviate human conditions and to interpret and inspire the harmonies of the better nature, are appreciated by all who can put themselves in sympathy with his originality of methods and his high consecration of purpose. His manner mates with his nature. It is each sermon in action. He presses the eyes, hands, his entire body, into the service of the illustrative truth. Gestures are the accompaniment of what he says. As he stands out before the immense throng, without a scrap of notes or manuscript before him, the effect produced can not be understood by those who have never seen it. The solemnity, the tears, the awful hush, as though the audience could not breathe again, are oftentimes painful.

His voice is peculiar, not musical, but productive of startling, strong effects, such as characterize no preacher on either side of the Atlantic. His power to grapple an audience and master it from text to peroration has no equal. No man was ever less self-conscious in his work. He feels a mission of evangelization on him as by the imposition of

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the Supreme. That mission he responds to by doing the duty that is nearest to him with all his might—as confident that he is under the care and order of a Divine Master as those who hear him are that they are under the spell of the greatest prose-poet that ever made the gospel his song and the redemption of the race the passion of his heart.

The following discourses were taken down by stenographic reporters and revised by the author. On the occasion of their delivery the church was thronged beyond description, the streets around blockaded with people so that carriages could not pass, Mr. Talmage himself gaining admission only by the help of the police.



THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE.

CHAPTER I.

HELP FOR THOSE OFF TRACK.

When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.—Proverbs xxiii: 35

I have thought in the midst of this series of sermons which I am preaching, on the night side of city life, it would be well for me to address a sermon of help to the multitude of people who have got on the wrong track. In the nights of my exploration I found a great multitude of men who had gone astray, and nothing more impressed me than the fact of their great multitude. With an insight into human nature such as no other man ever reached, Solomon, in my text, sketches the mental operations of one who, having stepped aside from the path of rectitude, desires to return. With a wish for something better, he says: "When shall I awake? When shall I come out of this horrid nightmare of iniquity?" But seized upon by uneradicated habit, and forced down hill by his passions, he cries out: "I will seek it yet again. I will try it once more."

Our libraries are adorned with an elegant literature addressed to young men, pointing out to them all the dangers and perils of life—complete maps of the voyage, showing all the rocks, the quicksands, the shoals. But suppose a man has already made shipwrecks; suppose he is already off the track; suppose he has already gone astray, how is he to get back? That is a field comparatively untouched. I propose to address myself this morning to such. There are those in this audience who, with every passion of their agonized soul, are ready to

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hear such a discussion. They compare themselves with what they were ten years ago, and cry out from the bondage in which they are incarcerated. Now, if there be any in this house, come with an earnest purpose, yet feeling they are beyond the pale of Christian sympathy, and that the sermon can hardly be expected to address them, then, at this moment, I give them my right hand and call them brother. Look up. There is glorious and triumphant hope for you yet. I sound the trumpet of Gospel deliverance. The church is ready to spread a banquet at your return, and the hierarchs of heaven to fall into line of bannered procession at the news of your emancipation. So far as God may help me, I propose to show what are the obstacles of your return, and then how you are to surmount those obstacles.

The first difficulty in the way of your return is the force of moral gravitation. Just as there is a natural law which brings down to the earth anything you throw into the air, so there is a corresponding moral gravitation. In other words, it is easier to go down than it is to go up; it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. Call to mind the comrades of your boyhood days—some of them good, some of them bad. Which most affected you? Call to mind the anecdotes that you have heard in the last five or ten years—some of them are pure and some of them impure. Which the more easily sticks to your memory? During the years of your life you have formed certain courses of conduct—some of them good, some of them bad. To which style of habit did you the more easily yield? Ah! my friends, we have to take but a moment of self-inspection to find out that there is in all our souls a force of moral gravitation. But that gravitation may be resisted. Just as you may pick up from the earth something and hold it in your hand

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toward heaven, just so, by the power of God's grace, a soul fallen may be lifted toward peace, toward pardon, toward heaven. Force of moral gravitation in every one of us, but power in God's grace to overcome that force of moral gravitation.

The next thing in the way of your return is the power of evil habit. I know there are those who say it is very easy for them to give up evil habits. I do not believe them. Here is a man given to intoxication. He knows it is disgracing his family, destroying his property, ruining him body, mind, and soul. If that man, being an intelligent man and loving his family, could easily give up that habit, would he not do so? The fact that he does not give it up proves it is hard to give it up. It is a very easy thing to sail down stream, the tide carrying you with great force; but suppose you turn the boat up stream, is it so easy then to row it? As long as we yield to the evil inclinations in our hearts, and our bad habits we are sailing down stream; but the moment we try to turn, we put our boat in the rapids just above Niagara, and try to row up stream. Take a man given to the habit of using tobacco, as most of you do! and let him resolve to stop, and he finds it very difficult. Seventeen years ago I quit that habit, and I would as soon dare to put my right hand in the fire as once to indulge in it. Why? Because it was such a terrific struggle to get over it. Now, let a man be advised by his physician to give up the use of tobacco. He goes around not knowing what to do with himself. He cannot add up a line of figures. He cannot sleep nights. It seems as if the world had turned upside down. He feels his business is going to ruin. Where he was kind and obliging, he is scolding and fretful. The composure that characterized

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him has given way to a fretful restlessness, and he has become a complete fidget. What power is it that has rolled a wave of woe over the earth and shaken a portent in the heavens? He has tried to stop smoking! After a while he says: "I am going to do as I please. The doctor doesn't understand my case. I'm going back to my old habit." And he returns. Everything assumes its usual composure. His business seems to brighten. The world becomes an attractive place to live in. His children, seeing the difference, hail the return of their father's genial disposition. What wave of color has dashed blue into the sky, and greenness into the mountain foliage, and the glow of sapphire into the sunset? What enchantment has lifted a world of beauty and joy on his soul? He has gone back to smoking. Oh! the fact is, as we all know in our own experience, that habit is a task-master; as long as we obey it, it does not chastise us; but let us resist and we find we are to be lashed with scorpion whips, and bound with ship cable, and thrown into the track of bone-breaking Juggernauts. During the war of 1812 there was a ship set on fire just above Niagara Falls, and then, cut loose from its moorings, it came on down through the night and tossed over the falls. It was said to have been a scene brilliant beyond all description. Well, there are thousands of men on fire of evil habit, coming down through the rapids and through the awful night of temptation toward the eternal plunge. Oh! how hard it is to arrest them. God only can arrest them. Suppose a man after five, or ten, or twenty years of evil-doing resolves to do right? Why, all the forces of darkness are allied against him. He cannot sleep nights. He gets down on his knees in the midnight and cries, "God help me!" He bites his lip. He grinds his teeth. He clenches his fist in a de-

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termination to keep his purpose. He dare not look at the bottles in the window of a wine store. It is one long, bitter, exhaustive, hand-to-hand fight with enflamed, tantalizing, and merciless habit. When he thinks he is entirely free the old inclinations pounce upon him like a pack of hounds with their muzzles tearing away at the flanks of one poor reindeer. In Paris there is a sculptured representation of Bacchus, the god of revelry. He is riding on a panther at full leap. Oh! how suggestive. Let every one who is speeding on bad ways understand he is not riding a docile and well-broken steed, but he is riding a monster wild and bloodthirsty, going at a death leap. How many there are who resolve on a better life, and say, "When shall I awake?" but, seized on by their old habits, cry, "I will try it once more; I will seek it yet again!" Years ago, there were some Princeton students who were skating and the ice was very thin, and some one warned the company back from the air-hole, and finally warned them entirely to leave the place. But one young man with bravado, after all the rest had stopped, cried out, one round more!" He swept around, and went down, and was brought out a corpse. My friends, there are thousands and tens of thousands of men losing their souls in that way. It is the one round more.

I have also to say that if a man wants to return from evil practices, society repulses him. Desiring to reform, he says: "Now, I will shake off my old associates, and I will find Christian companionship." And he appears at the church door some Sabbath day, and the usher greets him with a look as much as to say, "Why, you here? You are the last man I ever expected to see at church! Come, take this seat right down by the door!" Instead of saying, "Good morning; I am glad you are here. Come; I will give you a first-rate seat, right up

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by the pulpit." Well, the prodigal, not yet discouraged, enters a prayer meeting, and some Christian man, with more real than common sense, says: "Glad to see you; the dying thief was saved, and I suppose there is mercy for you!" The young man, disgusted, chilled, throws himself back on his dignity, resolved he never will enter the house of God again. Perhaps not quite fully discouraged about reformation, he sides up by some highly respectable man he used to know, going down the street, and immediately the respectable man has an errand down some other street! Well, the prodigal wishing to return, takes some member of a Christian association by the hand, or tries to. The Christian young man looks at him, looks at the faded apparel and the marks of dissipation, and instead of giving him a warm grip of the hand, offers him the tip end of the long fingers of the left hand, which is equal to striking a man in the face. Oh! how few Christian people understand how much force and gospel there is in a good, honest hand-shaking. Sometimes, when you have felt the need of encouragement, and some Christian man has taken you heartily by the hand, have you not felt thrilling through every fiber of your body, mind and soul an encouragement that was just what you needed? You do not know anything at all about this unless you know when a man tries to return from evil courses of conduct he runs against repulsions innumerable. We say of some man, he lives a block or two from the church, or half a mile from the church. There are people in Brooklyn and New York who live a thousand miles from church. Vast deserts of indifference between them and the house of God. The fact is, we must keep our respectability, though thousands and tens of thousands perish. Christ sat with publicans and sinners. But if there came to the

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house of God a man with marks of dissipation upon him, people almost threw up their hands in horror, as much as to say, "Isn't it shocking?" How these dainty, fastidious Christians in all our churches are going to get into heaven, I don't know, unless they have an especial train of cars, cushioned and upholstered, each one a car to himself! They cannot go with the great herd of publicans and sinners. Oh! ye who curl your lip of scorn at the fallen, I tell you plainly, if you had been surrounded by the same influences, instead of sitting to-day amid the cultured, and the refined and the Christian, you would have been a crouching wretch in stable or ditch, covered with filth and abomination. It is not because you are naturally any better, but because the mercy of God has protected you. Who are you that, brought up in Christian circles and watched by Christian parentage, you should be so hard on the fallen?

I think men also are often hindered from return by the fact that churches are too anxious about their membership and too anxious about their denomination, and they rush out when they see a man about to give up his sin and return to God, and ask him how he is going to be baptized, whether by sprinkling or immersion, and what kind of church he is going to join. Oh! my friends, it is a poor time to talk about Presbyterian catechisms, and Episcopal liturgies, and Methodist love feasts and baptistries to a man that is coming out of the darkness of sin into the glorious light of the gospel. Why, it reminds me of a man drowning in the sea, and a life-boat puts out for him, and the man in the boat says to the man out of the boat, "Now, if I get you ashore, are you going to live on my street?" First get him ashore, and then talk about the non-essentials of

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religion. Who cares what church he joins, if he only joins Christ and starts for heaven? Oh! you ought to have, my brother, an illumined face and a hearty grip for every one that tries to turn from his evil way. Take hold of the same book with him though his dissipations shake the book, remembering that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

Now, I have shown you these obstacles because I want you to understand I know all the difficulties in the way; but I am now to tell you how Hannibal may scale the Alps, and how the shackles may be unriveted, and how the paths of virtue forsaken may be regained. First of all, my brother, throw yourself on God. Go to him frankly, and earnestly, and tell him these habits you have, and ask him if there is any help in all the resources of omnipotent love, to give it to you. Do not go with a long rigmarole people call prayer, made up of "ohs," and "ahs," and "forever and forever, amens!" Go to God and cry for help! help! help! and if you cannot cry for help, just look and live. I remember, in the late war, I was at Antietam, and I went into the hospitals after the battle and I said to a man, "Where are you hurt?" He made no answer, but held up his arm, swollen and splintered. I saw where he was hurt. The simple fact is, when a man has a wounded soul, all he has to do is to hold it up before a sympathetic Lord and get it healed. It does not take any long prayer. Just hold up the wound. Oh, it is no small thing when a man is nervous, and weak and exhausted, coming from his evil ways, to feel that God puts two omnipotent arms around about him, and says: "Young man, I will stand by you. The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but I will never fail you." And then as the soul thinks the news is too good

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to be true, and cannot believe it, and looks up in God's face, God lifts his right hand and takes an oath, an affidavit, saying: "As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Blessed be God for such a gospel as this. "Cut the slices thin," said the wife to the husband, "or there will not be enough to go all around for the children; cut the slices thin." Blessed be God there is a full loaf for every one that wants it. Bread enough and to spare. No thin slices at the Lord's table. I remember when the Master Street Hospital, in Philadelphia, was opened during the war, a telegram came saying, "There will be three hundred wounded men to-night; be ready to take care of them;" and from my church there went in some twenty or thirty men and women to look after these poor wounded fellows. As they came, some from one part of the land, some from another, no one asked whether this man was from Oregon, or from Massachusetts, or from Minnesota, or from New York. There was a wounded soldier, and the only question was how to take off the rags the most gently, and put on the bandage, and administer the cordial. And when a soul comes to God, He does not ask where you came from, or what your ancestry was. Healing for all your wounds. Pardon for all your guilt. Comfort for all your troubles.

Then, also, I counsel you, if you want to get back, to quit all your bad associations. One unholy intimacy will fill your soul with moral distemper. In all the ages of the church there has not been an instance where a man kept one evil associate and was reformed. Among the twelve hundred thousand of the race, not one instance. Go home to-day, open your desk, take out letter paper, stamp an envelope, and then write a letter something like this:

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"My Old Companions: I start this day for heaven. Until I am persuaded you will join me in this, farewell."

Then sign your name, and send the letter with the first post. Give up your bad companions or give up heaven. It is not ten bad companions that destroy a man, nor five bad companions, nor three bad companions, nor two bad companions, but one. What chance is there for that young man I saw along the street, four or five young men with him, halting in front of a grogshop, urging him to go in, he resisting, violently resisting, until after a while they forced him to go in! It was a summer night and the door was left open, and I saw the process. They held him fast, and they put the cup to his lips, and they forced down the strong drink. What chance is there for such a young man?

I counsel you also, seek Christian advice. Every Christian man is bound to help you. If you find no other human ear willing to listen to your story of struggle, come to me and I will by every sympathy of my heart, and every prayer, and every toil of my hand, stand beside you in the struggle for reformation; and as I hope to have my own sins forgiven and hope to be acquitted at the judgment seat of Christ, I will not betray you. First of all, seek God, then seek Christian counsel. Gather up all the energies of body, mind, and soul, and, appealing to God for success, declare this day everlasting war against all drinking habits, all gaming practices, all houses of sin. Half-and-half work will amount to nothing; it must be a Waterloo. Shrink back now and you are lost. Push on, and you are saved. A Spartan general fell at the very moment of victory, but he dipped his finger in his own blood and wrote on a rock near which he was dying, "Sparta has conquered." Though your struggle to get rid of sin may seem to be almost

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a death struggle, you can dip your finger in your own blood and write on the Rock of Ages, "Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh! what glorious news it would be for some of these young men to send home to their parents in the country these holidays which are coming. They go to the postoffice every day or two to see whether there are any letters from you. How anxious they are to hear! You might send them for a holiday present this season, a book from one of our best publishing houses, or a complete wardrobe from the importer's palace—it would not please them half so much as the news you might send home to-morrow that you had given your heart to God. I know how it is in the country. The night comes on. The cattle stand under the rack through which burst the trusses of hay. The horses just having frisked up from the meadow at the nightfall, stand knee-deep in the bright straw that invites them to lie down and rest. The perch of the hovel is full of fowl, their feet warm under the feathers. In the old farmhouse at night no candle is lighted, for the flames clap their hands about the great backlog, and shake the shadow of the group up and down the wall. Father and mother sit there for half an hour, saying nothing. I wonder what they are thinking of. After a while the father breaks the silence and says, "Well, I wonder where our boy is in town to-night;" and the mother answers, "In no bad place, I warrant you; we always could trust him when he was home, and since he has been away there have been so many prayers offered for him we can trust him still." Then at eight o'clock—for they retire early in the country—at eight o'clock they kneel down and commend you to that God who watches in country and in town, on the land and on the sea. Some one said to a Grecian general, "What was the proudest

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moment in your life?" He thought a moment, and said, "The proudest moment in my life was when I sent word home to my parents that I had gained the victory." And the proudest and most brilliant moment in your life will be the moment when you can send words to your parents in the country that you have conquered your evil habits by the grace of God, and become eternal victor. Oh! despise not parental anxiety. The time will come when you will have neither father nor mother, and you will go around the place where they used to watch you and find them gone from the house, and gone from the field and gone from the neighborhood. Cry as loud for forgiveness as you may over the mound in the churchyard, they will not answer. Dead! Dead! And then you will take out the white lock of hair that was cut from your mother's brow just before they buried her, and you will take the cane with which your father used to walk, and you will think and think, and wish that you had done just as they wanted you to, and would give the world if you had never thrust a pang through their dear old hearts. God pity the young man who has brought disgrace on his father's name. God pity the young man who has broken his mother's heart. Better if he had never been born,—better if in the first hour of his life, instead of being laid against the warm bosom of maternal tenderness, he had been confined and sepulchred. There is no balm powerful enough to heal the heart of one who has brought parents to a sorrowful grave, and who wanders about through the dismal cemetery, rending the hair and wringing the hands, and crying, "Mother! mother!" Oh! that to-day, by all the memories of the past, and by all the hopes of the future, you would yield your heart to God. May your father's God and your mother's God be your God forever.

KEEPING BAD COMPANY.

CHAPTER II.

KEEPING BAD COMPANY.

A companion of fools shall be destroyed.—Proverbs xliii: 20.

On the nights of city exploration I found that hardly any young man came to places of dissipation alone. Each one was accompanied. No man goes to ruin alone. He always takes some one else with him.

“May it please the Court,” said a convicted criminal, when asked if he had anything to say before sentence of death was passed upon him—“may it please the Court, bad company has been my ruin. I received the blessings of good parents, and, in return, promised to avoid all evil associations. Had I kept my promise, I should have been saved this shame, and been free from the load of guilt that hangs round me like a vulture, threatening to drag me to justice for crimes yet unrevealed. I, who once moved in the first circles of society, and have been the guest of distinguished public men, am lost, and all through bad company.”

This is but one of the thousand proofs that the companion of fools shall be destroyed. It is the invariable rule. There is a well man in the wards of a hospital, where there are a hundred people sick with ship fever, and he will not be so apt to take the disease as a good man would be apt to be smitten with moral distemper, if shut up with iniquitous companions.

In olden times prisoners were herded together in the same cell, but each one learned the vices of all the culprits, so that, instead of being reformed by incarceration,

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the day of liberation turned them out upon society beasts, not men.

We may, in our places of business, be compelled to talk to and mingle with bad men; but he who deliberately chooses to associate himself with vicious people, is engaged in carrying on a courtship with a Delilah, whose shears will clip off all the locks of his strength, and he will be tripped into perdition. Sin is catching, is infectious, is epidemic. I will let you look over the millions of people now inhabiting the earth, and I challenge you to show me a good man who, after one year, has made choice and consorted with the wicked. A thousand dollars reward for one such instance. I care not how strong your character may be. Associate with horse-thieves, you will become a horse-thief. Clan with burglars, and you will become a burglar. Go among the unclean, and you will become unclean. Not appreciating the truth of my text, many a young man has been destroyed. He wakes up some morning in the great city, and knows no one except the persons into whose employ he has entered.

As he goes into the store all the clerks mark him, measure him, and discuss him. The upright young men of the store wish him well, but perhaps wait for a formal introduction, and even then have some delicacy about inviting him into their associations. But the bad young men of the store at the first opportunity approach and offer their services. They patronize him. They profess to know all about the town. They will take him anywhere that he wishes to go—if he will pay the expenses. For if a good young man and a bad young man go to some place where they ought not, the good young man has invariably to pay the charges. At the moment the ticket is to be paid for, or the champagne settled for, the

bad young man feels around in his pockets and says, "I have forgotten my pocket-book." In forty-eight hours after the young man has entered the store the bad fellows of the establishment slap him on the shoulder familiarly; and, at his stupidity in taking certain allusions, say, "My young friend, you will have to be broken in;" and they immediately proceed to break him in. Young man, in the name of God I warn you to beware how you let a bad man talk familiarly with you. If such an one slap you on the shoulder familiarly, turn round and give him a withering look, until the wretch crouches in your presence. There is no monstrosity of wickedness that can stand unabashed under the glance of purity and honor. God keeps the lightnings of heaven in his own scabbard, and no human arm can wield them; but God gives to every young man a lightning that he may use, and that is the lightning of an honest eye. Those who have been close observers of city life will not wonder why I give warning to young men, and say, "Beware of bad company."

First, I warn you to shun the skeptic—the young man who puts his fingers in his vest and laughs at your old-fashioned religion, and turns over to some mystery of the Bible, and says, "Explain that, my pious friend; explain that." And who says, "Nobody shall scare me; I am not afraid of the future; I used to believe in such things, and so did my father and mother, but I have got over it." Yes, he has got over it; and if you sit in his company a little longer, you will get over it too. Without presenting one argument against the Christian religion, such men will, by their jeers and scoffs and caricatures, destroy your respect for that religion, which was the strength of your father in his declining years, and the pillow of your old mother when she lay a-dying.

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Alas! a time will come when that blustering young infidel will have to die, and then his diamond ring will flash no splendor in the eyes of Death, as he stands over the couch, waiting for his soul. Those beautiful locks will be uncombed upon the pillow; and the dying man will say, "I cannot die—I cannot die." Death standing ready beside the couch, says, "You must die; you have only half a minute to live; let me have it right away—your soul." "No," says the young infidel, "here are my gold rings, and these pictures; take them all." "No," says Death, "What do I care for pictures!—your soul." "Stand back," says the dying infidel. "I will not stand back," says Death, "for you have only ten seconds now to live; I want your soul." The dying man says, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room. O God!" "Hush," says Death; "you said there was no God." "Pray for me," exclaims the expiring infidel. "Too late to pray," says Death; "but three more seconds to live, and I will count them off—one—two—three." He has gone! Where? Where? Carry him out—out, and bury him beside his father and mother, who died while holding fast the Christian religion. They died singing; but the young infidel only said, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room."

Again, I urge you to shun the companionship of idlers. There are men hanging around every store, and office and shop, who have nothing to do, or act as if they had not. They are apt to come in when the firm are away, and wish to engage you in conversation while you are engaged in your regular employment. Politely suggest to such persons that you have no time to give them during business hours. Nothing would please them so well as



MUSIC HALL AND BEER GARDEN.

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to have you renounce your occupation and associate with them. Much of the time they lounge around the doors of engine houses, or after the dining hour stand upon the steps of a fashionable hotel or an elegant restaurant, wishing to give you the idea that that is the place where they dine. But they do not dine there. They are sinking down lower and lower, day by day. Neither by day nor by night have anything to do with the idlers. Before you admit a man into your acquaintance ask him politely, "What do you do for a living?" If he says, "Nothing; I am a gentleman," look out for him. He may have a very soft hand, and very faultless apparel, and have a high-sounding family name, but his touch is death. Before you know it, you will in his presence be ashamed of your work dress. Business will become to you drudgery, and after awhile you will lose your place, and afterwards your respectability, and last of all your soul. Idleness is next door to villainy. Thieves, gamblers, burglars, shop-lifters, and assassins are made from the class who have nothing to do. When the police go to hunt up and arrest a culprit they seldom go to look in at the busy carriage factory, or behind the counter where diligent clerks are employed, but they go among the groups of idlers. The play is going on at the theater, when suddenly there is a scuffle in the top gallery. What is it? A policeman has come in, and, leaning over, has tapped on the shoulder of a young man, saying, "I want you, sir." He has not worked during the day, but somehow has raked together a shilling or two to get into the top gallery. He is an idler. The man on his right hand is an idler, and the man on his left hand is an idler.

During the past few years there has been a great deal of dullness in business. Young men have complained that they have little to do. If they have nothing else

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to do they can read and improve their minds and hearts. These times are not always to continue. Business is waking up, and the superior knowledge that in this interregnum of work you may obtain will be worth fifty thousand dollars of capital. The large fortunes of the next twenty years are having their foundations laid this winter by the young men who are giving themselves to self-improvement. I went into a store in New York and saw five men, all Christians, sitting round, saying that they had nothing to do. It is an outrage for a Christian man to have nothing to do. Let him go out and visit the poor, or distribute tracts, or go and read the Bible to the sick, or take out his New Testament and be making his eternal fortune. Let him go into the back office and pray.

Shrink back from idleness in yourself and in others, if you would maintain a right position. Good old Ashbel Green, at more than eighty years of age, was found busy writing, and some young man said to him: "Why do you keep busy? It is time for you to rest?" He answered: "I keep busy to keep out of mischief." No man is strong enough to be idle.

Are you fond of pictures? If so I will show you one of the works of an old master. Here it is: "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered well. I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelth and thy want as an armed man." I don't know of another sentence in the Bible more explosive than that. It first hisses softly, like the fuse of a cannon, and at

last bursts like a fifty-four pounder. The old proverb was right: "The devil tempts most men, but idlers tempt the devil."

A young man came to a man of ninety years of age and said to him: "How have you made out to live so long and be so well?" The old man took the youngster to an orchard, and, pointing to some large trees full of apples, said: "I planted these trees when I was a boy, and do you wonder that now I am permitted to gather the fruit of them?" We gather in old age what we plant in our youth. Sow to the wind and we reap the whirlwind. Plant in early life the right kind of a Christian character, and you will eat luscious fruit in old age, and gather these harvest apples in eternity.

Again: I urge you to avoid the perpetual pleasure-seeker. I believe in recreation and amusement. I need it as much as I need bread, and go to my gymnasium with as conscientious a purpose as I go to the Lord's Supper; and all persons of sanguine temperament must have amusement and recreation. God would not have made us with the capacity to laugh if he had not intended us sometimes to indulge it. We will go forth from the festivities of coming holidays better prepared to do our work. God hath hung in sky, and set in wave, and printed on grass many a roundelay; but he who chooses pleasure-seeking for his life work does not understand for what God made him. Our amusements are intended to help us in some earnest mission. The thunder-cloud hath an edge exquisitely purpled, but with voice that jars the earth, it declares, "I go to water the green fields." The wild-flowers under the fence are gay, but they say, "We stand here to make room for the wheat-field, and to refresh the husbandmen in their nooning." The stream sparkles and foams, and frolics, and says, "I go

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to baptize the moss. I lave the spots on the trout. I slake the thirst of the bird. I turn the wheel of the mill. I rock in my crystal cradle muckshaw and water-lily." And so, while the world plays, it works. Look out for the man who always plays and never works.

You will do well to avoid those whose regular business it is to play ball, skate or go a-boating. All these sports are grand in their places. I never derived so much advantage from any ministerial association, as from a ministerial club that went out to play ball every Saturday afternoon in the outskirts of Philadelphia. These recreations are grand to give us muscle and spirits for our regular toil. I believe in muscular Christianity. A man is often not so near God with a weak stomach as when he has a strong digestion. But shun those who make it their life occupation to sport. There are young men whose industry and usefulness have fallen overboard from the yacht on the Hudson or the Schuylkill. There are men whose business fell through the ice of the skating pond, and has never since been heard of. There is a beauty in the gliding of a boat, in the song of skates, in the soaring of a well-struck ball, and I never see one fly but I involuntarily throw up my hands to catch it; and, so far from laying an injunction upon ball-playing, or any other innocent sport, I claim them all as belonging of right to those of us who toil in the grand industries of church and state.

But the life business of pleasure-seeking always makes in the end a criminal or a sot. George Brummell was smiled upon by all England, and his life was given to pleasure. He danced with peeresses, and swung a round of mirth, and wealth, and applause, until exhausted of purse, and worn out of body, and bankrupt of reputation, and ruined of soul, he begged a biscuit from a grocer,

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and declared that he thought a dog's life was better than a man's.

Such men will crowd around your anvil, or seek to decoy you off. They will want you to break out in the midst of your busy day to take a ride with them to Coney Island or to Central Park. They will tell you of some people you must see; of some excursion that you must take; of some Sabbath day that you ought to dishonor. They will tell you of exquisite wines that you must take; of costly operas that you must hear of wonderful dancers that you must see; but before you accept their convoy or their companionship, remember that while at the end of a useful life you may be able to look back to kindnesses done, to honorable work accomplished, to poverty helped, to a good name earned, to Christian influence exerted, to a Savior's cause advanced—these pleasure-seekers on their death-bed have nothing better to review than a torn play-bill, a ticket for the races, an empty tankard, and the cast-out rinds of a carousal; and as in the delirium of their awful death they clutch the goblet, and press it to their lips, the dregs of the cup falling upon their tongue, will begin to hiss and uncoil with the adders of an eternal poison.

Cast out these men from your company. Do not be intimate with them. Always be polite. There is no demand that you ever sacrifice politeness. A young man accosted a Christian Quaker with, "Old chap, how did you make all your money?" The Quaker replied, "By dealing in an article that thou mayest deal in if thou wilt—*civility*." Always be courteous, but at the same time firm. Say *no* as if you meant it. Have it understood in store, and shop, and street that you will not stand in the companionship of the skeptic, the idle, the pleasure-seeker.

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Rather than enter the companionship of such, accept the invitation to a better feast. The promises of God are the fruits. The harps of heaven are the music. Clusters from the vineyards of God have been pressed into the tankards. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty are the guests. While, standing at the banquet, to fill the cups and divide the clusters, and command the harps, and welcome the guests, is a daughter of God on whose brow are the blossoms of Paradise, and in whose cheek is the flush of celestial summer. Her name is Religion.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace."

THE REPROACHFUL OUTCRY.

CHAPTER III.

THE REPROACHFUL OUTCRY.

No man cared for my soul.—Psalm cxlii: 4.

David, the rubicund lad, had become the battle-worn warrior. Three thousand armed men in pursuit of him, he had hidden in the cave of Engedi, near the coast of the Dead Sea. Utterly fagged out with the pursuit, as you have often been worn out with the trials of life, he sat down and cried out: "No man cared for my soul!"

If you should fall through a hatchway, or slip from a scaffolding, or drop through a skylight, there would be hundreds of people who would come around and pick up your body and carry it to the home or to the hospital. I saw a great crowd of people in the street and I asked: "What is the matter?" and I found out that a poor laboring man had fallen under sunstroke, and all our eyes were filled with tears at the thought of his distracted wife and his desolated home. We are all sympathetic with physical disaster, but how little sympathy for spiritual woes. There are men in this house who have come to mid-life who have never yet been once personally accosted about their eternal welfare. A great sermon dropped into an audience of hundreds of thousands will do its work; but if this world is ever to be brought to God it will be through little sermons preached to private Christians to an audience of one. The sister's letter postmarked at the village—the word uttered in your hearing, half of smiles and half of tears—the religious postscript to a business letter—the card left at the door

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when you had some kind of trouble—the anxious look of some one across a church aisle while an earnest sermon was being preached, swung you into the kingdom of God. But there are hundreds of people in this house who will take the word that David used in the past tense, and employ it in the present tense and cry out: “No man *cares* for my soul!” You feel as you go out day by day in the tug and jostle of life that it is every man for himself. You can endure the pressure of commercial affairs, and would consider it almost impertinent for any one to ask you whether you are making or losing money. But there have been times when you would have drawn your cheque for thousands of dollars if some one would only help your soul out of its perplexities. There are questions about your higher destiny that ache, and distract, and agonize you at times. Let no one suppose that because you are busy all day with hardware, or dry-goods, or groceries, or grain, that your thoughts are no longer than your yard-stick, and stop at the brass-headed nails of the store counter. Where you speak once about religious things you think five thousand times. They call you a worldling. You are not a worldling. Of course you are industrious and keep busy, but you have had your eyes opened to the realities of the next world. You are not a fool. You know better than any one can tell you that a few years at most will wind up your earthly engagements, and that you will take residence in a distant sphere where all your business adroitness would be a superfluity. You sometimes think till your head aches about great religious subjects. I see you going down the street with your eyes fixed on the pavement, oblivious of the passing multitudes, your thoughts gone on eternal expedition. You wonder if the Bible is true, how much of it is literal and how much is figurative, if

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Christ be God, if there is anything like retribution, if you are immortal, if a resurrection will ever take place, what the occupation of your departed kindred is, what you will be ten thousand years from now. With a cultured placidity of countenance you are on fire with agitations of soul. Oh, this solitary anxiety of your whole lifetime. You have sold goods to or bought them from Christian people for ten years, and they have never whispered one word of spiritual counsel. You have passed up and down the aisles of churches with men who knew that you had no hope for heaven, and talked about the weather, and about your physical health, and about everything but that concerning which you most wanted to hear them speak, namely, your everlasting spirit. Times without number you have felt in your heart, if you have not uttered it with your lips: "No man cares for my soul!"

There have been times when you were especially pliable on the great subject of religion. It was so, for instance, after you had lost your property. You had a great many letters blowing you up for being unfortunate. You showed that there had been a concatenation of circumstances and that your insolvency was no fault of yours. Your creditors talked to you as though they would have a hundred cents on a dollar or your life. Protest after protest tumbled in on your desk. Men who used to take your hand with both of theirs and shake it violently, now pass you on the street with an almost imperceptible nod. After six or eight hours of scalding business anxiety you go home, and you shut the door, and throw yourself on the sofa, and you feel in a state of despair. You wish that some one would come in and break up the gloom. Everything seems to be against you. The bank against you. Your creditors

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against you. Your friends, suddenly become critical, against you. All the past against you. All the future against you. You make reproachful outcry: "No man cares for my soul!"

There was another occasion when all the doors of your heart swung open for sacred influences. A bright light went out in your household. Within three or four days, there were compressed sickness, death, obsequies. You were so lonely that a hundred people coming into the house, did not break up the solitariness. You were almost killed with the domestic calamity. A few formal, perfunctory words of consolation were uttered on the stairs before you went to the grave; but you wanted some one to come and talk over the whole matter, and recite the alleviations, and decipher the lessons of the dark bereavement. No one came. Many a time you could not sleep until two or three o'clock in the morning, and then your sleep was a troubled dream, in which was re-enacted all the scene of sickness, and parting, and dissolution. Oh! what days and nights they were! No man seemed to care for your soul.

There was another occasion when your heart was very susceptible. There was a great awakening. There were hundreds of people who pressed into the kingdom of God; some of them acquaintances, some business associates, yes, perhaps some members of your own family were baptized by sprinkling or immersion. Christian people thought of you and they called at your store, but you were out on business! They stopped at your house, you had gone around to spend the evening. They sent a kindly message to you; somehow, by accident, you did not get it. The life-boat of the Gospel swept through the surf and everybody seemed to get in but you. Everything seemed to escape you. One touch of personal

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sympathy would have pushed you into the kingdom of God. When on communion-day, your friends went in and your sons and daughters went into the church, you buried your face in your handkerchief and sobbed: "Why am I left out? Everybody seems to get saved but me. No man cares for my soul."

Hearken to a revelation I have to make. It is a startling statement. It will so surprise you that I must prove it as I go on. Instead of this total indifference all about you, in regard to your soul, I have, to-night, to tell you that heaven, earth, and hell are after your immortal spirit. Earth to cheat it. Hell to destroy it. Heaven to redeem it. Although you may be a stranger to the thousands of Christians in this house, their faces would glow and their hearts would bound if they saw you make one step heavenward. So intricate and far-reaching is this web of sympathy that I could by one word rouse a great many prayers in your behalf. No one care for your soul! Why one signal of distress on your part, would thrill this audience with holy excitement. If a boat in New York harbor should get in distress, from the men-of-war, and from the sloops, and from the steamers, the flying paddles would pull to the rescue. And if to-night, you would lift one signal of distress, all these voyagers of eternity would bear down toward you and bring you relief. But no. You are like a ship on fire at sea. They keep the hatches down, and the captain is frenzied, and he gives orders that no one hail the passing ships. He says: "I shall either land this vessel in Hamburg, or on the bottom of the ocean, and I don't care which." Yonder is a ship of the White Star Line passing. Yonder one of the National Line. Yonder one of the Cunard Line. Yonder one of the Inman Line. But they know not there is any calamity

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happening on that one vessel. Oh! if the captain would only put his trumpet to his lip, and cry out: "Lower your boats! Bear down this way! We are burning up! Fire! Fire!" No. No. No signal is given. If that vessel perishes, having hailed no one, whose fault will it be? Will it be the fault of the ship that hid its calamity, or will it be the fault of the vessels that, passing on the high seas, would have been glad to furnish relief, if it had been only asked? In other words, my brother, if you miss heaven, it will be your own fault. I could to-night bring a thousand souls who would kneel beside you and not get up until your sins are pardoned and your sorrows assuaged.

No one care for your soul! Why in all the ages there have been men whose entire business was soul-saving. In this work, Munson went down under the knives of the cannibals whom he had come to save, and Robert McCheyne preached himself to death by thirty years of age, and John Bunyan was thrown into a dungeon in Bedfordshire, and Jehudi Ashman endured all the malarias of the African jungle, and there are hundreds and thousands of Christian men and women now who are praying, toiling, preaching, living, dying to save souls.

No one care for your soul! Have you heard how Christ feels about it? I know it was only five or six miles from Bethlehem to Calvary—the birth-place and the death-place of Christ—but who can tell how many miles it was from the throne to the manger? How many miles down, how many miles back again? The place of his departure was the focus of all splendor and pomp. All the thrones facing his throne. His name the chorus in every song, and the inscription on every banner. His landing-place a cattle-pen, malodorous with unwashed brutes, and dogs growling in and out of the stable. Born

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of a weary mother who had journeyed eighty miles in severe unhealth that she might find the right place for the Lord's nativity—born, not as other princes, under the flash of a chandelier, but under a lantern swung by a rope to the roof of the barn. In that place Christ started to save you. Your name, your face, your time, your eternity, in Christ's mind. Sometimes traveling on mule's back to escape old Herod's massacre, sometimes attempting nervous sleep on the chilly hill-side, sometimes earning his breakfast by the carpentry of a plough. In Quarantania the stones of the field, by their shape and color, looking like the loaves of bread, tantalizing his hunger. Yet all the time keeping on after you. With drenched coat treading the surf of Genessaret. Howled after by a blood-thirsty mob. Denounced as a drunkard. Mourning over a doomed city, while others shouted at the site of the shimmering towers. All the time coming on and coming on to save you. Indicted as being a traitor against government, perjured witnesses swearing their souls away to ensure his butchery. Flogged, spit on, slapped in the face, and then hoisted on rough lumber, in the sight of earth, and heaven, and hell, to purchase your eternal emancipation. From the first infant step to the last step of manhood on the sharp spike of Calvary, a journey for you. Oh, how he cared for your soul! By dolorous arithmetic add up the stable, the wintry tempest, the midnight dampness, the abstinence of forty days from food, the brutal Sanhedrim, the heights of Golgotha, across which all the hatreds of earth, and all the furies of hell, charged with their bayonets, and then dare to say again that no one cares for your soul.

A young man might as well go off from home and give his father and mother no intimation as to where he has gone, and, crossing the seas, sitting down in some

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foreign country, cold, sick, and hungry, and lonely, saying: "My father and mother don't care anything about me." Do not care anything about him! Why, that father's hair has turned grey since his son went off. He has written to all the consuls in the foreign ports, asking about that son. Does not the mother care anything about him? He has broken her heart. She has never smiled since he went away. All day long, and almost all night, she keeps asking: "Where is he? Where can he be?" He is the first thought in her prayer and the last thought in her prayer—the first thought in the morning and the last at night. She says: "O God, bring back my boy; I must see him again before I die. Where is he! I must see him before I die!" Oh, do not his father and mother care for him? You go away from your Heavenly Father, and you think he does not care for you because you will not even read the letters by which he invites you to come back, while all heaven is waiting, and waiting, and waiting for you to return. A young man said to his father: "I am going off; I will write to you at the end of seven years and tell you where I am." Nine years have passed along since that son went away, and, for the last two years, the father has been going to the depot in the village, on the arrival of every train, and when he hears the whistle in the distance he is thrilled with excitement, and he waits until all the passengers have come out, and then he waits until the train has gone clear out of sight again, and then he goes home, hastening back to the next train; and he will be at every train until that son comes back, unless the son waits until the father be dead. But, oh, the greater patience of God. He has been waiting for you, not seven years, not nine years, but, for some of you, twenty years, thirty years, forty years, fifty years—

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waiting, calling—waiting, calling, until nothing but omnipotent patience could have endured it. O my brother, do not take the sentiment of my text as your sentiment. We do care for your soul. I care for it. For that reason I give up all other themes and take this call of grace. I would like to-night to marshal a great host of invitations all around about you, and then command them to close up until it would be impossible for your soul to escape from the gracious environment. I have tried something of this religion. I know something of its peace, something of its good cheer, something of its glorious anticipations, and I commend it to you. Oh, come in by Christ, the good old way. Crowd all this path to heaven to-night with immortals. Why are you down there in the wilderness? Do you like husks better than bread? Do you like troughs better than chalices? Do you like fiends better than angels? Do you like hell better than heaven? Oh, come in by Christ, the living way.

A few Sabbath nights ago, a young man appeared in this room at the end of the platform, and he said to me: "I have just come off the sea." I said: "When did you arrive?" Said he: "I came into port this afternoon. I was in a great 'blow' off Cape Hatteras this last week, and I thought that I might as well go to heaven as to hell. I thought the ship would sink; but, sir, I never very seriously thought about my soul until to-night." I said to him: "Do you feel that Christ is able and willing to save you?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "I do." "Well," I said; "Now are you willing to come and be saved by him?" "I am," he said. "Well, will you now, in the prayer we are about to offer, give yourself to God for time and eternity?" "I will," he said. Then we knelt in prayer, and after we had got through praying, he told

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me that the great transformation had taken place. I could not doubt it. He is on the sea to-night. I do not know what other port he may gain or lose, but I think he will gain the harbor of heaven.

“Star of peace, beam o’er the billow,
Bless the soul that sighs for Thee;
Bless the sailor’s lonely pillow,
Far, far at sea.”

It was sudden conversion with him that night. Oh that it might be sudden conversion with you to-night. God can save you in one moment as well as he can in a century. There are sudden deaths, sudden calamities, sudden losses. Why not sudden deliverances? God’s Spirit is infinite in speed. He comes here with omnipotent power, and he is ready here and now, instantaneously and for ever, to save your soul. I believe that a multitude of you will to-night come to God. I feel you are coming, and you will bring your families and your friends with you. They have heard in heaven already of the step you are about to take. The news has been cried along the golden streets, and has rung out from the towers: “A soul saved! A soul saved!” But there is some one here to-night who will reject this Gospel. He will stay out of the kingdom of God himself. He will keep his family and his friends out. It is a dreadful thing for a man just to plant himself in the way of life, then keep back his children, keep back his companion in life, keep back his business partners—refuse to go into heaven himself, and refuse to let others go in. To-night I have set before you life and death, and there are some here who have chosen death, and this sermon, and the call of God’s Holy Spirit, so far as their rescue is concerned, is a failure.



A GAMBLING ESTABLISHMENT.

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A young man, at the close of a religious service, was asked to decide the matter of his soul's salvation. He said: "I will not do it to-night." Well, the Christian man kept talking with him, and he said: "I insist that to-night, you either take God or reject Him." "Well," said the young man, "if you put it in that way, I will reject him. There now, the matter's settled." On his way home on horseback, he knew not that a tree had fallen aslant the road, and he was going at full speed, and he struck the obstacle and dropped lifeless. That night his Christian mother heard the riderless horse plunging about the barn, and mistrusting something terrible was the matter, she went out and came to the place where her son lay, and she cried out: "O Henry, dead and not a Christian. O my son! my son! dead and not a Christian. O Henry, Henry, dead and not a Christian." God keep us from such a catastrophe!

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CHAPTER IV.

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In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.—Gen. xlix: 27.

There is in this chapter such an affluence of simile and allegory, such a mingling of metaphors, that there are a thousand thoughts in it not on the surface. Old Jacob, dying, is telling the fortunes of his children. He prophesies the devouring propensities of Benjamin and his descendants. With his dim old eyes he looks off and sees the hunters going out to the fields, ranging them all day, and at nightfall coming home, the game slung over the shoulder, and reaching the door of the tent, the hunters begin to distribute the game, and one takes a coney, and another a rabbit, and another a roe. "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Or it may be a reference to the habits of wild beasts that slay their prey, and then drag it back to the cave or lair, and divide it among the young.

There is nothing more fascinating than the life of a hunter. On a certain day in all England you can hear the crack of the sportsman's gun, because grouse hunting has begun; and every man that can afford the time and ammunition, and can draw a bead, starts for the fields. On the 20th of October our woods and forests will resound with the shock of firearms, and will be tracked of pointers and setters, because the quail will

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then be a lawful prize for the sportsman. Xenophon grew eloquent in regard to the art of hunting. In the far East, people, elephant-mounted, chase the tiger. The American Indian darts his arrow at the buffalo until the frightened herd tumble over the rocks. European nobles are often found in the fox-chase and at the stag-hunt. Francis I. was called the father of hunting. Moses declares of Nimrod: "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord." Therefore, in all ages of the world, the imagery of my text ought to be suggestive, whether it means a wolf after a fox, or a man after a lion. "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoils."

I take my text, in the first place, as descriptive of those people who in the morning of their life give themselves up to hunting the world, but afterward, by the grace of God, in the evening of their life divide among themselves the spoils of Christian character. There are aged Christian men and women in this house who, if they gave testimony, would tell you that in the morning of their life they were after the world as intense as a hound after a hare, or as a falcon swoops upon a gazelle. They wanted the world's plaudits and the world's gains. They felt that if they could get this world they would have everything. Some of them started out for the pleasures of the world. They thought that the man who laughed loudest was happiest. They tried repartee, and conundrum, and burlesque, and madrigal. They thought they would like to be Tom Hoods, or Charles Lambs, or Edgar A. Poes. They mingled wine, and music, and the spectacular. They were worshippers of the harlequin, and the merry Andrew, and the buffoon, and the jester. Life was to them foam, and bubble, and cachinnation, and roystering, and grimace. They were so full

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of glee they could hardly repress their mirth, even on solemn occasions, and they came near bursting out hilariously even at the burial, because there was something so dolorous in the tone or countenance of the undertaker. After awhile misfortune struck them hard on the back. They found there was something they could not laugh at. Under their late hours their health gave way, or there was a death in the house. Of every green thing their soul was exfoliated. They found out that life was more than a joke. From the heart of God there blazed into their soul an earnestness they had never felt before. They awoke to their sinfulness and their immortality, and here they sit to-night, at sixty or seventy years of age, as appreciative of all innocent mirth as they ever were, but they are bent on a style of satisfaction which in early life they never hunted; the evening of their days brighter than the morning. In the morning they devoured the prey, but at night they divided the spoils.

Then there are others who started out for financial success. They see how limber the rim of a man's hat is when he bows down before some one transpicuous. They felt they would like to see how the world looked from the window of a three thousand dollar turn-out. They thought they would like to have the morning sunlight tangled in the head-gear of a dashing span. They wanted the bridges in the park to resound under the rataplan of their swift hoofs. They wanted a gilded baldrick, and so they started on the dollar hunt. They chased it up one street and chased it down another. They followed it when it burrowed in the cellar. They treed it in the roof. Wherever a dollar was expected to be, they were. They chased it across the ocean. They chased it across the land. They stopped not for the night. Hearing that dollar, even in the darkness,

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thrilled them as an Adirondack sportsman is thrilled at midnight by a loon's laugh. They chased that dollar to the money-vault. They chased it to the government treasury. They routed it from under the counter. All the hounds were out—all the pointers and the setters. They leaped the hedges for that dollar, and they cried: "Hark away! a dollar! a dollar!" And when at last they came upon it and had actually captured it, their excitement was like that of a falconer who has successfully flung his first hawk. In the morning of their life, oh, how they devoured the prey! But there came a better time to their soul. They found out that an immoral nature cannot live on "greenbacks." They took up a Northern Pacific bond, and there was a hole in it through which they could look into the uncertainty of all earthly treasures. They saw some Ralston, living at the rate of twenty-five thousand dollars a month, leaping from San Francisco wharf because he could not continue to live at the same ratio. They saw the wizen and paralytic bankers who had changed their souls into molten gold stamped with the image of the earth, earthy. They saw some great souls by avarice turned into *homunculi*, and they said to themselves: "I will seek after higher treasure." From that time they did not care whether they walked or rode, if Christ walked with them; nor whether they lived in a mansion or in a hut, if they dwelt under the shadow of the Almighty; nor whether they were robbed in French broadcloth or in a homespun, if they had the robe of the Savior's righteousness; nor whether they were sandalled with morocco or calf-skin, if they were shod with the preparation of the gospel. Now you see peace on their countenance. Now that man says: "What a fool I was to be enchanted with this world. Why, I have more satisfaction in five minutes in the

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service of God than I had in all the first years of my life while I was gain getting. I like this evening of my day a great deal better than I did the morning. In the morning I greedily devoured the prey; but now it is evening, and I am gloriously dividing the spoil."

My friends, this world is a poor thing to hunt. It is healthful to go out in the woods and hunt. It rekindles the lustre of the eye. It strikes the brown of the autumnal leaf into the cheek. It gives to the rheumatic limbs a strength to leap like the roe. Christopher North's pet gun, the muckle-mounted-Meg, going off in the summer in the forests, had its echo in the winter-time in the eloquence that rang through the university halls of Edinburgh. It is healthy to go hunting in the fields; but I tell you that it is belittling and bedwarfing and belaming for a man to hunt this world. The hammer comes down on the gun-cap, and the barrel explodes and kills you instead of that which you are pursuing. When you turn out to hunt the world, the world turns out to hunt you; and as many a sportsman aiming his gun at a panther's heart has gone down under the striped claws, so, while you have been attempting to devour this world, the world has been devouring you. So it was with Lord Byron. So it was with Coleridge. So it was with Catherine of Russia. Henry II. went out hunting for this world, and its lances struck through his heart. Francis I. aimed at the world, but the assassin's dagger put an end to his ambition and his life with one stroke. Mary Queen of Scots wrote on the window of her castle:

"From the top of all my trust
Mishap hath laid me in the dust."

The Queen Dowager of Navarre was offered for her wedding day a costly and beautiful pair of gloves, and

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she put them on; but they were poisoned gloves, and they took her life. Better a bare hand of cold privation than a warm and poisoned glove of ruinous success. "Oh," says some young man in the audience, "I believe what you are preaching. I am going to do that very thing. In the morning of my life I am going to devour the prey, and in the evening I shall divide the spoils of Christian character. I only want a little while to sow my wild oats, and then I will be good." Young man, did you ever take the census of all the old people? How many old people are there in your house? One, two, or none? How many in a vast assemblage like this? Only here and there a gray head, like the patches of snow here and there in the fields on a late April day. The fact is that the tides of the years are so strong, that men go down under them before they get to be sixty, before they get to be fifty, before they get to be forty, before they get to be thirty; and if you, my young brother, resolve now that you will spend the morning of your days in devouring the prey, the probability is that you will never divide the spoils in the evening hour. He who postpones until old age the religion of Jesus Christ, postpones it forever. Where are the men who, thirty years ago, resolved to become Christians in old age, putting it off a certain number of years? They are in the lost world to-night. They never got to be old. The railroad collision, or the steamboat explosion, or the slip on the ice, or the falling ladder, or the sudden cold put an end to their opportunities. They have never had an opportunity since, and never will have an opportunity again. They locked the door of heaven against their soul, and they threw away the key; and if they could to-night break jail and come up shrieking to this audience, I do not think they would take two minutes to persuade us all to

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repentance. They chased the world, and they died in the chase. The wounded tiger turned on them. They failed to take the game that they pursued. Mounted on a swift courser, they leaped the hedge, but the courser fell on them and crushed them. Proposing to barter their soul for the world, they lost both and got neither.

While this is an encouragement to old people who are to-night unpardoned, it is no encouragement to the young who are putting off the day of grace. This doctrine that the old may be repentant is to be taken cautiously. It is medicine that kills or cures. The same medicine, given to different patients, in one case it saves life, and in the other it destroys it. This possibility of repentance at the close of life may cure the old man while it kills the young. Be cautious in taking it.

Again: my subject is descriptive of those who come to a *sudden and a radical change*. You have noticed how short a time it is from morning to night—only seven or eight hours. You know that the day has a very brief life. Its heart beats twenty-four times, and then it is dead. How quick this transition in the character of these Benjaminites! “In the morning they shall devour the prey, and at night they shall divide the spoils.” Is it possible that there shall be such a transformation in any of our characters? Yes, a man may be at seven o’clock in the morning an all-devouring worldling, and at seven o’clock at night he may be a peaceful, distributive Christian. Conversion is instantaneous. A man passes into the kingdom of God quicker than down the sky runs zig-zag lightning. A man may be anxious about his soul for a great many years; that does not make him a Christian. A man may pray a great while; that does not make him a Christian. A man may resolve on the reformation of his character, and have that resolu-

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tion going on a great while; that does not make him a Christian. But the very instant when he flings his soul on the mercy of Jesus Christ, that instant is lustration, emancipation, resurrection. Up to that point he is going in the wrong direction; after that point he is going in the right direction. Before that moment he is a child of sin; after that moment he is a child of God. Before that moment hellward; after that moment heavenward. Before that moment devouring the prey; after that moment dividing the spoil. Five minutes is as good as five years. My hearer, you know very well that the best things you have done you have done in a flash. You made up your mind in an instant to buy, or to sell, or to invest, or to stop, or to start. If you had missed that one chance, you would have missed it forever. Now just as precipitate, and quick, and spontaneous will be the ransom of your soul. This morning you were making a calculation. You got on the track of some financial or social game. With your pen or pencil you were pursuing it. This very morning you were devouring the prey; but to-night you are in a different mood. You find that all heaven is offered you. You wonder how you can get it for yourself and for your family. You wonder what resources it will give you now and hereafter. You are dividing peace, and comfort, and satisfaction, and Christian reward in your soul. You are dividing the spoil.

Last Sabbath-night, at the close of the service, I said to some persons: "When did you first become serious about your soul?" And they told me: "To-night." And I said to others: "When did you give your heart to God?" And they said: "To-night." And I said to still others: "When did you resolve to serve the Lord all the days of your life?" And they said: "To-night." I saw

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by the gaiety of their apparel that when the grace of God struck them they were devouring the prey; but I saw also, in the flood of joyful tears, and in the kindling raptures on their brow, and in their exhilarant and transporting utterances, that they were dividing the spoil. If any of you were in this building when these lights were struck to-night, you know that with one touch of electricity they all blazed. Oh, I would to God that the darkness of your souls might be broken up, and that by one quick, overwhelming, instantaneous flash of illumination you might be brought into the light and the liberty of the sons of God!

You see that religion is a different thing from what some of you people supposed. You thought it was decadence; you thought religion was maceration; you thought it was highway robbery; that it struck one down and left him half dead; that it plucked out the eyes; that it plucked out the plumes of the soul; that it broke the wing and crushed the beak as it came clawing with its black talons through the air. No, that is not religion. What is religion? It is dividing the spoils. It is taking a defenceless soul and panoplying it for eternal conquest. It is the distribution of prizes by the king's hand, every medal stamped with a coronation. It is an exhilaration, an expansion. It is imparadisation. It is enthronement. Religion makes a man master of earth, and death, and hell. It goes forth to gather the medals of victory won by Prince Emanuel, and the diadems of heaven, and the glories of realms terrestrial, and celestial, and then, after ranging all worlds for everything that is resplendent, it divides the spoil. What was it that James Turner, the famous English evangelist, was doing when in his dying moment he said: "Christ is all! Christ is all!" Why, he was entering into light; he was

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rounding the Cape of Good Hope; he was dividing the spoil. What was the aged Christian Quakeress doing when at eighty years of age she arose in the meeting one day and said: "The time of my departure is come. My grave clothes are falling off"? She was dividing the spoil.

"She longed with wings to fly away,
And mix with that eternal day."

What is Daniel now doing, the lion tamer? and Elijah who was drawn by the flaming coursers? and Paul, the rattling of whose chains made kings quake? and all the other victims of flood, and fire, and wreck, and guillotine—where are they? Dividing the spoil.

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light.

"'Tis finished, all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin;
Lift high your golden gates,
And let the victors in."

Oh, what a grand thing it is to be a Christian! We begin to-night to divide the spoil, but the distribution will not be completed to all eternity. There is a poverty-struck soul, there is a business-despoiled soul, there is a sin-struck soul, there is a bereaved soul—why do you not come and get the spoils of Christian character, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the salvation that I am sent to offer you in my Master's name? Though your knees knock together in weakness, though your hand tremble in fear, though your eyes rain tears of uncontrollable weeping—come and get the spoils. Rest for all the weary. Pardon for all the guilty. Labor for all the bestormed. Life for all the dead. I verily believe that there are some who have come in here outcast because

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the world is against them, and because they feel God is against them, who will go away to-night, saying:

“I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
And he has made me glad.”

Though you came in children of the world, you may go away heirs of heaven. Though this very autumnal morning you were devouring the prey, to-night, all worlds witnessing, you may divide the spoil.

THE BLACKSMITHS' CAPTIVITY.

CHAPTER V.

THE BLACKSMITHS' CAPTIVITY.

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears. But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.—I. Samuel xiii: 19-21.

What a scalding subjugation for the Israelites! The Philistines had carried off all the blacksmiths, and torn down all the blacksmiths' shops, and abolished the blacksmith's trade in the land of Israel. The Philistines would not even allow these parties to work their valuable mines of brass and iron, nor might they make any swords or spears. There were only two swords left in all the land. Yea, these Philistines went on until they had taken all the grindstones from the land of Israel, so that if an Israelitish farmer wanted to sharpen his plough or his axe, he had to go over to the garrison of the Philistines to get it done. There was only one sharpening instrument left in the land, and that was a file. The farmers and the mechanics having nothing to whet up the coulter, and the goad, and the pickaxe, save a simple file, industry was hindered, and work practically disgraced. The great idea of these Philistines was to keep the Israelites disarmed. They might get iron out of the hills to make swords of, but they would not have any blacksmiths to weld this iron. If they got the iron welded, they would have no grindstones on which to

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bring the instruments of agriculture or the military weapons up to an edge. Oh, you poor, weaponless Israelites, reduced to a file, how I pity you! But these Philistines were not for ever to keep their heel on the neck of God's children. Jonathan, on his hands and knees, climbs up a great rock beyond which were the Philistines; and his armor-bearer, on his hands and knees, climbs up the same rock, and these two men, with their two swords, hew to pieces the Philistines, the Lord throwing a great terror upon them. So it was then; so it is now. Two men of God on their knees, mightier than a Philistine host on their feet.

I learn first from this subject, *how dangerous it is for the Church of God to allow its weapons to stay in the hands of its enemies.* These Israelites might again and again have obtained a supply of swords and weapons, as for instance when they took the spoils of the Ammonites; but these Israelites seemed content to have no swords, no spears, no blacksmiths, no grindstones, no active iron mines, until it was too late for them to make any resistance. I see the farmers tugging along with their pickaxes and ploughs, and I say: "Where are you going with those things?" They say: "Oh, we are going over to the garrison of the Philistines to get these things sharpened." I say: "You foolish men, why don't you sharpen them at home?" "Oh," they say, "the blacksmiths' shops are all torn down, and we have nothing left us but a file."

So it is in the Church of Jesus Christ to-day. We are too willing to give up our weapons to the enemy. The world boasts that it has gobbled up the schools, and the colleges, and the arts, and the sciences, and the literature, and the printing press. Infidelity is making a mighty attempt to get all our weapons in its hand, and then to

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keep them. You know it is making this boast all the time; and after a while, when the great battle between sin and righteousness has opened, if we do not look out we will be as badly off as these Israelites, without any swords to fight with, and without any sharpening instruments. I call upon the superintendents of literary institutions to see to it that the men who go into the classrooms to stand beside the Leyden jars, and the electric batteries, and the microscopes and telescopes, be children of God, not Philistines. The Carlylian, Emerson, and Tyndalleian thinkers of this day are trying to get all the intellectual weapons of this century in their own grasp. What we want is scientific Christians to capture the science, and scholastic Christians to capture the scholarship, and philosophic Christians to capture the philosophy, and lecturing Christians, to take back the lecturing platform. We want to send out against Schenkel and Strauss and Renan, a Theodore Christlieb of Bonn; and against the infidel scientists of the day, a God-worshipping Silliman and Hitchcock and Agassiz. We want to capture all the philosophical apparatus, and swing around the telescopes on the swivel, until through them we can see the morning star of the Redeemer, and with mineralogical hammer discover the "Rock of ages," and amid the flora of the realms find the "Rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley." We want a clergy learned enough to discourse of the human eye, showing it to be a microscope and telescope in one instrument, with eight hundred wonderful contrivances, and lids closing 30,000 or 40,000 times a day; all its muscles and nerves and bones showing the infinite skill of an infinite God, and then winding up with the peroration: "He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" And then we want to discourse about the human ear, its wonderful integuments, mem-

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branes, and vibration, and its chain of small bones, and its auditory nerve, closing with the question: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" And we want some one able to expound the first chapter of Genesis, bringing to it the geology and the astronomy of the world, until, as Job suggested, "the stones of the field shall be in league" with the truth, and "the stars in their course shall fight against Sisera." Oh, Church of God, go out and recapture these weapons. Let men of God go out and take possession of the platform. Let the debauched printing-press of this country be recaptured for Christ, and the reporters, and the type-setters, and the editors, and publishers be made to swear allegiance to the Lord God of truth. Ah, my friend, that day must come, and if the great body of Christian men have not the faith, or the courage, or the consecration to do it, then let some Jonathan, on his busy hands and on his praying knees, climb up on the rock of hindrance, and in the name of the Lord God of Israel slash to pieces those literary Philistines. If these men will not be converted to God, then they must be destroyed.

Again, I learn from this subject *what a large amount of the Church's resources is actually hidden, and buried, and undeveloped.* The Bible intimates that that was a very rich land—this land of Israel. It says: "The stones are iron, and out of the hills thou shalt dig brass," and yet hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of this metal was kept under the hills. Well, that is the difficulty with the Church of God at this day. Its talent is not developed. If one-half of its energy could be brought out, it might take the public iniquities of the day by the throat and make them bite the dust. If human eloquence were consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ, it could in a few years persuade this whole earth to sur-

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render to God. There is enough undeveloped energy in this one Church to bring all Brooklyn to Christ—enough undeveloped Christian energy in the City of Brooklyn to bring all the United States to Christ—enough undeveloped Christian energy in the United States to bring the whole world to Christ; but it is buried under strata of indifference and under whole mountains of sloth. Now is it not time for the mining to begin, and the pickaxes to plunge, and for this buried metal to be brought out and put into the furnaces, and be turned into howitzers and carbines for the Lord's host? The vast majority of Christians in this day are useless. The most of the Lord's battalion belong to the reserve corps. The most of the crew are asleep in the hammocks. The most of the metal is under the hills. Oh, is it not time for the Church of God to rouse up and understand that we want all the energies, all the talent, and all the wealth enlisted for Christ's sake? I like the nickname that the English soldiers gave to Blucher, the Commander. They called him "Old Forwards." We have had enough retreats in the Church of Christ; let us have a glorious advance. And I say to you to-night, as the General said when his troops were affrighted. Rising up in his stirrups, his hair flying in the wind, he lifted up his voice until 20,000 troops heard him, crying out: "Forward, the whole line!"

Again: I learn from this subject, *that we sometimes do well to take advantage of the world's sharpening instruments.* These Israelites were reduced to a file, and so they went over to the garrison of the Philistines to get their axes and their goads, and their ploughs sharpened. The Bible distinctly states it—the text which I read at the beginning of the service—that they had no other instruments now with which to do this

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work, and the Israelites did right when they went over to the Philistines to use their grindstones. My friends, is it not right for us to employ the world's grindstones? If there be art, if there be logic, if there be business faculty on the other side, let us go over and employ it for Christ's sake. The fact is, we fight with too dull weapons, and we work with too dull implements. We hack and we maul when we ought to make a keen stroke. Let us go over among sharp business men, and among sharp literary men, and find out what their tact is, and then transfer it to the cause of Christ. If they have science and art it will do us good to rub against it. In other words: let us employ the world's grindstones. We will listen to their music, and we will watch their acumen, and we will use their grindstones; and we will borrow their philosophical apparatus to make our experiments, and we will borrow their printing-presses to publish our Bibles, and we will borrow their rail-trains to carry our Christian literature, and we will borrow their ships to transport our missionaries. That was what made Paul such a master in his day. He not only got all the learning he could get of Doctor Gamaliel, but afterward, standing on Mars Hill, and in crowded thoroughfare, quoted their poetry, and grasped their logic, and wielded their eloquence, and employed their mythology, until Dionysius the Areopagite, learned in the schools of Athens and Heliopolis, went down under his tremendous powers. That was what gave Thomas Chalmers his power in his day. He conquered the world's astronomy and compelled it to ring out the wisdom and greatness of the Lord, until for the second time, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. That was what gave to Jonathan Edwards his influence in his day. He conquered the world's metaphysics and

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forced it into the service of God, until not only the old meeting-house at Northampton, Massachusetts, but all Christendom felt thrilled by his Christian power. Well, now, my friends, we all have tools of Christian usefulness. Do not let them lose their edges. We want no rusty blades in this fight. We want no coultter that cannot rip up the glebe. We want no axe that cannot fell the trees. We want no goad that cannot start the lazy team. Let us get the very best grindstones we can find, though they be in the possession of the Philistines, compelling them to turn the crank while we bear down with all our might on the swift-revolving wheel until all our energies and faculties shall be brought up to a bright, keen, sharp, glittering edge.

Again: my subject teaches us *on what a small allowance Philistine iniquity puts a man*. Yes; these Philistines shut up the mines, and then they took the spears and the swords, then they took the blacksmiths, then they took the grindstones, and they took everything but a file. Oh, that is the way sin works; it grabs everything. It begins with robbery, and it ends with robbery. It despoils this faculty and that faculty, and keeps on until the whole nature is gone. Was the man eloquent before, it generally thickens his tongue. Was he fine in personal appearance, it mars his visage. Was he affluent, it sends the sheriff to sell him out. Was he influential, it destroys his popularity. Was he placid, and genial, and loving, it makes him splenetic and cross; and so utterly is he changed that you can see he is sarcastic and rasping, and that the Philistines have left him nothing but a file. Oh, "the way of the transgressor is hard." His cup is bitter. His night is dark. His pangs are deep. His end is terrific. Philistine iniquity says to that man: "Now, surrender to me, and I will give you

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all you want—music for the dance, swift steeds for the race, imperial couch to slumber on, and you shall be refreshed with the rarest fruits, in baskets of golden flagree.” He lies. The music turns out to be a groan. The fruits burst the rind with rank poison. The flagree is made up of twisted snakes. The couch is a grave—Small allowance of rest; small allowance of peace; small allowance of comfort. Cold, hard, rough—nothing but a file. So it was with Voltaire, the most applauded man of his day:

“The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew.
An infidel when well, but what when sick?
Oh, then a text would touch him to the quick.”

Seized with hemorrhage of the lungs in Paris, where he had gone to be crowned in the theater as the idol of all France, he sends a messenger to get a priest, that he may be reconciled to the Church before he dies. A great terror falls upon him. He makes the place all round about him so dismal that the nurse declares that she would not for all the wealth of Europe see another infidel die. Philistine iniquity had promised him all the world's garlands, but in the last hour of his life, when he needed solacing, sent tearing across his conscience and his nerves a file, a file. So it was with Lord Byron, his uncleanness in England only surpassed by his uncleanness in Venice, then going on to end his brilliant misery at Missolonghi, fretting at his nurse Fletcher, fretting at himself, fretting at the world, fretting at God; and he who gave to the world “Childe Harold,” and “Sardanapalus,” and “The Prisoner of Chillon,” and “The Siege of Corinth,” reduced to nothing but a file! Oh, sin has great facility for making promises, but it has just as great facility for breaking them. A Chris-

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tian life is the only cheerful life, while a life of wicked surrender is remorse, ruin, and death. Its painted glee is sepulchral ghastliness. In the brightest days of the Mexican Empire, Montezuma said he felt gnawing at his heart something like a canker. Sin, like a monster wild beast of the forest, sometimes licks all over its victim in order that the victim may be more easily swallowed; but generally sin rasps, and galls, and tears, and upbraids, and files. Is it not so, Herod? Is it not so, Hildebrand? Is it not so, Robespierre? Aye! aye! it is so; it is so. "The way of the wicked he turneth upside down." History tells us that when Rome was founded, on that day there were twelve vultures flying through the air; but when a transgressor dies, the sky is black with whole flocks of them. Vultures! When I see sin robbing so many of my hearers, and I see them going down day by day, and week by week, I must give a plain warning. I dare not keep it back lest I risk the salvation of my own soul. Rover and Pirate pulled down the warning bell on Inchcape Rock, thinking that he would have a chance to despoil vessels that were crushed on the rocks; but one night his own ship crashed down on this very rock, and he went down with all his cargo. God declares: "When I say to the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, that same man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hands."

I learn from this subject, *what a sad thing it is when the Church of God loses its metal*. These Philistines saw that if they could only get all the metallic weapons out of the hands of the Israelites, all would be well, and, therefore, they took the swords and the spears. They did not want them to have a single metallic weapon. When the metal of the Israelites was gone, their strength was gone. This is the trouble with the Church of God

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to-day. It is surrendering its courage. It has not got enough metal. How seldom it is that you see a man taking his position in pew, or in pulpit, or in a religious society, and holding that position against all oppression, and all trial, and all persecution, and all criticism. The Church of God to-day wants more backbone, more defiance, more consecrated bravery, more metal. How often you see a man start out in some good enterprise, and at the first blast of newspaperdom he has collapsed, and all his courage gone, forgetful of the fact that if a man be right, all the newspapers of the earth, with all their columns pounding away at him, cannot do him any permanent damage. It is only when a man is wrong that he can be damaged. Why, God is going to vindicate his truth, and he is going to stand by you, my friends, in every effort you make for Christ's cause and the salvation of men. I sometimes say to my wife: "There is something wrong; the newspapers have not assaulted me for six weeks! I have not done my duty against public iniquities, and I will stir them up next Sunday." Then I stir them up, and all the following week the devil howls, and howls, showing that I have hit him very hard. Go forth in the service of Christ and do your whole duty. You have one sphere. I have another sphere. "The Lord of Hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah." We want more of the determination of Jonathan. I do not suppose he was a very wonderful man; but he got on his knees and clambered up the rock, and with the help of his armor-bearer he hewed down the Philistines; and a man of very ordinary intellectual attainments, on his knees, can storm anything for God and for the truth. We want something of the determination of the general who went into the war, and as he entered his first battle, his knees knocked together, his physical courage not quite up to his moral

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courage; and he looked down at his knees, and said: "Ah, if you knew where I was going to take you, you would shake worse than that!" There is only one question for you to ask and for me to ask. What does God want me to do? Where is the field? Where is the work? Where is the anvil? Where is the prayer-meeting? Where is the pulpit? And, finding out what God wants us to do, go ahead and do it—all the energies of our body, mind, and soul enlisted in the undertaking. Oh, my brethren, we have but little time in which to fight for God. You will be dead soon. Put in the Christian cause every energy that God gives you. "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is neither wisdom nor device in the grave whither we are all hastening." Here we are at the end of the ecclesiastical year, our congregation partially dispersed, and others to go. Opportunities of usefulness gone forever; souls that might have been benefited three months ago never again coming under our Christian influence. Oh, is it not high time that we awake out of sleep? Church of God, lift up your head at the coming victory! The Philistines will go down, and the Israelites will go up. We are on the winning side. Hear that—on the winning side. I think just now the King's horses are being hooked up to the chariot, and when he does ride down the sky there will be such a hosanna among his friends, and such a wailing among his enemies, as will make the earth tremble and the heavens sing. I see now the plumes of the Lord's cavalymen tossing in the air. The archangel before the throne has already burnished his trumpet, and then he will put its golden lips to his own, and he will blow the long, loud blast that will make all the nations free. Clap your hands, all ye people! Hark! I hear the falling thrones, and the dashing down of demolished iniquities.

THE ACIDS OF THIS LIFE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ACIDS OF THIS LIFE.

When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar.—John xix: 30

The brigands of Jerusalem had done their work. It was almost sundown, and Jesus was dying. Persons in crucifixion often lingered on from day to day—crying, begging, and cursing; but Christ had been exhausted by years of maltreatment. Pillowless, poorly fed, flogged—as bent over and tied to a low post, his bare back was inflamed with the scourges intersticed with pieces of lead and bone—and now for whole hours, the weight of his body hung on delicate tendons, and, according to custom, a violent stroke under the armpits had been given by the executioner. Dizzy, swooning, nauseated, feverish—a world of agony is compressed in the two words: “I thirst!” O skies of Judea, let a drop of rain strike on his burning tongue! O world, with rolling rivers, and sparkling lakes, and spraying fountains, give Jesus something to drink! If there be any pity in earth, or heaven, or hell, let it now be demonstrated in behalf of this royal sufferer. The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those people who died in crucifixion—a powerful opiate to deaden the pain; but Christ would not take it. He wanted to die sober, and so he refused the wine. But afterward they go to a cup of vinegar, and soak a sponge in it, and put it on a stick of hyssop, and then press it against the hot lips of Christ. You say the

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wine was an anæsthetic, and intended to relieve or deaden the pain. But the vinegar was an insult. I am disposed to adopt the theory of the old English commentators, who believed that instead of its being an opiate to soothe, it was vinegar to insult. Malaga and Burgundy for grand dukes and duchesses, and costly wines from royal vats for bloated imperials; but stinging acids for a dying Christ. He took the vinegar.

In some lives the saccharine seems to predominate. Life in sunshine on a bank of flowers. A thousand hands to clap approval. In December or in January, looking across their table, they see all their family present. Health rubicund. Skies flamboyant. Days resilient. But in a great many cases there are not so many sugars as acids. The annoyances, and the vexations, and the disappointments of life overpower the successes. There is a gravel in almost every shoe. An Arabian legend says that there was a worm in Solomon's staff, gnawing its strength away; and there is a weak spot in every earthly support that a man leans on. King George of England forgot all the grandeurs of his throne because, one day in an interview, Beau Brummell called him by his first name, and addressed him as a servant, crying: "George, ring the bell!" Miss Langdon, honored all the world over for her poetic genius, is so worried with the evil reports set afloat regarding her, that she is found dead, with an empty bottle of prussic acid in her hand. Goldsmith said that his life was a wretched being, and that all that want and contempt could bring to it had been brought, and cries out: "What, then, is there formidable in a jail?" Correggio's fine painting is hung up for a tavern sign. Hogarth cannot sell his best paintings except through a raffle. Andrew Delsart makes the great fresco in the Church of the Annunciata, at Flor-

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ence, and gets for pay a sack of corn; and there are annoyances and vexations in high places as well as in low places, showing that in a great many lives the sour is greater than the sweet. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar."

It is absurd to suppose that a man who has always been well can sympathize with those who are sick; or that one who has always been honored can appreciate the sorrow of those who are despised; or that one who has been born to a great fortune can understand the distress and the straits of those who are destitute. The fact that Christ himself took the vinegar makes him able to sympathize to-day and forever with all those whose cup is filled with sharp acids of this life. He took the vinegar!

In the first place, there is the sourness of betrayal. The treachery of Judas hurt Christ's feelings more than all the friendship of his disciples did him good. You have had many friends; but there was one friend upon whom you put especial stress. You feasted him. You loaned him money. You befriended him in the dark passes of life, when he especially needed a friend. Afterward, he turned upon you, and he took advantage of your former intimacies. He wrote against you. He talked against you. He microscopized your faults. He flung contempt at you when you ought to have received from him nothing but gratitude. At first, you could not sleep at night. Then you went about with a sense of having been stung. That difficulty will never be healed, for though mutual friends may arbitrate in the matter until you shall shake hands, the old cordiality will never come back. Now, I commend to all such the sympathy of a betrayed Christ! Why, they sold him for less than our twenty dollars! They all forsook him,

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and fled. They cut him to the quick. He drank that cup of betrayal to the dregs. He took the vinegar!

There is also the sourness of pain. There are some of you who have not seen a well day for many years. By keeping out of draughts, and by carefully studying dietetics, you continue to this time; but oh, the headaches, and the sideaches, and the backaches, and the heartaches which have been your accompaniment all the way through! You have struggled under a heavy mortgage of physical disabilities; and instead of the placidity that once characterized you, it is now only with great effort that you keep away from irritability and sharp retort. Difficulties of respiration, of digestion, of locomotion, make up the great obstacle in your life, and you tug and sweat along the pathway, and wonder when the exhaustion will end. My friends, the brightest crowns in heaven will not be given to those who, in stirrups, dashed to the cavalry charge, while the general applauded, and the sound of clashing sabres rang through the land; but the brightest crowns in heaven, I believe, will be given to those who trudged on amid chronic ailments which unnerved their strength, yet all the time maintaining their faith in God. It is comparatively easy to fight in a regiment of a thousand men, charging up the parapets to the sound of martial music; but it is not so easy to endure when no one but the nurse and the doctor are the witnesses of the Christian fortitude. Besides that, you never had any pains worse than Christ's. The sharpnesses that stung through his brain, through his hands, through his feet, through his heart, were as great as yours certainly. He was as sick and as weary. Not a nerve, or muscle, or ligament escaped. All the pangs of all the nations of all the ages compressed into one sour cup. He took the vinegar!

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There is also the sourness of poverty. Your income does not meet your outgoings, and that always gives an honest man anxiety. There is no sign of destitution about you—pleasant appearance, and a cheerful home for you; but God only knows what a time you have had to manage your private finances. Just as the bills run up, the wages seem to run down. But you are not the only one who has not been paid for hard work. The great Wilkie sold his celebrated piece—"The Blind Fiddler"—for fifty guineas, although afterwards it brought its thousands. The world hangs in admiration over the sketch of Gainsborough, yet that very sketch hung for years in the shop-window because there was not any purchaser. Oliver Goldsmith sold his "Vicar of Wakefield" for a few pounds, in order to keep the bailiff out of the door; and the vast majority of men in all occupations and professions are not fully paid for their work. You may say nothing, but life to you is a hard push; and when you sit down with your wife and talk over the expenses, you both rise up discouraged. You abridge here, and you abridge there, and you get things snug for smooth sailings, and lo! suddenly there is a large doctor's bill to pay, or you have lost your pocket-book, or some creditor has failed, and you are thrown a-beam end Well, brother, you are in glorious company. Christ owned not the house in which he stopped, or the colt on which he rode, or the boat in which he sailed. He lived in a borrowed house; he was buried in a borrowed grave. Exposed to all kinds of weather, yet he had only one suit of clothes. He breakfasted in the morning, and no one could possibly tell where he could get anything to eat before night. He would have been pronounced a financial failure. He had to perform a miracle to get money to pay a tax-bill. Not a dollar did he own. Pri-

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vation of domesticity; privation of nutritious food; privation of a comfortable couch on which to sleep; privation of all worldly resources. The kings of the earth had chased chalices out of which to drink; but Christ had nothing but a plain cup set before him, and it was very sharp, and it was very sour. He took the vinegar.

There also is the sourness of bereavement. There were years that passed along before your family circle was invaded by death; but the moment the charmed circle was broken, everything seemed to dissolve. Hardly have you put the black apparel in the wardrobe, before you have again to take it out. Great and rapid changes in your family record. You got the house and rejoiced in it, but the charm was gone as soon as the crape hung on the door-bell. The one upon whom you most depended was taken away from you. A cold marble slab lies on your heart to-day. Once, as the children romped through the house, you put your hand over your aching head, and said: "Oh, if I could only have it still." Oh, it is too still now. You lost your patience when the tops, and the strings, and the shells were left amid floor; but oh, you would be willing to have the trinkets scattered all over the floor again, if they were scattered by the same hands. With what a ruthless ploughshare bereavement rips up the heart. But Jesus knows all about that. You cannot tell him anything new in regard to bereavement. He had only a few friends, and when he lost one it brought tears to his eyes. Lazarus had often entertained him at his house. Now Lazarus is dead and buried, and Christ breaks down with emotion—the convulsion of grief shuddering through all the ages of bereavement. Christ knows what it is to go through the house missing a familiar inmate. Christ knows what it is to see an unoccupied place at the table. Were

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there not four of them—Mary, and Martha, and Christ, and Lazarus? Four of them. But where is Lazarus? Lonely and afflicted Christ, his great loving eyes filled with tears, which drop from eye to cheek, and from cheek to beard, and from beard to robe, and from robe to floor. Oh, yes, yes, he knows all about the loneliness and the heartbreak. He took the vinegar!

Then there is the sourness of the death-hour. Whatever else we may escape, that acid-sponge will be pressed to our lips. I sometimes have a curiosity to know how I will behave when I come to die. Whether I will be calm or excited—whether I will be filled with reminiscence or with anticipation. I cannot say. But come to the point, I must and you must. In the six thousand years that have passed, only two persons have got into the eternal world without death, and I do not suppose that God is going to send a carriage for us with horses of flame, to draw us up the steeps of heaven; but I suppose we will have to go like the preceding generations. An officer from the future world will knock at the door of our heart and serve on us the writ of ejectment, and we will have to surrender. And we will wake up after these autumnal, and wintry, and vernal, and summery glories have vanished from our vision—we will wake up into a realm which has only one season, and that the season of everlasting love. But you say: “I don’t want to break out from my present associations. It is so chilly and so damp to go down the stairs of that vault. I don’t want anything drawn so tightly over my eyes. If there were only some way of breaking through the partition between worlds without tearing this body all to shreds. I wonder if the surgeons and the doctors cannot compound a mixture by which this body and soul can all the time be kept together? Is there no escape

from this separation?" None; absolutely none. So I look over this audience to-day—the vast majority of you seeming in good health and spirits—and yet I realize that in a short time, all of us will be gone—gone from earth, and gone for ever. A great many men tumble through the gates of the future, as it were, and we do not know where they have gone, and they only add gloom and mystery to the passage; but Jesus Christ so mightily stormed the gates of that future world, that they have never since been closely shut. Christ knows what it is to leave this world, of the beauty of which he was more appreciative than we ever could be. He knows the exquisiteness of the phosphorescence of the sea; he trod it. He knows the glories of the midnight heavens; for they were the spangled canopy of his wilderness pillow. He knows about the lilies; he twisted them into his sermon. He knows about the fowls of the air; they whirred their way through his discourse. He knows about the sorrows of leaving this beautiful world. Not a taper was kindled in the darkness. He died physicianless. He died in cold sweat, and dizziness, and hemorrhage, and agony that have put him in sympathy with all the dying. He goes through Christendom, and he gathers up the stings out of all the death pillows, and he puts them under his own neck and head. He gathers on his own tongue the burning thirsts of many generations. The sponge is soaked in the sorrows of all those who have died in their beds as well as soaked in the sorrows of all those who perished in icy or fiery martyrdom. While heaven was pitying, and earth was mocking, and hell was deriding, he took the vinegar.

To all those in this audience to whom life has been an acerbity—a dose they could not swallow, a draught that set their teeth on edge and a-rasping—I preach the om-

nipotent sympathy of Jesus Christ. The sister of Herschel the astronomer used to help him in his work. He got all the credit; she got none. She used to spend much of her time polishing the telescopes through which he brought the distant worlds nigh, and it is my ambition now, this hour, to clear the lens of your spiritual vision, so that looking through the dark night of your earthly troubles you may behold the glorious constellation of a Savior's mercy and a Savior's love. Oh, my friends, do not try to carry all your ills alone. Do not put your poor shoulder under the Appenines when the Almighty Christ is ready to lift up all your burdens. When you have a trouble of any kind, you rush this way, and that way; and you wonder what this man will say about it, and what that man will say about it; and you try this prescription, and that prescription, and the other prescription. Oh, why do you not go straight to the heart of Christ, knowing that for our own sinning and suffering race he took the vinegar!

There was a vessel that had been tossed on the seas for a great many weeks, and been disabled, and the supply of water gave out, and the crew were dying of thirst. After many days, they saw a sail against the sky. They signaled it. When the vessel came nearer, the people on the suffering ship cried to the captain of the other vessel: "Send us some water. We are dying for lack of water." And the captain on the vessel that was hailed responded: "Dip your buckets where you are. You are in the mouth of the Amazon, and there are scores of miles of fresh water all around about you, and hundreds of feet deep." And then they dropped their buckets over the side of the vessel, and brought up the clear, bright, fresh water, and put out the fire of their thirst. So I hail you to-day, after a long and perilous voyage,

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thirsting as you are for pardon, and thirsting for comfort, and thirsting for eternal life; and I ask you, What is the use of your going in that death-struck state, while all around you is the deep, clear, wide, sparkling flood of God's sympathetic mercy? Oh, dip your buckets, and drink, and live forever. "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

Yet my utterance is almost choked at the thought that there are people here who will refuse this Divine sympathy; and they will try to fight their own battles, and drink their own vinegar, and carry their own burdens; and their life, instead of being a triumphal march from victory to victory, will be a hobbling-on from defeat to defeat, until they make final surrender to retributive disaster. Oh, I wish I could this morning gather up in mine arms all the woes of men and women—all their heartaches—all their disappointments—all their chagrins—and just take them right to the feet of a sympathizing Jesus. He took the vinegar.

Nana Sahib, after he had lost his last battle in India, fell back into the jungles of Iheri—jungles so full of malaria that no mortal can live there. He carried with him also a ruby of great lustre and of great value. He died in those jungles; his body was never found, and the ruby has never yet been discovered. And I fear that to-day there are some who will fall back from this subject into the sickening, killing jungles of their sin, carrying a gem of infinite value—a priceless soul—to be lost forever. Oh, that that ruby might flash in the eternal coronation. But no. There are some, I fear, in this audience who turn away from this offered mercy, and comfort, and Divine sympathy; notwithstanding that Christ, for all who would accept his grace, trudged the long way, and suffered the lacerating thongs, and received

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in his face the expectorations of the filthy mob, and for the guilty, and the discouraged, and the discomforted of the race, took the vinegar. May God Almighty break the infatuation, and lead you out into the strong hope, and the good cheer, and the glorious sunshine of this triumphant Gospel!

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CHAPTER VII.

THE DIET OF ASHES.

He feedeth on ashes.—Isa. xlv: 20.

Here is a description of the idolatry and worldliness of people in Isaiah's time, and of a very prevalent style of diet in our time. The world spreads a great feast, and invites the race to sit at it. Platters are heaped up. Chalicees are full. Garlands wreath the wall. The guests sit down amid outbursts of hilarity. They take the fruit and it turns into ashes. They uplift the tankards and their contents prove to be ashes. They touch the garlands and they scatter into ashes. I do not know any passage of Scripture which so apothegmatically sets forth the unsatisfactory nature of this world for eye, and tongue, and lip, and heart, as this particular passage, describing the votary of the world, when it says: "He feedeth on ashes."

I shall not take the estimate by those whose life has been a failure. A man may despise the world simply because he cannot win it. Having failed, in his chagrin he may decry that which he would like to have had as his bride. I shall, therefore, take only the testimony of those who have been magnificently successful.

In the first place, I shall ask the kings of the earth to stand up and give testimony, telling of the long story of sleepless nights, and poisoned cups, and threatened invasion, and dreaded rebellion. Ask the Georges, ask the Henrys, ask the Marys, ask the Louises, ask the Cather-

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ines, whether they found the throne a safe scat, and the crown a pleasant covering. Ask the French guillotine in Madam Tussaud's Museum about the queenly necks it has dissevered. Ask the Tower of London and its headsman's block. Ask the Tuilleries, and Henry VIII., and Cardinal Wolsey to rise out of the dust and say what they think of worldly honors. Ghastly with the first and the second death, they rise up with eyeless sockets and grinning skeletons, and stagger forth, unable at first to speak at all, but afterward hoarsely whispering: "Ashes! ashes!"

I call up also a group of commercial adepts to give testimony; and here again, those who have been only moderately successful may not testify. All the witnesses must be millionaires. What a grand thing it must be to own a railroad, to control a bank, to possess all the houses on one street, to have vast investments tumbling in upon you day after day, whether you work or not. No; no. William B. Astor, a few days before his death, sits in his office in New York, grieving almost until he is sick, because rents have gone down. A. T. Stewart finds his last days full of foreboding and doubt. When a Christian man proposes to talk to him about the matters of the soul, he cries: "Go away from me! Go away from me;" not satisfied until the man has got outside the door. Come up, ye millionaires, from various cemeteries and graveyards, and tell us now what you think of banks, and mills, and factories, and counting-houses, and marble palaces, and presidential banquets. They stagger forth and lean against the cold slab of the tomb, mouthing with toothless gums and gesticulating with fleshless hands and shivering with the chill of sepulchral dampness, while they cry out: "Ashes!"

I must call up now, also, a group of sinful pleaurists,

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and here again I will not take the testimony of those who had merely the ordinary gratifications of life. The witnesses must have had excess of delight. Their pleasures were pyramidal. They bloomed paradisaically. If they drank wine, it must be the best that was ever pressed from the vineyards of Hockheimer. If they listened to music, it must be the costliest opera, with a world-renowned *prima donna*. If they sinned, they chased polished uncleanness, and graceful despair, and glittering damnation. Stand up, Alcibiades, and Aaron Burr, and Lord Byron, and Charles the second—what think you now of midnight revel, and sinful carnival, and damask-curtain abomination? Answer! The color goes out of the cheek, the dregs are serpent-twisted in the bottom of the wine-cup, the bright lights quenched in blackness of darkness. They jingle together the broken glasses, and rend the faded silks, and shut the door of the deserted banqueting hall, while they cry: "Ashes! ashes!"

A troop of infidels: There are a great many in this day who try to feed their soul on infidelity mixed with truth. Their religion is made up of ten degrees of humanitarianism, and ten degrees of transcendentalism, and ten degrees of egotism with one degree of Gospel truth, and with that mixture they make the poor, miserable cud which their immortal souls chew, while the meadows of God's Word are green and luxuriant with well-watered pastures. Did you ever see a bright infidel? Did you ever meet a placid skeptic? Did you ever find a contented atheist? Not one. From the days of Gibbon and Voltaire down, not one. They quarrel about God. They quarrel about the Bible. They quarrel about each other. They quarrel with themselves. They gather all the Divine teachings, and under them the fires of their own wit, and scorn, and sarcasm, and

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then they dance in the light of that blaze, and they scratch amid the rubbish for something with which to help them in the days of trouble, and something to comfort them in the days of death, finding for their distraught and destroyed souls, ashes—ashes. Voltaire declared: "This globe seems to me more like a collection of carcasses than of men. I wish I had never been born." Hume says: "I am like a man who has run on rocks and quicksands, and yet I contemplate putting out on the sea in the same leaky and weather-beaten craft." Chesterfield says: "I have been behind the scenes, and I have noticed the clumsy pulleys and the dirty ropes by which all the scene is managed, and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which throw the illumination on the stage, and I am tired and sick." Get up, then, Francis Newport, and Hume, and Voltaire, and Tom Paine, and all the infidels who have passed out of this world into the eternal world—get up now and tell what you think of all your grandiloquent derision at our holy religion. What do you think now of all your sarcasm at holy things? They come shrieking up from the lost world to the graveyards where their bodies were entombed, and point down to the white dust of dissolution, and cry: Ashes! ashes!

Oh, what a poor diet for an immortal soul. The fact is, the soul is hungry. What is that unrest that sometimes comes across you! Why is it that, surrounded by friends, and even the luxuries of life, you wish you were somewhere else, or had something you have not yet gained? The world calls it ambition. The physicians call it nervousness. Your friends call it the fidgets. I call it hunger—deep, grinding, unappeasable hunger. It starts with us when we are born, and goes on with us until the Lord God himself appeases it. It is seeking,

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and delving, and striving, and planning to get something we cannot get. Wealth says: "It is not in me." Science says: "It is not in me." Worldly applause says: "It is not in me." Sinful indulgence says: "It is not in me." Where, then, is it? On the banks of what stream? Slumbering in what grotto? Marching in what contest? Expiring on what pillow? Tell me, for this winged and immortal spirit, is there nothing but ashes?

In communion with God, and everlasting trust of him, is complete satisfaction. Solomon described it when he compared it to cedar houses, and golden chains, and bounding reindeer, and day-break, and imperial couch; to saffron, to calamus, to white teeth, and hands heavy with gold rings, and towers of ivory and ornamental figures; but Christ calls it bread! O famished, yet immortal soul, why not come and get it? Until our sins are pardoned, there is no rest. We know not at what moment the hounds may bay at us. We are in a castle, and know not at what hour it may be besieged; but when the soothing voice of Christ comes across our perturbation, it is hushed for ever. A merchant in Antwerp loaned Charles V. a vast sum of money, taking for it a bond. One day this Antwerp merchant invited Charles V. to dine with him, and while they were seated at the table, in the presence of the guests, the merchant had a fire built on a platter in the centre of the table. Then he took the bond which the King had given him for the vast sum of money, and held it in the blaze until it was consumed, and the king congratulated himself, and all the guests congratulated the king. There was gone at last the final evidence of his indebtedness. Mortgaged to God, we owe a debt we can never pay; but God invites us to the Gospel feast, and in the fires of

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crucifixion agony he puts the last record of our indebtedness, and it is consumed forever. It was so in the case of the dying thief expiring in dark despair, with the judgment to come staring him in the face, and the terrors of hell laying hold of his soul. He had faith in the Crucified One, and his faith won for him an immediate entrance into paradise.

Oh, to have all the sins of our past forgiven, and to have all possible security for the future—is not that enough to make a man happy? What makes that old Christian so placid? Most of his family lie in the village cemetery. His health is undermined. His cough will not let him sleep at night. From the day he came to town and he was a clerk, until this the day of his old age, it has been a hard fight for bread. Yet how happy he looks. Why? It is because he feels that the same God who watched him when he lay in his mother's arms is watching him in the time of old age, and unto God he has committed all his dead, expecting after a while to see them again. He has no anxiety whether he go this summer or next summer—whether he be carried out through the snowbanks or through the daisies. Fifty years ago, he learned that all this world could give was ashes, and he reached up and took the fruits of eternal life. You see his face is very white now. The crimson currents of life seem to have departed from it; but under that extreme whiteness of the old man's face is the flash of the day-break. There is only one word in all our language that can describe his feelings, and that is the word that slipped off the angel's harp above Bethlehem—peace! And so there are hundreds of souls here tonight who have felt this Almighty comfort. Their reputation was pursued; their health shattered; their home was almost if not quite broken up; their fortune went

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away from them. Why do they not sit down and give it up? Ah, they have no disposition to do that. They are saying while I speak: "It is my Father that mixed this bitter cup, and I will cheerfully drink it. Everything will be explained after awhile. I shall not always be under the harrow. There is something that makes me think I am almost home. God will yet wipe away all tears from my eyes." So say these bereft parents. So say these motherless children. So say a great many in this house to-night.

Now, am I not right in these circumstances, in trying to persuade this entire audience to give up ashes and take bread? To give up the unsatisfactory things of this world, and take the glorious things of God and eternity? Why, my friends, if you kept this world as long as it lasts, you would have, after awhile, to give it up. There will be a great fire breaking out from the sides of the hills; there will be falling flame, and ascending flame; in it the earth will be overwhelmed. Fires burning from within, out; fires burning from above, down; this earth will be a furnace, and then it will be a living coal, and then it will be an expiring ember, and the thick clouds of smoke will lessen and lessen until there will be only a faint vapor curling up from the ruins, and then the very last spark of the earth will go out. And I see two angels meeting each other over the gray pile, and as one flits past, he cries, "Ashes!" and the other, as he sweeps down the immensity, will respond, "Ashes!" while all the infinite spaces will echo and re-echo, "Ashes! ashes! ashes!"

Oh, God forbid that you and I should choose such a mean portion. My fear is, not that you will not see the superiority of Christ to this world, but that, through some dreadful infatuation, you will relegate to the future that which God, and angels, and churches militant and

triumphant declare that you ought to do now. My brother, I do not say that you will go out of this world by the stroke of a horse's hoof, or that you will fall through a hatchway, or that a plank may slip from an insecure scaffolding and dash your life out, or that a bolt may fall on you from an August thunder-storm; but I do say that, in the vast majority of cases, your departure from the world will be wonderfully quick; and I want you to start on the right road before that crisis has plunged.

A Spaniard, in a burst of temper, slew a Moor. Then the Spaniard leaped over a high wall and met a gardener, and told him the whole story; and the gardener said: "I will make a pledge of confidence with you. Eat this peach and that will be a pledge that I will be your protector to the last." But, oh, the sorrow and surprise of the gardener when he found out that it was his own son that had been slain! Then he came to the Spaniard and said to him: "You were cruel, you ought to die, you slew my son, and yet I took a pledge with you, and I must keep my promise; and so he took the Spaniard to the stables and brought out the swiftest horse. The Spaniard sprang upon it and put many miles between him and the scene of crime, and perfect escape was effected.

We have, by our sins, slain the Son of God. Is there any possibility of our rescue? Oh, yes. God the Father says to us: "You had no business, by your sin, to slay my Son, Jesus; you ought to die, but I have promised you deliverance. I have made you the promise of eternal life, and you shall have it. Escape now for thy life." And to-night I act merely as the Lord's groom, and I bring you out to the King's stables, and I tell you to be quick and mount, and away. In this plain you perish,

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but housed in God you live. Oh, you pursued and almost overtaken one, put on more speed. Eternal salvation is the price of your velocity. Fly! fly! lest the black horse outrun the white horse, and the battle-axe shiver the helmet and crash down through the insufficient mail. In this tremendous exigency of your immortal spirit beware, lest you prefer ashes to bread!

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CHAPTER VIII.

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Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.—John x: 16.

There is no monopoly in religion. The grace of God is not a little property that we may fence off and have all to ourselves. It is not a king's park at which we look through a barred gate-way, wishing that we might go in and see the deer and the statuary, and pluck the flowers and fruits in the royal conservatory. No, it is the Father's orchard, and everywhere there are bars that we may let down and gates that we may swing open.

In my boyhood, next to the country school-house, there was an orchard of apples, owned by a very lame man, who, although there were apples in the place perpetually decaying, and by scores and scores of bushels, never would allow any of us to touch the fruit. One day, in the sinfulness of a nature inherited from our first parents, who were ruined by the same temptation, some of us invaded that orchard; but soon retreated, for the man came after us at a speed reckless of making his lameness worse, and cried out: "Boys, drop those apples, or I'll set the dog on you!"

Well, my friends, there are Christian men who have the Church under severe guard. There is fruit in this orchard for the whole world; but they have a rough and unsympathetic way of accosting outsiders, as though they had no business here, though the Lord wants them

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all to come and take the largest and the ripest fruit on the premises. Have you an idea that because you were baptized at thirteen months of age, and because you have all your life been under hallowed influences, that therefore you have a right to one whole side of the Lord's table, spreading yourself out and taking up the entire room? I tell you no. You will have to haul in your elbows, for I shall to-night place on either side of you those whom you never expected would sit there; for, as Christ said to the Jews long ago, so he says to you and to me to-night: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

MacDonald, the Scotchman, has four or five dozen head of sheep. Some of them are browsing on the heather, some of them are lying down under the trees, some of them are in his yard; they are scattered around in eight or ten different places. Cameron, his neighbor, comes over and says: "I see you have thirty sheep; I have just counted them." "No," says MacDonald, "I have a great many more sheep than that. Some are here, and some are elsewhere. They are scattered all around about. I have four or five thousand in my flocks. Other sheep I have, which are not in *this* fold."

So Christ says to us. Here is a knot of Christians and there is a knot of Christians, but they make up a small part of the flock. Here is the Episcopal fold, the Methodist fold, the Lutheran fold, the Congregational fold, the Presbyterian fold, the Baptist and the Pedo-Baptist fold, the only difference between these last two being the mode of sheep-washing; and so they are scattered all over; and we come with our statistics, and say there are so many thousand of the Lord's sheep; but Christ responds: "No, no; you have not seen more than one out of a thousand of my flock. They are scattered all over the

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earth. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Christ, in my text, was prophesying the conversion of the Gentiles with as much confidence as though they were already converted, and he is, to-night, in the words of my text, prophesying the coming of a great multitude of outsiders that you never supposed would come in, saying to you and saying to me: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

In the first place, I remark, that the heavenly Shepherd will find many of his sheep *amid the non-church-goers*. There are congregations where they are all Christians, and they seem to be completely finished, and they remind one of the skeleton-leaves which, by chemical preparation, have had all the greenness and verdure taken off of them, and are left cold, and white, and delicate, nothing wanting but a glass case to put over them. The minister of Christ has nothing to do with such Christians but to come once a week, and with ostrich feather dust off the accumulation of the last six days, leaving them bright and crystalline as before. But the other kind of a Church is an armory, with perpetual sound of drum and fife, gathering recruits for the Lord of hosts. We say to every applicant: "Do you want to be on God's side, the safe side and the happy side? If so, come in the armory and get equipped. Here is a bath in which to be cleansed. Here are sandals to put upon your feet. Here is a helmet for your brow. Here is a breast-plate for your heart. Here is a sword for your right arm, and yonder is the battle-field. Quit yourselves like men!"

There are some here to-night, who say: "I stopped going to church ten or twenty years ago." My brother, is it not strange that you should be the first man I should talk to to-night? I know all your case; I know

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it very well. You have not been accustomed to come into the house of God, but I have a surprising announcement to make to you: you are going to become one of the Lord's sheep. "Ah," you say, "it is impossible. You don't know how far I am from anything of that kind." I know all about it. I have wandered up and down the world, and I understand your case. I have a still more startling announcement to make in regard to you: you are not only going to become one of the Lord's sheep, but you will become one to-night. You will stay after this service to be talked with about your soul. People of God, pray for that man! That is the only use for you to-night. I shall not break off so much as a crumb for you, Christians, in this sermon, for I am going to give it all to the outsiders. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

When the *Atlantic* went to pieces on Mars' Rock, and the people clambered up on the beach, why did not that heroic minister of the Gospel, of whom we have all read, sit down and take care of those men on the beach, wrapping them in flannels, kindling fire for them, seeing that they got plenty of food? Ah, he knew that there were others who would do that. He says: "Yonder are men and women freezing in the rigging of that wreck. Boys, launch the boat!" And now I see the oar-blades bend under the strong pull; but before they reached the rigging a woman was frozen and dead. She was washed off, poor thing! But he says: "There is a man to save;" and he cries out: "Hold on five minutes longer, and I will save you. Steady! Steady! Give me your hand. Leap into the life-boat. Thank God, he is saved!" So there are those here to-night who are safe on the shore of God's mercy. I will not spend any time with them at all; but I see there are some who are

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freezing in the rigging of ~~sun~~, and surrounded by perilous storms. Pull away, my lads! Let us reach them! Alas! one is washed off and gone. There is one more to be saved. Let us push out for that one. Clutch the rope. Oh! dying man, clutch it as with a death-grip. Steady, now, on the slippery places. Steady. There! Saved! Saved! Just as I thought. For Christ has declared that there are some still in the breakers who shall come ashore. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Christ commands his ministers to be fishermen; and when I go fishing I do not want to go among other churches, but into the wide world; not sitting along Hohokus Creek, where eight or ten other persons are sitting with hook and line, but, like the fishermen of Newfoundland, sailing off and dropping net away outside, forty or fifty miles from shore. Yes, there are non-church-goers here who will come in. Next Sabbath morning and evening they will be here again, or in some better church. They are this moment being swept into Christian associations. Their voice will be heard in public prayer. They will die in peace, their bed surrounded by Christian sympathies, and be carried out by devout men to be buried, and on their grave be chiseled the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And on Resurrection day you will get up with the dear children you have already buried and with your Christian parents who have already won the palm. And all that grand and glorious history begins to-night. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

I remark again, the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many of his sheep among *those who are positive rejectors of Christianity*. I do not know how

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you came to reject Christianity. It may have been through hearing Theodore Parker preach, or through reading Renan's "Life of Jesus," or through the infidel talk of some young man in your store. It may have been through the trickery of some professed Christian man who disgusted you with religion. I do not ask you how you became so; but you frankly tell me to-night that you do reject it. You do not believe that Christ is a Divine being, although you admit that he was a very good man. You do not believe that the Bible was inspired of God, although you think that there are some very fine things in it. You believe that the Scriptural description of Eden was only an allegory. There are fifty things that I believe that you do not believe. And yet you are an accommodating man. Everybody that knows you says that of you. If I should ask you to do a kindness for me, or if any one else should ask of you a kindness, you would do it. Now, I have a kindness to ask of you to-night. It is something that will cost you nothing and will give me great delight. I want you by experiment to try the power of Christ's religion. If I should come to you, and you were very sick, and doctors had given you up, and said there was no chance for you, and I should take out a bottle, and say: "Here is a medicine that will cure you; it has cured fifty people, and it will cure you." You would say: "I have no confidence in it." I would say: "Won't you take it to oblige me?" "Well," you would say, "If it's any accommodation to you, I'll take it." My friend, will you be just as accommodating in matters of religion? There are some of you who have found out that this world cannot satisfy your soul. You are like the man who told me last Sabbath night, after the service was over, "I have tried this world and found it an insufficient portion. Tell me of

something better." You have come to that. You are sick for the need of Divine medicament. Now, I come and tell you of a Physician who will cure you, who has cured hundreds and hundreds who were sick as you are. "Oh," you say, "I have no confidence in him." But will you not try him? Accommodate me in this matter; oblige me in this matter; just try him. I am very certain he will cure you. You reply: "I have no especial confidence in him; but if you ask me as a matter of accommodation, introduce him." So I do introduce him—Christ, the Physician, who has cured more blind eyes, and healed more ghastly wounds, and bound up more broken hearts, than all the doctors since the time of Æsculapius. That Divine Physician is here. Are you not ready to try him? Will you not, as a pure matter of experiment, try him, and state your case before him to-night? Hold nothing back from him. If you cannot pray, if you do not know how to pray any other way, say "O Lord Jesus Christ, this is a strange thing for me to do. I know nothing about the formulas of religion. These Christian people have been talking so long about what thou canst do for me. I am ready to do whatever thou commandest me to do. I am ready to take whatever thou commandest me to take. If there be any power in religion, as these people say, let me have the advantage of it." Will you try that experiment to-night? I do not at this point of my discourse say that there is anything in religion; but I simply say, try it—try it. Do not take my counsel or the counsel of any clergyman, if you despise clergymen. Perhaps we may be talking professionally; perhaps we may be prejudiced in the matter; perhaps we may be hypocritical in our utterances; perhaps we may preach because we are paid to preach; perhaps our advice is not

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worth taking. Then take the counsel of some very respectable laymen, as John Milton, the poet; as William Wilberforce, the statesman; as Isaac Newton, the astronomer; as Robert Boyle, the philosopher; as Locke, the metaphysician. They never preached or pretended to preach; and yet putting down, one his telescope, and another his parliamentary scroll, and another his electrician's wire, they all declare the adaptedness of Christ's religion to the wants and troubles of the world. If you will not take the recommendation of ministers of the Gospel, then take the recommendations of highly respectable laymen. Oh men, sceptical and struck through with unrest, would you not like to have some of the peace which broods over our souls to-night? I know all about your doubts. I have been through them all. I have gone through all the curriculum. I have doubted whether there is a God, whether Christ is God. I have doubted whether the Bible was true, I have doubted the immortality of the soul, I have doubted my own existence, I have doubted everything; and yet, out of that hot desert of doubt I have come into the broad, luxuriant, sunshiny land of Gospel hope, and peace, and comfort; and so I have confidence in preaching to you and asking you to come in. However often you may have spoken against the Bible, or however much you may have caricatured religion, step ashore from that rocking and tumultuous sea. If you go home to-night adhering to your infidelities, you will not sleep one wink. You do not want your children to come up with your scepticism. You cannot afford to die in that midnight darkness, can you? If you do not believe in anything else, you believe in love—a father's love, a mother's love, a wife's love, a child's love. Then let me tell you that God loves you more than them all. Oh, you must come

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in. You will come in. The great heart of Christ aches to have you come in, and Jesus this very moment—whether you sit or stand—looks into your eyes and says: “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.”

Again I remark, that the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many sheep among *those who have been flung of evil habit*. It makes me mad to see Christian people give up a prodigal as lost. There are those who talk as though the grace of God were a chain of forty or fifty links, and after they had run out, there was nothing to touch the depth of a very bad case. If they were hunting and got off the track of the deer, they would look longer among the brakes and bushes for the lost game than they have been looking for that lost soul. People tell us that if a man has *delirium tremens* twice, he cannot be reclaimed; that after a woman has fallen from her integrity, she cannot be restored. The Bible has distinctly intimated that the Lord Almighty is ready to pardon four hundred and ninety times; that is, seventy times seven. There are men before the throne of God who have wallowed in every kind of sin; but, saved by the grace of Jesus, and washed in his blood, they stand there radiant now. There are those who plunged into the very lowest hell of Elm-street, New York, who have for the tenth time been lifted up, and finally, by the grace of God, they stand in heaven gloriously rescued by the grace promised to the chief of sinners. I want to tell you that God loves to take hold of a very bad case. When the Church casts you off, and when the club-room casts you off, and when society casts you off, and when business associates cast you off, and when father casts you off, and when mother casts you off, and when everybody casts you off, your first cry for help will bend the Eternal God clear down into the ditch of your

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suffering and shame. The Good Templars cannot save you, although they are a grand institution. The Sons of Temperance cannot save you, although they are mighty for good. Signing the temperance pledge cannot save you, although I believe in it. Nothing but the grace of the Eternal God can save you, and that will if you will throw yourself on it. There is a man in this house to-night who said to me during the week: "Unless God helps me I cannot be delivered. I have tried everything, sir; but now I have got in the habit of prayer, and when I come to a drinking saloon I pray that God will take me safe past, and I pray until I am past. He does help me." For every man given to strong drink there are scores of traps set; and when he goes out on business to-morrow, with his bill of goods, on Broadway, or John-street, or Walter-street, or Fulton-avenue, or Atlantic-avenue, he will be in infinite peril, and no one but the everywhere present God can see that man through. Oh! they talk about the catacombs of Naples, and the catacombs of Rome, and the catacombs of Egypt—the burial places under the city where the dust of a great multitude lie; but I tell you Brooklyn has its catacombs, and New York its catacombs, and Boston its catacombs, and Philadelphia its catacombs. They are the underground restaurants, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Young man, you know it. God help you. There is no need of going into the art gallery to see in skillful sculpture that wonderful representation of a man and his sons wound around with serpents. There are families represented in this house to-night that are wrapped in the martyrdom of fang and scale and venom—a living Laocoon of ghastliness and horror. What are you to do? I am not speaking into the air. I am talking to-night to hundreds of men who must be saved

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by Christ's Gospel, or never saved at all. What are you going to do? Do not put your trust in bromide of potassium, or in Jamaica ginger, or anything that apothecaries can mix. Put your trust only in the Eternal God, and he will see you through. Some of you do not have temptations every day. It is a periodic temptation that comes every six weeks, or every three months, when it seems as if the powers of darkness kindle around about your tongue the fires of the pit. It is well enough, at such a time, as some of you do, to seek medical counsel; but your first and most importunate cry must be to God. If the fiends will drag you to the slaughter, make them do it on your knees. O God! now that the paroxysm of thirst is coming again upon that man, help him! Fling back into the pit of hell the fiend that assaults his soul this moment. Oh! my heart aches to see men go on in this fearful struggle without Christ.

There are to-night in this house those whose hands so tremble from dissipation that they can hardly hold a book; and yet I have to tell you that they will yet preach the Gospel, and on communion days carry around the consecrated bread, acceptable to everybody, because of their holy life, and their consecrated behavior. The Lord is going to save you. Your home has got to be rebuilt. Your physical health has got to be restored. Your worldly business has got to be reconstructed. The Church of God is going to rejoice over your discipleship. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

While I have hope for all prodigals, there are some people in this house to-night whom I give up as lost. I mean those who have been church-goers all their life, who have maintained outward morality, but who, notwithstanding twenty, thirty, forty years of Christian advantages, have never yielded their heart to Christ.

They are Gospel hardened. I could call their names now, and if they would rise up they would rise up in scores. Gospel hardened! A sermon has no more effect upon them than the shining of the moon on the city pavement. As Christ says: "The publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom of God before them." They have resisted all the importunity of Divine mercy, and have gone, during these thirty years, through most powerful earthquakes of religious feeling, and they are farther away from God than ever. After awhile they will lie down sick, and some day it will be told that they are dead. No hope!

But I turn to outsiders with a hope that thrills through my body and soul. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." You are not Gospel hardened. You have not heard or read many sermons during the last few years. As you came in to-night everything was novel, and all the services are suggestive of your early days. How sweet the opening hymn sounded in your ears, and how blessed it is in this place! Everything suggestive of heaven. You do not weep, but the shower is not far off. You sigh, and you have noticed that there is always a sigh in the wind before the rain falls. There are those here who would give anything if they could find relief in tears. They say: "Oh, my wasted life! Oh, the bitter past! Oh, the graves over which I have stumbled! Whither shall I fly? Alas for the future! Everything is dark—so dark, so dark. God help me! God pity me!" Thank the Lord for that last utterance. You have begun to pray, and when a man begins to petition, that sets all heaven flying this way, and God steps in and beats back the hounds of temptation to their kennel, and around about the poor wounded soul puts the covert of his pardoning mercy. Hark! I hear something fall.

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What was that? It is the bars of the fence around the sheep-fold. The shepherd lets them down, and the hunted sheep of the mountain bound in; some of them their fleece torn with the brambles, some of them their feet lame with the dogs; but bounding in. Thank God! "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

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CHAPTER IX.

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Then I went up in the night by the brook and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.—Nehemiah ii: 15.

A dead city is more suggestive than a living city—past Rome than present Rome—ruins rather than newly frescoed cathedral. But the best time to visit a ruin is by moonlight. The Coliseum is far more fascinating to the traveler after sundown than before. You may stand by daylight amid the monastic ruins of Melrose Abbey, and study shafted oriel, and rosetted stone and mullion, but they throw their strongest witchery by moonlight. Some of you remember what the enchanter of Scotland said in the “Lay of the Last Minstrel:”

“Wouldst thou view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight.”

Washington Irving describes the Andalusian moonlight upon the Alhambra ruins as amounting to an enchantment. My text presents you Jerusalem in ruins. The tower down. The gates down. The walls down. Everything down. Nehemiah on horseback, by moonlight looking upon the ruins. While he rides, there are some friends on foot going with him, for they do not want the many horses to disturb the suspicions of the people. These people do not know the secret of Nehemiah's heart, but they are going as a sort of body-guard.

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I hear the clicking hoofs of the horse on which Nehemiah rides, as he guides it this way and that, into this gate and out of that, winding through that gate amid the *debris* of once great Jerusalem. Now the horse comes to a dead halt at the tumbled masonry where he cannot pass. Now he shies off at the charred timbers. Now he comes along where the water under the moonlight flashes from the mouth of the brazen dragon after which the gate was named. Heavy-hearted Nehemiah! Riding in and out, now by his old home desolated, now by the defaced Temple, now amid the scars of the city that had gone down under battering-ram and conflagration. The escorting party knows not what Nehemiah means. Is he getting crazy? Have his own personal sorrows, added to the sorrows of the nation, unbalanced his intellect? Still the midnight exploration goes on. Nehemiah on horseback rides through the fish gate, by the tower of the furnaces, by the king's pool, by the dragon well, in and out, in and out, until the midnight ride is completed, and Nehemiah dismounts from his horse, and to the amazed and confounded and incredulous body-guard, declares the dead secret of his heart when he says: "Come, now, let us build Jerusalem." "What, Nehemiah, have you any money?" "No." "Have you any kingly authority?" "No." "Have you any eloquence?" "No." Yet that midnight, moonlight ride of Nehemiah resulted in the glorious rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. The people knew not how the thing was to be done, but with great enthusiasm they cried out: "Let us rise up now and build the city." Some people laughed and said it could not be done. Some people were infuriate and offered physical violence, saying the thing should not be done. But the workmen went right on, standing on the wall, trowel in one hand, sword in the other, until the

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work was gloriously completed. At that very time, in Greece, Xenophon was writing a history, and Plato was making philosophy, and Demosthenes was rattling his rhetorical thunder; but all of them together did not do so much for the world as this midnight, moonlight ride of praying, courageous, homesick, close-mouthed Nehemiah.

My subject first impresses me with the idea what an intense thing is church affection. Seize the bridle of that horse and stop Nehemiah. Why are you risking your life here in the night? Your horse will stumble over these ruins and fall on you. Stop this useless exposure of your life. No; Nehemiah will not stop. He at last tells us the whole story. He lets us know he was an exile in a far distant land, and he was a servant, a cup-bearer in the palace of Artaxerxes Longimanus, and one day, while he was handing the cup of wine to the king, the king said to him, "What is the matter with you? You are not sick. I know you must have some great trouble. What is the matter with you?" Then he told the king how that beloved Jerusalem was broken down; how that his father's tomb had been desecrated; how that the Temple had been dishonored and defaced; how that the walls were scattered and broken. "Well," says King Artaxerxes, "what do you want?" "Well," said the cup-bearer Nehemiah, "I want to go home. I want to fix up the grave of my father. I want to restore the beauty of the Temple. I want to rebuild the masonry of the city wall. Besides, I want passports so that I shall not be hindered in my journey. And besides that," as you will find in the context, "I want an order on the man who keeps your forest for just so much timber as I may need for the rebuilding of the city." "How long shall you be gone?" said the king. The time of absence

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is arranged. In hot haste this seeming adventurer comes to Jerusalem, and in my text we find him on horseback, in the midnight, riding around the ruins. It is through the spectacles of this scene that we discover the ardent attachment of Nehemiah for sacred Jerusalem, which in all ages has been the type of the church of God, our Jerusalem, which we love just as much as Nehemiah loved his Jerusalem. The fact is that you love the church of God so much that there is no spot on earth so sacred, unless it be your own fireside. The church has been to you so much comfort and illumination that there is nothing that makes you so irate as to have it talked against. If there have been times when you have been carried into captivity by sickness, you longed for the Church, our holy Jerusalem, just as much as Nehemiah longed for his Jerusalem, and the first day you came out you came to the house of the Lord. When the temple was in ruins, as ours was five years ago, like Nehemiah, you walked around and looked at it, and in the moonlight you stood listening if you could not hear the voice of the dead organ, the psalm of the expired Sabbaths. What Jerusalem was to Nehemiah, the Church of God is to you. Sceptics and infidels may scoff at the Church as an obsolete affair, as a relic of the dark ages, as a convention of goody-goody people, but all the impression they have ever made on your mind against the Church of God is absolutely nothing. You would make more sacrifices for it to-day than for any other institution, and if it were needful you would die in its defence. You can take the words of the kingly poet as he said: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." You understand in your own experience the pathos, the home-sickness, the courage, the holy enthu-

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siasm of Nehemiah in his midnight moonlight ride around the ruins of his beloved Jerusalem.

Again, my text impresses me with the fact that, before reconstruction, there must be an exploration of ruins. Why was not Nehemiah asleep under the covers? Why was not his horse stabled in the midnight? Let the police of the city arrest this midnight rider, out on some mischief. No. Nehemiah is going to rebuild the city, and he is making the preliminary exploration. In this gate, out that gate, east, west, north, south. All through the ruins. The ruins must be explored before the work of reconstruction can begin. The reason that so many people in this day, apparently converted, do not stay converted is because they did not first explore the ruins of their own heart. The reason that there are so many professed Christians who in this day lie and forge and steal, and commit adultery, and go to the penitentiary, is because they first do not learn the ruin of their own heart. They have not found out that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." They had an idea that they were almost right, and they built religion as a sort of extension, as an ornamental cupola. There was a superstructure of religion built on a substratum of unrepented sins. The trouble with a good deal of modern theology is that instead of building on the right foundation, it builds on the *debris* of an unregenerated nature. They attempt to rebuild Jerusalem before, in the midnight of conviction, they have seen the ghastliness of the ruin. They have such a poor foundation for their religion that the first north-east storm of temptation blows them down. I have no faith in a man's conversion if he is not converted in the old-fashioned way—John Bunyan's way, John Wesley's way, John Calvin's way, Paul's way, Christ's way, God's way.

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A dentist said to me a few days ago, "Does that hurt?" Said I, "Of course it hurts. It is in your business as in my profession. We have to hurt before we can help." You will never understand redemption until you understand ruin. A man tells me that some one is a member of the church. It makes no impression on my mind at all. I simply want to know whether he was converted in the old-fashioned way, or whether he was converted in the new-fashioned way. If he was converted in the old-fashioned way he will stand. If he was converted in the new-fashioned way he will not stand. That is all there is about it. A man comes to me to talk about religion. The first question I ask him is, "Do you feel yourself to be a sinner?" If he say, "Well, I—yes," the hesitancy makes me feel that that man wants a ride on Nehemiah's horse by midnight through the ruins—in by the gate of his affections, out by the gate of his will; and before he has got through with that midnight ride he will drop the reins on the horse's neck, and will take his right hand and smite on his heart and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and before he has stabled his horse he will take his feet out of the stirrups, and he will slide down on the ground, and he will kneel, crying, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies; blot out my transgressions, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sins are ever before thee." Ah, my friends, you see this is not a complimentary gospel. That is what makes some people so mad. It comes to a man of a million dollars, and impenitent in his sins, and says, "You're a pauper." It comes to a woman of fairest cheek, who has never repented, and says, "You're a sinner." It comes to a man priding himself on his independence, and says, "You're bound hand and foot by

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the devil." It comes to our entire race and says, "You're a ruin, a ghastly ruin, an illimitable ruin." Satan sometimes says to me, "Why do you preach that truth? Why don't you preach a gospel with no repentance in it? Why don't you flatter men's hearts so that you make them feel all right? Why don't you preach a humanitarian gospel with no repentance in it, saying nothing about the ruin, talking all the time about redemption? Instead of preaching to five thousand you might preach to twenty thousand, for there would be four times as many who would come to hear a popular truth as to hear an unpopular truth, and you have voice enough to make them hear." I say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." I would rather lead five souls into heaven than twenty thousand into hell. The redemption of the gospel is a perfect farce if there is no ruin. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "If any one, though he be an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than this," says the apostle, "let him be accursed." There must be the midnight ride over the ruins before Jerusalem can be built. There must be the clicking of the hoofs before there can be the ring of the trowels.

Again. My subject gives me a specimen of busy and triumphant sadness. If there was any man in the world who had a right to mope and give up everything as lost, it was Nehemiah. You say, "He was a cup-bearer in the palace of Shushan, and it was a grand place." So it was. The hall of that palace was two hundred feet square, and the roof hovered over thirty-six marble pillars, each pillar sixty feet high; and the intense blue of the sky, and the deep green of the forest foliage, and the white of the driven snow, all hung trembling in the upholstery. But, my friends, you know very well that fine

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architecture will not put down home-sickness. Yet Nehemiah did not give up. Then when you see him going among these desolated streets, and by these dismantled towers, and by the torn-up grave of his father, you would suppose that he would have been disheartened, and that he would have dismounted from his horse and gone to his room and said: "Woe is me! My father's grave is torn up. The temple is dishonored. The walls are broken down. I have no money with which to rebuild. I wish I had never been born. I wish I were dead." Not so says Nehemiah. Although he had a grief so intense that it excited the commentary of his king, yet that penniless, expatriated Nehemiah rouses himself up to rebuild the city. He gets his permission of absence. He gets his passports. He hastens away to Jerusalem. By night on horseback he rides through the ruins. He overcomes the most ferocious opposition. He arouses the piety and patriotism of the people, and in less than two months, namely, in fifty-two days, Jerusalem was rebuilt. That's what I call busy and triumphant sadness.

My friends, the whole temptation is with you when you have trouble, to do just the opposite to the behavior of Nehemiah, and that is to give up. You say: "I have lost my child and can never smile again." You say, "I have lost my property, and I never can repair my fortunes." You say, "I have fallen into sin, and I never can start again for a new life." If Satan can make you form that resolution, and make you keep it, he has ruined you. Trouble is not sent to crush you, but to arouse you, to animate you, to propel you. The blacksmith does not thrust the iron into the forge, and then blow away with the bellows, and then bring the hot iron out on the anvil and beat with stroke after stroke to ruin the iron, but to

prepare it for a better use. Oh that the Lord God of Nehemiah would rouse up all broken-hearted people to rebuild. Whipped, betrayed, shipwrecked, imprisoned, Paul went right on. The Italian martyr Algerius sits in his dungeon writing a letter, and he dates it "From the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison." That is what I call triumphant sadness. I knew a mother who buried her babe on Friday and on Sabbath appeared in the house of God and said: "Give me a class; give me a Sabbath-school class. I have no child now left me, and I would like to have a class of little children. Give me real poor children. Give me a class off the back street." That, I say, is beautiful. That is triumphant sadness. At three o'clock this afternoon, in a beautiful parlor in Philadelphia—a parlor pictured and statuetted—there will be from ten to twenty destitute children of the street. It has been so every Sabbath afternoon at three o'clock for sixteen years. These destitute children receive religious instruction, concluding with cakes and sandwiches. How do I know that that has been going on for sixteen years? I know it in this way. That was the first home in Philadelphia where I was called to comfort a great sorrow. They had a splendid boy, and he had been drowned at Long Branch. The father and mother almost idolized the boy, and the sob and shriek of that father and mother as they hung over the coffin resound in my ears to-day. There seemed to be no use of praying, for when I knelt down to pray, the outcry in the room drowned out all the prayer. But the Lord comforted that sorrow. They did not forget their trouble. If you should go this snowy afternoon into Laurel Hill, you would find a monument with the word "Walter" inscribed upon it, and a wreath of fresh flowers around the name. I think there has not been an hour

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in sixteen years, winter or summer, when there was not a wreath of fresh flowers around Walter's name. But the Christian mother who sends those flowers there, having no child left, Sabbath afternoons mothers ten or twenty of the lost ones of the street. That is beautiful. That is what I call busy and triumphant sadness. Here is a man who has lost his property. He does not go to hard drinking. He does not destroy his own life. He comes and says, "Harness me for Christian work. My money's gone. I have no treasures on earth. I want treasures in heaven. I have a voice and a heart to serve God." You say that that man has failed. He has not failed—he has triumphed. Oh, I wish I could persuade all the people who have any kind of trouble never to give up. I wish they would look at the midnight rider of the text, and that the four hoofs of that beast on which Nehemiah rode might cut to pieces all your discouragements, and hardships, and trials. Give up! Who is going to give up, when on the bosom of God he can have all his troubles hushed? Give up! Never think of giving up. Are you borne down with poverty? A little child was found holding her dead mother's hand in the darkness of a tenement-house, and some one coming in, the little girl looked up, while holding her dead mother's hand, and said: "Oh, I do wish that God had made more light for poor folks." My dear, God will be your light, God will be your shelter, God will be your home. Are you borne down with the bereavements of life? Is the house lonely now that the child is gone? Do not give up. Think of what the old sexton said when the minister asked him why he put so much care on the little graves, in the cemetery—so much more care than on the larger graves, and the old sexton said "Sir, you know that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' and

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I think the Savior is pleased when He sees so much white clover growing around these little graves." But when the minister pressed the old sexton for a more satisfactory answer, the old sexton said: "Sir, about these larger graves, I don't know who are the Lord's saints and who are not; but you know, sir, it is clean different with the bairns." Oh, if you have had that keen, tender, indescribable sorrow that comes from the loss of a child, do not give up. The old sexton was right. It is all well with the bairns. Or, if you have sinned, if you have sinned grievously—sinned until you have been cast out by the Church, sinned until you have been cast out by society, do not give up. Perhaps there may be in this house one that could truthfully utter the lamentation of another:

"Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell—
Fell like a snowflake, from heaven to hell—
Fell, to be trampled as filth in the street—
Fell, to be scoffed at, spit on, and beat;
Praying, cursing, wishing to die.
Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living, and fearing the dead."

Do not give up. One like unto the Son of God comes to you to-day, saying, "Go and sin no more;" while He cries out to your assailants, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone at her." Oh! there is no reason why any one in this house, by reason of any trouble or sin, should give up. Are you a foreigner, and in a strange land? Nehemiah was an exile. Are you penniless? Nehemiah was poor. Are you homesick? Nehemiah was homesick. Are you broken-hearted? Nehemiah was broken-hearted. But just see him in the text, riding along the sacrilegious grave of his father, and by the

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dragon well, and through the fish gate, and by the king's pool, in and out, in and out, the moonlight falling on the broken masonry, which throws a long shadow at which the horse shies, and at the same time that moonlight kindling up the features of this man till you see not only the mark of sad reminiscence, but the courage the hope, the enthusiasm of a man who knows that Jerusalem will be rebuilt. I pick you up to-day, out of your sins and out of your sorrow, and I put you against the warm heart of Christ. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

THE PRINCESS IN DISGUISE.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRINCESS IN DISGUISE.

And the Lord said unto Abijah: Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son, for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. —I. Judges xiv: 5.

There is a very sick child in Jeroboam's palace in Tirzah. Medicines have failed. Skill is exhausted. Abijah, the young prince, who had already become very popular, must die, unless some supernatural aid be afforded. Death comes up the palace-stairs and swings open the sick-room of royalty, and stands looking upon the wasted form of the young prince, holding over him a dart with which to strike. Wicked Jeroboam the father has no right to expect Divine interference. He knows if he pleads with the Lord's prophet, he will get nothing but condemnation, and so Jeroboam sends his wife on the tender and solemn mission. She put aside her princely apparel, and puts on the attire of a peasant-woman, and instead of taking gold and gems, as she might have done, as a present to the prophet, she takes only those things which would seem to indicate that she belonged to the peasantry, namely, ten loaves of bread and cracknels, and a cruse of honey.

Yonder she goes, hooded and disguised, the first woman of all the realm, on foot, unattended, carrying a burden as though she had come out from one of the humblest homes in Tirzah. People carelessly pass her on the road, not knowing that she is the first woman in all the realm, the heiress of a kingdom, and that those who are bespangled

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and robed with royalty are her daily associates. Peter the Great, the Czar of all the Russias, at work on the dry dock at Saardam, with a sailor's hat and a shipwright's axe, was not more thoroughly disguised than this woman of Tirzah on her way to seek the healing blessing of the prophet in Shiloh. But the Lord's messenger might not thus be deceived. Divinely illumined, although he had lost his physical eyesight—divinely illumined, he sees right through that woman's cheat, and as this great lady enters his door, he accosts her in the words: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam. Why feignest thou thyself to be another? For I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Get thee to thy house, and when thy feet reach the gate of the city the child shall die." Broken-hearted, the woman goes back to her home, now not so careful to hide her face, or her noble gait and bearing. Her tears fall on the dust of the way, and her mourning fills all the road from Shiloh to Tirzah. What overwhelming grief! for she knows that every step she takes is one heart-beat less in the life of her child. With wonderful precision every word of the prophet is fulfilled. As the woman goes in the gate of the city, the child's life passes out. No sooner have her feet struck the gate, than the pulses of the son cease. The cry of sorrow in the palace is joined by the wailing of a nation, and as this youthful Abijah is carried out to his grave, the land sends up its voice in eulogy of departed virtue, and the air is rent with the lamentation of a kingdom.

It is with no small or insignificant idea that this morning I ask you to consider the thrilling story of this disguised Princess of Tirzah.

In the first place, I see that *wickedness is disposed to involve others*—to make them its dupes, its allies, its scapegoats. Jeroboam wanted to hoodwink the prophet.

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Did he go himself? No, he sent his wife to do the work. Hers the peril of detection, the hardship of the way, the execution of the plot, while he stayed at home in indolence, waiting for his wicked scheme to be carried out. Iniquity, though a brag, is a great coward. It contrives sin, but leaves others to execute it ; it lays the train of gunpowder, but wants somebody else to touch it off; plans the mischief, gets somebody else to work it; invents the lie, gets somebody else to circulate it. In nearly all the great plots of wickedness that have been discovered, it has been found out that the instigators of the rapine, or the arson, or the murder, went free, while those who were suborned and inveigled into the crime, clanked the chain and mounted the gallows. Aaron Burr, with a heart unsurpassed for impurity and ambition, plots for the usurpation of the United States Government, but gets off with a little censure and a few threats, while Blennerhasset—sweet-tempered Blennerhasset, learned Blennerhasset—whom he decoyed from his gardens, and vineyards, and laboratories, on the banks of the Ohio, and hoodwinked into his crime, is hurled into prison, and his great fortune is scatterèd, and his family, brought up in luxury, turned out to die. Benedict Arnold, scheming for the surrender of the American forts, and the destruction of the American army, and the overthrow of the American nation, for the betrayal of our cause gets his purse filled with pounds sterling, and becomes a brigadier-general in the opposing army; while Major Andre, the brave and the brilliant, whom he duped into the conspiracy, suffers the gibbet on the banks of the Hudson. Nine-tenths of those who are arraigned, incarcerated, and condemned, are merely the satellites of some adroit villain. Ignominious fraud is a juggler, which, by sleight of hand and legerdemain, makes the money it

stole appear to be in somebody else's pocket. When there is any great wickedness to be achieved, when there is any great prophet to be hoodwinked, Jeroboam, instead of going himself, sends his wife to do it. Stand off from imposition and chicanery. Let not vile men employ you for the purpose of carrying out their iniquities.

Again, I learn from this thrilling story of the disguised Princess of Tirzah, that *royalty sometimes passes in disguise*. The frock, the hood, the veil of the country-woman, hid up the majesty of this princess or queen, and as she passed along the road, no one suspected who she was. Yet she was just as much a princess or a queen under the country-woman's garb, as when wearing the apparel which flashed through the palace. So God now often puts upon imperial natures a crown, yet we do not discover them. They make no display. They wear no insignia of royalty. They blow no trumpet. They ride in no high places. They elicit no huzza. They quote no foreign language. Royalty in mask. A princess in disguise.

There are kings without the crown, and conquerors without the palm, and empresses without the jewels. That plain woman you passed on the street to-day may be regnant over vast realms of goodness and virtue—a dominion wider than Jeroboam saw from the window of his palace. You look in upon a home of poverty and destitution. No clothes. No fire. No bread. Long story of suffering written on the mother's wasted hand, and on the pale cheeks of the children, and on the empty bread-tray, and on the fireless hearth, and on the broken chair. You would not give a dollar for all the furniture in the house. Yet God, by his grace, may have made that woman a princess or a queen. The overseers of the

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poor talk over her case, and pronounce her a pauper. They know not that God has burnished a coronet for her wrinkled brow, and that there is a throne on which at last she will rest from earthly weariness. Glory veiled! Affluence hidden! Eternal raptures hushed up! Majesty in a mask! A princess in disguise!

I will tell you of a grander disguise. Hear it. The favorite of a great house one day looked out of his palace window and saw men carrying very heavy burdens, and some of them lying at the gate full of sores, and some hobbling on crutches, and heard others bewailing their woe; and he said: "I will put on poor-man's clothes, and I will go down among those destitute ones, and I will be one of them, and I will see what I can do in the way of sympathy and help." The day was set. The lords of the land came to see him off. All who could sing gathered together to give him a parting song, which shook the hills and woke up the shepherds. The first few nights of his life he slept with the ostlers, and drovers, and camel-drivers, for no one knew there was a King in town. He strolled into the house where learned men sat, and amazed them, that one without a doctor's gown should know more about the law than the doctors. He fished with the fisherman. He smote with his own hammer in the carpenter's shop. He ate raw corn out of the field. He fried his own fish on the banks of Genessaret. He slept out of doors, because the mountaineers would not invite him into their cabin. He was howled at by crazy people amid the tombs. He was splashed by the surf of the sea. A pilgrim without a pillow. A sick man without any medicament. A mourner without any sympathetic bosom into which he could pour his tears. Through all that land he passed in disguise. Occasionally his Divine royalty would flash

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out, as in the Genessarct storm; as in the red wine at the wedding; as when he freed the shackled demoniacs of Gaddera; as when he swung a whole school of fish into the net of the discouraged boatmen; as when he throbbled life into the wasted arm of the paralytic; but, still, for the most part he passed in disguise. No one saw a king's jewel in his sandal. No one saw a king's robe in his plain coat. They knew not that that shelterless man owned all the mansions in which the hierarchs of heaven have their habitation. They knew not that he who cried: "I thirst!" poured the Euphrates from his own chalice. They knew not that that hungered man owned all the olive gardens and all the harvests that shook their gold on the hills of Palestine. They knew not that the worlds that lighted up the Eastern night were only the glittering belt with which he clasped the robes of his glory. They knew not that the ocean lay in the palm of his hand, like a dew-drop in the vase of a lily. They knew not that all the splendors of the noon-day were only the shadow of his throne. They knew not that suns, and moons, and stars, and galaxies, marching on for ages in cohorts of light, as compared with Christ's lifetime, were less than the sparkle of a fire-fly on a summer's night. Omnipotence sheathed in a human form! Omniscience hidden in a human eye! Infinite love concealed in a human heart! Eternal harmonies subdued into a human voice! Honor cloaked in shame! The crown of universal dominion covered up by a bunch of thorns! The royalty of heaven passing in earthly disguise!

Again, I learn from this story of the disguised Princess of Tirzah, *how people put masks on, and how the Lord tears them off*. Oh, it must have been terrible when the prophet accosted this woman of Tirzah, and

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said: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam. You cannot cheat me. I know who you are. Come in. Why feignest thou to be the wife of another?" It was right for her to seek a cure for her sick son; but it was not right that she should try to hoodwink the prophet. It was a wicked cheat, and God tore off the mask. Sometimes we have a right to conceal. There is no need of telling everything. A man is a fool who tells everything he knows. There is a natural pressure to the lips which indicates that sometimes we ought to be silent. But for all double dealing, and Jesuitry, and moral shuffling, and forgery, and sham, God has nothing but exposure and anathema. He will show up the trap. He will riddle the empiricism. He will assault the ambuscade. He will rip up the cheat. I wish I could point out to you some of the charlatans and tricksters that hoodwink, and cajole, and cozen, and hoax society. There is a vast multitude of people over-credulous. They are ready to be deceived. They believe in ghosts; they saw one of them once. They heard strange and unaccountable sounds in a vacant dwelling. Passing a graveyard at night they saw something in white approach and cross the road. In a neighbor's house they heard something that portended a death in the family. They think it is very disastrous to count the carriages at a funeral. They think it is a certain sign of evil if a bat flies into a room on a summer night, or a salt-cellar upsets, or a cricket chirps on the hearth, or if they see the moon over the wrong shoulder. They would not think of beginning any enterprise on Friday, or of going back to the house to get anything after they had once started on a journey. Now, such people are all ready to be duped. Ignorance comes along in the disguise of medical science, and these are the kind of people that this disguised ignorance first

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entraps. Oh, the tragedy of the pill-box and the mixtures that have never been described. It is high time that somebody lifted up his voice against the wholesale butchery of the race. There are so many men who have found the essence of a weed which was plucked in some strange place in the moonshine, that can cure all kinds of disease, and they cover up the board fences with the advertisements of the "elixirs," and the "pain killers," and the "Indian mixtures," and the supernatural bitters, and the nostrums which are emptying cradles, and filling insane asylums, and choking the cemetery with more bones than it can swallow! And so ears are deafened, and eyes are blinded, and nervous systems are destroyed by "electrical salves," and "instantaneous ointments," and "irresistible cataplasms," and "unfailing disinfectants," and the wonders of therapeutics, and the prodigies of pharmacy, and the marvels of chirurgery, enough to stun, electrify, poultice, scarify and kill the whole race. Oh, stand off from such impositions. When ignorance comes to you in the form of medical science—when it comes to you in that or in any other disguise, have nothing to do with it. Men prosper by these things, and build up vast fortunes; but after awhile, if they have been practicing on the weaknesses of men and women, the time will come when their prosperity will cease, and their dapple greys will be halted by the angel of the Lord that stood before the ass with drawn sword. In the day of the Lord, there will be a light which will shine through every subterfuge, and thinner than the disguise of the woman of Tirzah will be every earthly imposition, and with a voice louder than that with which the prophet accosted that woman, saying: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam," will he consign to midnight darkness, and doom, and death all two-faced men, and

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jockies, and knaves, and defrauders, and imposters, and charlatans.

Again, I learn, from this story of the disguised princess of Tirzah, *how exact, and minute, and precise are the Providences of God.* The prophet told that woman that the moment she entered the gate of the city, the child would die. She comes up to the gate of the city, the child's pulses instantly stop. With what wonderful precision that Providence acted. But it was no more certainly true in her life than it is true in your life and mine. Sickness comes, death occurs, the nation is born, despotisms are overthrown at the appointed time. God drives the universe with a stiff rein. Events do not go slipshod. Things do not merely happen so. With God there are no disappointments, no surprises, no accidents. The designs of God are never caught in *Jeshabille*. In all the Book of God's Providence there is not one "if." I am far from being a fatalist, but I would be wretched indeed if I did not suppose that God arranges everything that pertains to me and mine; and as when that woman entered the gate of Tirzah and her son died, the providence was minutely arranged, just so minutely and precisely are all the affairs of our life arranged. You may ask me a hundred questions I cannot answer about this theory, nor can any man answer them; but I shall believe until the day of my death that no pang ever seized me but God decides when it shall come and when it shall go, and that I am over-arched by unerring care, and that though the heavens may fall, and the earth may burn, and the judgment may thunder, and eternity may roll, if I am God's child, not so much as a hair shall fall from my head, or a shadow drop on my path, or a sorrow transfix my heart, but to the very last particular it shall be under my Father's arrangement. He bottles our

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tears. He catches our sighs. And to the orphan he will be a father, and to the widow he will be a husband, and to the outcast he will be a home, and to the poorest wretch that to-day crawls out of the ditch of his abominations, crying for mercy, he will be an all-pardoning Redeemer. The rocks will turn grey with age, the forests will be unmoored in the hurricane, the sun will shut its fiery eyelid, the stars will drop like blasted figs, the sea will heave its last groan and lash itself in expiring agony, the continents will drop like anchors in the deep, the world will wrap itself in sheet of flame and leap on the funeral pyre of the judgment day; but God's love will never die. It shall kindle its suns after all other lights have gone out. It will be a billowing sea after all other oceans have wept themselves away. It will warm itself by the blaze of a consuming world. It will sing while the archangel's trumpet peals and the air is filled with the crash of breaking sepulchers and the rush of the wings of the rising dead.

OUR AMERICAN CITIES.

CHAPTER XI.

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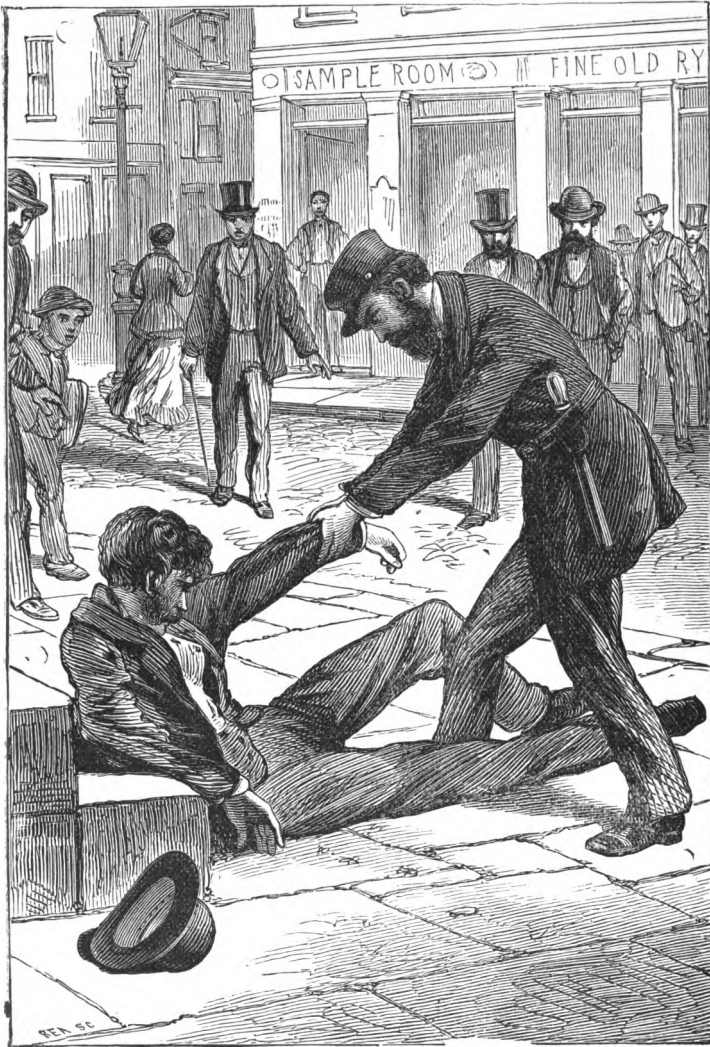
The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.—Zechariah viii: 5.

With this one stroke of the pencil the prophet puts upon canvas the safety and the glee of the world's cities after they have been gospelized. When Christian people shall have had the courage to look upon the sins of the city, and the courage to apply the gospel to those sins, then will come the time when so entirely free from ruffianism and vagabondism will all the streets of all the cities be, that the children, without any protection of police, or any parental anxiety, shall fly kite and play ball anywhere. "The streets of the cities shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." But before that time, oh, how much expurgation. I have laughed for six weeks to see some of the American clergy running about with their hands full of court-plaster to cover up the sins that I have been probing. A little green court-plaster for this, a little white court-plaster for that, a little blue court-plaster for something else. Ah! my friends, court-plaster can cover up, but it cannot cure. Not saying what my theory is in regard to the treatment of physical disease, in morals I am an allopathist, and I believe in giving a good stout dose to throw the ulcers to the surface, and then put on the salve of the old-fashioned gospel which Christ mixed to cure Bartimeus's blind eyes, and the young man who had fits, and the ten lepers, and the miseries of all generations.

There is no man on earth who has more exhilarant

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hope in regard to the moral condition and prosperity of our great American cities, but that hope is not based on apology or covering up, but upon exploration, exposure and Almighty medicament. After as thorough an examination as was possible, I come to tell you what I consider to be the moral condition of this country, as inferred from Washington, the city of official power; Boston, the city of culture; Philadelphia, the city of beautiful order; Chicago, the city of miraculous growth; New York, the city of commercial supremacy; Brooklyn, the city of homes; and soon, only stopping next Sunday to have a few words with my critics in regard to what is the mission of a minister of the gospel. As the cities go, so goes the land. Who has moral barometer mighty enough to tell the influence of Cincinnati upon Ohio, or of Baltimore upon Maryland, or of Charleston upon South Carolina, or of New Orleans upon Louisiana, or of Louisville upon Kentucky, or of San Francisco upon California? Let me feel the pulse of the cities, and I will tell you the pulse of the land. God gives to every city, as to every individual, a mission. As our physical and mental characteristics show what our personal sphere is, so topographical and historical facts show the mission of a city. Every city comes to be known for certain characteristics: Babylon for pride, Sparta for military prowess, Dresden for pictures, Rome for pontifical rule, Venice for architecture in ruins, Glasgow for shipbuilding, Edinburgh for learning, and London for being the mightiest metropolis of the world. Our American cities, of course, are younger, and therefore their characteristics are not so easily defined; but I think I have struck the right word in designation of each. Wrapped up and interlocked with the welfare and the very existence of this nation stands the city of Washington, on the



ONLY A DRUNKARD.

Potomac—planted there by way of compromise. At the dining-table of Alexander Hamilton it was decided that if the South would agree that the National Government should assume the State debts, then the North would agree to have the capital on the Potomac instead of on the Delaware. So the capital went from Annapolis to Philadelphia, and from Philadelphia to Trenton, and from Trenton to New York, and then passed from New York to the Potomac, where it will stay until within a century it shall be planted on the banks of the Mississippi, or the Missouri, just as soon as the nation shall find out from the law of national growth that it is better to have the hub of a wheel at the center rather than at the rim of the tire. "Well," you say, "what's all that to me?" You have just as much to do with the city of Washington as your heart has to do with your body. Washington is the heart of the nation. If it send out good blood, good national health. If it send out bad blood, bad national sickness. It is to me one of the most fascinating cities in the world, and I believe I shall show you before I get through that it has come to a higher condition of morality than it has ever before reached. It is a city of palaces. He who has seen the Treasury buildings, and the National Post-office, and the Capitol, and the departments of State, has seen the grandest triumphs of masonry, architecture, painting, and sculpture. I put the eight panels of the bronze door of the Capitol against the door of the Church of Madeleine, at Paris.

You talk about the works of the old masters. Go to Washington and see the works of the new masters: Lutz's "Westward Ho," Brumidi's frescoes, Greenough's Washington, Crawford's statue of Freedom. I put the white marble mountain of magnificence in which our Congress assembles against the Tuilleries and the

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Parliament-houses of London. It is a city laid out more grandly than any city in the land. Mr. Ellicott by astronomical observations running the great boulevards from north to south, and from east to west. Every inch of its Pennsylvania avenue historical with the footsteps of Webster, and Clay, and Jackson, and Calhoun, and Washington. Hundreds of thousands of people along those streets vociferating at the inaugurations. Streets along which Charles Sumner moved out toward Mount Auburn, and Abraham Lincoln toward Springfield, the bells of the nation tolling at the obsequies, and the organs of the continent throbbing with the Dead March. City of huzza and requiem. City of patriotism and debauchery. City of national sacrifice and back pay. City of Senatorial dignity and corrupt lobby. City of Emancipation Proclamation and Credit Mobilier. City of the best men and the worst. City of Washington. Now, I have watched that city when Congress was in session, and when Congress was away. The morals of the city are fifty per cent better when Congress is away. Then, at that time, piety becomes more dominant. It is one of the woes of this country that so many national legislators leave their families at home. These distinguished men coming to Washington show the need of domestic supervisal. A man entirely absent from elevated female society is naturally a bear. Men are better at home than they are away from home. It is said that even ministers of the gospel during vacation sometimes go to the Saratoga horse-races. It is said that some members of Congress, faithful to their religious duties during vacation, during term time give the vacation to their religion. There are iniquities in Washington, however, not associated with office—iniquities that stay all the year round. Plenty of drinking establishments, plenty of hells of

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infamy, and the police in their attempts to keep order do not get as much encouragement as they ought from the courts and churches. On Christmas Day ten men in contest on Pennsylvania avenue, one of them shot dead, others bruised and mangled, the culprits brought before the District Attorney and let go. The sins rampant in New York and Brooklyn rampant in Washington. Two thousand dramshops and grocery stores and apothecary shops where they sell strong drink—two thousand in Washington. Twelve thousand nine hundred and eighty-three arrests during last year. Over four thousand people in that city who neither read nor write. One hundred and twenty thousand dollars of stolen property captured by the police last year. All this suggestive to every intelligent mind. Washington wants more police. The beat of each policeman in Washington and Georgetown is on an average ten miles. Only nine mounted police in that vast city, which has rushed up in population and more than doubled in nine years—rushing up from 61,000 to 131,000. But oh! what an improvement since the day when the most flourishing liquor establishments were under the National Capitol, and Congressmen and Senators went there to get inspiration before they made their speeches, and went there to get recuperation afterward. Thanks to Henry Wilson and a few men like him for the overthrow of that abomination. During the war there were one hundred gambling-houses in the city of Washington; there were over five hundred professional gamblers there. One gambling-house boasted that in one year it had cleared over half a million of dollars. During one session of Congress the keeper of a gambling-house went to the Sergeant-at-Arms at the Capitol and presented an order for the greater part of the salary of many of the members, who

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had lost so heavily at the faro-table that they had thus to mortgage their salaries; and if now, when there are about twenty gambling-houses remaining in the city of Washington, you should go, you would find in those places clerks of departments, book-keepers, confidential and private secretaries; and if you should go to some of the more expensive establishments, near Pennsylvania avenue and Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, you would find in those gambling-houses members of Congress, officers of the army, gentlemen distinguished all the land over. It seems to me that the reporters of Washington are not as wide awake as our reporters or they would give to the different States of the Union the names of the places where some of their great representatives in Congress are accustomed to spend their evenings. But what a vast improvement in the morals of that city! Dueling abolished. No more clubbing of Senators for opposite opinion. Mr. Covode, of Pennsylvania, no more brandishes a weapon over the head of Barksdale of Mississippi. Grow and Heitt no more take each other by the throat. Griswold no more pounds Lyon, Lyon snatching the tongs and striking back until the two members in a scuffle roll on the floor of the great American Congress. Oh! there has been a vast improvement. Is it not a matter of great congratulation that there are to-day more thoroughly Christian men at the heads of departments of State in Washington than at any time since the foundation of the Government, and that the Queen of American society, by her simplicity of wardrobe in the White House, has put condemnation upon that extravagance of wardrobe which well-nigh shipwrecked some other administrations, and by the banishment of the wine-cup from State dinners has shown to people in this country in high position that

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people may be jolly and yet be sober? Whatever may be your opinion in regard to the politics of the Presidential mansion—and I know there is a great difference of opinion among you—I have to tell you that there has never been a purer White House, less rum and tobacco, more Methodist hymn-books, or a higher style of personal morality than to-day.

I came back from my observations of the city of Washington impressed with two or three things. And first, while I would not have the question of a man's being a Christian or not a Christian brought into the political contest, I do demand that every man sent to Washington, or to any other place of authority, be a man of good morals. Will you send a blasphemer, as you have sometimes? Blasphemy is an indictable offense against the State. Will you send to Washington a man to make laws who breaks laws? Will you send an atheist? How can he swear to support the Constitution of the United States when there is no solemnity in an oath if there be no God? Will you send a man who indulges in games of chance, whether the amount be \$500 or five cents? No. Gambling is denounced by the statute of every State. Will you send a libertine? Then you insult every family in the United States. Before you send a man to your City Hall, or your State Legislature, or to your national council, go through him with a lighted candle and find if he swear, if he lie, if he cheat, if he dishonor the family relation, if he keep bad company. If he does let him stay at home. Scratch his name off your ticket with the blackest ink, and put on a blot after. How dare you send such a man to a Congress where John Quincy Adams died, or to a Senate Chamber where Theodore Frelinghuysen sat, his face illumined with charity and heaven? No religious test,

but a moral test, is demanded for every ballot-box in the city, State, and national elections. Years ago some men were sent to Congress—and I am sorry to say there are some of them left—who were walking charnel-houses. Nothing but a grave-digger's spade could free the world from their corruption. Some of them died of delirium tremens, and in a brothel. After they had been dead a little while, some member, for the purpose of giving a stone-cutter a lucrative job, moved that a large sum of city, State, or national funds be appropriated for building a monument. Now, I have no objections to such a monument to such a man if you put on it the right kind of epitaph and uncover it in the right way. Let the uncovering of that monument be when an August thunder-storm is approaching. Let the blocks of marble of that monument be cut in the shape of the ivory "chips" in which the deceased patriot used to gamble. On the four corners of the pedestal of the monument, cut in marble, let there be wine-cup, flask, decanter, demijohn. Then gather around for the dedication of this monument the fragments of families whom he despoiled, and let them come, and on each block of marble let them drop a bitter tear; and then when the blackest fold of that August thunder-storm has wrapped the top of the monument in darkness, and when some man high in church or State, recreant to the truth, stands there delivering the eulogium, let the black cloud open and a bolt strike into dust the monumental infamy with a thunder which shall make all our American capitals quake with the reverberation. "The name of the wicked shall rot."

Again: I came back from Washington with the impression that we need a great national religion. I do not mean a religion controlled by State officials, but I mean a religion dictated by a nation gospelized. I mean

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a religion mighty enough to control the morals of a nation. Old politicians will not be reformed. The undertakers must hurry up the funerals in these cases of political mortification. They will never be any better, those men. But gospelize the voters and then you will have gospelized officers of government. The pivot on which this nation turns is the ballot-box. Set that pivot on the Rock of Ages. There is only one being who can save this nation, and that is God. We talk a great deal about putting the name of God more thoroughly into the Constitution of the United States. Ah! my friends, it is not God in the Constitution that we want; it is God in the hearts of the people. That test is going to come, if not in our time, then in the time of our children. There has been a good deal of discussion of late as to whether the battle of Lookout Mountain was really fought above the clouds. General Grant says no. General Hooker says yes. We will not go into that discussion; but I tell you at the very battle in this country for ninety-eight years has been fought above the clouds, God and angels on our side. First came the war of the American revolution. That was the birth-throe that ushered this nation into life. Then came the war of 1812. That was the infantile disease through which every child must go. Then came the war of 1861. That was the great typhoid which was to revolutionize the national system; and when this nation resumed specie payments, that was the settlement of the doctor's bill! Now let the nation march on in its grand career. Lord God of Bunker Hill, out of the trenches of Gettysburg, so long leading us with pillar of fire by night, give us the pillar of cloud by day. Lord God of Joshua, bring down the walls of opposition to this nation, at the blast of the Gospel trumpet. Lord God of Daniel, move around

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about us amid the leonine despotisms that growl for our destruction. Lord God of our fathers, make us worthy descendants of a brave ancestry. Lord God of our children, bring forth from the cradles of the rising generation a race to do better than we, when our hand and voice are still. Then let all the rivers of this land flowing into the gulf, or into the Atlantic and Pacific seas, be rivers of salvation, and all the mountains, Olivets of truth and Pisgahs of prospect, and the mists rising from the lakes will be the incense of holy praise, and our cities will be so thoroughly evangelized that boys and girls, according to the teaching of my text, will be found playing in the streets thereof.

I learn once more, from my observation in the city of Washington, that worldly greatness is a very transitory and unsatisfactory thing. Great men, I noticed in Washington, are great only a little while. The majority of those men whom you saw there ten or fifteen years ago are either in the grave or in political disgrace. How rapidly the wheel turns! Call the roll of Jefferson's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Madison's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Monroe's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Pierce's Cabinet. Dead. Of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet, if I remember right, all dead but one, and he as good as dead. Call the roll of Grant's Cabinet. One or more of them worse than dead. The Congressional burying-ground in the city of Washington has one hundred and sixty cenotaphs planted in honor of members who died while in office; but they are only suggestive of a vaster congress departed. What is political honor in this country? As far as I can judge, it is the privilege of being away from home amid temptations that have slain the mightiest, bored to death by office-seekers, assaulted by meanest acrimony, and kicked into

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obscurity with your health gone when your time is out. One of the Senators of the United States dying in Flatbush Hospital, idiotic from his dissipations. One member of Congress I saw, years ago, seated drunk on the curbstone in Philadelphia, his wife trying to coax him home. A Congressman from New York, years ago, on a cold day, picked out of the Potomac, into which he had dropped through his intoxication, the only time when he ever came so near losing his life by too much cold water. Delaware had a Senator whose chief characteristic was, he was always drunk. Illinois had a Senator celebrated in the same direction. Oh! my friends—and I say this especially to the young men in my audience—there are so many temptations coming around all political honors, that before you seek them you had better see whether your morals are incorruptible. And I also point out to you the fact that American politics are most unfair to the most faithful and self-sacrificing men. I will never forgive American politics for the fact that it slew Horace Greeley. This country never saw a better patriot. His whole life given to reform, making a magnificent record for his country, all his deeds of self-sacrifice and his brilliant, intellectual achievements forgotten in one hour. There came a time when he felt that he, better than any other man in the Presidential chair, could adjust the difficulties between the sections, and while he was talking about the North and the South “clasping hands across the bloody chasm,” American politics pushed him into it. When American politics did that, it committed the greatest outrage of the century and proved itself guilty of patricide in the fact that it murdered a father, and of regicide in the fact that it slew a king. Oh! young men, look not for the honors of this world; look only for the honors that come from God. They never

intoxicate. They never destroy. Crowns, thrones, sceptres, dominions—will you have them? Did you ever hear Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord?" That song is founded on this beautiful idea. Some one sat at a piano or organ in reverie, fingers wandering among the keys, when she touched a chord of infinite sweetness that sent all her soul vibrating with comfort and with joy. But she kept that last chord of music only a moment. While she played she lost it, and for years she sought for that lost chord of music, but found it not. But one day she bethought herself, in a better country,—in heaven, among the minstrelsy of the saved,—she would get again that lost chord. If you have heard Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord," piano on one side, organ on the other side accompanying, then you have heard something most memorable. Our first parents in Paradise had happiness for a little while, and then missed it. Men have gone searching it through fame and applause and riches and emolument, but found it not. In all the ages it has eluded their grasp. It is the lost chord. Blessed be God, in Christ, our peace we find again, that which we could find nowhere else. He is the lost chord found. The symphony begins here amid our sorrows, which we must have comforted, and our sins, which we must have slain; but it will come to its mightiest music in the day when the baton of the eternal orchestra shall begin to swing, and we shall, like St. John in apocalyptic vision, hear the harpers harping with their harps. That will be the lost chord found.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.—I. Sam. xx: 18.

Set on the table the cutlery and the chased silver-ware of the palace, for King Saul will give a state dinner to-day. A distinguished place is kept at the table for his son-in-law, a celebrated warrior, David by name. The guests, jeweled and plumed, come in and take their places. When people are invited to a king's banquet, they are very apt to go. But before the covers are lifted from the feast, Saul looks around and finds a vacant seat at the table. He says within himself, or perhaps audibly, "What does this mean? Where is my son-in-law? Where is David the great warrior? I invited him, I expected him. What! a vacant chair at a king's banquet!" The fact was that David, the warrior, had been seated for the last time at his father-in-law's table. The day before Jonathan, had coaxed David to go and occupy that place at the table, saying to David, in the words of my text, "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty." The prediction was fulfilled. David was missed. His seat was empty. That one vacant chair spoke louder than all the occupied chairs at the banquet. In almost every house the articles of furniture take a living personality. That picture—a stranger would not see anything remarkable either in its design or execution, but it is more to you than all the pictures of the Louvre and the Luxembourg. You remember who bought it, and who admired it. And that hymn-book—you remember

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who sang out of it. And that cradle—you remember who rocked it. And that Bible—you remember who read out of it. And that bed—you remember who slept in it. And that room—you remember who died in it. But there is nothing in all your house so eloquent and so mighty voiced as the vacant chair. I suppose that before Saul and his guests got up from this banquet there was a great clatter of wine-pitchers, but all that racket was drowned out by the voice that came up from the vacant chair at the table. Millions have gazed and wept at John Quincy Adams's vacant chair in the House of Representatives, and at Mr. Wilson's vacant chair in the vice-presidency, and at Henry Clay's vacant chair in the American Senate, and at Prince Albert's vacant chair in Windsor Castle, and at Thiers's vacant chair in the councils of the French nation; but all these chairs are unimportant to you as compared with the vacant chairs in your own household. Have these chairs any lessons for us to learn? Are we any better men and women than when they first addressed us?

First, I point out to you the father's vacant chair. Old men always like to sit in the same place and in the same chair. They somehow feel more at home, and sometimes when you are in their place and they come into the room, you jump up suddenly and say, "Here, father, here's your chair." The probability is it is an armchair, for he is not so strong as he once was, and he needs a little upholding. His hair is a little frosty, his gums a little depressed, for in his early days there was not much dentistry. Perhaps a cane chair and old-fashioned apparel, for though you may have suggested some improvement, father does not want any of your nonsense. Grandfather never had much admiration for new-fangled notions. I sat at the table of one of my parishioners in a former

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congregation; an aged man was at the table, and his son was presiding, and the father somewhat abruptly addressed the son and said: "My son, don't now try to show off because the minister is here!" *Your* father never liked any new customs or manners; he preferred the old way of doing things, and he never looked so happy as when, with his eyes closed, he sat in the arm-chair in the corner. From wrinkled brow to the tip of the slippers, what placidity! The wave of the past years of his life broke at the foot of that chair. Perhaps, sometimes, he was a little impatient, and sometimes told the same story twice; but over that old chair how many blessed memories hover! I hope you did not crowd that old chair, and that it did not get very much in the way. Sometimes the old man's chair gets very much in the way, especially if he has been so unwise as to make over all his property to his children, with the understanding that they are to take care of him. I have seen in such cases children crowd the old man's chair to the door, and then crowd it clear into the street, and then crowd it into the poor-house, and keep on crowding it until the old man fell out of it into his grave. But your father's chair was a sacred place. The children used to climb up on the rungs of it for a good-night kiss, and the longer he stayed the better you liked it. But that chair has been vacant now for some time. The furniture dealer would not give you fifty cents for it, but it is a throne of influence in your domestic circle. I saw in the French palace, and in the throne room, the chair that Napoleon used to occupy. It was a beautiful chair, but the most significant part of it was the letter "N," embroidered into the back of the chair in purple and gold. And your father's old chair sits in the throne room of your heart, and your affections have embroidered into the back of

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that chair in purple and gold the letter "F." Have all the prayers of that old chair been answered? Have all the counsels of that old chair been practiced? Speak out! old arm chair. History tells us of an old man whose three sons were victors in the Olympic games, and when they came back, these three sons, with their garlands and put them on the father's brow, the old man was so rejoiced at the victories of his three children that he fell dead in their arms. And are you, O man, going to bring a wreath of joy and Christian usefulness, and put it on to your father's brow, or on the vacant chair, or on the memory of the one departed? Speak out! old arm chair. With reference to your father, the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I go a little further on in your house, and I find the mother's chair. It is very apt to be a rocking chair. She had so many cares and troubles to soothe that it must have rockers. I remember it well. It was an old chair, and the rockers were almost worn out, for I was the youngest, and the chair had rocked the whole family. It made a creaking noise as it moved; but there was music in the sound. It was just high enough to allow us children to put our heads into her lap. That was the bank where we deposited all our hurts and worries. Ah! what a chair that was. It was different from the father's chair; it was entirely different. You ask me how? I cannot tell; but we all felt it was different. Perhaps there was about this chair more gentleness, more tenderness, more grief when we had done wrong. When we were wayward, father scolded, but mother cried. It was a very wakeful chair. In the sick days of children, other chairs could not keep awake; that chair always kept awake—kept easily awake. That

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chair knew all the old lullabies and all those wordless songs which mothers sing to their sick children—songs in which all pity and compassion and sympathetic influences are combined. That old chair has stopped rocking for a good many years. It may be set up in the loft or the garret, but it holds a queenly power yet. When at midnight you went into that grog-shop to get the intoxicating draught, did you not hear a voice that said: “My son, why go in there?” And louder than the boisterous *encore* of the theatre, a voice saying, “My son, what do you here?” And when you went into the house of sin, a voice saying, “What would your mother do if she knew you were here?” And you were provoked with yourself, and you charged yourself with superstition and fanaticism, and your head got hot with your own thoughts, and you went home and you went to bed, and no sooner had you touched the bed than a voice said: “What! a prayerless pillow? Man, what is the matter?” This: You are too near your mother’s rocking chair. “Oh, pshaw!” you say. “There’s nothing in that; I’m five hundred miles off from where I was born; I’m three thousand miles off from the church whose bell was the first music I ever heard.” I cannot help that: you are too near your mother’s rocking chair. “Oh,” you say, “there can’t be anything in that; that chair has been vacant a great while.” I cannot help that; it is all the mightier for that; it is omnipotent, that vacant mother’s chair. It whispers; it speaks; it weeps; it carols; it mourns; it prays; it warns; it thunders. A young man went off and broke his mother’s heart, and while he was away from home his mother died, and the telegraph brought the son, and he came into the room where she lay and looked upon her face, and he cried out: “Oh, mother! mother! what your life could not do your death

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shall effect. This moment I give my heart to God." And he kept his promise. Another victory for the vacant chair. With reference to your mother, the words of my text were fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I go on a little further; I come to the invalid's chair. What! How long have you been sick? "O! I have been sick ten, twenty, thirty years." Is it possible? What a story of endurance! There are in many families of my congregation these invalids' chairs. The occupants of them think they are doing no good in the world; but that invalid's chair is the mighty pulpit from which they have been preaching, all these years, trust in God. One day last July, on an island just off from Sandusky, Ohio, I preached, and there was a great throng of people there; but the throng did not impress me so much as the spectacle of just one face—the face of an invalid who was wheeled in on her chair. I said to her afterwards, "Madam, how long have you been prostrated?" for she was lying flat in the chair. "Oh!" she replied, "I have been this way fifteen years." I said, "Do you suffer very much?" "Oh, yes, she said, "I suffer very much; I suffer all the time; part of the time I was blind. I always suffer." "Well," I said, "can you keep your courage up?" "Oh, yes," she said, "I am happy, very happy indeed." Her face showed it. She looked the happiest of anyone on the ground. Oh! what a means of grace to the world, these invalid chairs. On that field of human suffering the grace of God gets its victory. Edward Payson the invalid, and Richard Baxter the invalid, and Robert Hall the invalid, and the ten thousand of whom the world has never heard, but of whom all heaven is cognizant. The most conspicuous thing on earth for God's eye and the eye of angels to

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rest on is not a throne of earthly power, but it is the invalid's chair. Oh! these men and women who are always suffering but never complaining—these victims of spinal disease and neuralgic torture and rheumatic excruciation will answer to the roll-call of the martyrs and rise to the martyr's throne, and will wave the martyr's palm. But when one of these invalid's chairs becomes vacant, how suggestive it is! No more bolstering up of the weary head. No more changing from side to side to get an easy position. No more use of the bandage and the cataplasm and the prescription. That invalid's chair may be folded up, or taken apart, or set away, but it will never lose its queenly power; it will always preach of trust in God and cheerful submission. Suffering all ended now. With respect to that invalid the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I pass on, and I find one more vacant chair. It is a high chair. It is the child's chair. If that chair be occupied, I think it is the most potent chair in all the household. All the chairs wait on it; all the chairs are turned toward it. It means more than David's chair at Saul's banquet. At any rate, it makes more racket. That is a strange house that can be dull with a child in it. How that child breaks up the hard worldliness of the place, and keeps you young to sixty, seventy, and eighty years of age! If you have no child of your own, adopt one; it will open heaven to your soul. It will pay its way. Its crowing in the morning will give the day a cheerful starting, and its glee at night will give the day a cheerful close. You do not like children? Then you had better stay out of heaven, for there are so many there they would fairly make you crazy! Only about five hundred millions of them! The old crusty Phari-

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sees told the mothers to keep the children away from Christ. "You bother him," they said; "you trouble the Master." Trouble him! He has filled heaven with that kind of trouble. A pioneer in California says that for the first year or two after his residence in Sierra Nevada county there was not a single child in all the reach of a hundred miles. But the Fourth of July came, and the miners were gathered together, and they were celebrating the Fourth with oration and poem and a boisterous brass band; and while the band was playing an infant's voice was heard crying, and all the miners were startled, and the swarthy men began to think of their homes on the eastern coast, and of their wives and children far away, and their hearts were thrilled with homesickness as they heard the babe cry. But the music went on, and the child cried louder and louder, and the brass band played louder and louder, trying to drown out the infantile interruption, when a swarthy miner, the tears rolling down his face, got up and shook his fist, and said: "Stop that noisy band and give the baby a chance." Oh! there was pathos in it, as well as good cheer in it. There is nothing to arouse and melt and subdue the soul like a child's voice. But when it goes away from you, the high chair becomes a higher chair, and there is desolation all about you. I cannot speak from experience, thank God; but in three-fourths of the homes of my congregation there is a vacant high chair. Somehow you never get over it. There is no one to put to bed at night; no one to ask strange questions about God and heaven. Oh, what is the use of that high chair? It is to call you higher. What a drawing upward it must be to have children in heaven! And then it is such a preventative against sin. If a father is going away into sin, he leaves his living children with their mother; but

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if a father is going away into sin, what is he going to do with his dead children floating about him and hovering over his every wayward step. Oh, speak out, vacant high chair, and say: "Father, come back from sin; mother, come back from worldliness. I am watching you. I am waiting for you." With respect to your child, the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

My hearers, I have gathered up the voices of your departed friends this morning, and tried to intone them into one invitation upward. I set in array all the vacant chairs of your homes and of your social circle, and I bid them cry out this morning: "Time is short. Eternity is near. Take my Savior. Be at peace with my God. Come up where I am. We lived together on earth; come, let us live together in heaven." We answer that invitation. We come. Keep a seat for us as Saul kept a seat for David, but that seat shall not be empty. I have been very earnest this morning, because I realize the fact that the day will come when the pastor's chair will be empty. From this point, how often have I looked off into your friendly faces. I have seen a great many beautiful and thrilling sights, but never anything to equal what I have witnessed when in this chair. I have looked off and seen you rise for the doxology. Seated in this chair, sometimes I have greatly rejoiced at seeing multitudes come to God, and then, again, I have trembled for fear men would reject the Gospel. I wonder what this chair will testify when I have left it for the last time? Will it tell of a useful life, of an earnest ministry, of a pure Gospel? God grant it may. The most powerful sermon that is ever preached is by the vacant chair of a pastor the Sabbath after he has been carried away from it. And oh! when we are all through with this world, and we have

shaken hands all around for the last time, and all our chairs in the home circle and in the outside world shall be vacant, may we be worshiping God in that place from which we shall go out no more for ever. I thank God there will be no vacant chairs in heaven.

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CHAPTER XIII.

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To every man his work.—Mark xiii: 84.

There are now in the world one thousand three hundred and seventy-seven millions of people, and consequently there are one thousand three hundred and seventy-seven million fields of usefulness. No individual can do the work of any one else. If a man neglect his work it is undone for ever. "To every man his work." You may not know that this is a double anniversary. It is nearly ten years since I became pastor of this church. Besides that, last Wednesday, January 7th, I was 47 years of age. This being a double anniversary, you will not be surprised if my sermon this morning is autobiographical. I started life in an old-fashioned Christian family, where they had prayers morning and night, and always asked a blessing at the table; and there was no exception to the rule, for, if my father was sick or away, my mother led, and while sometimes, when my father led, we found it hard to repress childish restlessness, there was something in the tones of my mother, and there was something in the tears which always choked her utterance before she got through with the prayer, that was irresistible. The fact is, that mothers get their hearts so wound around their children that when they think of their future, and the trials and temptations to which they may be subjected, they cannot control their emotions as easily as men do. While he had a very sympathetic nature, I never saw my father cry but once, and that was when

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they put the lid over my mother. Her hair was white as the snow, and her face was very much wrinkled, for she had worked very hard for us all and had had many sicknesses and bereavements. I do not know how she appeared to the world, nor what artists may have thought of her features; but to us she was perfectly beautiful. There were twelve of us children, but six of them are in heaven. I started for the legal profession with an admiration for it which has never cooled, for I cannot now walk along by a court-house, or hear an attorney address a jury, without having all my pulses accelerated and my enthusiasm aroused. I cannot express my admiration for a profession adorned with the names of Marshall, and Story, and Kent, and Rufus Choate, and John McLean. But God converted my soul and put me into the ministry by a variety of circumstances, shutting me up to that glorious profession. And what a work it is! I thank God every day for the honor of being associated with what I consider the most elevated, educated, refined, and consecrated band of men on this planet—the Christian ministry of America. I know, I think, about five thousand of them personally, and they are as near perfection as human nature ever gets to be. Some of them on starvation salaries, and with worn health and amid ten thousand disadvantages, trying to bring comfort and pardon to the race. I am proud to have my name on the roll with them, though my name may be at the very bottom of the roll, and am willing to be their servant for Jesus's sake. But we all have a work. "To every man his work." I will not hide the fact that it has been the chief ambition of my ministry to apply a religion six thousand years old to the present day—a religion of four thousand years B. C. to 1869 and 1879 A. D. So I went to work to find the oldest religion I

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could see. I sought for it in my Bible, and I found it in the Garden of Eden, where the serpent's head is promised a bruising by the heel of Christ. I said, "That is the religion," and I went to work to see what kind of men that religion made, and I found Joshua, and Moses, and Paul, and John the Evangelist, and John Bunyan, and John Wesley, and John Summerfield, and five hundred other Johns as good or approximate. I said: "Ah! that is the religion I want to preach—the Edenic religion that bruises the serpent's head." That is what I have been trying to do. The serpent's head must be bruised. I hate him. I never see his head but I throw something at it. That is what I have been trying to do during these courses of sermons, to bruise the serpent's head, and every time I bruised him he hissed, and the harder I bruised him the harder he hissed. You never trod on a serpent but he hissed. But I trod on him with only one foot. Before I get through I shall tread on him with both feet. If God will help me I shall bruise the oppression and the fraud and the impurity coiled up amid our great cities. Come now, God helping me, I declare a war of twenty-five years against iniquity and for Christ, if God will let me live so long. To this conflict I bring every muscle of my body, every faculty of my mind, every passion of my soul. Between here and my bed in Greenwood there shall not be an inch of retreat, or indifference, or of compromise. After I am dead, I ask of the world and of the church only one thing—not for a marble slab, not for a draped chair, not for a long funeral procession, not for a flattering ovation. A plain box in a plain wagon will be enough, if the elders of the church will stand here and say that I never compromised with evil, and always presented Christ to the people. Then let Father Pearson, if he be still alive,

pronounce the benediction, and the mourners go home. I do not forget that my style of preaching and my work in general have been sometimes severely criticised by some of my clerical brethren. It has come to be understood that at installations and at dedications I shall be assailed. I have sometimes said to prominent men in my church, "Go down to such and such an installation, and hear them excoriate Talmage." And they go, and they are always gratified! I have heard that sometimes in Brooklyn, when an audience gets dull through lack of ventilation in the church, the pastor will look over toward Brooklyn Tabernacle and say something that will wake all the people up, and they will hunch each other and say, "That's Talmage!" You see, there are some ministers who want me to do just the way they do; and, as I cannot see my duty in their direction, they sometimes call me all sorts of names. Some of them call me one thing, and some call me another thing; but I think the three words that are most glibly used in this connection are "mountebanks," "sensationalism," "buffoonery," and a variety of phrases showing that some of my dear clerical brethren are not happy. Now, I have the advantage of all such critical brethren in the fact that I never assault them though they assault me. The dear souls! I wish them all the good I can think of—large audiences, \$15,000 salaries, and houses full of children, and heaven to boot! I rub my hands all over their heads in benediction. You never heard me say one word against any Christian worker, and you never will. The fact is, that I am so busy in assaulting the powers of darkness that I have no time to stop and stab any of my own regiment in the back. Now, there are two ways in which I might answer some of the critical clergy. I might answer them by the same bitterness and acrimony

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and caricature with which some of them have assaulted me; but would that advance our holy religion? Do you not know that there is nothing that so prejudices people against Christianity as to see ministers fighting? It takes two to make a battle, so I will let them go on. It relieves them and does not hurt me! I suppose that in the war of words I might be their equal, for nobody has ever charged me with lack of vocabulary! But then, you plainly see that if I assaulted them with the same bitterness with which they assaulted me, no good cause would be advanced. There is another way, and that is by giving them kindly, loving, and brotherly advice. "Ah!" you say, "that's the way; that's the Christian way." Then I advise my critical brethren of the clergy to remember what every layman knows, whether in the church or in the world, that you never build yourself up by trying to pull anybody else down. You see, my dear critical brethren—and I hope the audience will make no response to what I am saying—you see, my dear critical brethren, you fail in two respects when you try to do that; first, you do not build yourselves up, and secondly, you do not pull anybody else down. Show me the case in five hundred years where any pulpit, or any church, has been built up by bombarding some other pulpit. The fact is, we have an immense membership in this church, and they are all my personal friends. Then, we have a great many regular attendants who are not church members, and a great many occasional attendants, from all parts of the land, and these people know that I never give any bad advice in this place, and that I always give good advice, and that God by conversion saves as many souls in this church every year as he saves in any other church. Now, my dear critical brethren of the clergy, why assault all these homes throughout the

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world? When you assault me, you assault them. Beside that, "to every man his work." I wish you all prosperity, critical brethren. *You*, for instance, are metaphysical. May you succeed in driving people into heaven by raising a great fog on earth. *You* are severely logical. Hook the people into glory by the horns of a dilemma. *You* are anecdotal. Charm the people to truth by capital stories well told. *You* are illustrative. Twist all the flowers of the field and all the stars of heaven into your sermon. You are classical. Wield the club of Hercules for the truth, and make Parnassus bow to Calvary. Your work is not so much in the pulpit as from house to house, by pastoral visitation. The Lord go with you as you go to take tea with the old ladies, and hold the children on your lap and tell them how much they look like their father and mother! Stay all the afternoon and evening, and if it is a damp night stay all night! All prosperity to you in this pastoral work, and may you by that means get the whole family into the kingdom of God. You will reach people I never will reach, and I will reach people you never will reach. Go ahead. In every possible way, my dear critical brethren of the clergy, will I help you. If you have anything going on in your church—lecture, concert, religious meeting—send me the notice and I will read it here with complimentary remarks, and when you call me a hard name I will call you a blessed fellow, and when you throw a brickbat at me, an ecclesiastical brickbat, then I will pour holy oil on your head until it runs clear down on your coat collar! There is nothing that so invigorates and inspires me as the opportunity to say pleasant things about my clerical brethren. God prosper you, my critical brethren of the ministry, and put a blessing on your head, and a blessing in your shoe, and

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a blessing in your gown—if you wear one—and a blessing before you, and a blessing behind you, and a blessing under you, and a blessing on the top of you, so that you cannot get out until you mount into heaven, where I appoint a meeting with you on the north side of the river, under the Tree of Life, to talk over the honor we had on earth of working each one in his own way. “To every man his work.” We ought to be an example, my critical brethren, to other occupations. How often we hear lawyers talking against lawyers, and doctors talking against doctors, and merchants talking against merchants. You would hardly go into a store on one side of the street to get a merchant’s opinion of a merchant on the other side of the street in the same line of business. We ought, in the ministry, to be examples to all other occupations. If we have spites and jealousies, let us hide them forever. If we have not enough divine grace to do it, let common worldly prudence dictate.

But during these ten years in which I have preached to you, I have not only received the criticism of the world, but I have often received its misrepresentation, and I do not suppose any man of any age escapes if he be trying to do a particular work for God and the church, It was said that Rowland Hill advertised he would on the following Sabbath make a pair of shoes in his pulpit, in the presence of his audience, and that he came into the pulpit with a pair of boots and a knife, and having shied off the top of the boots, presented the pair of shoes. It was said that Whitefield was preaching one summer day, and a fly buzzed around his head, and he said, “The sinner will be destroyed as certainly as I catch that fly.” He clutched at the fly and missed it. The story goes that then he said that after all perhaps the sinner might escape through salvation! Twenty

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years ago the pictorials of London were full of pictures of Charles Spurgeon, astride the rail of the pulpit, riding down in the presence of the audience to show how easy it was to go into sin; and then the pictorials represented him as climbing up the railing of the pulpit to show how hard it was to get to heaven. Mr. Beecher was said to have entered his pulpit one warm day, and, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, to have said, "It's hot!" with an expletive more emphatic than devotional! Lies! Lies! All of them lies. No minister of the gospel escapes. Certainly I have not escaped! A few years ago, when I was living in Philadelphia, I came on to unite in holy marriage Dr. Boynton, the eloquent geological lecturer, with a lady of New York. I solemnized the marriage ceremony in the parlors of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The couple made their wedding excursion in a balloon that left Central Park within the presence of five thousand people. When I got back to Philadelphia I saw in the papers that I had disgraced the holy ordinance of marriage by performing it a mile high, above the earth, in a balloon! And there are thousands of people to this day who believe that I solemnized that marriage above the clouds. About eight or nine years ago, in our chapel, at a Christmas festival one week night, amid six or eight hundred children roaring happy, with candies and oranges and corn-balls, and with the representation of a star in Christmas greens right before me, I said: "Boys, I feel like a morning star." It so happened that that phrase is to be found in a negro song, and two days afterwards it appeared over the name of a man who said he was "a member of a neighboring church," that I had the previous Sunday night, in my pulpit, quoted two or three verses from "Shoo Fly!" And, moreover, it went on to say that we sang that every

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Sunday in our Sunday-school! And as it was supposed that "a member of a neighboring church" would not lie, grave editorials appeared in the prominent newspapers deploring the fact that the pulpit should be so desecrated, and that the Sabbath-schools of this country seemed to be going to ruin. Some years ago, in the New York *Independent*, I wrote an article denouncing the exclusiveness of churches, and making a plea for the working classes. In the midst of that article there were two ironical sentences, in which I expressed the disgust which some people have for anybody that works for a living. Some enemy took those two ironical sentences and sent them all around the world as my sentiments of disgust with the working classes, and a popular magazine of the country, taking those two ironical sentences as a text, went on to say that I preached every Sunday with kid gloves and swallowtail coat (!), and that I ought to remember that if I ever got to heaven I should have to be associated with the working classes, and be with the fisherman apostles, and Paul, the tent-maker. To this very day, I get letters from all parts of the earth containing little newspaper scraps, saying, "*Did* you really say that? How is it possible you can so hate the working classes? How can you make that accord with the words of sympathy you have recently been uttering in behalf of their sorrows?" A few years ago I preached a series of sermons here on good and bad amusements. There appeared a sermon as mine, denouncing all amusements, representing that all actors, play-actors, and actresses were dissolute without any exception, and that all theatrical places were indecent, and that every man who went to a theater lost his soul, and that it was wrong even to go to a zoological garden, and a sin to look at a zebra. I never preached one word of the sermon. Every

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word of that sermon was written in a printing office, by a man who had never seen me, or seen Brooklyn Tabernacle—every word of it except the text, and that he got by sending to another printing office. In the State of Maine a religious paper has a letter from a clergyman who says that I came into this pulpit on Sabbath morning with Indian dress, feathers on my head, and scalping-knife in my hand, and that the pulpit was appropriately adorned with arrows, and Indian blankets, and buffalo-skins; and the clergyman, in that letter, goes on, with tears, to ask, "What is the world coming to?" and asks if ecclesiastical authority somehow cannot be evoked to stop such an outrage. Why do I state these things? To stop them? Oh, no. But for public information. I do not want to stop them. They make things spicy! Beside that, my enemies do more for me than my friends can. I long ago learned to harness the falsehood and abuse of the world for Christian service. I thought it would be a great privilege if I could preach the gospel through the secular press beyond these two cities. The secular press of these two cities, as a matter of good neighborhood and of home news, have more than done me justice; and I thank them for it. If they put the gospel as I preach it in their reportorial columns, I should be very mean and ungrateful if I objected to anything in the editorial columns. I have felt if this world is ever brought to God, it will be by the printing press; and while I have for many years been allowed the privilege of preaching the gospel through the religious press all around the world, I wanted to preach the gospel through the secular press beyond these cities, to people who do not go to church and who dislike churches. My enemies have given me the chance. They have told such monstrous lies about

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this pulpit and about this church that they have made all the world curious to know what really is said here. They have opened the way before me everywhere, in all the cities of this land, so that now the best, the most conscientious, and the most leading papers of the country allow me, week by week, to preach repentance and Christ to the people. And first of all, now, I thank the secular press of these two cities for their kindness, and after that I publicly thank—for I shall never have any opportunity of doing so save this—the *Boston Herald*, the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the *Philadelphia Press*, the *Times* of Philadelphia, the *Albany Argus*, the *Inter-Ocean* of Chicago, the *Advance* of Chicago, the *Courier-Journal* of Louisville, the *Times-Journal* of St. Louis, the *Dispatch* of Pittsburg, the *Reading Eagle*, Pennsylvania; the *Henrietta Journal*, of Texas; the *Evangel* of San Francisco, the *Telegraph* of St. John, Canada; the *Guardian* of Toronto, Canada; the *Christian Herald* of Glasgow, Scotland; the *Christian Age* of London, the *Christian Globe* of London, the *Oldham Chronicle* of Manchester, England; the *Liverpool, Protestant*, the *Southern Cross* of Melbourne, Australia; *Town and Country* of Sidney, Australia; the *Words of Grace*, of Sidney, Australia, and many others, all around the world. And I want to tell you that when I was called here to take this place, while I received the call from nineteen people, my enemies now give me the opportunity every week of preaching the gospel to between seven and eight million souls. They have made the curiosity to see and hear what I would say, and then the leading, the honorable newspapers of the country have gratified that curiosity. Go on, mine enemies! If you can afford it in your soul I can. So God makes the wrath of men to praise him, and while I thank my friends I thank my enemies.

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But, while the falsehoods to which I have referred may somewhat have stirred your humor, there is a falsehood which strikes a different key, for it invades the sanctity of my home; and, when I tell the story, the fair-minded men and women and children of the land will be indignant. I will read it, so that if any one may want to copy it they can afterward. (Reading from manuscript.) It has been stated over and over again in private circles, and in newspapers hinted, until tens of thousands of people have heard the report, that sixteen or seventeen years ago I went sailing on the Schuylkill river with my wife and her sister (who was my sister-in-law); that the boat capsized, and that having the opportunity of saving either my wife or her sister, I let my wife drown and saved her sister, I marrying her in sixty days! I propose to nail that infamous lie on the forehead of every villain, man or woman, who shall utter it again, and to invoke the law to help me. One beautiful morning, my own sister by blood relation, Sarah Talmage Whiteknack, and her daughter Mary, being on a visit to us in Philadelphia, I proposed that we go to Fairmount Park and make it pleasant for them. With my wife and my only daughter—she being a little child—and my sister Sarah and her daughter, I started for Fairmount. Having just moved to Philadelphia, I was ignorant of the topography of the suburbs. Passing along by the river, I saw a boat and proposed a row. I hired the boat and we got in, and not knowing anything of the dam across the river, and unwarned by the keeper of the boat of any danger, I pulled straight for the brink, suspecting nothing until we saw some one wildly waving on the shore as though there were danger. I looked back, and lo! we were already in the current of the dam. With a terror that you cannot imagine I tried to back

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the boat, but in vain. We went over. The boat capsized. My wife instantly disappeared and was drawn under the dam, from which her body was not brought until days after; I, not able to swim a stroke, hanging on the bottom of the boat, my niece hanging on to me, my sister Sarah clinging to the other side of the boat. A boat from shore rescued us. After an hour of effort to resuscitate my child, who was nine-tenths dead—and I can see her blackened body yet, rolling over the barrel, such as is used for restoring the drowned—she breathed again. A carriage came up, and leaving my wife in the bottom of the Schuylkill river, and with my little girl in semi-unconsciousness, and blood issuing from nostril and lip, wrapped in a shawl, on my lap, and with my sister Sarah and her child in the carriage, we rode to our desolated home. Since the world was created a more ghastly and agonizing calamity never happened. And that is the scene over which some ministers of the gospel, and men and women pretending to be decent, have made sport. My present wife was not within a hundred miles of the place. So far from being sisters, the two were entire strangers. They never heard of each other, and not until nine months after that tragedy on the Schuylkill did I even know of the existence of my present wife. Nine months after that calamity on the Schuylkill, she was introduced to me by my brother, her pastor, Rev. Goyñ Talmage, now of Paramus, New Jersey. My first wife's name was Mary R. Avery, a member of the Reformed Church on Harrison street, South Brooklyn, where there are many hundreds of people who could tell the story. My present wife, I say, was not within a hundred miles of the spot. Her name was Susie Whittemore, and she was a member of the church in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, where multitudes could tell the

story. With multitudes of people on the bank of the Schuylkill who witnessed my landing on that awful day of calamity, and hundreds of people within half an hour's walk of this place who knew Mary Avery, and hundreds of people in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, who knew my present wife, Susie Whittlemore—what do you think, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, editors and reporters, of a lie like that manufactured out of the whole cloth? I never have spoken of this subject before, and I never shall again; but I give fair notice that, if any two responsible witnesses will give me the name of any responsible person after this affirming this slander, I will pay the informant \$100, and I will put upon the criminal vagabond, the loathsome and accursed wretch who utters it, the full force of the law.

But while I have thus referred to falsehoods and criticisms, I want to tell you that in the upturned faces of my congregation, and in the sympathy of a church always indulgent, and in the perpetual blessing of God, my ten years here in Brooklyn have been a rapture. Now, as to the future—for I am preaching my anniversary sermon—as to the future, I want to be of more service. My ideas of a sermon have all changed. My entire theology has condensed into one word, and that a word of four letters, and that word is "help." Before I select my text, when I come to this pulpit, when I rise to preach, the one thought is: How shall I help the people? And this coming year I mean, if God will give me his spirit, to help young men. They have an awful struggle, and I want to put my arm through their arm with a tight grip, such as an older brother has a right to give a younger brother, and I want to help them through. Many of them have magnificent promise and hope. I am going to cheer them on up the steps of usefulness

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and honor. God help the young men! I get letters every week from somebody in the country, saying: "My son has gone to the city; he is in such a bank, or store, or shop. Will you look after him? He was a good boy at home, but there are many temptations in the city. Pray for him, and counsel him." I want to help the old. They begin to feel in the way; they begin to feel neglected, perhaps. I want at the edge of the snow-bank of old age, to show them the crocus. I want to put in their hands the staff and the rod of the gospel. God bless your gray hairs. I want to help these wives and mothers in the struggle of housekeeping, and in the training of their children for God and for heaven. I want to preach a gospel as appropriate to Martha as to Mary. God help the martyrs of the kitchen, and the martyrs of the drawing-room, and the martyrs of the nursery, and the martyrs of the sewing-machine. I want to help merchants; whether the times are good or bad, they have a struggle. I want to preach a sermon that will last them all the week; when they have notes to pay, and no money to pay them with; when they are abused and assaulted. I want to give them a gospel as appropriate for Wall street, and Broadway, and Chestnut street, and State street, as for the communion table. I want to help dissipated men who are trying to reform. Instead of coming to them with a patronizing air that seems to say, "How high I am up, and how low you are down," I want to come to them with a manner which seems to say, "If I had been in the same kind of temptation I would have done worse." I have more interest in the lost sheep that bleats on the mountain than in the ninety-nine sheep asleep in the fold. I want to help the bereft. Oh! they are all around us. It seems as if the cry of orphanage and childlessness and widowhood would

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never end. Only last Wednesday we carried out a beautiful girl of twenty years. Fond parents could not cure her. Doctors could not cure her. Oceanic voyage to Europe could not cure her. She went out over that road over which so many of your loved ones have gone. Oh! we want comfort. This is a world of graves. God makes me the sun of consolation to the troubled. Help for one. Help for all. Help now. While this moment the sun rides mid heaven, may the eternal noon of God's pardon and comfort flood your soul.

I was reading this morning, that when Richard Baxter was preaching on a certain occasion in England, the shock of arms was heard in the distance. Twenty-five thousand men were in combat, but he went on preaching, and the audience sat and listened though they knew that a great conflict was raging. While I preach this morning, I know there is a mightier contest—all heaven and hell in battle array, contending for the mastery of your immortal spirit. Who shall have it?

*Ten pages are here added to correct omission of page illustrations.

SENSATION VERSUS STAGNATION.

CHAPTER XIV.

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There arose no small stir about that way.—Acts xix: 28.

What was the matter? Paul had been preaching some sermons that seemed to upset everything. People wondered what he would do next. What is that great bonfire in the streets of Ephesus? Why, Paul has been preaching against the iniquities of the day until the people have brought out nine thousand dollars' worth of bad books and tumbled them into the fire. There seemed to be no end to his impertinence, for now he is assaulting the Temple of Diana, a building twice as large as St. Paul's Cathedral, London; its roof supported by columns of green jasper; its sculptured altars of Praxiteles; its paintings Parthasius, and its audience-room capable of holding fifty thousand idolators. In the month of May, when there were a great many strangers in the city, come there to buy medallion representations of that temple, Paul is thundering against it, until he completely ruins the stock of trinkets and spoils the medallion business, and the merchants gather together in a great indignation mass-meeting to denounce him, and say this thing must stop. Never before or since was there such a sensation. Paul was the great disturber of the day. He went to Iconium, and made a sensation. He went to Corinth, and made a sensation. He went to Jerusalem, and made a sensation. In other words, wherever he went, "there was no small stir about that way."

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What is a sensation? Noah Webster says it is "an excited state of thought or feeling," and I cannot see anything more valuable than that, if the excitement of thought and feeling be in the right direction. But as the word "conservatism" has been twisted from its noble sense to mean a stupid do-nothingism, and as "liberalism" has been twisted from meaning generous treatment of opinions of others to mean a surrender of Christianity, so the word "sensation" has sometimes been twisted to mean everything erratic and reprehensible. But this I do declare: No one ever accomplished any good for church or State without exciting a sensation. Sensation is life. Stagnation is death. When sometimes I have been charged with making a sensation I have taken it as complimentary, and I have wished that the charge were more thoroughly true, and I promise, if God will help me, in the future I will make it more accurate!

I go on in this anniversary discourse, begun last Sabbath, and to-day speak to you chiefly of sensation versus stagnation. When I was a layman, worshiping in the pews, I noticed that religion was very often associated with dullness. I noticed in political conventions where the Governor of the State was to be nominated, all the people were wide awake; but when they came into religious assemblages where Christ was to get coronation, many were somnolent. I saw that in assemblages where financial questions were being discussed people were all attention; but when, in religious assemblages, the question was whether men should be forever mansioned or forever pauperized, there was but little alertness. I noticed in the court-room that when one man was on trial for his life, there was agitation and enthusiasm; but when in religious assemblage the eternal life of five hundred was being discussed, then there was somnolence. I

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noticed what every layman notices and remarks, that there is something radically wrong in the church of God at this day. In our boyhood days we tried every kind of art to keep awake in church. We ate caraway-seed, and cloves, and cinnamon, and held up one foot until it began to ache, and pinched ourselves until we were black and blue, or got stimulus from an older brother who stuck us with a pin, or saw the reproving look of some older sister that filled us with a sense of self-abnegation, until we looked up to the elders' and deacons' pew in the old Dutch church, and saw the seven sleepers (!) these consecrated men having lost their hold at the end of the second head of the discourse, and then we felt encouraged to think that, after all, there might be some chance for us when such very good men got asleep. What is the use of hiding the fact that there is more sleeping done in the churches than in any other kind of buildings? Many of our churches are great Sunday dormitories. Men who are troubled at home with insomnia and cannot sleep on the pillow at night, find in churches sometimes the needed anodyne. What morphine and chloral and pillow of hops cannot do, sometimes the sermon and the long prayer accomplish. Said the old Puritan clergyman, "And now, to be brief, eight-centhly!" Oh, how many arts to appear awake in church! You have seen men put their heads down on the pew in front, pretending they are overcome with emotion, when they are really overcome with drowsiness. I tell you if we do not keep our audiences awake, it is the fault of us, the clergy, and not the fault of the people. An old Scotch minister, preaching, saw one of his hearers sound asleep, and he said: "Donald, wake up; if you can't keep awake in any other way, take a pinch of snuff." "Ah!" said Donald, "Doctor, put the pinch of snuff in

the sermon?" With all the artillery of eternity at hand if a man cannot keep his audience awake, it is because he has missed his calling. When men keep taking out their watches during religious services, it is evidence of the fact that they are bored. What would you think of a man at a banquet taking out his watch every few moments to see how soon he could stop eating a cream meringue? The gospel is a banquet, and our populations are starving for it, and their souls must have something to eat, and they have no patience with an entertainment which is all made up of napkin-ring, finger-bowl, and red tape. I put the complaint that the people do not like to come to church where it belongs. I say to the young men who are entering the ministry, if you want an audience, do as Paul did in my text—make a big stir. "There arose no small stir about that way." Men want help. Give them help, and they will come again. What do they care about the conventionalities of religion. How much of your Latin do they understand? What do they know about those sesquipedalian words that crawl through your senses like thousand-legged worms? They know that your chief anxiety is lest you lose your place in your notes. They know it is all a matter of calculation that the soap-lock curl comes down half way on your forehead, so that at the right moment you may brush it away with a hand delicate and diamonded. What do they care about your Arian controversy, when the controversy with them is how they can pay a note of \$500 with \$200, and how they can get comfort for the child they buried yesterday in Greenwood. I judge other people by myself. I cannot keep awake in a religious service where there is no practicality. I went into a beautiful church for worship. I sat down. The church was not only beautiful, but the singing was

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beautiful, the sermon was beautiful, the organ was beautiful, the minister was beautiful; but there came over me a spirit of somnolence, and I made manful resistance, and after a while I said to my companions, "No use, I can hold out no longer," and I put my head down on the pew in front, and had one of the most refreshing slumbers in all my life! I committed no sin. The man who stood there for three-quarters of an hour with posies, and didactics heavy as lead, was the criminal. As long as we stick to the mere technicalities of religion in our churches, a few people may come because it has been eternally decreed that they should come; but the great masses of the people will not come any more than they would come and sit down in an ice-house, or accept an invitation to spend an evening in the vault of a cemetery. My friends, the great battle in this country is to be fought, not between Christianity and infidelity, but it is to be fought between honest Christian sensation and putrid stagnation. Let the churches of God wake up, hoist their banners, blow the trumpet, give the battle-shout, and in twenty years the earth will be the Lord's. It is high time we brought up the cavalry. The big guns are stuck in the mud. The great danger for the church of God in this day is not sensation, but stagnation. Sensation is life. Stagnation is death. As I told you in the beginning of this discourse last Sabbath, that my first resolution had been to preach a religion six thousand years old appropriate to the present time, so I now tell you, in the second place, that it has been my resolution, God helping me, never to be dull. There is something in our health, there is something in our lack of ventilation that makes us dull. The reason that ministers are the most merciless critics in all the world is not because their hearts are any worse, but because so many of them are

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troubled with indigestion. The entire draft is on the nervous system, and much of their life is a sedentary life, and it is almost impossible for some of them to keep well. When I was editor of a religious newspaper and a book came in that I thought ought to be cut to pieces, I always handed it over to a clerical critic who had the worst dyspepsia, and he always cut it to pieces, and cut it to pieces enough. Let us, however, whatever the state of our health be, always fight against dullness, whether in the pew or in the pulpit—whether in the Sunday-school or in the prayer-meeting, and for that reason let us marshal all our faculties. If we have logical faculty, harness that. If imagination, harness that. If humor, harness that. If physical exuberance, harness that. There is not anything that is available, in a parlor, or on a lecturing platform, in the art of persuading people to right feeling and right action that is not appropriate for the pulpit. I shall before long preach a sermon on the sarcasm of the Bible. Elijah used it. Paul used it. Christ used it. If a man say a thing in church merely to make people laugh, he is reprehensible; but if he say a thing so strikingly true that people do laugh, that is another thing. I do not care whether they cry, or laugh, or hiss, or applaud, or get up and go out, or what they do, if they only quit sin and with fleet foot start for heaven. For this purpose we must ransack the mineral, the botanical, the agricultural, the æsthetic, the scientific, the poetic, the literary, the historical, the astronomical worlds for illustration. If we cannot get anything better than two flints, we must smite them together and strike fire. In vain the gold chasing on the hilt of the sword, if the edge of it is not sharp enough to cut. In vain the \$100 rod and reel from Conroy's, with fly of gold pheasant or gray drake, if we

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cannot catch anything. In vain the expense of the collegiate and theological education of seven or ten years, if we get hopelessly buried in our own armor. During the last war I was chaplain for a few weeks in a Pennsylvania regiment, and I was told one day that there was a cavalryman sick and wounded, and perhaps dying, in a barn four or five miles away. I walked over to see if I could be of any service to him. He asked me to take his horse, which was suffering from lack of attention, and his entire equipment up to headquarters at Hagerstown. I consented, but knew not what I was undertaking, for I had on and around me on the horse a heavy sword, a carbine, pistols, saddle-bags, and a great many other things I knew not the names of, and I was so overloaded I had to go on a slow walk and hold fast to the pommel of the McClellan saddle, and when I got half way up to headquarters the girth broke, and I went off, and it was a great job to get loaded up again. In the woods all around about there were stragglers from the Confederate army, but they did not seem at all affrighted at my warlike appearance! When I rode up to the encampment, and the boys gave three cheers for the chaplain who had been so brave as to capture a horse, my embarrassment exceeded my exhilaration. But I was then in the condition in which a multitude of us are in the ministry to-day—loaded up with equipment enough to slay Apollyon, yet we cannot wield it, and we go along on a slow walk, afraid that our system of didactic theology will fall off on one side, or our church history or homiletics will fall off on the other side—carefully guarding to keep our theology right side up, while David felled Goliath with a shepherd-boy's sling, and Shamgar slew six hundred men with an ox-goad. I believe in the day of eternity it will be found out that some

backwoods Methodist minister who never had but three months' education in his life, but set all the prairies on fire with zeal for God, and in the summer preached to his audience in his shirt-sleeves, will be found to have done more for the race than some of us who have all the titles of the schools, and who wrap around us the gowns and the bands and the surplices, which are not enough to keep us from freezing to death in an ecclesiasticism twenty degrees below zero!

But I go further, and tell you in this anniversary sermon that in the decade through which we have passed I have tried to carry out the resolution of never explaining to you what I do not understand myself. I believe in God's sovereignty and man's free agency. Harmonize them I cannot. I believe God is one, and yet in three persons. How that can be I know not. I believe that Christ had in his nature the divine and the human. How they were interjoined I cannot explain. For years I tried to explain these things, but I found that the greatest undertaking of my life was to make other people understand that which was beyond my comprehension. Sometimes when I had preached on the subject and hoped that it was plainer to the people than it was to myself, and pronounced the benediction, some plain man at the foot of the pulpit would ask me a question which would confound me, and I would have to tell him I would see him some other time! Now, there are some things that I do know. Sin is wrong; that I know. Christ came to help us out of it; that I know. Christ has a sympathy compared with which fatherly and motherly compassion is cruelty; that I know. His grace is mighty for mightiest calamity; that I know. The religion of Jesus Christ kindles in the soul great expectations amounting to a supernatural glee; that I know.

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That religion is a sedative to soothe all nervous perturbation, that is a stimulus to arouse inertia, that it pulls up by the root the red dahlia of war, and plants instead thereof the white lily of peace; that I know. That it hangs around the dying couch of the Christian the saffron, and orange, and purple clouds of a heavenly sunrise, and swings back the gates of glory so wide that they shiver the gates of the sepulcher; that I know. Now, knowing these things beyond all controversy, knowing them beyond all mistake, knowing them from my own experience, or from my own observation, what is the use of my taking your precious time and my precious time in telling you what I do not know? We had a great fire at my house the other day. I burned up five hundred manuscript sermons, for when I began to preach I wrote out all my sermons, word for word. In those sermons that I burned up I explained all the mysteries of religion, and the doctrine of election was as clear as a Scotch mist or a San Francisco fog. As I stood by the kitchen fire where these manuscripts were burning, I really thought they threw out more warmth than they had ever thrown out before! Really, the best thing you can do with any style of Christian work that has not warmth in it is to burn it. The pulpit and the church ought to be a great fireplace around which the people, benumbed of the cold world, can come and warm their entire nature. Stir up the fire around the great back-log and bring all the chairs up closer. There is a severe irony in the usual term descriptive of a minister's notes when they are called a minister's skeleton. Cold statements of truth are skeletons that weed round them the warmth, the life, and the eternal sympathy of Christ's gospel. There is nothing in romance or novel so enchanting as the religion of Christ, if you see it fairly; but put it

down on the dissecting-table of sharp analysis and rip its heart out, and you have made it loathsome and a corpse.

Again, my dear people, in this decade in which it has been my happiness to administer to you, it has been my resolution to smite sin wherever I see it, reckless of the consequences. The reason sin triumphs in this country is because we do not call it by the right name. Ministers of the gospel were intended to be the Lord's artillerymen, and to fire away at iniquity wherever they see it, and let other people provide the ambulances. What has been the cause of the excitement over the sermons I have been preaching for the last three or four months? Because they were awfully true. You see a group of dogs fighting on the commons, and you throw a stone at them. Which one howls? The one that is hit. The worst sign of the times is that the public make so many ministers hush up. You might as well try to stop Asiatic cholera, or yellow fever at Grenada and New Orleans, by saying nothing about them. In order that I might take straighter aim at iniquity, I went and explored the dark places of our cities. The common sense of the church and of the State approved what I had done. Any man's common sense, if he allowed his common sense to come up, said: "You can not forcibly assault iniquity until you see it." But there were some who did not like the way. They thought I ought to have gone down on Brooklyn Heights, and loaded my gun with blank cartridges, and then aimed over at the Fourth ward, New York, and then turned my head the other way, and shut my eyes and pulled the trigger, and then started for South Bushwick! Because I did not do that way there were some ministers almost frantic about my exploration of city life.

SENSATION VERSUS STAGNATION.

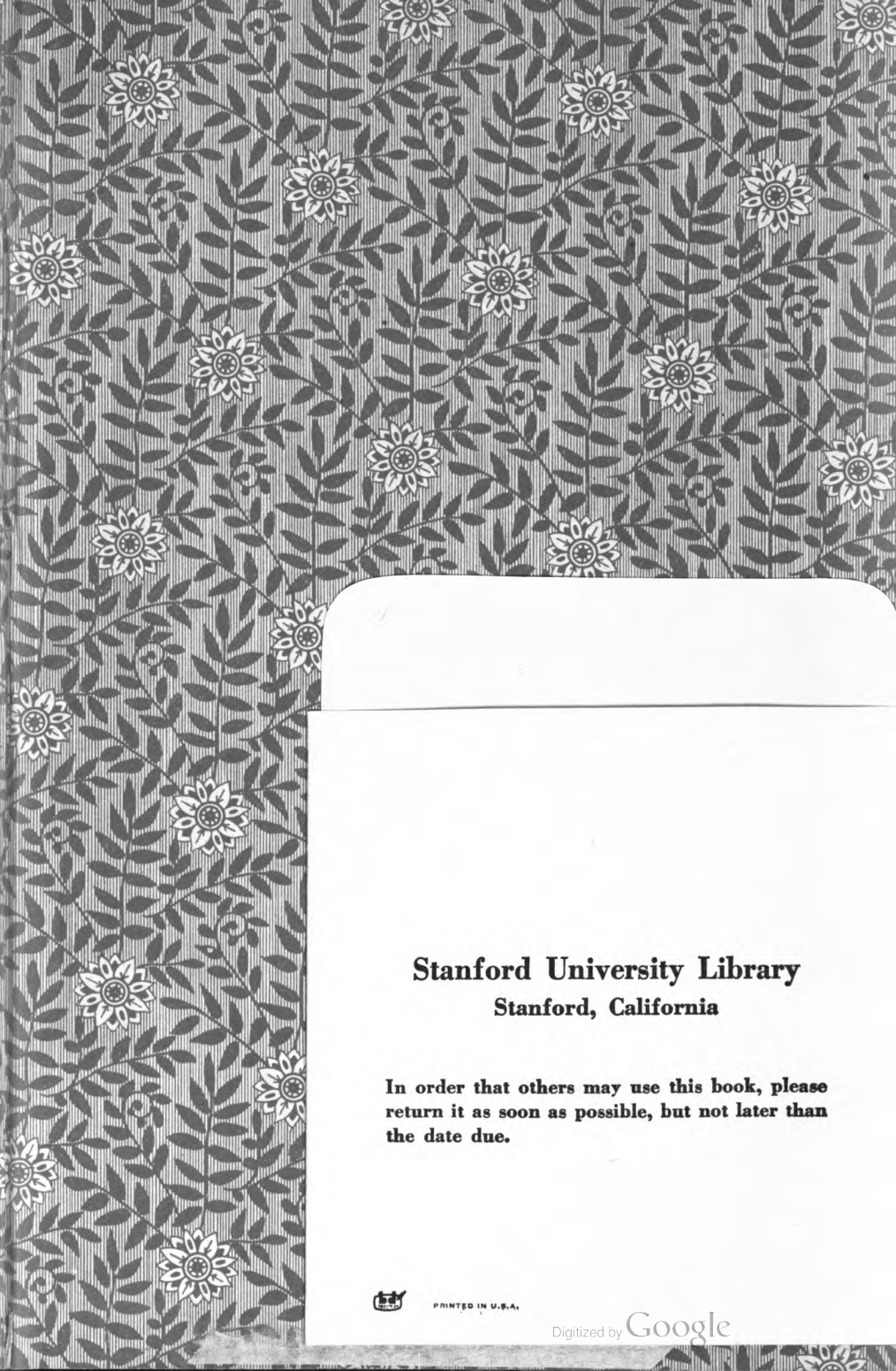
They believed in the exploration of Africa by Stanley, and the exploration of the heart of the North American continent by Fremont, but were afraid of the exploration of worse heathenism within five minutes of the City Hall of Brooklyn and within five minutes of Broadway, New York. To hear some of my dear brethren talk, you would have supposed I had been the first clergyman that had ever made an exploration of underground life in our great cities. Why I could call off the names of scores of ministers and evangelists in the country who have made the same tour. The police who took me around those nights told me they had taken them around on the same rounds. I could make a big disturbance, if I had the heart, in a great many churches in Brooklyn and New York; but I never make any disturbance! The difference between my exploration and the exploration of these other dear brethren was, that they said nothing about it, except among ministerial brethren, while I uttered it in the hearing of my people, announcing the thunders of the Lord God Almighty against the crimes and warning the young men of this country to look out. The bar of God will decide which was the better plan—to look at iniquity and say nothing about it, or to look at iniquity and give the warning, not only so far as I may reach from this platform, but through these journalists, whom I shall, to the day of my death, thank for their kindness. I preached some years ago in this place, about the average American theater, and the people all over said: “Why, you are talking about the theater, the historical theater as it was two or three hundred years ago; if you want to see the theater as it is now, or know about it, go and look for yourself.” I saw there was force in the criticism, and I tell you if ever I treat those subjects again I shall first personally make a tour of the

SENSATION VERSUS STAGNATION.

theaters, and I shall see who is there and I shall see what kind of plays they have. I am done looking through other people's spectacles! God has given me two first-rate eyes, and I am going to use them. But whether I denounce sin, or commend Christ to you, my dear congregation, I will always choose the most startling and arousing theme I can find, and bring to it the most startling and arousing illustrations I can think of, trying to produce the most startling and arousing results, willing, if I can save men, to be called by all the world a sensationalist. In this great lawsuit between Sin, Sensation the plaintiff, versus Stagnation, the defendant, I appear as attorney for the plaintiff.

But once more and this will close these anniversary thoughts which I have been presenting for two Sabbaths. I have tried to present to you a religion which would not leave a man in the lurch. What was the trouble with those trains that came out from Chicago, a week ago last Thursday? They started out beautifully and swiftly, but they came to the snow-banks and stopped, and the trains were disbanded. Oh! my friends, we want to get on a through train. We do not want a religion which takes us smoothly through this life, merely for a few miles on earth, and then puts us out at the snow-bank of a cheerless grave. No! You may take that train. I will not take it. I will start on a highway where the marble of the tomb is only the mile-stone on a road always brightening and improving. "Come with us and we will do you good; for the Lord hath promised concerning Israel." I have told the men who feel themselves to be the worst, that Christ died for them, and they have come. And now this morning, I want you all to join me on this path to heaven. It is all tracked up. Examine these tracks in the dust of the road. Ah! those are

little feet that have been tracking the road. Have you lost children? They went up this way. I see their tracks on the road. But here there are larger footsteps but footsteps that were very short—very short steps, as though they were the steps of the aged. Is your father gone? Is your mother gone? They, went up this way. And behold! in the track of the road I see the mark of a foot that was bare, and a scar in the hollow of the foot. Oh! it was the footstep of a wounded Christ. This is the way—walk ye in it.



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