

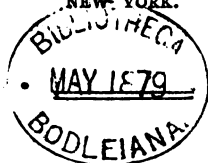
THE
BRIGHT AND MORNING
STAR:

BEING A
SIXTH SERIES OF SERMONS,

BY THE
Rev. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

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

DELIVERED IN THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE,
NEW YORK.



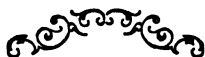
WAKEFIELD:
WILLIAM NICHOLSON AND SONS.
LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO. S. D. EWINS AND CO.'

100. cc. 57.

THE
Bright and Morning Star.

SIXTH SERIES.
TALMAGE'S SERMONS.





THE GREAT SUCCESS OF THE FIVE VOLUMES OF
DR. TALMAGE'S SERMONS ALREADY ISSUED,
ENCOURAGES THE PUBLISHERS TO ISSUE THIS THE
SIXTH VOLUME, BELIEVING IT WILL BE EQUALLY
WELCOMED BY HIS NUMEROUS ADMIRERS.





TALMAGE'S SERMONS.



THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.

"I am the bright and the morning star."—REV. xxii. 16.

IT seems as if the natural world was anxious to make up for the damage it did our race in furnishing the forbidden fruit. If that fruit wrought death among the nations, now all the natural products shall become a symbol of blessing. The showering down of the wealth of the orchard will make us think of him who Solomon describes as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, and the flowers of tangled glen and cultured parterre shall be the dew-glittering garland for the brow of the Lord Jesus. Yea, even the night shall be taxed, and its brightest star shall be set as a gem in the coronet of our holy religion.

Have you ever seen the morning star advantageously? If it was on your way home from a night's carousal, you saw none of its beauty. If you merely turned over on your pillow in the darkness, glancing out of the window, you know nothing about the cheerful influence of that star. But there are many in this house to-night, who in tremendous passes of their life, some of them far out at sea, have gazed at that star and been thrilled through with indescribable gladness. That star comes trembling as

though with the perils of the darkness, and yet bright with the anticipations of the day. It seems emotional with all tenderness, its eyes filled with the tears of many sorrows. It is the gem on the hand of the morning thrust up to signal its coming. Other stars are dim like holy candles in a cathedral of silver beads counted in superstitious litany; but this is a living star, a speaking star, a historic star, an evangelical star, bright and brilliant and triumphant symbol of the great Redeemer. The telegraph operator puts his finger on the silver keys of the electric instrument and the tidings fly across the continent; and so it seems to me that the finger of inspiration is placed upon this silver point in the heavens, and it thrills through all the earth: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. Behold I am the bright and the morning star."

The meaning of my text is this: as the morning star precedes and promises the coming of the day, so Christ heralds the natural and spiritual dawn.

In the first place, Christ heralded *the coming of the creation*. There was a time when there was no order, no sound, no beauty. No wing stirred. No word was uttered. No light sped. As far as God could look up, as far down, as far out, there was nothing. Immeasurable solitude. Height and depth and length and breadth of nothingness. Did Christ then exist? Oh, yes: "By him were all things made that are made; things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth." Yes, he antedated the creation. He led forth Arcturus and his sons. He shone before the first morning. His voice was heard in the concert when the morning stars serenaded the advent of our infant earth, when, wrapped in swaddling clothes of light, it lay in the arms of the great Jehovah. He saw the first foundation laid. He saw the first light kindled. The hand which was afterwards crushed upon the cross, was thrust into chaos and it brought out one world and swung it in that orbit, and brought out another world and swung it in another orbit.

and brought out all the worlds and swung them in their particular orbits. They came like sheep at the call of a shepherd. They knew his voice and he called them all by their names.

Oh, it is an interesting thought to me to know that Christ had something to do with the creation. I see now why it was so easy for him to change water into wine; he first created the water. I see now why it was so easy for him to cure the maniac; he first created the intellect. I see now why it was so easy for him to hush the tempest; he sank Gennesaret. I see now why it was so easy for him to swing fish into Simon's net; he made the fish. I see now why it was so easy for him to give sight to the blind; he created the optic nerve. I see now why it was so easy for him to raise Lazarus from the dead! He created the body of Lazarus and the rock that shut him in. Some suppose that Christ came a stranger to Bethlehem. Oh, no. He created the shepherds, and the flocks they watched, and the hills on which they pastured, and the heavens that overarched their heads, and the angels that chanted the chorus on that Christmas night. That hand which was afterwards nailed to the cross was an omnipotent and creative hand, and the whole universe was poised on the tip of one of his fingers. Before the world was, Christ was. All the world came trooping up out of the darkness, and he greeted them as a father greets his children, with a "Good morning" or a "Good night." Hail! Lord Jesus, morning star of the first creation.

Again, Christ heralds *the dawn of comfort in a Christian soul*. Sometimes we come to passes in life where all kinds of tribulation meet us. You are building up some great enterprise. You have built the foundation, the wall—you are just about to put on the capstone, when everything is demolished. You have a harp all strung for sweetest accord, and some great agony crushes it. There is a little voice hushed in the household; blue eyes closed; color dashed out of the cheeks; the foot still; instead of the

quick feet in the hall, the heavy tread of those who march to the grave. Oh, what are people to do amid all these sorrows? Some sit down and mourn. Some bite their lips until the blood comes. Some swing their pale hands. Some fall on their faces. Some lie on their backs helpless and look up into what seems to them an unpitied heaven. Some pull their hair down over their eyes and look through with a fiend's glare. Some with both hands press their hot brain and want to die, and cry: "O God! O God!" Long night, bitter night, stupendous night of the world's suffering. Some know not which way to turn. But not so, the Christian man. He looks up toward the heavens. He sees a bright appearance there. Can it be only a flashing meteor? Can it be only a falling star? Can it be only a delusion? Nay, nay. The longer he looks the more distinct it becomes, until after awhile he cries out. "A star! a morning star! a star of comfort! a star of grace! a star of peace! The star of the Redeemer!" Peace for all trouble; balm for all wounds; life for all dead. Now, Jesus, the great heart-healer, comes into our home. Peace! Peace that passeth all understanding. We look up through our tears. We are comforted. It is the morning star of the Redeemer. "Who broke off that flower?" said one servant in the garden to another, and the other servant said, "The master." Nothing more was said, for if the master had not a right to break off the flower to wear over his heart, or to set in the vase in the mansion, who has a right? And when Christ comes down into our garden to gather lilies, shall we fight him back? shall we talk as though he had no right to come? If any one in all the universe has a right to that which is beautiful in our homes, then our Master has, and he will take it and he will wear it over his heart, or he will set it in the vase of his palace eternal. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Peace, troubled soul. I put the palm on your wounded heart to-night. The morning star—the morning star of the Redeemer.

Again: Christ heralds *the dawn of millennial glory*. It is night in China, it is night in India, night in Liberia, night for the vast majority of the world's population. But it seems to me there are some intimations of the morning. All Spain has to be brought under the influence of the gospel, and before long she shall have a republic of the right kind, a Christian Republic. What is that light I see breaking over the top of the Pyrennes? The morning. Yea, all Italy shall receive the gospel. She shall have her schools and her colleges and her churches; her vast population shall surrender themselves to Christ. What is that light I see breaking over the Alps? The morning! All India shall come to God. Her idols shall be cast down. Her Juggernauts shall be broken. Her temples of iniquity shall be demolished. What is that light I see breaking over the top of the Himalayas? The morning. The empurpled clouds shall guard the path of the conquering day.

The Hottentot shall come out of his mud hovel to look at the dawn, the Chinaman will come up on the granite cliffs, the Norwegian will get up on the rocks, and all the beach of heaven will be crowded with celestial inhabitants come out to see the sun rise over the ocean of the world's agony. They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. These sweltered under tropical suns. Those shivered in Icelandic temperature. These plucked the vineyards in Italy. Those packed the tea-boxes in China. These were aborigines lifting up their dusky faces in the dawn. And the wind shall waft it, and every mountain shall become a transfiguration, and the sea shall become the walking-place of him who trod the wave-cliffs of the stormy Tiberias, and the song of joy shall rise toward heaven, and the great sky shall become a sounding-board which shall strike back the shout of salvation to the earth until it rebounds again to the throne of the Almighty, and the morning star of Christian hope shall become the sunburst of millennial glory.

Again: Christ heralds the dawn of heaven upon every Christian's dying pillow. I suppose you have noticed that the characteristics of people in their healthy days, are very apt to be their characteristics in their dying days. The dying words of ambitious Napoleon were; "Head of the army." The dying words of poetic Lord Byron were: "I must sleep now." The dying words of affectionate Lord Nelson were: "Kiss me, Hardy." The dying words of Voltaire were, as he saw one whom he supposed to be Jesus in the room: "Crush that wretch." But I have noticed that the dying words of Christians always mean peace. Generally the pain is all gone, and there is great quietude through the room. As one of these brothers told me last night of his mother in the last moment, she looked up, and said, pointing to some supernatural being that seemed to be in the room: "Look at that bright form. Why, they have come for me now." The lattice is turned so that the light is very pleasant. It is peace all around. You ask yourself: "Why, can this be a dying room? it is so different from anything I have ever expected." And you walk the floor, and you look out of the window, and you come back and look at your watch, and you look at the face of your patient again, and there is no change except that the face is becoming more radiant, more illuminated. The wave of death seems coming up higher and higher until it has touched the ankle, then it comes up until it touches the knee, and then it comes up until it reaches the girdle, and then it comes up until it reaches the lip, and the soul is about to be floated away into glory, and you roll back the patient's sleeve, and you put your finger on the pulse, and it is getting weaker and weaker, and the pulse stops, and you hardly know whether the life has gone or not. Indeed, you cannot tell when she goes away, she goes away so calmly.

Perhaps it is four o'clock in the morning, and you have the bed wheeled around to the window, and the dying one looks out into the night sky, and she sees something that attracts her attention, and you wonder what it is. Why,

it is a star. It is a star that out of its silver rim is pouring a supernatural light into that dying experience. And you say: "What is that you are looking at?" she says: "It is a star." You say: "What star is that that seems so well to please you?" "Oh!" she says, "that is the morning star—Jesus!" I would like to have my death-bed under that evangelistic star. I would like to have my eye on that star so I could be assured of the morning. Then the dash of the surf of the sea of death would only be the billowing up of the promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and the rivers they shall not overflow thee!" All other lights will fail—the light that falls from the scroll of fame, the light that flashes from the gem in the beautiful apparel, the light that flames from the burning lamps of a banquet—but this light burns on and burns on.

Paul kept his eye on that morning star, until he could say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Edward Payson kept his eye on that star until he could say: "The breezes of heaven fan me." Dr. Goodwin kept his eye on that evangelistic star until he could say, "I am swallowed up in God." John Tenant kept his eye on that evangelistic star until he could say: "Welcome, sweet Lord Jesus—welcome eternity." No other star ever pointed a mariner into so safe a harbor. No other star ever sunk its silvered anchor so deep into the waters. No other star ever pierced such accumulated cloud, or beckoned with such a holy luster. I would God that if my sermon to-night does not lead you to Christ, that before morning, looking out of the window, the astronomy of the night heavens might lead you to the feet of Jesus.

Hark! Hark! to God the chorus breaks,
From every heart, from every gem;
But one alone, the Saviour speaks—
It is the star of Bethlehem."



THE ARTILLERY ADVANCING.

"And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad."—
1 SAMUEL, XX: 40.

JONATHAN, with a boy, went out to warn David of his danger. The shooting of arrows was to be the signal. The information having been given, Jonathan has no more use for the weapons, and so he gives them in charge of the boy to take home again. "And Jonathan delivered his artillery unto his lad." Well, my friends, we soon will all be through with this earthly conflict, and we are going to hand over our weapons unto the children. They will take our pulpits, our press, our offices, our shops, our legislative halls, our Presidential chairs, and to do battle for the eternal God. Jonathan will have given all his artillery to the lads. To prepare our young folks for this conflict of life the Sabbath school toils. It is to be no holiday tournament, no knight-errant combat in which, on white palfrey, with jeweled sword, the gay combatant shall go prancing into the battle and then come prancing out; but bayonets crossing bayonets until, snapped off, the foemen strike with the breeches of their guns. The Sabbath school is the West Point where God's troops are to be prepared for service. They have already turned out enough Christian soldiers to man the fortresses of every kingdom under the sun. With one field-piece they raked down the walls of China, and they are rushing the one-starred flag of Bethlehem on the battlements of Japan, and the foundations of darkness every-where begin to quake under the thunderous artillery of Jonathan's lad. Who are they who are making Buddhism and Mohammedism blanch and cower? Our boys! Who are they who are hoisting higher than the standard on which is inscribed the British lion and the Russian bear the more glorious insignia of the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world? Our boys! And yet the

Sabbath school has only just begun its work. We have been hewing with dull axes, and shooting with crooked arrows and failing with unskillful guides. There is not so much difference between the clumsy battering-ram of Bible times and the modern park of artillery as there shall be between our Sabbath schools as they are now and the Sabbath schools as they shall be when they have developed all their magnificent resources. I propose to mark out what I consider shall be the line of Sabbath school advance:

First. It will be through improved Sabbath school architecture. If some of the school rooms where children are gathered on Sabbath afternoons, were a little improved they would make excellent cattle-pens! Damp and dark cellars are not fit for this work. An underground room, whether in Greenwood or under a church, is not fit for the living to stay in. It is a very difficult thing for a lad, sitting on a hard bench, his feet six inches from the floor, his lips turning blue with the cold, to realize that religion's ways are ways of pleasantness! When a church is to be built committees go out, and they are not satisfied until they have heard the last stroke of the carpenter's hammer, and felt the last touch of the painter's brush, and heard the last ring of the mason's trowel, and if there be a defect in a Gothic arch, or a Grecian lintel, or a Corinthian capital, there is a great ado. But who cares anything about the architecture of a Sabbath school room? The old sheep have no right to a warm, snug fold, the hay bursting through the rack, as long as the lambs are huddled together in a cold pen. In all our Sabbath school rooms let there be plenty of light—light clear and beautiful, such as God pours out of the sun every day—a world full of it; not crowding through small windows cobwebbed and stained, but plenty of light, such as puts the blue on the gentian and the gold on the cowslip, and spots the pansy, and sends the mists of the valley in whirling columns of glory sky tall, and that at sunset pulls aside the bars of heaven until the light of the celestial world strikes through

the cloud-racks and comes dripping over the battlement, in purple and saffron and orange and flaming fire! Give us plenty of light, for God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. When a photographer wants to take a picture by the light of the sun, he takes the brightest room in all the house, and when we want to impress the image of the eternal God on a youthful soul, we want an illumined edifice. Let there be darkness in the coal-shaft and in the holds of the ships, but let it fly from all our school rooms as soon as we can batter a hole in the wall, or throw back the shutters. Then, let such rooms be well ventilated, not the bottled-up air of other Sundays kept over from week to week, as though, like wine, it improved by age; but fresh air, such as comes panting off the sea or moving down the hillsides, sweeping up the aroma of whole acres of red-clover top. Have the room bright and cheerful. Introduce not the "murder of the innocents." Have the place bright pictured, carpeted. Remember that many of the little ones who come in from the street come from repulsive homes, and they ought at least one hour in all the week to have a cheerful residence; and they will forget the hard crust, and the fireless grate, and the blaspheming father, and the abandoned mother, in the beauty and warmth and good cheer of a Sabbath school room. The line of Sabbath school advance shall be amid pictured walls and over carpeted floors, and I give the command to-day: Column, forward! Dress on the colours! File right! March! And there is no army that can stand before you. The cowards will fly like thistle-down in a tempest. Until we have in the United States and in England the right kind of Sunday school rooms, we will not have the right kind of Sunday schools.

Again, I remark, the line of Sunday school advance in this country will be through an improved Sunday school literature. I am amazed to see what kind of books get into the Sunday school libraries. Sentimental love stories, biographies of generals who were very brave, but who swore like troopers, fairy stories, Oliver Optic, accounts of

boys and girls more wonderful than ever lived—books that have no more religion in them than “Hudibras” or “Gulliver’s Travels.” The poor little darling goes home with her library book thinking she has heaven under her arm, but by the time she has read through the story of love and adventure, she feels so strange, she thinks she must be getting lots of religion! I tell you there is no excuse for getting sickly or bad books in our Sunday school libraries. Time was when there was no juvenile literature worth anything. Some of you can remember the time when there were only a few books of war and adventure, and the story of some cast-away on a barren island—books that were bound to come into every child’s hand whether admitted or contraband; but there was nothing to cultivate an elevated taste. You perhaps excited the suspicions of your parents in the fact that you could not get interested in “Edwards on the Will,” and Wilberforce’s “Practical View of Christianity,” and Chalmers’s “Astronomical Discourses.” You could not pronounce the polysyllables, and you leaped from preface to appendix without finding more than one picture, and that of the author, in gown and bands, and long hair of powdered whiteness. Oh! what a change! The best minds of Europe and America are now preparing juvenile literature. Reject from your Sunday school libraries all exaggerations of life and all adventures that do well enough for the romance, but are not fit for the child whose taste is to be formed, and whose habits are to be established, and whose immortal soul is to be saved. Let not the fascinations of style apologize for the lack of truth. Mistake not trash and slops for simplicity. Do not have your books higher than the child’s comprehension, or lower than its dignity. In the choice of your Sunday school books do not let the angelic and the diabolic efface the human. Oh, the power in a Sunday school book! My brother John, who is now a missionary in China, having served God in that field for many years with success, entered the missionary life through the reading in boyhood of the life of Henry Martyn, in the Sabbath school library,

and when he closed that book he said: "I will be a missionary." Years of worldliness passed on, but the Spirit of God after awhile met him, and John kept his promise, and he is a missionary. And there are hundreds of people in this house to-day whose whole course of life has been changed by a Sunday school book. These books taken home will not only bless the children, but parents will read them, and the drunken father will be redeemed from his cups, and the poor widow will be consoled in her loneliness, and the anxious sinner will be pointed to the cross. Oh, the omnipotence of a Sunday school book! A great many of our Sunday school libraries in this country need a blessed fumigation and the infusion of a stout, healthy Christian literature.

I remark again: One line of Sabbath-school advance will be through an improved hymnology. We all know the effect of music upon a congregation of grown people. You have sometimes seen a choir rise after a sermon, and by the right choice of a tune add a hundred-fold power to the sermon; and then, again, you have seen a choir rise after a sermon, and in two minutes sing away all the effect of the discourse, and all the effect of the service. Choirs ought to be the best people in the church, and they sometimes are; but choirs that sleep, and laugh, and write notes during the service, and yawn, and get up, and sit down, and go out, and shuffle their feet, and rattle the hymn books, are an intolerable nuisance. I have sometimes been afflicted in that direction. And if a church has a precen-tor, or a choir, who love God and keep his commandments, that church ought to be grateful. But, if music has so much effect upon grown people, it has more effect upon children. Four or five years ago I was fearful that the hymnology of our Sunday-schools was going to dwindle away into a mingling of doggerel rhymes and plaintive melody. Oh! the miserable stuff that was sung all over the United States. But there has been a great improvement. I do not think there are better tunes or better songs this side of heaven than are sung in the Sunday-schools of

the United States to-day. Drag none of your dull, dead tunes over an audience of children. The little feet will not keep step with the dead march. Let every song be buoyant and quick like a battle strain, and no older voices linger and hold the song back, and hang on behind, coming in different trains long after they are due. Professor Bradbury infused his own soul into the souls of the rising generation through the publication of his tunes and hymns until I believe these songs will sound in the ears of our converted youth long after, around the throne of God, they have begun the march of everlasting ages. I believe the time will come when we will realize that that man did more for the race who composed a good Sabbath-school tune than he who marshaled an army or conquered an empire. Sabbath-school songs are coming up from all parts of the land, and God will gather them from the East and from the West, and from the North and from the South, and mingle them into one magnificent chorus, which, at the foot of the throne, will beat like the voice of many waters.

Again: The line of Sabbath-school advance will be through improved instruction. We have a great many competent men and women through the country engaged in this business, but they are going to be more competent. What do you say is the first qualification? You say a man must be a Christian. I do not agree with you. I have baptized at the altar on the same day Sabbath-school teachers and their classes. I would have every teacher moral and upright. That must be an indispensable requisition; but just as certainly as a moral and upright teacher comes into a Sabbath-school, though he be not a Christian, he will find himself in the path of eternal life. It is impossible for a moral man or woman to sit down by a class of five or ten children, trying to lead them into the path of life without getting in himself. So I say all moral and upright men and women have a right to go out and gather Sabbath-school classes, and though they may not be Christians now, they will be, and at these altars I shall baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of

the Holy Ghost—the teachers in the middle, the boys and the girls on either side of them. But you must have a love of children, or stay away from Sunday-schools. You must not have any of the spirit of the teacher that I had in the Sabbath-school when I was a lad, who, because of my inattention, struck me over the head with a hymn-book! I remember nothing of my association with that man except that he struck me over the head with a hymn-book. You must love children, or stay away from the Sabbath-school. And then you must have faith in God, and look beyond the present. Who are those four persons seated before you? Oh! you say, they are boys, or they are girls. I go further and say they are immortals, and after the sun has died of old age, and all the countless worlds that glitter at night shall have been swept off by the Almighty's breath as the small dust of a threshing floor, those children will live; so that this afternoon, as you take your place before them, look them in the eye, and as you see them interested in the lesson, do your best for God and eternity, looking at each of the four, saying within yourself: "Immortal! immortal! immortal!"

Be punctual. A late teacher makes a late class. A punctual teacher makes a punctual class. Washington said to his secretary, who was always excusing himself for being late because his watch was not right: "Sir, you will have either to get another watch or I will get another secretary." With wonderful regularity the world moves. Hundreds of years before, the astronomer will tell you what time the sun will rise and set. The queerest comet has a law, so that the philosopher will tell you what night it will first appear. At just the right time the bud bursts and the leaf unfurls, and yet there are thousands of people in our Sunday-schools and churches who are always behind. If you should happen to see them prompt on any one occasion you would think it a phenomenon; you would have to look again and again, lest it were an optical delusion. The fact was they were born too late, and they will die too late, and they will get up in the resurrection too late, if it is

possible ~~for~~ them to sleep over. Be prompt—not only prompt at the beginning, but prompt at the close. A Sabbath-school that lasts more than an hour and twenty minutes injures the child and hurts the cause of Christ. Out of twenty schools in the United States nineteen keep in too long. Children get worn out, and Christian workers get worn out, and they are unfit for the other duties of the holy Sabbath day. Begin promptly at the right time. Close promptly at the right time. Then, be industrious. There is no railroad built over the road on which John Bunyan's pilgrim travelled. If you are going to get this truth of God's word for the children you will have to dig for it. You will have to "double the cape" if you want to reach this land of gold. There never will be an overland route. It is by the sweat of your brow that you are to get this divine bread. You will have to sharpen and scour up the sword of truth if you want it to cut and glitter. As much depends on the way you present the truth as upon the truth itself. The best food may be spoiled in the cooking. Do not spend the whole afternoon in telling the child something he knows, or in telling him who Melchisedec was not, or in trying to count the teeth in the jaw-bone of the ass with which Samson smote the Philistines. Talk not about non-essentials and non-entities. You have a half hour or an hour to do the work for eternity. Be busy. You have no right to be dull; it is a crime to be dull in your class. God has filled the world with music and with illustrations, and the plainest brook will tell you of the fountain of living water, and the smallest flower will speak of the lily of the valley, and the faintest star, like that of the east, will point down to the manger; and while Sabbath-school teachers are watching their flocks, as did the Bethlehem shepherds, the air will be full of angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." And then, be cheerful. Never scowl or scold in the Sabbath-school. You cannot catch children with the vinegar of a sour visage; you may catch them with Gospel honey. Let your features all shine out the truth: "Religion has

made me happy—religion will make you happy. * Oh ! my friends, we all need better preparation for our work—I for the pulpit, and you for the class. Let us kneel down before God to-day and ask for a new baptism of the Holy Ghost.

I remark last of all : the line of Sunday school advance will be through a more thorough public recognition. We want conventions all over the land to discuss these subjects. In the springtime, when Anniversary Day comes, we want to turn out the fifty thousand Sunday school children of Brooklyn, and have them march through the streets until the drays of business and the carriages of pleasure have to halt while the children go along, waving their banners and singing :

I am glad I'm in this army,
I am glad I'm in this army

A great many people of my church like the Sunday school for one reason ; it gets the children out of the house long enough to allow them to take a good nap on Sunday afternoon. They have no idea that this institution takes hold of all the mercantile, agricultural, manufacturing, literary, political, and religious interests of the country. They do not know that this institution is deciding whether we shall be a nation of freemen or slaves. They do not realize that these institutions are to make the thinkers, the writers, the poets, the orators, the lawyers, the physicians and the clergymen of the land. The Sunday school, instead of being a dwarfed or insignificant affair, stands up to-day, and with its one hand it moulds all the religious affairs of this age, and with the other hand it moulds and fashions all the secular and political affairs of this nation.

Go out and gather the children. They are on the commons to-day, within sight of the spires of your churches yet they know no more of God or heaven than if they had been born in Central Africa. Go out and gather them in, and while you are blessing them you yourselves will be

blessed. "Oh!" you say, "they are not washed." Then wash them. Christ washed the disciples' feet, and you can wash these children. "Oh!" you say, "they are uncombed." Then comb them, and become in the highest sense Christian hair-dressers. "But," you say, "their apparel is not decent enough for a religious assemblage." Then beg or buy proper garments for them. Take your old coat or your old dress and refashion it, and before you get it fixed up a voice will drop from the ceiling, saying, "I was naked and ye clothed me." O, Lord Jesus, if this coming generation may be marshalled to thee under the thunderous artillery of Jonathan's lad, the last abominations will fall, and the desert will crimson into the rose, and Lebanon will wave her cedar tops in the advance of our King. Before I leave this world I want to see all the little feet traveling up the heavenly pathway, and I want to hear all the voices sounding in the eternal triumph. It ought to be. It must be. We take this garland of beauty and joy, and throw it at thy feet, O Lord Jesus! Thou hast invited them to come, and we bring them, our sons and daughters, and the lost children of the street. Here they are, O blessed Christ! They ask. They kiss. They wait thy benediction. The prayer of Jacob for his sons so many years ago shall be my prayer while I live, and my prayer when I die: "The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads."

THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN DEAD.

"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares."—

ISAIAH ii. 4.

THIS is a prophecy of the day when agriculture shall triumph over war, corn tassles over battle plumes, wheat sacks over ammunition wagons, scythes over swords, and cottages over batteries. I suppose you have all heard what the musicians call the "Anvil Chorus." There is not

much music in the beating of one hammer; but when in the great National Peace Jubilee some years ago in Boston, there were ten thousand trained voices and a great multitude of brazen instruments, and the booming of cannon, there were hundreds of hammers that came down on anvils, making a music that moved the whole audience to wildest vociferations. But what was that scene compared with the day in which the keen sword and the glittering scimeters of all nations shall go into the blacksmith shops and the foundries for reconstruction, and after being heated in the blaze shall be brought out on the anvils, and all the hammers of mechanism, clear around the world, uplifted and down-swung, in the name of God "shall beat the swords into ploughshares?" Oh, that will be the "anvil chorus" of the ages. There does not, however, seem to be any prospect of immediate fulfilment of this prophecy. While I speak all Europe seems in opposition to the prophecy of the text, and they are beating their ploughshares into swords.

I have thought, on this week when garlands are to be put upon the graves of Northern and Southern soldiers, and when we naturally refer to the suffering and the bereavement of our awful civil war, it would be well if I tried to set you against the curse of war, which has afflicted all nations. I know there are those who intimate that blood-letting is healthful for nations, and that nothing but the lancet can keep them from plethora, and that frequent wars are necessary in order to kill off the useless and bad population of the earth. That heathenish idea is utterly loathsome to me, especially when I remember that war is indiscriminate, and takes down the good as well as the bad. Then I think the time has come when Christian nations ought to substitute arbitration and treaty, in the place of wholesale massacre. A Turk in the city of Jerusalem said to a Christian missionary, "Why do you come here to Jerusalem?" "Why," said the missionary, "I came to preach peace!" "Peace indeed!" sneered the Turk. Then he took the missionary to a window, and

pointed out to Mount Calvary and said: "There is the mountain on which your Lord died to purchase peace for the world, and yet Mohammedans on that very mount have had to interfere to keep Christians from killing each other. Peace indeed!"

A glance at isolated facts will show the waste, the desolation, the suffering, the extermination of war. When Napoleon's army marched up towards Moscow, they burned every house for one hundred and fifty miles. Our Revolutionary war cost the English government six hundred and eighty millions of dollars. The wars growing out of the French Revolution cost England three thousand millions of dollars. Christendom, or, as I might mispronounce it, in order to make the fact more appalling, Christ-en-dom, has paid in twenty-two years, fifteen thousand million dollars for battle. Those were the twenty-two years, I think, ending in 1820 or thereabouts. The exorbitant, and exhausting taxes of Great Britain and the United States are for the most part resultant from conflicts. When we complain about our taxes we charge the fault upon this administration or upon that administration, upon this line of policy or upon that line of policy; but it is a simple fact that to-day, we are paying for the shot and the shell, and the ambulances, and the cavalry horses, and the batteries, and the exploded fortresses, and the broken bones, and the digging of the grave-trenches, and for four years of national martyrdom.

Edmund Burke estimated that the nations of this world had expended thirty-five thousand million dollars in war; but he did his ciphering before our great American and European wars occurred. He never dreamed that in this land, in the latter part of this century, in four years, we should spend in battle, three thousand million dollars. But what is all the waste of treasure when compared with the waste of human life? The story is appalling beyond everything. In one battle under Julius Cæsar, four hundred thousand fell. Under Xerxes in one campaign five million were slain. Under Genghis Khan at Herat, one

million six hundred thousand were slain. At Nishar, one million seven hundred and forty-seven thousand were slain; at the siege of Ostend, one hundred and twenty thousand; at Acre, three hundred thousand; at the siege of Troy, one million eight hundred and sixteen thousand fell. The Tartar and African wars cost one hundred and eighty million lives; the wars against the Turks and the Saracens cost one hundred and eighty million. Added to all these, the million who fell in our own conflict. It might seem to some a small addition, but a vast addition it seems to us, because it comes so near our own hearts. Then take the fact that thirty-five times the present population of the earth have fallen in battle. Looking on these things, am I not right in charging you, O Christian men and women, to pray every day of your lives that the Lord will hasten on the day spoken of in the text, when the swords of battle shall become the ploughshares of agriculture. Enough the tears, enough the blood, enough the bereavement, enough the martyrdom.

I think that this annual decoration of the graves of Northern and Southern soldiers will help on that day of peace. Mark well, that this is the first year since the civil war when by common consent all the graves of both sections are to be decorated. Why not? Is it not time to give up the old grudge? I say, let them all be covered with garlands, the graves of the fallen, whether they be Vermonters or Georgians, New Yorkers or Alabamians. The time has come to cover up all the scars of battle. The dead are at peace. Why not the living? They suffered more than we. Cannot we who suffered less be at peace? The boys in blue and grey went down into the same tent for the night. They put their heads on the same pillow of dust. They have stacked their arms. They have ended their march. They have fought their last battle. Sleep on, great host of Federals and Confederates, till the morning light shall break through the rifts of the tent and the trumpets shall sound the "reveille" of the resurrection. It seems to me very much like this: Two brothers get

into an awful quarrel and they are both slain. The mother hears about it. She come down and she sees them stretched on the grass. She kneels between them. She puts one arm around George and the other arm around Thomas. She does not stop to think which was right or which was wrong—she kisses them both. And so our Northern and Southern brothers went forth into the conflict and they fell. Now this week, let the United States Government, the mother of us all, come down to the field, and putting one arm over the grave of the Northern men, and the other arm over the grave of the Southern men, pronounce her benediction upon them all. It seems to me that there has been enough suffering on both sides to satisfy the worst man on earth and the worst devil in hell. At Arlington Heights five years ago, a Southern woman put a wreath on the grave of her fallen husband. A Northern man with epaulets came up, took that wreath, tore it in pieces and threw it to the winds. He had the epaulets of a soldier, but he had no soldier's heart. I would that all the garlands that have ever been laid on the graves of Northern and Southern men were lifted and linked together, each garland a link, and with that long, bright, beautiful chain this whole land might be bound together in peace and amity. That is the only kind of a chain an American will ever consent to wear, and the sooner we put that on, the better.

But you say: "If what you have already declared is true, that there are so many falling in battle and it is such a common thing to lose one's life in public strife, why do you come with so much reverence and affection to the graves of these American soldiers?" I will tell you. They are our graves, just as you have a special love for one plot in Greenwood or Mount Auburn, and upon that you put unusual care; so that when the little boy was putting flowers on a grave and a stranger passed and asked: "What are you doing there, my lad?" the boy replied: "This is papa's grave." So these graves of the men who

have fallen for our country are our graves. This is our family plot in the cemetery of the nations. The men who sleep here went out from our homes. The terrible war proclamation came, and the father went down to the village post-office and got the paper and read it, and went home and said to his wife: "Do you think our boys will have to go?" And at night, the sons returned from the field and they said: "Father, you are too old to go; you stay at home and take care of mother, and we will go with the next train." Then there was a hasty putting up of a few valuables, two or four photographs, and there was a hasty good-by, and the train halted at the village depot, and there were "three times three" for the volunteers, and they were off. A few weeks passed by and a rumor came of a great battle, and the father went again to the village post-office and got the paper and opened it with a trembling hand and a trembling heart, and read on down, beginning at the top of the list of the killed, on down from line to line, till he came almost to the bottom of the page, when he saw something that made him drop as though he were dead. Now, there are over the mantel in that country home, two pictures of young men who went off in soldier's dress but never came back, and when Decoration Day comes and the mother is too feeble to go out to the cemetery, she goes out and plucks a few old-fashioned daffodils from the door yard and twines them around those two pictures over the mantel or she takes the pictures down and fondles them. But this week this nation will go out to find the graves of those two boys and put on them one wreath for father and one wreath for mother, and the night dew will fill them with tears. It is our great family plot; of course we take care of it. So each one of these graves is an oath of patriotism. We cannot help but love the land for which our fathers and brothers died. Why did we sing the last hymn with so much enthusiasm?

"Land where my fathers died—
Land of the pilgrims' pride"?

It is because we felt it. Look out how you talk against your country in the presence of a man whose sun lies under the sod at Gettysburgh. Be careful how you malign the government in the presence of a woman whose husband fell in the awful charge at Ball's Bluff. Be careful what you say against your native land in the presence of that man whose father starved to death in a military prison. Malign your country in the presence of that old man whose home was desolated by the war, and the color will come back to the faded cheek, and the fire to the lusterless eye, and the strength to the palsied tongue, and you shall feel the all-consuming fire of an old man's curse. This nation, putting its hand on the brow of its fallen fathers and brothers and sons, has sworn before high heaven that it will protect the institutions for which they perished.

Now Decoration Day has come. Lift up your eyes and see all over this land from San Francisco to Canada, the people gathering in the cemeteries. They are bringing flowers. The drums are beating the grand march, and the minute guns are the heart-throb of the nation's sympathy. They bring flowers in wreaths—that suggest the conqueror. They bring flowers in crosses—that suggests awful suffering. Some of them are white—that means victory. Some of the flowers are red or crimson—the seed for them was planted at Manasses Junction and Charlotte Court House, planted in grave-trench, and covered with the iron rake of battle; blooming to-day, suggestive of the blood that was spilled, of the ruddy flash of musketry.

But, my friends, there will be a great many of the graves that will be missed—you may depend on that. Notwithstanding all the gardens and hot houses that will be despoiled by loving hands for this service, there will be thousands and tens of thousands of graves missed, and so to-day I would like to twist two or three wreaths and let them down in the right place. And the first I would like to let down in the wave of the sea by the coral pillow of those who were lost and never found. Some of them fell

from the gun-boats or the fire-rafts. Some of them dropped from the cavalry horses crossing the Potomac. Some of them were shot in the ship's rigging going into New Orleans harbor. They were buried without shroud or funeral psalm. The sarcophagus of coral in which they lie is beautiful, and the wreath of sea-weed around their brow is beautiful, but that is not enough. We let down this week, to the place where they rest, the wreath of a nation's thanksgiving, wet with the nation's tears, commending their bodies to him at whose voice the sea shall give up its dead. Another wreath I bring and put it on the grave of the unknown. In all the national cemeteries of this country, there is no inscription that means so much to me as that one word "unknown." Though father and mother waited for them—unknown. Though they died for the land—unknown. God only saw their dying tears. He only heard their dying prayer. The government this week will come forth by public order and have those graves covered; but there are many unknown sepulchres that the government will not know how to touch, and so to-day we go along by the swamps of the Chickahominy, and through the Wilderness, and amid the thickets of the far West, and we hunt out places where men died without any attendance and came to hasty burial or no burial at all. No human eye saw them. No human hand clasped theirs in the last moment. Unknown, unknown! And as we come to them we cry out: "Hail! resting place of the departed. Take this wealth of a nation's love, wet with a nation's tears."

There is another garland we must twist for the graves of the women who fell nursing the sick in our hospitals. Ah! they must not be forgotten this week. Our poor fellows went off and died away from home. What would they have done had it not been for the Christian women who went with lint and bandages and cordials, and leaned over their cots in the hospitals? May God keep in everlasting remembrance the names of those Christian women who suffered for the land in the hour of its darkness and peril.

But there is another wreath I must bring, and where shall I put it? I will not place it on any grave. Oh, no. I twist into it all aromatic flowers and green branches, and then I will not put it upon the graves of the dead, but I will put it on the brow of the living soldiers and sailors—the men who suffered and yet who live. It is time we stopped postponing until men are dead the honor they ought to have while they are alive. And so, although you have put off the accoutrements of war, we will not forget your services. We tender you our thanks to-day in the name of a government reconstructed, and of a land redeemed from all servitude, so that from where the sun rises on the eastern coast to where it sets on the Sierra Nevadas, its burning eye cannot discover a single bondman. Thank God that we live in this free land, with the determination that by the help of God and our own arm we always will be free.

But, my friends, these garlands will all wither. It will not be two weeks before the beauty will be all gone from them. Even those that they call “everlastings,” will after awhile fade and scatter. It seems to me on this great national occasion there ought to be a more permanent offering to the asylums and the institutions. Where are the men who were crippled and disabled by the war? It is high time that the soldiers who suffered for their country, having lost an arm or a leg, should have no longer, in order to get a livelihood, to grind hand-organs at street corners! They want bread, not posies. Then, while you remember the dead, look also after the children of these heroes. Gather them into the best of schools. Send them to the best colleges and seminaries of learning. Teach them the names of the battlefields on which their fathers fought. Yea, let this lesson come to all our children, and what “Marathon” was to the Greeks in the way of a thrill, let Malvern Hills and Kenesaw Mountain, and Shiloh, and Gettysburgh be to our children, and when we want to impress upon them how much this land cost, how much its redemption is worth, if we forget the names of all the other men who died, let us bring before our minds two names

suggestive of all the rest—one of the men perishing at the beginning of the war, the other at the close—two martyrs for the land—two names dear to every American heart—two names never to die: Ellsworth the first and Abraham Lincoln the last. Let this Decoration Day go down from generation to generation. Strew flowers over the head that ached, over the heart that bled, over the feet that were blistered in the march. O ye throng of departed heroes, stoop down and breathe the perfume of a nation's thanks—stoop down and take the kiss of a nation's love—stoop down and hear the shout of a nation's deliverance, and may God hasten on the time when war itself shall be buried, that grim old breaker of hearts. Carry him out on a rusted shield. Put him down in the most desolate part of all the earth. Bury his sword with him. Heap on his gravestone broken chariot-wheels. Let widowhood and orphanage clap their hands over his burial, and the winds howl for requiem: "This is the second death"

EXCEEDING ANTICIPATION.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."—1 COR. ii. 9.

THE city of Corinth has been called the Paris of antiquity. Indeed, for splendour the world holds no such wonder to-day. It stood on an isthmus washed by two seas, the one sea bringing the commerce of Europe—the other the commerce of Asia. From her wharves, in the construction of which whole kingdoms had been absorbed, war-galleys, with three banks of oars, pushed out and confounded the navy-yards of all the world. Huge-handed machinery such as modern invention cannot equal, lifted ships from the sea on one side and transported them on trucks across the isthmus, and set them down in the sea on the other side. The revenue officers of the city went down through olive groves that lined the beach to collect

tariff from all nations. The mirth of all people sported in her Isthmian games, and the beauty of all lands sat in her theatres, walked her porticos, and threw itself on the altar of her stupendous dissipations. Column and statue and temple bewildered the beholder. There were white marble fountains into which, from apertures at the side, there rushed waters everywhere known for health-giving qualities. Around these basins, twisted into wreaths of stone, there were all the beauties of sculpture and architecture, while, standing as if to guard the costly display, was a statue of Hercules of burnished Corinthian brass. Vases of terra cotta adorned the cemeteries of the dead—vases so costly that Julius Cæsar was not satisfied until he had captured them for Rome. Armed officials, the Corintharii, passed up and down to see that no statue was defaced, no pedestal overthrown, no bas-relief touched. From the edge of the city a hill arose with its magnificent burden of columns and towers and temples (one thousand slaves waiting at one shrine) and a citadel so thoroughly impregnable that Gibraltar is a heap of sand compared with it. Amid all that strength and magnificence Corinth stood and defied the world.

Oh, it was not to rustics who had never seen any thing grand that Paul uttered this text. They had heard the best music that had come from the best instruments in all the world; they had heard songs floating from morning porticos and melting in evening groves; they had passed their whole lives among pictures and sculpture and architecture and Corinthian brass which had been moulded and shaped until there was no chariot wheel in which it had not sped, and no tower in which it had not glittered, and no gateway that it had not adorned.

Ah, it was a bold thing for Paul to stand there amid all that and say: All this is nothing. These sounds that come from the temple of Neptune are not music compared with the harmonies of which I speak. These waters rushing in the basin of Pyrene are not pure. These statues of Bacchus and Mercury are not exquisite. Yon citadel of Acrocorin-

thus is not strong compared with that I offer to the poorest slave that puts down his burden at that brazen gate. You Corinthians think this is a splendid city. You think you have heard all sweet sounds and seen all beautiful sights; but I tell you: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." You see my text sets forth the thought that, however exalted our ideas may be of heaven, they come far short of the reality. Some wise men have been calculating how many furlongs long and wide is the New Jerusalem, and they have calculated how many inhabitants there are on the earth, how long the earth will probably stand, and then they come to this estimate: that after all the nations have been gathered to heaven, there will be a room for each soul—a room sixteen feet long and fifteen feet wide. It would be not large enough for me. I am glad to know that no human estimate is sufficient to take the dimensions. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," nor arithmetics calculated.

I first remark that we can in this world get no idea of *the wealth of heaven*. When you were a child and you went out in the morning how you bounded along the road or street—you had never felt sorrow or sickness. Perhaps later, perhaps in these very autumnal days, you felt a glow in your cheek, and a spring in your step, and an exuberance of spirits, and a clearness of eye, that made you thank God you were permitted to live. The nerves were harp-strings, and the sunlight was a doxology, and the rustling leaves were the rustling of the robes of a great crowd rising up to praise the Lord. You thought that you knew what it was to be well, but there is no perfect health on earth. The diseases of past generations come down to us. The airs that float now on the earth are not like those which floated above Paradise. They are charged with impurities and distempers. The most elastic and robust health of earth compared with that which those experience before whom the gates have been opened, is nothing but sickness and

emaciation. Look at that soul standing before the throne. On earth, she was a life-long invalid. See her step now and hear her voice now. Catch, if you can, one breath of that celestial air. Health in all the pulses! Health of vision; health of spirit; immortal health! No racking cough, no sharp pleurisies, no consuming fevers, no exhausting pains, no hospitals of wounded men; health swinging in the air; health flowing in all the streams; health blooming on all the banks; no headaches, no side-aches, no backaches. That child that died in the agonies of croup, hear her voice now ringing in the anthem. That old man that went bowed down with the infirmities of age, see him walk now with the step of an immortal athlete—forever young again. That night when the needle woman fainted away in the garret, a wave of the heavenly air resuscitated her forever. For everlasting ages to have neither ache nor pain, nor weakness nor fatigue. “Eye hath not seen it, ear hath not heard it.”

I remark further that we can in this world, get no idea of *the splendors of heaven*. John tries to describe them. He says: “The twelve gates are twelve pearls,” and that “the foundations of the walls are garnished with all manner of precious stones.” As we stand looking through the telescope of St. John we see a blaze of amethyst and pearl and emerald and sardonyx and chrysoprase and sapphire a mountain of light, a cataract of colour, a sea of glass, and a city like the sun. John bids us look again and we see thrones; thrones of the prophets, thrones of the patriarchs, thrones of the angels, thrones of the apostles, thrones of the martyrs, throne of Jesus—throne of God. And we turn around to see the glory and it is thrones! thrones! thrones!

John bids us look again and we see the great procession of the redeemed passing; Jesus on a white horse, leads the march, and all the armies of salvation follow on white horses. Infinite cavalcade passing, passing; empires pressing into line; ages following ages; dispensation tramping on after dispensation; glory in the track of glory;

Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South America pressing into line; islands of the sea shoulder to shoulder; generations before the flood following generations after the flood; and as Jesus rises at the head of that great host and waves his sword in signal of victory, all crowns are lifted, and all ensigns flung out, and all chimes rung, and all hal-leujahs chanted, and some cry: "Glory to God most high!" and some "Hosannah to the son of David!" and some "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" till all exclamations of endearment and homage in the vocabulary of heaven are exhausted, and there comes up surge after surge of "Amen! amen! and amen!"

"Eye hath not seen it, ear hath not heard it." Skim from the summer waters the brightest sparkle and you will get no idea of the sheen of the everlasting sea. Pile up the splendours of earthly cities and they would not make a stepping stone by which you might mount to the city of God. Every house is a palace; every step a triumph; every covering of the head a coronation; every meal is a banquet; every stroke from the tower is a wedding bell; every day is a jubilee; every hour a rapture; and every moment an ecstasy. "Eye hath not seen it, ear hath not heard it."

I remark further, we can get no idea on earth of *the reunions of heaven*. If you have ever been across the seas and met a friend or even an acquaintance in some strange city, you remember how your blood thrilled and how glad you were to see him. What then will be our joy after we have passed the seas of death to meet in the bright city of the sun those from whom we have long been parted. After we have been away from our friends ten or fifteen years and we come upon them, we see how differently they look. The hair has turned and wrinkles have come in their faces, and we say: "How you have changed!" But oh, when we stand before the throne, all cares gone from the face, all marks of sorrow disappeared, and feeling the joy of that blessed land methinks we shall say to each other with an exultation we cannot now imagine: "How you have chang-

ed!" In this world we only meet to part. It is good bye, good bye. Farewells floating in the air. We hear it at the rail-car window and at the steam-boat wharf—goodbye. Children lisp it and old age answers it. Sometimes we say it in a light way—"goodbye;" and sometimes with anguish in which the soul breaks down—*Goodbye!* Ah, that is the word that ends the thanksgiving banquet; that is the word that comes in to close the Christmas chant—Goodbye, goodbye. But not so in heaven. Welcomes in the air; welcomes at the gates; welcomes at the house of many mansions, but no goodbye. That group is constantly being augmented. They are going up from our circles of earth to join it; little voices to join the anthem; little hands to take hold in the great home circle; little feet to dance in the eternal glee; little crowns to be cast down before the feet of Jesus. Our friends are in two groups—a group on this side of the river and a group on the other side of the river. Now, there goes one from this to that, and another from this to that, and soon we will all be gone over. How many of your loved ones have already entered upon that blessed place? If I should take paper and pencil, do you think I could put them all down? Ah, my friends, the waves of the Jordan roar so hoarsely we cannot hear the joy on the other side where their group is augmented. It is graves here, and coffins and hearses here. A little child's mother had died and they comforted her. They said: "Your mother has gone to heaven—don't cry," and the next day they went to the graveyard, and they laid the body of the mother down into the ground and the little girl came up to the verge of the grave and looking down at the body of her mother said: "Is this heaven?" Oh, we have no idea what heaven is. It is the grave here, it is darkness here, but there is merrymaking yonder. Methinks when a soul arrives some angel takes it around to show it the wonders of that blessed place. The usher angel says to the newly arrived "These are the martyrs that perished at Piedmont; these were torn to pieces at the inquisition; this is the throne of the great Jehovah—this is Jesus!"

"I am going to see Jesus," said a dying negro boy. "I am going to see Jesus," and the missionary said "You are sure you will see him?" "Oh, yes, that's what I want to go to heaven for." "But," said the missionary, "suppose Jesus should go away from heaven; what then?" "I should follow him," said the boy. "But if Jesus went down to hell; what then?" He thought for a moment and then he said: "Massa, where Jesus is there can be no hell!" Oh, to stand in his presence! That will be heaven! Oh, to put our hand in that hand which was wounded for us on the cross; to go around amid all the groups of the redeemed and shake hands with prophets and apostles and martyrs and with our own dear beloved ones. That will be the great reunion. We cannot imagine it now. Our loved ones seem so far away. When we are in trouble and lonesome, they don't seem to come to us. We go on the banks of the Jordan and call across to them but they don't seem to hear. We say: "Is it well with the child? is it well with the loved ones?" and we listen to hear if any voice comes back over the waters. None! none! Unbelief says: "They are dead and they are annihilated," but blessed be God, we have a Bible that tells us different. We open it, and we find they are neither dead nor annihilated, that they never were so much alive as now, that they are only waiting for our coming and that we shall join them on the other side of the river. Oh, glorious reunion: we cannot grasp it now. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

I remark again, we can in this world get no idea of *the song of heaven*. You know there is nothing more inspiring than music. In the battle of Waterloo the Highlanders were giving way, and Wellington found out that the bands of music had ceased playing. He sent a quick dispatch telling them to play with utmost spirit a battle march. The music started, the Highlanders were rallied and they dashed on till the day was won. We appreciate

the power of secular music, but do we appreciate the power of sacred song? 'There is nothing more inspiring to me than a whole congregation lifted on the wave of holy melody. When we sing some of those dear old psalms and tunes they rouse all the memories of the past. Why, some of them were cradle songs in our father's house. They are all sparkling with the morning dew of a thousand Christian Sabbaths. They were sung by brothers and sisters gone now—by voices that were aged and broken in the music—voices none the less sweet because they did tremble and break. When I hear these old songs sung, it seems as if all the old country meeting houses joined in the chorus, and Scotch kirk and sailor's Bethel and Western cabins, until the whole continent lifts the doxology, and the sceptres of eternity beat time in the music. Away then with your starveling tunes that chill the devotions of the sanctuary and make the people sit silent when Jesus is coming to Hosannah. When generals come back from victorious wars, don't we cheer them and shout: "Huzza, huzza"? and when Jesus passes along in the conquest of the earth, shall we not have for him one loud ringing cheer?

All hail the power of Jesus name
Let angels prostrate fall,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

But, my friends, if music on earth is so sweet, what will it be in heaven. They all know the tune there. Methinks the tune of heaven will be made up partly from the songs of earth, the best parts of all our hymns and tunes going to add to the song of Moses and the Lamb. All the best singers of all the ages will join it, choirs of white-robed children! choirs of patriarchs! choirs of apostles! Morning stars clapping their cymbals; harpers with their harps. Great anthem of God, roll on! roll on! other empires joining the harmony till the thrones are full of it and the nations saved. Anthem shall touch anthem chorus, and all the sweet sounds of earth and heaven be poured into the ear of

Christ. David of the harp will be there; Gabriel of the trumpet will be there; Germany redeemed will pour its deep bass voice in the song, and Africa will add to the music with her matchless voices.

I wish we could anticipate that song, I wish in our closing hymn to-night we might catch an echo that slips from the gates. Who knows but what when the heavenly door opens to-night to let some soul through, there may come forth the strain of the jubilant voices until we catch it. Oh, that as the song drops down from heaven, it might meet half way a song coming from earth.

They rise for the doxology, all the multitude of the blest! Let us rise with them; and so at this hour, at the death pillow of this expiring Sabbath, the joys of the church on earth, and the joys of the church in heaven will mingle their chalices; and the dark apparel of our morning will seem to whiten into the spotless raiment of the skies. God grant that through the rich mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may all get there.

THE HOVERING BLESSING.

"And there was a great rain."—1 Kings, xviii. 45.

A LONG, consuming drought had come upon the land. The leaves crumpled; the earth brake open; the buckets came down on the stony bottom of the well, and found no water; the cattle bellowed with thirst on the banks of the ravine that was once all a-rush with liquid brightness. Alas! must the nation die? Up the side of Mount Carmel go Elijah, his servant and king Ahab. There is a magnificent prospect from the top of Mount Carmel. You can look off upon the Mediterranean and see vessels moving up and down, carrying the commerce of great nations. It is a very conspicuous point. The sailor

to this day, calls it Cape Carmel. But Elijah did not go to the top of the mountain for the fine prospect. He went up there to pray for rain, and the Bible says he cast himself down on the ground and put his face between his knees, and cried mightily unto the Lord that the land might not perish, but that the showers might come. As soon as he had finished the first prayer, he sent his servant to the outlook of the mountain to see if there were any signs of rain. The servant came back and said: "No signs of rain." Again Elijah prayed and again the servant went to the outlook and came back with the same information, and the third time and the fourth, and no rain and the fifth time and no rain and the sixth time and no signs of rain. And then Elijah threw himself into a more importunate petition, and for the seventh time he cried unto the Lord, and for the seventh time he sent his servant to the outlook. Lo! the young man came back saying: "I see a little cloud five or six inches long, about the size of a man's hand." Elijah leaped from his knees and said to the servant: "Run and tell king Ahab to get down out of the mountain; the freshets will come, and unless he flies now, he will never get home." The servant starts for king Ahab. Ahab gets in the chariot and speeds down the mountain, and Elijah, more swift-footed than the horses, leads the chariot down the hill. The cloud that was only five or six inches long, expands until the whole heaven is filled with gloom, and the wind blows up from the sea to the mountain and from the mountain to the sea, and the thunders boom and there is a wild, overwhelming dash as the clouds burst, and the forests are drenched and the earth sings—"And there was a great rain."

"Well," you say, "what is that to us? It is an incident long ago past. The last drop of that shower is exhaled, the very last leaf that was washed by it, has gone into dust, and why do you present it this morning?" For a most practical purpose. I want to send this whole church to its knees. I want to have you understand that if you will only go up to the Carmel of prayerful expectations and

look off, you can behold already vapors gathering into a cloud of mercy which will burst in torrents of salvation upon the people. I have to tell you three or four things about that wonderful prayer of Elijah which resulted so marvelously.

First: it was *a humble prayer*. Mark the language of the Bible: "He cast himself on the earth and put his face between his knees." "Oh," you say, "the posture of the body doesn't decide the earnestness of the soul." I know that, but the feeling of the soul very often indicates what shall be the position of the body. There was sorrow in your house. Clouds of bereavement hovered. You were afraid you would lose that loved one. You went to your room; you locked the door; you prayed for the recovery of that sick one. What position did you take? Did you sit upright? Did you stand? No; you either knelt, or you threw yourself on your face before God. You had no idea position would have any effect with God, but the position you took was the result of your feeling. No wonder, then, that Elijah, with his own sins to confess, and the sins of a nation, took that humble posture, and it is most appropriate to-day for us. How are we living? Within a few years—yes, perhaps, within a few hours, of our last account; yet, cold and worldly and selfish and proud. Where is the mercy-seat? How little we pray. Where is Jesus? How little we seek his society. Where are the impenitent? How little we do for their rescue. Where is heaven? How little its raptures kindle our soul. Cold and hard, ought we not to-day, you in the pew and I on the platform, to take before God the same posture that Elijah took? Tell me, are we all sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty? Are we the souls that have been ransomed? Was that cross of inexpressible pain the price that was paid for our rescue? Look over the past five, ten, fifteen years of our life how much wasted opportunity! Professing to live for God and eternity, has not our profession sometimes been a lie, and our position a by-word? O my brethren and sisters, we must come down out of this pride.

We must humble ourselves before God, as Elijah did. Church of God, repent! repent! To the dust. Put on sackcloth! Weep aloud for thy sin! Wail for the dead!

Again I remark in regard to this prayer of Elijah: It was a *persistent prayer*. He prayed once—no answer; twice—no answer; three times—no answer; four times—no answer; five times—no answer; six times—no answer, and the seventh time, when the blessing came; and if it had not come the seventh time, he would have kept on to the one-hundredth time. An occasional petition for a blessing upon us and our families, and our church, does not amount to much. It wants persistent, unrelenting imploration. Prayer after prayer, besiegement after besiegement, prostration after prostration, a sobbing, a groaning of earnestness. If the prayer is not answered the first time, keeping on to the thousandth time, keeping on, though we die on our knees. A story is told of the apostle James, that after he was dead they examined his body, and they found that his knees were calloused from much kneeling. Oh, that we had some such persistence before God. Is not the object for which we struggle worth a struggle? It is your own heaven; and, beside that, it is the question of the snatching back of your own loved ones from eternal disaster. Plead before God, and plead again. Do not give it up. Day in and day out, night in and night out, rising and retiring, in store, in street, in car—everywhere, by the throne of judgment, by the joys of heaven, by the horrors of hell—plead, plead until God shall come, and the church shall be moved and the impenitent shall fly for mercy, and there shall be “a great rain.” Do not wait for others. Christians are very apt to wait for somebody else to do their duty.

When God's Spirit was so mightily poured out, in 1837, all over this land, do you know where the influence started? It was from a blacksmith's shop, where a consecrated man stood day after day pounding the iron, and at the same time importuning God for the redemption of all the village where

he lived, and it was the spark from that one forge which set the whole land on fire with Christian awakening and illumination. Oh, pray! pray! pray!

I remark again in regard to the petition of Elijah: It was *a definite prayer*. There were fifty things that Elijah would have liked to have had for himself. There were fifty things he would have liked to have had for the people; but he goes there and asks for just one thing, and that is rain.

My friends, there are too many glittering generalities in our prayers. I think that is the reason they do not amount to much. We must go before God with some specific errand, and say: "Here are my children, strangers to the covenant of grace, having no part or lot in the matter. O Lord, save my children!" and just call them by name. You have been asking that the commercial world be consecrated to Christ, and that was a glittering generality. Why do you not say: "Here is my partner in business, all absorbed in the world; O Lord, convert him by thy grace, and show him that there is something better for his soul than this world." I wish I could make you feel that you are responsible for some one soul. Do you not suppose that when you come before God in judgment, he will ask you about those over whom you had an influence? Will he not ask you about your own children? will he not say: "Where is John, or George, or Mary, or Sarah, or Hannah? . Where are they?" And if, in that hour, you say: "I don't know, I don't know," perhaps God will point and say: "There, do you see that? Do you know what that is? Why, that is the blood of their souls on your garment!"

I remark again: that this prayer of Elijah was *a confident prayer*. There was no "may-be's" about it. Why was it that, when he was praying, he sent his servant to the out-look? It was because he knew rain was going to come, and he wanted to know the first moment of its arrival, so that he could get down the mountain. He knew that the rain would come, just as certainly as Carmel rose above

him, and the Mediterranean lay beneath him. Have you the same positiveness of expectation? Do you believe God really means it when he says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you?" or is your imploration a mere matter of indefinite "perhaps?" Then away with your prayers; they will die on your lips. Coming to God with such an insulting unbelief, he will spurn you away from him. O my dear brethren and sisters in Christ, how can we halt and stagger and doubt with the Bible full of promises, and heaven full of glories, and God full of mercy and salvation for all the people.

Some years ago, a vessel went out from a port on Lake Erie. It was just as the ice was going out of the lake, and when it starts to go out it hardly ever returns. The vessel put out, but, strange to say, the ice returned and surrounded the vessel, and the captain saw they must go down unless some wonderful relief came from some source which he knew not. So he gathered the passengers in the cabin and said: "I will tell you the whole truth. I have done all I can to deliver this vessel, and we must go down unless more than human means are brought to our aid. Is there any one here that can pray?" It was all still for a minute. Then the first mate, or the second mate, said, with a good deal of tremor and modesty, "Let us pray!" So, he knelt down before God, in the cabin, and told of their perils and of the loved ones at home, and how they would like to get home again, and asked God to "spare their lives and save the ship!" They arose and lo! the ice had parted, and the vessel floated through the channel-way. One of the sailors said to the captain: "Shall we put on more sail?" He said: "No; there is a hand guiding this vessel not seen of us. Let her alone." The vessel floated out into safe waters. And there comes a time—and that time is now, when the church of God is all surrounded by a fierce worldliness. It is ice on the north, and ice on the south, and ice on the east, and ice on the west. Oh, let us implore God for the rescue, that the vessel of the church may

ride out into calm, bright and beautiful waters. "Before they call, I will answer. While they are yet speaking, will I hear." Oh! pray, pray, pray!

I remark again in regard to that prayer of Elijah: It was a *successful prayer*, that is, he got what he wanted. which was rain—not rain only for the trough of the camel; not rain just enough to settle the dust; not rain enough to wet the cornfield, but enough to drench the forests and soak the fields, and slake the thirst of a whole nation. Rain for the mountains, rain for the valleys, rain for the trees and rain for the cattle. It was a *great* rain! Now are we making the prayer that will bring the same success? We do not want rain so much on the fields, but it is rain on the tender heart of childhood and the weary spirit of the old man that we need; it is rain on the heart, hard with the drought of sin or wilted under the sun-stroke of worldliness, it is spiritual rain that we need. How to get it? The way Elijah got it. All our preaching about it and talking about it will not bring it. We must pray and pray. We must go on the Carmel of Christian expectation and bow ourselves before the Lord, and then it will come. It always has come when the right kind of prayer went up. It *will* come as certain as there is a Lord, and you have a soul immortal to be set on trial on the last day. Prayer in private; prayer in public; prayer now; prayer perpetually.

But when did the rain come? The same day. When will our prayer be answered? To-day, if it be the right kind of prayer. We cannot wait until to-morrow. Some of these who are out of Christ, by to-morrow may be lifting up their eyes in a land far beyond the reach of mercy, and hope and salvation, and it will be too late for them. For how much would I give up my hope in Christ for two hours? Not for all the wealth of the world at my feet. And if we cannot afford to give up our hope for two hours, can we afford to wait for the conversion of our friends until to-morrow, when this night their souls may be required of them? Oh, it is rain to-day that we want, we must have and we

will have, if, with all the concentrated passions and emotions and energies of our soul, we struggle for it. Do not your hearts already begin to kindle? Do you not see that the prayers, like vapors, are ascending from the sea into a cloud a good deal larger than a man's hand? Holy Spirit, speak now, with thy omnipotent voice! Lord, help us! King of glory, come to the Temple! I feel overwhelmed with anxiety for the redemption of your soul. I feel that the eternity of many is at stake; I feel that between rousing up from our lethargy as Christians, and sleeping on in that lethargy, is the alternative between the happiness and the wretchedness of some who sat with you this morning at the breakfast table, and who will sit with you again at noon. What shall I say to rouse up my church to its work? I will make a bargain with you. I ask that to-day, so far as your Sabbath school duties and other duties will not interfere with it, that you spend the afternoon in your rooms imploring the blessing of God on yourselves, your families and the church. I will do the same. God is not far off, that he should not hear us. Oh, let us come before him feeling our feebleness, but laying hold of the promises of a faithful God, as though this were the last day of our lives, and in the next few hours stupendous destinies were to be decided.

I see this morning some who have been back-sliders from God. They once sat at the communion table; they sit there no more. Once they prayed; they pray no more. Once upon their eyes there came the vision of a pardoning Jesus; but now they stand with both their feet on the bleeding heart of the Son of God. O wandering brother, you cast God off, do you? Will it be strange if God casts you off? It will be harder for you at the last than for those who never took the first step heavenward. You showed that you knew your duty. How about all those precious scenes in which you once commingled? Where are they now? How can you meet Christ at last—that Jesus whom you have been persecuting by a wandering life? How can you look him in the face at the last? Are you happy, back-

sliders? No, no; you have not seen an hour of happiness since you gave up your hope and wandered off, perhaps, to please a skeptical companion. You say: "Oh, if I could only get back to those good old times when I did serve God!" The most wretched condition in all the world is that of a man who once was a member of the church and sat at holy communion, who has gone back. But Jesus will be just as glad to have you come now as he was the first time you started for him. He waits to be gracious. Trust him. He will say nothing about what you have said against him. He will say nothing about the days of your wandering. He will say nothing about the fact that you have been sitting in the seat of the scorners and laughed at Christianity, and despised that which you once loved. He will not throw that up to you at all, no more than did the father when the prodigal came back. The father did not say anything to the prodigal about his poor clothes or his hungered face, but he went right away to clothe him and to robe him and to feast him. And Christ will not say, anything about what you have been doing so long, if you will only come to him to-day, and do your works over again.

But there are those here who have not even gone as far as that; they have never taken the first step towards the kingdom. In what jeopardy they are to-day I cannot say, for I have no power to describe it. It all looks safe and well here, pleasantly clad as you are, and all the surroundings bright and beautiful; but is it not the fact that out of Christ you are in awful peril. Without warrant for another pulsation of the heart do you not feel this morning like taking the first offer of security? I preach to you Jesus and the resurrection. Why stand amid those terrible uncertainties when you might be insured with eternal safety? Why will you be uncovered in pitiless storm when you might hide in the great rock of God's salvation? How do you suppose you will feel at the last, your Sabbaths all gone, your opportunities of mercy sped away, the trumpet sounded and the throne of judgment set? Oh, to have had

the Bible and not have read it. To have been warned and not to have heeded; to have been invited by all the pleading wounds of Christ and not to have accepted them; to have had glorious Sabbaths of mercy like this, and yet not to have improved them; to have come so near heaven, yet to have missed it! There will be two things that will be said on that day. You will say one and God will say the other, if without repentance you appear before him. Two things, one by you and one by the Lord. You, looking back on the wasted life will say: "How have I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof. The harvest is past, the summer is ended and I am not saved." The other thing will be said by the Lord: "Because I called and ye refused, and stretched out my hand and no man regarded, therefore I will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh."

JOSHUA ON THE MARCH.

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."—JOSHUA i. 5.

MOSES was dead. A beautiful tradition says that God kissed him, and in that act drew forth the soul of the dying lawgiver. He has been buried, only one person at his funeral; the same one who kissed him. But God never removes a man until he has some one ready to take his place. God does not go around seeking among a great variety of candidates some one to take a vacant position; he just makes a man to fit that particular place. Moses had passed off the stage. Joshua, the hero of the text, comes out to take his place, and puts his foot so solidly on the platform of history that all ages hear the echo of his tread. He was a magnificent fighter, and he always fought on the right side. He never fought for personal

aggrandizement, and never fought unless the Lord him to do so. In my text, God gives him a military fit, and one would think it must have been like a plumed helmet to the head, and greaves of brass to the feet, and a habergeon for the breast: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." "Well," you say, "it does not require any great courage to go with a backing like that." I reply, God promised Joshua no more than he promises you and me in our conflict. The framer of the universe, the chieftain of all eternity, pledged all his resources to see us through, and he promised no more than that to Joshua. God always stands by his people, and my object is to show you that he fulfilled his entire promise to Joshua, although his first battle was against a spring freshet, and his second battle against a stone wall, and his third battle while leading on a movement of whipped cowards, and his fourth battle against darkness as he marshalled the sun and the moon into a battalion, and his last battle against death, the King of Terrors,—the hero of the text getting the victory in all these battles.

A general would usually prefer to start with a small conflict that he might get his courage up and his men drilled; but Joshua's undertaking was more of a job than the landing of Fort Pulaski, or the thundering down of Gibraltar, or the taking of Sebastopol. His first undertaking was to cross the river Jordan in a spring freshet. At certain seasons in the year, and at certain points, that river can be easily forded, and the water would only come to the knee or to the girdle; but at this season of which I am speaking, the snow of Mount Lebanon had melted, and they were pouring down into the valley, and the valley became one raging flood. It was easy enough in certain seasons to cross the river, as when Lieutenant Molin was exploring that river Jordan, sometimes he had boats in the water and sometimes he had them carried on camels' back, so shallow was the stream in certain places. But in spring, when Lieutenant Lynch attempted his

ploration, his boats were knocked to pieces amid the twenty-seven rapids of the river, although they were lined with copper, or galvanized iron. You might as well talk of wading across the Hudson River at Yonkers as to think of wading the river Jordan at that season of which I am speaking. The Canaanites on the other side felt perfectly secure. They looked across the river and saw the Israelites, and they said: "Aha! you can't get at us—we are safe anyhow until this spring freshet falls." The voice of the gurgling freshet was a lullaby to the Canaanites as they looked across the stream. But one day, Joshua orders out his troops and tells them to fall into line. The Canaanites looking across say: "Ah! what's the matter now? I wonder if those Israelites are frightened? I think a panic must have struck them and they are going to run away, or they are going up near the mouth of the Jordan expecting to cross there, and Joshua's army will be entirely destroyed before he gets here. Joshua is a lunatic.

"Forward, march!" cries Joshua to his troops. They pass on toward the river, and it seems as if the light-armed troops and the spearmen and the archers and all their leaders must be swept down in the fearful flood. Let them prepare you say for a watery grave. One mile ahead of the main army of Joshua, go the priests carrying a glittering box about four feet long by two feet wide. That glittering box is the Ark of the Covenant, and no sooner had the priests come down with that Ark and with their foot touched the margin of the river, than Jordan parts by an Almighty fiat. Thirty miles above, the river stops on one side, while on the other side, the waters flow on down toward the salt sea. Forward, now, you troops of Israel. Come right on. It is a dry path all the way through—a path of chalk and broken shell, and pebbles. You will not even get the soles of your feet wet. March on. Come to the other bank. They reach the bank and they pull themselves up its steep thirty or forty feet in height—they pull themselves up the bank by the oleanders and the tamarisks

and the willows, until they reach the top. Now, let them clap cymbals and shields, and sing a song of praise to the God of Joshua. No sooner have they climbed up this high bank than with dash and roar and terrific rush the waters of the Jordan break loose from their strange anchorage. You know how fast the waters roll when a milldam breaks, and the probability is, that in the halt of that great river, and in the piling up of the accumulated waters, there must have been a dam lifted by God's hand a half a mile high, and when that broke, Oh, the fury! What a predicament for Joshua and his troops. Why did not those waters stay parted until Joshua and his troops could find out whether they could cope with their enemies or not? I hear one of the unbelieving Israelites say: "Lord, why didst thou not keep those billows parted so that if we wanted to retreat we could go back dry-shod, just as when we advanced? We are engaged in a very risky experiment. How if these Canaanites eat us all up?"

Ah! my hearer, God never makes any provision for the Christian's retreat. He clears the path to Canaan, if we go ahead; if we go back, we die. It is dry shod on a path of broken shell and pebbles in one direction. It is water forty feet deep in the rear. The same gate-keeper that swung back the crystal and amethystine door of Jordan to let you pass, hath bolted and barred the crystal and amethystine of the Jordan to keep you from going back. I declare it to-day: Victory ahead. Darkness, flood, ruin and death behind.

You say; "Why didn't those Canaanites destroy Joshua and his troops while they had a chance? Here they were, on a bank thirty or forty feet high. There were the Israelites under Joshua down in the bed of the stream. Why didn't the Canaanites fight back these invaders? The Canaanites were familiar with their own country. The invading army were strangers to the country they were about to take. The Canaanites were all fresh troops. The soldiers under Joshua were travel-worn. Why didn't

the Canaanites double up the right wing and then double up the left wing and then pierce the centre of Joshua's army?" I will tell you why they did not. The promise had been given and the Lord God keeps his promise. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."

But we cannot stop here. It is no place for Joshua's troops to stay. What is that in the distance? At the end of a grove of palms eight miles long, is the chief city.. It is a city of gold and arbors and of huge impregnable walls that seem to reach the heavens and buttress the sky. That is the city that guards the mountain pass. That is Jericho the great metropolis. Take it Joshua must. "Take it Joshua can't," say the unbelievers. Where are the battering rams for such a conflict as this? Why the Canaanitish archers will come out on the top of the walls and shoot destruction and death into these Israelites if they come anywhere near the walls. This city in after-time was taken by Pompey, and it was taken by Herod the Great, and it was taken by the Mohammedans; but this campaign is planned by the Lord Almighty. There are to be no swords, no shields, no battering rams. There is to be only weapon, and that is to be a ram's horn. The crooked horns of the slain rams were punctured with holes so that the fingers could play on them, and then the musician would put this rustic instrument to his lips and make music for the people. Now the command is, that seven of the priests should take these rude musical instruments, and for six days they should go around about the walls of Jericho once a day, and then on the seventh day, they should go around seven times blowing this curious, rustic, musical instrument, and the peroration of the whole scene is to be a great shout under which that wall from base to capstone is to tumble. Around the walls of Jericho the priests go once, and a failure. Not so much as a piece of mortar or plaster drops from the wall; not so much as a crevice opens; not so much as a rock gets loose. Around the city the second day, and a failure; the third day and

a failure; the fourth day, and a failure; around the fifth day, and a failure; around the sixth day, and a failure. "Ah!" say some of the unbelieving Israelites, "I told you so; those ministers are simply making fools of themselves. That wall stands as firm now after six days' surrounding as when it was first built. The fact is that our leader Joshua is getting spoiled; he thinks because he can conquer a spring freshet he can conquer a city wall. Come, now, let us be philosophic about this. It isn't reasonable that a ram shorn blown should knock down a city wall." And the wiseacres knit their brow and put their forefinger of the right hand against the forefinger of the left hand, and reason it all out that such a cause could not possibly produce such an effect. The encampment, I think, that night was full of philosophy and caricature, and if Joshua had been nominated for any prominent military position he would have received but few votes. Joshua's stock was down. But the seventh day came—the climacteric day—and Joshua is up early according to the statement, and he is around among the troops looking at their condition, and he is impatient for the moment to come when he shall march on to the victory. At last, the hour has arrived. The priests with these rude musical instruments go around the city of Jericho once, and a failure. Around the city twice, three times, four times, and a failure. Around the city five times, six times, seven times, and a failure. There is only one more thing to be done, and that is to give a great shout. I see the Israelitish army straightening themselves up and filling their lungs for a vociferation such as was never before or since heard. Joshua rises to his full stature and he gives the command. He feels the right moment has come, and he says: "Shout for the Lord hath given you the city," and the command is heard and the people all together cry: "Down, Jericho! down Jericho"! And that long line of solid masonry begins to quiver, and then crash go the walls, the temples, the palaces, until the earth quakes and the Heavens are blackened with the dust, and the shriek of the crush

city and the huzza of the victorious Israelites commingle. "Oh," say the philosophers, who were croaking the night before," we did it! we did it! Did you hear that shout? that was I, Joshua; is there anything else you want us to do? We are all ready." "Ah! Joshua felt no boasting in his soul, for while he stood there amid the *debris* of that destroyed city, the old promise came ringing through his soul. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."

People cross the ocean to see a ruin. You need not go far. Stand a minute and look at the ruins of this city Jericho. There is one house that did not fall. Why did not that one house fall? Could the king have lived there? Could a very great and good man have lived there? Could a very good woman have lived there? No. I wonder that one house stood while all the rest of the city fell. Rahab lived there. She had been noted for her crimes. Yet she was saved. Because she had been a great sinner? No, because she had repented, and to prove to all the ages that there is mercy for the chief of sinners. There was a red cord hanging at the window of that house, and that cord was placed there by divine injunction, and when that was seen no one dared damage those premises. When I see the color of that cord it makes me think of the crimson cord let down for our deliverance; it makes me think that we ought to have swung out of the window of our soul, the red cord of a Saviour's sacrifice, the red cord of a Saviour's mercy, the red cord of a Saviour's intercession. Mercy for the chief of sinners. All the other houses went down but Rahab's house: that stood. She repented. She trusted in God. She was saved. Mercy for the chief of sinners. Put your trust in that God, and nothing shall ever damage you, and when at last our world shall be surrounded more terribly than was Jericho even, by the trumpets of judgment and resurrection the walls of rocks and mountains shall fall crushing all the unpardoned, yea when nature's metal, bones and ribs shall break, they who have Rahab's faith shall have Rahab's deliverance.

When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,
And heaven's last thunder shake the world below,
Thou undismayed shall o'er the ruin smile,
And light thy torch at natures' funerals pile.

This is no place to stop, Joshua cries: "Forward, march!" There is the city of Ai to be taken. "Oh," says a scouting party just come back from that city, "you can take that very easily; Joshua, you need not go; you stay, and a few of us will go and take that city." They started out in pompous order to take the city of Ai. They got up in front of the city when the men of Ai came out and gave one yell, and away ran the Israelites like reindeer. Our Northern troops at Bull Run made slow time compared with those Israelites with the men of Ai after them. My friends, we have no right to go into the Lord's conflict having only half our force. We have no right to reserve corps. Body, mind, soul, reputation, property, everything, must be marshaled, equipped, launched for God, and against our enemies. If you are going to do any Christian work in that half-and-half way, instead of your taking the men of Ai, the men of Ai will take you. The Israelites never cut such a ridiculous figure as when following back. Did you ever see the church of God retreat? The Bornesian cannibals ate up Munson, the missionary. A thousand Christians said: "Fall back, you never can convert Borneo. See! they have eaten up Munson the missionary." Tyndal delivers his celebrated lecture at Glasgow University. A great many people, say: "Oh, it seems as if worldly philosophy is going to overcome Christian philosophy." Geology plunges its crowbar in the foundations of the earth, and people say: "There! the geological development is going to overthrow the Mosaic account of the creation. Fall back!" The church of God has no right to fall back. I see Joshua coming out that day of his encampment, and he looks up and sees the people running, and he puts his hand to his forehead, and he says: "Why, I really believe those are our men,

They are running in retreat." And soon the retreating army come up. They say: "O, General, we are all cut to pieces. Those men of Ai are awful people. We are all cut to pieces." Joshua falls down on his face in chagrin. It is the only time we ever see the back of his head. And he begins to whine, and he says: "O, Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan. Oh, Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth." I am very glad he said that. I find he is only a man after all. Before he seemed supernatural, and then he could not be an example for us. I find he knows all about human discouragements. That man who conquered a freshet, and who conquered a stone wall, there he lies making that lachrymose utterance. He is only a man. And sometimes you have seen a very good Christian man in our day, from over work or from a sudden change of the weather, or from some venomous opposition, take the position which Joshua took—the back of the head up and the face down. But how did God arouse Joshua? Did he address him in some complimentary apostrophe? No, he says; "Get thee up. Why liest thou thus on thy face?"

Joshua arose, I suppose looking mortified; but his old courage came back again. That was not his defeat. If he had been in that battle he would have rode conqueror. He marshals all the Israelites, and he says: "We will go up *en masse*, and we will take the city of Ai." He takes most of his army and he hides it in the night behind a ledge of rocks. In the morning he marches up a small battalion of troops in front of the city as by stratagem. The men of Ai say: "Ah! we will conquer these men very soon," and the people of Ai pursued this little battalion, and the Israelites, as though they were frightened, fall back into the stratagem. No sooner are all the people of

the city started in pursuit of that battalion, than Joshua stands on a rock, and I see his hair flying in the wind as he stretches out his spear toward the doomed city, and all the armed men behind the rocks rush for the city and the capture it and put it to the torch, and no sooner is it on fire than those Israelites in the city start down, pursuing the men of Ai, and the Israelites coming out of the city on one side, and the battalion that had fallen back suddenly coming up from the other side, between those two waves of Israelitish courage, the victory was gained. And as I see the smoke of the burning city curling in the sky, and as I hear the groans of the defeated men of Ai, and the victorious shout of the Israelites, Joshua hears something better than that: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."

Joshua's troops cannot stop yet. "Forward, march!" says Joshua, for there is the city of Gibeon: it has put itself under the wings of Joshua's protection, and Joshua must defend it, and the people send word from this city to Joshua: "Come right away; there are five kings going to destroy us. Come right away." Joshua makes a three days' march in one night. It is double quick. When the next morning dawns, there is Joshua, and there are his troops. Prepare now to see the Gettysburgh, the Waterloo, the Sedan of the ancients. Two armies are drawn out in line of battle near this city. The conflict opens with great slaughter. The Canaanites look up and they say "Ah! it is Joshua, it is Joshua who conquered the spring freshet, and the stone wall, and who took the city of Ai. There's no use; he's a terrible man; there's no use; as they sounded a retreat, and as they started, the Israelites with the spring of a panther, came after them, over the rocks, and those Canaanites with their sprained ankles and their gashed foreheads went tumbling over the ledge of Bethoron, and in addition to Joshua's ammunition the catapults of heaven poured out a volley of hail-stones, and the artillery of the sky shot bullets of ice, pounding the retreating army against the rocks. "Oh," says Joshua

"this is a victory! But it is getting towards sundown and those miserable Canaanites are going to get away from me, and they will come back some day, and they will besiege us, and perhaps attempt to destroy us. Oh for a day twice as long as any we have ever seen in this climate." What is the matter with Joshua? Has he fallen in an apoplectic fit? No, he is in prayer. Look out now, for when a good man makes the Lord God his ally, nothing is impossible.

Joshua rises, his face radiant with prayer, and he looks at the descending sun over the hills of Gibeon, and he looks at the faint crescent of the moon. As you sometimes see the queen of the night lingering around the palace of the day—he sees the faint crescent of the moon over the valley of Ajalon, and he lifts both hands in sublime apostrophe, one pointing toward the sun, the other pointing toward the moon, and in the name of the Lord, who spake the world into being, he lifts one hand and says: "Sun, stand thou still over Gibeon," and pointing the other hand to the moon, he says: "And thou moon stand still over the valley of Ajalon." And for twelve hours the planetary system halted. Those worlds that had never stopped an instant since they were created, stopped then and there. Look at the sun dial. No change hour after hour. The sublime record is: "The sun stood still in the midst of heaven." In those twelve additional hours gained by that stopping sun, in those twelve additional hours of that protracted day, there was enough time to demolish by the most tremendous battle ever fought, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish and the king of Eglon—five kings.

"Oh," you say, "the sun and the moon didn't stand still." One man comes to me and says: "According to the Copernican system the sun stood still anyhow, and it was no miracle for it to stand still." Another man says: "If you stop the sun you upset the whole universe and throw everything out of order." Another man tells me it

was only the refraction of the sun's rays which made sun seem to stand still." Another man tells me that that was necessary to have this miracle right, was to stop the world on its own axis, and it was not necessary to stop it in its revolution through its orbit. Well, my friends have always supposed that if a watchmaker could make a good watch, that same watchmaker would know how to stop it, how to take it all apart, how to put it together again, how to start it again. That would be a very poor watchmaker who could not take a watch apart and put it together again and start it again. The universe is our God's watch. I suppose he could make it. Then I suppose he could stop it. Then I suppose he could start it again, and stop it again, and start it again, and stop it again, and start it again, and stop it again. But leaving that to the Christian scientist and to the infidel scientist, let us settle that question among themselves, and wishing always that the Joshua of the church may get the victory over the Ammonites of the German universities, I go and tell you that I have seen the same miracle. Oh, is the sun standing still? Yes. A bad man does not live out half his days. His sun may set at noon. But a good man may prolong his days of usefulness. If a man in the strength of Joshua will go forth to fight against sin and in behalf of the truth, he shall live a thousand years, and shall be as one day.

John Summerfield was a consumptive Methodist. I stood looking fearfully white in old Sands street Methodist church, preaching the glorious gospel, and on the anniversary platform in New York, pleading for the Bible and the old book unrolled new glories the world had never seen. And on his death bed, he talked of heaven until the wing of the angelic messenger brushed the pillow on which he lay. Has John Summerfield's sun set? Has John Summerfield's day ended? No! He lives in the burning words he uttered in behalf of the Christian church. He lives in the fame of that Christ whom he recommended to the dying people. He lives in the eternal raptures of the

heaven into which he has already introduced so many immortal souls. Faint, and sick, and dying, and holding with one hand to the rail of the altar of the Methodist church, with the other hand he arrested the sun in the heavens, seeming to say: "I can't die now; I want to live on and live on; I want to speak a word for Christ that will never die; I am only twenty-seven years of age. Sun of my Christian ministry, stand still over America." And it stood still.

Robert McCheyne of Scotland, was a consumptive Presbyterian. He used to cough in his sermon so hard that the people thought he would never preach again; but thousands in Aberdeen and Edinburgh and Dundee heard the voice of mercy from his lips. The people rejoiced under his ministry. His name to day is fragrant in all Christendom, and that memory is mightier than ever was his living presence. The delirium of his last sickness was filled with prayer, and when in his dying moment he lifted his hand for a benediction upon his country, he was only practically saying: "I can't die now; I want to live on for Christ; I am only thirty years of age. Sun of my Christian ministry, stand still over Scotland." "And it stood still."

A good many years ago, there was a very consecrated Christian woman. She had a drunken husband and there came to her the night of domestic calamity. She lost her children. And there came to her the night of bereavement. She lost her health and there came to her the night of sickness. Her soul departed and there came to her the night of death. But in all these years of bereavement and calamity, and sickness and of death, the promise of God shone on her so brightly, she had songs in the night, and people used to go to her sick room and see how happy a Christian could be, and the story of that cheerful sick room has been told in all its branches of the family, and other nights of distress have been radiated by her bright and glorious night. The moon that illumined her night of tribulation was a reflection from the Sun of Righteousness,

and when in the last hours of that night of tribulation she lifted her hand as toward the opening heaven, she was only practically saying: "Thou moon, stand still over the valley of Ajalon.

When will this Sabbath end? Seven o'clock to night? No! The almanac says so. I deny it. There will be miracles to-day. Ye who toil in Sabbath schools and reformatory institutions, go forth and do you best for God and the church, and after you have offered your most ardent prayer and uttered your most ardent exhortation, feel that your day of influence can never come to an end, and you can in triumph cry out: "Sun of this holy Sabbath sun of my Christian work, stand thou still forever and forever." It shall obey you.

It is not yet quite sundown in Joshua's day, and we will have time for five royal funerals. Where are those five kings that Joshua took and whose armies he destroyed? They are there in that cave—the cave of Makkedah, hiding. Joshua has rolled a stone against it and they cannot get out. But before night, before this very sun which I am speaking about goes down, these five kings are brought out, and according to the ancient custom, the major generals of Joshua now come up, and they put their foot on the neck of the terrible old kings, and they are beheaded, and their bodies are put back into the same cave and the same stone is rolled against it again; so that that cave has been to them headquarters, first; prison, second; sepulchre last, and all on the same day. Who will preach their funeral sermon? Massillon preached the funeral sermon of Louis the XIV. Doctor Robert South preached a sermon commemorative of Charles the First. Who will preach the funeral sermon of these five bad kings? Joshua. And what shall be his text? And what shall be the epitaph chiseled on the rock in front of the cave at Makkedah? Joshua i. 5. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."

"Oh," you say, "it is a pity to bury these five kings so ignominiously." No, sir; before that rock is sealed up, I

want to put in five more kings, first having them beheaded—king Alcohol, king Fraud, king Lust, king Superstition, king Bigotry. Have them all in. Cover them over with a mound of broken decanters and the *debris* of their miserable doings. Roll a rock against that cave, so that they never can get out. Then chisel for these last five kings the same epitaph you had for the other five kings, and let all the Christian reformers and philanthropists before the sun of their protracted day of usefulness is ended, come up and read it: Joshua i. 5. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life."

Now, it is time for Joshua to go home. He is an old man. He is a hundred and ten. Washington went down to the Potomac and at Mount Vernon spent the evening of his day. Wellington died peacefully at Walmer Castle. Now give Joshua, the oldest warrior of the ages, a chance to rest. No! The greatest battle of all his lifetime opens—mightier than the one against the spring freshet, mightier than the one against the stone wall, mightier than the one in which he led the regiment of whipped cowards, mightier than the one in which he fought back the darkness, marshaling the sun and moon in his battalion. He comes out now against the greatest king on earth, a king who has more subjects than all the present population of the earth. His throne is a pyramid of skulls. His chariot is the world's hearse. The playground and the park around his palace is the world's graveyard. All the sicknesses of the world are marshalled on his side. It is the king of Terrors, the conqueror of thousands of years. Now, Joshua, you have your match. No! For if this is Joshua's greatest battle it is Joshua's greatest victory. He gathers his friends around him and he gives his valedictory. It is full of an old man's reminiscences. Young men tell what they are going to do. Old men tell what they have done. And as sometimes by the winter fire you have heard your grandfather or great-grandfather talk of Monmouth or Yorktown or Bunker Hill, shouldering his staff, as though

it were a musket, to show you how the field was won, so Joshua fights all his battles over again in the last days of his life.

As I stand looking at the old man and see his white hair over his wrinkled brow, and his upper lip compressed against his sunken gum, I wonder if God has fulfilled the entire promise of the text: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." And while I am wondering the old man tells the same story twice and in the same breath, as some times you know old people forget and will tell the same story twice. He says: "This day I go the way of all the earth, and no one thing of all the good things that God has promised concerning you has failed. All have come to pass. Not one thing thereof has failed." And then in his dying moment, he says to the people: "Now make your choice—which God are you going to have, the God of the Ammonites or the God of Israel? As for me and my house, I will serve the Lord." Oh, how natural that was. When a good man dies his chief anxiety is about his family. We want our children saved. Joshua wanted all his family saved. Living—dying, be that our prayer. Consent to everything else we can, but consent to eternal parting at the tomb, we never can. By the cradle in which their infancy was rocked, by the bosom on which they first lay, by the burning prayers we have offered for their salvation, by the blood of the new covenant, by the Lord God of Joshua, it shall not be. Jehovah-jirah, we take thee at thy oath: "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." Dead, the old chieftain must be laid out. He is a hundred and ten years old. Touch him very gently. Stretch out those old feet that once walked the dry path of the parted Jordan. Close those lips which blew the blast that dropped the walls of Jericho. Fold that arm that stretched our the spear, against the doomed city of Ai. Fold it across the heart that exulted when the five kings fell. But where shall we get the burnished granite fit to be the headstone and the footstone of this greatest of warriors? Oh, I bethink my-

self now. I imagine at his head it shall be the sun that stood still above Gibeon, and at the foot it shall be the moon that stood still over the valley of Ajalon.

THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF

"And he took the calf which they had made, and he burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it."—EXODUS xxxii. 30.

PEOPLE will have a god of some kind, and they prefer one of their own making. Here come the Israelites, breaking off their golden earrings, the men as well as the women, for in those times there was masculine as well as feminine decorations. Where did they get these beautiful gold earrings, coming up as they did from the desert? Oh, they borrowed them of the Egyptians when they left Egypt. These earrings are piled up into a pyramid of glittering beauty. "Any more earrings to bring?" says Aaron. None. Fire is kindled; the earrings are melted and poured into a mould, not of an eagle or a war-charger, but of a silly calf; the gold cools off; the mould is taken away, and the idol is set up on its four legs. An altar is built in front of the shining calf. Then the people throw up their arms, and gyrate and shriek, and dance mightily, and worship. Moses has been six weeks on Mount Sinai, and he comes back and hears the howling and sees the dancing of these golden-calf fanatics, and he loses his patience, and he takes the two plates of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments and flings them so hard against a rock that they split all to pieces. When a man gets mad he is very apt to break all the Ten Commandments! Moses rushes in and he takes this calf-god and throws it into a hot fire, until it is melted all out of shape, and then pulverizes it—not by the modern appliance of nitro muriatic acid, but by

the ancient appliance of nitre, or by the old-fashioned file. He stirs for the people a most nauseating draught. He takes this pulverized golden calf and throws it in the only brook which is accessible, and the people are compelled to drink of that brook, or not drink at all. But they did not drink all the glittering stuff thrown on the surface. Some of it flows on down the surface of the brook to the river, and then flows on down the river to the sea, and the sea takes it up and bears it to the mouth of all the rivers, and when the tides set back, the remains of this golden calf are carried up into the Hudson and the East river and the Thames and the Clyde and the Tiber, and men go out and they skim the glittering surface, and they bring it ashore and they make another golden calf, and California and Australia break off their golden earrings to augment the pile, and in the fires of financial excitement and struggle all these things are melted together, and while we stand looking and wondering what will come of it, lo! we find that the golden calf of Israelitish worship has become the golden calf of European and American worship.

I shall describe to you the god spoken of in the text, the temple, his altar of sacrifice, the music that is made in the temple, and then the final breaking up of the whole congregation of idolaters.

Pull aside this curtain and you see the golden calf of modern idolatry. It is not like other idols, made out of stocks or stone, but it has an ear so sensitive that it can hear the whispers on Wall street and Third street and State street, and the footfalls in the Bank of England, and the flutter of a Frenchman's heart on the Bourse. It has an eye so keen that it can see the rust on the farm of Michigan wheat and the insect in the Maryland peach-orchard, and the trampled grain under the hoof of the Russian war-charger. It is so mighty that it swings any way it will the world's shipping. It has its foot on all the merchantmen and the steamers. It started the American civil war, and under God stopped it, and it will decide the Turko-Russian contest. One broker in September, 1869, in New York,

shouted: "One hundred and sixty for a million:" and the whole continent shivered. This golden calf of the text has its right front foot in New York, its left front foot in Chicago, its right back foot in Charleston, its left back foot in New Orleans, and when it shakes itself it shakes the world. Oh, this is a mighty god—the golden calf of the world's worship.

But every god must have its temple, and this golden calf of the text is no exception. Its temple is vaster than St. Paul of the English, and St. Peter of the Italians, and the Alhambra of the Spaniards, and the Parthenon of the Greeks, and the Taj Mahal of the Hindoos, and all the other cathedrals put together. Its pillars are grooved and fluted with gold, and its ribbed arches are hovering gold, and its chandeliers are descending gold, and its floors are tessellated gold, and its vaults are crowded heaps of gold; and its spires and domes are soaring gold, and its organ pipes are resounding gold, and its pedals are tramping gold, and its stops pulled out are flashing gold, while standing at the head of the temple as the presiding deity, are the hoofs and shoulders and eyes and ears and nostrils of the calf of gold.

Further: every god must have not only its temple, but its altar of sacrifice, and this golden calf of the text is no exception. Its altar is not made out of stone as other altars, but out of counting room desks, and fireproof safes, and it is a broad, a long, a high altar. The victims sacrificed on it are the Swartouts, and the Ketchams, and the Fisks, and the Tweeds, and the Mortons, and ten thousand other people who are slain before this golden calf. What does this god care about the groans and struggles of the victims before it? With cold, metallic eye it looks on, yet lets them suffer. Oh, heavens and earth, what an altar! What a sacrifice of body, mind, and soul! the physical health of a great multitude is flung on to this sacrificial altar. They cannot sleep, and they take chloral and morphine and intoxicants. Some of them struggle in a nightmare of stocks, and at 1 o'clock in the morning suddenly rise up shouting:

"A thousand shares of New York Central—one hundred and eighty and a half! take it!" until the whole family is affrighted, and the speculators fall back on their pillow and sleep until they are awakened again by a "corner" in Pacific Mail, or a sudden "rise" of Rock Island. Their nerves gone, their digestion gone, their brain gone, they die. The gowned ecclesiastic comes in and reads the funeral service: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Mistake. They did not "die in the Lord;" the golden calf kicked them!

The trouble is, when men sacrifice themselves on this altar suggested in the text, they not only sacrifice themselves, but they sacrifice their families. If a man by an ill course is determined to go to perdition, I suppose you will have to let him go; but he puts his wife and children in an equipage that is the amazement of the avenues, and the driver lashes the horses into two whirlwinds, and the spokes flash in the sun, and the golden headgear of the harness gleams, until Black Calamity takes the bits of the horses and stops them, and shouts to the luxuriant occupants of the equipage: "Get out!" They get out. They get down. The husband and father flung his family so hard they never got up. There was the mark on them for life—the mark of the split hoof—the death-dealing hoof of the golden calf.

Solomon offered in one sacrifice, on one occasion, twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep; but that was a tame sacrifice compared with the multitude of men who are sacrificing themselves on this altar of the golden calf, and sacrificing their families with them. The soldiers of General Havelock, in India, walked literally ankle deep in the blood of "the house of massacre," where two hundred women and children had been slain by the Sepoys; but the blood around about this altar of the golden calf flows up to the knee, flows to the girdle, flows to the shoulder, flows to the lip. Great God of heaven and earth, have mercy! The golden calf has none

Still the degrading worship goes on, and the devotees kneel and kiss the dust, and count their golden beads, and cross themselves with the blood of their own sacrifice. The music rolls on under the arches; it is made of clinking silver and clinking gold, and the rattling specie of the banks and brokers' shops, and the voices of all the exchanges. The soprano of the worship is carried by the timid voices of men who have just begun to speculate, while the deep bass rolls out from those who for ten years of iniquity have been doubly damned. Chorus of voices rejoicing over what they have made. Chorus of voices wailing over what they have lost. This temple of which I speak stands open day and night, and there is the glittering god with his four feet on broken hearts, and there is the smoking altar of sacrifice, new victims every moment on it, and there are the kneeling devotees, and the doxology of the worship rolls on, while Death stands with mouldy and skeleton arm beating time for the chorus—"More! more! more!"

Some people are very much surprised at the actions of people in the Stock Exchange, New York. Indeed, it is a scene sometimes that paralyzes description, and is beyond the imagination of any one who has never looked in. What snapping of finger and thumb, and wild gesticulation, and raving like hyenas, and stamping like buffaloes, and swaying to and fro, and jostling and running one upon another, and deafening uproar, until the president of the Exchange strikes with his mallet four or five times, crying, "Order! order!" and the astonished spectator goes out into the fresh air feeling that he has escaped from pandemonium. What does it all mean? I will tell you what it means. The devotees of every heathen temple cut themselves to pieces, and yell and gyrate. This vociferation and gyration of the Stock Exchange is all appropriate. This is the worship of the golden calf.

But my text suggests that this worship has got to be broken up, as the behaviour of Moses in my text indicated. There are those who say that this golden calf spoken of in

my text was hollow, and merely plated with gold; otherwise, they say, Moses could not have carried it. I do not know that; but somehow, perhaps by the assistance of his friends, he takes up this golden calf, which is an infernal insult to God and man, and throws it into the fire, and it is melted, and then it comes out and is cooled off, and by some chemical appliance, or by an old-fashioned file, it is pulverized, and it is thrown into the brook, and as a punishment, the people are compelled to drink the nauseating stuff. So, my hearers, you may depend upon it that God will burn, and he will grind to pieces the golden calf of modern idolatry, and he will compel the people in their agony to drink it. If not before, it will be so on the last day. I know not where the fire will begin, whether at the "Battery" or Central Park, whether at Fulton Ferry or at Bushwick, whether at Shoreditch, London, or West End; but it will be a very hot blaze. All the government securities of the United States and Great Britain will curl up in the first blast. All the moneys, safes, and depositing vaults will melt under the first touch. The sea will burn like tinder, and the shipping will be abandoned forever. The melting gold in the broker's window will burst through the melted window-glass into the street; but the flying population will not stop to scoop it up. The cry of "Fire" from the mountain will be answered by the cry of "Fire" in the plain. The conflagration will burn out from the continent toward the sea, and then burn in from the sea toward the land. New York and London with one cut of the red scythe of destruction will go down. Twenty-five thousand miles of conflagration! The earth will wrap itself 'round and 'round in shroud of flame, and lie down to perish. What then will become of your golden calf? Who then so poor as to worship it? Melted, or between the upper and the nether millstone of falling mountains ground to powder. Dagon down. Moloch down. Juggernaut down. Golden calf down.

But, my friends, every day is a day of judgment, and God is all the time grinding to pieces the golden calf.

Merchants of New York and Brooklyn, what is the characteristic of the times in which we live? "Bad," you say. Professional men, what is the characteristic of the times in which we live; "Bad," you say. Though I should be in a minority of one, I venture the opinion that these are the best times we have had in fifteen years, for the reason that God is teaching this nation as never before, that old-fashioned honesty is the only thing that will stand. In the past few months we have learned as never before that forgeries will not pay; that the watering of stock will not pay; that the spending of \$50,000 on country seats and a palatial city residence, when there are only \$30,000 income, will not pay: that the appropriation of trust funds to our own private speculation will not pay. We had a great national tumor, in the shape of fictitious prosperity. We called it national enlargement; instead of calling it enlargement we might better have called it a swelling. It has been a tumour, and God is cutting it out—has cut it out, and the nation will get well and will come back to the principles of our fathers and grandfathers when twice three made six instead of sixty, and when the apples at the bottom of the barrel were just as good as the apples on the top of the barrel, and a silk handkerchief was not half cotton, and a man who wore a five dollar coat paid for was more honoured than a man who wore a fifty dollar coat not paid for.

The golden calf of our day, like the one of the text, is very apt to be made out of borrowed gold. These Israelites of the text borrowed earrings of the Egyptians, and then melted them into a god. That is the way the golden calf is made nowadays. A great many housekeepers not paying for the articles they get borrow of the grocer, and the baker, and the butcher, and the dry goods seller. Then the retailer borrows of the wholesale dealer. Then the wholesale dealer borrows of the capitalist, and we borrow and borrow, until the community is divided into two classes, those who borrow, and those who are borrowed of; and after awhile the capitalist wants his money, and he rushes upon the wholesale dealer, and the wholesale dealer wants

his money and he rushes upon the retailer, and the retailer wants his money and he rushes upon the consumer, and we all go down together. There is many a man in this day who rides in a carriage and owes the blacksmith for the tire, and the wheelwright for the wheel, and the trimmer for the curtain, and the driver for unpaid wages, and the harness-maker for the bridle, and the furrier for the robe, while from the tip of the carriage tongue clear back to the tip of the camel's hair shawl fluttering out of the back of the vehicle, everything is paid for by notes that have been three times renewed.

I tell you, sirs, that in this country we will never get things right until we stop borrowing and pay as we go. It is this temptation to borrow, and borrow, and borrow, that keeps the people everlastingly praying to the golden calf for help, and just at the minute they expect the help the golden calf treads on them. The judgments of God, like Moses in the text, will rush in and break up this worship; and I say let the work go on until every man shall learn to speak truth with his neighbour, and those who make engagements shall feel themselves bound to keep them, and when a man who will not repent of his business iniquity, but goes on wishing to satiate his cannibal appetite by devouring widows' houses, shall, by the law of the land, be compelled to exchange the brown-stone front on Madison avenue or Beacon Hill for Newgate or Sing Sing. Let the golden calf perish!

But, my friends, if we have made this world our god, when we come to die we will see our idol demolished. How much of this world are you going to take with you into the next? Will you have two pockets—one in each side of your shroud? Will you cushion your casket with bonds and mortgages and certificates of stock? Ah! no. The ferryboat that crosses this Jordan take no baggage—nothing heavier than a spirit. You may, perhaps, take five hundred dollars with you two or three miles, in the shape of funeral trappings, to Greenwood, but you will have to leave them there. It would not be safe for you to lie down

there with a gold watch or diamond ring; it would be a temptation to the pillagers. Ah, my friends! if we have made this world our god, when we die we will see our idol ground to pieces by our pillow, and we will have to drink it in bitter regrets for the wasted opportunities of a lifetime. Soon we will be gone. Where are the veterans who on the Fourth of July, 1794, marched from New York Park to the "Battery," and fired a salute, and then marched back again? and the Society of the Cincinnati, who dined that afternoon at Tontine Coffee House on Wall street? and Grant Thorburn, who that afternoon waited fifteen minutes at the foot of Maiden Lane for the Brooklyn ferryboat, then got in and was rowed across by two men, with oars, the tide so strong that it was an hour and ten minutes before they landed? Where are the veterans that fired the salute, and the men of the Cincinnati Society who that afternoon drank to the patriotic toast? and the oarsmen that rowed the boat? and the people who were transported? Gone! Oh! this is a fleeting world, it is a dying world. A man who had worshiped it all his days, in his dying moment described himself when he said. "Fool! Fool! Fool!"

I want you to change temples, and to give up the worship of this unsatisfying and cruel god for the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the gold that will never crumble. Here are securities that will never fail. Here are banks that will never break. Here is an altar on which there has been one sacrifice that does for all. Here is a God who will comfort you when you are in trouble, and soothe you when you are sick, and save you when you die. When your parents have breathed their last, and the old, wrinkled, and trembling hands can no more be put upon your head for a blessing, He will be to you father and mother both, giving you the defense of the one and the comfort of the other; and when your children go away from you, the sweet darlings, you will not kiss them good-by forever. He only wants to hold them for a little while. He will give them back to you again, and He will have them all waiting

for you at the gates of eternal welcome. Oh! what a God he is! He will allow you to come so close this morning that you can put your arms around his neck, while he in response will put his arms around your neck, and all the windows of heaven will be hoisted to let the redeemed look out and see the spectacle of a rejoicing Father and a returned prodigal locked in glorious embrace. Quit worshipping the golden calf, and bow this day before Him in whose presence we must all appear when the world has turned to ashes and the scorched parchment of the sky shall be rolled together like an historic scroll.

LONGEVITY.

"With long life will I satisfy him."—PSALMS xci. 16.

THROUGH the mistake of its friends religion has been chiefly associated with sick beds and graveyards. This whole subject to many people is odorous with chlorine and carbolic acid. There are people who cannot pronounce the word "religion" without hearing it in the clipping chisel of the tombstone cutter. It is high time that this thing were changed, and that religion, instead of being represented as a hearse to carry out the dead, should be represented as a chariot in which the living are to triumph. Religion, so far from subtracting from one's vitality, is a glorious addition. It is sanative, curative, hygienic. It is good for the eyes, good for the ears, good for the spleen, good for the digestion, good for the nerves, good for the muscles, and other things being equal—I say other things being equal, a man will lift more pounds, walk more miles, and live more years with religion than without it. When David, in another part of the Psalms, prays that religion may be dominant he does not speak of it as a mild sickness, or an emancipation, or an attack of moral and spiritual cramps; he speaks of it as "the saving health of all na-

tions', while God, in the text, promises longevity to the pious, saying: "With long life will I satisfy him."

The fact is that men and women die too soon. It is high time that religion joined the hand of medical science in attempting to improve the world's longevity. Adam lived 930 years. Methuselah lived 969 years. As late in the history of the world as Vespasian, there were at one time in his empire forty-five people 135 years old. So far down as the sixteenth century, Peter Zartan died at 185 years of age. I do not say that religion will ever take the race back to antediluvian longevity, but I do say the length of human life will be greatly improved, and a person will be called a child at 100 years of age. Proof! Isaiah, lxxv. 20: "The child shall die a hundred years old." Now, if according to the Scripture, the child is to be a hundred years old, may not the men and women reach to three hundred and four hundred, and five hundred? The fact is that we are mere dwarfs and skeletons compared with some of the generations that are to come. Religion has just touched our world. Give it full swing for a few centuries, and who can tell what will be the strength of man and the beauty of woman, and the longevity of all?

My design this morning is to show to you that practical religion is the friend of longevity; and I prove it, first, from the fact that it makes the care of our physical health a positive Christian duty. Whether we shall keep early or late hours, whether we shall take food digestible or indigestible, whether there shall be thorough or incomplete mastication, are questions very oft deferred to the realm of whimsicality; but the Christian man lifts this whole problem of health into the accountable and the divine. He says: "God has given me this body, and he has called it the temple of the Holy Ghost, and to deface its altars, or to mar its walls, or crumple its pillars, is a God-defying sacrilege." He sees God's caligraphy in every page—anatomical and physiological. He says: "God has given me a wonderful body for noble purposes." That arm with thirty-six curious bones, wielded by forty-six curious muscles, and

and all under the brain's telegraphy—three hundred and fifty pounds of blood rushing through the heart every hour—the heart in twenty-four hours beating one hundred thousand times—during the twenty-four hours overcoming resistances amounting to 225,000,000 pounds weight—during the same time the lungs taking in fifty-seven hogsheads of air, and all this mechanism not more mighty than delicate, and easily unhooked and demolished. The Christian man says to himself, "If I hurt my nerves, if I hurt my brain, if I hurt any of my physical faculties, I insult God and I call for dire retribution." Why did Paul write for his cloak at Troas? Why should such a great man as Paul be anxious about a thing so insignificant as an overcoat? It was because he knew that Paul, with pneumonia and rheumatism, would not be worth half as much to God and the church as Paul with respiration easy and foot free. An intelligent Christian man would consider it an absurdity to kneel down at night and say his prayers and ask God's protection, while at the same time he kept the windows of his bed-room tight shut against fresh air. He would just as soon think of going out on the bridge between New York and Brooklyn, leaping off, and then praying to God to keep him from getting wet. Just as long as you defer this whole subject of physical health to the realm of whimsicality, or to the pastrycook, or to the butcher, or the baker, or the apothecary, or the clothier, you are no Christian. The care of all your physical forces—nervous, muscular, bone, brain, cellular tissues—for all this you must be brought into requisition when the world is on fire. Smoking your nervous system into fidgets, burning out the coating of your stomach with wine logwooded and strychnined, walking through snow-banks with thin shoes to make your feet look delicate, pinched at the waist until you are nigh cut in two, and neither part worth anything, groaning about sick headache and palpitations of the heart, which you think come from God when they come from the devil! You are no Christian. What right has any man or any woman to deface the temple of the Holy Ghost? What is

the ear? Why, it is the whispering gallery of the human soul. What is the eye? It is the observatory God constructed, its telescope sweeping the heavens. What is the hand? An instrument so wonderful that when the Earl of Bridgewater bequeathed in his will \$40,000 for treatises to be written on the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, and Dr. Chalmers found his subject in the adaptation of eternal nature to the moral and intellectual constitution of man, and the learned Dr. Whewell found his subject in astronomy, Sir Charles Bell, the great English anatomist and surgeon, found his greatest illustration of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God in the construction of the human hand, writing his whole book on that subject. So wonderful is the body that God names his own attributes after different parts of it. His omniscience—it is God's eye. His omnipresence—it is God's ear. His omnipotence—it is God's arm. The upholstery of the midnight heavens—it is the work of God's fingers. His life-giving power—it is the breath of the Almighty. His dominion—the government shall be upon his shoulder. A body so divinely honoured and so divinely constructed, let us be careful not to abuse it. When it becomes a Christian duty to take care of our health, is not the whole tendency toward longevity? If I toss my watch about recklessly, and drop it on the pavement, and wind it up any time of day or night I happen to think of it, and often let it run down, while you are careful with your watch, and you never abuse it, and you wind it up at just the same hour every night, and then put it away in a place where it will not suffer from the violent changes of atmosphere, which watch will last the longer? Common sense answers. Now, the human body is God's watch. You see the hands of the watch, you see the face of the watch; but the beating of the heart is the ticking of the watch. Oh! be careful and not let it run down.

Again, I remark, that practical religion is a friend of longevity, in the fact that it is a protest against all the dissipations which injure and destroy the health. Bad men

and women live a very short life. Their sin kills them. I know hundreds of good old men, but I do not know a half dozen bad old men. Why? They do not get old. Oh! how many people we have known who have not lived out half their days because of their dissipations and indulgences. Now, practical religion is a protest against all dissipation of any kind. "But," you say, "all professors of religion have fallen, professors of religion have got drunk, professors of religion have misappropriated trust funds, professors of religion have absconded." Yes, yes, but they threw away their religion before they did their morality. If a man on a White Star Line steamer, bound for Liverpool, in mid-Atlantic jumps overboard and is drowned, is that anything against the White Star Line's capacity to take the man across the ocean? And if a man jumps over the gunwales of his religion and goes down never to rise, is that any reason for your believing that religion has no capacity to take the man clear through? In the one case, if he had stuck to the steamer his body would have been saved; in the other case, if he had stuck to his religion his morals would have been saved. There are aged people in this house to-day who would have been dead twenty-five years ago but for the defences and the equipoise of religion. You have no more natural resistance than hundreds of people who lie in Greenwood and Mount Auburn and Laurel Hill to-day, slain by their own vices. The doctors made their case as kind and pleasant as they could, and it was called congestion of the brain; but the snakes and the blue-flies that crawled over the pillow in the sight of the delirious patient showed what was the matter with him. You, the aged Christian man, walked right along by that unfortunate until you came to the golden pillar of a Christian life. You went to the right, he went to the left. That is all the difference between you. Oh! if this religion is a protest against all forms of dissipation, then it is an illustrious friend of longevity. My text right again: "With long life will I satisfy thee."

Again : religion is a friend of longevity in the fact that it takes the worry out of our temporalities. It is not work that kills men ; it is worry. When a man becomes a genuine Christian, he makes over to God not only his affections, but his family, his business, his reputation, his body, his mind, his soul—everything. Industrious he will be, but never worrying, because God is managing his affairs. How can he worry about business when, in answer to his prayers, God tells him when to buy and when to sell, and if he gain that is best, and if he lose, that is best. Suppose you had a supernatural neighbour who came in and said : “ Sir, I want you to call on me in every exigency ; I am your fast friend ; I could fall back on \$20,000,000 ; I can foresee a panic ten years ; I hold the controlling stock in thirty of the best monetary institutions of New York : whenever you are in any trouble call on me, and I will help you ; you can have my money, and you can have my influence, here is my hand in pledge for it.” How much would you worry about business ? Why, you would say : “ I’ll do the best I can, and then I’ll depend upon my friend’s generosity for the rest.” Now, more than that is promised to every Christian business man. God says to him : “ I own New York and London and St. Petersburg and Pekin, and Australia and California are mine ; I can foresee a panic a million years ; I have all the resources of the universe, and I am your fast friend ; when you get in business trouble, or any other trouble, call on me, and I will hear, and I will help ; here is my hand in pledge of omnipotent deliverance.” How much is that man going to worry ? Not much. “ Oh ! ” you say, “ here is a man who asked God for a blessing upon a certain enterprise, and he has lost \$5,000 in it. Explain that.” I will. Yonder is a factory, and one wheel is going north and the other wheel is going south, and one wheel plays laterally and the other plays vertically. I go to the manufacturer, and I say, “ O manufacturer ! your machinery is a contradiction. Why do you not make all the wheels go one way ? ” “ Well,” he says, “ I made them to go on in opposite directions on purpose, and they pro-

duce the right result. You go down stairs and examine the carpets we are turning out in this establishment and you will see." I go down on the other floor and I see the carpets, and I am obliged to confess that, though the wheels in the factory go in opposite directions, they turn out a beautiful result ; and while I am standing there looking at the exquisite fabric, an old Scripture passage comes through my mind : " All things work together for good to those who love God." Is there not rest in that ? Is there not longevity in that ? Suppose a man is all the time worried about his reputation ? One man says he lies, another man says he is stupid, another man says he is dishonest, and half a dozen printing establishments get the man under Hoe's cylinder and flatten him out, and he is in a great state of excitement, and worry, and fume, and cannot sleep at nights ; but religion comes to him and says : " Man, God is on your side ; he will take care of your reputation ; if God be for you, who can be against you ?" How much is that man going to worry about his reputation ? Not much. If that broker, who, a few years ago in Wall-street, after he had lost money, sat down and wrote a farewell letter to his wife before he blew his brains out—if instead of taking out of his pocket a pistol he had taken out a well-read New Testament, there would have been one less suicide. Oh ! nervous and feverish people of the world, try this almighty sedative ; you will live twenty-five years longer under its soothing power. It is not chloral that you want, or morphine that you want ; it is the gospel of longevity. " With long life will I satisfy thee."

Again : Practical religion is a friend of longevity is the fact that it removes all corroding care about future existence. Every man wants to know what is to become of him. If you get on board a rail train, you want to know at what depot it is going to stop ; if you get on board a ship you want to know into what harbour it is going to run, and if you should tell me you have no interest in what is to be your future destiny, I would, in as polite a way as I know

how, tell you I did not believe you. Before I had this matter settled with reference to my future existence, the question almost worried me into invalidism. The anxieties you have had upon this subject, put together would make a martyrdom. This is a state of awful unhealth. There are people who fret themselves to death for fear of dying. I want, this morning, to take the strain off your nerves and the depression off your soul, and I make two or three experiments. Experiment the first: When you go out of this world, it does not make any difference whether in this world you have been good or bad, or whether you believed right or wrong, you will go straight to glory. "Impossible," you say, "my common sense as well as my religion teaches that the bad and the good cannot live together forever; you give me no comfort in that experiment." Experiment the second: When you leave this world, you will go into an intermediate state where you can get fixed up and prepared for heaven. "Impossible," you say, "as the tree falleth, so it must lie, and I cannot postpone to an intermediate state that reformation which ought to have been effected in this state." Experiment the third: There is no future world; when a man dies, that is the last of him. Do not worry about what you are to do in another state of being; you will not do anything. "Impossible," you say, "there is something that tells me that death is not the appendix, but the preface; there is something that tells me that on this side of the grave I only get started, and I will go on forever—my power to think says 'Forever;' my affections say 'Forever;' my capacity to enjoy or suffer, 'Forever.'" Well, you defeat me in my three experiments. I have only one more to make, and if you defeat me in that I am exhausted. A mighty One, on a knoll back of Jerusalem, one day, the skies filled with forked lightnings and the earth shaking with volcanic disturbances, turned his pale and agonized face towards the heavens and said: "I take the sins and the sorrows of the ages into my own heart. I am the expiation. Witness earth, and heaven, and hell, I am the expiation."

Accept that sacrifice and quit worrying. Take the tonic, the inspiration, the longevity of this thought. Religion is sunshine; that is healthy. Religion is fresh air and pure water; they are healthy. Religion is warmth; that is healthy. Ask all the doctors, and they will tell you that a quiet conscience and pleasant anticipations are hygienic. I offer you perfect peace now, everything hereafter which can fillip the blow and irradiate the disposition. You have been accustomed to open the door on this side the sepulchre. This morning I open the door on the other side the sepulchre. You have been accustomed to walking in the wet grass on the top of the grave. I show you the under side of the grave; the bottom has fallen out, and the long ropes with which the pall-bearers let down your dead let them clear through into heaven. Glory be to God for this robust, rubicund religion! It will have a tendency to make you live long in this world, and in the world to come you will have eternal longevity. "With long life will I satisfy thee."

THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN.

"Behold the half was not told me."—¹ KINGS x. 7.

SOLOMON had resolved that Jerusalem should be the centre of all sacred, regal and commercial magnificence. He set himself to work and monopolized the Syrian desert as a highway for his caravans. He built the city of Palmyra around one of the principal wells of the East, so that all the long trains of merchandise from the East were obliged to stop there, pay toll, and leave a part of their wealth in the hands of Solomon's merchants. He named the fortress Thapsacus at the chief ford of the Euphrates, and put under guard everything that passed there. The three great products of Palestine, wine, pressed from the richest clusters and celebrated all the world over, oil, which

in that hot country, was the entire substitute for butter and lard, and was pressed from the olive branches until every rock in the country became an oil well, and honey, which was the entire substitute for sugar,—these three great products of the country Solomon exported and received in return fruits, precious woods, and the metals and the animals of every clime. He went down to Ezion-geber, ordered a fleet of ships constructed, oversaw the workmen, watched the launching of the flotilla which was to go out on more than a year's voyage to bring the wealth of the then known world. He heard that the Egyptian horses were large, and swift, and long-maned, and round-limbed, and he resolved to purchase them, giving eighty-five dollars a piece for them, putting the best of these horses in his own stalls, and selling the surplus to foreign potentates at a great profit. He heard that there was the best of lumber on Mount Lebanon, and he sent out a hundred and eighty thousand men to hew down the forest, drag the lumber through the mountain gorges, construct it into rafts to be floated to Joppa, and from thence drawn by ox-teams twenty-five miles across the land to Jerusalem. He heard that there were beautiful flowers in other lands. He sent for them, planted them in his own gardens, and to this very day, there are flowers found in the ruins of that city such as are to be found in no other part of Palestine, the lineal descendants of the very flowers that Solomon planted. He heard that in foreign groves there were birds of richest voice and most luxuriant wing. He sent out people to catch them and bring them there, and he put them into his cages.

Stand back now and see this long train of camels coming up to the king's gate, and the ox trains from Joppa, gold and silver and precious stones, and beasts of every hoof, and bird of every wing and fish of every scale. See the peacocks strut under the cedars, and the horsemen run, and the chariots wheel. Hark to the orchestra. Gaze upon the dance. Not stopping to look into the wonders of the temple, step right on to the causeway and pass up to

Solomon's palace. Here we find ourselves amid a collection of buildings on which the king had lavished the wealth of many empires. The genius of Hiram, the architect, and of the other artists is here seen in the long line of corridors, and the suspended gallery, and the porch, and the throne. Traceried window opposite traceried window; bronzed adornments bursting into lotus and lily and pomegranate; chapiters surrounded by net-work of leaves in which imitation fruits seemed suspended as in hanging baskets; tree branches—so Josephus tells us—tree branches sculptured on the marble so thin and subtle that even the leaves seemed to quiver; a laver capable of holding five hundred barrels of water resting on six hundred brazen ox-heads which gushed with water and filled the whole place with coolness and crystalline brightness and musical plash. Ten tables chased with chariot wheel and lion and cherubim. Solomon sat on a throne of ivory. At the sitting place of the throne, imitation of hands came out to receive the king. There were six steps that mounted to the throne, on each end of each of the steps a brazen lion. Why, my friends, in that palace, they trimmed their candles with snuffers of gold, and they cut their fruit with knives of gold and they washed their faces in basins of gold, and they scooped out the ashes with shovels of gold, and they stirred the altar fires with tongs of gold. Gold reflected in the water; gold flashing from the apparel; gold blazing in the crown; gold, gold, gold! Of course the news of the affluence of that place went out everywhere, by every caravan and by the wing of every ship, until soon the streets of Jerusalem are crowded with curiosity seekers. What is that long procession approaching Jerusalem? I think from the pomp of it there must be royalty in the train. I smell the breath of the spices which are brought as presents, and I hear the shout of drivers, and I see the dust covered caravan, showing that they have come from far away. Cry the news up to the palace. The Queen of Sheba advances. Let all the people come out to see. Let the mighty men of the land come out on the palace corridors. Let Solomon

himself come down the stairs of the palace before the Queen has alighted. Shake out the cinnamon and the saffron, and the calamus, and the frankincense, and pass it into the treasure-house. Take up the diamonds until they glitter in the sun. The Queen of Sheba alights. She enters the palace. She washes at the bath. She sits down at the banquet. The cup-bearers bow. The meats smoke. The music trembles along the hall and through the corridors until it mingles in the dash of the water from the molten seas. Then she rises from the banquet and she walks through the conservatories, and she gazes on the architecture, and she asks Solomon many strange questions, and she learns about the religion of the Hebrews, and she then and there becomes a servant of the Lord God. She is overwhelmed. She begins to think that all the spices she brought, and all the talmug trées which were intended to be turned into harps and psalteries and into railings for the causeway between the temple and the palace, and the one hundred and eighty-thousand dollars in money,—she begins to think that all these presents amount to nothing in such a place, and she is almost ashamed that she has brought them, and she says within herself: “I heard a great deal about this place and about this wonderful religion of the Hebrews, but I find it is far beyond my highest anticipations. It exceeds everything that I could have expected, the half, the half was not told me.” Learn first from this subject what a beautiful thing it is when *social position and wealth surrender themselves* to God. When religion comes to a neighbourhood, the first who receive it are the women. Austere men say it is because they are weak minded. I say it is because they have quicker perception of what is right, more ardent affection, and capacity for sublimer emotion. After the women have received the gospel, then all the distressed and the poor of both sexes—those who have no friends—accept Jesus. Last of all come the people of affluence and high social position. Alas! that it is so! If there are those here to-night who have been favoured of fortune, or as I might better put it,

favoured of God, surrender all you have, and all you expect to be to the Lord who blessed this Queen of Sheba. Certainly you are not ashamed to be found in this queen's company. I am glad that Christ has had his imperial friends in all ages. Elizabeth Christina, Queen of Prussia ; Marie Federovna, Queen of Russia ; Marie Lackinska, Empress of France ; Helena, the imperial mother of Constantine, Arcadia from her great fortunes building public baths in Constantinople, and toiling for the elevation of the masses ; Queen Clotilda, leading her husband and three thousand of his armed warriors to Christian baptism ; Elizabeth of Burgundy, giving her jeweled glove to a beggar and scattering great fortunes among the distressed ; Prince Albert, singing "Rock of Ages" in Windsor Castle, and Queen Victoria incognito reading the Scripture to a dying pauper. I bless God that the day is coming when royalty will bring all its thrones, and music all its harmonies, and painting all its pictures, and sculpture all its statuary, and architecture all its pillars, and conquest all its scepters, and the queens of the earth in long line of advance, frankincense filling the air and the camels laden down with the gold, shall approach Jerusalem, and the gates shall be opened, and the great burden of splendor shall be lifted into the palace of this greater than Solomon.

Again, my subject teaches me *what is earnestness in the search of truth*. Do you know where Sheba was ? It was in Abyssinia, or some say in the southern part of Arabia Felix. In either case, it was a great way off from Jerusalem. To get from there to Jerusalem you had to cross a country infested with bandits, and go across blistering deserts. Why did not the Queen of Sheba stay at home, and send a committee to inquire about this new religion, and have the delegates report in regard to that religion and the wealth of King Solomon ? She wanted to see for herself and hear for herself. She could not do this work by committee. She felt she had a soul worth ten thousand kingdoms like Sheba, and she wanted a robe richer than any woven by Oriental shuttles, and she wanted a crown

set with the jewels of eternity. Bring out the camels. Put on the spices. Gather up the jewels of the throne and put them on the caravan. Start now, no time to be lost. Goad on the camels. When I see that caravan, dust-covered, weary, and exhausted, trudging on, up across the desert and among the bandits until it reaches Jerusalem, I say: "There, there is an earnest seeker after the truth."

But a great many of you, my friends, do not do that way. You all want to get the truth, but you want the truth to come to you; you do not want to go to it. There are people who fold their arms and say: "I am ready to become a Christian at any time; If I am to be saved, I will be saved, if I am to be lost, I will be lost. A man who says that and keeps on saying it, will be lost. Jerusalem will never come to you; you must go to Jerusalem. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ will not come to you; you must go and get religion. Bring out the camels, put on all the sweet spices, all the treasures of the heart's affection, start for the throne, go in and hear the waters of salvation dashing in fountains all around about that throne; sit down at the banquet—the wine pressed from the grapes of the heavenly Eshcol—the angels of God the cup-bearers. Goad on the camels. Jerusalem will never come to you; you must go to Jerusalem. The Bible declares it. "The Queen of the South"—that is this very woman I am speaking of—"the Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment of this generation and condemn it, for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and lo! a greater than Solomon is here." God help me to break up the infatuation of those people who are sitting down in idleness expecting to be saved. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." Take the kingdom of heaven by violence. Urge on the camels.

Again: my subject impresses me with the fact that *religion is a surprise to anybody that gets it.* This story of

the new religion in Jerusalem and of the glory of King Solomon, who was a type of Christ—that story rolls on and rolls on, and is told by every traveler coming back from Jerusalem. The news goes on the wing of every ship and with every caravan, and you know a story enlarges as it is retold, and by the time that story got down into the southern part of Arabia Felix and the Queen of Sheba hears it, it must be a tremendous story. And yet, this Queen declares in regard to it, although she had heard so much and had her anticipations raised so high, the half, the half was not told her. So religion is always a surprise to anyone that gets it. The story of grace is an old story. Apostles preached it with rattle of chain, martyrs declared it with arm of fire; death-beds have affirmed it with visions of glory; and ministers of religion have sounded it through the lanes and the high ways and the chapels and the cathedrals. It has been cut into stone with chisel, and spread on the canvas with pencil; and it has been recited in the doxology of great congregations. And yet, when a man first comes to look upon the palace of God's mercy and to see the royalty of Christ, and the wealth of his banquet, and the luxuriance of his attendance, and the loveliness of his face, and the joy of his service, he exclaims with prayers, with tears, with songs, with triumph: "The half—the half was not told me." I appeal to those people in this house to-night, who are Christians; compare the idea you had of the joy of the Christian life before you became a Christian, with the appreciation of that joy you have now since you have become Christians, and you are willing to attest before angels and men that you never in the days of your spiritual bondage had any appreciation of what was to come. You are ready to-night to answer, and if I gave you an opportunity, in the midst of this assemblage, you would speak out and say in regard to the discoveries you have made of the mercy and the grace and the goodness of God: "The half, the half was not told me." Well, we hear a great deal about the good time that is coming to this world when it is to be girdled with salvation. Holiness

on the bells of the horses. The lions mane patted by the hand of a babe. Ships of Tarshish bringing cargoes for Jesus, and the hard, dry, barren wastes, bleached, storm-scarred, thunder-split rock breaking into floods of bright water. Deserts into which the dromedaries thrust their nostril because they were afraid of the simoon—those deserts blooming into carnations, roses and silver-tipped lilies. It is the old story. Every body tells it. Isaiah told it, John told it, Paul told it, Ezekiel told it, William Cowper told it, Doctor Young told it, John Milton told it, everybody tells it, and yet, and yet when the midnight shall fly the hills and Christ shall marshal his great army, and China dashing her idols into the dust, shall hear the voice of God and wheel into line, and India destroying her Juggernaut and snatching up her little children from the Ganges, shall hear the voice of God and wheel into line, and vine-covered Italy and wheat-crowned Russia, and all the nations of the earth shall hear the voice of God and fall into line—then the church which has been toiling and struggling through the centuries, robed and garlanded like a bride adorned for her husband, shall put aside her veil and look up into the face of her Lord, the King, and say: "The half, the half was not told me." Well, there is coming a greater surprise to every Christian—a greater surprise than anything I have depicted. Heaven is an old story. Everybody talks about it. There is hardly a hymn in the hymn-book that does not refer to it. Children read about it in their Sabbath school book. Aged men put on their spectacles to study it. We say it is a harbour from the storm. We call it our home. We say it is the house of many mansions. We weave together all sweet, beautiful, delicate, exhilarant words—we weave them into letters and then we spell it out in rose and lily and amaranth.

And yet that place is going to be a surprise to the most intelligent Christian. Like the Queen of Sheba report has come to us from the far country and many of us have started. It is a desert march, but we urge on the camels,

What though our feet be blistered with the way, we are hastening to the palace. We take all our loves and hopes and Christian ambitions as frankincense and myrrh and cassia to the great King. We must not rest. We must not halt. The night is coming on and it is not safe out here in the desert. Urge on the camels. I see the domes against the sky, and the houses of Lebanon, and the temples and the gardens. See the fountains dance in the sun, and the gates flash as they open to let in the poor pilgrims. Send the word up to the palace that we are coming and that we are weary of the march of the desert. The king will come out, and say, "Welcome to the palace; bathe in these fountains: recline on these banks. Take this cinnamon and frankincense and myrrh, and put it upon a censer and swing it before the altar. And yet, my friends, when heaven bursts upon us, it will be a greater surprise than that. Oh, what a thrilling rapture. Jesus on the throne, and we made like him! All our Christian friends surrounding us in glory; all sorrows and tears and sins gone by forever. The thousands of thousands, the one hundred and forty and four thousand, the great multitudes that no man can number, will cry world without end. "The half, the half was not told me."

THE HORNET'S MISSION.

"The Lord thy God will send the hornet."—DEUT vii. 20.

IT seems as if the insectile world were determined to extirpate the human race. It is bombarding the grain fields and orchards and the vineyards. The Colorado beetle, the Nebraska grasshopper, the New Jersey locust, the universal potato-bug, seem to carry on the work which was began ages ago when the insects buzzed and droned out of Noah's Ark as the door was opened.

In my text, the hornet flies out on its mission. It is a species of wasp, swift in its motion and violent in its sting. Its touch is torture to man or beast. We have all seen the cattle run bellowing under the cut of its lancet. In boyhood we used to stand cautiously looking at the globular nest hung from the tree branch, and while we were looking at the wonderful pasteboard covering we were struck with something that sent us shrieking away. The hornet goes in swarms. It has captains over hundreds, and twenty of them alighting on one man will produce certain death. The Persians attempted to conquer a Christian city, but the elephant and the beasts on which the Persians rode were assaulted by the hornet, so that the whole army was broken up, and the besieged city was rescued. This burning and noxious insect stung out the Hittites and the Canaanites from their country. What gleaming sword and chariot of war could not accomplish was done by the puncture of an insect. The Lord sent the hornet.

My friends, when we are assaulted by great Behemoths of trouble, we become chivalric, and we assault them: we get on the high-mettled steed of our courage, and we make a cavalry charge at them, and, if God be with us, we come out stronger and better than when we went in. But alas! for the insectile annoyances of life—these foes too small to shoot—these things without any avordupois weight—the gnats, and the midges, and the flies, and the wasps, and the hornets. In other words, it is the small stinging annoyances of our life which drive us out and use us up. In the best conditioned life, for some grand and glorious purpose God has sent the hornet.

I remark in the first place that these small and stinging annoyances may come in the shape of a sensitive nervous organization. People who are prostrated under typhoid fevers or with broken bones get plenty of sympathy, but who pities anybody that is nervous? The doctors say, and the family say, and everybody says, "Oh, she's only a little nervous; that's all." The sound of a heavy foot, the

harsh clearing of a throat, a discord in music, an inharmony between the shawl and the glove on the same person, a curt answer, a passing slight, the wind from the east, any one of ten thousand annoyances, opens the door for the hornet. The fact is, that the vast majority of the people in this country are overworked, and their nerves are the first to give out. A great multitude are under the strain of Leyden, who, when he was told by his physician that if he did not stop working while he was in such poor physical health he would die, responded: "Doctor, whether I live or die the wheel must keep going round, and though I may be disappointed in it, if before I die I don't surpass Sir William Jones in profound Oriental literature, may no tear of grief for me ever profane a borderer." These sensitive persons of whom I speak have bleeding sensitiveness. The flies love to light on anything raw, and these people are like the Canaanites spoken of in the text, or in the context—they have a very thin covering and are vulnerable at all points. "And the Lord sent the hornet."

Again, these small insect annoyances may come to us in the shape of friends and acquaintances who are always saying disagreeable things. There are some people that you cannot be with for half an hour but you feel cheered and comforted. Then there are other people you cannot be with five minutes before you feel miserable. They do not mean to disturb you, but they sting you to the bone. They gather up all the yarn which the gossips spin, and peddle it. They gather up all the adverse criticisms about your person, about your business, about your home, about your church, and they make your ear the funnel into which they pour it. They laugh heartily when they tell you, as though it were a good joke, and you laugh too—outside. These people are brought to our attention in the Bible, in the Book of Ruth: Naomi went forth beautiful and with the finest of worldly prospects and into another land, but after awhile she came back widowed, and sick, and poor. What did her friends do when she came to the city? They all went out and, instead of giving her common sense consolation, what did

they do? Read the Book of Ruth and find out. They threw up their hands and said: "Is this Naomi?" as much as to say how awful bad you do look!" When I entered the ministry I looked very pale for years, and every year, for four or five years, a hundred times a year, I was asked if I had not the consumption! And passing through the room, I would sometimes hear people sigh and say: "A-ha! not long for this world!" I resolved in those times that I never, in any conversation would say anything depressing, and by the help of God I have kept the resolution. These people of whom I speak, reap and bind in the great harvest-field of discouragement. Some days you greet them with a hilarious "good morning," and they come buzzing at you with some depressing information. "The Lord sent the hornet." It is astonishing how some people prefer to write and to say disagreeable things. That was the case when four or five years ago Henry M. Stanley returned after his magnificent exploit of finding Dr. David Livingstone, and when Mr. Stanley stood before the *savants* of Europe, and many of the small critics of the day, under pretence of getting geographical information, put to him most insolent questions, he folded his arms and refused to answer. At the very time when you would suppose all decent men would have applauded the heroism of the man, there were those to hiss. "The Lord sent the hornet." And now at this time, when that man sits down on the western coast of Africa, sick and worn out with perhaps the grandest achievement of the age in the way of geographical discovery, there are small critics all over the world to buzz and buzz, and caricature and deride him, and after awhile he will get the London papers, and as he opens them, out will fly the hornet. When I see that there are so many people in the world who like to say disagreeable things, and write disagreeable things, I come in my almost weaker moments to believe what a man said to me in Philadelphia one Monday morning. I went to get the horse at the livery, and the hostler, a plain man, said to me: "Mr. Talmage, I saw that you preached to the

young men yesterday." I said, "Yes." He said: "No use, no use; man's a failure."

Perhaps these small insect annoyances will come in the shape of domestic irritation. The parlor and the kitchen do not always harmonize. To get good service and to keep it is one of the great questions of the country. Sometimes it may be the arrogancy and inconsiderateness of employers, but whatever be the fact, we will admit there are these insect annoyances winging their way out from the culinary department. If the grace of God be not in the heart of the housekeeper, she cannot maintain her equilibrium. The men come home at night and hear the story of these annoyances, and say: "Oh! these home troubles are very little things." They are small, small as wasps, but they sting.

These small insect disturbances may also come in the shape of business irritations. There are men here who went through 1857 and the 24th of September, 1869, without losing their balance, who are every day unhorsed by little annoyances—a clerk's ill-manners, or a blot of ink on a bill of lading, or the extravagance of a partner who overdraws his accounts, or the underselling by a business rival, or the whispering of store confidences in the street, or the making of some little bad debt which was against your judgment, just to please somebody else. It is not the panics that kill the merchants. Panics come only once in ten or twenty years. It is the constant din of these every day annoyances which is sending so many of our best merchants into nervous dyspepsia and paralysis and the grave. When our national commerce fell flat on its face, these men stood up and felt almost defiant; but their life is going away now under the swarm of these pestiferous annoyances. The Lord sent the hornet.

I have noticed in the history of some of my congregation that their annoyances are multiplying, and that they have a hundred where they used to have ten. The naturalist tells us that a wasp sometimes has a family of twenty thousand wasps, and it does seem as if every annoyance of

your life brooded a million. By the help of God to-day, I want to set in a counter current. The hornet is of no use? Oh yes! The naturalist tells us they are very important in the world's economy; they kill spiders, and they clear the atmosphere; and I really believe God sends the annoyances of our life upon us to kill the spiders of the soul and to clear the atmosphere into the skies. These annoyances are sent on us, I think, to wake us from our lethargy. There is nothing that makes a man so lively as a nest of "yellow jackets," and I think that these annoyances are intended to persuade us of the fact that this is not a world for us to stop in. If we had a bed of everything that was attractive and soft and easy, what would we want of heaven? We think that the hollow tree sends the hornet. You think the devil sends the hornet. I want to correct your theology. "The Lord sent the hornet."

Then I think these annoyances come to us to culture our patience. In the gymnasium, you find upright parallel bars—upright bars with holes over each other for the pegs to be put in. Then the gymnast takes a peg in each hand and he begins to climb, one inch at a time, beginning, or two or three inches, and getting his strength cultured, reaches after awhile the ceiling. And it seems to me that these annoyances in life are a moral gymnasium, each worriment a peg with which we are to climb higher and higher in Christian attainment. We all love to see patience, but it cannot be cultured in fair weather,. It is a child of the storm. If you had everything desirable and there was nothing more to get, what would you want with patience? The only time to culture it is when you are lied about and cheated, and sick, and half dead. It just takes so much trouble to fit us for usefulness and heaven. The only question is, whether we shall take it in the bulk, or pulverized and granulated. Here is one man who takes it in the bulk. His back is broken, or his eyesight put out, or some other awful calamity befalls him; while the vast majority of people take this thing piece-meal. Which way would you rather have it? Of course in piece-meal.

Better have five aching teeth than one broken jaw. In this matter of trouble, I like homœopathic doses—small pellets of annoyance rather than small knock-down doses of calamity. In the village of Hamelin, tradition says, there was an invasion of rats, and these small creatures almost devoured the town and threatened the lives of the population, and the story is that a piper came out one day and played a very sweet tune, and all the vermin followed him—followed him to the banks of the Weser, and then he blew a blast and they dropped in and disappeared forever. Of course this is a fable, but I wish I could, on the sweet flute of the gospel, draw forth all the nibbling and borrowing annoyances of your life, and play them down into the depths forever. How many touches did Mr. Church give to his picture of "Cotopaxi" or his "Heart of the Andes?" I suppose about fifty thousand touches. I hear the canvas saying, "Wh do you keep me trembling with that pencil so long?" "Why don't you put it on in one dash?" "No," says Mr. Church; "I know how to make a painting; it will take fifty thousand of these touches." And I want you, my friends, to understand that it is these ten thousand annoyances which, under God, are making up the picture of your life, to be hung at last in the galleries of heaven, fit for the angels to look at. God knows how to make a picture.

My friends, I shall not have preached this morning in vain if I have shown you that the annoyances of life, the small annoyances of life, may be subservient to your present and your eternal advantages. Polycarp was condemned to be burned at the stake. The stake was planted. He was fastened to it, the wood was planted around the stake, it was kindled, but, by some strange current of the atmosphere, history tells us, the flames bent outward like the sails of a ship under a strong breeze, and then far above they came together, making a canopy; so that instead of being destroyed by the flames, there he stood in a flam-buoyant bower planted by his persecutors. They had to take his life in another way, and by the point

of the poniard. And I have to tell you this morning that God can make all the flames of your trials a wall of defence and a canopy for the soul. God is just as willing to fulfil to you as he was to Polycarp the promise, "When thou passest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." In heaven you will acknowledge the fact that you never had one annoyance too many, and through all eternity you will be grateful that in this world the Lord did send the hornet. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "All things work together for good to them that love God." The Lord sent the sunshine. "The Lord sent the hornet."

THE SWORD OF ELEAZAR.

"His hand clave unto the sword."—2 SAM. xxiii. 10.

A GREAT general of King David was Eleazar, the hero of the text. The Philistines had opened a battle against him, and his troops ran; but he with three other men held the field. He fought with such ferocity that the Philistines were appalled and routed. Putting his hand on the hilt of his sword, he swept the fingers around until the tips of the fingers were clenched on the other side. Now with a down stroke laying open the head of the Lord's enemies from cranium to chin: now coming in upon them with a sharp thrust at the vitals, and now with swift, keen, glittering stroke, leaving the carcasses of his enemies by the roadside. "Fall back!" shouted the officers of the Philistine army. The cry ran all along the line—"Fall back!" Eleazar, having cleared the field, throws himself on the ground to rest; but the sinews of his hand have been so long clenched around the sword that the hilt of it has entered the palm of the hand, and the gold wire around the hilt has broken the skin of the palm until he cannot drop the sword which he has so illustriously

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wielded. That is what I call magnificent fighting for the Lord God of Israël, and we want more of it. I am going to take up your time this morning in showing how Eleazar took hold of the sword, and how the sword took hold of him.

In the first place, I notice that he took hold of that sword with a tight grip. The soldiers in his army who ran away could easily drop all their weapons whenever they wanted to do so. I hear their swords clanging on the rocks as they throw them down in fright. But Eleazar's hand clave unto his sword. The fact is, that in this Christian conflict we want a tighter grip of the gospel weapon—the two-edged sword of God's truth. I am sick and tired of seeing people with only half-and-half a hold. They take hold of a part of God's Word and let the rest go, and the Philistines, seeing their loose grip, wrench the entire sword away. The only safe thing for us to do is to put our thumb down on the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, and sweep our hand on around until the New Testament shall come in the palm, and sweep the fingers still on around until the tips of the fingers clutch on the words: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." I like an infidel a great deal better than I do one of these namby-pamby Christians who takes hold of God's Word with the tips of his fingers, and knows what part to keep and what part to let go. God, by positive miracle, has kept this book together, and it is a Damascus blade. In a sword factory the severest test they can apply to a sword is the winding of the blade around a gun-barrel like a ribbon, and then when the sword is let loose it springs back to its old shape. This sword of God's Word has been put to the test, and it has been bent this way and that way, and wound this way and that way; but it always springs back again. Just think of it! A book written eighteen centuries ago, and some of it thousands of years ago, yet published to-day at the rate of twenty thousand copies a week, and more than one million copies a year. A book miraculously written, miraculously preserved, and miraculously scattered, is a

book you want to keep a tight grip of. Bishop Colenso will try to wrench out from your fingers the five books of Moses; Strauss will try to wrench out from your fingers the miracles; Renan will try to wrench out of your hand the entire life of Christ; your infidel friend will try to wrench out of your hand all the Bible. But with Eleazar's grip and in the strength of the Lord God of Israel, hold on to it! He who gives up the Bible, or any part of it, gives up pardon and life and peace and heaven.

Again, I notice in Eleazar's grip of the sword an entire self-forgetfulness. He did not realize that the hilt of the sword was eating down into the palm of his hand, and that while he was taking hold of the sword the sword was taking hold of him. He forgot the pain in his hand in his desire to destroy the Philistines. His hand clave unto his sword. Now in our Christian work we want self-forgetfulness. If we are all the time afraid we are going to get hurt, we will not kill the Philistines. Who cares whether our hand is hurt or not? When we are battling in such a glorious conflict, let us throw our whole nature into it, in entire self-abnegation and self-forgetfulness. I would rather live five years more and have them industrious and consecrated to Christ, than to live fifty years more and have them indolent and useless. What are pain and persecution, and misrepresentation and falsehood, when we are engaged in the service of such a Master? Do not be groaning because you are so tired, or because you meet with such severe rebukes from the world. Stop thinking of your wounded hand and think of the victory. We have all noticed how man can overcome physical hindrances when they are engaged in a great worldly enterprise. What were the everlasting frosts to Dr. Kane engaged in Arctic exploration! What was gout to Torstensten, the Swedish General, who was carried on his cot at the head of his army, the enemy flying when they saw the pillows of the sick man advancing! What was scrofula to Dr. Samuel Johnson doing the work of five professors at Oxford? What was invalidism to Alexander Pope poetizing for all time and for the nations although so

weak that every morning he had to be sewed up in canvas before he could stand at all? What was lameness to Lord Nelson when he had the enemies of England to beat back? What were dropsy and heart disease and a half dozen other complaints to Commodore Vanderbilt when he had the stock of the New York Central Railroad to advance? When we see worldly men overcoming every kind of impediment in order that they may succeed, what ought not we to overcome in the gaining of heavenly crowns for ourselves and our fellows? And yet, how many Christians go wringing their hands. They say: "O! my hand! my hand! It is so numb and it is so wounded. There is blood on the hilt and there is blood on the hand." When Eleazar plunged into the conflict with such a holy recklessness he did not think whether he had a hand, or an arm, or a foot, or think of anything but victory. "His hand clave to his sword."

Ah! my friends, how little we are willing to suffer for Christ and his cause compared with those who were suffocated, or who were drowned, or who were burned, or who were chopped to pieces for the truth. You do not appreciate the roll of the martyrs—one hundred and fifty thousand perishing for Christ in the inquisition; two hundred thousand perishing under Julian; one million Waldenses slain, and in the history of the Christian church it has been estimated that fifty millions have suffered martyrdom; but we must go to heaven in a Pullman sleeping car, our feet on plush, the bed made up early so we can sleep nearly all the way, the black porter of death to wake us up just in time to enter the golden city. We must have all the spiritual surgeons with salve and lint and bandages to look after our bruised hand; while Eleazar of the text forgets that the hilt of the sword is imbedded in the flesh. "His hand clave to the sword."

Again I remark that Eleazar's hand proves that he had done a great deal of hard hitting with his sword, and that something had got hurt. When I see Eleazar and the

three other brave men driving back a whole army of Philistines, I am not surprised that "his hand clave to his sword." The fact was, every time the point of the sword struck an enemy, the hilt of the sword struck deeper into Eleazar's hand. It has long ago been discovered in military life, you cannot conquer an enemy by rosewater speeches. You must have sharp and destructive work; it is only to be done by hard hitting. There are intemperance, and fraud, and gambling, and lust, and ten thousand regiments—armed regiments—of Philistine iniquity. Soft sermons in morocco cases laid down by kid gloves in the presence of an exquisite audience will never do the work. We must call things by their right names. We must expel from our churches the hypocrites who eat the sacrament on communion days, and then devour widows' houses between meals! We have to quit expending all our wrath on the Hittites and Jebusites and Girgashites of olden time. Let those poor wretches go, when we have so many living illustrations of appalling iniquity that need to be dragged out and slain. Herod is here. Ahab is here. Jezebel is here. The destroying angel is here. The massacre of the infants is here. We must, sandal on foot, helmet on head, heart-plate over heart, Eleazar-sword in the right hand, hit so hard that the result will not only be seen in the gashes of fallen iniquity, but in the adherence of the sword to our own hand. In other words, we want a few John Knoxes turned out into the church. We are refining on Christian work—the whole tendency is in that direction—and we are so refined in it that we send apologetic word to iniquity when we propose to attack it, and with a sword, silver chased, presented by the ladies, we ride out on a white palfrey covered with embroidered housing, and we put spurs into the war-charger just enough to make him dance gracefully, and then we send a missive, delicate as a wedding card, asking the old black giant of sin to surrender. Christian women saved by the sacrifice of Christ, and with a glorious mission given them, sometimes staying home from Sabbath school class because their fall hat is not done!

and Methodist churches, which used to shake our cities with rousing revivals, sending around a committee to ask demonstrative worshippers if they will please to say "Amen" and "Hallelujah" a little softly. We are trying to baptize the Church of God in this day with cologne and balm of a thousand flowers, when it wants a baptism of fire from the Lord God of Pentecost. Oh, we are so afraid somebody will criticise our sermons, or our prayers, or our exhortations, that we forget our desire for the world's conquest in the fear we will get hurt; while Eleazar goes into the conflict with such enthusiasm he does not care whether he is hurt or not. "His hand clave unto the sword."

Again, I notice how hard it was for Eleazar to get his hand and his sword parted. He had been fighting against the Philistines so long that the sinews had clutched around the sword and it became rigid, and when he gets through with the conflict, he cannot drop it. And I see three comrade warriors coming up to help him, and they bathe the back of the hand of Eleazar, and they try to relax the muscles and the sinews. They cannot get it loose. The sword sticks fast. They pry open the fingers, and they pry back the thumb, and after they succeed they find the curve of the wound corresponds with the curve of the hilt. "His hand clave unto the sword." You and I have seen the same thing many a time. There are in the United States a great many aged ministers. They are too decrepit or invalid to take parishes. They fought a mighty battle for God in other days. Their names are in the church records styled "*Emeritus*" or the words are put down, "a minister without a charge." They have taken off the heads of more Philistine iniquities than you could count from noon until sundown. They were a self-denying race of ministers. They had few books, and small salaries, and they swam spring freshets to meet their appointments. Put that old, worn-out minister into a prayer-meeting, or put him some Sunday into the pulpit, or put him in a sick room where a dying man wants consolation, and it is the same old gospel ring of admonition and petition. The sword which for half a century has been

wielded against the Philistines is so imbedded in the old man's hand he cannot drop it.

On the second floor, in the front room, my father lay a-dying. It was Saturday morning, about four o'clock. Just three years that day my mother had left him for the skies, and he had been homesick to join her society ever after. He was eighty-three years of age. Ministers of the Gospel came in to comfort him in his last hours, but he comforted them. He knew more Scripture than any of them. Oh, how wonderfully the words sounded out from his dying pillow: "I have been young and now am I old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread." He was full of the goodness of God and the mercy of Christ. They bathed his brow, and they bathed his hands, and they bathed his feet, and they succeeded in straightening out the limbs, and they succeeded in brushing back the white hair from the temples; but they did not succeed in bathing open the right hand so it would stay open. They bathed it open, and it came shut. They bathed it open again, and it came shut. What was the matter with the thumb and the fingers of that dear old hand? The fact was that Eleazar's sword had so long been clutched by the fingers that the sinews would keep bending that way. His dying hand clave unto the sword.

I preach this sermon this morning as a tonic. I want you to take hold of God's truth with such an ineradicable grip that all the forces of earth and hell cannot loosen it, and I want you to strike so hard for God that it will react, and while you take the sword, the sword of God's truth will take you. After the battle is over and the war is gone soldiers gather together, and they show their scars. One soldier rolls up his coat sleeve, and he says: "There I was wounded in the arm;" and another soldier pulls down his collar, and he says: "There I was wounded in the neck;" and another soldier says: "I have never had any use of that limb since the gunshot fracture." Oh, my Christian friends, when we get back our bodies on the resurrection

day I wonder if we will have any scars to prove our spiritual bravery? Jesus will stand there, scars on his hands, scars on his feet, scars on his brow, scars over his heart, won in the great battle of redemption, and all heaven will sob aloud with emotion and gratitude. Ignatius will stand there and point to the marks where the tooth and the paw of the lion seized him in the Coliseum. John Huss will show where the coals first scorched his foot on that day when his spirit took wing of flame and rose from Constance. Hugh McKail will point to the mark on the neck where the axe struck him. McMillan and Campbell and Freeman, the American missionaries, who with their wives and children perished in the awful massacre at Cawnpore, will show where the daggers of the Sepoys struck them. The Waldenses will show where their bones were broken on the day when the Piedmontese soldiery pitched them over the rocks. And all who have nursed the sick and cared for the poor will show the evidences of earthly exhaustion, and Christ shall wave his scarred hand over the scarred multitude, saying: "Ye suffered with me on earth, now be glorified with me in heaven." And the great organs of eternity will take up the chant, and St. John the martyr will sweep the keys with his fingers: "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." But on that day what will be your chagrin and mine if it shall be told on the streets of heaven that in this world we shrank back from all toil, from all hardship, from all fatigue? No battle-scars to show the glorified; not so much as one ridge on the palm of the hand to show that just once in all this great battle for God and the truth we clutched so tight and struck so hard that the hand clave to the sword.



THE SPIDER IN PALACES.

"The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces."—PROVERBS xxx. 28.

WE are all watching for phenomena. A sky full of stars shining from January to January calls out not so many remarks as the blazing of one meteor. A whole flock of robins takes not so much of our attention as one blundering bat darting into the window on a summer eve. Things of ordinary sound and sight and occurrence fail to reach us, and yet no grasshopper ever springs up in our path, no bug ever dashes into the evening candle, no mote ever floats in the sunbeam that pours through the crack of the window shutter, no barnacle on ship's hull, no burr on a chestnut, no limpet clinging to a rock, no rind of an artichoke, but would teach us a lesson if we were not so stupid. God in his Bible sets for our consideration the lily, and the snowflake, and the locust, and the stork's nest, and the hind's foot, and the Aurora Borealis, and the ant-hill. One of the sacred writers, sitting amid the mountains, sees a hind skipping over the rocks. The hind has such a peculiarly shaped foot that it can go over the steepest places without falling, and as the prophet looks upon that walking of the hind's foot on the rock, and thinks of the divine care over him, he says: "Thou makest my feet like hind's feet, that I may walk on high places." And another sacred writer sees the ostrich leaving its egg in the sand of the desert, without any care of incubation, and walk off, and the Scripture says that is like some parents, leaving their children without any wing of protection or care. In my text inspiration opens before us the gate of a palace, and we are inducted amid the pomp of the throne and the courtier, and while we are looking around upon the magnificence, inspiration points us to a spider plying its shuttle and weaving its web on the wall. It does not call us to regard the grand surroundings

of the palace, but to a solemn and earnest consideration of the fact that "the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

It is not very certain what was the particular species of insect spoken of in the text; but I shall proceed to learn from it in the first place the *exquisiteness of the divine mechanism*. The kings' chamberlain comes into the palace and looks around and sees the spider on the wall, and says: "Away with that intruder," and the servant of Solomon's palace comes with his broom and dashes down the insect saying, "What a loathsome thing it is." But under microscopic inspection I find it more wondrous of construction than the embroideries on the palace walls and the upholstery about the windows. All the machinery of the earth could not make anything so delicate and beautiful as the prehensile with which that spider clutches its prey, or as any of its eight eyes. We do not have to go so far up to see the power of God in the tapestry hanging around the windows of heaven, or in the horses and chariots of fire with which the dying day departs, or to look at the mountain swinging out its sword arm from under the mantle of darkness until it can strike with its scimiter of the lightning. I love better to study God in the shape of a fly's wing, in the formation of a fish's scale, in the snowy whiteness of a pond lily. I love to track his footsteps in the mountain mass, and to hear his voice in the hum of the rye fields, and discover the rustle of his robe of light in the south wind. Oh, this wonder of divine power that can build a habitation for God in an apple blossom, and tune a bee's voice until it is fit for the eternal orchestra, and can say to a firefly: "Let there be light," and from holding an ocean in the hollow of his hand goes forth to find heights and depths and lengths and breadths of omnipotency in a dew drop, and dismounts from the chariot of midnight hurricane to cross over on the suspension bridge of a spider's web. You may take your telescope and sweep it across the heavens in order to behold the glory of God, but I shall take the leaf holding the

spider and the spider's web, and I shall bring the microscope to my eye, and while I gaze and look and study and am confounded, I will kneel down in the grass and cry: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!"

Again: my text teaches me that insignificance is no excuse for inaction. This spider that Solomon saw on the wall might have said: "I can't weave a web worthy of this great palace. What can I do amid all this gold and embroidery? I am not able to make anything fit for so grand a place, and so I will not work my spinning jenny." Not so said the spider. "The spider taketh hold with her hands." Oh what a lesson that is for you and me. You say if you had some great sermon to preach, if you only had a great audience to talk to, if you only had a great army to marshal, if you only had a constitution to write, if there was some tremendous thing in the world for you to do—then you would show us. Yes, you would show us! What if the Levite in the ancient temple had refused to snuff the candle because he could not be a high priest? What if the humming-bird should refuse to sing its song into the ear of the honey-suckle because it cannot, like the eagle, dash its wing into the sun? What if the rain-drop should refuse to descend because it is not a Niagara? What if the spider of the text should refuse to move its shuttle because it cannot weave a Solomon's robe? Away with such folly! If you are lazy with the one talent you would be lazy with the ten talents. If Milo cannot lift the calf he never will have strength to lift the ox. In the Lord's army there is order for promotion, but you cannot be a general until you have been a lieutenant, a captain, or a colonel. It is step by step, it is inch by inch, it is stroke by stroke, that our Christian character is builded. Therefore, be content to do what God commands you to do. God is not ashamed to do small things. He is not ashamed to be found chiseling a grain of sand, or helping a honey bee to construct its cell with mathematical accuracy, or tingeing a shell in the surf, or shaping the

bill of a chaffinch. What God does he does well. What you do, do well, be it a great work or a small work. If ten talents, employ all the ten. If five talents, employ all the five. If one talent, employ the one. If only the thousandth part of a talent, employ that. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." I tell you, if you are not faithful to God in a small sphere, you would be indolent and insignificant in a large sphere.

Again: my text teaches me that *repulsiveness and loathsomeness will sometimes climb up into very elevated places*. You, perhaps, would have tried to kill the spider that Solomon saw. You would have said: "This is no place for it. If that spider is determined to weave a web let it do so down in the cellar of this palace, or in some dark dungeon." Ah! The spider of the text could not be discouraged. It clambered on, and climbed up higher and higher and higher, until after a while it reached the king's vision, and he said, "The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces." And so it often is now that things that are loathsome and repulsive get up into very elevated places. The Church of Christ, for instance, is a palace. The King of heaven and earth lives in it. According to the Bible her beams are of cedar, and her rafters of fire, and her windows of agate, and the fountains of salvation dash a rain of light. It is a glorious palace, the church of God is. And yet sometimes unseemly and loathsome things creep up into it—evil speaking and rancor and slander and back-biting and abuse, crawling up on the walls of the church, spinning a web from arch to arch, and from the top of one communion tankard to another. Glorious palace in which there ought only to be light and love and pardon and grace. Yet a spider is in the palace.

Home ought to be a castle. It ought to be the residence of everything royal. Kindness, love, peace, patience and forbearance, ought to be the princess residing there, and yet sometimes dissipation crawls up into that home, and the jealous eye comes up, and the scene of peace and

plenty becomes the scene of domestic jargon and dissonance. You say, "What is the matter with the home?" I will tell you. A spider is in the palace! A well developed Christian character is a grand thing to look at. You see some man with great intellectual and spiritual proportions. You say, "How useful that man must be!" But you find amid all his splendour of faculties there is some prejudice, some whim, some evil habit that a great many people do not notice, but that you have happened to notice, and it is gradually spoiling that man's character. It is gradually going to injure his entire influence. Others may not see it, but you are anxious in regard to his welfare, and now you discover it. A dead fly in the ointment. A spider in the palace.

Again: my text teaches me that *perseverance will mount into the king's palace*. It must have seemed a long distance for that spider to climb in Solomon's splendid residence, but it started at the very foot of the wall and went up over the panels of Lebanon cedar, higher and higher, until it stood higher than the highest throne in all the nations—the throne of Solomon. And so God has decreed it that many of those who are down in the dust of sin and dishonor shall gradually arrive in the king's palace. We see it in worldly things. Who is that banker in Philadelphia? Why he used to be the boy that held the horses of Stephen Girard while the millionaire went in to collect his dividends. Arkwright toils up from a barber's shop until he gets into the palace of invention. Sextus V. toils up from the office of a swineheard until he gets into the palace of Rome. Fletcher toils up from the most insignificant family position until he gets into the palace of Christian eloquence. Hogarth, engraving pewter pots for a living, toils up until he reaches the palace of world-renowned art. And God hath decided that though you may be weak of arm and slow of tongue, and be struck through with a great many mental and moral deficits, that by his almighty grace you shall yet arrive in the King's palace. Not such an one as is spoken of in the text—not

one of marble, not one adorned with pillars of alabaster and thrones of ivory and flagons of burnished gold, but a palace in which God is the King and the angels of heaven are the cup-bearers. The spider crawling up the wall of Solomon's palace, was not worth looking after or considering as compared with the fact that we who are worms of the dust may at last ascend into the palace of the King immortal. By the grace of God may we all reach it. Oh! heaven is not a dull place. It is not a worn-out mansion with faded curtains and outlandish chairs and cracked ware. No, it is as fresh and fair and beautiful as though it were completed but yesterday. The kings of the earth shall bring their honor and glory into it. A palace means splendor of apartments. Now, I do not know where heaven is, and I do not know how it looks, but if our bodies are to be resurrected in the last day, I think heaven must have a material splendor as well as a spiritual grandeur. What will be the use of a resurrected foot if there be nothing to tread on? or of a resurrected hand if there be no harp to strike, and no palm to wave, and no place to take hold in the king's palace? Oh! what grandeur of apartments when that divine hand which plunges the sea into blue and the foliage into green, and sets the sunset on fire, shall gather all the beautiful colors of earth around his throne, and when that arm which lifted the pillars of Alpine rock and bent the arch of the sky, shall rise before our soul the eternal architecture, and that hand which hung with loops of fire the curtains of morning shall prepare the upholstery of our kingly residence. A palace also means splendor of association. The poor man, the outcast, cannot get into the Tuilleries or Windsor Castle. The Sentinel of the king or the queen stands there and cries, "Halt!" as he tries to enter. But in that palace we may all become residents, and we shall all be princes and kings. We may have been beggars, we may have been outcasts, we may have been wandering and lost as we all have been, but there we shall take on regal power. What companionship in heaven! To walk side

by side with John and James and Peter and Paul and Moses, and Joshua and Caleb and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and Micah and Zachariah and Wilberforce and Oliver Cromwell and Philip Doddridge and Edward Payson and John Milton and Elizabeth Fry and Hannah More and Charlotte Elizabeth, and all the other kings and queens of heaven. O my soul, what a companionship!

A palace means a splendor of banquet. There will be no common ware on that table. There will be no unskilled musicians at that entertainment. There will be no scanty supply of fruit or beverage. There have been banquets spread that cost a million of dollars each; but who can tell the untold wealth of that banquet? I do not know whether John's description of it is literal or figurative. A great many wise people tell me it is figurative; but prove it. I do not know but that it may be literal. I do not know but that there may be real fruits plucked from the Tree of Life. I do not know but that Christ referred to the real juice of the grape when he said that we should drink new wine in our Father's kingdom. I do not say it is so, but I have as much right for thinking it so as you have the other way. At any rate, it will be a glorious banquet.

Hark! the chariot is rumbling in the distance. I really believe the guests are coming now. The gates swing open, the guests dismount, the palace is filling, and all the chalices flashing with pearl and with jet and carbuncle, are lifted to the lips of the myriad banqueters, while standing in robes of snowy white they drink to the honour of our glorious King! "Oh," you say, "that is too grand a place for you and for me." No, it is not. If a spider, according to the text, could crawl up on the wall of Solomon's palace, shall not our poor souls through the blood of Christ mount up from the depths of its sin and shame, and finally reach the palace of the eternal King? "Where sin abounded grace doth much more abound, that whereas sin reigned unto death, even so may grace

reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the far east there is a bird called the Huma, about which is the beautiful superstition that upon whatever head the shadow of that bird rests, upon that head there shall be a crown. O thou Dove of the Spirit floating above us, let the shadow of thy wing fall upon this congregation, that each at last in heaven may wear upon his head a crown! a crown! and hold in his right hand a star! a star!

HEROES IN COMMON LIFE.

"Thou, therefore, endure hardness."—2 TIM. ii. 3.

HISTORIANS are not slow to acknowledge the merits of great military chieftains. We have the full-length portrait of the Baldwins, the Cromwells, and the Marshal Ney of the world. History is not written in black ink, but with red ink of human blood. The gods of human ambition did not drink from bowls made out of silver, or gold, or precious stones, but of the bleached skulls of the fallen. But I am to-day to unroll before you a scroll of heroes that the world has never acknowledged; they who faced no guns, blew no bugle-blast, conquered no cities, chained no captives to their chariot wheels, and yet, in the great day of eternity, will stand higher than those whose names startled the nations; and seraph, and rapt spirit, and archangel will tell their deeds to a listening universe. I mean the heroes of common, everyday life.

In this roll, in the first place, I find all the heroes of the sick-room. When Satan had failed to overcome Job, he said to God, "Put forth thy hand and touch his bones and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." Satan has

found out what we have all found out, that sickness is the greatest test of one's character. A man who can stand that can stand anything; to be shut up in a room so fast as though it were a bastille; to be so nervous you cannot endure the tap of a child's foot; to have luxuriant fruit which tempts the appetite of the robust and the healthy, excite our loathing and disgust when it first appears on the platter; to have the rapier of pain strike through the side or across the temple, like a razor, or to put the foot into a vice, or to throw the whole body into a blaze of a fever. Yet there have been men and women, but more women than men, who have cheerfully endured this hardness. Through years of exhausting rheumatisms and excruciating neuralgias they have gone, and through bodily distresses that rasped the nerves, and tore the muscles, and paled the cheeks, and stooped the shoulders. By the dim light of the sick-room taper they saw on their wall the picture of that land where the people are never sick. Through the dead silence of the night they heard the chorus of the angels. The cancer ate away her life from week to week and month to month, and she became weaker and weaker, and every "good night" was feebler than the "good night" before—yet never sad. The children looked up into her face and saw suffering transformed into a heavenly smile. Those who suffered on the battle-field, amid shot and shell were not so much heroes and heroines as those who in the field hospital and in the asylum had fevers which no ice could cool and no surgery could cure. No shout of comrade to cheer them, but numbness, and aching, and homesickness—yet willing to suffer, confident in God, hopeful of heaven. Heroes of rheumatism; heroes of neuralgia; heroes of spinal complaints; heroes of sick headache; heroes of lifelong invalidism; heroes and heroines. They shall reign forever and forever. Hark! I catch just one note of the eternal anthem: "There shall be no more pain." Bless God for that.

In this roll I also find the heroes of toil who do their work uncomplainingly. It is comparatively easy to lead a regi-

ment into battle when you know that the whole nation will applaud the victory; it is comparatively easy to doctor the sick when you know that your skill will be appreciated by a large company of friends and relatives; it is comparatively easy to address an audience when in the gleaming eyes and the flushed cheeks you know that your sentiments are adopted, but to do sewing where you expect that the employer will come and thrust his thumb through the work to show how imperfect it is, or to have the whole garment thrown back on you to be done over again; to build a wall and know there will be no one to say you did it well, but only a swearing employer howling across the scaffold; to work until your eyes are dim and your back aches, and your heart faints, and to know that if you stop before night your children will starve. Ah! the sword has not slain so many as the needle. The great battle fields of our last war were not Gettysburg and Shiloh and South Mountain. The great battlefields of the last war were in the arsenals, and the shops, and the attics, where women made army jackets for a sixpence. They toiled on until they died. They had no funeral eulogium, but in the name of my God, this morning, I unroll their names among those of whom the world was not worthy. Heroes of the needle; heroes of the sewing-machine; heroes of the attic; heroes of the cellar; heroes and heroines. Bless God for that.

In this roll I also find the heroes who have uncomplainingly endured domestic injustices. There are men who for their toil and anxiety have no sympathy in their homes. Exhausting application to business gets them a livelihood, but an unfrugal wife scatters it. He is fretted at from the moment he enters the door until he comes out of it. The exasperations of business life augmented by the exasperations of domestic life. Such men are laughed at, but they have a heart-breaking trouble, and they would have long ago gone into appalling dissipations but for the grace of God. Society to-day is strewn with the wrecks of men who under the northeast storm of domestic infelicity have been driven

on the rocks. There are tens of thousands of drunkards in this country to-day, made such by their wives. That is prose! But the wrong is generally in the opposite direction. You would not have to go far to find a wife whose life is a perpetual martyrdom. Something heavier than the stroke of a fist, unkind words, staggerings home at midnight, and constant maltreatment which have left her only a wreck of what she was on that day when in the midst of brilliant assemblages the vows were taken, and full organ played the wedding march, and the carriage rolled away with the benediction of the people. What was the burning of Latimer and Ridley at the stake compared with this? Those men soon became unconscious in the fire, but here is a fifty years martyrdom, a fifty years putting to death, yet uncomplaining. No bitter words when the rollicking companions at two o'clock in the morning pitch the husband dead drunk into the front entry. No bitter words when wiping from the swollen brow the blood struck out in a midnight carousal. Bending over the battered and bruised form of him who, when he took her from her father's home, promised love, kindness, and protection, yet nothing but sympathy, and prayers, and forgiveness before they are asked for. No bitter words when the family Bible goes for rum, and the pawnbroker's shop gets the last decent dress. Some day, desiring to evoke the story of her sorrows, you say: "Well, how are you getting along now?" and rallying her trembling voice and quieting her quivering lip, she says: "Pretty well, I thank you, pretty well." She never will tell you. In the delirium of her last sickness she may tell all the secrets of her life-time, but she will not tell that. Not until the books of eternity are opened on the thrones of judgment will ever be known what she has suffered. Oh! ye who are twisting a garland for the victor, put it on that pale brow. When she is dead the neighbours will beg linen to make her a shroud, and she will be carried out in a plain box with no silver plate to tell her years, for she has lived a thousand years of trial and anguish. The gamblers and the swindlers who destroy her husband will not come to

the funeral. One carriage will be enough for that funeral—one carriage to carry the orphans and the two Christian women who presided over the obsequies. But there is a flash, and a clank of a celestial door, and a shout: "Lift up your head, ye everlasting gate, and let her come in!" And Christ will step forth and say: "Come in! ye suffered with me on earth, be glorified with me in heaven." What is the highest throne in heaven? You say: "The throne of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb." No doubt about it. What is the next highest throne in heaven? While I speak it seems to me that it will be the throne of the drunkard's wife, if she, with cheerful patience, endured all her earthly torture. Heroes and heroines.

I find also in the roll the heroes of Christian charity. We all admire the George Peabodys and the James Lenoxes of the earth, who give tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars to good objects. Last week Moses H. Grinnel was buried, and the most significant thing about the ceremonies, as I read them, was that there was no sermon and no oration; a plain hymn, a prayer, and a benediction. Well, I said, that is very beautiful. All Christendom pronounces the eulogium of Moses H. Grinnell, and the icebergs that stand as monuments to Franklin and his men will stand as monuments of this great merchant, and the sunlight that plays upon the glittering cliff will write his epitaph. But I am speaking this morning of those who, out of their pinched poverty help others—of such men as those Christian missionaries at the West, who are living on \$250 a year, that they may proclaim Christ to the people, one of them, writing to the secretary in New York, saying: "I thank you for that \$25. Until yesterday we have had no meat in our house for three months. We have suffered terribly. My children have no shoes this winter." And of those people who have only a half loaf of bread, but give a piece of it to others who are hungrier; and of those who have only a scuttle of coal, but help others to fuel; and of those who have only a dollar in their pockets, and give twenty-five cents to somebody else; and of that father who wears

a shabby coat, and of that mother who wears a faded dress, that their children may be well appareled. You call them paupers or ragamuffins, or emigrants, or tatterdemalions. I call them heroes and heroines. You and I may not know where they live, or what their name is. God knows, and they have more angels hovering over them than you and I have, and they will have a higher seat in Heaven. They may have only a cup of cold water to give a poor traveller, or may have only picked a splinter from under the nail of a child's finger, or have put only two mites into the treasury, but the Lord knows them. Considering what they had, they did more than we have ever done, and their faded dress will become a white robe, and the small room will be an eternal mansion, and the old hat a coronet of victory, and all the applause of earth and all the shouting of heaven will be drowned out when God rises up to give His reward to those humble workers in His kingdom, and say to them: "Well done, good and faithful servant." You have all seen or heard of the ruin of Melrose Abbey. I suppose in some respects it is the most exquisite ruin on earth. And yet, looking at it, I was not so impressed—you may set it down to bad taste—but I was not so deeply stirred as I was at a tombstone at the foot of that abbey—the tombstone planted by Walter Scott over the grave of an old man who had served him for a good many years in his house—the inscription most significant, and I defy any man to stand there and read it without tears coming into his eyes—the epitaph: "Well done, good and faithful servant." Oh! when our work is over, will it be found that because of anything we have done for God, or the church, or suffering humanity, that such an inscription is appropriate for us? God grant it.

Who were the bravest and deserved the greatest monument—Lord Claverhouse and his burly soldiers, or John Brown, the Edinburgh carrier, and his wife? Mr. Atkins, the persecuted minister of Jesus Christ in Scotland, was secreted by John Brown and his wife, and Claverhouse rode up one day with his armed men and shouted in front of the

house. John Brown's little girl came out. He said to her: "Well, miss, is Mr. Atkins here?" She made no answer, for she could not betray the minister of the gospel. "Ha!" Claverhouse said, "then you are a chip of the old block, are you? I have something in my pocket for you. It is a nosegay. Some people call it a thumbscrew, but I call it a nosegay." And he got off his horse, and he put it on the little girl's hand, and began to turn it until the bones cracked, and she cried. He said, "Don't cry, don't cry; this isn't a thumbscrew; this is a nosegay." And they heard the child's cry, and the father and mother came out, and Claverhouse said, "Ha! it seems that you three have laid your holy heads together determined to die like all the rest of your hypocritical, canting, sniveling crew; rather than give up the good Mr. Atkins, pious Mr. Atkins, you would die. I have a telescope with me that will improve your vision," and he pulled out a pistol. "No," he said, "you old pragmatist, lest you should catch cold in this cold morning of Scotland, and for the honour and safety of the king, to say nothing of the Glory of God and the good of our souls, I will proceed simply and in the neatest and most expeditious style possible to blow your brains out." John Brown fell upon his knees and began to pray. "Ah!" said Claverhouse, "look out, if you are going to pray; steer clear of the king, the council, and Richard Cameron." "O Lord," said John Brown, "since it seems to be thy will that I should leave this world for a world where I can love thee better and serve thee more, I put this poor widow woman and these helpless, fatherless children into thy hands. We have been together in peace a good while, but now we must look forth to a better meeting in heaven, and as for these poor creatures, blindfolded and infatuated, that stand before me, convert them before it be too late, and may those who have sat in judgment in this lonely place on this blessed morning, upon me, a poor, defenceless fellow-creature—may they, in the last judgment, find that mercy which they have refused to me, thy most unworthy but faithful servant. Amen." He rose up, and said: "Isabel,

the hour has come of which I spoke to you on the morning when I proposed hand and heart to you; and are you willing now, for the love of God, to let me die?" She put her arms around him, and said: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" "Stop that sniveling," said Claverhouse. "I have had enough of it. Soldiers, do your work. Take aim! Fire!" And the head of John Brown was scattered on the ground. while the wife was gathering up in her apron the fragments of her husband's head—gathering them up for burial—Claverhouse looked into her face, and said: "Now, my good woman, how do you feel now about your bonnie man?" "Oh!" she said, "I always thought weel of him, he has been very good to me; I had no reason for thinking anything but weel of him, and I think better of him now." O! what a grand thing it will be in the last day to see God pick out his heroes and heroines. Who are those paupers of eternity trudging off from the gate of heaven? Who are they? The Lord Claverhouses and the Herods and the Lord Jeffreys of the earth. They had sceptres, and they had crowns, and they had thrones, but they lived for their own aggrandizement, and they broke the heart of nations. Heroes of earth, but paupers in eternity. I beat the drums of their eternal despair. Woe! woe! woe!

But there is great excitement in heaven. Why those long processions? Why the booming of that great bell in the tower? It is coronation day in heaven. Who are those rising on the thrones, with crowns of eternal royalty? They must have been great people on earth, world-renowned people. No. They taught in a ragged school! Is that all? That is all. Who are those souls waving sceptres of eternal dominion? Why, they were little children who waited on invalid mothers. That all? That is all. She was called "Little Mary" on earth. She is an empress now. Who are that great multitude on the highest thrones of heaven? Who are they? Why, they fed the hungry, they clothed the naked, they healed the sick, they comforted the

heart-broken. They never found any rest until they put their head down on the pillow of the sepulchre. God watches them. God laughed defiance at the enemies who put their heels hard down on these his dear children; and one day the Lord struck his hand so hard on his thigh that the omnipotent sword rattled in the buckler, as he said: "I am their God, and no weapon formed against them shall prosper." What harm can the world do you when the Lord Almighty with unsheathed sword fights for you?

I preach this sermon this morning in comfort. Go home to the place just where God has put you to play the hero and heroine. Do not envy any man his money, or his applause, or his social position. Do not envy any woman her wardrobe, or her exquisite appearance. Be the hero or the heroine. If there be no flour in the house, and you do not know where your children are to get bread, listen and you will hear something tapping against the window-pane. Go to the window and you will find it is the beak of a raven, and open the window, and there will fly in the messenger that fed Elijah. Do you think that the God who grows the cotton of the South will let you freeze for lack of clothes? Do you think that the God who allowed the disciples on Sunday morning to go into the grain-field, and then take the grain and rub it in their hands and eat—do you think God will let you starve? Did you ever hear the experience of that old man. "I have been young, and now am I old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread." Get up out of your discouragement, O troubled soul, O sewing woman, O man kicked and cuffed by unjust employers, O ye who are hard bested in the battle of life and know not which way to turn, O you bereft one, O you sick one with complaints you have told to no one. Come and get the comfort of this subject. Listen to our great Captain's cheer: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the fruit of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

EXILES BROUGHT BACK.

"Yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him."—2 SAM. xiv. 14.

THAT passage I never noticed until last week. The wise, witty and imaginative woman of Tekoah said this in trying to persuade David to take back his beautiful but recreant son Absalom. For exquisite strategem woman has no equal in the other sex. If there had been a plain demand that Absalom be taken back it would have been ineffectual, but this woman composed a fiction which completely captured David's heart. She winds up the story by asking him to imitate the Lord, saying: "Yet doth God devise means that his banished be not expelled from him."

Indeed, then, are we all banished from God. What do you mean by banishment? Well, it means being driven away and wearing fetters. It means bitter absence from home. It means in some places and on some occasions an expatriation to Siberia to delve in the mines and to be fastened in a chain-gang. Yes, the whole race is banished; our first parents from Paradise; the recreant angels banished from heaven; the whole human family banished from peace. Where is the worldly man who has anything worthy of the name of happiness? What are those anxious looks of the brokers, of the bankers, of the merchants, of those men in the club house, of that great multitude of people who tramp up and down Broadway? Banished from God. Banished from peace. Banished from heaven. Sin has broken in, and it has snapped all the strings of the heart; it has untuned all the instruments of earthly accord; it has thrown the whole earth into a jangle. An old writer tells of two brothers who went out to take a walk in the night, and one of them looked up to the sky and said, "I wish I had a pasture field as large as the night heavens."

And the other brother looked up into the sky and said, "I wish I had as many oxen as there are stars in the sky." "Well," said the first, "how would you feed so many oxen?" Said the second, "I would turn them into your pasture." "What! whether I would or not?" Yes, whether you would or not." And there arose a quarrel, and when the quarrel ended one had slain the other. And so there has been a ridiculous contest in all ages of the world, sometimes about immaterial things, sometimes about supposititious things, and if this man had all the night heavens for an estate, he would not be happy, and if that man had as many oxen as there are stars in the sky he would not be happy. Banished from God. Banished from peace. Banished from heaven. Now, if my sermon should stop just here, it would be as though a man should look through the wicket of a penitentiary and say to the incarcerated, "What a hard time you have." What a small room. What poor fare, what a hard pillow. Alas for you! No, sir, I will not go to the wicket of the prison until I can say, "Sirs, do you know what this document is? Can you read that signature at the foot of the page? That is the governor's signature. You are a free man." If my sermon should stop at this point it would be as though I went into a penal colony, and I should say to the slaves, "On what small limits you are kept. It is most dreadful that you are never to be allowed to go home to your families. Alas for you!" No, I will not go to that penal colony until I can say, "Sirs, I have good news to tell you. The queen has taken your case into especial clemency, and in two or three weeks you are to go home to your wives and children. Give me your toiled, blistered hand in congratulation." A man who tells only half the story of the gospel might better not tell any of it.

A few days ago there was a terrible wreck down at Bridgehampton, Long Island. Thirty Indians, who were wreckers, went out to bring ashore the cargo. A hurricane struck them before they could get ashore, and all the thirty perished. When that hurricane struck them would it not

have been inhuman for some one to stand on the shore, through a speaking trumpet crying out to them, "You will be lost! Your wives will be widows! Your children will be orphans! You will be lost!" You have no right to speak to them at all unless you can speak to them through rocket and life-boat. Now, I come out to-night to the rescue. You are in the surf, and I throw you a life-line. You are in prison and I offer you the King's pardon. You are banished, "yet doth God devise means by which his banished shall not be expelled from him." When you are far away from home and you get a large package of letters, which do you read first? The letter from home. You shuffle the letters in your hand until you come down to the well-known handwriting. You throw the other letters aside, open the envelope and plunge into the tidings. Now, the world has to-night a great many messages for you—letters of loss and gain and emolument and preferment; but I come out as the Lord's postman. I have a package of letters. Which will you read first? "You say, Give us the one from home." Here it is. God your Father writes to you, asks you to return immediately, telling you the ship is ready to transport you, that all the expenses of the voyage are paid, the sails are already filled with the breath of heaven, that the pilot has his hand on the helm and all things are ready; for "God hath devised means that his banished shall not be expelled from him." To-night I gather all the Bible writers into a great orchestra, and they unfold the celestial music, and they take up the gospel instruments—the harp, the clapping cymbal and the trumpet. David puts his imperial fingers among the strings and plays, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean;" and Isaiah sweeps the bow across the viol, singing, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as snow;" and John puts the apocalyptic trump to his lips, and blows this blast, "Whosoever will let him come;" while the old prophet, with beard flowing down over breast heaving with emotion, claps the cymbals of my text, saying, "God hath devised means that his banished be not

expelled from him." And then I wait to hear the echo. I hear it far up the sky, in the cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," and in the beating of the surges of song against the base of the throne, like "the voice of many waters."

Well, my friends, what are some of the means that "God has devised that the banished be not expelled from him?" In the first place, the footpath up through the rifts of skull-shaped Calvary. Constantine has designated that hill as the one on which Jesus died. Dean Stanley says there are on that hill shattered fragments of lime-stone rock cleft evidently of the crucifixion earthquake. And, my friends, it is through that fissure of the rock that our path to pardon lies; through the earthquake of conviction, under the dripping crimson of the cross. Ah, do you not like the smell of blood? Neither do I; but without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Our debts are never to be paid unless from the cloven arteries of Jesus Christ they are liquidated.

Hallelujah! 'tis done,
I believe on the Son,
I'm saved by the blood
Of the crucified One.

No wonder that Mr. P. P. Bliss wrote that hymn expressive of his own salvation. When the railroad bridge broke down at Ashtabula, he was not harmed, but went over into the glories of that redemption of which he had been singing. Oh, yes, if we ever come to God we shall come over the hill of Calvary. Coming up to-night through those fissures in the rock, you going up, Christ coming down, you will meet, and there will be joy on earth and joy in heaven over your souls pardoned and forgiven. Now the Christian tracks the blood all around the shelving of the gray limestone rock on Calvary—the blood of the great martyrdom of Jesus Christ. The spring rains came, and they washed that red carnage into the valley at the foot of the mountain; but the Christian easily finds the red mark

on the rock, and the glimpse of it in song or sermon stirs all his sensibilities and crowns all his prayers. If it were needed that all the hosts of heaven should be gathered for one great battle, there would be only one name that could rally the universe, and that is the name of Jesus!

The steamboat bell was ringing on Luzerne Lake, and I had only a few moments in which to go up and see the dying lion sculptured in the rock, representative of the courage of the 800 of the Swiss guard who perished defending the royal honour. It is one of Thorwaldsen's finest works in stone. There lay the dying lion, spear in the side, life-blood oozing away, while with the paw, and in his dying breath, the lion seemed to be defending the national escutcheon. At the foot of the rock there was a fountain of limpid water where any one might drink. Then there were ivy branches and flowering plants dropping down from the cliffs that made the whole scene a joy forever. No Swiss can look upon that dying lion without thinking of the courage of the 800 guards that fell, and every drop of blood in his veins is stirred with patriotism. But to-night, behold sculptured in the Rock of Ages, the lion of Judah's tribe, the spear in the side, the life-blood oozing away, his dying struggle for our deliverance, while beneath the rock is the fountain of God's love in which your soul may drink, and the scene is all run over with roses of Sharon and lilies of the valley odorous with heaven. If those Swiss can afford to kneel down at the foot of a sculptured rock worshipping the memory of their patriots can we not to-night afford to kneel down at the foot of the hill, crying:

Rock of ages cleft for me
Let me hide myself in thee.

Among the means that God has devised that the banished be not expelled from him, I notice still further, spiritual influences; I do not mean any influence gone up from earth and etherealized, but the Divine Spirit. Some call him the Comforter; it is best for my purpose to-night that I call

him the soul-saving power of the nations. When that influence comes upon a man how strangely he acts. He cries; he trembles: he says things and does things that five minutes before he could not have been coaxed or hired to say or do. The human soul and religion seem antagonistic elements; but this divine spiritualism seems the harmonizing chemistry that brings into comity these opposing elements. The general mode of the Holy Spirit is in selecting means that are utterly insignificant, and then making them the steps of Christian ascent. At a fair in England a man stepped up to a peddler's stand and bought something. Then he took a leaf from a catechism and wrapped the article in that leaf; but one line in that catechism ushered his soul into the kingdom of God. Two men were wrestling on the green. One threw the other. A Christian man came along and said, "It will be sad indeed if Satan trips up your hope and you are both eternally overthrown." That ushered both of them into the kingdom of God in due time. Oh, it is a mighty spirit. Sometimes people laugh under it. Sometimes they pray under its power. There is a soul bowed down. The Holy Spirit is bowing him down. There is an anxious one. There is a deriding face trying to throw off religious impressions. It is often the case when the Holy Spirit comes to a man's heart he acts infernally to throw off the impression. I think when Richard Baxter stood before Jeffries, Lord Jeffries had the Spirit of God in his heart; but oh, how violently he resisted him, crying out; "Richard do you think to poison the ear of the court? Richard, you are an old knave. Richard, you have written and carried low books, each one as full of heresy as an egg is full of meat. Richard, I will look after you." And when the friends of Richard Baxter sobbed aloud with their grief, Jeffries shouted "Silence, you snivelling calves!" Oh, I believe the Holy Spirit was in that man's heart, and it was with violence that he was trying to drive him out. And so sometimes when the Spirit comes to a man he prays, and sometimes he blasphemes; but the Holy Spirit always comes with one idea, and that is

to show men that "God hath devised means that the banished be not expelled from him."

That Holy Spirit is in this house to-night. You have felt strangely ever since you came into this room. There are doors opening in your soul that have never been opened. You are wondering where you will come out at the last. You see that these Christian people are on a road that you are not travelling, and though you may not admit the words heaven or hell in your mind, you are conscious of the fact that there must be two destinies, two careers, two conditions, two termini, two words antagonistic, and everlastingly swung apart. Oh, What is this suppressed agitation? What is this awful silence? The Holy Spirit! The infinite Spirit! The eternal Spirit! The Divine Spirit! The lightning-footed and fire-winged Spirit! The armed Spirit! The all-conquering Spirit! The omnipotent Spirit! He comes down upon your soul with an avalanche of power. He commands you to repent; he begs you to believe; he asks you to live. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"

Among the means that "God has devised that the banished be not expelled from him," I notice also Christian surroundings. First, there is the influence of ancestral piety. Was there not a good man or woman in your ancestral line? Is there not an old Bible around the house with worn covers and turned down leaves, giving you the hint that there was some one who prayed? Was there a family altar at which you used to bow? The carpet may have been worn out, and the chair may have been sold for old furniture, and the knee that knelt on the one and beside the other may never again be pliant in earthly worship; but you remember, do you not remember? Ah! that Christian homestead, the memory of it to-night almost swamps your soul. When the first death came to the house what was it that comforted the old people? When you stood fanning them in their last hour what was it that gave them courage, the dear, old departing souls? O you ban-

ished ones, hear the voice of the Christian dead to-night, bidding you come home. I remember being with my father one day when he was ploughing in a new ground. It was very hard ploughing, and I remember how the sweat dropped down on the plough handles, and I remember at noon hearing my mother as she stood at the corner of the house far away, calling us to come home, that the table was spread, and the dining hour had arrived. And some of you are down in life, and you have a hard time. It is rough ploughing, and there is the sweat of toil and the sweat of many sorrows. Do you not hear to-night voices from heaven, crying, "Come home, the table is spread, the banquet is ready. Come home?" Is there not in your present surroundings a Christian influence? Is there not a Christian wife, or husband, or child, or brother, or sister? Through that influence God has been calling a great while. Oh, you must have been a persistent case to have withstood so much and withstood so long. What will you do next? What will God do next? He will somehow break up this monotony. Will it be fire, or storm, or the opening furnaces of the doomed world? What next? God will not be forever repeating these messages of invitation and alarm. What next? There will be a change in your case, O soul! On the road you travel there is a turn just ahead of you. This night thy soul may be required of thee. As I was seated in a chair on the deck of a steamer mid-Atlantic the night of a cyclone, an English lord whispered in my ear, "Do you know that the barometer has fallen very much, and we are going to have a tremendous change in the weather?" I said, "No; I have no apprehensions." But before morning we found what a change three or four hours could make in the Atlantic Ocean. From being a scene where we were lounging in arm-chairs on the deck, it became a scene where we were holding on with both hands for life! O hearer, have you examined the barometer of your soul? Does it tell smooth sailing or a cyclone? Some of you have been called by the gospel for many years. Do you suppose that God will always keep on in that line?

No, I tell you plainly, my dear hearer, there will be a change in your case.

I suppose you have seen the statue of Napoleon at St. Helena—emaciated, sick, broken-hearted, banished. Then you may also have seen the representation of the Triumphal Arch of the Champs Elysees, Paris—a representation of Napoleon in full power, mounted at Austerlitz. Oh, what a contrast between the two Napoleons. Will you, my hearer, pine in exile or will you ride the victor? Will your eternity be banishment or enthronement? There is only one question that makes my heart quake and my lip quiver and my strength give away, and that question is this: Where will you spend the million centuries of your existence?

STRANGERS WELCOMED AND WARNED.

"And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel."—2 CHRON ii. 17.

IF, in the time when people travelled afoot or on camel back, and vacillation from city to city was seldom, it was important that Solomon recognize the presence of strangers, how much more important, now, in these days, when by railroad and steamboat the population of the earth are always in motion, and from one year's end to the other, our cities are crowded with visitors. Every morning, on the Hudson River railroad track, there come in, I think, about six trains, and on the New Jersey railroad track some thirteen passenger trains; so that all the depots and the wharves are a-rumble and a-clang with the coming in of a great immigration of strangers. Some of them come for purposes of barter, some for mechanism, some for artistic gratification, some for sight-seeing. A great many of them go out on the evening trains, and

consequently the city makes but little impression upon them; but there are multitudes who, in the hotels and boarding houses, make temporary residence. They tarry here for three or four days, or as many weeks. They spend the days in the stores and the evenings in sight-seeing. Their temporary stay will make or break them, not only financially but morally, for this world and the world that is to come. Multitudes of them come into our morning and evening services. I am conscious that I stand in the presence of many of them to-night. I desire more especially to speak to them. May God give me the right word and help me to utter it in the right way.

There have glided into this house those unknown to others, whose history, if told, would be more thrilling than Booth's tragedy, more exciting than Nilsson's song, more bright than a spring morning, more awful than a wintry midnight. If they could stand up here and tell the story of their escapes, and their temptations, and their bereavements, and their disasters, and their victories, and their defeats, there would be in this house such a commingling of groans and acclamations as would make the place unendurable.

There is a man who, in infancy, lay in a cradle satelined. There is a man who was picked up, a foundling, on Boston Common. Here is a man who is coolly observing this evening's service, expecting no advantage and caring for no advantage for himself; while yonder is a man who has been for ten years in an awful conflagration of evil habits, and he is a mere cinder of a destroyed nature, and he is wondering if there shall be in this service any escape or help for his immortal soul. Meeting you only once, perhaps, face to face, I strike hands with you in an earnest talk about your present condition and your eternal well-being. St. Paul's ship at Melita went to pieces where two seas meet; but we stand to-night at a point where a thousand seas converge, and eternity alone can tell the issue of the hour. Listen to that song; watch that wan cheek; hark to the crash of that catastrophe!

The hotels of this country, for beauty and elegance, are not surpassed by the hotels in any other land; but those that are most celebrated for brilliancy of tapestry and mirror cannot give to the guest any costly apartment unless he can afford a parlor in addition to his lodging. The stranger, therefore, will generally find assigned to him a room without any pictures, and perhaps any rocking chair! He will find a box of matches on a bureau, and an old newspaper left by the previous occupant, and that will be about all the ornamentation. At seven o'clock in the evening, after having taken his repast, he looks over his memorandum book of the day's work; he will write a letter to his home, and then a desperation will seize upon him to get out. You hear the great city thundering under your windows, and you say: "I must join that procession," and in ten minutes you have joined it. Where are you going? "Oh," you say, "I haven't made up my mind yet." Better make up your mind before you start. Perhaps the very way you go now you will always go. Twenty years ago there were young men who came down the Astor House steps and started out in a direction where they have been going ever since, and ten million years from now, if you should meet them on the highway of eternity, you would find them going in the same direction, only faster.

"Well, where are you going?" says one man. "I am going to the Academy to hear some music." Good. I would like to join you at the door. At the tap of the orchestral baton, all the gates of harmony and beauty will open before your soul. I congratulate you. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to see some advertised pictures." Good. I should like to go along with you and look over the same catalogue, and study with you Kensett and Bierstadt and Church and Moran. Nothing more elevating than good pictures. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going to the Young Men's Christian Association rooms." Good. You will find there gymnastics to strengthen the muscles and books to improve the mind, and Christian influence to

save the soul. I wish every city in the United States had as fine a palace for its Young Men's Christian Association as New York has. Where are *you* going. "Well," you say, "I am going to take a long walk up Broadway, and so turn around into the Bowery. I am going to study human life." Good. A walk through Broadway at eight o'clock at night is interesting, educating, fascinating, appalling, exhilarating to the last degree. Stop in front of that theatre, and see who goes in. Stop at that saloon and see who comes out. See the great tides of life surging backward and forward, and beating against the marble of the curbstone, and eddying down into the saloons. What is that blotch on the face of that debauchee? It is the hectic flush of eternal death. What is that woman's laughter? It is the shriek of a lost soul. Who is that Christian man going along with a phial of anodyne to the dying pauper in Elm Street? Who is that belated man on the way to a prayer-meeting? Who is that city missionary going to take a box in which to bury a child? Who are all these clusters of bright and beautiful faces? They are going to some interesting place of amusement. Who is the man who shoots across Broadway from alley to alley? He is the murderer! He has whetted his knife until it will cut a hair, and it jingles in his filthy pocket. Who is that man going into the drug-store? That is the man who yesterday lost all his fortune on Wall street. He is going in for a dose of Belladonna, and before morning it will make no difference to him whether stocks are up or down. Who is that young man hastening along? He is going to rob his employer's till, if the coast be clear, and no Christian young man meet him and take him off in another direction. I tell you that Broadway, between seven and twelve o'clock at night between the Battery and Union Square, is an Austerlitz, a Gettysburgh, a Waterloo, where kingdoms are lost or won, and three worlds mingle in the strife.

I meet another coming down off the hotel steps, and I say, "Where are you going?" You say, "I am going

with a merchant of New York who has promised to-night to show me the underground life of the city. I am his customer, and he is going to oblige me very much." Stop! A business house that tries to get or keep your custom through such a process as that, is not worthy of you. There are business establishments in our cities which have for years been sending to eternal destruction hundreds and thousands of merchants. They have a secret drawer in the counter where money is kept, and the clerk goes and gets it when he wants to take these visitors to the city through the low slums of the place. Shall I mention the names of some of these great commercial establishments? I have them on my lip. Shall I? Perhaps I had better leave it to the young men who in that process have been destroyed themselves, while they have been destroying others. I care not how high-sounding the name of a commercial establishment if it proposes to get customers, or to keep them, by such a process as that. Drop their acquaintance. They will cheat you before you get through. They will send to you a style of goods different from that which you bought by sample. They will give you under weight. There will be in the package half-a-dozen less pairs of suspenders than you paid for. They will rob you. Oh, you feel in your pockets and say, "Is my money gone?" They have robbed you of something for which dollars and cents can never give you compensation. When one of these Western merchants has been dragged by one of these commercial agents, through the slums of the city, he is not fit to go home. The mere memory of what he has seen will be moral pollution. I think you had better let the city missionary and the police attend to the exploration of New York and underground life. You do not go to a small-pox hospital for the purpose of exploration. You do not go there, because you are afraid of the contagion. And yet you go into the presence of moral leprosy that is as much more dangerous to you as the death of the soul is worse than the death of the body. I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the men who have

been ruined in our cities, have been ruined by simply going to observe without any idea of participating. The fact is that underground city life is a filthy, fuming, reeking, pestiferous depth which blasts the eye that looks at it. In the Reign of Terror, In 1792, in Paris, people escaping from the officers of the law, got into the sewers of the city, and crawled and walked through miles of that awful labyrinth, stifled with the atmosphere and almost dead, some of them, when they came out to the river Seine, where they washed themselves and again breathed the fresh air. But I have to tell you that a great many of the men who go on the work of exploration through the underground gutters of New York life, never come out at any Seine river, where they can wash off the pollution of the moral sewerage. Stranger, if one of the "drummers" of the city, as they are called—if one of the "drummers" propose to take you and show you the "sights" of the town and underground New York, say to him: "Please, sir, what part do you propose to show me?"

Sabbath morning comes. You wake up in the hotel. You have had a longer sleep than usual. You say: "Where am I? a thousand miles away from home! I have no family to take to church to-day. My pastor will not expect my presence. I think I shall look over my accounts and study my memorandum book. Then I will write a few business letters, and talk to that merchant who came in on the same train with me." Stop! you cannot afford to do it.

"But," you say, "I am worth five hundred thousand dollars." You cannot afford to do it. You say: "I am worth a million dollars." You cannot afford to do it. All you gain by breaking the Sabbath you will lose. You will lose one of three things: your intellect, your morals, or your property, and you cannot point in the whole earth to a single exception to this rule. God gives us six days and keeps one for himself. Now, if we try to get the seventh, he will upset the work of all the other six.

I remember going up Mount Washington, before the railroad had been built, to the Tip-top House, and the guide would come around to our horses and stop us when we were crossing a very steep and dangerous place, and he would tighten the girdle of the horse, and straighten the saddle. And I have to tell you that this road of life is so steep and full of peril we must, at least one day in seven, stop and have the harness of life readjusted, and our souls re-equipped. The seven days of the week are like seven business partners and you must give to each one his share, or the business will be broken up. God is so generous with us ; he has given you six days to his one. Now, here is a father who has seven apples, and he gives six to his greedy boy, proposing to keep one for himself. The greedy boy grabs for the other one and loses all the six.

How few men there are who know how to keep the Lord's Day away from home. A great many who are consistent on the banks of the St. Lawrence, or the Alabama, or the Mississippi, are not consistent when they get so far off as the East River. I repeat—though it is putting it on a low ground—you cannot financially afford to break the Lord's day. It is only another way of tearing up your government securities, and putting down the price of goods, and blowing up your store. I have friends who are all the time slicing off pieces of the Sabbath. They cut a little of the Sabbath off that end, and a little of the Sabbath off this end. They do not keep the twenty-four hours. The Bible says : "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." I have good friends who are quite accustomed to leaving Albany by the midnight train on Saturday night, and getting home before church. Now, there may be occasions when it is right, but generally it is wrong. How, if the train should run off the track into the North River? I hope your friends will not send to me to preach your funeral sermon. It would be an awkward thing for me to stand up by your side and preach—you a Christian man killed on a rail-train travelling on a Sunday morning. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." What

does that mean? It means twenty-four hours. A man owes you a dollar. You don't want him to pay you ninety cents; you want the dollar. If God demands of you twenty-four hours out of the week, he means twenty-four hours and not nineteen. Oh, we want to keep vigilantly in this country, the American Sabbath, and not have transplanted here the German or the French Sabbath. If any of you have been in Paris, you know that on Sabbath morning the vast population rush out toward the country with baskets and bundles, and toward night, they come back fagged out, cross and intoxicated. May God preserve to us our glorious, quiet American Sabbaths.

Now you are in this hotel, and it is Sabbath morning, You wake up and you say to yourself: "Whatever others may do, I am going to have a day of rest for my body and for my soul." Go out and find a church somewhere. You will find something just suited to your taste in architecture, music and preaching—something certainly between St. Alban's and the plain Quaker meeting-house. Go in. If the sacrament is spread, without being asked, if you are prepared, sit down at it. My children, coming into the dining-room, never ask me whether they can sit at the table. They know they have a right to sit there. And when my father spreads a table, I have a right to sit at it. It is my table as much as his. Join in the singing, that is if the choir will let you! And listen to the preaching, and feel at home. Christ on the banks of the East River, is just the same Christ as on the banks of the Rio Grande. And then having found the Sabbath day the best day in the city, find the Sabbath night the best night of all the week. I think it is. Saturday night is a good night. We come home and put off our toils, yet the limbs ache and the head is heavy; but by the time sabbath night has come, we are rested. We have been all day in Christian society, and elevated thoughts have been going through our mind, and when the evening service comes, and we assemble in church, there is not a great deal of difference between earth and heaven, and the angels of God flying

to and fro can hardly find the boundary line between the two worlds, and our departed kindred seem to come down through the twilight, and we all clap our hands in glee and say: "It is good; it is good to be here."

But the Sunday night is the worst night in town to a great many people. But men all day are planning what they shall do on Sunday night. By the arrival of dark all the saloons of iniquity are in full blaze, and sin stands at the door and says: "Come in! come in!" And they go in—the verdant young man, the vicious old man, the insolvent man to drown his troubles, the adventurous young man to see the sights, people from all the cities and from all parts of the country. They go in and sit down at the table. Wretches with painted cheeks and shameful lack of apparel and soul whelmed in sin, wait upon them, and pass the poisoned chalice, and chatter uncleanly, and the beast takes possession of the man, and saloon answers to saloon, and clashing goblet, and bass viol through all the city play the chorus of devils in the orchestra of the damned! Oh, turn back from such influences. Make the Sabbath night the best night of all the week. It is God-honored. Honor it yourself by an earnest Christian service.

There are two classes of "drummers," who come to look over the register at the hotels. One man comes up from an honorable store and in an honorable way looks over the register, sees the new arrivals and applies for their custom. That is right. If you and I have articles of merchandize, and they are about equal in value, and you see the stranger first, you will get his patronage. That is right. But another kind of "drummer" comes up to every hotel register in this city. He looks over the register. His hat is shiny. His face is marked with dissipation. He is a carrion crow looking after a carcass. He looks over the register and sees the name of Brown, from Natchez. "Natchez! Natchez!" he says. "Why, I know a man living in Natchez and I can get acquainted with this man through that." He goes up to the clerk and he says:

"When will Mr. Brown, of Natchez, be in?" "Oh," says the clerk, "he will be in at six o'clock to dine." The man with the shiny hat tarries around the hotel until six o'clock. The Western merchant comes in. The waiting man goes up to him and says: "Mr. Brown, of Natchez?" "Yes," he replies, "that's my name."

"I know a man in Natchez, and I feel quite at home with anybody that comes from that city." "I am very glad to see you," the merchant says; "very glad to see you." The merchant, a little homesick and hardly knowing how to spend the evening, invites the "drummer" to dine with him. He dines very heartily. He always does when he dines at somebody's else expense. Seated at the table, he says: "Well, now, how can I serve you to-night? I know all the ins and outs of the city. Where would you like to go? I suppose you would like to see the sights." Ah, now eternity quivers in the balance. Stop and fly before you go any further into that spider's web. John Franklin, Capt. Hall and Dr. Kane might have a right to sacrifice their lives in Arctic explorations; but no man has a right to go so near the coast of eternal fire, just to find out whether it is hot or not. "Oh," you say, "I am only going to see." My friend takes me up on the top of a mountain in Colorado, four thousand feet high. He says: "Come here and look at that piece of moss, five hundred feet down, on that shelving." I say to him: "I would rather not look. I would rather stand off from that precipice." He says: "It won't hurt you; your head is not dizzy." He looks down and admires that patch of moss five hundred feet below, and stands looking, looking, until his head swims and he rolls over.

And so men come to the verge of city life and say: "Now, we'll look off. Come, young man, don't be afraid. Come near, let's look off." He looks and looks, until after awhile Satan comes and puts a hand on each of his shoulders, and pushes him off. Society says it is evil proclivity on the part of that young man. Oh, no, he was simply an explorer, and sacrificed his life in discovery. A

young man comes in from the country bragging that nothing can do him any harm. He knows about all the tricks of city life. "Why," he says, "didn't I receive a circular in the country, telling me that somehow they found out I was a sharp business man, and if I would only send a certain amount of money by mail or express, charges prepaid, they would send a package with which I could make a fortune in two months; but I didn't believe it. My neighbors did, but I didn't. Why, no man could take my money. I carry it in a pocket inside my vest. No man could take it. No man could cheat me at the faro table. Don't I know all about the 'cue-box,' and the 'dealer's-box,' and the cards stuck together as though they were one, and when to hand in my checks? Oh, they can't cheat me. I know what I am about." While at the same time, that very moment, such men are succumbing to the worst Satanic influences in the simple fact that they are going to observe. Now if a man or woman shall go down into a haunt of iniquity for the purpose of reforming men and women—if, as did John Howard, or Elizabeth Fry, or Van Meter, they go down among the abandoned for the purpose of saving souls; then they shall be God-protected and they will come out better than when they went in. But if you go on this work of exploration merely for the purpose of satisfying a morbid curiosity, I will take twenty per cent off your moral character. O strangers, welcome to the great city. May you find Christ here, and not any physical or moral damage. Men coming from inland, from distant cities, have here found God and found him in our service. May that be your case to-night. You thought you were brought to this place merely for the purpose of sight-seeing. Perhaps God brought you to this roaring thundering city, for the purpose of working out your eternal salvation. Go back to your homes and tell them how you met Christ here—the loving, patient, pardoning and sympathetic Christ. Who knows but the city which has been the destruction of so many may be your eternal redemption. A good many years ago, Edward Stanley, the Eng.

lish commander, with his regiment, took a fort. The fort was manned by some three hundred Spaniards. Edward Stanley came close up to the fort, leading his men, when a Spaniard thrust at him a spear, intending to destroy his life; but Stanley caught hold of the spear and the Spaniard in attempting to jerk the spear away from Stanley, lifted him into the battlements. No sooner had Stanley taken his position on the battlements, than he swung his sword and his whole regiment leaped up after him and the fort was taken. So may it be with you, O stranger. These city influences which have destroyed so many and dashed them down forever, shall be the means of lifting you up into the tower of God's mercy and strength, your soul more than conqueror through the grace of him who hath promised an especial benediction to those who shall treat you well, saving: "I was a stranger and ye took me in."

THE VACANT CHAIR.

Thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty.—
1 SAMUEL 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, in the words of my text, "Thou wilt 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. In 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 who sang out of it; and that cradle—you remember who rocked it; and that Bible—you remembered 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 gazed and wept at John Quincy Adams's vacant chair in the House of Representatives, and 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 household. Have those 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 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 and suddenly 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.

The air a little frosty ; the gums a little depressed, for in his early days there was not much dentistry. Perhaps a cane 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 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 of 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. 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 on its back 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 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 old arm chair! History tells 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 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 fulfilling: "Thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty."

I go a little farther 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 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 day of children, other chairs could not keep awake, that chair always kept awake—kept easily awake. That 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 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 at 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 Scotch kirk 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: "O mother, mother, what your life could not do, your death 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 farther and I come to the invalid's chair. What! How long have you been sick? "Oh, I have been sick ten, twenty, thirty years." Is it possible? What a story of endurance. There are in many of the families of my congregation, these invalid 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 throng of people there; but the throng did not impress me so much as the spectacle of just one face—the face of an old invalid who was wheeled in on her chair. I said to her afterwards, "Madame, how long have you been prostrated?" for she was lying flat in the chair. "Oh," she replied, "I have been this way for fifteen years." I said, "Do you suffer 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 any one 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 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 become vacant, how suggestive it is. No more of 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 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 Pharisees 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 with tears rolling down his face got up and shook his fist and said: "Stop that infernal band and give the baby a chance." Oh, there was pathos in it as well as good cheer. 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 around 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 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 an 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 Saviour. 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 I have 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 re-

ject 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. 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 worshipping God in that place from which we shall go out no more forever. Thank God there will be no vacant chairs in heaven!

A CALL TO ACTION.

"So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil."
—ISAIAH xli. 7.

THERE had been war made upon idolatry, and its friends gathered to the scene. The carpenter went to work and cut out idols to take the place of those that had been destroyed, and the blacksmith fashioned parts of the idol on the anvil and the goldsmith adorned what the other two mechanics had made. "The carpenter encouraged the goldsmith and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil." When I read that passage I wondered why it was that in the kingdom of God we could not be just as well banded together—why, since there is work for every Christian man to do, we could not all be encouraging each other. I encouraging you by the way I do my work, and you me by the way in which you do your work, and so, in a spiritual and Christian sense, "the carpenter encouraging the goldsmith and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil."

I propose in the first place to address myself to those who profess the faith of Christ, and in the next place to address myself to those who profess not to be Christians, for, my dear friends, you all profess one thing or the other in regard to the religion of Jesus Christ. I want, before I get through, to point all these Christian men and women to some style of work. I don't believe that a man can be a child of God and have no anxiety about the redemption of the people. I often hear people while they have their arms folded, singing :

Tis a point I long to know
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I his or am I not ?

Why, it is very easy to have that question decided. If you have no anxiety about the salvation of others you are not a Christian, and you might as well understand it now as ever. Many of you have sworn before high heaven that you will be the Lord's; and before I get through speaking to-night, the Holy Spirit will tell you something you ought to do, and it will be at the infinite peril of your immortal soul if you refuse to do it. In the first place here are the *elders of the church*. It is very plain what their work is. It is your work to help me in watching this great flock. Sickness will come to one of these church members; be there and pray for him. Death will come into some of the households of this congregation; before they have time to put crape on the door bell, I want you to be there to talk of Jesus who is "the resurrection and the life." Here is a young man who wants to become a Christian but he does not know how to start. His father cannot tell him; his mother cannot tell him. Take him by the arm, walk with him down the street, and before you leave him be sure his feet are on the road to heaven. You are not called to be a king over a nation; you are not called to be admiral of a navy: you are not called to be general in an army; but God has given you the highest honour—he has put into

your hand the keys of the kingdom. Be thou faithful unto death and Christ will give thee a crown.

Here are the *deacons of the church*. They ought to be familiar with the dark lanes and rotten stairs and the damp cellars of these cities. There are hundreds of suffering, stretching out their hands for bread. Give it to them. Do you hear the cry of that freezing woman? God give speed to your feet while you buy her coal and pay her rent and tell her of that land where they never freeze and never starve. Oh, what a beautiful work that is. A Russian soldier was standing sentinel one cold night: he was almost perishing. A labourer passing along, took his coat off and said: "Wear this coat: you will freeze before morning if you don't; I am going home, and will be comfortable." The next morning, the Russian soldier was found frozen to death. A few months afterwards, the labourer who had given him his coat was dying. In his dream he thought that Jesus came into the room, and he looked around and said: "Jesus, is that you? You have my coat on." "Yes," said Jesus, "it is the coat you gave the Russian soldier that night he froze to death." "I was naked and ye clothed me." Oh, the reward of those who are faithful to the outcast and the suffering and the poor!

Then, here are the *trustees of the church*. Let them look after the church finances as well as they look after their own business. Let them know that God backs them up in the work, and that what they do for the church they do for God. In the name of him who will judge the quick and the dead I bid you rouse up to that work, the importance of which you will not appreciate until the last day comes, and the books are open.

Then, there is the *Sunday school* field. It is an immense congregation in itself. Oh, the work it is doing. It is waiting for some of you to help. Hark, I hear in the tramp of those little feet the marching of coming generations, and in the hosanna that this afternoon rang in the temple, I hear another pean in the hallelujahs of heaven. Oh, when

you close your eyes in the last sleep, do you not want your influence felt in the church and state. The lambs on the cold mountains are waiting for you to shepherd them. Do you say they are nothing but little children and of no great account? Does it seem a stooping for you to go there? That child has covered up in the ashes of his body a spark of immortality which will blaze on with untold splendor long after the sun has died of old age and all the countless worlds that glitter at night shall be swept off by the Almighty's breath as the small dust of the threshing floor. That soul at death will speed quicker than the eagle, swifter than lightning, swifter than thought forever and forever upward until lost in God, or plunge down into endless night. You are deciding whether it shall go upward or downward.

Then, there is *the praying circle*. Every Friday night you can go there and pluck clusters of life for your own soul and the souls of others. Has any one ever heard you pray? Is it because you are ashamed of your poor grammar or ashamed of Jesus that you have not been heard there? Is it because illiterate men sometimes take part and your taste is offended? Oh, when the long roll of Judgment thunders shall wake, the dead and empires of the departed shall rise from the dust, and "Come, ye blessed," and "Depart ye cursed" shall rend the air, do you think such an excuse as that will stand? Oh, have you been living all these years in this world of trouble, and has no one ever heard you pray? Here is a map of the destitution in our own city. Do you know anything about it? Do we walk through the streets in the morning going to business, and at night returning from business, without any idea of the wretchedness in this city of Brooklyn? Who will enter on this work of city evangelization? Not those whose nostrils are easily offended with bad odors. Not those whose chief work it is to look after a refined taste. Not those who are more fearful of having their patent leathers mussed than that five hundred thousand souls will die. I hear coming up through all the streets of the city a cry of bereavement uncomforted;

of drunkenness unpitied ; of uncleanness that knows no way of reformation. Behold, the gambling hells ! Behold, the grogshops ! Behold the brothels ! Oh, where are the Christian men and women in the strength of Christ to go out and invite the lost, the abandoned and the debauched, back to the heart of an all-forgiving God ? Where are the John Howards to carry light into the dungeons ? Where are the Elizabeth Frys to take the message of heaven to the abandoned ? Where are the Harlan Pages to preach Christ at the street corners ? O Lord Jesus, did'st thou weep over the city, and shall we stand stolidly looking at all this wreck of broken families and broken fortunes and broken hearts ? Weep, O Church of God ! Weep for the children of the street born in the straw, nurtured in infamy, and schooled in shame. Weep for the victims of evil habits over whom the Juggernaut hath gone grinding into crimson mortar their blood and bones ! Weep for the filth and the squalor and the living sepulchres of metropolitan crime. What is it I hear ? Hark ! it is the shriek of the dying populations of Brooklyn and New York. They want bread, they want medicine, they want clothes, they want the Bible, they want Christ, they want heaven. They have no comfort for this life ; they have no hope for the life to come. Wake up ! Wake up ! Why stand ye here all the day idle ? If you can't save a multitude of them can't you save one ? Is there any soul in this house that cannot go out and during the winter save one ? Remember that he that converteth one sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins. Have not you found your field of work yet ? Then go down on your knees to-night and refuse to get up until the prayer is answered ; " Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? "

There must be a field somewhere. Sea captains are generally sympathetic, and when they are going over the water and see a signal of distress hoisted they bear down upon the ship and take her passengers from the wreck. But there have been cases where these men

have been hard-hearted and seen a signal of distress but paid no attention to it and come into port. How they have been execrated by the sailors and the people of the country. What do you think will be said of us in eternity if it shall be found out that we voyaged on through life only careful about our own comfort while all around us there were signals of distress lifted but we cared not for the suffering, and were not moved by the cry of the eternally shipwrecked ! Ah, is there no work for you to do ? Join some of the regiments ; belong to the artillery or the cavalry or the infantry of the church Do you know that God will have no mercy upon you in your death hour, and no compassion in eternity, if, while professing to be a Christian you sit idly and let the people perish. You shall not dwell among the Christian workers. Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion.

I am glad to know that so many of these people are coming up to the work of the Lord—that so many are enlisted, hundreds more this year than last year, and yet I shall not be satisfied until I see every man and woman belonging to this church thoroughly enlisted for the Lord. Come, my friends, do what you can. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and knowing that in judgment you and I must give an account before God, I charge you to gather up all your energies of body and mind and soul and unite them in one direction in behalf of Christ's kingdom. Oh, it is a great service. I want you to understand, you Christians who are drones in the hive, doing nothing, that you are missing your chief satisfaction. Look at the life of a man who serves God and of one who serves the world. Look at Albert Barnes and Lord Byron. The former enjoying the service of Christ so much that his cheerfulness was everywhere known, the latter miserable all his days, becoming more miserable to the last and then his soul going out into darkness forever. You will have to do it quickly, if you do anything for Jesus. Some of you will be dead

before this year is ended. "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no knowledge nor wisdom nor device in the grave whither we are all hastening."

But now the rest of my remarks are to those who profess not to be Christians. I do not want to sweep the gospel net through this audience to-night and catch two or three souls, but to catch a thousand. I want to ask you why it is that you have not become Christians? There is a man who says: "Because I am waiting for a revival before I come to Christ." What do you call this? During the past few years we have had a perpetual revival. The constant cry among the people has been: "Which is the way to heaven?" Why is it that the silence in our assemblages makes it seem as if the audience were listening for the footstep of Christ on the church aisle? Oh, if you have been waiting for a revival, it has come, not by earthquake, or storm, but by a still small voice, and a deep surging to and fro of heart-felt emotion. The tide sets in toward the beach, and all you have to do is to let yourselves float in on the billow. God, to-night, shakes at the door of your soul. Whether you listen to me or not, whatever may have been the motive that brought you here to-night, whether you like my preaching or not—the Lord God Almighty this moment rattles at the door of your soul. Hear him, feel him, know him—the Lord God merciful and gracious; the Lord infinite and omnipotent; the Lord of the pentecost; the Lord of the judgment day; the Lord that came down on Northampton when Jonathan Edwards was there; the Lord that came down on Monmouth when William Tennent preached there; the Lord who was at Baskingridge when Doctor Finlay dwelt there. Old prejudices are going away, and lips that never prayed before begin to move in supplication. Oh, that instead of hiding your feelings and holding yourselves back, there might be an outbreak of religious sensibility that would sweep all before it. Would to God that prayers that have been offered for some of your souls by those gone

to glory might this night be answered! O dying soul, fly to Jesus.

There are some of you who say you are kept back by your worldly engagements. You say: "I have so much to do." O my dear brethren, will you let your store, your office, your shop, stand between you and heaven? What will Wall street or Broadway or Fulton street or Atlantic street or any street in Brooklyn or New York be to you in a little while except as a pathway on which to go out to the cemetery? Among the thousands who rush through the gates at Fulton Ferry, South Ferry, Catharine Ferry, and Grand Street Ferry, your face will not be seen. You will leave behind your bonds, your mortgages, your bills of sale, your government securities, and with two empty hands you will go out of this life into the great eternity. O my God! show that man the folly of letting anything stand between him and heaven! Think of a man leaving this life where he has had everything comfortable, saying: "I had an elegant home, beautiful surroundings, large store-houses, extensive business engagements—I had everything that heart could wish, and now I come up to the verge of the eternal world and I must go down. Look at me, all ye friends who mingled with me in worldly associations; look at me, all ye business men who stood with me in the marts; look at me as now I leap out from a world of comfort into a world of darkness—one, two, three! and I am gone forever." There is somebody in the audience who says; "I am afraid some one will laugh at me if I become a Christian." Would you want to let anybody know you wept over sin? Wouldn't it be infinite mortification if anybody should find you on your knees? Will you allow your soul to be caught in such a thin trap as human scorn? Can these people who laugh at your seriousness insure you for the future? Can they bridge the chasm between this world and the next, and open for you the gate into the skies? If so, let this religion of Christ go down under a volley of merriment. But they can't help you,

and you know they can't. When the earth crackles in the last fire, and the mountains crash into ruin, and the throne of judgment shall be set, white, flaming, omnipotent, what will be all this laughing and jeering of your associates! I beg you break away from this thralldom of evil companionship. Say to them; "Let me go. You may do as you please, but I must save my own soul. This night I start for heaven. Farewell, thou lying, deceitful world. Welcome Jesus! Welcome heaven!"

There may be in this audience some young people who say: "We are too young yet. Wait a little while till after we have enjoyed the world more, and then we will become Christians." I ask any young man if that is fair, to sit down at a banquet all your life long, and have everything you want, and then at the close when you are utterly exhausted, say: "Lord Jesus, there are dregs in that cup; you may drink them. Lord Jesus, there are crumbs under the table; you may take them up." Is that fair to the best friend you ever had? Why not rather join the noble company of young people in this church who have started for heaven? Did you not hear them sing to-night? Don't you know there is no shadow upon their brows, that they can laugh as loudly as you can? Since they became Christians they have quadrupled their joy. They bound on the way to heaven, their hearts glad, their prospects bright; their plans noble. Won't you join them in that race? Give the strength of your arm, the exuberance of your soul, the energy of your whole nature, to him who was himself once a young man and knows a young man's joys, and a young man's temptations. Jesus was never anything but a young man on earth, and he knows all about you. O young man, trust yourself in his company.

I hear Jesus saying to that young man: "Son, give me thy heart," and I hear him call to some young woman as to the maiden in the Scripture: "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." Oh, that it might be like the crowning of a May

quëen, as the garlands of God come down upon the brows of these dear young people.

I hear some say, "I am too old." Alas, how old art thou? Seventy? Eighty? That is not too old. If thou can'st not do any more than tremble towards the cross, if thou art too weak to-night to hold thy staff, if all thy soul seems to be bound down with sorrow, just stumble thy way and put thy withered arms around that cross, and life and joy and pardon and peace and salvation will come to you. Though your sins are as scarlet they shall be as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. No, you are not too old.

I hear some one say: "Give me more time to think of this!" What is time? We wrote compositions upon it in school, but what is time? It is a very swift wheel, and it goes around sixty times in a minute and every time it turns it hurls souls into eternity. Oh, what an uncertain thing life is! Where we will be by to-morrow at just this hour, I know not. Would I give up my hope in Christ till six o'clock to-morrow morning. If I should, what if between now and six o'clock my soul should be carried into eternity, whither would I go? Life uncertain? Why, it is more certain which way a wave will break or a cloud float, or a bird fly than it is certain when our last change will come. Are we ready for it? I have often read of persons who floated off in a life-boat after a wreck, and for three or four days had nothing to eat, and then through complete exhaustion would fall asleep and dream about cool fountains and shady groves full of ripe apples, and about sitting around a luxuriant banquet; and then waking up from the dream to find nothing but the boat and the hunger and the thirst. O ye who are voyaging on in life, dreaming of heaven, of the fruits of the tree of life, of heavenly supplies will you ever get them? Or will any of you wake up at last as from a dream to find nothing but darkness and hunger and thirst and woe? I wish I could batter down to-night

the last obstacle in the way of your coming to God. "As I live," saith the Lord; "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Turn ye! why will ye die? You read in this Bible that the Israelites were all surrounded; there was the Red Sea before them and mountains on either side, and Pharaoh's host right after them. You are as thoroughly surrounded—eternity before you, eternity behind you, eternity on the right hand and eternity on the left hand, eternity above you, eternity beneath you. Oh, eternity! What glory and despair. What hallelujahs and wailing. What glittering of crowns and rattling of chains! Eternity! Where will we spend it? Who will be our companions? What will be our occupation? Eternity! Eternity! Oh, shoreless sea, oh, interminable procession! oh, unending years! Eternity! who can count thy joys! who can tell thy tears!

Standing here to-night I am overwhelmed utterly with the thought that in a very little while we will all be gone into that other existence. Some one else will stand here to speak and others will sit there to hear, and the thought comes over me overwhelmingly. There is an old hymn I heard sung when I was seven years of age in a country prayer meeting. I never had a hymn produce such an effect on my mind as that. There are hymns more jubilant and some more rousing and there may be hymns that have more rhythm, but I never heard any hymn that so touched my soul as that one. I think I can recollect two or three verses:

Eternity! stupendous theme,
Compared herewith our life's a dream;
Eternity! oh, awful sound!
A deep where all our thoughts are drowned

But an eternity there is
Of dreadful woe or joyful bliss,
And, swift as time fulfills its round,
We to eternity are bound.

What countless millions of mankind
Have left this fleeting world behind ;
They're gone—but where ? Ah, pause and see
Gone to a long eternity.

Ye gracious souls, with joy look up,
In Christ rejoice, your glorious hope.
This everlasting bliss secures,
God and eternity are yours.



THE FATHER'S KISS.

"When he was yet a great way off his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."—ST. LUKE xv. 20.

I HAVE often described to you the going away of this prodigal son from his father's house and I have showed you what a hard time he had down in the wilderness, and what a very great mistake it was for him to leave so beautiful a home for such a miserable desert. But he did not always stay in the wilderness ; he came back after a while. We don't read that his mother came to greet him. I suppose she was dead. She would have been the first to come out. The father would have given the second kiss to the returning prodigal ; the mother the first. It may have been for the lack of her example and prayers that he became a prodigal. Sometimes the father does not know how to manage the children of the household ; the chief work comes upon the mother. Indeed, no one ever gets over the calamity of losing a mother in early life. Still, this young man was not ungreeted when he came back. However well appareled we may be in the morning, when we start out on a journey, before night, what with the dust and the jostling, we have lost all cleverness of appearance. But this prodigal, when he started from his swine trough, was ragged and wretched, and his appearance after he had

gone through days of journeying and exposure, you can more easily imagine than describe. As the people see the prodigal coming on homeward, they wonder who he is. They say : "I wonder what prison he has broken out of. I wonder what lazaretto he has escaped from. I wonder with what plague he will smite the air." Although these people may have been well acquainted with the family, yet they don't imagine that this is the very young man who went off only a little while ago with quick step and ruddy cheek and beautiful apparel. The young man, I think, walks very fast. He looks as though he were intent upon something very important. The people stop ; they look at him ; they wonder where he came from ; they wonder where he is going. You have heard of a son who went off to sea and never returned. All the people in the neighbourhood thought that the son would never return, but the parents came to no such conclusion. They would go by the hour and day and sit upon the beach, looking off upon the water, expecting to see the sail that would bring home the long absent boy. And so, I think, this father of my text sat under the vine looking out towards the road, on which his son had departed ; but the father has changed very much since we saw him last. His hair has become white, his cheeks are furrowed, his heart is broken. What is all his bountiful table to him when his son may be lacking bread ? What is all the splendour of the wardrobe of that homestead when the son may not have a decent coat ? What are all the sheep on the hillside to that father when his pet lamb is gone ? Still he sits and watches, looking out on the road, and one day he beholds a foot traveller. He sees him rise above the hills, first the head, and after a while the entire body, and as soon as he gets a fair glance at him he knows it is his recreant son. He forgets the crutch and the cane and the stiffness of the joints, and bounds away. I think the people all around were amazed. They said : "It is only a foot-pad ; it is only an old tramp of the road ; don't go out to meet him." The father knew better. The change in the son's appearance could not hide

the marks by which the father knew the boy. You know that persons of a great deal of independence of character are apt to indicate it in their walk. For that reason the sailor almost always has a peculiar step, not only because he stands much on shipboard, amid the rocking of the sea, and he has to balance himself, but he has for the most part an independent character, which would show itself even if he never went on the sea, and we know what transpired afterward and from what transpired before that this prodigal son was of an independent and frank nature, and I suppose that the characteristics of his mind and heart were the characteristics of his walk. And so the father knew him. He puts out his withered arms toward him. He brings his wrinkled face against the pale cheek of his son. He kisses the wan lips. He thanks God that the long agony is over. "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."

Oh, don't you recognize that father? Who was it? It is God! I have no sympathy with that cast iron theology which represents God as hard, severe, and vindictive. God is a father, kind, loving, lenient, gentle, long-suffering, patient, and he flies to our immortal rescue. Oh, that we might realize it to-day. "A wealthy lady in one of the eastern countries was going off for some time and she asked her daughters for some memento to carry with her. One of the daughters brought a marble tablet, beautifully inscribed, and another daughter a beautiful wreath of flowers. The third daughter came and said: "Mother, I brought no flowers or tablet, but here is my heart. I have inscribed it all over with your name, and wherever you go it will go with you." The mother recognized it as the best of all the mementoes. Oh, that to-day our souls might go out towards the Lord Jesus Christ, towards our Father—that our heart might be written all over with the evidences of his loving kindness, and that we might never again forsake him. Lord God, this day by thy Holy Spirit move upon our affections!

In the first place, I notice in this text, the father's *eye-sight*; in the second place, I notice the father's *haste*; and in the third place, I notice the father's kiss.

To begin: The father's *eye-sight*. "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him." You have noticed how old people sometimes put a book off on the other side of the light; they can see at a distance a great deal easier than they can close by. I don't know whether he could see well that which is near by, but I do know that he could see a great way off. "His father saw him." Perhaps he had been looking for the return of that boy especially that day. I don't know but that he had been in prayer and that God had told him that that day the recreant boy would come home. "The father saw him a great way off."

I wonder if God's eye-sight can descry us when we are coming back to him? The text pictures our condition—we are a great way off. That young man was not farther off from his father's house, sin is not farther of from holiness, hell is no farther from heaven—than we have been by our sins, away from God; aye, so far off that we could not hear his voice though vehemently he has called us year after year. I don't know what bad habits you may have formed or in what evil places you have been or what false notions you may have entertained; but you are ready to acknowledge, if your heart has not been changed by the grace of God, that you are a great way off, aye, so far that you cannot get back of yourselves. You would like to come back. Aye, this moment you would start if it were not for this sin and that habit and this disadvantage. But I am to tell you of the Father's eye-sight. "He saw him a great way off." He has seen all your frailties, all your struggles, all your disadvantages. He has been longing for your coming. He has not been looking at you with a critic's eye or a bailiff's eye, but with a Father's eye, and if a parent ever pitied a child, God pities you. You say: "Oh, I had so many evil surroundings when I started life." Your Father sees it. You say. "I have so many bad surroundings now and it is very difficult for me to break away from evil

associations." Your Father sees it, and if this moment you should start heavenward, as I pray you may, your Father would not sit idly down and allow you to struggle on up toward him. Oh, no! Seeing you a great way off, he would fly to the rescue. How long does it take a father to leap into the middle of the highway if his child be there and a swift vehicle is coming and may destroy him. Five hundred times longer than it takes our heavenly father to spring to the deliverance of a lost child. "When he was a great way off his father saw him."

And this brings me to notice the father's haste. The Bible says he ran. No wonder. He didn't know but that the young man would change his mind and go back. He didn't know but that he would drop down from exhaustion. He didn't know but something fatal might overtake him before he got up to the door-sill, and so the father ran. The Bible for the most part speaks of God as walking. "In the fourth watch of the night" it says, "Jesus came unto them *walking* on the sea." "He *walketh* upon the winds." Our first parents heard the voice of the Lord, *walking* in the garden in the cool of the day; but when a sinner starts for God, the father runs to meet him. Oh, if a man ever wants help it is when he tries to become a Christian. The world says to him, "back with you, have more spirit, don't be hampered with religion, time enough yet; wait until you get sick, wait until you get old." Satan says, "back with you; you are so bad that God will have nothing to do with you," or, "you are good enough and need no Redeemer. Take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry." Ten thousand voices say; "back with you. God is a hard master. The church is a collection of hypocrites. Back into your sins, back into your evil indulgences, back to your prayerless pillow. The silliest thing that a young man ever does is to come home after he has been wandering." Oh, how much help a man does want when he tries to become a Christian. Indeed the prodigal can't find his way home to his father's house alone. Unless some one comes to meet him he had better have staid by the swine-trough

chewing the carobs of the desert. When the sea comes in at full tide you might more easily with your broom sweep back the surges than you could drive back the ocean of your unforgiven transgressions. What are we to do? Are we to fight the battle alone and trudge on with no one to aid us and no rock to shelter us and no word of encouragement to cheer us. Glory be to God we have in the text the announcement: "When he was yet a great way off his father *ran*." When the sinner starts for God, God starts for the sinner. God does not come out with a slow and hesitating pace; the infinite spaces slip beneath his feet and he takes worlds at a bound. "The father ran!"

Oh, wonderful meeting when God and the soul come together. "The father ran!" You start for God and God starts for you, and this morning and this house is the time and the place when you meet, and while the angels rejoice over the meeting, your long injured father falls upon your neck with attestation of compassion and pardon. Your poor wandering, sinful, polluted soul and the loving, the eternal Father's have met.

I remark upon the father's kiss. "He fell on his neck," my text says, "and he kissed him." It is not every father that would have done that way. He would have scolded him and said: "here, you went off with beautiful clothes, but now you are all in tatters; you went off healthy and come back sick and wasted with your dissipations." He didn't say that. The son, all haggard and ragged and filthy and wretched stood before his father. The father charged him with none of his wanderings; he just received him, he just kissed him. His wretchedness was a recommendation to that father's love. Oh, that father's kiss! How shall I describe the love of God? The ardour with which he receives a sinner back again? Give me a plummet with which I may fathom this sea; give me a ladder with which I can scale this height; give me words with which I can describe this love. The apostle says in one place: "unsearchable;" in another, "past finding out."

Height overtopping all height, depth plunging beneath all depth, breadth compassing all immensity. Oh, this love. Don't you believe it? Has he not done everything to make you think so? He has given you life, health, friends, home, the use of your hands, the sight of your eye, the hearing of your ear; He has strewn your path with mercies, he has fed you, clothed you, sheltered you, defended you, loved you, importuned you, all your life long. Don't you believe he loves you? Why, this morning, if you should start up from the wilderness of your sin, he would throw both arms around you. To make you believe that he loves you he stooped to manger and cross and sepulchre. With all the passions of his holy nature roused he stands before you to-day and would coax you to happiness, and heaven. Oh, this father's kiss! There is so much meaning and love and compassion in it—so much pardon in it—so much heaven in it. I proclaim him the Lord God merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth. Lest you would not believe him, he goes up Golgotha, and while the rocks are rending and the graves are opening and the mobs are howling and the sun is hiding he dies for you. See him. See him on the mount of Crucifixion, the sweat on his brow tinged with the blood exuding from his lacerated temples. See his eyes swimming in death. Hear the loud breathing of the sufferer as he pants with a world on his heart. Hark to the fall of blood from brow and hand and foot on the rock beneath—drop, drop, drop! Look at the nails! How wide the wounds are—wider do they gape as his body comes down upon them. Oh, this crucifixion agony. Tears melting into tears; blood flowing into blood; darkness dropping no darkness; hands of men joined with the hands of devils to tear apart the quivering heart of the Son of God! Oh, will he never speak again? Will that crimson face ever light up again? He *will* speak again, while the blood is suffusing his brow and reddening his cheek and gathering on nostril and lip, and you think he is exhausted and cannot speak; he cries out until all the ages hear him: "Father, forgive them, they

know not what they do!" Is there no emphasis in such a scene as that to make your dry eyes weep and your hard heart break? Will you turn your back upon it and say by your actions what the Jews said by their words: "His blood be on us, and on our children?" What does it all mean, my brother, my sister? Why, it means that for our lost race there was a Father's kiss. Love brought him down; love opened the gate; love led to the sacrifice; love shattered the grave; love lifted him up in resurrection—sovereign love, omnipotent love, infinite love, bleeding love, everlasting love.

Oh, for this love let rocks and rills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues,
The Saviour's praises speak.

Now will you accept that Father's kiss? The Holy Spirit asks you to. The Holy Spirit comes to you this morning with his arousing, melting, alarming, inviting, vivifying influence. Hearer, what creates in thee that unrest? It is the Holy Ghost. What sounds in your ears to-day, the joys of the saved and the sorrows of the condemned? It is the Holy Ghost. What influence now tells thee that it is time to fly, that to-morrow may be too late, that there is one door, one road, one cross, one sacrifice—one Jesus? It is the Holy Ghost. Don't you think he is here? I see it in these solemn looks; I see it in these tearful eyes; I see it in these blanched cheeks; I see it in the upturned face of childhood and the earnest gaze of old age. I know it from this silence like the grave. The Holy Ghost is here, and while I speak the chains of captives are falling, and the dungeons of sin are opening, and the prodigals coming and the fathers running, and angels are shouting and devils are trembling. Oh, it is a momentous hour. It is charged with eternal destinies. The shadows of the eternal world flit over this assemblage. Hark! I hear the songs of the saved—I hear the howlings of the damned. Heaven and hell seem to mingle and eternity poises on the pivot of

this hour. Thy destiny is being decided, thy doom is being fixed. The door of mercy so wide open begins to close. It trembles on its hinges and soon will be shut. These go into life and those go into death. These have begun to march to heaven and those have commenced to die. These have begun to rise and those have begun to sink—Hallelujah! hallelujah! Woe! woe! It seems to me as if the judgment were past. I imagine it is past. I imagine that all the sentences have been awarded, the righteous enthroned, the wicked driven away in his wickedness. Shut all the gates of heaven; there are no more to come in. Bolt all the gates of darkness—no more to be allowed to come out. Hark! the eternal ages have begun their unending tramp! tramp!

THE MINISTRY OF TEARS.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—REV. vii. 17.

A FEW days ago, riding across a Western prairie, wild flowers up to the hub of the carriage wheel, and while a long distance from any shelter there came a sudden shower, and while the rain was falling in torrents, the sun was shining as brightly as ever. I saw it shine, and I thought, What a beautiful spectacle this is! So the tears of the Bible are not midnight storm, but rain on pansied prairies in God's sweet and golden sunlight. You remember that bottle which David labeled as containing tears, and Mary's tears, and Paul's tears, and Christ's tears, and the harvest of joy that is to spring from the sowing of tears. God mixes them. God rounds them. God shows them where to fall. God exhales them. A census is taken of them, and there is a record as to the moment when

they are born and as to the place of their grave. Tears of bad men are not kept. Alexander in his sorrow had the hair clipped from his horses and mules, and made a great ado about his grief; but in all the vases of heaven there is not one of Alexander's tears. I speak of the tears of the good. Alas! they are falling all the time. In summer you sometimes hear the growling thunder, and you see their is a storm miles away, but you know from the drift of the cloud that it will not come anywhere near you. So though it may be all bright around about us, there is a shower of trouble somewhere all the time. You think it is the cannonading that you hear along the banks of the Danube. No. It is the thunder of clouds of trouble over the groaning hospitals and over the desolated Russian and Turkish homes. Tears! Tears!

What is the use of them, anyhow? Why not substitute laughter? Why not make this a world where all the people are well, and eternal strangers to pains and aches? What is the use of an Eastern storm when we might have a perpetual nor'wester? When a family is put together why not have them all stay, or if they must be transplanted to make other homes, then have them all live, the family record telling a story of marriages and births, but of no deaths? Why not have the harvests chase each other without fatiguing toil, and all our homes afflicted? Why the hard pillow, the hard crust, the hard struggle? It is easy enough to explain a smile or a success, or a congratulation; but come, now, and bring all your dictionaries, and all your philosophies, and all your religions, and help me this morning to explain a tear. A chemist will tell you that it is salt and lime, and other component parts; but he misses the chief ingredients—the acid of a soured life, the viperan sting of a bitter memory, the fragments of a broken heart. I will tell you what a tear is. It is agony in solution.

Hear me then, this morning, while I discourse to you of the ministry of tears, and of the ending of that ministry, when God shall wipe them all away.

First, it is the ministry of tears *to keep this world from being too attractive*. Something must be done to make us willing to quit this existence. If it were not for trouble this world would be a good enough heaven for me. You and I would be willing to take a lease of this life for a hundred million years if there were no trouble. The earth cushioned and upholstered and pillared and chandeliered with such an expanse, no story of other worlds could enchant us. We would say: "Let well enough alone. If you want to die and have your body disintegrated in the dust, and your soul go out on a celestial adventure, then you can go; but this world is good enough for me." You might as well go to a man who has just entered the Louvre at Paris, and tell him to hasten off to the picture galleries of Venice or Florence. "Why," he would say, "what is the use of my going there? There are Rembrandts and Rubens and Raphaels here that I haven't looked at yet." No man wants to go out of this world, or out of any house until he has a better house. To cure this inordinate wish to stay here, God must somehow create a disgust for our surroundings. How shall he do it? He cannot afford to deface his horizon, or to tear off a fiery panel from the sunset, or to subtract an anther from the water-lily, or to banish the pungent aroma from the mignonette, or to drag the robes of the morning in the mire. You cannot expect a Christopher Wren to mar his own St. Paul's Cathedral, or a Michael Angelo to dash out his own "Last Judgment," or a Handel to discard his "Israel in Egypt," and you cannot expect God to spoil the architecture and music of his own world. How then are we to be made willing to leave? Here is where trouble comes in. After a man has had a good deal of trouble he says: "Well, I am ready to go. If there is a house somewhere whose roof doesn't leak, I would like to live there. If there is an atmosphere somewhere that doesn't distress the lungs, I would like to breathe it. If there is a society somewhere where there is no tittle-tattle, I would like to live there. If there is a home circle somewhere where I can find my lost friends,

I would like to go there." He used to read the first part of the Bible chiefly; now he reads the last part of the Bible chiefly. Why has he changed Genesis for Revelation? Ah! he used to be anxious chiefly to know how this world was made, and all about its geological construction. Now he is chiefly anxious to know how the next world was made and how it looks, and who lives there, and how they dress. He reads Revelation ten times now where he reads Genesis once. The old story, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," does not thrill him half so much as the other story, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." The old man's hand trembles as he turns over this apocalyptic leaf, and he has to take out his handkerchief to wipe his spectacles. That book of revelation is a prospectus now of the country into which he is soon to immigrate—the country in which he has lots already laid out, and avenues opened, and trees planted, and mansions built. The thought of that blessed place this morning comes over me mightily, and I declare that if this Tabernacle were a great ship, and you all were passengers on board it, and one hand could launch that ship into the glories of heaven, I should be tempted to take the responsibility and launch you all into glory with one stroke, holding on to the side of the boat until I could get in myself! And yet there are people here this morning to whom this world is brighter than heaven. Well, dear souls, I do not blame you. It is natural. But after awhile you will be ready to trade. It was not until Job had been worn out with bereavements and carbuncles and a pest of a wife, that he wanted to see God. It was not until the prodigal got tired of living among the hogs that he wanted to go to his father's house. It is the ministry of trouble to make this world worth less and heaven worth more.

Again: It is the ministry of trouble *to make us feel our complete dependence upon* God. King Alphonso said that if he had been present at the creation, he could have made a better world than this. What a pity he was not present! I do not know what God will do when some men die.

Men think they can do anything, until God shows them that they can do nothing at all. We lay out our great plans and we like to execute them. It looks big. God comes and takes us down. As Prometheus was assaulted by his enemy, when the lance struck him it opened a great swelling that had threatened his death, and he got well. So it is the arrow of trouble that lets out our great swellings of pride. We never feel our dependence upon God until we get trouble. I was riding with my little child along a road, and she asked if she might drive. I said, "Certainly." I handed over the reins to her, and I had to admire the glee with which she drove. But after a while we met a team, and we had to turn out. The road was narrow and it was sheer down on both sides. She handed the reins over to me and said: "I think you had better take charge of the horse." So, we are all children, and on this road of life we like to drive. It gives one such an appearance of superiority and power. It looks big. But after awhile we meet some obstacle and have to turn out, and the road is narrow and it is sheer down on both sides, and then we are willing that God should take the reins and drive. Ah! my friends, we get upset so often because we do not hand over the reins soon enough. Can you not tell when you hear a man pray whether he has ever had any trouble? I can. The cadence, the phraseology indicate it. Why do women pray better than men? Because they have had more trouble. Before a man has had any trouble his prayers are poetic, and he begins away up among the sun, moon and stars, and gives the Lord a great deal of astronomical information, that must be highly gratifying. He then comes down gradually over beautiful table-lands of "forever and ever amen." But after a man has had trouble, prayer is with him a taking hold of the arm of God and crying out for help. I have heard earnest prayers on two or three occasions that I remember. Once on the Cincinnati express train, going at forty miles the hour, and the train jumped the track, and we were near a chasm eighty feet deep, and the men who, a few minutes

before, had been swearing and blaspheming God, began to pull and jerk at the bell rope, and got up on the backs of the seats, and cried out, "O God, save us!" There was another time, about 800 miles out at sea on a foundering steamer, after the last life-boat had been split finer than kindling wood. They prayed then. Why is it you so often hear people in reciting the last experience of some friend say: "He made the most beautiful prayer I ever heard?" What makes it beautiful? It is the earnestness of it. O! I tell you a man is in earnest when his stripped and naked soul wades out in the boundless, shoreless, bottomless ocean of eternity. It is trouble, my friends, that makes us feel our dependence upon God. We do not know our own weakness or God's strength until the last plank breaks. It is contemptible in us, when there is nothing else to take hold of, that we catch hold of God only. A man is unfortunate in business. He has to raise a great deal of money and raise it quickly. He borrows on word and note all he can borrow. After a while, he puts a mortgage on his house. After awhile he puts a second mortgage on his house. Then he puts a lien on his furniture. Then he makes over his life insurance. Then he assigns all property. Then he goes to his father-in-law and asks for help! Well, having failed everywhere, completely failed, he gets down on his knees and says: "O! Lord I have tried everybody and everything—now help me out of this financial trouble." He makes God the last resort instead of the first resort. These are men who have paid ten cents on a dollar who could have paid a hundred cents on a dollar, if they had gone to God in time. Why, you do not know who the Lord is. He is not an autocrat, seated far up in a palace, from which he emerges once a year, preceded by heralds swinging swords to clear the way. No; but a father, willing, at our call, to stand by us in every crisis and predicament of life. I tell you what some of you business men make me think of. A young man goes off from home to earn his fortune. He goes with his mother's consent and benediction. She has large

wealth, but he wants to make his own fortune. He goes far away, falls sick, gets out of money. He sends to the hotel-keeper where he is staying, asking for lenience, and the answer he gets is: "If you don't pay up on Saturday night, you will be removed to the Hospital." The young man sends to a comrade in the same building. No help. He writes to a banker who was a friend of his deceased father. No relief. He writes to an old schoolmate, but gets no help. Saturday night comes, and he is moved to the hospital. Getting there, he is frenzied with grief, and he borrows a sheet of paper and a postage stamp, and he sits down and writes home saying: "Dear mother: I am sick unto death. Come!" It is ten minutes of ten when she gets the letter. At ten o'clock the train starts. She is five minutes from the depot. She gets there in time to have five minutes to spare. She wonders why a train that can go thirty miles per hour cannot go sixty miles per hour. She rushes into the hospital. She says: "My son, what does this mean? Why didn't you send for me. You sent for everybody but for me. You knew I could help you. Is this the reward I get for my kindness to you always?" She bundles him up, takes him home, and gets him well very soon. Now, some of you treat God just as that young man treated his mother. When you get in financial perplexity, you call on the banker, you call on the broker, you call on your creditors, you call on your lawyer, for legal counsel, you call upon everybody, and when you cannot get any help, then you go to God. You say: "Oh! Lord, I come to thee. Help me now out of my perplexity," and the Lord comes; though it is the eleventh hour. He says: "Why did you not send for me before? As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you." It is to throw us back upon an all-comforting God that we have this ministry of tears. Again: It is the ministry of tears *to capacitate us for the office of sympathy*. The priests, under the old dispensation, were set apart by having water sprinkled on their hands, feet and heads; and by the sprinkling of tears people are now

set apart to the office of sympathy. When we are in prosperity, we like to have a great many young people around us, and we laugh when they laugh, and we romp when they romp, and we sing when they sing; but when we have trouble we like plenty of old folks around. Why? They know how to talk. Take an aged mother, seventy years of age, and she is almost omnipotent in comfort. Why? She has been through it all. At 7 o'clock in the morning, she goes over to a young mother who has just lost her babe. Grandmother knows all about that trouble. Fifty years ago she felt it. At 12 o'clock on that day, she goes over to comfort a widowed soul. She knows all about that. She has been walking in that dark valley twenty years. At four o'clock in the afternoon, some one knocks at the door wanting bread. She knows all about that. Two or three times in her life, she came to her last loaf. At ten o'clock that night she goes over to sit up with some one severely sick. She knows all about it. She knows all about fevers and pleurisies and broken bones. She has been doctoring all her life—spreading plasters and pouring out bitter drops, and shaking up hot pillows and contriving things to tempt a poor appetite. Drs. Abernethy, and Rush, and Hosack, and Harvey, were great doctors; but the greatest doctor the world ever saw is an old Christian woman. Dear me! do we not remember her about the room when we were sick in our boyhood? Was there any one who could ever so touch a sore without hurting it? And when she raised her spectacles against her wrinkled forehead, so she could look closer at the wound, it was three-fourths healed. And when the Lord took her home, although you may have been men and women thirty, forty, fifty years of age, you lay on the coffin lid and sobbed as though you were only five or ten years of age. O! man, praise God if instead of looking back to one of these berouged and bespangled old people, fixed up of the devil, to look young, you have in your memory the picture of an honest, sympathetic, kind, self-sacrificing, Christ-like mother. O! it takes those people who have had

trouble to comfort others in trouble. Where did Paul get the ink with which to write his comforting epistle? Where did David get the ink to write his comforting psalms? Where did John get the ink to write his comforting Revelation? They got it out of their own tears. When a man has gone through the curriculum, and has taken a course of dungeons and imprisonments and shipwrecks he is qualified for the work of sympathy. When I began to preach, I used to write out all my sermons, and I sometimes have great curiosity to look at the sermons I used to preach on trouble. They were nearly all poetic and in semiblack verse; but God knocked the blank verse out of me long ago, and I have found out that I cannot comfort people except as I myself have been troubled. God make me the son of consolation to the people. I would rather be the means of soothing one perturbed spirit to-day, than to play a tune that would set all the sons of mirth reeling in the dance. I am an herb doctor. I put in the caldron, the root out of dry ground without form or comeliness. Then I put in the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley. Then I put into the caldron some of the leaves from the tree of life, and the branch that was thrown into the wilderness Marah. Then I pour in the tears of Bethany and Golgotha, then I stir them up. Then I kindle under the caldron a fire made out of the wood of the cross, and one drop of that potion will cure the worst sickness that ever afflicted a human soul. Mary and Martha shall receive their Lazarus from the tomb. The Damsel *shall* rise. And on the darkness shall break the morning, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes. You know on a well spread table, the food becomes more delicate to the last. I have fed you this morning with the bread of consolation. Let the table now be cleared and let us set on the chalices of heaven. "O!" says some wise critic in the audience, "the Bible contradicts itself. It intimates again and again that there are to be no tears in heaven, and if there be no tears in heaven, how is it possible that God will wipe any away?" I answer, have you never seen

a child crying one moment and laughing the next, and while she was laughing you saw the tears still on her face? And perhaps you stopped her in the very midst of her resumed glee and wiped off those delayed tears. So, I think after the heavenly raptures have come upon us, there may be the mark of some earthly grief, and while those tears are glittering in the light of the jasper sea, God will wipe them away. How well he can do that! Jesus had enough trial to make him sympathetic with all trial. The shortest verse in the Bible tells the story; "Jesus wept:" The scar on the back of either hand, and the scar on the arch of either foot, the row of scars along the line of the hair will keep all heaven thinking. I do not know but some day Christ may throw off his robe and lay it over the side of the throne, and point to the lacerations on his shoulders, showing where the ploughers ploughed upon his back and made long their furrows. O! that great weeper is just the one to silence all earthly trouble and wipe out all stains of earthly grief. Gentle! Why, his step is softer than the step of the dew. It will not be a tyrant bidding an incarcerated wretch hush up his howling. It will be a Father who will take you on his left arm, his face gleaming into your face, while with the soft tips of the fingers of the right hand, he shall wipe away all tears from your eyes. I have noticed when the children get hurt and their mother is away from home, they always come to me for comfort and sympathy; but I have noticed when the children get hurt and their mother is at home, they go right past me and to her; I am of no account. So, when the soul comes up into heaven out of the wounds of this life, it will not stop to look for Paul, or Moses, or David or John. These did very well once, but now the soul shall rush past crying: "Where is Jesus? Where is Jesus?" Dear Lord what a magnificent thing to die, if thou shalt thus wipe away our tears. Methinks it will take us some time to get used to heaven. The fruits of God without one speck. The fresh pastures without one nettle. The orchestra without one snapped string. The river of

gladness without one torn bank. The solferinos and the saffron of sunrise and sunset swallowed up in the eternal day that beams from God's countenance!

Why should I wish to linger in the wild,
When thou art waiting Father to receive Thy child?

Sirs, if we could get any appreciation of what God has in reserve for us, it would make us so homesick we would be unfit for our every-day work. A few days ago, Professor Leonard, in Iowa University, put in my hands, a meteoric stone—a stone thrown off from some other world to this. How suggestive it was to me. And I have to tell you the best representations we have of heaven, are only aerolites flung off from that world which rolls on bearing the multitudes of the redeemed. We analyze these aerolites and find them crystallizations of tears. No wonder flung off from heaven, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Have you any appreciation this morning of the good, and glorious times your friends are having in heaven? How different it is when they get news there of a Christian's death from what is here. It is the difference between embarkation and coming into port. Every thing depends upon which side of the river you stand when you hear of a Christian's death. If you stand on this side of the river you mourn that they go. If you stand on the other side of the river you rejoice that they come. O! the difference between a funeral on earth and a jubilee in heaven—between requiem here and triumphal march there—parting here and re-union there. Together! Have you thought of it. They are together. Not one of your departed friends in one land and another in another land; but together in different rooms of the same house—the house of many mansions. Together! I never appreciated that thought so much as day before yesterday when we laid away in her last slumber my sister Sarah. Standing there in the village cemetery I looked around and said—there is father, there is mother, there is grandfather, there is

grandmother, here are whole circles of kindred, and I thought to myself, "together in the grave—together in glory." I am so impressed with the thought that I do not think it is fanaticism when some one is going from this world to the next if you make them the bearer of dispatches to your friends who are gone, saying "give my love to my parents—give my love to my children—give my love to my old comrades who are in glory, and tell them I am trying to fight the good fight of faith, and I will join them after awhile." I believe the message will be delivered, and I believe it will increase the gladness of those who are before the throne. Together are they, all their tears gone. No trouble getting good society for them. All kings, queens, princes, and princesses. In 1751 there was a bill offered in the English Parliament proposing to change the almanack so that the first of March should come immediately after the eighteenth of February. But O! what a glorious change in the calendar when all the years of your earthly existence are swallowed up in the eternal year of God!

My friends take this good cheer home with you. Those tears of bereavement that course your cheek, and of persecution and of trial, are not always to be there. The motherly hand of God will wipe them all away. What is the use, on the way to such a consummation—what is the use of fretting about anything? O! what an exhilaration it ought to be in Christian work.

See you the pinnacles against the sky? It is the city of our God; and we are approaching it. O! let us be busy in the few days that shall remain for us. The Saxons and the Britons went out to battle. The Saxons were all around. The Britons had no weapons at all, and yet history tells us the Britons got the victory. Why? They went into battle shouting three times "hallelujah!" And at the third shout of "hallelujah" their enemies fled panic struck, and so the Britons got the victory. And, my friends, if we could only appreciate the glories that are to come, we should be so filled with enthusiasm that no power

on earth or hell could stand before us, and at our first shout the opposing forces would begin to tremble, and at our second shout, they would begin to fall back, and at our third shout they would be routed forever. There is no power on earth or in hell that could stand before three such volleys of hallelujah.

I put this balsam on the recent wounds in my congregation. Death has swung a sharp keen, sword through this church since I have been gone. I was not here to comfort you then. I try to comfort you to-day. Rejoice at the thought of what your departed friends have got rid of, and that you have a prospect of so soon making your own escape. Bear cheerfully the ministry of tears, and exult at the thought that soon it is to be ended.

There we shall march up the heavenly street,
And ground our arms at Tesus' feet.

ROCKS ON BOTH SIDES.

"There was a sharp rock on the one side, and there was a sharp rock on the other side."—1 SAM. xiv. 4.

THE cruel army of the Philistines must be taken and scattered. There is just one man accompanied by his body guard, to do that thing. Jonathan is the hero of the scene. I know that David cracked the skull of the giant with a few pebbles well slung, and that three hundred Gideonites scattered ten thousand Amalekites by the crash of broken crockery; but here is a more wonderful conflict. Yonder are the Philistines on the rocks. Here is Jonathan with his body guard in the valley. On the one side is a rock called Bozez; on the other side is a rock called Seneh—these two rocks as famous in olden times as in modern times are Plymouth Rock and Gibraltar. They were precipitous, unscalable and sharp. Between these two rocks

Jonathan must make his ascent. The day comes for the scaling of the heights. Jonathan on his hands and feet begins the ascent. With strain and slip and bruise I suppose, but still on and up, first goes Jonathan, then goes his body guard. Bozez on the one side; Seneh on the other side. After a sharp tug and push and climbing, I see the head of Jonathan above the hole in the mountain, and then I see the head of the body guard above the hole in the mountain; and there is a challenge, and a fight, and a supernatural consternation. These two men, Jonathan and his body-guard, drive back and drive down the Philistines over the rocks and open a campaign which demolishes the enemies of Israel. I suppose that the overhanging and overshadowing rocks on either side did not balk or dishearten Jonathan or his body-guard but only roused and filled them with enthusiasm as they went up. "There was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side."

My friends, you have been or are now, some of you, in this crisis of the text. If a man meet one trouble, he can go through it. He gathers all his energies, concentrates them upon one point, and in the strength of God, or by his own natural determination, goes through it. But the man who has trouble to the right of him and trouble to the left of him, is to be pitied. Did either trouble come alone, he might endure it, but two troubles, two disasters, two overshadowing misfortunes are Bozez and Seneh. God pity him! "There is a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side."

In this crisis of the text is that man whose fortune and health fail at the same time. Nine-tenths of all our merchants capsize in business before they come to forty-five years of age. There is some collision in commercial circles and they stop payment. It seems as if every man must put his name on the back of a note before he learns what a fool a man is who risks all his own property on the prospect that some man will tell the truth. It seems as if a man must have a large amount of unsaleable goods on

his own shelf before he learns how much easier it is to buy than to sell. It seems as if every man must be completely burned out, before he learns the importance of always keeping fully insured. It seems as if every man must be wrecked in a financial tempest before he learns to keep things snug in case of a sudden euroclydon. When the calamity does come, it is awful. The man goes home in despair and he tells his family: "We'll have to go to the poor house." He takes a dolorous view of everything. It seems as if he never could rise. But a little time passes and he says: "Why, I am not so badly off after all; I have my family left." Before the Lord turned Adam out of Paradise, he gave him Eve; so that when he lost Paradise he could stand it! Permit one who has never read but three or four novels in all his life and, who has not a great deal of romance in his composition, to say that if, when a man's fortunes fail, he has a good wife, a good, Christian wife, he ought not to be despondent. "Oh," you say, "that only increases the embarrassment, since you have her also to take care of." You are an ingrate; for a woman as often supports a man, as the man supports the woman. The man may bring all the dollars, but the woman generally brings the courage and the faith in God. Well, this man of whom I am speaking, looks around and he finds his family is left, and he rallies, and the light comes to his eye, and the smile to his face, and the courage to his heart. In two years he is all over it. He makes his financial calamity the first chapter in a new era of prosperity. He met that one trouble—conquered it. He sat down for a little while under the grim shadow of the rock Bozez, yet he soon rose and began like Jonathan to climb.

But how often it is that physical ailment comes with financial embarrassment. When the fortune failed it broke the man's spirits. His nerves were shattered. His brain was stunned. I can show you hundreds of men in New York to-morrow, whose fortune and health failed at the same time. They came prematurely to the cane. Their

hand trembled with incipient paralysis. They never saw a well day since the hour when they called their creditors together for a compromise. If such men are impatient and peculiar and irritable, excuse them. They had two troubles, either one of which alone they could have met successfully. If when the health went, the fortune had been retained, it would not have been so bad. The man could have bought the very best medicament, and he could have had the very best attendance, and long lines of carriages would have stopped at the front door to inquire as to his welfare. But poverty on the one side and sickness on the other, are Bozez and Seneh, and they interlock their shadows and drop them in upon the poor man's way. God help him! "There is a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side." Now, what is such a man to do? In the name of Almighty God, I will tell him what to do. Do as Jonathan did—climb, climb up into the sunlight of God's favor and consolation. I can go through the churches and show you men who lost fortune and health at the same time, and yet who sing all day and dream of heaven all night. If you have any idea that sound digestion and steady nerves and clear eyesight and good hearing and plenty of friends are necessary to make a man happy, you have miscalculated.

I suppose that these overhanging rocks only made Jonathan scramble the harder and the faster to get up and out into the sunlight; and this combined shadow of invalidism and financial embarrassment has often lifted a man up the quicker into the sunlight of God's favour, and the noonday of his glorious promise. It is a difficult thing for a man to feel his dependence upon God when he has ten thousand dollars in the bank and fifty thousand dollars in government securities, and a block of stores and three ships. "Well," the man says to himself, "it is silly for me to pray, 'Give me this day my daily bread,' when my pantry is full, and the canals from the west are crowded with bread-stuffs destined for my storehouses." Oh, my friends, if the combined misfor-

tunes and disasters of life have made you climb up into the arms of a sympathetic and compassionate God, through all eternity you will bless him that in this world "There was a sharp rock on one side and a sharp rock on the other side."

Again: that man is in the crisis of the text who has *home troubles and outside persecution at the same time*. The world treats a man well just as long as it pays best to treat him well. As long as it can manufacture success out of his bone and brain and muscle, it favours him. The world fattens the horse it wants to drive. But let a man see it is his duty to cross the track of the world, then every bush is full of horns and tusks thrust at him. They will belittle him; they will caricature him; they will call his generosity self aggrandizement; and his piety sanctimoniousness. The very worst persecution will sometimes come upon him from those who profess to be Christians on the principle that religious wars are the most bitter wars. Now the world sometimes takes after him, the newspapers take after him, public opinion takes after him, and he is lied about until all the dictionary of Billingsgate is exhausted on him. You often see a man whom you know to be good and pure and honest, set upon by the world, and mauled of whole communities, and vicious men take on a supercilious air in condemnation of him; as though Lord Jeffrey should write an essay on gentleness, or Henry VIII. talk about purity, or Herod go to blessing little children. Now, a certain amount of persecution rouses a man's defiance, stirs the blood for magnificent battle and makes him fifty times more a man than he would have been without the persecution. So it was with the great reformer when he said: "I will not be put down; I will be heard." And so it was with Millard the preacher, in the time of Louis XI. When Louis XI. sent word to him that unless he stopped preaching in that style he would throw him into the river, he replied: "Tell the king that I will reach heaven sooner by water than he will reach it by fast horses." A certain amount of persecution is a tonic and an inspiration;

but too much of it, and too long continued becomes the rock Bozez, throwing a dark shadow over a man's life. What is he to do then? Go home, you say. Good advice that. That is just the place for a man to go when the world abuses him. Go home. Blessed be God for our quiet and sympathetic homes. But there is many a man who has the reputation of having a home when he has none. Through unthinkingness or precipitation there are many matches made that ought never to have been made. An officiating priest cannot alone unite a couple. The Lord Almighty must proclaim banns. There is many a home in which there is no sympathy and no helpfulness and no good cheer. The clangor of the battle may not have been heard outside, but God knows notwithstanding all the playing of the "wedding march," and all the odor of the orange blossoms, and the benediction of the officiating pastor, there has been no marriage. Sometimes men have awakened to find on one side of them the rock of persecution, and on the other side the rock of domestic intimacy. What shall such an one do? Do as Jonathan did. Climb! Get up into the heights of God's consolation from which you may look down in triumph upon outside persecution and home trouble. While good and great John Wesley was being silenced of the magistrates and having his name written on the board fences of London in doggerel, at that very time his wife was making him as miserable as she could, acting as though she were possessed with the devil, as I suppose she was; never doing him a kindness until the day she ran away, so that he wrote in his diary these words: "I did not forsake her; I have not dismissed her; I will not recall her." Planting one foot, John Wesley did, upon outside persecution, and the other foot on home trouble, he climbed up into the heights of Christian joy, and after preaching forty thousand sermons and travelling two hundred and seventy thousand miles, reached the heights of heaven, though in this world he had it hard enough, "A sharp rock on one side and a sharp rock on the other side.'

Again: that woman stands in the crisis of the text, who has *bereavement and a struggle for a livelihood at the same time*. Without calling names, I speak from observation. Oh! it is a hard thing for a woman to make an honest living even when her heart is not troubled and she has a fair cheek and the magnetism of an exquisite presence. But now the husband or the father is dead. The expenses of the obsequies absorbed all that was left in the savings bank, and wan and wasted with weeping and watching, she goes forth—a grave, a hearse, a coffin behind her—to contend for her existence and the existence of her children. When I see such a battle as that open, I shut my eyes at the ghastliness of the spectacle. Men sit with embroidered slippers and write heartless essays about woman's wages, but that question is made up of tears and blood, and there is more blood than tears. Oh, give woman free access to all the realms where she can get a livelihood, from the telegraph office to the pulpit. Let men's wages be cut down before hers are cut down. Men have iron in their souls and can stand it. Make the way free to her of the broken heart. May God put into my hand the cold, bitter cup of privation and give me nothing but a windowless hut for shelter for many years, rather than after I am dead there should go out from my home into the pitiless world, a woman's arm to fight the Gettysburgh, the Austerlitz, the Waterloo for bread. And yet, how many women there are seated between the rock of bereavement on the one side and the rock of destitution on the other, Bozez and Seneh interlocking their shadow and dropping them upon her miserable way. "There is a sharp rock on the one side and a sharp rock on the other side." What are such to do? Somehow let them climb up into the heights of the glorious promise: "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widow trust in me." Or get up into the heights of that other glorious promise: "The Lord preserveth the strangers and relieveth the widow and the fatherless." O ye sewing women on starving wages—O ye widows turned out from the once bounti-

ful home—O ye female teachers, kept on niggardly stipend—O ye despairing women, seeking in vain for work, wandering along the docks, thinking to throw yourself into the East River last night—O ye women of weak nerves and aching side and short breath and broken heart, you need something more than human sympathy, you need the sympathy of God. Climb up into his arms. He knows it all and he loves you more than father or mother or husband ever could or ever did, and instead of sitting down wringing your hands in despair, you had better begin to climb. There are heights of consolation for you, though now “There is a sharp rock on the one side and a sharp rock on the other side.”

Again: that man is in the crisis of the text who has *a wasted life on the one side and an unilluminated eternity on the other*. Though a man may all his life have cultivated deliberation and self-poise, if he gets in that position, all his self-possession is gone. There are all the wrong thoughts of his existence, all the wrong deeds, all the wrong words—strata above strata, granitic, ponderous, overshadowing. The rock I call Bozez. On the other side are all the retributions of the future, the thrones of judgment, the eternal ages angry with his long defiance; piled up, concentrated, accumulated wrath. That rock I will call Seneh. Between these two rocks Lord Byron perished, and Absalom perished, and Alcibiades perished, and Herod perished, and ten thousand times ten thousand perished. O man immortal, man redeemed, man blood-bought, climb up out of those shadows. Climb up by the way of the cross. Have your wasted life forgiven. Have your eternal life secured. This morning just take one look to the past and see what it has been, and take one look to the future and see what it threatens to be. You can afford to lose your health, you can afford to lose your property, you can afford to lose your reputation; but you can not afford to lose your soul. That bright, gleaming, glorious, precious, eternal possession you must carry aloft in the day when the earth rocks

down and the heavens burst. O God, help that man to save his soul.

You see from my subject, that when a man goes into the safety and peace of the gospel, he does not bemean himself. There is nothing in religion that leads to unmanliness or unwomanliness. The gospel of Jesus Christ only asks you to climb as Jonathan did—climb toward God, climb towards heaven, climb into the sunshine of God's favor. To become a Christian is not to go meanly down; it is to come gloriously up—up into the communion of saints, up into the peace that passeth all understanding, up into the companionship of angels. He lives up. He dies up. Oh, then accept the wholesale invitation which I make this morning to all the people. Come up from between your invalidism and financial embarrassment. Come up from between your home trouble and your outside persecution. Come up from between your bereavements and your destitutions. Come up from between a wasted life and an unilluminated eternity. Like Jonathan, climb with all your might, instead of sitting down to wring your hands in the shadow and in the darkness, a sharp rock on this side, and a sharp rock on the other side.

THE LAUGHTER OF THE BIBLE

"Then was our mouth filled with laughter."—PSALM cxxvi. 2.

"He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh."—PSALM ii. 4.

THIRTY-EIGHT times does the Bible make reference to this configuration of the features and quick expulsion of breath which we call laughter. Sometimes it is born of the sunshine and sometimes the midnight. Sometimes it stirs the sympathies of angels and sometimes the

cachinnation of devils. All healthy people laugh; whether it pleases the Lord, or displeases him, that depends upon when we laugh and at what we laugh. My theme this morning, is the laughter of the Bible, namely: Sarah's laugh, or that of scepticism; David's laugh, or that of spiritual exultation, the fool's laugh, or that of sinful merriment; God's laugh, or that of infinite condemnation; Heaven's laugh, or that of eternal triumph. Scene: an oriental tent. The occupants, old Abraham and Sarah, perhaps wrinkled and decrepit. Their three guests are three angels, the Lord Almighty is of them. In return for the hospitality shown by the old people, God promises Sarah that she shall become the ancestress of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sarah laughs in the face of God; she does not believe it. She is affrighted at what she has done. She denies it, she says: "I didn't laugh." Then God retorted with an emphasis that silenced all disputation: "But thou did'st laugh." My friends, the laugh of scepticism in all the ages is only the echo of Sarah's laughter. God says he will accomplish a thing, and men say it cannot be done. A great multitude laugh at the miracles. They say they are contrary to the laws of nature. What is a law of nature? It is God's way of doing a thing. You ordinarily cross the river at Fulton Ferry. To-morrow you change for one day and you go across Wall-street Ferry. You made the rule, have you not a right to change it? I ordinarily come in at that door (pointing to a side entrance) of the church. Suppose next Sabbath I should come in at the other door? It is a habit I have. Have not I a right to change my habit? A law of nature is God's habit—his way of doing things. If he makes the law, has he not a right to change it at any time he wants to change it? Alas! for the folly of those who laugh at God when he says, "I will do a thing," they responding, "You can't do it." God says that the Bible is true—it is all true. Bishop Colenso laughs. Herbert Spencer laughs. Stuart Mill laughs. All the German

Universities laugh. Harvard laughs—softly! A great many of the learned institutions of this country, with long rows of professors seated on the fence between Christianity and infidelity, laugh softly. They say: "We didn't laugh." That was Sarah's trick. God thunders from the heavens: "But thou did'st laugh." The garden of Eden was only a fable. There never was any ark built, or if it was built it was too small to hold two of every kind. The pillar of fire by night was only the northern lights. The ten plagues of Egypt only a brilliant specimen of jugglery. The sea parted because the wind blew violently a great while from one direction. The sun and moon did not put themselves out of the way for Joshua. Jacob's ladder was only bow-parted and picturesque clouds. The destroying angel smiting the first-born in Egypt was only cholera infantum become epidemic. The gullet of the whale, by positive measurement, too small to swallow a prophet. The story of the immaculate conception a shock to all decency. The lame, the dumb, the blind, the halt, cured by mere human surgery. The resurrection of Christ's friend only a beautiful tableau, Christ and Lazarus and Mary and Martha acting their parts well. My friends, there is not a doctrine or statement of God's holy Word that has not been derided by the scepticism of this day. I take up this book of King James's translation. I consider it a perfect Bible, but here are sceptics who want it torn to pieces, and now with this Bible in my hand let me tear out all those portions which the scepticism of this day demands shall be torn out. What shall go first? "Well," says some one in the audience, "take out all that about the creation, and about the first settlement of the world." Away goes Genesis. "Now," says some one, "take out all that about the miraculous guidance of the children of Israel in the wilderness." Away goes Exodus. "Now," says some one else in the audience, "there are things in Deuteronomy and Kings that are not fit to be read." Away go Deuteronomy and

the Kings. "Now," says some one, "the book of Job is a fable that ought to come out." Away goes the Book of Job. "Now," says some one, "those passages in the New Testament which imply the divinity of Jesus Christ ought to come out." Away go the evangelists. "Now," says some one, "the Book of Revelation was preposterous: it represents a man with the moon under his feet and a sharp sword in his hand." Away goes the Book of Revelation. Now there are a few pieces left. What shall we do with them? "Oh" says some one in the audience, "I don't believe a word of the Bible from one end to the other." Well, it is all gone. Now, you have put out the last light for the nations. Now it is the pitch darkness of eternal midnight. How do you like it? But I think, my friends, we had better keep the Bible a little longer in tact. It has done pretty well for a good many years. I hear there are old people who find it a comfort to have it on their laps, and children like the stories in it. Let us keep it for a curiosity anyhow. If the Bible is to be thrown out of the school, and out of the court room so men no more swear by it, and it is to be put in a dark corridor of the city library, the Koran on one side and the writings of Confucius on the other, then let us each one keep a copy for himself: for we might have trouble and we would want to be under the delusions of its consolations, and we might die, and we would want the delusions of the exalted residence at God's right hand which it mentions. Oh! what an awful thing it is to laugh in God's face and hurl his revelation back at him. After awhile, the day will come when they will say they did not laugh. Then all the hypercriticisms, all the caricatures and all the learned sneers in the *Quarterly Review* will be brought to judgment, and amid the rocking of everything beneath, and amid the flaming of everything above, God will thunder: "But thou did'st laugh!" I think the most fascinating laughter at Christianity I ever remember, was Theodore Parker. He made the Word of God seem ridiculous and he laughed on at our holy religion until he came to die,

and then said : " My life has been a failure, a failure domestically—I have no children ; a failure socially, for I am treated in the streets like a pirate ; a failure professionally, because I know but one minister that has adopted my sentiments." For a quarter of a century, he laughed at Christianity, and ever since Christianity has been laughing at him. Now, it is a mean thing to go into a man's house and steal his goods ; but I tell you the most gigantic burglary ever enacted is the proposition to steal these treasures of our Holy religion. The meanest laughter ever uttered is the laughter of the sceptic.

The next laughter mentioned in the Bible is David's laughter, or the expression of spiritual exultation. " Then was our mouth filled with laughter." He got very much down sometimes, but there are other chapters where, for four or five times he calls upon the people to praise and exult. It was not a mere twitch of the lips ; it was a demonstration that took hold of his whole physical nature. " Then was our mouth filled with laughter." My friends, this world will never be converted to God until Christians cry less and laugh and sing more. The horrors are a poor bait. If people are to be persuaded to adopt our holy religion, it will be because they have made up their mind it is a happy religion. They do not like an ultra-bilious Christianity. I know there are morbid people who enjoy a funeral. They come early to see the friends take leave of the corpse, and they steal a ride to the cemetery ; but all healthy people enjoy a marriage better than they do a burial. Now, you make the religion of Christ sepulchral and hearse-like, and you make it repulsive. I say plant the Rose of Sharon along the church walks, and columbine to clamber over the church wall, and have a smile on the lip, and have the mouth filled with holy laughter. There is no man in the world except the Christian that has a right to feel an untrammelled glee. He is promised that everything is the best here, and he is on the way to a delight which will take all the processions with palm-branches, and all the orchestras harped and cymbaled and trumpeted to ex-

press. "Oh!" you say, "I have so much trouble." Have you more trouble than Paul had? What does he say: "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Poor, yet making many rich. Having nothing, yet possessing all things." The merriest laugh I think I ever heard has been in the sick-room of God's dear children. When Theodosius was put upon the rack, he suffered very great torture at the first. Somebody asked him how he endured all that pain on the rack. He replied: "When I was first put upon the rack, I suffered a great deal, but very soon a young man in white stood by my side and with a soft and comfortable handkerchief he wiped the sweat from my brow and my pains were relieved; it was punishment for me to get from the rack because when the pain was all gone, the angel was gone." O! rejoice evermore. You know how it is in the army—an army in encampment. If to-day, news comes that our side has had a defeat, and to-morrow another portion of the tidings comes, saying: "we have had another defeat," it demoralizes all the host. But if the news come of victory to-day and victory to-morrow, the whole army is impassioned for the contest. Now, in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, report fewer defeats; tell us the victories. Victory over sin and death and hell. Rejoice evermore, and again I say rejoice. I believe there is more religion in a laugh than in a groan. Anybody can groan, but to laugh in the midst of banishment and persecution and indescribable trials—that requires a David, a Daniel, a Paul, a modern Heroine.

The next laughter mentioned in the Bible that I shall speak of, is the fool's laughter, or the expression of merriment. Solomon was very quick at simile; when he makes a comparison we all catch it. What is the laughter of a fool like? He says "it is the crackling of thorns under a pot." The kettle is swung, a bunch of brambles is put under it and the torch is applied to it, and there is a great noise and a big blaze, and a sputter and a quick extinguishment. Then it is darker than it was before. Fool's laughter. The most miserable thing on earth is a bad man's

fun. There they are, ten men in a bar-room. They have at home, wives, mothers, daughters. The impure jest starts at one corner of the bar-room, and crackle, crackle, crackle it goes all around. In five hundred such guffaws, there is not one item of happiness. They all feel bemeaned, if they have any conscience left. Have nothing to do with men nor women who tell smutty stories. I have no confidence either in their Christian character or their morality. So, all merriment that springs out of the defects of others—caricature of a lame foot, or a curved spine, or a blind eye, or a deaf ear, will be met with the judgment of God either upon you, or your children. Twenty years ago, in this city of Brooklyn, I knew a man who was particularly skilful in imitating the lameness of a neighbor. Not long ago, a son of the skilful mimic had his leg amputated for the very defect which his father had mimicked years before. I do not say it was a judgment of God: I leave you to make your own inference. So, all merriment born of dissipation; that which starts at the counter of the drinking restaurant, or from the wine glass in the home circle, the maudlin simper, the meaningless joke, the saturnalian gibberish, the paroxysm of mirth about nothing that you sometimes see in the fashionable club-room or the exquisite parlour at twelve o'clock at night, are the crackling of thorns under a pot. Such laughter and such sin end in death. When I was a lad, a book came out entitled "*Dow Jr's Patent Sermons.*" It made a great stir, a very wide laugh all over the country, that book did. It was a caricature of the Christian ministry and of the Word of God, and of the day of judgment. Oh! we had a great laugh. The commentary on the whole thing is, that not long ago, the author of that book died in poverty, shame, debauchery, kicked out of society and cursed of Almighty God. The laughter of such men as he is the echo of their own damnation.

The next laughter that I shall mention as being in the Bible is the laugh of God's condemnation. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." Again: "The Lord

will laugh at him." Again: "I will laugh at his calamity." With such demonstration will God greet every kind of great sin and wickedness. Bad men build up villanies higher and higher. Good men almost pity God because he is so schemed against by men. Suddenly a pin drops out of the machinery of wicked men, or a secret is revealed, the foundation begins to rock. Finally the whole thing is demolished. What is the matter? I will tell you what the matter is. That crash of ruin, is only the reverberation of God's laughter. On Wall Street there are a great many good men and a great many fraudulent men. A fraudulent man there says: "I mean to have my million." He goes to work reckless of honesty, and he gets his first \$100,000. He gets after awhile his \$200,000: after awhile he has his \$500,000. "Now," he says, "I have only one more move to make and I shall have my million." He gathers up all his resources; he makes that one last grand move, and he has not enough money of his own left to pay the ten cents on the Broadway stage on his way home. People cannot understand this spasmodic revulsion. Some said it was a sudden turn in Erie Railroad stock, or in Western Union, or in Illinois Central. Some said it was Jay Gould. Some said it was Cornelius Vanderbilt. Some said it was Daniel Drew. They all guessed wrong. I will tell you what it was. "He that sitteth in the heavens laughed." A man in New York said he would be the richest man in the city. He left his honest work of chair-making and got into the city council some way, and in ten years stole \$15,000,000 from the city government. Fifteen million dollars! He held the Legislature of the State of New York in the grip of his right hand. Suspicions were aroused. The grand jury presented indictments. The whole land stood aghast. The man who expected to put half the city in his vest pocket goes to Blackwell's Island, goes to Ludlow Street Jail, breaks prison and goes across the sea, is re-arrested and brought back. Skillful counsel for a long while have attempted the clearance of that man, as yet not successful. Why? "He that sitteth in the heavens laughs." Rome

was a great empire. She had Horace and Virgil among her poets. She had Augustus and Constantine among her conquerors. But what mean the defaced Pantheon and the Forum turned into a cattle market, and the broken-walled Coliseum, and the architectural skeleton of her great aqueducts? What was that thunder? "O!" you say, "that was the roar of the battering rams against her walls." No. What was that quiver? "Oh," you say, "that was the tramp of hostile legions." No. The quiver and the roar were the outbursts of omnipotent laughter from the defied and insulted heavens. Rome defied God, and he laughed her down. Thebes defied God, and he laughed her down. Nineveh defied God, and he laughed her down. Babylon defied God, and he laughed her down. There is a great difference between God's laugh and his smile. His smile is eternal beatitude. He smiled when David sang, and Miriam clapped the cymbals, and Hannah made garments for her son, and Paul preached, and John kindled with apocalyptic vision, and when any man has anything to do and does it well. His smile! Why, it is the 15th of May, the apple orchards in full bloom. It is morning breaking on a rippling sea. It is heaven at high noon, all the bells ringing. But his laughter—may it never fall on us. It is a condemnation for our sin. It is a wasting away. We may let the satirist laugh at us, and all our companions laugh at us, and we be made the target for the merriment of earth and hell; but God forbid that we should ever come to the fulfillment of the prophecy against the rejectors of the truth: "I will laugh at your calamity."

But, my friends, all of us who reject the pardon of the gospel are to come under that tremendous bombardment. God wants us all to repent; he counsels; he coaxes; he importunes; he begs us; he comes down out of heaven; he puts all the world's sin on one shoulder; he puts all the world's sorrow on the other shoulder, and then with that Alps on one side and that Himalaya on the other he starts up the hill back of Jerusalem to achieve our salvation. He

puts the palm of his right foot on one long spike, and he puts the palm of his left foot on another long spike, and then with his hands spotted with his own blood he gesticulates, saying: "Look! look! and live. With the crimson veil of my sacrifice I will cover all your sins. With my dying groan I will swallow up all your groans. Look! live!" But a thousand of you this morning, turn your back to that, and then this voice of invitation turns to a tone divinely ominous, that sobs like a simoon or an equinox through the first chapter of Proverbs: "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity." Oh, what a laugh that is. A deep laugh, a long reverberating laugh. An overwhelming laugh. God grant we may never hear it. But in this day of merciful visitation, yield your heart to Christ that you may spend all your life on earth under his smile and escape forever the thunder of the laugh of God's indignation.

The other laughter mentioned in the Bible, the only one I shall speak of, is Heaven's laughter, or the expression of eternal triumph. Christ said to his disciples: "Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh." That makes me know positively that we are not to spend our days in heaven singing long meter-songs. The formalistic and stiff notions of heaven that some people have would make me miserable. I am glad to know that the heaven of the Bible is not only a piece of holy worship but of magnificent sociality. "What," say you, "will the ringing laugh go around the circle of the saved?" I say yes; pure laughter, cheering laughter, holy laughter. It will be a laugh of congratulation. When we meet a friend who has suddenly come to a fortune, or who has got over some dire sickness, do we not shake hands, do we not laugh with him? And when we get to heaven and see our friends there, some of them having come up out of great tribulation, why we will say to one of them: "the last time I saw you, you had been suffering for six weeks under a low intermittent,"

or to another we will say : "You for ten years were limping with the rheumatism, and you were full of complaints when we saw you last. I congratulate you on this eternal recovery." Ye shall laugh. Yes, we shall congratulate all those who have come up out of great financial embarrassments in this world, because they have become millionaires in heaven. Ye shall laugh. It will be a laugh of reassociation. It is just as natural for us to laugh when we meet a friend we have not seen for ten years as anything is possible to be natural. When we meet our friends from whom we have been parted ten, or twenty or thirty years, will it not be with infinite congratulation? Our perception quickened, our knowledge improved, we will know each other at a flash. We will have to talk over all that has happened since we have been separated, the one that has been ten years in heaven telling us all that has happened in the ten years of his heavenly residence, and we telling him in return all that has happened during the ten years of his absence from earth. Ye shall laugh. I think George Whitfield and John Wesley will have a laugh of contempt for their earthly collisions, and Toplady and Charles Wesley will have a laugh of contempt for their earthly misunderstandings, and the two farmers who were in a law suit all their days will have a laugh of contempt over their earthly disturbance about a line fence. Exemption from all annoyance. Immersion in all gladness. Ye shall laugh. Christ says, "Ye shall laugh." Yes, it will be a laugh of triumph. Oh ! what a pleasant thing it will be to stand on the wall of heaven and look down at Satan, and hurl at him defiance, and see him caged and chained, and we forever free from his clutches. Aha ! Aha ! Yes, it will be a laugh of royal greeting. You know how the Frenchmen cheered when Napoleon came back from Elba. You know how the English cheered when Wellington came back from Waterloo. You know how Americans cheered when Kossuth arrived from Hungary. You remember how Rome cheered when Pompey came back victor over nine hundred cities. Every cheer was a laugh. But oh ! the mightier greeting,

the gladder greeting when the snow white cavalry troop of heaven shall go through the streets, and according to revelation Christ in the red coat.

WHAT MAKES A LIVE CHURCH.

"Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich."—REV. ii. 8, 9.

SMYRNA was a great city of the ancients, bounded on three sides by mountains. It was the central emporium of the Levantine trade. In that prosperous and brilliant city there was a Christian church established. After it had existed for a while, it was rocked down by an earthquake, It was rebuilt. Then it was consumed by a conflagration that swept over the entire city. That church went through fire and trouble and disaster, but kept on to great spiritual prosperity. The fact was, that church had the grace of God, an ever active principle. Had it been otherwise, all the grandeur of architecture and all the pomp of surroundings would only have been the ornament of death, the garlands of a coffin, the plumes of a hearse. To-night, preaching my eighth anniversary sermon as your pastor, it may be profitable to consider what are the elements of a live church.

I remark in the first place, that one characteristic of such a church, is punctuality in meeting its engagements. All ecclesiastical institutions have financial relations, and they ought to meet their obligations just as certainly as men meet their obligations at the bank. When a church of God is not as faithful in its promises as the Bank of England, it ceases to be a church of God. It ought to be understood that prayers cannot paint a church, and

prayers cannot pay a winter's coal bill, and prayers cannot meet the insurance, and that while prayers can do a thousand things, there are a thousand things that prayers cannot do. Prayer for any particular church will never reach heaven-high unless it goes down pocket-deep. In my church at the West, there was a man of comfortable means who used to pray for his pastor in such elongated style he became a nuisance to the prayer-meeting, asking God in a prayer that was almost without ceasing, that the pastor might be blessed in his basket and in his store, while the fact was he never paid anything. If we pray for the advancement of the church and do not, out of our means, contribute for its advancement, our prayer is only mockery. Let the church of God then meet its obligations on the outside, and let the members of the congregation meet the obligations inside, and the church will be financially prosperous.

Let me say also that there must be punctuality in the attendance in the house of the Lord. If the service begins at half past ten in the morning, the regular congregation of a live church will not come at a quarter to eleven. If the service is to begin at half past seven in the evening, the regular congregation of a live church will not come at a quarter to eight. In some churches I have noticed the people are always tardy. There are some people who are always late. They were born too late, and the probability is that they will die too late. The rustling of silk up the aisle, and the slamming of doors, and the treading of heavy feet, is poor inspiration for a minister. It requires great abstraction in a pastor's mind to proceed with the preliminary exercises of the church when one half of the audience seated are looking around to see the other half come in. Such a difference of attendance upon the house of God may be a difference of time pieces; but the live church of which I am speaking ought to go by railroad time, and that is pretty well understood in all our communities. There is one hymn that ought to be sung in a great many Christian families on a Sabbath morning :

Talmage's Sermons.

Early, my God, without delay,
I haste to seek thy place.

Another characteristic of a live church is the fact that all the people participate in the exercises. A stranger can tell by the way the first tune starts whether there is any life there. A church that does not sing is a dead church. It is awful to hear a cold drizzle of music coming down from the organ loft, while all the people beneath sit in silence. When a tune wanders around lonely and unfriended, and is finally lost amid the arches because the people do not join in it, there is not much melody made unto the Lord. In heaven they all sing, though some there cannot sing half as well as others. The Methodist church has sung all round the world and gone from conquest to conquest, among other things because it is a singing church; and any Christian church organization that with enthusiasm performs this part of its duty will go on from triumph to triumph. A church of God that can sing, can do anything that ought to be done. We go forth into this holy war with the Bible in one hand, and a hymn book in the other. O ye who used to sing the praises of the Lord, and have got out of the habit, take your harps down from the willows. I am glad to know that as a church we are making advancement in this respect. When I came to be your pastor, we had an excellent choir in the little chapel, and they sang very sweetly to us Sabbath by Sabbath; but ever and anon there was trouble, for you know that the choirs in the United States are the Water-logs where the great battles go on. One Sunday, they sing like angels, and the next Sunday they will be mad and will not sing at all! We resolved to settle all the difficulties and have one skillful man at the organ and one Christian and enthusiastic man on the platform to beat time as precentor, and now from Sabbath to Sabbath the song comes up like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of many thunderings. On the way to triumph that never ends and pleasures that never die—sing!

Another characteristic of a live church is the flourishing Sabbath school. It is too late in the history of the Christian church to argue the benefit of such an institution. The Sabbath school is not a supplement to the church; it is its right arm. But you say, there are dead churches that have Sabbath schools. Yes, but the Sabbath schools are dead too. It is a dead mother holding in her arms a dead child. But when superintendent and teachers and scholars come on Sabbath afternoons together, their faces glowing with interest and enthusiasm, and their songs are heard all through the exercises, and at the close they go away feeling they have been on the mount of transfiguration—that is a live school, and it is characteristic of a live church. There is only one thing I have against the Sabbath schools of this country, and that is, they are too respectable. We gather in our schools the children of the refined, and the cultured, and the educated; but alas! for the great multitude of the children of the abandoned and the lost. A few of them are gathered into our Sabbath schools, but what about the 70,000 destitute children of New York, and the score of thousands of destitute children of Brooklyn, around whom are thrown no benign and heavenly Christian influence? It is now a tremendous question, what is to become of the destitute children of these cities? We must either act on them or they will act on us. We shall either Christianize them, or they will heathenize us. It is a question not more for the Christian than the philanthropist and the statesman. Oh, if we could have all these suffering little ones gathered together, what a scene of hunger and wretchedness and rags and sin and trouble and darkness! If we could see those little feet on the broad road to death, which through Christian charity ought to be pressing the narrow path of life; if we could hear their voices in blasphemy, which ought to be singing the praises of God; if we could see those little hearts which at that age ought not to be soiled with one unclean thought, becoming the sewers for every abomination! if we could see those suffering little ones sacrificed on the altar of every

iniquitous passion, and baptized with fire from the laver of the pit—we would recoil, crying out, “Avaunt thou dream of hell!” They are not always going to be children. They are coming up to be the men and women of this country. That spark of iniquity that might now be put out with one drop of the water of life, will become the conflagration of every green thing that God ever planted in the soul. That which ought to have been a temple of the Holy Ghost will become a scarred and blistered ruin—every light quenched and every altar in the dust. That petty thief who slips into your store and takes a yard of cloth from your counter will become the highwayman of the forest, or the burglar at midnight, picking the lock of your money-safe and blowing up your store to hide the villany. A great army with staggering step and blood-shot eye and drunken hoot, they are coming on, gathering recruits from every grogshop and den of infamy in the land, to take the ballot box and hurrah at the election. The hard-knuckled fist of ruffianism will have more power than the gentle hand of intelligence and sobriety. Men bloated and with the signature of sin burned in from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin will look honest men out of countenance. Moral corpses which ought to be buried a hundred feet deep to keep them from poisoning the air, will rot in the face of the sun at noon-day. Industry in her plain frock will be unappreciated, while thousands of men will wander around in idleness, with their hands on their hips, saying: “The world owes us a living.”

Oh, what a tremendous power there is in iniquity when uneducated and unrestrained and unblanched it goes on concentrating and deepening and widening and gathering momentum until it swings ahead with a very triumph of desolation, drowning like surges, scorching like flames, crushing like rocks. What are you going to do with this abandoned population of the streets? Will you gather them in your churches? It is not the will of your Heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish. If you

have ten respectable children in your class, gather in ten that are not respectable. If in your Bible class there be twenty young men who have come from Christian homes and elegant surroundings, let those twenty young men go out and gather in twenty more of the young men of the city who are lost to God and lost to society. This outside population, unless educated and restrained, will work terror in the ages that are to come. Years ago, at New Orleans, when the cholera was raging fearfully, a steamboat put out just before nightfall, crowded with passengers who were trying to escape from the pestilence. After the boat had been out a little while, the engineer fell ill with cholera. The captain in consternation went down among the passengers and asked: "Is there any one here who knows anything about engineering?" A swarthy man replied, "I am an engineer." "Well," said the captain, "I would be very glad if you would take charge of this boat." The man went to the engine. The steamer moved more rapidly until after awhile the captain and some passengers were alarmed, and they went to see what was the matter, and they found that this was a maniac engineer, and that he was seated on the safety valve, and as they came to him he said: "I am commissioned of Satan to drive this steamer to hell!" and he flourished his pistol and would not come down. But after awhile, through some strategem, he was brought from his position, and the lives of the passengers were saved.

O my friends, that steamer had no such peril as our institutions are threatened with, if the ignorant and unrestrained children of this land shall come up in their ignorance and their crime to engineer our civil and religious institutions and drive them on the rocks. Educate this abandoned population, or or they will overthrow the institutions of this land. Gather them into your Sabbath schools. I congratulate you that many have been gathered. Go forth, teachers, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and on the coming Sabbaths may there be found gathered scores and hundreds of these wanderers, and

instead of 1,500 in the Sabbath school we shall see 3,000 or 4,000, and the grace of God will come down upon them, and the Holy Spirit will bring them all into the truth,

Another characteristic of a live church is one with appropriate architecture. In the far West amid destitute population, a log church is very appropriate, the people living in log houses; but in communities where people live in comfortable abodes, a church uncommodious or lacking in beauty is a moral nuisance. Because Christ was born in a manger is no reason why we should worship him in a barn. Let the churches of Jesus Christ be not only comfortable but ornate. Years ago, we resolved to have a comfortable church. We resolved that it should be amphitheatrical in shape. The prominent architects of the country, after figuring on the matter a good while, said that such a church would not be churchly, and they would have nothing to do with the enterprise. But after awhile we found an architect willing to risk his reputation. He put up for us the first Tabernacle in amphitheatrical style. We liked it. All who came liked it. This building followed in the same style. We believe it is appropriate and adapted. The church of Jesus Christ ought to be a great family circle, the pulpit only the fireplace around which they are gathered in sweet and domestic communion. But when our first Tabernacle went up, Oh, the caricature and scoffing. They said: "It's a hippodrome! It's a holy circus! It's a Talmage theatre!" But the Lord came down with power upon that old building and made it the gate of heaven to a great many. And this building followed. That we were right in persisting in the style of architecture is proved by the fact that there are now some thirty or forty churches in the United States coming up in precisely the same style—two in Boston, one in Louisville that I saw last week, two in Chicago, two in San Francisco and in different parts of the country, the same style of architecture repeated. Indeed one Tabernacle has revolutionized church architecture in this country. A live church

must have a commodious, comfortable, and adapted building. "How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Again, the characteristic of a live church must be that it is a soul-saving church. It must be the old gospel of Christ. "Oh," say some people, "the gospel of Christ allows but a small swing for a man's faculties, and some men have left the ministry with that idea." One such said to Rowland Hill: "I have left the ministry because I don't want to hide my talents any longer." "Well," replied Rowland Hill, "I think the more you hide your talents the better." Why, there is no field on earth so grand as that which is open before the gospel ministry. Have you the powers of analysis, exhaust them here. Have you unconquerable logic, let it grapple with Paul's epistle to the Romans. Have you strong imagination, let it discourse on the psalms of David or John's apocalyptic vision. Have you great power or pathos, exhaust it in telling the story of a Saviour's love. Have you a bold style of thinking, then follow Ezekiel's wheel full of eyes and hear through his chapters the rush of the wings of a seraphim. All ye who want a grand field in which to work for God, come into the gospel ministry. At any rate, come into Christian circles, and somewhere and somehow, declare the grace of God. Pardon for all sin; comfort for all trouble; eternal life for all the dead. O my soul, preach it forever. It has been my ambition, and I believe it has been yours, my dear people, in these years of my ministry, to have this a soul-saving church, and we never yet threw out the gospel net but we drew in a great multitude. They have come, a hundred at a time, and two hundred at a time, and three hundred and fifty at a time, and I expect the day will appear when in some service there will be three thousand souls accepting the offers of eternal life. I wish I could tell you some circumstances that have come under my observation, proving the fact that God has blessed the prayers of this dear people in behalf of souls im-

mortal. I could tell you of one night when I stood at the end of the platform and a gentleman passed me, his cheek bronzed with the sea, and he went into the inquiry room he said to me: "I am an Englishman." I said: "I am very glad to see you; walk in." That night he gave his heart to the Lord. It was a clear case of quick but thorough conversion. Passing out at the close of the inquiry meeting I said: "How long have you been in this country?" He said: "I arrived by steamer this morning at eleven o'clock." I said, "How long will you be in the city?" He said: "I leave to-morrow for Canada, and thence I go to Halifax, and thence to Europe, and I'll never be here again." I said: "I think you must have come to this country to have your soul saved." He said: "That certainly was the reason." In that other room one night, at the close of the service, there sat among others, three persons looking so cheerful that I said to myself; "These are not anxious inquirers." I said to the man: "Are you a Christian?" "I am." "When did you become a Christian?" "To-night." His wife sat next to him. I said to her; "Are you a Christian?" "I am." "When did you become a Christian?" "To-night." I remarked: "Is this young lady your daughter?" They answered "yes." I said to her: "Are you a Christian?" "Yes." "When did you become a Christian?" "To-night." I said to them: "From whence came you?" They said: "We are from Charleston, South Carolina." "When did you come?" "We came yesterday." "How long are you going to remain?" "We go to-morrow. We have never been here before and shall never be here again." I have heard from them since. They are members of the church of Jesus Christ in good and regular standing, eminent for consistency and piety.

And so God has made it a soul-saving church. But I could tell you of a tragic scene, when once at the close of the service during the last year, I found a man in one of these front seats, wrought upon most mightily. I said to him, "What is the matter?" He replied: "I am a cap-

tive of strong drink ; I came from Illinois ; I thought perhaps you could do me some good. I find you can't do me any good. I find there is no hope for me." I said : "Come into this side room, and we will talk together." "Oh, no," he said, there's no need of my going in ; I am a lost man ; I have a beautiful wife ; I have four beautiful children ; I had a fine profession. I have had a thorough education, I had every opportunity a man ever had, but I am a captive of strong drink : God only knows what I suffer." I said, "Be encouraged ; come in here and we'll talk together about it." "No," he reiterated, "I can't come, and you can't do me any good. I was on the Hudson River railroad yesterday, and coming down, I resolved never again to touch a drop of strong drink. While I sat there a man came in, a low creature, and sat by me : he had a whisky flask and he said to me, 'Will you take a drink ?' I said no, but Oh, how I wanted it ; and as I said no, it seemed that the liquor curled up around the mouth of the flask and begged, 'Take me ! take me ! take me !' I felt I couldn't resist it, and yet I was determined not to drink, and I rushed out on the platform of the car, and I thought I would jump off ; we were going at the rate of forty miles an hour and I didn't dare to jump ; The paroxysm of thirst went off, and I am here to-night." I said : "Come in, I'll pray for you and commend you to God." He came in trembling. Some of you remember. After the service, we walked out and up the street. I said : "You have an awful struggle ; I'll take you into a drug store, perhaps the doctor can give some medicine that will help you in your struggle, though after all you will have to depend upon the grace of God." I said to the doctor : "Can you give this man something to help him in his battle against strong drink ?" "I can" replied the doctor, and he prepared a bottle of medicine. I said : "There is no alcohol in this—no strong drink ?" "None at all" said the doctor. "How long will this last ?" I inquired. "It will last him a week." "Oh" I said "give us another bottle." We passed out into the

street and stood under the gaslight. It was getting late and I said to the man ; " I must part with you ; put your trust in the Lord, and he will see you through ; you will make use of this medicine when the paroxysm of thirst comes on." A few weeks passed away and I got a letter from Boston saying—" Dear Friend : I enclose the money you paid for that medicine. I have never used any of it. The thirst for strong drink has entirely gone away from me. I send you two or three newspapers to show you what I have been doing since I came to Boston."

I opened the newspapers and saw accounts of meetings of two or three thousand people to whom this man had been preaching righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. I have heard from that man again and again since. He is faithful now and will be I know, faithful to the last. Oh, this work of soul-saving ! Would God that out of this audience to-night, five hundred men might hear the voice of the Son of God bidding them come to a glorious resurrection.

Sadness comes over me as I realize the fact that eight years of my pastorate have gone, and I see so many opportunities of usefulness I have neglected ; and I am aware of the fact there were so many occasions in which I might have struck harder for the cause of God, when I utterly failed. O God, in the blood of thine own Son Jesus Christ, wash out the sins of my ministry. I recognize the fact that in this house to-night, there are but three persons who were in the church when I came to Brooklyn. At any rate three representatives of families, and indeed there are very few here who were in the old chapel. Many of them have gone into saints' everlasting rest. I was permitted to stand by many of their death beds and hear the evidence they gave of the fact that God never forsakes a dying Christian. Your fathers, your mothers, your companions in life, your sons, your daughters, where are they ?

Asleep in Jesus—blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep.

Others in different parts of the land are living the Christian life and upholding the Christian standard, and we shall meet them when the toils of life are over, in the great harvest home. I wish also personally to thank my dear people for their kindness to me, for the manner in which they have borne with my infirmities, for the fact that they have upheld me with their prayers, and that, though sometimes my work, on the outside, has not been understood, my congregation have always been faithful to me, and God will be faithful to them. In my days of prosperity, they have been my joy, and when sickness came to my household they were with me in their prayers, and the days of sickness and darkness have been turned into days of joy. I bless God that I ever came to Brooklyn, I bless God that I ever met you; I cannot find a single thing about which to make complaint. And now we start out on another year. God only knows what is to be the history of this year. I am expecting grander spiritual results and that thousands of souls now in the darkness of sin will step out into the liberty of the gospel, and I do not know any way in which we can more appropriately celebrate the anniversary of a pastorate than by the induction of a great multitude of souls into the peace of the gospel. So let it be to-night. Let them come like clouds and doves to the window. O men and women immortal, hear this call of sovereign mercy. All the offers of the gospel are extended to you "without money and without price," and you are conscious of the fact that these opportunities will soon be gone forever. The conductor of a railtrain was telling me a few weeks ago, of the fact that he was one night standing by his train on a side track, his train having switched off so that the express train might dart past unhindered. He said while he stood there in the darkness beside his train on the side track, he heard the thunder of the express in the distance. Then he saw the flash of the headlight. The train came on with fearful velocity, nearer and nearer, until after awhile when it came very near, by the flash of the head light, he saw that the switchman had not attend-

ed to his duty—either through intoxication or indifference—and that train unless something was done immediately, would rush on the side track and dash the other train to atoms. He shouted to the switchman; “Set up the switch!” and with one stroke the switch went back and the express thundered on. O men and women, going toward the eternal world, swift as the years, swift as the months, swift as the days, swift as the hours, swift as the seconds—on what track are you going to-night? Toward light or darkness? Toward victory or defeat? Toward heaven or hell? Set up that switch! Cry aloud to God. “Now is the day of Salvation.”

A SATISFIED SPIRIT.

“Be content with such things as ye have.”—HEBREWS xiii. 5.

IF I should ask some one: “Where is Brooklyn to-day?” he would say: “At Shelter Island.” “Where is New York to-day?” “At Long Branch.” “Where Philadelphia?” “Cape May.” “Where is Boston?” “At Martha’s Vineyard.” “Where is Virginia?” “At the Sulphur Springs.” “Where the great multitudes from all parts of the land?” “At Saratoga,” the modern Bethesda, where the angel of health is ever stirring the waters. But, my friend, the largest multitude are at home, detained by business or circumstances. Among them all newspaper men, the hardest worked and the least compensated; city railroad employes, and ferry masters, and the police, and the tens of thousands of clerks and merchants waiting for their turn of business, and households with an invalid who cannot be moved, and other multitudes by the stringency of the times hindered from further expenditure, and the great multitude or well-to-do people who stay at home because they like home better than any other place, refusing

to go away simply because it is the fashion to go. When the express wagon, with its mountain of trunks directed to the Catskills or Niagara, goes through the streets, we stand at our window, envious and impatient, and wonder why we cannot go as well as others. Fools that we are; as though one could not be as happy at home as any where else. Our grandfathers and grandmothers had as good a time as we have, long before the first spring was bored at Saratoga, or the first deer shot in the Adirondacks. They made their wedding tour to the next farmhouse, or, living in the city, they celebrated the event by an extra walk on the New York "Battery." Now, the genuine American is not happy until he is going somewhere, and the passion is so great that there are Christian people with their families detained in the city, who come not to the house of God, trying to give people the idea that they are out of town; leaving the door-plate unscoured for the same reason, and for two months keeping the front shutters closed while they sit in the back part of the house, the thermometer at ninety! My friends, if it is best for us to go, let us go and be happy. If it is best for us to stay home, let us stay home and be happy. There is a great deal of good common sense in Paul's advice to the Hebrews: "Be content with such things as ye have." To be content is to be in good humour with our circumstances, not picking a quarrel with our obscurity or our poverty, or our social position. There are four or five grand reasons why we should be content with such things as we have.

The first reason that I mention as leading to this spirit advised in the text, is the consideration that the poorest of us have all that is indispensable in life. We make a great ado about our hardships, but how little we talk of our blessings. Health of body, which is given in largest quantity to those who have never been petted and fondled and spoiled of fortune, we take as a matter of course. Rather have this luxury and have it alone, than without it, look out of a palace window upon parks of deer stalking between foun-

tains and statuary. These people sleep sounder on a straw mattress than fashionable invalids on a couch of ivory and eagle's down. The dinner of herbs taste better to the appetite sharpened on a woodman's axe or a reaper's scythe than wealthy indigestion experiences seated at a table covered with partridge and venison and pine apple. The grandest luxury God ever gave a man is health. He who trades that off for all the palaces of the earth is infinitely cheated. We look back at the glory of the last Napoleon, but who would have taken his Versailles and his Tuilleries if with them we had been obliged to take his gout? "Oh," says some one, "it isn't the grosser pleasures I covet, but it is the gratification of an artistic and intellectual taste." Why, my brother, you have the original from which these pictures are copied. What is a sunset on a wall, compared with a sunset hung in loops of fire on the heavens? What is a cascade silent on a canvas compared with a cascade that makes the mountain tremble, its spray ascending like the departed spirit of the water slain on the rocks? O! there is a great deal of hollow affectation about a fondness for pictures on the part of those who never appreciate the original from which the pictures are taken. As though a parent should have no regard for his child, but go into ecstasies at the daguerreotype. Bless God to-day, O man, O woman; that though you may be shut out from the works of a church, and a Bierstadt and a Rubens and a Raphael, you still have free access to a gallery grander than the Louvre or the Luxembourg or the Vatican—the royal gallery of the noonday heavens, the King's gallery of the midnight sky.

Another consideration leading us to a spirit of contentment, is the fact that our happiness is not dependent upon outward circumstances. You see people happy and miserable amid all circumstances. In a family where the last loaf is on the table and the last stick of wood on the fire, you sometimes find a cheerful confidence in God, while in a very fine place you will see and hear discord sounding

her war-whoop and hospitality freezing to death in a cheerless parlour. I stopped one day on Broadway at the head of Wall-street, at the foot of Trinity Church, to see who seemed the happiest people passing. I judged from their looks the happiest people were not those who went down into Wall-street, for they had on their brow the anxiety of the dollar they expected to make ; nor the people who came out of Wall-street, for they had on their brow the anxiety of the dollar they had lost ; nor the people who swept by in splendid equipage, for they met a carriage that was finer than theirs. The happiest person in all that crowd, judging from the countenance, was the woman who sat at the apple-stand a-knitting. I believe real happiness oftener looks out of the window of a humble home than through the opera glass of the gilded box of a theatre. I find Nero growling on a throne. I find Paul singing in a dungeon. I find king Ahab going to bed at noon, through melancholy, while near by is Naboth contented in the possession of a vineyard. Haman, prime minister of Persia, frets himself almost to death because a poor Jew will not tip his hat, and Ahithophel, one of the great lawyers of the Bible times, through fear of dying, hangs himself. The wealthiest man forty years ago, in New York, when congratulated over his large estate, replied : " Ah ! you don't know how much trouble I have in taking care of it." Byron declared in his last hours that he had never seen more than twelve happy days in all his life. I do not believe he had seen twelve minutes of thorough satisfaction. Napoleon I. said : " I turn with disgust from the cowardice and selfishness of man. I hold life a horror ; death a repose. What I have suffered the last twenty days is beyond human comprehension." While on the other hand, to show how one may be happy amid the most disadvantageous circumstances, just after the Ocean Monarch had been wrecked in the English Channel, a steamer was cruising along in the darkness, when the captain heard a song, a sweet song, coming over the water, and he bore down toward that voice, and he found it was a Christian woman on-

a plank of the wrecked steamer, singing to the tune of St. Martins:

Jesus, lover of my soul
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high.

The heart right toward God and man, we are happy.
The heart wrong toward God or man, we are unhappy.

Another reason why we should come to this spirit inculcated in the text is the fact that all the differences of earthly condition are transitory. The houses you build, the lands you culture, the places in which you barter, are soon to go into other hands. However hard you may have it now, if you are a Christian the scene will soon end. Pain, trial, persecution, never knock at the door of the grave. A coffin made out of pine boards is just as good a resting place as one made out of silver-mounted mahogany or rosewood. Go down among the resting places of the dead, and you will find that though people there had a great difference of worldly circumstances, now they are all alike unconscious. The warm hand that greeted the senator and the president and the king is still as the hand that hardened on the mechanic's hammer or the manufacturer's wheel. It does not make any difference now, whether there is a plain stone above them from which the traveller pulls aside the weeds to read the name, or a tall shaft springing into the heavens as though to tell their virtues to the skies. In that silent land there are no titles for great men, and there are no rumblings of chariot wheels, and there is never heard there the foot of the dance. The Egyptian guano which is thrown on the field in the East for the enrichment of the soil, is the dust raked out from the sepulchres of the kings and lords and mighty men. O! the chagrin of those mighty men if they had ever known that in the after ages of the world, they would have been called Egyptian guano,

Another reason why we should culture this spirit of cheerfulness is the fact that God knows what is best for his creatures. You know what is best for your child. He thinks you are not as liberal with him as you ought to be. He criticises your discipline, but you look over the whole field, and you, loving that child, do what in your deliberate judgment is best for him. Now, God is the best of fathers. Sometimes his children think that he is hard on them and that he is not as liberal with them as he might be. But children do not know as much as a father. I can tell you why you are not largely affluent, and why you have not been grandly successful. It is because you cannot stand the temptation. If your path had been smooth, you would have depended upon your own sure-footedness; but God roughened that path so you have to take hold of his hand. If the weather had been mild, you would have loitered along the water courses, but at the first howl of the storm you quickened your pace heavenward, and wrapped around you the warm robe of a Saviour's righteousness. "What have I done?" says the wheat sheaf to the farmer, "what have I done that you beat me so hard with your flail?" The farmer makes no answer, but the rake takes off the straw, and the mill blows the chaff to the winds, and the golden grain falls down at the foot of the wind-mill. After a while the straw looking down from the mow, upon the golden grain banked up on either side the floor, understands why the farmer beat the wheat sheaf with the flail. Who are these before the throne? The answer comes: "These are they who out of great threshing had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Would God that we could understand that our trials are the very best thing for us. If we had an appreciation of that truth, then we would know why it was that John Noyes, the martyr, in the very midst of the flame reached down and picked up one of the faggots that was consuming him and kissed it, and said: "Blessed be God for the time when I was born to this preferment." "They who suffer with him on earth shall be glorified

with him in heaven." "Be content then with such things as you have."

Another consideration leading us to the spirit of the text is the assurance that the Lord will provide somehow. Will he who holds the waters in the hollow of his hand allow his children to die of thirst? Will he who owns the cattle on a thousand hills and all the earth's luxuriance of grain and fruit, allow his children to starve? Go out to-morrow morning at five o'clock, into the woods and hear the birds chant. They have had no breakfast, they know not where they will dine, they have no idea where they will sup; but hear the birds chant at five o'clock in the morning. "Behold, the fowls of the air, they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they?" Seven thousand people in Christ's time went into the desert. They were the most improvident people I ever heard of. They deserved to starve. They might have taken food enough with them to last them until they got back. Nothing did they take. A lad who had more wit than all of them put together, asked his mother that morning for some loaves of bread and some fishes. They were put into his satchel. He went out into the desert. From this provision, the seven thousand were fed, and the more they ate the larger the loaves grew, until the provision that the boy brought in one satchel was multiplied so he could not have carried the fragments home in six satchels. "Oh," you say, "times have changed, and the day of miracles has gone." I reply that what God did then by miracle, he does now in some other way and by natural laws. "I have been young," said David, "but now am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." It is high time that you people who are fretting about worldly circumstances and who are fearing you are coming to want, understood that the oath of the eternal God is involved in the fact that you are to have enough to eat and to wear.

Again : I remark that the religion of Jesus Christ is the grandest influence to make a man contented. Indemnity against all financial and spiritual harm. It calms the spirit, dwindles the earth into insignificance, and swallows up the soul with the thought of heaven. Oh ! ye who have been going about from place to place expecting to find in change of circumstances something to give solace to the spirit, I commend you this morning to the warm-hearted, earnest, practical, common-sense religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no peace, saith my Lord, for the wicked, and as long as you continue in your sin, you will be miserable. Come to God. Make him your portion and start for heaven and you will be a happy man—you will be a happy woman.

Yet, my friends, notwithstanding all these inducements to a spirit of contentment, I have to tell you this morning the human race is divided into two classes—those who scold and those who get scolded. The carpenter wants to be anything but a carpenter, and the mason anything but a mason, and the banker anything but a banker, and the lawyer anything but a lawyer, and the minister anything but a minister, and everybody would be happy if he were only somebody else. The anemone wants to be a sunflower, and the apple orchards throw down their blossoms because they are not tall cedars, and scow wants to be a schooner, and the sloop would like to be a seventy-four pounder, and parents have the worst children that ever were, and everybody has the greatest misfortune, and everything is upside down, or going to be. Ah ! my friends, you never make any advance through such a spirit as that. You cannot fret yourself up : you may fret yourself down. Amid all this grating of tones I strike this string of the gospel harp : “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” “We brought nothing into this world, and it is very certain we can carry nothing out ; and having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

Let us all remember, if we are Christians that we are going, after awhile, whatever be our circumstances now, to

come to a glorious vacation. As in summer we put off our garments and go down into the cool sea to bathe, so we will put off these garments of flesh, and we will step into the cool Jordan. We will look around for some place to lay down our weariness, and the trees of the grove will say: "Come and rest under our shadow," and the earth will say: "Come and sleep in my bosom," and the winds will say: "Hush! while I sing thee a cradle hymn," and while six strong men carry us out to our last resting place, and ashes come to ashes, and dust to dust, we will see two scarred feet standing amid the broken sod, and a lacerated brow bending over the open earth, while a voice tender with all affection and mighty with omnipotence will declare: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Comfort one another with these words.

A HARVEST SERMON.

"My Father is the husbandman."—JOHN XV. 1.

WILL it not be appropriate if I preach a harvest sermon? This summer, having gone in different directions over between five and six thousand miles of harvest field, I can hardly open my Bible without smelling the breath of new-mown hay and seeing the golden light of the wheat fields, and when I open my Bible, to take my text, the Scripture leaf rustles like the tassels of the corn. We were nearly all of us born in the country. We dropped corn in the hill, four grains to the hill; and went on Saturday to the mill, trying the grist in the centre of the sacks, so that the contents on either side the horse balanced each other, and drove the cattle a-field, our bare feet wet with the dew; and rode the horses with the halter to the brook until we fell off; and hunted the mow for nests until the

feathered occupants went cackling away. We were nearly all of us born in the country, and would have stayed there had not some adventurous lad on his vacation come back with better clothes and softer hand, and set the whole village on fire with ambition for city life. So we all understand rustic allusions. The Bible is full of it. In Christ's sermon on the Mount you see the full-blown lilies, and the glossy black of the crow's wing as it flits over Mount Olivet. David and John and Paul and Isaiah find in country life a source of frequent illustration, while Christ in the text takes the responsibility of calling God a farmer, declaring: "My Father is the husbandman." Noah was the first farmer. We say nothing about Cain, the tiller of the soil. Adam was a gardener on a large scale, but to Noah was given all the acres of the earth. Elisha was an agriculturist, not cultivating a ten-acre lot, for we find him ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen. In Bible times, the land was so plentiful and the inhabitants so few, that Noah was right when he gave to every inhabitant a certain portion of land, that land, if cultivated, ever after to be his own possession. Just as now in Nebraska, the Government on the payment of sixteen dollars will give pre-emption right to one hundred and sixty acres, to any man who will settle there and cultivate the soil. All classes of people were expected to cultivate ground except ministers of religion. It was supposed that they would have their time entirely occupied with their own profession; although sometimes ministers do deal in stocks, I am told, and they are superior judges of horses, and make one think sometimes of what Thomas Fuller said in regard to a man in his day, who preached very well but lived very ill: "When he is out of the pulpit it is a pity that he should ever go into it, and when he is in the pulpit it is a pity he should ever come out of it."

They were not small crops raised in those times, for though the arts were rude, the plough turned up very rich soil, and barley and flax, and all kinds of grain came up at the call of the harvesters. Pliny tells of one stalk of grain that had on it between three and four hundred ears.

The rivers and the brooks, through artificial channels, were brought down to the roots of the corn, and to this habit of the farmer of turning a river wherever he wanted it, Solomon refers when he says: "The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord, and he turneth it as the rivers of water are turned, whithersoever he will." The wild beasts were caught, and then a hook was put into their nose, and then they were led over the fields, and to that God refers when he says to wicked Sennacherib, "I will put a hook in thy nose and I will bring thee back by the way by which thou camest;" and God has a hook in every bad man's nose—whether it be Nebuchadnezzar or Ahab or Herod. He may think himself very independent, but sometime in his life, or in the hour of his death, he will find that the Lord Almighty has a hook in his nose.

This was the rule in regard to the culture of the ground: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together," illustrating the folly of ever putting intelligent and useful and pliable men in association with the stubborn and the unwieldy. The vast majority of trouble in the churches and in the reformatory institutions comes from the disregard of this command of the Lord: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together." There were large amounts of property invested in cattle. The Moabites paid one hundred thousand sheep as an annual tax. Job had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen. The time of vintage was ushered in with mirth and music. The clusters of the vine were put into the wine-press and then five men would get into the press and trample out the juice from the grape until their garments were saturated with the wine, and they became the emblems of slaughter, Christ himself wounded until covered with the blood of crucifixion, making use of this allusion. When the question was asked: "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like one who treadeth the wine vat?" he responded: "I have trodden the wine-press alone!"

In all ages there has been great honour paid to agriculture. Seven-eighths of the people in every country are disciples of the plough. A government is strong in proportion as it is supported by an athletic and industrious yeomanry. So long ago as before the fall of Carthage, Nago wrote twenty-eight books on agriculture. Hesiod wrote a poem on the same subject: "The Weeks and Days." Cato was prouder of his work on husbandry than of all his military conquests. So far back as the reign of Claudius, Collumbella wrote a book on the subject of agriculture. But I must not be tempted to a discussion of agricultural conquests. Standing amid the harvests and orchards and vineyards of the Bible, and standing among the harvests and orchards and vineyards of our own country—larger harvests than have ever before been gathered, I want to run out the analogy between the production of crops and the growth of grace in the soul—all these sacred writers making use of that analogy.

In the first place I remark, in grace as in the fields there must be a ploughing. That which theologians call conviction is only the ploughshare turning up the sins that have been rooted and matted in the soul. A farmer said to his indolent son: "There are a hundred dollars buried deep in that field." The son went to work and ploughed the field from fence to fence, and he ploughed it very deep, and then complained that he had not found the money; but when the crop had been gathered and sold for a hundred dollars more than any previous year, then the young man took the hint as to what his father meant when he said there was a hundred dollars buried down in that field. Deep ploughing for a crop. Deep ploughing for a soul. He who makes light of sin will never amount to anything in the church or in the world. If a man speaks of sin as though it were an inaccuracy or a mistake instead of the loathsome, abominable, consuming and damning thing that God hates—that man will never yield a harvest of usefulness. When I was a boy, I ploughed a field with a team of fleet horses. I ploughed it very quickly. Once in a

while I passed over some of the sod without turning it, but I did not jerk back the plough with its rattling devices. I thought it made no difference. After a while my father came along and said: "Why, this will never do; this isn't ploughed deep enough. There, you have missed this, and you have missed that," and he ploughed it over. The difficulty with a great many people is that they are only scratched with conviction, when the sub-soil plough of God's truth ought to be put in up to the beam. My word is to all Sabbath school teachers, to all parents, to all Christian workers: Plough deep! Plough deep! And if in your own personal experience you are apt to take a lenient view of the sinful side of your nature, put down beside your soul the ten commandments which boomed from the artillieried mount, and study the holiness of God, and before you get through, the team with flaming nostrils will be harnessed to the sharpened and glittering coulter that will turn up your soul to the deepest depths. If a man preaches to you that you are only a little out of order by reason of sin, and that you need only a little firing up, he lies! You have suffered an appalling catastrophe by reason of sin. There are quick poisons and slow poisons, but the druggist could give you, one drop that would kill the body, and sin is like that drug; so virulent, so poisonous, so deathful, that one drop is enough to kill the soul. Deep ploughing for a soul. Broken heart, or no religion. Broken soul, or no harvest. Why was it that David, and the jailer, and the publican, and Martin Luther, made such ado about their sins? Had they lost their senses? No. The ploughshare struck them. Conviction turns up a great many things that were forgotten. As a farmer ploughing sometimes turns up the skeleton of a man, or the anatomy of a monster long ago buried, so the ploughshare of conviction turns up the ghostly skeletons of sins long ago entombed. Geologist never brought up from the depths of the mountain mightier ichthyosaurus or megatherium. But what means all this crooked ploughing—these crooked furrows—the repentance that amounts to nothing—the re-

penitance that ends in nothing? Men groan over their sins but get no better. They weep, but their sins are not counted. They get convicted, but not converted. What is the reason? I remember that on the farm we set a standard with a red flag at the other end of the field. We kept our eye on that. We aimed at that. We ploughed up to that. Losing sight of that, we made a crooked furrow. Keeping our eye on that, we made a straight furrow. Now, in this matter of conviction, we must have some standard to guide us. It is a red standard that God has set at the other end of the field. It is the cross. Keeping your eye on that, you make a straight furrow. Losing sight of it, we make a crooked furrow. Plough up to the cross. Aim not at either end of the horizontal piece of the cross, but at the upright piece, at the centre of it—the heart of the Son of God who bore your sins and made satisfaction. Crying and weeping will not bring you through. “Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour to give repentance.” Oh, plough up to the cross!

Again: I remark, in grace as in the field there must be a sowing. In the autumnal weather you find the farmer going across the field at a stride of about twenty-three inches, and at every stride he puts his hand in the sack of grain, and he sprinkles it over the field. It looks silly to a man who does not know what he is doing. He is doing a very important work. He is scattering the winter grain, and the snow may come, but the next year there will be a great crop. Now, that is what we are doing, when we are preaching the gospel, when we are scattering the seed. It is the foolishness of preaching, but it is winter grain, and though the snows of worldliness may come down upon it, it will yield after a while a glorious harvest. Let us be sure we sow the right kind of seed. Sow mullein stalk, and mullein stalk will come up. Sow Canada thistles, and Canada thistles will come up. Sow wheat, and wheat will come up. Let us distinguish between truth and error. Let us know the difference between wheat and hellebore and henbane and colicoquintida. The largest

denomination in this country is the denomination of Nothingarians. Their religion is a system of negations. You say to one of them: "What do you believe?" "I don't believe in the doctrine of election." "What do you believe?" "Well, I don't believe in infant baptism." "What *do* you believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the perseverance of the saints." "Well, now tell us what you *do* believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the eternal punishment of the wicked." So their religion is a row of ciphers. Believe something and teach it, or, to resume the figure of any text, scatter abroad the right kind of gospel seed. A minister in New York, the other day, preached a sermon calculated to set the denominations of Christians quarreling. He was sowing nettles. A minister in Boston, the other day, advertised that he would preach a sermon on the "Superiority of Transcendental and Organized Forces to Intranscendental and Inorganized Forces." He was sowing artichokes! The Lord Jesus Christ, nineteen centuries ago, planted one red seed of doctrine. It sprang up. On one side of the stalk are all the churches of Christendom; on the other side of the stalk are all the free governments of the earth, and on the top there shall be a flowering millennium after a while. All from one red seed of doctrine. Every word that parent, or Sabbath school teacher, or city missionary, or Christian worker speaks for Christ, comes up. Yea, it comes up with compound interest. You, saving one soul, that one saving ten, the ten a hundred, the hundred a thousand, the thousand ten thousand, the ten thousand a hundred thousand—on, on forever. It seems very insignificant to see a mother teaching her child, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

What is the use of it? That child does not know what he is saying. He has his head in his mother's lap, and he is squirming about, and he is breathing hard, and he is playing with his feet, and he says "Amen" two or three times before it is the right place to say it. Why is not that mother reading Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii," or Hawthorne's "House of the Seven Gables?" I will tell

you a story of "Now I lay me down to sleep." At the inauguration of President Hayes in Washington, last March, two men went over from Baltimore, worldly men. At night the rooms of the hotels were all crowded, and these two worldly men were introduced into a room where there were seven or eight men lying down trying to sleep. As these two worldly men from Baltimore went into the room, one of them said to his comrade: "I can't sleep here; I am always accustomed to saying a little prayer which my mother taught me, and I can't sleep until I have said it." "Well," said the other worldly man from Baltimore, "that's the way with me; I can't sleep until I have said my prayers." So they retired from the room, but finding no accommodation they came back to the same room, passed in, and one of these men from Baltimore said to the people who were lying on the floor still awake: "Gentlemen, I am accustomed to say a little prayer before I go to sleep; I can't sleep until I do say it; if you will excuse me I will just say it now, and I always say it aloud." They all said: "Of course, we'll excuse you." He knelt down and his comrade with him, and all the men in that room got up on their knees, and audibly they all recited:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.

To make a long story short, those two men from Baltimore through their own fidelity, were convicted of sin and converted to God, and all those other men, so far as they have been heard from, by that one exercise that night were ushered into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The two men went back to Baltimore, and under the ministry of Thomas Harrison, a young man who graduated from our Lay College year before last, these two men telling the story of their own conversion at Washington, sixteen hundred souls in seven months were brought into the kingdom of God. When I saw Thomas Harrison this summer, and found that he was the Thomas

Harrison who came out of our own institution, the story thrilled me beyond almost anything I have heard. So you see that a mother whose name I don't know, forty or fifty years ago taught her child the infant prayer: "Now I lay me down to sleep." The first harvest of it is the conversion of her own son, and then of sixteen hundred souls in Baltimore—tide of influence rolling on forever and forever. O Sabbath school teacher, O mother, O Christian worker, you shall reap if you faint not.

We have with us this morning some of the men of the sea. They came in the vessel *Cape of Good Hope* from Calcutta after a long voyage. I greet them to this house of God. They sit right before me. Many of them, I am told, are from Scotland—glorious land of Thomas Chalmers and John Knox. I never speak the name of that country without emotion. I felt as if I had seen all the world, and wanted to come back. O men, far away in your childhood days was the gospel seed planted in your souls, and it is coming up to-day. Many of you, I hear, are children of God, and I congratulate you: and in the hearts of others of you the Good Word will spring up to-day, and the memory of that land of Bibles and of Sabbaths—good, old glorious Scotland—the memory of that time when you knelt at your mother's knee and said your evening prayer, comes over your soul to-day, and who knows but that coming in here this morning may be the matter of your eternal redemption.

Again I remark, in grace as in the farm, there must be a harrowing. I refer now not to a harrow that goes over the field in order to prepare the ground for the seed, but a harrow which goes over after the seed is sown lest the robins pick up the seed, sinking it down into the earth so it can take root. You know a harrow. It has pieces of wood nailed across each other, and has sharp teeth, and when the horses are hitched to it, it goes tearing and leaping across the field, driving the seed down into the earth until it springs up in the harvest. Bereavements, sorrow, persecution, are the Lord's harrows to sink the gospel

truth into the heart. There were truths that you heard thirty years ago that have not affected you until recently. Some great trouble came over you, and the truth was harrowed in, and it has come up. What did God mean in this country in 1857? For a century there was gospel preached, but a great deal of it produced no result. Then God harnessed a wild panic to a harrow of commercial disaster, and that harrow went down Wall Street and up Wall Street, down Third Street and up Third Street, down State Street and up State Street, until the whole land was torn to pieces as never before. What followed the harrow? A great awakening in which there were 500,000 souls brought into the kingdom of our Lord. No harrow, no crops.

Again I remark, in grace as in the farm, there must be a reaping. Many Christians speak of religion as though it were a matter of economies or of insurance. They expect to reap in the next world. Oh, no, now is the time to reap. Gather up the joy of the Christian religion this morning, this afternoon, this night. If you have not as much grace as you would like to have, thank God for what you have, and pray for more. You are no worse enslaved than Joseph, or worse troubled than was David, or worse tempted than was Daniel, or worse scourged than was Paul. Yet amid the rattling of fetters and amid the gloom of dungeons and amid the horror of shipwreck, they triumphed in the grace of God. The weakest man in this house this morning has 500 acres of spiritual joy all ripe. Why do you not go and reap it? You have been groaning over your infirmities for thirty years. Now give one round shout over your emancipation. You say you have it so hard. You might have it worse. You wonder why this great cold trouble keeps revolving through your soul like a grindstone, turning and turning with black hand on the crank. Ah! that trouble is the grindstone on which you are to sharpen your sickle. To the fields! wake up! Take off your green spectacles, your blue spectacles, your black spectacles. Pull up the corners of your mouth

as far as you pull them down. To the fields! Reap! Reap!

Again I remark : in grace as in farming there is a time for threshing. I tell you bluntly, that is death. Just as the farmer with a flail beats the wheat out of the straw, so death beats the soul out of the body. Every sickness is a stroke of the flail, and the sick bed is the threshing floor. What, say you, is death to a good man only taking the wheat out of the straw? That is all. An aged man has fallen asleep. Only yesterday you saw him on the sunny porch playing with his grandchildren. Calmly he receives the message to leave this world. He bids a pleasant good-bye to his old friends. The telegraph carries the tidings, and on swift rail trains the kindred come, wanting to look once more on the face of dear old grandfather. Brush back the gray hairs from his brow; it will never ache again. Put him away in the slumber of the tomb. He will not be afraid of that night. Grandfather was never afraid of anything. He will rise in the morning of the resurrection. Grandfather was always the first to rise. His voice has already mingled in the doxology of heaven. Grandfather always did sing in church. Anything ghastly about that? No. The threshing of the wheat out of the straw—that is all.

The Saviour folds a lamb in his bosom. The little child filled all the house with her music, and her toys are scattered all up and down the stairs just as she left them. What if the hand that plucked four-o'clocks out of the garden is still? It will wave in the eternal triumph. What if the voice that made music in the home is still? She will sing the eternal hosanna. Put a white rose in one hand, and a red rose in the other hand, and a wreath of orange blossoms on the brow—the white flower for the victory, the red flower for the Saviour's sacrifice, the orange blossom for her marriage day. Anything ghastly about that? Oh, no. The sun went down and the flower shut. The wheat threshed out of the straw. "Dear Lord, give me sleep," said the dying boy, the son of one of my elders. "Dear

Lord, give me sleep," and he closed his eyes and awoke in glory. Henry Longfellow, writing a letter of condolence to those parents, says: "Those last words were beautifully poetic," and Mr. Longfellow knows what is poetic. "Dear Lord, give me sleep."

'Twas not in cruelty, not in wrath,
That the reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel that visited the earth
And took the flower away.

So may it be with us when our work is all done, and our trials are all ended. "Dear Lord, give us sleep."

I have one more thought to present. I have spoken of the ploughing, of the sowing, of the harrowing, of the reaping, of the threshing. I must now speak a moment of the garnering. Where is the garner? Need I tell you? Oh! no, so many have gone out from your own circle—yea, from your own family, that you have had your eye on that garner for many a year. What a hard time some of them had. In Gethsemanes of suffering they sweat great drops of blood. They took the trembling cup and they put it to their hot lips and they cried, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me." Pursued and hounded and crushed, with tongues of burning agony they cried: "O Lord, deliver my soul." But they got over it. They all got over it. Garnered! Their tears wiped away. Their battles all ended. Their burdens lifted. Garnered! The Lord of the harvest will not allow those sheaves to perish in the equinox. Garnered! Some of us remember on the farm that the sheaves were put on the top of the rack which surmounted the wagon, and these sheaves were piled higher and higher, and after a while the horses started for the barn, and these sheaves swayed to and fro in the wind and the old wagon creaked, and the horses gave a struggle and pulled so hard the harness came up in loops of leather on their back, and then when the front wheel struck the elevated floor of the barn, it seemed as if the load would go no farther, until the workmen gave a great shout, and then with one last tre-

mendous strain, the horses pulled in the load. Then they were unharnessed, and forkful after forkful of grain fell into the mow. O my friends, our getting to heaven may be a pull, a very hard pull, but these sheaves are bound to go in. The Lord of the harvest has promised it. I see the load at last coming to the door of the heavenly garner. The sheaves of the Christian soul sway to and fro in the wind of death, and the old body creaks under the load, and as the load strikes the floor of the celestial garner, it seems as if it can go no farther. It is the last struggle until the voices of angels and the voice of our departed kindred, and the welcoming voice of God shall give a shout that shall send in the harvest rolling into the eternal triumph, while all up and down the sky the cry is heard: "Harvest home! Harvest home!"

THE JORDANIC PASSAGE.

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up on a heap very far from the city Adam, and the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."—JOSHUA iii. 15—17.

NOT long ago we saw Joshua on a forced march. During that hour we saw him cross the Jordan, blow down the walls of Jericho, capture the city Ai, demolish five kings, the astronomy of heaven changed to give him time enough to completely whip out his enemies. It was my grief and yours on that occasion that we could not stop to consider more deliberately the Jordanic passage. I staid for some three or four weeks at Williamsport, on the

banks of the Potomac, just after the Confederate army had crossed over, and the broken ammunition wagons and the dead cavalry horses that strewed the beach brought back to my mind vividly the solemn and dreadful scenes which recently transpired. Washington crossed the Delaware when crossing was pronounced impossible; but he did it by boat. Xerxes crossed the Hellespont with two million men; but he did it by bridge. The Israelites crossed the Red Sea; but the same orchestra that celebrated the deliverance of one army, sounded the strangulation of the other. The Jordanic passage differs from all. There was no sacrifice of human life. Not so much as the loss of a linchpin. The vanguard of the host, made up of the priests, advanced until they put their foot at the brim of the river, when immediately the streets of Jerusalem were no more dry than the bed of that river. It was as if all the water had been drawn off, and then the dampness had been soaked up with a sponge, and then by a towel the road had been wiped dry. Yonder go the great army of the Philistines, the hosts in uniform; following them, the wives, the children, the flocks, the herds. The people look up at the crystal wall of Jericho as they pass, and think what an awful disaster would come to them if, before they got to the opposite bank of tamerisk and oleander and willows, that wall should fall upon them, and the thought makes the mothers hug their children closer to their hearts and to swiften their pace. Quick now! Get them all upon the bank—armed warriors, wives, children, flocks, herds, and let this wonderful Jordanic passage be completed forever.

Seated this morning, on the shelving of limestone, I look off upon the Jordan where Joshua crossed under triumphal march of rainbow woven out of the spray—the river which afterwards became the baptistery where Christ was sprinkled or plunged, the river where the borrowed ax-head miraculously swam at the prophet's order, the river illustrious in the history of the world for heroic faith and omnipotent deliverance, and typical of scenes yet to transpire in

your life and mine, scenes enough to make us from sole of foot to crown of head to tingle with infinite gladness. Standing on the scene of that affrighted and fugitive river Jordan, I learn for myself and for you, first, *that obstacles when they are touched, vanish*. The text says that when those priests came down and touched the edge of the water with their feet, the water parted. They did not wade in chin deep, or waist deep, or knee deep, or ankle deep, but as soon as their feet touched the water, it vanished. And it makes me think that almost all the obstacles of life need only to be approached in order to be conquered. Difficulties touched, vanish. It is the trouble, the difficulty, the obstacle there in the distance that seems so huge and tremendous. The apostle Paul and John seemed to hate cross dogs. The apostle Paul said in Philippians: "Beware of dogs," and John seems to shut the gate of heaven against all the canine species when he says: "Without are dogs." But I have been told that when these animals are furious and they come at you, if you will keep your eye on them and advance upon them, they will retreat. So the most of the trials of life that hound your steps, if you can only get your eye upon them, and keep your eye upon them, and advance upon them, crying: "Begone!" will sink and cower.

There is a beautiful tradition among the American Indians, that Maraton was travelling in the invisible world and one day he came to a barrier of brambles and sharp thorns which forbade his going on, and there was a wild beast glaring at him from the thicket, but as he determined to go on and did proceed, the brambles were found to be only phantoms, and the beast was found to be a powerless ghost, and the impassable river that forbade his rushing to the embrace of his dusk Garatelda proved to be only the phantom of a river. Well, my friends, the fact is that many things that cross our pathway are only the phantoms, only the delusions of life. Difficulties touched are conquered. Put your feet into the brim of the water and Jordan retreats. You sometimes see a great duty to per-

form ; it is a very disagreeable duty. You say : " I can't go through it, I haven't the courage, I haven't the intelligence to go through it." Advance upon it and Jordan will fly. I always sigh, before I begin to preach, at the greatness of the undertaking ; but as soon as I start it becomes to me an exhilaration, and any duty undertaken with a confident spirit becomes a pleasure, and the higher the duty the higher the pleasure.

Difficulties touched, are conquered. Jordans advanced upon, vanish. There are a great many people who are afraid of death in the future. John Livingstone once on a sloop coming from Elizabeth port to New York, was dreadfully frightened because he thought he was going to be drowned, a sudden gust coming up. People were surprised at him. If there was any man in the world ready to die i was good John Livingstone. So there are now a great many good people who shudder in passing a grave-yard, and they hardly dare think of Canaan because of the Jordan that intervenes ; but once they are down on a sick bed, all their fears are gone. The waters of death dashing on the beach sound like the mellow song of ocean shells. The departing ones swell the blossoms of the tree of life. The music of heavenly castles comes stealing over the waters. Crossing now is only a pleasant sail. How long the boat is coming ! Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Christ, the priest, advances ahead, and the dying Christian goes over dry-shod on coral beds and flowers of heaven and paths of pearl.

Oh, could we make our doubts remove
These gloomy doubts that rise,
And view the Canaan that we love,
With unbeckluded eyes.

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Could fright us from the shore,

Again : this Jordanic passage teaches me the *completeness of everything that God does*. When God put an invisible dam across the Jordan and it halted, it would have been natural, you would suppose for the waters to overflow the region around about, so that great devastation would have taken place. But when God put a dam on in front of the river, he put a dam on either side of the river, so according to the text the waters halted and reared and stood there, not overflowing the surrounding country. Oh, the completeness of everything God does ! One would think if the water of Jordan had dropped until it was only two or three feet deep that the Israelites might have marched through and have come up on the other bank with soaked and saturated garments, as men come ashore from a shipwreck, and that would have been a wonderful deliverance. So it would. But God does something better than that. One would suppose, if the water had been drawn off from the Jordan there would have been a bed of mud and slime through which the army would have had to march. Draw off the water from the Hudson or the Connecticut and there would be many days and perhaps many weeks before the sediment would dry. Yet here, immediately, God prepares a path through the depths of the Jordan. It is so dry the passengers do not even get their feet damp.

Oh, the completeness of everything that God does ! Does he make a universe ? it is a perfect clock, running ever since it was wound up, fixed stars the pivots, constellations the intermoving wheels, and ponderous laws the weights and mighty swinging pendulum ; the stars in the great dome striking midnight, and the sun with brazen tongue tolling the hour of noon. The slightest comet has upon it the chain of a law which it cannot break. The thistle-down flying before the schoolboy's breath is controlled by the same law that controls the sun and the planets. The rose bush in your window is governed by the same principle that governs the great tree of the universe, on which stars are ripening fruit, and on which God will one day put his hand and shake down the fruit. A perfect

universe ! No astronomer has ever proposed an amendment. Does God make a Bible, it is a complete Bible. Standing amid its dreadful and delightful truths, you seem to be in the midst of an orchestra, where the wailings over sin and the rejoicings over pardon and the martial strains of victory make a chorus like the anthem of eternity. This book seems to you an ocean of truth on every wave of which Christ walks sometimes in the darkness of prophecy, sometimes in the splendours with which he walked on Galilee. In this book, apostle answering to prophet, Paul to Isaiah, Revelation to Genesis ; glorious light turning the midnight of sorrow into the midnoon of joy ; piercing every fog ; unflickering in every tempest. Oh, this book is the kiss of God on the soul of lost man. Complete Bible ; no man ever proposed an improvement. Does God provide a Saviour, he is a complete Saviour. God-man, divinity-humanity united in the same person. He set up the starry pillars of the universe, and the towers of light ; he planted the cedars on the heavenly Lebanon ; he struck out of the rock the rivers of life singing under the trees, singing under the thrones ; he unquarried the sardonyx and the chrysolite and the topaz of the heavenly wall, pulling down jasper for the foundation and heaving up amethyst for the capital, and swinging twelve gates which are twelve pearls. In one instant, he thought out a universe, and yet he is a child crying after his mother, feeling along the side of the manger while he is learning to walk. Omnipotence sheathed in the muscles and flesh of a child's arm ; omnipotence strung in the optic nerve of a child's eye ; infinite love beating in a child's heart ; the great God appearing in the form of a child one year old, five years old, fifteen years old. While all heaven were ascribing to him glory and honour, and power, on earth they called him "this fellow." While the heavenly host, with folded wing over face, bowed down before him and cried : "Holy ! holy !" on earth they denounced him as a blasphemer and a sot. Rocked in a boat on Genessaret, and yet he it is who undirks the lightning from the storm-cloud and dis-

masts Lebanon of its forests, and holds the five oceans on the tip of his finger as a leaf holdeth a rain-drop. Oh, he is a complete Saviour! Rubbing his hand over the place where we have a pain until it is soothed, yet the stars of heaven the adorning gems of his right hand! Holding us in his arms when we take the last view of our dead, and sitting down with us on the tombstone, and while we plant roses there, he is planting consolation in our heart, every chapter a stalk, every verse a stem, every word a rose. A complete Saviour; a complete Bible; a complete universe; a complete Jordanic passage; everything that God does is complete!

Again: I learn from this Jordanic passage that *between us and every Canaan of success and prosperity, there is a river that must be passed*. "Oh, how I should like to have some of those grapes on the other side," said some of the Israelites to Joshua. "Well," said Joshua, "if you want some of those grapes, why don't you cross over and get them?" A river of difficulty between us and everything that is worth having. That which costs nothing is worth nothing. God did not intend this world for an easy parlour through which we are to be drawn in a rocking-chair, but we are to work our passage, climb masts, fight battles, scale mountains, ford rivers. God makes everything valuable difficult to get at for the same reason that he puts the gold down in the mine, and the pearl clear down in the sea; it is to make us dig and dive for them. We acknowledge this principle in worldly things. Would that we were wise enough to acknowledge it in religious things. We are not surprised to find that Cornelius Vanderbilt used to have his hands blistered rowing a ferry boat. We are not surprised to find that A. T. Stewart used to sweep out his own store. You have had scores of illustrations under your own observation, where men have had it just as hard as they could have it, and yet after a while had it easy. Now the walls of their home blossom with pictures. Carpets that made foreign looms laugh, embrace their feet. The summer wind lifts the tapestry about

the window gorges enough for a Turkish Sultan. Impatient steeds paw and neigh at the door, or moving therefrom, the gilded harness tinkling with silver, and the carriage moving through that sea of New York life, a very wave of beauty and splendour. Who is it? Why it is the boy that came to New York with a dollar in his pocket and his estate slung over his shoulder in a cotton handkerchief. The silver on the harness of that dancing span is petrified sweat drops. That beautiful dress is faded calico over which God put his hand approvingly, turning it to Turkish satin or Italian silk. Those diamonds are the tears which suffering froze as they fell.

Oh, there is a river of difficulty between us and every earthly achievement. You know it is so in regard to the acquisition of knowledge. The ancients used to say that Vulcan struck Jupiter on the head and the goddess of Wisdom jumped out, illustrating the truth that wisdom comes by hard knocks. There was a river of difficulty between Shakspeare the boy holding the horse at the door of the London theatre, and that Shakspeare the greatest dramatist, winning the applause of all nations by his tragedies. There was a river of difficulty between Benjamin Franklin with a loaf of bread under his arm, walking the streets of Philadelphia, and that same Benjamin Franklin the philosopher just outside of Boston, playing kite with the thunder storm. An idler was cured of his bad habit by looking through the window night after night, at a man who seemed sitting at his desk turning off one sheet of writing after another until almost the dawn of morning. The man seated there writing until morning was the industrious Walter Scott. The man who looked at him through the window was Lockhart, his illustrious biographer afterward. Lord Mansfield, pursued by the press, pursued by the populace, because of a certain course he had taken, shook his fist in the face of the mob and said: "Sirs, when one's last end comes, it cannot come too soon when he falls in defence of the law and the liberty of his country." And so there is, my friends, a tug, a jostle, a trial, a push, an

anxiety through which every man must go before he comes to worldly success. Now be wise enough to apply the principle in religion. Eminent Christian character is only attained by Jordanic passage. No man just happens to get good. Why does that man know so much about the Scriptures? He was studying the Bible while you were reading a novel. He was on fire with the sublimities of the Bible while you were sound asleep. It was by tugging and toiling and pushing and running in the Christian life that he became so strong. In a hundred Solferinos, he learned how to fight. In a hundred shipwrecks he learned how to swim. Tears over sin, tears over Zion's desolation, tears over the impenitent, tears over graves, made a Jordan which that man had to pass.

Sorrow stains the cheek, and sinks the eye, and pales the brow and thins the hand. There are mourning garments in every wardrobe. There are deaths in every family record. All around us are the relics of the dead. The Christian has passed this Red Sea of trouble, and yet he finds that there is the Jordan of death between him and heaven. He comes down to the Jordan of death and thinks how many have been lost there. When Lieutenant Malineaux was exploring the Jordan in Palestine, he had his boats all knocked to pieces in the rapids of the river, and there are a great many men who have gone down in the river of death. The Atlantic and Pacific have not swallowed so many. It is an awful thing to make shipwreck on the rock of ruin. Masts falling, hulks splitting, death coming, groaning in the water, moaning in the wind; thundering in the sky; while God with finger of lightning writes over all the scene: "I will tread them in my wrath, and I will trample them in my fury." The Christian approaches this raging torrent, and as he nears it, his breath gets shorter and his last breath leaves him as he steps into the stream: but no sooner has he touched the stream than it is parted, and he goes through dry shod, while all the waters wave their plumes crying: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is

thy victory?" "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," and there shall be no more sea, and there shall be no more death.

When I see the Israelites getting through Jordan and getting up the banks, and I see their flocks and herds following right on after them, the suggestion comes through my mind that perhaps after all, the best part of the brute creation may have a chance in the great future. You say: "Harmonize with that theory the passage, 'The spirit of the brute goes downward.' " I can harmonize these two things a great deal easier than I can harmonize the annihilation of the brute creation with the ill-treatment they here receive. I do not know but that in the clear atmosphere of that other country, there may be a bird heaven. I do not know but that on those fair banks, there may be a lily heaven, a rose heaven, an amaranthine heaven. When I see a professed Christian man abusing his horse, my common sense of justice tells me that that horse ought to have a better time in the future than his driver! If really the jaded and abused car and omnibus horses of our cities have any better country to go to when they leave this world—I do not know that they do, I do not know that they do not—but if they do have such a country to go to, I should like to see them the moment when, their galled necks cured and their foundered knees straightened, and their coughing distempers healed, free from the collar and the tight check-line and the twisted bit, they shall range in the celestial pasturage forever and forever. I do not say it is so, but I should not be offended if I should find at last that not only all the Israelites got through the Jordan but the best part of the brute creation got in after them.

But whether that be so or not, there is one thing certain, I get from my text, and that is: We have a right to expect our families to go with us. Some of your children have already gone up the other bank. You let them down on this side the bank; they will be on the other bank to help you up with supernatural strength.

The other morning, seated at my table, all my family present, I thought to myself, how pleasant it would be if I could put them all in a boat and then get in with them, and we could pull across the river to the next world, and be there, very speedily all together. No family partings. No gloomy obsequies. It would not take five minutes to go from bank to bank, and then in that better world to be together forever! Would it not be pleasant if you could take all your family into that blessed country, and you could all go together? I remember my mother in her dying hour said to my father: "Father, wouldn't it be pleasant if we could all go together?" But we cannot all go together; we must go one by one. What a heaven it will be if we have all our families there. To look around and see that all your children are present. Rather have them all there and you go with bare brow forever, than one of them missing and all the garlands of heaven for your coronal. Lord God of Joshua, give them safe Jordanic passage!

Every Christian will go over dry shod. Those of us who were brought up in the country, remember when the summer was coming on, in our boyhood days, we always longed for the day when we could go barefooted, and after teasing our mothers in regard to it a good while and she having consented, we remember now the delicious sensation of the cool grass and the soft dust of the road when we put our uncovered foot down. And the time will come, when these shoes we wear now—lest we be cut of the sharp places of this world—shall be taken off, and with unsandaled foot, we shall step into the bed of the river. With foot untrammelled from pain and fatigue we shall begin that last journey. When with one foot in the bed of the river, and the other foot on the other bank we spring upward, that will be heaven. I pray for all my dear people safe Jordanic passage. That is what the dying Christian husband felt when he said: "How the candle flickers, Nelly, put it out; I shall sleep well to-night and awake in the morning."

One word of comfort from this subject for all the bereft. You see our departed friends have not been submerged, they have not been swamped in the waters; they have only crossed over. These Israelites were as thoroughly alive on the eastern bank of the Jordan as they had been on the western bank of the Jordan, and our departed Christian friends have only crossed over. They are not sick nor dead, not exhausted, not extinguished, not blotted out; but with healthier respiration, and stouter pulsation and keener sight, and better prospect. Crossed over—their sins, their physical and mental disquietude all left on this side. Impassable obstacle between them and all human and Satanic pursuit. Crossed over. I shake hands of congratulation with all the bereft in the consideration that their departed Christian friends are safe. Why was there so much joy in certain circles of New York this past week? If was because they heard from their friends who were on board the *City of Brussels*. It was thought that vessel had gone to the bottom of the sea, and when the friends on this side heard that their friends had arrived safely in Liverpool, was it not right to congratulate the people in New York that their friends had got safely across? And is it not right this morning, that I congratulate you that your departed friends are safe on the shore of heaven? Would you have them back again? Would you have those old parents back again? You know how hard it was sometimes for them to get their breath in the stifling atmosphere of the summer. Would you have them back now? Did they not have their burden long enough? Would you have your children back again? Would you have them take the risks and the temptations which threaten every human pathway? Would you have them cross Jordan three times—in addition to the crossing already, crossing again to greet you now, and then crossing back after a while? Certainly, you would not want to keep them forever out of heaven.

“Pause now and weep, not for the freed from pain,
But that the sigh of love would bring them back again.”

I ask a question and there seems to come back an answer in heavenly echo. "What, will you never be sick again?" "Never be sick again." "What, will you never be tired again?" "Never be tired again." "What, will you never weep again?" "Never weep again." "What, will you never die again?" "Never die again." Oh, you army of departed kindred, we hail you from bank to bank. Wait for us. When the Jordan of death shall part for us, as it parted for you, come down and meet us half way between the willowed banks of earth and the palm groves of heaven. May our great High Priest go ahead of us and with his bruised feet touch the waters, and there shall be fulfilled the words of my text: "And all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."

TO CLERKS.

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened."—ACTS xvi. 14

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings."—PROVERBS xxii. 29.

THE first passage introduces to you Lydia, a Christian merchantess. Her business is to deal in purple cloths or silks. She is not a giggling nonentity, but a practical woman not ashamed to work for her living. Indeed, a woman is never more honorably occupied than when she is selling goods across a counter. All the other women of Philippi and Thyatira had been forgotten; but God has made immortal in our text, Lydia, the Christian saleswoman.

The other text shows you a man with head and hand and heart and foot all busy toiling on up until he gains a princely success. "Seest thou a man diligent in his

business? he shall stand before kings." Great encouragement in these two passages for men and women who will be busy, but no solace for those who are waiting for good luck to show them, at the foot of the rainbow, a casket of buried gold. It is folly for anybody in this world to wait for something to turn up. It will turn down. The law of thrift is as inexorable as the law of tides. Fortune the magician, may wave her hand in that direction until castles and palaces come; but she will, after awhile, invert the same wand, and all the splendors will vanish into thin air. There are certain styles of behavior which leads to usefulness, honor and permanent success, and there are certain styles of behavior which lead to dust, dishonor and moral default. I would like to fire the ambition of young people. I have no sympathy with those who would prepare young folks for life by whittling down their expectations. That man or woman will be worth nothing to church or state who begins life cowed down. The business of Christianity is not to quench but to direct human ambition. Therefore it is that I come out this morning and utter words of encouragement to those who are occupied as clerks in the stores and shops and banking houses of the country. You say; "Why select one class, and talk to one specially this morning?" For the same reason that a surgeon does not open the door of a hospital and throw in a bundle of prescriptions, saying: "Come now, and get your medicine." He first feels the pulse, watches the symptoms, and then prescribes for that particular case. So to-day I must be specific. The people in this audience who are clerks are not an exceptional class. They belong to a great company of tens of thousands who are in this country amid circumstances which will either make or break them for time and for eternity. I should be very slow to acknowledge that the clerks, male and female, of other cities, are any more honest or faithful than the clerks of our own city. Many of these people have already achieved a Christian manliness and a Christian womanliness which will be their passport to any position. I have

seen their trials. I have watched their perplexities. There are evils abroad which need to be hunted down, and their miserable carcasses dragged out into the noonday light.

In the first place, I counsel clerks to remember that for the most part of their clerkship is only a school for which they are to be graduated. It takes about eight years to get one of the learned professions. It takes about eight years to get to be a merchant. Some of you will be clerks all your lives, but the vast majority of you are only in a transient position. After awhile, some December day, the head men of the firm will call you into the back office and they will say to you: "Now you have done well by us; we are going to do well by you. We invite you to have an interest in our concern." You will bow to that edict very gracefully. Getting into a street car to go home, an old comrade will meet you and say: "What makes you look so happy to-night?" "Oh," you will say, "nothing—nothing." But in a few days, your name will blossom on the sign. Either in the store or bank where you are now, or in some other store or bank, you will take a higher position than that which you now occupy. So I feel to-day that I am standing before people who will yet have their hand on the helm of the world's commerce, and you will turn it this way or that; now clerks, but to be bankers, importers, insurance company directors, shippers, contractors, superintendents of railroads—your voice mighty "on 'Change"—standing foremost in the great financial and religious enterprises of the day. For though we who are in the professions may on the platform plead for the philanthropies, after all, the merchants must come forth with their millions to sustain the movement. Be therefore patient and diligent in this transient position. You are now where you can learn things you can never learn in any other place. What you consider your disadvantages are your grand opportunity. You see an affluent father some day come down on a prominent street with his son, who has just graduated from the

University, and establishing him in business, putting \$250,000 of capital in the store. Well, you are envious. You say: "Oh, if I only had a chance like that young man—if I only had a father to put \$250,000 in a business for me, then I would have some chance in the world."

Be not envious. You have advantages over that young man which he has not over you. As well might I come down to the docks when a vessel is about to sail for Valparaiso, and say: "Let me pilot this ship out of the Narrows." Why, I would sink crew and cargo before I got out of the harbor, simply because I knew nothing about pilotage. Wealthy sea captains put their sons before the mast for the reason that they know that is the only place where they can learn to be successful sailors. It is only under drill that people get to understand pilotage and navigation, and I want you to understand that it takes no more skill to conduct a vessel out of the harbor and across the sea, than to steer a commercial establishment clear of the rocks. You see every day the folly of people going into a business they know nothing about. A man makes a fortune in one business; thinks there is another occupation more comfortable; goes into it and sinks all. Many of the commercial establishments in our cities are giving to their clerks a mercantile education as thorough as Yale or Harvard or Princeton are giving scientific attainment to the students matriculated. The reason there are so many men foundering in business from year to year, is because their early mercantile education was neglected. Ask these men in high commercial circles, and they will tell you they thank God for this severe discipline of their early clerkship. You can afford to endure the wilderness march, if it is going to end in the vineyards and orchards of the promised land. But you say: "Will the women clerks in our stores have promotion?" Yes. Time is coming when women will be as well paid for their toil in mercantile circles as men are now paid for their toil. Time is coming when a woman will be allowed to do anything she can do well. It is only a little while ago

when women knew nothing of telegraphy, and they were kept out of a great many commercial circles where they are now welcome; and the time will go on until the woman who at one counter in a store sells \$10,000 worth of goods in a year, will get as high a salary as the man who at the other counter of the same store sells \$10,000 worth of goods. All honor to Lydia, the Christian saleswoman. And in passing, I may as well say that you merchants who have female clerks in your stores ought to treat them with great courtesy and kindness. When they are not positively engaged, let them sit down. In England and in the United States, physicians have protested against the habit of compelling the woman clerks in the stores to stand when it is not absolutely necessary for them to stand. Therefore, I add to the protest of physicians the protest of the Christian church, and in the name of good health, and that God who has made the womanly constitution more delicate than man's, I demand that you let her sit down.

The second counsel I have to give to the clerks who are here to-day, is that you seek out what are the lawful regulations of your establishment, and then submit to them. Every well-ordered house has its usages. In military life, on ship's deck, in commercial life, there must be order and discipline. Those people who do not learn how to obey, will never know how to command. I will tell you what young men will make ruin, financial and moral: it is the young man who thrusts his thumb into his vests and says; "Nobody shall dictate to me; I am my own master; I will not submit to the regulations of this house." Between an establishment in which all the employes are under thorough discipline and the establishment in which the employes do about as they choose, is the difference between success and failure—between rapid accumulation and utter bankruptcy. Do not come to the store ten minutes after the time. Be there within two seconds, and let it be two seconds before instead of two seconds after. Do not think anything too insignificant to do well. Do not say "It's only just once," From the

most important transaction in commerce down to the particular style in which you tie a string around a bundle, obey orders. Do not get easily disgusted. While others in the store may lounge or fret or complain, you go with ready hands and cheerful face and contented spirit to your work. When the bugle sounds, the good soldier asks no questions, but shoulders his knapsack, fills his canteen and listens for the command of "March!" Do not get the idea that your interests and those of your employer are antagonistic. His success will be your honor. His embarrassment will be your dismay. Expose none of the frailties of the firm. Tell no store secrets. Do not blab! Rebuff those persons who come to find out from clerks what ought never to be known outside the store. Do not be among those young men who take on a mysterious air when something is said against the firm that employs them, as much as to say: "I could tell you some things if I would, but I won't." Do not be among those who imagine they can build themselves up by pulling somebody else down. Be not ashamed to be a subaltern.

Again, I counsel clerks in this house to search out what are the unlawful and dishonest demands of an establishment, and resist them. In the six thousand years that have passed, there has never been an occasion when it was one's duty to sin against God. It is never right to do wrong. If the head men of the firm expect of you dishonesty, disappoint them. "Oh," you say, "I shall lose my place then." Better lose your place than lose your soul. But you will not lose your place. Christian heroism is always honored. You go to the head man of your store and say: "Sir, I want to serve you; I want to oblige you; it is from no lack of industry on my part, but this thing seems to me to be wrong, and it is a sin against my conscience, it is a sin against God, and I beg you, sir, to excuse me." He may flush up and swear, but he will cool down, and he will have more admiration for you than for those who submit to his evil dictation; and while they sink, you will rise. Do not, because of seeming temporary advan-

tage, give up your character, young man. Under God, that is the only thing you have to build on. Give up that, you give up everything. That employer asks a young man to hurt himself for time and for eternity, who expects him to make a wrong entry, or change an invoice, or say goods cost so much when they cost less, or impose upon the ver-dancy of a customer, or misrepresent a style of fabric. How dare he demand of you anything so insolent?

There is one style of temptation that comes on a great many of our clerks, and that is upon those who are engaged in what is called "drumming." Now, that occupation is just as honorable as any other, if it be conducted in accord with one's conscience. In this day, when there are so many rivalries in business, all our commercial establishments ought to have men abroad who are seeking out for opportunities of merchandise. There can be no objection to that. But there are professed Christian merchants in the week-night prayer-meeting who have clerks abroad in New York conducting merchants of Cincinnati, and Chicago, and St. Louis, through the debaucheries of the great town in order to secure their custom for the store. There are in stores in New York and Brooklyn, drawers in which there are kept moneys which the clerks are to go and get whenever they want to conduct these people through the slums of the city. The head men of the firm wink at it, and in some places actually demand it,—professed Christian merchants. One would think that the prayer would freeze on their lips, and they would fall back dead at the sound of their own song. What chance is there for young men when commercial establishments expect such things of them? Among all things infernal, I pronounce that the most damnable. Young man, how will that firm treat you when you are utterly besouled and dragged out with sin, going through the haunts of iniquity for the purpose of getting customers for their store? How will they treat you? Oh, they will give you a pension! They will build you a fine house! They will get you a horse and a carriage! Will they? No. Some day you will go to the

store, shabby, intoxicated, worn out in their service, and they will say: "John, you are a disgrace to our house. Now just look at yourself. Accountant, how much do we owe this man?" "A dollar and thirty cents." "Well, now, here—here it is; a dollar and thirty cents. Go off. Don't be hanging around the store." Magnanimity superb. They stole the lustre from his eye and the color from his cheek and the honor from his soul, and then they kicked him out. O young men, disappoint the expectation of the firm; disappoint those customers, if these things are expected of you. You may sell an extra case of goods; you may sell an extra roll of silk; but the trouble is, you throw your soul to boot in the bargain.

Again, I counsel all clerks to conquer the trials of their particular position. One great trial for clerks is in the consideration of customers. There are people who are entirely polite everywhere else, but gruff and dictatorial and contemptible when they come into a store to buy anything. There are thousands of men and women who go from store to store to prize things, without any idea of purchase. They are not satisfied until every roll of goods is brought down and they have pointed out all the real or imaginary defects. They try on all kinds of gloves and stretch them out of shape, and they put on all styles of cloak and walk to the mirror to see how it would look, and then they sail out of the store, saying: "I will not take it to-day;" which means: "I don't want it at all," leaving the clerk amid a wreck of ribbons and laces and cloths, to smooth out a thousand dollars' worth of goods—not one farthing of which did that man or woman buy or expect to buy. Now I call that a dishonesty on the part of the customer. If a boy runs into the store and takes a roll of cloth off the counter and sneaks out into the street, you all join in the cry pell-mell: "Stop thief!" When I see you go into the store, not expecting to buy anything, but to prize things, stealing the time of the clerk and stealing the time of his employer, I say, too, "Stop thief!" If I were asked which class of persons most need the grace of God

If the Bible favours the institution I will favour it; if the Bible denounces it I will denounce it. In addition to the forecast of Joseph in the text, I call your attention to Paul's comparison. Here is one man who through neglect fails to support his family while he lives or after he dies. Here is another man who abhors the Scriptures and rejects God. Which of these men is the worse? Well, you say, the latter. Paul says the former. Paul says that a man who neglects to care for his household is more obnoxious than a man who rejects the Scriptures. "He that provideth not for his own, and especially those of his own household is worse than an infidel."

Life insurance companies help most of us to provide for our families after we are gone, but if we have the money to pay the premiums and do not pay the premiums, we have no right to expect mercy at the hand of God in the judgment. We are worse than Tom Paine, worse than Voltaire, and worse than Shaftesbury. The Bible declares it, we are worse than an infidel. After the certificate of death has been made out, and the thirty or the sixty days have passed, and the officer of a life insurance company comes into the bereft household and pays down the hard cash on an insurance policy, that officer of the company is performing a positively religious rite, according to the apostle James, who says: "True religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction," and so on. The religion of Christ proposes to take care of the temporal wants of the people as well as the spiritual. Just after the battle of Antietam there was a man found distributing religious tracts. A Christian merchant came up to him and said: "What are you distributing tracts here for? There are three thousand men out yonder who have not had their wounds bound up, and they are bleeding to death. You go and bind up their wounds, and then distribute the tracts." I think that was good, healthy gospel.

When Hezekiah was dying the injunction came to him: "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

That injunction in our day would mean : " Make your will : settle your accounts ; make things plain ; don't deceive your heirs with rolls of Jay Cooke's Northern Pacific Railroad bonds ; don't deceive them with deeds for Western lands that will never yield any crop but chills and fever ; don't leave for them notes that have been outlawed, and second mortgages on property that will not pay the first. " Set thy house in order." That is, fix up things so your going out of the world may make as little consternation as possible. See the lean cattle devouring the fat cattle, and in the time of plenty prepare for the time of want. The difficulty is, when men think of their death they are apt to think of it only in connection with their spiritual welfare, and not of the devastation in the household which will come because of their emigration from it. It is meanly selfish for you to be so absorbed in the heaven to which you are going that you forget what is to become of your wife and children after you go. You can go out of this world not leaving them a dollar, and yet die happy if you could not provide for them. You can trust them in the hands of the God who owns all the harvests and the herds and the flocks ; but if you could pay the premium on a policy and neglected them, it is a mean thing for you to go up to heaven, while they go in the poor house. You, at death, move into a mansion, river front, and they move into two rooms on the fourth story of a tenement house in a back street. When they are out at the elbows and the knees the thought of your splendid robe in heaven will not keep them warm. The minister may preach a splendid sermon over your remains, and the quartette may sing like four angels, in the organ loft ; but your death will be a swindle. You had the means to provide for the comfort of your household when you left it, and you wickedly neglected it.

" Oh !" says some one, " I have more faith than you ; I believe when I go out of this world the Lord will take care of my family." Yes, he will provide for them. Go to Blackwell's Island, go through all the poor-houses of the

amid their annoyances, I would say, "Dry goods clerks." All the indignation of customers about the high prices comes on the clerk. For instance: A great war comes. The manufactories are closed. The people go off to battle. The price of goods runs up. A customer comes into the store. Goods have gone up. "How much is that worth?" "A dollar." "A dollar! Outrageous. A dollar!" Why, who is to blame for the fact that it has gone up to be a dollar? Does the indignation go out to the manufacturers on the banks of the Merrimac, because they have closed up? No. Does the indignation go out toward the employer, who is out at his country seat? No. It comes on the clerk. He got up the war! He levied the taxes! He put up the rents! Of course, the clerk!

Then a great trial comes to clerks in the fact that they see the parsimonious side of human nature. You talk about lies behind the counter—there are just as many lies before the counter. Augustine speaks of a man who advertised that he would on a certain occasion tell the people what was in their hearts. A great crowd assembled and he stepped to the front and said: "I will tell you what is in your hearts: To buy cheap and sell dear!" O people of Brooklyn, lay not aside your urbanity when you come into a store. Treat the clerks like gentlemen and ladies—proving yourself to be a gentleman or a lady. Remember that if the prices are high and your purse is lean, that it is no fault of the clerks. And if you have a son or a daughter amid those perplexities of commercial life, and such a one comes home all worn out, be lenient, and know that the martyr at the stake no more certainly needs the grace of God than our young people amid the seven times heated exasperations of a clerk's life.

Then there are all the trials which come to clerks from the treatment of inconsiderate employers. There are professed Christian men in the city who have no more regard for their clerks than they have for the scales on which the sugars are weighed. A clerk is no more than so much store furniture. No consideration for their rights or their

interests. Not one word of encouragement from sunrise to sunset, nor from January to December. But when anything goes wrong—a streak of dust on the counter, or a box with the cover off—thunder showers of scolding. Men imperious, capricious, cranky toward their clerks—their whole manner as much as to say: “All the interest I have in you is to see what I can get out of you.”

Then there are all the trials of incompetent wages, not in such times as these, when if a man gets half a salary for his services he ought to be thankful; but I mean in prosperous times. You remember when the war broke out and all merchandise went up, and merchants were made millionaires in six months by the simple rise in the value of goods. Did the clerk get advantage of that rise? Sometimes, not always. I saw estates gathered in those times, over which the curse of God has hung ever since. The cry of unpaid men and women in those stores reached the Lord of Sabaoth, and the indignation of God has been around those establishments ever since, rumbling in the carriage wheels, flashing in the chandeliers, glowing from that crimson upholstery, thundering in the long roll of the ten-pin alley. Such men may build up palaces of merchandise heaven high, but after awhile a disaster will come along, and will put one hand on this pillar and another hand on that pillar, and throw itself forward until down will come the whole structure, crushing the worshipers as grapes are mashed in a wine-press.

Then there are boys in establishments who are ruined—in prosperous establishments—ruined by their lack of compensation. In how many prosperous stores it has been for the last twenty years, that boys were given just enough money to teach them how to steal! Some were seized upon by the police. The vast majority of instances were not known. The head of the firm asked: “Where is George now?” “Oh, he isn’t here any more.” A lad might better starve to death on a blasted heath than take one farthing from his employer; but woe to that employer who unnecessarily puts a temptation in a boy’s way.

There have been great establishments in these cities building marble palaces, their owners dying worth millions and millions and millions, who made a vast amount of their estate out of the blood and muscle and nerve of half-paid clerks. I mean men who have gathered up vast estates at the expense of the people who were ground under their heel. "Oh," say such merchants, "if you don't like it here, then go and get a better place." As much as to say: "I've got you in my grip and mean to hold you; you can't get any other place." Oh, what a contrast we see between such men and those Christian merchants of Brooklyn and New York who to-day are sympathetic with their clerks—when they pay their salary, acting in this way: "This salary that I give you is not all my interest in you. You are an immortal man; you are an immortal woman; I am interested in your present and your everlasting welfare; I want you to understand that if I am a little higher up in this store, I am beside you in Christian sympathy."

Go back thirty years to Arthur Tappan's store in New York—a man whose worst enemies never questioned his honesty. Every morning, he brought all the clerks and the accountants and the weighers into a room for devotion. They sang. They prayed. They exhorted. On Monday morning the clerks were asked where they had attended church on the previous day, and what the sermons were about. It must have sounded strangely, that voice of praise along the streets where the devotees of Mammon were counting their golden beads. You say Arthur Tappan failed. Yes, he was unfortunate like a great many good men; but I understand he met all his obligations before he left this world, and I know that he died in the peace of the gospel, and that he is before the throne of God to-day—forever blessed. If that be failing, I wish you might all fail.

There are many young men in this city—yea, in this house—who want a word of encouragement, Christian encouragement. One smile of good cheer would be

worth more to them to-morrow morning in their places of business than a present of \$15,000 ten years hence. I remember the apprehension and tremor of entering a profession. I remember very well the man who greeted me into the ecclesiastical court with the tip ends of the long fingers of the left hand? and I remember the other man who took my hand in both of his, and said: "God bless you, my brother; you have entered a glorious profession; be faithful to God, and he will see you through." Why, I feel this minute the thrill of that hand-shaking, though the man who gave me the Christian grip has been in heaven fifteen years. There are old men here to-day who can look back to forty years ago, when some one said a kind word to them. Now, old men, pay back what you got then. It is a great art for old men to be able to encourage the young. There are many young people in our cities who have come from inland counties of our own State, from the granite hills of the North, from the savannas of the South, from the prairies of the West. They are here to get their fortune. They are in boarding houses where everybody seems to be thinking of himself. They want companionship and they want Christian encouragement. Give it to them. My word is to all clerks in this house. Be mightier than your temptations. A Sandwich Islander used to think when he slew an enemy all the strength of that enemy came into his own right arm. And I have to tell you that every misfortune you conquer is so much added to your own moral power. With omnipotence for a lever, and the throne of God for a fulcrum, you can move earth and heaven. While there are other young men putting the cup of sin to their lips, stoop down and drink out of the fountains of God, and you will rise up strong to thresh the mountains. The ancients used to think that pearls were fallen rain-drops, which, touching the surface of the sea, hardened into gems, then dropped to the bottom. I have to tell you to-day, that storms of trial have showered imperishable pearls into many a young man's lap.

O young men, while you have goods to sell, remember you have a soul to save. In a hospital a captain, wounded a few days before, got delirious, and in the midnight hour he sprang out on the floor of the hospital, thinking he was in the battle, crying: "Come on, boys! Forward! Charge!" Ah! he was only battling the spectres of his own brain. But it is no imaginary conflict into which I call you, young man, to-day. There are ten thousand spiritual foes that would capture you. In the name of God up and at them. After the last store has been closed, after the last bank has gone down, after the shuffle of the quick feet on the Custom House steps has stopped, after the long line of merchantmen on the sea have taken sail of flame, after Brooklyn and New York and London and Vienna have gone down into the grave where Thebes and Babylon and Tyre lie buried, after the great fire-bells of the judgment day have tolled at the burning of the world,—on that day, all the affairs of banking houses and stores will come up for inspection. Oh, what an opening of account books. Side by side, the clerks and the men who employed them—the people who owned thread and needle stores on the same footing with the Stewarts and Delanos and the Abbotts and the Barings. Every invoice made out—all the labels of goods—all certificates of stock—all lists of prices—all private marks of the firm, now explained so everybody can understand them; all the maps of cities that were never built, but in which lots were sold; all bargains; all gougings; all snap judgments; all false entries; all adulteration of liquors with copperas and strychnine; all mixing of teas and sugars and coffees and syrups with cheaper material! all embezzlements of trust funds; all swindles in coal and iron and oil and silver and stocks; all Swart-outs and Huntingtons and Ketchums. On that day when all the cities of this world are smoking in the last conflagration, the trial will go on; and down in an avalanche of destruction will go those who wronged man or woman, insulted God and defied the judgment. Oh, that will be a great day for you, honest Christian clerk. No getting up

early; no retiring late; no walking around with weary limbs; but a mansion in which to live, and a realm of light and love and joy over which to hold everlasting dominion. Hoist him up from glory to glory, and from song to song, and from throne to throne; for while others go down into the sea with their gold like a mill-stone hanging to their neck, this one shall come up the heights of amethyst and alabaster, holding in his right hand the pearl of great price in a sparkling, glittering, flaming casket.

THE HIGH CRIME OF NOT INSURING.

"Let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years."
—GEN. xli. 34.

THESE were the words of Joseph, the President of the first life insurance company that the world ever saw. Pharaoh had a dream that distracted him. He thought he stood on the banks of the river Nile, and saw coming up out of the river seven fat, sleek, glossy cows, and they began to browse in the thick grass. Nothing frightful about that. But after them, coming up out of the same river, he saw seven cows that were gaunt and starved, and the worst looking cows that had ever been seen in the land, and in the ferocity of hunger they devoured their seven fat predecessors. Pharaoh the King, sent for Joseph to decipher these midnight hieroglyphics. Joseph made short work of it, and intimated that the seven fat cows that came out of the river were seven years with plenty to eat, the seven emaciated cows that followed them were seven years with nothing to eat. "Now," said Joseph, "let us take one-fifth of the corn crop of the seven prosperous years, and keep it as a provision for the seven years in which there shall be no corn crop."

The King took the counsel, and appointed Joseph, because of his integrity and public spiritedness, as the president of the undertaking. The farmers paid one fifth of their income as a premium. In all the towns and cities of the land there were branch houses. This great Egyptian life insurance company had millions of dollars as assets. After a while the dark days came, and the whole nation would have starved if it had not been for the provision they had made for the future. But now these suffering families have nothing to do but go up and collect the amount of their life policies. The Bible puts it in one short phrase: "In all the land of Egypt there was bread." I say this was the first life insurance company. It was divinely organized. It had in it all the advantages of the "whole life plan," of the "Tontine plan," of the "reserved endowment plan," and all the other good plans. We are told that Rev. Dr. Angham, of Lincolnshire, England, originated the first life insurance company in 1698. No! it is as old as the corn cribs of Egypt, and God himself was the author and originator. If that were not so I would not take your time and mine in a Sabbath discussion of this subject, I feel it is a theme vital, religious, and of infinite import, the morals of life and fire insurance. It seems to me that it is time for the pulpit to speak out. We are in the midst of a great insurance agitation. The air is full of charges of mismanagement and fraud. We hear of bogus agents who have been arrested; or receivers appointed to take refractory companies into their custody; of grand juries who have indicted other companies for perjury; and of a company which had in its hand the prospective support of many widows and orphans, that is charged with a deficit of near a half million dollars. So great has been the agitation that there are some people who have denounced all life insurance companies as impious and a nuisance that needed to be squelched. Against this life insurance panic, in the name of God and the best interests of society I solemnly protest. In all businesses and occupations there are failures and losses and dis-

honesties. Ninety-eight out of one hundred men in every kind of business fail. In 1857 there were at least eight thousand failures in various styles of merchandise outside of these insurance companies. Are these failures anything against traffic in dry goods, or groceries, or hardware? And shall you allow failures, or ill-behaviour on the part of three or four insurance companies to kindle suspicions in regard to the most magnificent institution which has ever existed for the temporal support and the earthly welfare of the human race? It is easy enough to denounce life insurance companies and demand that they call in their loans until all the agricultural and mercantile and manufacturing and ecclesiastical interests of the land are shipwrecked; but is it fair thus to treat the prince of human institutions? Where does that institution stand to-day? What amount of comfort, of education, of moral and spiritual advantage is represented in the simple statistics that in this country the life insurance companies in one year paid seventy-seven million dollars to the families of the bereft; and in five years they paid three hundred millions of dollars to the families of the bereft, and are promising to pay, and hold themselves in readiness to pay, two thousand millions of dollars to the families of the bereft. They have actually paid out more in dividends and in death claims than they have ever received in premiums. I know of what I speak. The life insurance companies of this country have paid more than seven millions of dollars of taxes to the government in five years; so instead of these companies being indebted to the land, the land is indebted to them. Now I say that a man that will raise a panic against these companies for the reason that three or four of them have not behaved well, is as preposterous as a man who should burn down a thousand acres of harvest field in order to kill the moles and the potato bugs; as preposterous as a man who should blow up a crowded steamer in mid-Atlantic for the purpose of destroying the barnacles on the bottom of the hulk.

But what does the Bible say in regard to this subject?

If the Bible favours the institution I will favour it ; if the Bible denounces it I will denounce it. In addition to the forecast of Joseph in the text, I call your attention to Paul's comparison. Here is one man who through neglect fails to support his family while he lives or after he dies. Here is another man who abhors the Scriptures and rejects God. Which of these men is the worse ? Well, you say, the latter. Paul says the former. Paul says that a man who neglects to care for his household is more obnoxious than a man who rejects the Scriptures. "He that provideth not for his own, and especially those of his own household is worse than an infidel."

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That injunction in our day would mean : " Make your will : settle your accounts ; make things plain ; don't deceive your heirs with rolls of Jay Cooke's Northern Pacific Railroad bonds ; don't deceive them with deeds for Western lands that will never yield any crop but chills and fever ; don't leave for them notes that have been outlawed, and second mortgages on property that will not pay the first. " Set thy house in order." That is, fix up things so your going out of the world may make as little consternation as possible. See the lean cattle devouring the fat cattle, and in the time of plenty prepare for the time of want. The difficulty is, when men think of their death they are apt to think of it only in connection with their spiritual welfare, and not of the devastation in the household which will come because of their emigration from it. It is meanly selfish for you to be so absorbed in the heaven to which you are going that you forget what is to become of your wife and children after you go. You can go out of this world not leaving them a dollar, and yet die happy if you could not provide for them. You can trust them in the hands of the God who owns all the harvests and the herds and the flocks ; but if you could pay the premium on a policy and neglected them, it is a mean thing for you to go up to heaven, while they go in the poor house. You, at death, move into a mansion, river front, and they move into two rooms on the fourth story of a tenement house in a back street. When they are out at the elbows and the knees the thought of your splendid robe in heaven will not keep them warm. The minister may preach a splendid sermon over your remains, and the quartette may sing like four angels, in the organ loft ; but your death will be a swindle. You had the means to provide for the comfort of your household when you left it, and you wickedly neglected it.

" Oh !" says some one, " I have more faith than you ; I believe when I go out of this world the Lord will take care of my family." Yes, he will provide for them. Go to Blackwell's Island, go through all the poor-houses of the

country, and I will show you how often God provides for the neglected children of neglectful parents. That is, he provides for them through public charity. As for myself, I would rather have the Lord provide for my family in a private home, and through my own industry, and paternal and conjugal faithfulness. But says some man: "I mean in the next ten or twenty years to make a great fortune, and so I shall leave my family, when I go out of this world, very comfortable." How do you know you are going to live ten or twenty years? If we could look up the walk of the future we would see it crossed by pneumonias and pleurisies and consumptions and colliding rail trains and runaway horses and breaking bridges and funeral processions. Are you so certain you are going to live ten or twenty years that you can warrant your household any comfort after you go far away from them? Besides that, the vast majority of men die poor! Two—only two out of a hundred succeed in business. Are you very certain that you are going to be one of the two? Rich one day—poor the next. A man in New York got two million of dollars, and the money turned his brain, and he died in the lunatic asylum. All his property was left with the business firm, and they swamped it; and then the family of the insane man were left without a dollar. In eighteen months the prosperity, the insanity, the solvency, and the complete domestic ruin. Besides that, there are men who die solvent who are insolvent before they get under the ground, or before their estate is settled. How soon the auctioneer's mallet can knock the life out of an estate! A man thinks the property worth \$15,000; under a forced sale it brings \$7,000. The business man takes advantage of the crisis, and he compels the widow of his deceased partner to sell out to him at a ruinous price, or lose all. The stock was supposed to be very valuable, but it has been so "watered" that when the executor tries to sell it he is laughed out of Wall-street; or the administrator is ordered by the Surrogate to wind up the whole affair. The estate was supposed at the man's death to be worth

\$20,000; but after the indebtedness has been met, and the bills of the doctor and the undertaker and the tombstone cutter have been paid, there is nothing left. That means the children are to come home from school and go to work. That means the complete hardship of the wife turned out with nothing but a needle to fight the great battle of the world. Tear down the lambrequins, close the piano, rip up the Axminster, sell out the wardrobe, and let the mother take a child in each hand and trudge out into the desert of the world. A life insurance would have hindered all that.

But, says some one: "I am a man of small means, and I can't afford to pay the premium." That is sometimes a lawful and a genuine excuse, and there is no answer to it; but in nine cases out of ten when a man says that, he smokes up in cigars, and drinks down in wine, and expends in luxuries enough money to have paid premium on a life insurance policy which would have kept his family from beggary when he is dead. A man ought to put himself down on the strictest economy until he can meet this Christian necessity. You have no right to the luxuries of life until you have made such provision. I admire what was said by Dr. Guthrie, the great Scottish preacher. A few years before his death he stood in a public meeting and declared: "When I came to Edinburgh the people sometimes laughed at my blue stockings and at my cotton umbrella, and they said I looked like a common ploughman, and they derided me because I lived in a house for which I paid thirty-five pounds rent a year, and oftentimes I walked when I would have been very glad to have had a cab; but, gentlemen, I did all that because I wanted to pay the premium on a life insurance that would keep my family comfortable if I should die." That I take to be the right expression of an honest, intelligent Christian man.

The utter indifference of many people on this important subject accounts for much of the crime and the pauperism of this day. Who are these children sweeping the

crossings with broken broom, and begging of you a penny as you go by? Who are these lost souls gliding under the gaslight, in thin shawls? Ah, they are the victims of want. In many of the cases the forecast of parents and grand-parents who might have prohibited it. God only knows how they struggled to do right. They prayed until the tears froze on their cheeks, they sewed on the sack until the breaking of the day, but they could not get enough money to pay the rent; they could not get enough money to decently clothe themselves, and one day, in that wretched home, the angel of purity and the angel of crime fought a great fight between the empty bread tray and the fireless hearth, and the black-winged angel shrieked: "Aha! I have won the day!"

Says some man: "I believe what you say, it is right and Christian, and I mean sometime to attend to this matter." My friend, you are going to lose the comfort of your household in the same way the sinner loses heaven, by procrastination. I see all around me the destitute and suffering families of parents who meant some day to attend to this Christian duty. During the process of adjournment the man gets his feet wet, then comes a chill and a delirium, and the doleful shake of the doctor's head, and the obsequies. If there be anything more pitiable than a woman delicately brought up, and on her marriage day by an indulgent father given to a man to whom she is the chief joy and pride of life until the moment of his death, and then that same woman going out with helpless children at her back to struggle for bread in a world where brawny muscle and rugged soul are necessary—I say, if there be anything more pitiable than that, I don't know what it is; and yet there are good women who are indifferent in regard to their husband's duty in this respect, and there are those positively hostile, as though a life insurance subjected a man to some fatality. There is in this city to-day a very poor woman keeping a small candy shop, who vehemently opposed the insurance of her husband's life, and when application had been made for a policy of \$10,000

she frustrated it. She would never have a document in the house that implied it was possible for her husband ever to die. One day, in the quick revolution of machinery his life was instantly dashed out. What is the sequel? She is with annoying tug making the half of a miserable living. Her two children have been taken away from her in order that they may be clothed and schooled, and her life is to be a prolonged hardship. O man, before forty-eight hours have passed away appear at the desk of some of our great life insurance companies, have the stethoscope of the physician put to your heart and lungs, and by the seal of some honest company decree that your children shall not be subjected to the humiliation of financial struggle in the dark day of your demise.

But I must ask the men engaged in life insurance business whether they feel the importance of their trust, and charge them I must, that they need divine grace to help them in their work. In this day, when there are so many rivalries in your line of business, you will be tempted to overstate the amount of assets and the extent of the surplus, and you will be tempted to abuse the franchise of the company, and to make up for the deficits of 1877 by adding some of the receipts of 1878; and you will be tempted to send out mean, anonymous circulars derogatory of other companies, forgetful of the fact that anonymous communication means only two things: the cowardice of the author, and the inefficiency of the police in allowing such a thing to be dated anywhere save inside of a penitentiary. Under the mighty pressure many have gone down, and you will follow them if you have too much confidence in yourself, and do not appeal to the Lord for positive help. But if any of you belong to that miscreant class of people who without any financial ability organized themselves into what they call a life insurance company with a pretended capital of \$200,000 or \$300,000, then vote yourselves into the lucrative position, and then take all the premiums for yourself, and then at the approach of the State Superintendent drop all into the hands of those life insurance under-

takers whose business it is to gather up the remains of defunct organizations and bury them in their own vault—then I say you had better get out of the business and disgorge the widow's houses you have swallowed. But my word is to all those who are legitimately engaged in the business. You ought to be better than other men, not only because of the responsibilities that rest upon you, but because the truth is ever confronting you, that your stay on earth is uncertain, and your life a matter of a few days or years. Do not those black-edged letters that come into your office make you think? Does not the doctor's certificate on the death claim give you a thrill? Your periodicals, your advertisements and even the lithography of your policies, warn you that you are mortal. According to your own showing the chances that you will die this year are two per cent. Are you prepared for the tremendous exigency? The most condemned man in the judgment day will be the unprepared life insurance man, for the simple reason that his whole business was connected with human exit, and he cannot say "I did not think." His whole business was to think on that one thing. O my brother, get insured for eternity. In consideration of what Christ has done in your behalf, have the indenture this day made out, signed, and sealed with the red seal of the cross.

But I have words of encouragement and counsel for those of my hearers who are engaged in the *fire insurance* business. You are ordained by God to stand between us and the most raging element of nature. We are indebted to you for what the National Board of Underwriters and the conventions of chiefs of the fire department have effected through your suggestion and through your encouragement. We are indebted to you for what you have effected in the constructions of buildings, and in the change in the habits of our cities; so that by scientific principle orderly companies extinguish the fire instead of the old-time riots which used to extinguish the citizens! And we are indebted to you for the successful demands you have made for the repeal of unjust laws—for the bat-

tle you have waged against incendiarism and arson—for the fatal blow you have given to the theory that corporations have no souls, by the cheerfulness and promptitude with which you have met losses, from which you might have escaped through the technicality of the law. I do not know any class of men in our midst more high-toned and worthy of confidence than these men, and yet I have sometimes feared that while your chief business is to calculate about losses on earthly property you might without sufficient thought go into that which in regard to your soul in your own parlance might be called “hazards,” “extra hazards,” “special hazards.” An unforgiven sin in the soul is more inflammable and explosive than camphene or nitro-glycerine. However the rates may be—yea, though the whole earth were paid down to you in one solid premium, you cannot afford to lose your soul. Do not take that risk lest it be said hereafter, that while in this world you had business faculty when you went out of the world you went out everlastingly solvent.

The scientific Hitchcocks and Sillimans and Mitchells of the world have united with the sacred writers to make us believe that there is coming a conflagration to sweep across the earth, compared with which that of Chicago in 1871, and that of Boston in 1872, and that of New York in 1835, were a mere nothing. Brooklyn on fire! New York on fire! Charleston on fire! San Francisco on fire! Canton on fire! St. Petersburg on fire! Paris on fire! London on fire! the Andes on fire! Appenines on fire! the Himalaya on fire! What will be peculiar about the day will be that the water with which we put out great fires will itself take flame, and the Mississippi, and the Ohio, and the St. Lawrence, and Lake Erie, and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and tumbling Niagara, shall with red tongues lick the heavens. The geological neats of the centre of the world will burn out toward the circumference, and the heats of the outside will burn down from the circumference to the centre, and this world will become, not only according to the Bible, but according to science a liv-

ing coal—the living coal afterward whitening into ashes, the ashes scattered by the breath of the last hurricane, and all that will be left of this glorious planet will be the flakes of ashes fallen on other worlds. Oh! on that day will you be fire-proof, or will you be a total loss? Will you be rescued or will you be consumed? When this great cathedral of the world with its pillars of rocks, and its pinnacles of mountains, and its cellar of golden mine, and its upholstery of morning cloud, and its baptismal font of the sea, shall blaze, will you get out on the fire escape of the Lord's deliverance? Oh! on that day for which all other days were made, may it be found that these life insurance men had a paid-up policy and these fire insurance men had given them instead of the *debris* of a consumed worldly estate a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!

TO MERCHANTS.

"Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth."—ISAIAH xxiii. 8.

ITS wealth and splendour and power made Tyre the crowning city of the land. What Tyre was to that land, New York with its surroundings is to this country, the crowning city. Philadelphia, has a more genial clime and less superficiality of society, and Boston a reputation for higher culture; and Chicago more speed of advancement; but, taking it all in all, New York is the crowning city of the United States. The question in Boston is, "How much does he know?" in Philadelphia, "Who was his father?" the question in New York is, "How much is he worth?" This tendency of things has developed the material advantages of our city until, like that of Tyre of

old, it may be called "the crowning city." "Its merchants are princes, and its traffickers the honourable of the earth."

It is to this royal family of merchants that I speak to-day. I call them the royal family because they are higher in authority and power than Congresses or Parliaments. How often it has been the case that the Cabinets of Europe have waited to hear what a Jewish banker had to say on the matter. This last week, men in this country, critical of the man that their own party had put into power, proposed to block up the way of his administration, when one clap of thunder from Wall Street sent all the croakers to their hiding places. I speak at a most cheering and brightening time. I was recently in Kentucky, and during the four days and nights that I spent in the cars, I was more impressed with this fact than any other; that the merchandise of the land is waking up. The cars were crowded with merchants from New York to Pittsburgh: crowded from Pittsburgh to Columbus; crowded from Columbus to Cincinnati; crowded from Cincinnati to Louisville, Kentucky; crowded all the way back with merchants. It is at such an encouraging time that I speak.

But in all circumstances merchants have their trials. If a man has any helpful word in their behalf, shall he not utter it? If a war break out, they furnish the means for the armament. If famine prey upon Ireland, merchants send out breadstuffs. If there are churches to be built and colleges to be endowed, and beneficent institutions to be supported, the merchants put their hands to the work, and they have a right to expect that in our ministration we will be sympathetic with their struggles and temptations. I shall speak of some of the temptations and trials to which our merchants are subjected, and then show them the way out.

In the first place, a great many of our merchants are much tried with limited capital in business. Every body knows it takes three or four times as much money now to do business well as once it did. Once, a man would take

a few hundred dollars and put them into goods, and he would be his own store sweeper, his own weigher, his own book-keeper, his own salesman, and having all the affairs under his own hand, and brain, everything was net profit. So it was in the times when the Grinnells, and the Stewarts and the Lawrences of the world, started.

Oh, what a change! Heavy taxation, costly apparatus, extensive advertising, exorbitant store-rent, are only a part of the demand made upon our commercial men. The man waking up with a small capital, says; "I can't endure this pressure any longer," and under this temptation of limited capital, men ruin themselves in one or two directions. Some immediately succumb to the temptation. They surrender before the first shot of the battle is fired. At the first hard duty they yield. Their knees knock together at the fall of the auctioneer's gavel. They do not understand that there is such a thing as heroism in merchandise, and that there are Waterloos of the counter, and that no braver battle was ever won with the sword than has been won with the yard stick. Their souls melt within them because sugars are up when they want to buy, and down when they want to sell; and because there are bad debts on their ledgers, the gloom of their soul overshadows their dry-goods and groceries. Despondency blasts them. Other men are ruined by the temptation in the opposite direction. They say: "Here, I have struggled as long as can be expected; I am going to stop this. I have been going along from hand to mouth long enough. I find by legitimate business and straight-forward merchandise I can't succeed. Now, from this time it is make or break." The craft that did very well in a small storm is pushed out beyond the lighthouse on the great sea of speculation. The man borrows a few thousand dollars from friends who do not like to refuse him. He says, "I can't be any worse off than I am now; if I succeed with this borrowed money I shall give \$10,000 to the Bible Society, and I will give \$10,000 to the Tract Society, and I will help to support all beneficent institutions; and if I fail, I'll be no worse off

than I am now; one hundred thousand dollars subtracted from nothing, nothing remains." Perhaps stocks are the dice with which he gambles. Perhaps he buys large tracts of western lands, and then some day meeting a farmer from a fat homestead in New Jersey, or Massachusetts, or New York state, he persuades the farmer to trade off his homestead for lots in Western cities, with wide avenues, and costly palaces, and lake steamers smoking at the wharves, and lightning express trains coming down from all directions! There it is, all on paper! True, there has been no city built and no railroad constructed as yet, but everything points in that direction, and the thing will be done as sure as you live. The man stops at no fraud, stops at no outrage. He dashes past in his splendid equipage after two years of business, and the labourer looks up as he goes by, and says, "Well, I wonder where that man got his money?" and then the labourer, wiping the sweat from his brow, thinks to himself: "Why, two years ago, that man was as poor as I am, I wonder where he got his money." He stole it. After awhile the bubble bursts and the creditors rush in, and the law clutches but finds nothing in its grasp. The pictorials blaze the face of the man who had genius enough in a few years to fail for \$250,000. I would not want to block up the path to lawful accumulation before any of our young men: but when I see so many men, through limited capital, tempted into reckless speculation I think it is time for the church of God and the ministers of religion to raise a most emphatic and unmistakable protest. It is this process through which so many merchants go down into destruction and perdition. If ever tempted into reckless speculation, preach to your soul a sermon from the text: "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so riches got by fraud; a man shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool."

Again, I remark that a great many of our merchants are tempted to over-care and anxiety. All styles of merchandise seem overdone. Smitten with the love of quick

gain, men rush into the cities resolved to get rich at all hazard. The money must come: they do not care how it comes. Our honest merchants are thrown into competition with men of larger means and less conscience, and if an opportunity for emolument be lost for an hour, somebody else picks it up. This spirit of strife and contention among the occupations—this rivalry in business, was well illustrated by Charles Kingsley, who says: "Go where you will, in town or country, you will find half a dozen shops struggling for a custom that would only keep up one. And so they are forced to undersell one another, and when they have got down the prices all they can by fair means they are forced to get them even by foul, and to sand the sugar, and sloe-leaf the tea, and puts, Satan that prompts them on knows what, into the bread, and then they don't thrive. They can't thrive. God's curse must be on them. They began by trying to oust each other and eat each other up, and while they are eating up their neighbors their neighbours eat them up, and so they all come to ruin together."

Now what a contest it is for our honest, upright merchants, when they go out into this competition! From January to December it is one long struggle. No quiet at night for their tossing limbs, and their brain that will not stop thinking. Even the Sabbath does not dam back this tide of worldliness, for its wave dashes clear over the church, and leaves its foam on the Bible, and the prayer-books. Men on salaries, men cultivating their farms, do not understand that wear and tear of body, mind and soul to which our merchants are subjected in this day, when their livelihood, their competency, their fortune, their business honour, may all depend upon the uncertainties of the next hour. This perpetual excitement of the brain, the corroding care of the heart, this strain that exhausts the spirit, pushes many of our very best merchants mid-life into the grave. They find that Wall Street does not end at the East River; it ends in Greenwood, their life dashes out against a money safe! They carry their store on their

back. They trudge, like camels sweating from Aleppo to Damascus. Oh! if there is any class of men who have my hearty sympathies, it is these men who are toiling in merchandise to-day. I wish I could rub out some of the lines of care from your brow. I wish I could lift some of the burdens from your heart. I wish I could give relaxation to your worn-out muscles. Is it not time for you to take it a little easier? Do the best you can and then trust the rest with God. Take a long breath. God manages all the affairs of your life and he manages them for the best. Consider the lilies, they always have robes. Behold the fowls of the air, they always have nests. Bethink yourself of the fact that God did not intend you to be a pack horse. Dig yourself out from the hogsheads and the shelves, and in the light of this holy Sabbath, in the strength and faith of God, throw your fretfulness and fears to the winds. You brought nothing into the world, and it is very certain you can carry nothing out. Having food and raiment be therewith content. There was a man who came over from New York some years ago, and threw himself down on the lounge in his house, and said, "Well, everything is gone." They said, "What do you mean?" "Oh!" he replied, we have had to suspend payment; our house has gone to pieces, nothing left." His little child bounded from the other side of the room, and said, "Papa, you have me left." And the wife who had been very sympathetic and helpful, came up and said, "Well, my dear, you have me left;" and the old grandmother seated in the corner of the room put up her spectacles on her wrinkled forehead and said, "My son, you have all the promises of God left." Then the merchant burst into tears and said, "What an ingrate I am! I find I have a great many things left; God forgive me." I tell you, my brother, what gives you so much worriment. You have an idea that your happiness depends upon your commercial success. It does not. You are building on a very poor foundation if you are building on that foundation. You know the authentic statistics that out of a hundred merchants only two suc-

ceed finally, and are you going into this struggle with the idea that your happiness for this world, or the next depends upon commercial success? I want to explode that infatuation.

Some years ago a man wrote :

I called on a friend, a great antiquarian, a gentleman always referred to in all matters relating to the city of Boston, and he told me that in the year 1800 he took a memorandum of every person on Long Wharf, and that in 1840, which is as long as a merchant continues in business, only five in one hundred remained. They had all in that time failed, or died destitute of property. I then went to a very intelligent director of the Union Bank, a very strong bank. He told me that bank commenced business in 1798, that there was then another bank in Boston—the Massachusetts bank—and that the bank was so overrun with business that the clerks and officers were obliged to work until twelve o'clock at night, and on Sundays; that they had occasion to look back, a year or two ago, and they found that of the one thousand accounts which were opened with them in starting, only six remained. They had in the forty years either failed or died destitute of property. Houses whose paper had passed without question had all gone in that time. Banking, said he, is like death, and is as certain; they fall singly and alone and are then forgotten, but there is no escape from it, and he is a fortunate man who fails young! Another friend told me that he had occasion to look through the probate office a few years since, and was surprised to find over ninety per cent, of all the estates settled there were insolvent.

Now what a foolish man that is who builds his happiness on the prospects of worldly success! You are not dependent upon commercial prosperity for your peace here or your joy hereafter. You would not be able to take these fortunes even if you could keep them up to the last moment of life. Suppose that in the parting moment when you make your will, you had all your estate round about you—would that comfort you? After Mr. Aster died, all the newspapers were discussing the question how much he left. After A. T. Stewart died, all the people were discussing how much he left. After Mr. Vanderbilt died, all the peo-

ple were discussing the question, how much he left. I can tell you. Every dollar!

Again. I notice that our merchants are tempted sometimes to neglect their home duties. There ought to be no collision between the store and the home. But there is sometimes a collision. There are merchants in this city, who are merely the cashier of their family; they are the agent to provide dry-goods and groceries. They have nothing to do with the discipline and education of their children. Perhaps once or twice a year, some Sunday afternoon when they have nothing else to do, they call their children around about them and review their good habits, and review their bad habits, and give them a quarter a piece for their virtues and chastise them for their faults, and give them a world of good advice, and then all the rest of the year, wonder that their children are not better for this semi-annual discipline and castigation. If they have family prayers, it is with a rush, and they read the twenty-third psalm of David, a psalm more read than any chapter perhaps in the Bible, first because it is a very precious and glorious psalm; secondly, in many cases because it is short. If they ask a blessing at the table, it is cut off at both ends, and with their hand on the carving knife. While they are waiting for the dessert, they are counting on their fingers, making commercial estimates. Then the hat goes on the head, and they are down the street, and before their family have left the table, they are binding up another package of goods and saying, "Anything more I can do for you to day, sir?" O my brother, you have not discharged your responsibilities to your household when you have given them a drawing master and a music teacher. It is your duty, O father,—no other one can do this but yourself,—to look after the physical culture of your children. You ought sometimes to unlimber your dignity; you ought sometimes to run out with your children into their sports and games. That man who cannot sometimes turn his back upon the severe work of life, and fly the kite, and trundle the hoop, and jump the rope, and

chase the ball with his children, ought never to have been tempted out of a crusty, irredeemable solitariness. Do you suppose you are going to keep your children at home if you do not make your home bright? As long as they find the saloons of sin more beautiful, more attractive than the home circle, so long they will go there. Do you suppose you can sit down with your children in the evening from seven to ten o'clock, groaning over your rheumatism, expecting them to be entertained with that? Oh, no! do not give them any extra trouble. They will have their own rheumatism soon enough. Bring into your homes all brightness, all books, all musical instruments, so far as you can afford them. I do not invite you to extravagance, but I say, so far as you can afford them. And above all, not by a semi-annual discipline, but the year around, teach your children that religion is a great gladness, that it is a chain of gold about the neck, that it takes no blitheness from the step, no luster from the eye, no ring from the laughter, but that her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

Again: I remark that a good many of our merchants are tempted to make financial gain of more importance than the soul. It is a grand thing to have plenty of money. The more money you get the better if it come honestly and go usefully. There is no war between the Bible and worldly success. When I hear a man canting in pulpit or pew, or prayer-meeting against money as though it had no practical use,—well, I think the best heaven for such a man as that would be an everlasting poor-house. For the lack of money, sickness dies without medicine, and hunger finds its coffin in an empty bread-tray. But while we admit that money has its lawful use, we must remember that it will not glitter in the dark valley, that it will not pay the ferriage across the Jordan of death, that it will not unlock the gate of heaven. There are men in all our occupations and professions who act as though they thought a pack of bonds and mortgages might be traded off at the last for a mansion in the skies, as though gold would be a legal ten-

der in that land where it is so common that they make paving stones out of it. Salvation by Christ is the one salvation. Treasures in heaven are the only incorruptible treasures. I suppose you have all ciphered in arithmetic as far as loss and gain. If you have, then I will give you a sum in loss and gain: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" However firmly you may be attired the winds of death will flutter your apparel like rags. The pearl of great price is worth more than any gem ever brought up from the depths of the ocean—worth more than Australian and Brazilian mines strung in one cascanet. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added to you.

Yet how many merchants there are who seem to get along without any religion. The fact is that a man is very seldom converted after he is worth \$40,000. After a man gets a certain amount of worldly resources he thinks, "Well, now, I can take care of myself." Oh! how many there are who go down financially and go down eternally. You see it. You know it a great deal better than I do. You saw it yesterday. You have seen it every day for a long while. Men failing for this world and failing for eternity.

Some of you remember the shipwreck of the *Central America* about twenty years ago. She was laden with a valuable cargo and she had about 500 passengers, I think. They had a prosperous voyage; but after a while a storm struck, and the surges trampled the deck and swung into the hatches, and there went up a 500-voiced death shriek. The foam on the jaw of the wave; the pitching or the steamer as though it would leap a mountain; the dismal flare of the signal rockets: the long cough of the smoke pipes; the hiss of extinguished furnaces; the walking of God through the storm. That vessel did not go down without a great struggle. The passengers gathered in long lines and with their buckets tried to bale out the sinking steamer. After a while there came a sail in sight. The

people on that other vessel saw the flash of the distress-gun, but did not hear its sound, because the booming of the gun was drowned by the louder booming of the storm. The vessel came near. Very few got off. Suddenly the ship, the wounded steamer, gave a great lurch and went down. So there are men who are sailing on in life prosperously. All is well! All is well! until after a while, a financial storm strikes them—a euroclydon, a cyclone, and they perish. O my brother, because you lose your property, do not lose your soul. For there is coming a more stupendous shipwreck after a while. This great ship of a world which God launched more than 6,000 years ago, bearing a freightage of mountains and immortals, has been sailing on, sailing on; but some day it will be staggered with the cry of “Fire!” The timbers of rock will burn, and the mountains flame like masts, and the clouds like sails in the judgment hurricane. But God will take his children off that deck, and from the berths those who are asleep in Jesus, and he will set them beyond the reach of storm and tempest. But how many will go down, will never be known until some day in heaven it is announced: “The shipwreck of a world! so many millions saved; so many millions drowned.” O my hearers, though your store go, though your house go, though your government securities go,—may God through the blood of the everlasting covenant save all your souls!

THE VOICES OF THE STREET.

“Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets.”—PROV i. 20.

WE are all ready to listen to the voices of nature—the voices of the mountain, the voices of the sea, the voices of the storm, the voices of the star. As in some of the cathedrals of Europe, there is an organ at either end of

the building, and the one instrument responds musically to the other, so in the great cathedral of nature, day responds to day, and night to night, and flower to flower, and star to star in the great harmonies of the universe. The spring-time is an evangelist in blossoms, preaching of God's love, and the winter is a prophet, white-bearded, denouncing woe against our sins. We are all ready to listen to the voices of nature, but how few of us learn anything from the voices of the noisy and dusty street. You go to your mechanism, and to your work, and to your merchandise, and you come back again, and often with how indifferent a heart you pass through these streets. Are there no things for us to learn from these pavements over which we pass? Are there no tufts of truth growing up between these cobblestones beaten with the feet of toil and pain and pleasure, the slow tread of age and the quick step of childhood? Aye, there are great harvests to be reaped, and this morning I thrust in the sickle because the harvest is ripe. "Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets."

In the first place, the street impresses me with the fact that this life is a scene of toil and struggle. By ten o'clock of every day the city is jarring with wheels, and shuffling with feet, and humming with voices, and covered with the breath of smoke stacks, and a-rush with traffickers. Once in a while you find a man going along with folded arms and with leisurely step as though he had nothing to do; but for the most part as you find men going down these streets on their way to business, there is anxiety in their faces as though they had some errand which must be executed at the first possible moment. You are jostled by those who have bargains to make and notes to sell. Up this ladder with a hod of bricks, out of this bank with a roll of bills, on this dray with a load of goods, digging a cellar, or shingling a roof, or shoeing a horse, or building a wall, or mending a watch, or binding a book. Industry with her thousand arms and thousand eyes and thousand feet, goes on singing her song of Work! Work! Work!

while the mills drum it and the steam whistles fife it. All this is not because men love toil. Some one remarked, "Every man is as lazy as he can afford to be." But it is because necessity with stern brow and with uplifted whip, stands over you, ready, whenever you relax your toil, to make your shoulders sting with the lash. Can it be that, passing up and down these streets on your way to work and business, that you do not learn anything of the world's toil and anxiety and struggle? Oh, how many drooping hearts, how many eyes on the watch, how many miles travelled, how many burdens carried, how many losses suffered, how many battles fought, how many victories gained, how many defeats suffered, how many exasperations endured, what losses, what hunger, what wretchedness, what pallor, what disease, what agony, what despair! Sometimes I have stopped at the corner of the street as the multitudes went hither and yon, and it has seemed to be a great pantomime, and as I looked upon it my heart broke. This great tide of human life that goes down the street is as rapids tossed and turned aside and dashed ahead and driven back—beautiful in its confusion and confused in its beauty. In the carpeted aisles of the forest, in the woods from which the eternal shadow is never lifted, on the shore of the sea over whose iron coast tosses the tangled foam sprinkling the cracked cliffs with a baptism of whirlwind and tempest, is the best place to study God; but in the rushing, swarming, raving street is the best place to study man. Going down to your place of business and coming home again, I charge you look about; see these signs of poverty, of wretchedness, of hunger, of sin, of bereavement, and as you go through the streets, and come back through the streets, gather up in the arms of your prayers all the sorrows, all the losses, all the sufferings, all the bereavements of those whom you pass, and present them in prayer before an all-sympathetic God. In the great day of eternity there will be thousands of persons with whom you in this world never exchanged one word, who will rise up and call you blessed, and there will be a

thousand fingers pointed at you in heaven, saying, "That is the man, that is the woman, who helped me when I was hungry and sick and wandering and lost and heart-broken—that is the man, that is the woman!" and the blessing will come down upon you, as Christ shall say: "I was hungry and ye fed me, I was naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and in prison and ye visited me. Inasmuch as ye did it to these poor waifs of the streets of Brooklyn and New York, ye did it to me."

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that all classes and conditions of society must commingle. We sometimes cultivate a wicked exclusiveness. Intellect despises ignorance. Refinement will have nothing to do with boorishness. Gloves hate the sunburned hand; the high forehead despises the flat head; the trim hedgerow will have nothing to do with the wild copsewood; and Athens hates Nazareth. This ought not so to be. The astronomer must come down from his starry revelry and help us in our navigation. The surgeon must come away from his study of the human organism and set our broken bones. The chemist must come away from his laboratory where he has been studying analysis and synthesis, and help us to understand the nature of the soils. I bless God that all classes of people are compelled to meet on the street. The glittering coach wheel clashes against the scavenger's cart; fine robes run again the peddler's pack; robust health meets wan sickness; honesty confronts fraud; every class of people meets every other class, impudence and modesty, pride and humility, purity and beastliness, frankness and hypocrisy, meeting on the same block in the same street in the same city. Oh! that is what Solomon meant when he said, "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all." I like this democratic principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which recognizes the fact that we stand before God on one and the same platform. Do not take on any airs, whatever position you have gained in society. You are nothing but a man, born of the same parent,

regenerated by the same Spirit, cleansed in the same blood, to lie down in the same dust, to get up in the same resurrection. It is high time that we all acknowledged not only the fatherhood of God but the brotherhood of man.

Again: the street impresses me with the fact that it is a very hard thing for a man to keep his heart right, and to get to heaven. Infinite temptations spring upon us from these places of public concourse. Amid so much affluence, how much temptation to covetousness and to be discontented with our humble lot. Amid so many opportunities for overreaching, what temptation to extortion. Amid so much display, what temptation to vanity. Amid so many saloons of strong drink, what allurements to dissipation. In the maelstorms and Hell Gates of the street, how many make quick eternal shipwreck. If a man-of-war comes back from a battle and is towed into the navy-yard we go down to look at the splintered spars, and count the bullet holes, and look with patriotic admiration on the flag that floated in victory from the mast head. But that man is more of a curiosity who has gone through thirty years of sharp-shooting of business life, and yet sails on victor over the temptations of the street. Oh! how many have gone down under the pressure, leaving not so much as the patch of a canvas to tell where they perished. They never had any peace. Their dishonesties kept tolling in their ears. If I had an axe and could split open the beams of that fine house, perhaps I would find in the very heart of it a skeleton. In his very best wine there is a smack of poor man's sweat. Oh! is it strange that when a man has devoured widows' houses he is disturbed with indigestion? All the forces of nature are against him. The floods are ready to drown him, and the earthquakes to swallow him, and the fires to consume him, and the lightning to smite him. Aye, all the armies of God are on the street, and in the day when the crowns of heaven are distributed, some of the brightest of them will be given to those men who were faithful to God and faithful to the souls of others, amid the marts of business prov-

ing themselves the heroes of the street. Mighty were their temptations, mighty was their deliverance, and mighty shall be their triumph.

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that life is full of pretension and sham. What subterfuge, what double-dealing, what two-facedness. Do all people who wish you good morning really hope for you a happy day? Do all the people who shake hands love each other? Are all those anxious about your health who inquire concerning it? Do all want to see you who ask you to call! Does all the world know half as much as it pretends to know? Is there not many a wretched stock of goods with a brilliant show-window? Passing up and down these streets to your business and your work, are you not impressed with the fact that society is hollow and that there are subterfuges and pretensions? Oh! how many there are who swagger and strut, and how few people who are natural and walk. While fops simper, and fools chuckle, and simpletons giggle, how few people are natural and laugh. The courtesan and the libertine go down the street in beautiful apparel, while within the heart there are volcanoes of passion consuming their life away. I say these things not to create in you incredulity or misanthropy, nor do I forget there are thousands of people a great deal better than they seem; but I do not think any man is prepared for the conflict of this life until he knows this peculiar peril. Ehud comes pretending to pay his tax to King Eglon, and while he stands in front of the king, stabs him through with a dagger until the haft went in after the blade. George betrayed Hungary. Judas kissed Christ.

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that it is a great field for Christian charity. There are hunger and suffering and want and wretchedness in the country; but these evils chiefly congregate in our great cities. On every street crime prowls, and drunkenness staggers, and shame winks, and pauperism thrusts out its hand, asking for alms. Here, want is most squalid and hunger is most lean. A Christian man going along a street in New York,

saw a poor lad, and he stopped and said: "My boy, do you know how to read and write?" The boy made no answer. The man asked the question twice and thrice, "Can you read and write?" and then the boy answered, with a tear plashing on the back of his hand, "No, sir; I can't read nor write neither. God, sir, don't want me to read and write. Didn't he take away my father so long ago I never remembered to have seen him? and haven't I had to go along the streets to get things to fetch home for the folks to eat? and didn't I, as soon as I could carry a basket, have to go out and pick up cinders, and never had no schooling, sir? God don't want me to read, sir. I can't read nor write neither." Oh! these poor wanderers! They have no chance. Born in degradation, as they get up from their hands and knees to walk, they take their first step on the road to despair. Oh, let us go forth in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to rescue them. Let us ministers not be afraid of soiling our black clothes while we go down on that mission. While we are tying an elaborate knot in our cravat, or while we are in the study rounding off some period rhetorically, we might be saving a soul from death and hiding a multitude of sins. O Christian laymen, go out on this work. If you are not willing to go forth yourself, then give of your means, and if you are too lazy to go, and if you are too stingy to help, then get out of the way and hide yourself in the dens and caves of the earth, lest, when Christ's chariot comes along, the horses hoof trample you into the mire. Beware lest the thousands of the destitute of your city, in the last great day, rise up and curse your stupidity and your neglect.

Down to work! Lift them up! One cold winter's day, as a Christian man was going along the Battery, New York, he saw a little girl seated at the gate shivering in the cold. He said to her, "My child, what do you sit there for this cold day?" "Oh," she replied, "I am waiting—I am waiting for somebody to come and take care of me." "Why," said the man, "what makes you

think that anybody will come and take care of you?" "Oh," she said, "my mother died last week, and I was crying very much, and she said, 'Don't cry; though I am gone and you father is gone, the Lord will send somebody to take care of you.' My mother never told a lie. She said some one would come and take care of me, and I am waiting for them to come." Oh, yes, they are waiting for you. Men who have dollars, men who have influence, men of churches, men of great hearts, gather them in, gather them in. It is not the will of your Heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish.

Lastly: the street impresses me with the fact that all the people are looking forward. I see expectancy written on almost every face I meet between here and Fulton Ferry or walking the whole length of Broadway. Where you find a thousand people walking straight on, you only find one man stopping and looking back. The fact is, God made us all to look ahead because we are immortal. In this tramp of the multitude on the streets, I hear the tramp of a great host marching and marching for eternity. Beyond the office, the store, the shop, the street, there is a world populous and tremendous. Through God's grace, may your each that blessed place. A great throng fills those boulevards and the streets are a-rush with the chariots of conquerors. The inhabitants go up and down, but they never weep and they never toil. A river flows through that city, with rounded and luxuriant banks, and trees of life laden with everlasting fruitage, bend their branches to dip the crystal. No plumed hearse rattles over that pavement, for they are never sick. With immortal health glowing in every vein, they know not how to die. Those towers of strength, those palaces of beauty, gleam in the light of a sun that never sets. O heaven, beautiful heaven! Heaven where our friends are! They take no census in that city, for it is inhabited by "a multitude which no man can number." Rank above rank; host above host; gallery above gallery; sweeping all around the heavens. Thou-

sands of thousands; millions of millions; quadrillions of quadrillions; quintillions of quintillions. Blessed are they who enter in through the gate into that city. Oh, start for it this morning. Through the blood of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, take up your march for heaven. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." Join this great throng who this morning, for the first time, espouse their faith in Christ. All the doors of invitation are open. "And I saw twelve gates, and they were twelve pearls."

TO TELEGRAPH OPERATORS.

"Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?"—JOB xxxviii. 35.

YES, we can. It is done thousands of times every day. Franklin at Boston lassoed the lightnings, and Morse put on them a wire bit, turning them around from city to city; and Cyrus W. Field plunged them into the sea, and wherever the telegraphic instrument clicks—at Valentia, or Heart's Content, or London, or New York—the lightnings of heaven are exclaiming in the words of my text: "Here we are! We await your bidding: we listen to your command."

In this sermon I speak to telegraph operators. They are not an exceptional class. The Western Union Telegraph Company have in this region 110 offices. The Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Company have in this region sixty offices; so that there are thousands of these persons engaged, and in the United States they may be counted by tens of thousands. Many of them are present this morning. The criticism is sometimes made against some of these sermons of the course, that comparatively few of the persons addressed are present. I answer that criticism by saying that in addition to the courtesy of the secular newspapers

of Brooklyn and New York, which courtesy I wish here this morning to acknowledge, there are also some eighteen religious papers in the United States, and in Great Britain, and in the islands of the sea, which print my sermons weekly in full, so that I reach all the classes spoken of, and the adverse criticism falls to the ground. Whether, therefore, I speak face to face, or address you through other channels, I wish to recognize the fact that telegraphic operators have their hand on momentous domestic, social, political, financial, moral, religious, ecclesiastical interests. And that they have trials and annoyances which prove that their nerves are not, like the telegraph, made out of wire ; and in the name of our all-sympathetic Christianity, I this morning address them, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?" Yes, that is your regular business.

In the first place I charge you to give gratitude to God for the fact that he has made you the means of so much advantage and blessing to the world. What a stride from the time when the Roman generals were dependent upon the signals given by the bonfires kindled on mountain top, or the rockets, the torches, the column of smoke, or the rotating beam upon which the world was dependent in after centuries—the rotating beam, placed on high points, which in the time of Napoleon became enveloped in fog, so only half the message reached London, announcing "Wellington defeated," throwing the whole city into consternation, until on the following day, when the fog lifted, the whole message arrived, saying, "Wellington defeated the French at Salamanca!" Down, on from those days until this time, when one telegraph company sends twenty million dispatches in one year, and twenty thousand dispatches in only one week from the office. I am indebted to Mr. Chandler, of the Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Company, and Mr. Prescott, the electrician of the Western Union Telegraph Company, for an array of facts and for an inspection of mechanism that have left me in a state of wonderment. Last Monday while I was looking in the

Western Union Telegraph office at the new electro motor telegraph printing instrument, there unrolled before me a message plainly printed from the operator in the city of Washington, giving me his compliments and saying, "How do you like this performance?" leaving me struck through as never before with a sense of almost omniscient and omnipresent power of American Telegraphy. What painstaking since the day when Thales, six hundred years before Christ, discovered frictional electricity by the rubbing of amber, and Wimbles, in the last century, sent electric currents along metallic wires, until in our day Faraday and Bain and Henry and Morse and Prescott and Orton—some in one way and some in another way—have helped the lightnings of heaven to come bounding along, crying: "Here we are!"

I celebrate the mercies of the telegraph. What meant those storm signals at Barnegat, and Hatteras, and St. John, and Key West, yesterday, by some color or some shape indicating a storm from the north, or a storm from the south or changeable currents? Why, it meant the telegraph is gathering up the reports of thermometers and barometers and wind-waves all over the land; and as Elijah the prophet ran down Mount Carmel ahead of King Ahab's chariot, announcing the coming of the rain, so this scientific prophet ran ahead of this imperial storm—ran down from Mount Washington and the Alleghanies, and up from the Carribean Sea, crying "A tempest! get ready on all the coasts; let the fishing smacks stand off from the breakers; let not the steamers attempt harbor to-night; let all those vessels close reef main-topsail." There are thousands of sailors sleeping amid the corals and the seaweed who this morning would have been alive had the storm-signals been lighted years before. Telegraph operators, they who go down to the sea in ships, bless you. And in all the homes from which you have signaled back bereavement, in the morning and the evening prayer before God let mention be made of the mercies of telegraphy.

What mean those rail-trains going up and down the great thoroughfares without accident, or with but few accidents; with less comparative loss of life than the old stage-coach; putting almost a quarter of a century between the Norwalk and the Ashtabula disasters. Telegraphs are watching around these chariots of fire, telling when they start, when they stop, all about them. Millions of people travelling one way, millions of people travelling the other way, in perfect safety. What a grand accompaniment the telegraph has been to the rail-train was well illustrated in England in 1850, when there was a collision at Gravesend, and the engineer leaped from the locomotive and it went on at full speed, and a telegram went along the lines, saying, "Clear the track for a fugitive locomotive!" And it dashed through twelve villages without any accident, and then an engineer waited along the track, and as soon as the fugitive had passed, had his own engine switched on to the same track and pursued, and ran it down, and got aboard it and reversed the rods, and within two miles of London put an end to what would have been a great disaster to life and property. The multiplicity of trains on the Pennsylvania route, and the Erie route, and the Hudson River route, but for the clicking of the telegraph would make one long scene of disaster.

What has this art done for literature? One great curse of literature is verbosity—long sentences for small ideas—a whole pack of hounding adjectives after one poor noun! The economics of telegraphy came and declared, Put what you have to say in ten words, or pay extra for every preposition, every adjective, every conjunction. Under this mighty pressure the land is learning the beauty of brevity. Men who would have taken two hours to tell a story, crowd, squeeze, compress, and jam it all into the ten words of the electric telegram. Why be a spendthrift of words? With four words God ordered the illumination of two hemispheres: "Let—there—be—light!" With five words the Archangel shall preach the funeral sermon of the world:

"Time—shall—be—no—longer!" The world is being talked to death! and the American Telegraph is helping to abate the nuisance.

What has this art done for the domestic circle? In sudden exigency how quickly it brings the physician. The fire that in a few hours would have turned the beautiful home into ashes, at the call of the electric telegraph, is put out in five minutes. You are in a distant hotel, and in a paroxysm of pain. Yea, you are dying alone; no railroad could have carried your message swift enough. You telegraph "Come!" And very soon upon your dying vision there dawns the familiar and sympathetic face of her who has been to you a sweet song ever since the day when, amid the orange blossoms and the sound of the Wedding March, you put the ring on her hand and promised to be faithful until death did you part, and though you are far away her breath on your dying cheek makes you feel at home, and you look up into her tearful eyes and say, "My dear, I am so glad you have come." There is not a home in Christendom but has by the telegraph been put under everlasting obligation. A father may travel seven days in a straight line, and every night before retiring receive the salutations of his household.

What has this art done for the church of God? Gathering up the doings of conventions and presbyteries and conferences, it comes bounding, saying: "Here we are!" Years after, when a dying English soldier in India telegraphed to a Christian officer hundreds of miles away, "What must I do to be saved?" the Christian officer telegraphed back, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." What a question and answer to go to and fro! When the *Agamemnon* and the *Niagara* had successfully put down the Atlantic cable, the directors in London sent the first telegram to the directors in New York, the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men." When the great revival occurred in 1857, the John St. prayer-meeting in New

York telegraphed to the great meeting in Jacques Hall, Philadelphia, saying :

Christian brethern we greet you in brotherly love. The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts. I will go also. Praise the Lord ; call upon his name ; declare his doings among the people ; make mention that his name is exalted."

And immediately there came over the telegraph wires from Philadelphia the answer :

Jacques Hall prayer-meeting crowded! With one mind and heart they glorify our Father in heaven for the work he is doing in our city and country ; the Lord hath done great things for us. May he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, and who walks in the midst of the churches, be with you by his Spirit this day

Aye, in 1857 the telegraph was the touch that set the whole land on fire with Christian enthusiasm, and 500,000 souls stepped into the kingdom of God. There is not a day now that Christian messages do not go over the wires. Every morning the secular and religious news of the world is put on our breakfast-table by the telegraph through the newspaper, the newspaper press of this country one year giving \$521,000 for the telegraphic intelligence ; the newspaper press in continental Europe giving \$11,000,000 in one year for telegraphic intelligence, The telegraph takes the whole earth in its benediction, the wires being long enough to girdle the globe five times, from St. Kene to Brest, from Brest to Suez, from Suez to Bombay, from Bombay to Singapore. Oh ! what a thrill of supremacy for the telegraph. The American villain lands in the arms of the Liverpool police. To arrest crime, to scatter good, to strike the key-note of musical accord, God has ordained the telegraph.

I am glad to know that woman, shut out from so many other fields of employment, has been admitted to this. Telegraphy says to her : "Come down out of that dimly-lighted garret ; get up out of that killing work, and put your hand on this cleanly, and intelligent, and healthful

o—s

employment." And woman is to-day refining all telegraphic circles. People are better behaved, have more elevated conversation and brighter cheer where women are. Is not that so? If it is not, why do we all love to get into the ladies cabin of the Fulton Ferry boat? I thank God that woman, who has never had any chance, has been permitted to enter upon this elevated realm of telegraphy.

Now, let me say to the men and women engaged in this art, do not make that art a mere matter of livelihood. Can it be that you have no Christian gratitude to God who has allowed you to put your hand on this mighty fulcrum which is to help raise a sunken world toward a stooping heaven? I preach this sermon to magnify your office, and to stir up in your soul an appreciation of the grandeur of that work to which God has called you. Again, I charge that you maintain inviolate all the confidence entrusted to you. The affairs of homes, of commercial establishments, and of churches are in your hand. Through no other channel do there go so many things never intended for public eye or ear.

Resist all that inquisitiveness which has more interest in knowing about the business of other people than in minding its own. And at this point let me say, I think the judges of courts, and the national government ought to be very slow to bring into public inspection, private telegrams. What a scene it was, when a few weeks ago, Mr. Orton, the president of the Western Union Telegraph Company, was arrested, and brought before a confessional commission to display private telegrams of the last political contest. We all admired the fact that he resisted as long as it was possible to resist. It is a simple fact that the men who compelled that display of private telegrams were worsted by the exposition. They got scorched with their own lightnings. When the lightnings came and said, "Here we are," they said, "Yes, I wish I had never seen you." Such espionage may do very well under despotisms but not in this country and in this day. The letters of a

post-office are no more sacred than the dispatches of a telegraph. And public officials ought to be very careful how they tamper with this medium of intelligence lest they cripple its influence, and dishonor its name among the nations. A great many people are tempted to tell all they know, especially when they do not know much. And any institution like the telegraph or post-office that cultivates in the people a healthful taciturnity, ought to be encouraged. Men talk too much.

Again, I charge you to seek divine solace in all your perplexities. To the outside world your work seems ambrosial. How easy to sit in a chair, in a warm office, and read by the sound of the armative, or manipulate an instrument as easily as you would a piano. Here at last is an occupation without any annoyances and trials. Alas! Since the day you began to learn the art, you have not been free from annoyances and trials. Send five thousand telegrams without the mistake of a word, and in the five thousand and first make the slightest mistake, and what a rattling there is at the other end of the lines. The officers of the company are besieged with charges of your inefficiency. People prowl around wanting to get your position. You are arraigned. You must confess. You are put on a smaller salary in a less conspicuous position, or you are turned out, and you sit amazed that such attenuated lightning could make such loud thunder. Your nerves, your eyes, your heart, are sore with annoyances. So it is all along the line of telegraphy, and in all departments, from the uninformed lads who run with the lead pencil, receipt book, and message, clear up to the room of the electrician, and the room of the treasurer, and the vice president, and the president. The whole story of telegraphy has been a story of trial and struggle. Go back to 1844, in Boston, and you see a telegraph wire reaching from Milk street to School street, and the people paying twenty-five cents to see it operated; and the next year, 1845, in New York you find a short telegraph running up Broadway, and the people paying twenty-five cents to see

it operated ;—the operators going to bed hungry, their bed the hard floor of the office where they worked. It has been a struggle all the way up, and all the way down. Sebastopol and Austerlitz and Gettysburg were not more exciting scenes than those which were seen and suffered when the Atlantic cable was laid in 1858, 1865, and 1866, and Wellington won no more brilliant victory at Waterloo than did Cyrus W. Field win when he landed at Heart's Content, after thirteen years of exposure and hardship and caricature and scoffing, and telegraphed to New York city:

HEART'S CONTENT, July, 27.—Arrived safely. All is well. The cable laid and in perfect order.

Well might the choir of old Trinity Church, a few days after, celebrate the event, chanting while the organs rolled out the harmony, "Oh, come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation."

You may weave your garlands around the brows of conquerors who have waded chin-deep in blood to get more territory. I shall save my garlands for the Galvanis, and the Davy's, and the Bains, and the Capt. Hudsons who have helped us by the stroke of God's omnipotence to weld the continents together. It has been trouble and trial, and struggle all the way through. The pioneers of the telegraph were the target for the ridicule of two hemispheres. When the cable broke in 1858, all the nations jeered and said, "We told you so." The Indians on the plains, the Arabs on the desert, the wild beasts in India, tore up the lines. The United States government again and again has attempted to appropriate or steal the telegraphs of this country and make them a mere system of political jobbery. Resistance to all this and continuance amid all this, has made telegraphy in this country a strife and a struggle, and a heroism.

Now is there any comfort for these people in any department of this wonderful art? I have to tell you that God's Word, more wonderful than any syphon recorder, or galvanometer, or electromotograph, or testing instrument, or repeater that was ever invented, is charged to-day with

comfort, and if you should touch it, you would fire an eternal thrill. Seated in your operating office, you are in quicker communication with heaven than with earth. You may with a stroke of your finger call some one, thousands of miles away, and because of the difference in time, your message may seem to arrive there an hour earlier than when it was sent. But here is something that beats all telegraphy—the promise of God, “*Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.*” It has only been a short time, you know, since you could send messages on the same wire in opposite directions and at the same time: but for thousands of years there has been such communication between heaven and earth, between God and the human soul, both speaking instantaneously and at the same time. God is ready this morning, and is ever ready to transmit comfort to your soul. Go to him with your great troubles and little troubles. Do you not now already feel the shock of the Lord’s battery? No people in all the world have such an opportunity of appreciating the Lord’s presence as you have. He is not in the storm of earthquake so much as in the click of the telegraph. You, every day, have your fingers on the pulses of the Omnipotent Arm. You know that God is in the room where you are operating. Standing or sitting in such an august presence, what consecrated men and women you ought to be! Yea, you ought to have larger hearts than other people, since you can realize as no others can, that the San Franciscan and the Russian, and the Australasian are only your next door neighbors, and seated in your chairs you can shake hands with all nations. Yea, you ought to have a better appreciation than any other people of what Paul said when he declared, “God hath made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the earth, and hath determined the times appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek after the Lord; if so be that feeling after him they might find him, though he be not far from any one of us.” Working as you do with such tremendous agencies, and in such an august presence,

you ought to be the most earnest of all Christian people. Aye, you need the religion of Jesus Christ, not only for its inspiration and its comfort, but as an absolute necessity. I lift the storm-signal to-day. There is a day coming which will try every man's work of whatever sort it is. In Christ all are safe. Away from Christ all are in peril. If I had all the telegraph wires of the world brought to this platform and I could read only one message I think it would be this, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I am glad to know that God is going to take possession of all the world's telegraphy. The thought stirs my soul. Between ten and three o'clock the wires are chiefly now occupied by quotations of the cotton exchange and stock market, and the bankers and brokers employ most of the time between these hours; but after awhile when all the telegraph lines are completed, and instead of four or five cables through the ocean from here to Europe, there will be twenty, and the wire of the telegraph shall insinuate itself into the hidden abodes of the human family; then, methinks, there shall be some great central office, and some great central instrument, and perhaps a herald of heaven will take his position and put his hand on that instrument, and give the final call to all nations. Yea, perhaps Christ himself, descended among men, may put his hand on that central instrument, giving the final and successful call to all people, and thrilling to all lands the message: "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God and there is none else." And all the nations, instantly catching the invitation, shall respond, and China shall say, "I come," and India, "I come," and Siberia, "I come," and Russia, "I come;" and Europe, and Asia, and Africa, and North and South America, "We come." Nations born in a day! Empires saved! The world's work done! God glorified! Heaven full!

The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe,

No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear,
From every eye he wipes off every tear ;
In adamant chains shall death be bound.
And hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.

God hasten the day, and then the galvanometers may meet, and then the Atlantic cables may snap, and the lightnings of heaven, having fulfilled all their errands and completed all their circuits, shall return and kneel at the foot of the throne, crying, " Here we are !"

THE MEN OF WALL STREET.

" As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool."—JER. xvii. 11.

ALLUSION is here made to a well-known fact in natural history. If a partridge or a quail or a robin brood over the eggs of another species of bird, the young will not adhere to the one that happens to have brooded them, but will, the first chance it get, assort with its own species. And so those of us who were brought up in the country, have often seen the dismay of the barnyard hen after having brooded aquatic fowls, when they tumble into their natural element, the water. A man may gather under his wings large estates. . If they are estates that belong to somebody else, they will after awhile leave him looking very silly. You have known men to spread themselves over vast properties until they got under them ten or fifteen fortunes, and the process of financial incubation seemed to be going on well, when suddenly the fortunes clip their shells, and some take to the water and some take to the air, leaving

the nest entirely empty. "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool." How different such estates from those of the Van Renssalaers and Peabodys, gotten in industry, supervised in righteousness, and by God's eternal law made permanent.

Across the Island of New York, in 1685, a wall of stone and earth, cannon-mounted, was erected to keep off the savages. A street was laid along by that wall, and as the street took the line of the wall it was appropriately called Wall street. It is short, narrow, unarchitectural; but unique in history, and, excepting Lombard in London, the mightiest street in the world. There the government of the United States was born: there Washington held his levees; there, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Caldwell, Mrs. Knox and other brilliant women of the Revolution displayed their charms; there, Witherspoon and Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield sometimes preached; there, John Mason chided Alexander Hamilton because the Constitution of the United States was written without any God in it; there, negroes were sold in the slave mart; there, criminals were harnessed to wheelbarrows and made to draw like beasts of burden, or were lashed through the street behind carts to which they were fastened; and there, fortunes have come to coronation or to burial, from the day when unscrupulous financiers in powdered hair and silver shoe-buckles dodged Dugan the Governor-general of his Majesty, until clear on down to last week when you saw the rush on the Panama & Pacific Mail. The fact is, the history of Wall street would be the larger part of the financial, agricultural, manufacturing, and religious history of this country. People talk of its only being a few blotks long. It reaches from the Canadas to the Gulf of Mexico—from San Francisco to Bangor. It stands for the most emphatic opposites—unswerving integrity and tiptop scoundrelism heaven-born charity and bloodless Shylockism. The best men and the worst men are found there, I would like to-

day, to put a plough in at the curbstone of old Trinity, and drive it clear down to Wall street Ferry, and so it shall go if the horses are strong enough to draw the plough. When I speak of Wall street, I mean for the most part to include the outbranchings of the street—Nassau and Broad and William and Exchange Place, and the other streets in which many of the heavy operators have their headquarters.

In the first place, Wall street stands for tried integrity on the one hand and the most outrageous villany on the other. Among farmers who have only a few hundred dollars of produce to put upon the market, you cannot find out the character of men because they are not tried; but plunge a man into the seven-times-heated excitement of Wall street, and he will either come out a Shadrach with hair unsinged, or he will be turned into a black moral cinder. If I wanted to find integrity bombproof, I would seek it among the Wall street bankers and merchants. You are honest on Fulton street—that is nothing; you are honest on Broadway—that is nothing; you are honest on Tremont—that is nothing; you are honest on Chestnut—that is nothing; but O Philadelphians, are you honest on Third street? O Bostonians, are you honest on State street? O Brooklynites and New Yorkers, are you honest on Wall street? Then you shall have the palm. Such nefarious things have sometimes been done there that strangers have an idea that from one end to the other, it is a scene of financial debauchery, and there are people who hardly dare to pass through the street unless they have buttoned up their last pocket and had their life insured, and almost religiously crossed themselves! Such bad things have been done there sometimes, that bad men have almost given a reputation to the street; when the fact is, if you start at either end of it and look at the names on the signs and the names of the moneyed institutions, you will find that there are more upright men in the same space on that street than on any other business-doing street of all our cities. Fraud and lying and subterfuge and infernal reck-

lessness do not hold unlimited sway. The Board of Brokers, which is considered by some people an aquarium of sharks, has a record for financial accuracy equaled by no monetary institutions of the world; its contracts done on honour: a man having on him a suspicion of dishonesty, not able to get into it. Since 1794, when it was organized, only one man has been found guilty of fraud while connected with it. Added to all this is the fact that when the Sanitary and Christian Commissions wanted to send medicine and bandages to the wounded, and when this country wanted to send breadstuffs to famishing Ireland, and when colleges were to be endowed and churches supported, and missionary societies were to send the people to all the earth and demand was made upon our cities, Wall street was the first to respond.

But I have to say also, that in that street there are the worst financial desperadoes this country has ever seen. Some of them got out of the penitentiary—others are on the way to Sing Sing. These are the spiders that are waiting for innocent flies. These are the crocodiles that crawl up through the slime to craunch the calf. These are the anacondas with loop ready to crush the unwary. These are the maelstroms that suck down the freighted ship. These are the men who last week attempted to throw our country now recuperating, into the paroxysms of 1869 or 1873. They wanted to make a black Monday blacker than any black Friday. These were the wreckers who stood on the beach praying for Caribbean whirl-winds to swamp our American commerce. Blessed be God, the infamy was defeated. I do not own a dollar in Panama, or Pacific Mail, or a dollar of stock in anything else; but last Thursday, when in Cincinnati, I opened the papers, and found that one embarrassed broker had been able to make his contract good, and that the other had been magnanimously helped by his friends, I felt very grateful to God, and I saw we were not to be disappointed in the expectation that this spring weather will not only renew the face of the earth, but will give resurrection to our long prostrated commerce.

God only knows what our merchants have suffered, and our working people too. And I am glad to believe that their day of deliverance is coming, and I pray God that he will put a hook into the nose of these financial monsters and jerk them back into the East river or the Hudson river—preferring the latter, for that would be further off from our residences! Now, in passing, I want to make this subject practical, and I say to all you men whose principles are not thoroughly settled in business: keep out of Wall street. That is no place for a man who, when he is over-paid five dollars by mistake, does not know whether he had better send it back or not; or for a man who has put trust funds in speculation; or for a man who does not know whether by the laws of the State of New York, usury is right or wrong. That is no place for a man whose principles quiver in the blast of temptation. Remember poor Ketcham—how quick the hoofs of his iron-grays clattered him down on the road to destruction. Remember poor Gay, by thirty years of age astounding the whole land with his fortunes, and also astounding them with his forgeries. Remember James Fisk whose splendid steamboats and opera house could not atone for his adulterous rides through Central Park in the face of decent New York, and who from Wall street, by his example, blasted tens of thousands of the young men of this generation. I hold up his polluted memory as a warning to all men whose principles are not thoroughly settled, to keep out of Wall street.

Yea, my word also is to the men who in that street are engaged in legitimate business: Stand firm in Christian principle—be courageous in that commercial battle-field. Remember there are heroes of the bank and heroes of the Stock Exchange. That French empress who stood on the balcony in France and addressed a great mob until she silenced them, does not excite my admiration so much as that old bank President in Wall street in 1869, who stood on the steps of his moneyed institution quieting the excitement of the depositors, bidding peace to the angry waves of commercial excitement. God is going to take care of

you down amid the marts of business. The lions did not hurt Daniel, and the "bears" will not hurt you! Remember that the day is coming on very soon when all this Wall street jargon about "corners," and "margins," and "saltings down," and "carrying stocks" will be ended. You will be beyond all that, and by the law of God's eternal right, all the affairs of your business life will be adjudicated. If you live in the country during the summer, some day after you have returned from business, go out to the hennery and see the unsuccessful incubation in certain cases, or see the fright as the young flutter off into some unexpected element, and then bethink yourself of my text: "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool."

Again: I remark that Wall street stands for legitimate speculation and for ruinous stock gambling. Almost every merchant is in some sense a speculator. If a grocer buys a barrel of flour for nine dollars and expects to sell it at ten—if he buys a pound of coffee for thirty-five cents and expects to sell at forty cents—if he buys a pound of sugar at nine cents, and expects to sell it at eleven and a half, he is to a certain extent a speculator. He depends not only on the difference between what he pays for it at wholesale prices, and what he gets for it at retail, but also upon the fluctuations of the market. If the market rises greatly he gains greatly; if it goes down greatly, he loses greatly. A man has as thorough a right to deal in New York Central stocks, or Toledo & Wabash, or Western Union Telegraph as he has to deal in iron, or coal, or hardware, or drygoods. That man who denounces all stock dealers as iniquitous, only displays his own ignorance. Stop legitimate speculation in this country, and you stop the factories, you stop the banks, you stop the railroads, you stop all the great financial prosperities of the country. The stock broker is only a commission merchant. He gets his commission on one kind of goods. You, the grocer, get your commission on

another kind of goods. The dollar that he earns is as fair and bright and honest a dollar as that which is earned by the day labourer. But here we must draw a very distinct line between lawful speculation and ruinous stock gambling which has brought upon this country three-fourths of its commercial woes, and which is now turning the heads of many people, and filling the land with lunacy and inebriation. You, the stock operator, sell \$100 worth of nothing and get paid for it. You steal from that man just so much money. You say it is a contract on time. You have no property and do not expect to have. The man who buys does not want it. It is sold at thirty days. You sell one hundred shares, you are to get for them \$10,000. It is to be delivered in thirty days. If at the end of that time you can get the scrip for \$9,000 you have made a thousand, but if at the end of that time you have to pay \$11,000 then you have lost a thousand. Now, my brother, that is trafficking on fiction. That is betting on chances. That makes you as certainly a gambler as the man who makes or loses his fortune in one of the gambling hells of John Morrissey, that great reformer and Christian philanthropist!

Now, it is against this kind of traffic in stocks that I warn the young men of my congregation. Almost every successful merchant during his life-time wakes up and says: "Here, I have been successful in my regular line of merchandise; now I'll just go down and consult with the brokers and perhaps in three weeks I can double my fortune! What's the use of my being satisfied with ten or twenty thousand dollars income when that man next door to me, in the same kind of business, by one move in Wall street, made \$300,000!" There they come on Wall street, retired merchants, wanting to get a little excitement in their sluggish veins. There they come—trustees of vast property willing to rush other people's estates in the whirlpool. Fortunes that were forty years in accumulating scattered in a day. Men celebrated for their prudence flinging into the vortex the livelihood of widows and orphans. Oh! is it any wonder that sometimes these men lose their reason—

that the kings of Wall street have sometimes had on them strait-jackets, and that some of them in the back office, with a pistol at the temple suddenly put an end to the tragedy? Oh! it is this insane passion for stock gambling against which this morning, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I utter my solemn protest. It has cursed all civilized nations, and it has cursed every Christian age, and the men who are in business circles know what I say is true, and they could present this morning a great many more illustrations out of their own observation than I can present out of mine. It is not peculiar to the mercurial Americans. The Hollanders, the most phlegmatic people in the world, in 1635 had what was called the "tulipmania." It was a speculation in tulips. All the people in Holland went to buying tulips or selling tulips. The excitement went on until one time a root brought \$1,200, and another \$2,000. Properties worth half a million were all thrown into this one speculation. The Amsterdam tulip, supposed to be the only one of the kind in the world, brought \$1,814,000.

Look at France. She had her excitement in 1716. John Law projected the Mississippi scheme. The people of France had heard that the American continent was a chunk of gold, and this Mississippi scheme was projected by John Law for the purpose of taking this gold and pouring it in on France. The whole nation turned into lunatics. The people rushed in. There were 300,000 applicants for shares. The mounted military sometimes had to disperse the crowd of men who were so determined to get some of John Law's stock. There were 500 temporary tents erected, in which the people could stay while they were waiting for their interview with John Law. A lady of fortune had her coachman willfully upset her coach near by where John Law was passing in order that she might in that way get an interview with that benevolent and sympathetic man. Stocks went up until they reached two thousand and fifty per cent. Suddenly, the people began to suspect there was something wrong. Crash! went John Law's Mississippi

scheme, and under it was buried the projector and all the best financial interests of the French empire.

Sedate England had her stock gambling excitement in 1720. It was the South Sea Company. It was to pour the gold of Peru and Mexico, and all the islands of the sea into England. Books were opened. Five millions worth of stock was offered, at three hundred pounds a share. In a few days it was all taken and twice the amount subscribed. The whole English nation was racked with insane excitement. Under the wing of that one excitement, there came other stock-gambling companies, among them a company formed, with large capital, for providing funerals for all parts of the land; another company with its five million of capital, to develop a wheel in perpetual motion; another company with a capital of fifteen million dollars, to insure people against losses by servants; another company with ten million dollars of capital, to transplant walnut trees from Virginia to England; and then to cap the climax, a company was formed for a great undertaking, nobody to know what it is, and lo! two million, five hundred thousand dollars of shares were offered at five hundred dollars a share. The books were opened at nine o'clock in the morning and closed at three o'clock in the afternoon, and the first day it was all subscribed. A great undertaking, nobody to know what it is!

But it was left for our country to surpass all other countries. We have here the biggest rivers, and the biggest cataracts, and the biggest mountains, and so we had to have the biggest swindle. The country had done very well in that direction in the days of *Morus Multicaulis*, when each man had in his house a collection of crawling silk worms, by which he was to make his fortune; but all was tame comparatively, until, in 1864, a man digging near Titusville, Pennsylvania, for salt, struck oil. Twelve hundred oil companies calling for a billion of dollars. Prominent members of churches, as soon as stocks had been assigned them, felt at liberty to become presidents, and secretaries, and directors. Many of the companies owned

not a foot of ground. Their entire equipment was a map showing where oil might be, and two phials of grease, one crude and the other clarified. We became a nation of maniacs. One young man having sold his farm in Venango County, at a fabulous price, on the supposition there was oil in it, came to Philadelphia when I was living there and he threw down a five thousand dollar check at the hotel to pay for one meal and did not want the change, and then stepped back to the gas burner and lighted his cigar with a thousand dollar bill. Unsophisticated people poured down in the first train to the city, and put all their hard earnings in the gulf. People said: "There can be no mistake about it; good Elder So-and-so is president of it, and good Deacon So-and-so is secretary of it, and then there are four or five professors of religion in the Board of Directors, and joining that company will be almost as good as joining the church. Poor souls! they didn't know that when professors of religion go into stock gambling they all lie like any body else!

But the comedy turned into a tragedy, and one thousand millions of hard-earned property was swamped, and to-day there are multitudes of people sitting in the shadow of destitution, who but for that great national outrage, would have had their cottages and their homesteads. I give you these four illustrations of nefarious stock gambling to show the young men more especially, of this congregation, what fools and knaves it will make of the people. I want to show them what an insane and contagious passion it is, and I want to show them also that the Lord God hates it, always has punished it, and always will punish it.

O men of Wall street, men of all streets, stand back from nefarious enterprises! Join those people, who on every block from Broadway to Wall street Ferry have illustrated Christian principle. At the opening of every day, in your broker's office, in your store, or your banking house, utter a silent prayer for God's blessing, and when the day is done, pronounce on it a benediction. Let it be sounded in the ears of the young men of this country what George

Peabody said in an address at Danvers in 1856, when he visited his native place and was speaking to his townsmen. He said:

“Though Providence has granted me unvaried and unusual success in the pursuits of fortune in other lands, I am still in heart the humble boy who left yonder unpretending dwelling. There is not a youth within the sound of my voice whose early opportunities and advantages are not very much greater than were my own, and I have since achieved nothing that is impossible to the most humble boy among you.”

May the protecting and prosperous blessing of God come down on all the men of Wall street. I pray for them fortunes in this world and fortunes in the world to come. Some day when you leave your office to go to the bank, or clearing-house, or place of custom, or you start on your way home, just look up to the clock on Trinity Church steeple, and by the motion of the hands, be reminded of the fact that your business life is rapidly going and that soon all the voices at the Exchange will have died away from your ears, and before the throne of God's scrutinizing judgment you must give an account for every day's business since you entered Wall street. For the stock gambler, that will be a “break” at the “first call.” No smuggling into heaven. No “collaterals” on which to trade your way in. Through Jesus Christ you enter, or you forever stay out. I wish you all prosperity in business. Stand close by Christ and Christ will stand close by you. By so much as your temptation may be great, your reward will be magnificent. God forbid that when your business on earth is done and the hushed assemblage stand with bowed head at your obsequies that the most appropriate text for your funeral oration should be: “As a partridge sitteth upon eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool.” And that the most appropriate funeral psalm for the occasion should be:

Price of many a crime untold—
Gold, gold, gold, gold!

6—T

TO MECHANICS.

"So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil."
—ISAIAH xli. 7.

YOU have seen in factories a piece of mechanism passing from hand to hand, and from room to room, and one mechanic will smite it, and another will flatten it, and another will chisel, and another will polish it, until the work be done. And so the prophet describes the idols of olden times as being made, part of them by one hand, part of them by another hand. Carpentry comes in, gold-beating comes in, smithery comes in, and three or four styles of mechanism are employed. "So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil." When they met, they talked over their work, and they helped each other on with it. It was a very bad kind of business; it was making idols which was an insult to the Lord of heaven. I have thought if men in bad work can encourage each other, ought not men engaged in honest artisanship and in honest mechanism to speak words of good cheer. The Bible comes down to the minutiae of everything. It tells us how many dollars Solomon paid for his horses. It tells us in Deuteronomy what kind of a roof we ought to have on our house. It applauds the industry and generosity of the Israelitish spinsters. It gives us specimens of old time needlework, leather-making, tanning establishment, pottery, brick-kiln, city water-work, ship-building. Men see in their own work hardships and trials, while they recognize no hardships or trials in anybody's else occupation. Every man's burden is the heaviest, and every woman's task is the hardest. We find people wanting to get into other occupations and professions. I hear men in all kinds of toil wishing they were enabled to do something else, saying to me: "I have mistaken my path in life; I ought to have been a mechanic and I am a mer-

chant;" or, "I ought to have been a merchant and I am a mechanic; I ought to have been a lawyer and I am an artist. If I had undertaken some other path in life I should have had an easier time and grander successes." I suppose when the merchant comes home at night, his brain hot with the anxieties of commercial toil, disappointed and vexed, agitated about the great excitements in the gold markets, he says: "Oh, I wish I were a mechanic! When his day's work is done, the mechanic lies down; he is healthy in body, healthy in mind, and healthy in soul, but I can't sleep." While at that very moment, the mechanic is wishing he were a banker or a merchant. He says: "Then I could always have on beautiful apparel; then I could move in the choicest circles; then I could bring up my children in a very different sphere from that in which I am compelled to bring them up." Now the beauty of our holy religion is that God looks down upon all the occupations and professions, and while I cannot understand your annoyances and you cannot understand mine, God understands them all. He knows all about the troubles of these men mentioned in my text—the carpenter who encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer and the gold-beater. People want help. It is the easiest thing in the world to get up in an audience and discourage the hearers. I have seen one dolorous man arise in a cheerful prayer-meeting and chill all the exercises; while on the other hand, I have seen one man with strong faith in God, making no pretensions to any brilliancy of intellect, cheer up a thousand souls with his own sunshine of spirit. I think I will speak of some of the trials of mechanics, and then offer encouragements.

One great trial that you feel is physical exhaustion. There are athletes who go out to their work at six or seven o'clock in the morning and come back at night as fresh as when they started. They turn their back upon the shuttle or the forge or the rising wall, and they come away elastic and whistling. That is the exception. I have noticed that when the factory bell taps for six o'clock,

the hard-working man wearily puts his arm into his coat sleeve and starts for home. He sits down in the family circle resolved to make himself agreeable, to be the means of culture and education to his children; but in five minutes he is sound asleep. He is fagged out—strength of body, mind, and soul, utterly exhausted. He rises in the morning only half rested from the toil. Indeed, he will never have any perfect rest in this world until he gets into one narrow spot which is the only perfect rest for the human body in this world. I think they call it a grave! Has toil frosted the color of your cheek? Has it taken the spontaneity from your laughter? Has it subtracted the spring from your step and the lustre from your eye, until it has left only half the man you were when you first put your hand on the hammer and your foot on the wheel? To-morrow in your place of toil, listen, and you will hear a voice above the hiss of the furnace and the groan of the foundry and the clatter of the shuttle—a voice not of machinery nor of the task-master, but the voice of an all-sympathetic God, as he says; “Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Remember also, men and women of toil, that this work will soon be over. Have you not heard that there is a great holiday coming? Oh, that home and no long walk to get to it! Oh, that bread and no sweating toil necessary to earn it! Oh, those deep wells of eternal rapture and no heavy buckets to draw up! I wish this morning you would come and put your head on this pillow stuffed with the down from the wing of all God's promises. There remains a rest for the people of God. I wonder how many tired people there are in the house to-day? A thousand? More than that. Two thousand people who are tired, tired out with the life, tired in hand and foot and back and heart? Ah! there are more than two thousand tired people here to-day, supposing all the rest to be in luxury and in ease. Yonder is a woman who has her head down on her hand. What does that mean? Ask her. It has been a tiresome week to her. “Oh,” she says, “when

will I ever get any rest?" If there are any people in this world who excite my commiseration, it is the sewing women of our great cities. You say, "We have sewing machines and our trouble is gone." No, it is not. I see a great many women wearing themselves out amid the hardships of the sewing machine. A Christian man went into a house of a good deal of destitution in New York, and he saw a poor woman there with a sick child, and he was telling the woman how good a Christian she ought to be and how she ought to put her trust in God. "Oh!" she said, I have no God; I work from Monday morning until Saturday night and I get no rest, and I never hear anything that does my soul any good; and when Sunday comes I haven't any bonnet that I can wear to church, and I have sometimes got down to pray and then I got up saying to my husband, 'There's no use of my praying, I am so distracted I can't pray; it don't do any good.' O sir, it is very hard to work on as we people do from year to year, and to see nothing bright ahead, and to see the poor little child getting thinner and thinner, and my man almost broken down, and to be getting no nearer to God, but to getting farther away from him. Oh, if I were only ready to die!" May God comfort all who toil with the needle and the sewing machine, and have compassion on those under the fatigues of life.

Another great trial is privation of taste and sentiment. There are mechanics who have their beautiful homes, who have their fine wardrobes, who have all the best fruits and meats of the earth brought to their table. They have their elegant libraries. But they are the exception. A great many of the working people of our country are living in cramped abodes, struggling amid great hardships, living in neighborhoods where they do not want to live but where they have to live. I do not know of anything much more painful than to have a fine taste for painting and sculpture and music and glorious sunsets and the expanse of the blue sky, and yet not to be able to get the dollar for the oratorio, or to get a picture, or to buy one's way into

the country to look at the setting sun and at the bright heavens. While there are men in great affluence who have around them all kinds of luxuries in art, themselves unable to appreciate these luxuries, buying their books by the square foot, their pictures sent to them by some artist who is glad to get the miserable daub out of his studio—having no appreciation of fine art yet the capacity to get art and to get music, and get everything that could charm the soul, there are multitudes of refined, delicate women who are born artists and will reign in the kingdom of heaven as artists, who are denied every picture and every sweet song and every musical instrument. Oh, let me cheer such persons by telling them to look up and behold the inheritance that God has reserved for them. The king of Babylon had a hanging garden that was famous in all the ages, but you have a hanging garden better than that. All the heavens are yours. They belong to your Father, and what belongs to your Father belongs to you.

Then there are many who suffer not only in the privation of their taste, but in the apprehensions and the oppressive surroundings of life that were well described by an English writer. He said :

To be a poor man's child and look through the rail of the playground, and envy rich boys for the sake of their many books, and yet to be doomed to ignorance; or to be apprenticed to some harsh stranger and feel forever banished from a mother's tenderness and a sister's love; to work when very weary, and work when the heart is sick and the head is sore; to see a wife or a darling child wasting away and not to be able to get the best advice; to hope that better food or purer air might set her up again, but that food you cannot buy, that air you must never hope to breathe; to be obliged to let her die; to come home from the daily task some evening and see her sinking, to sit up all night in hope to catch again those precious words you might have heard could you have afforded to stay at home all day, but never heard them. To have no mourners at the funeral, and even to have to carry on your own shoulder through the merry streets the light coffin. To see huddled into a promiscuous hole the dust which is so dear to

you, and not venture to mark the spot by planted flower or lowliest stone. Some bitter winter or some costly spring to barter for food the cloak, or the curious cupboard, or the Henry's Commemorative on which you prided yourself as the heir-loom of a frugal family, and never to be able to redeem it. To feel that you are getting old, nothing laid aside and present earnings scarce sufficient. To change the parlor floor for the top story, and top story for a single attic, and wonder what change will be next.

But I have no time longer to dwell upon the hardships and the trials of those who toil with hand and foot. I cannot even dwell upon the fact that so often the reward is disproportioned to the amount of work, or that you are subject necessarily to the whims of others. I will not mention these things for I must go on to offer you some grand and glorious encouragements, and the first encouragement is that one of the greatest safeguards against evil is plenty to do. When men sin against the law of their country, where do the police detectives go to find them? Not amid the dust of factories, not among those who have on their "overalls," but among those who stand with their hands in their pockets around the doors of saloons and restaurants and taverns. Active employment is one of the greatest sureties for a pure and upright life. There are but very few men with characters stalwart enough to endure consecutive idleness. I see a pool of water in the country and I say, "Thou slimy, fetid thing—what does all this mean?" "Oh," says the pool, "I am just stopping here." I say, "Didn't I see you dance in the shower?" "Oh, yes; I came down from God shining like an angel." I say to that water, "Didn't you drop like a beautiful gem into a casket of other gems as you tumbled over the rock?" "Oh, yes, I sang all the way down from the cliffs to the meadow." I say again: "Didn't I see you playing with those shuttles and turning that grist mill?" "Oh, yes, I used to earn my living." "Then what makes you look so sick? Why are you covered with this green scum? Why is your breath so vile?" "Oh, I have nothing to do; I am disgusted with shuttles and wheels;

I am going to spend my lifetime here, and while yonder stream sings on its way down the mountain side, here I am left to fester and die, accursed of God because I have nothing to do." Sin is an old pirate that bears down on vessels whose sails are flapping idly in the wind. The arrow of sin has hard work to puncture the leather of a working apron. Be encouraged by the fact that your shops, your rising walls, your anvils are fortresses in which you may hide, and from which you may fight against the temptations of your life. Morning, noon and night, Sundays, week days, thank God for plenty to do.

Another encouragement is the fact that their families are going to have the very best opportunity for development and usefulness. That may sound strange to you, but the children of fortune are very apt to turn out poorly. In nine cases out of ten the lad finds out, if a fortune is coming, by twelve years of age—he finds out there is no necessity of toil, and he makes no struggle, and a life without struggle goes into dissipation or into stupidity. There are thousands and tens of thousands of men in our great cities who are toiling on, denying themselves all luxuries year after year, toiling and grasping and grasping. What for? To get enough money to spoil their children. The father was fifty years getting the property together. How long will it take the boy to get rid of it, not having been brought up in prudent habits? Less than five years to undo all the work of fifty. You see the sons of wealthy parents going out into the world, inane, nerveless, dyspeptic, or they are incorrigible and reckless; while the son of the porter that kept the gate, learns his trade, gets a robust physical constitution, achieves high moral culture, and stands in the front rank of church and state. Who are the men mightiest in our Legislatures and Congresses and Cabinets? Did they walk up the steep of life in silver slippers? Oh, no. The mother put him down in the shade, while she spread the hay. Many of those mighty men ate out of an iron spoon and drank out of the roughest earthenware—their whole life a forced march. They never had any

luxuries until after awhile God gave them affluence and usefulness and renown as a reward for their persistence. Remember, then, that though you may have poor surroundings and small means for the education of your children, they are actually starting under better advantages than though you had a fortune to give them. Hardship and privation are not a damage to them but an advantage. A clipper likes a stiff breeze. The sledge hammer does not hurt the iron that it knocks into shape. Trouble is a hone for sharpening very keen razors. Akenside rose to his eminent sphere from his father's butcher shop. Robert Burns started as a shepherd. Prideau used to sweep Exeter College. Gifford was a shoemaker. And the son of every man of toil may rise to heights of intellectual and moral power, if he will only trust God and keep busy.

Again I offer as encouragement, that you have so many opportunities of gaining information. Plato gave \$1,300 for two books. The Countess Anjou gave two hundred sheep for one volume. Jerome ruined himself financially by buying one copy of Origin. Oh, the contrast! Now there are tens of thousands of pens gathering up information. Type setters are calling out for more "copy." All our cities quake with the rolling cylinders of the Harpers and the Appletons, and the Lippincotts, and the Osgoods, and you may buy more than Benjamin Franklin ever knew for fifty cents! A hard-working man comes along toward his home and he looks into the show window of the bookstore and sees an elegantly bound volume. He says, "I wish I had that book; there must be a great deal of information in it." A few months pass along and though that book which he looked at cost five dollars, it comes now in pamphlet shape and costs him fifty cents. The high wall around about the well of knowledge is being broken down, and people come, some with porcelain pitchers and some with pewter mugs, to dip up the living water for their thirsty lips. There are people who toil from seven o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night, who know more about anatomy than the old physiologists, and who know more

about astronomy than the old philosophers. If you should take the learned men of two hundred years ago and put them on one bench, and take twenty children from the common schools in Brooklyn and put them on the other bench, the children could examine the philosophers and the philosophers could not examine the children! "Ah!" says Isaac Newton, coming up and talking to some intelligent lad of seven years, "what is that?" "Oh!" that is a rail train." "What is that?" "That is a telegraph." "What is that?" "It is a telephone." "Dear me I think I shall go back to my bed in the dust." Oh, rejoice that you have all these opportunities of information spread out before you, and that seated in your chair at home, by the evening lamp, you can look over all nations and see the descending morn of a universal day.

One more encouragement: your toils in this world are only intended to be a discipline by which you shall be prepared for heaven. "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy," and tell you that Christ the carpenter of Nazareth, is the working-man's Christ. You get his love once in your heart, O working-man, and you can sing on the wall in the midst of the storm, and in the shop amidst the shoving of the plane, and down in the mine amid the plunge of the crow-bar, and on ship board while climbing the ratlines. If you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, he will count the drops of sweat on your brow. He knows every ache and every pain you have suffered in your worldly occupations. Are you weary, he will give you rest. Are you sick, he will give you health. Are you cold, he will wrap around you the warm mantle of his eternal love. And beside that, my friends, you must remember that all this is only preparatory. I see a great multitude before the throne of God. Who are they? "Oh," you say, "those are princes; they must have always been in a royal family. They dress like princes; they walk like princes; they are princes. There are none of the common people there; none of the people that ever toiled with hand and foot. Ah! you are mistaken, Who is that bright spirit before

the throne? Why, that was a sewing girl who, work as hard as she could, could make but two shillings a day. Who is that other illustrious soul before the throne? Why, that man toiled amid the Egyptian brick kilns. Who is that illustrious soul before the throne? Why, her drunken father drove her out on a cold winter night, and she froze into heaven. Who are those kings and queens before the throne? Many of them went up from Birmingham mills and from Lowell carpet factories. And now I hear a sound like the rustling of robes, and now I see a taking up of harps as though they were going to strike a thanksgiving anthem, and all the children of the saw, and the disciples of the shuttle, are in glorious array, and they lift a song so clear and sweet—I wish you could hear it. It would make the pilgrim's burden very light, and the pilgrim's journey very short. Not one weak voice or hoarse throat in that great assemblage. The accord is as perfect as though they had been all eternity practicing, and I ask them what is the name of that song they sing before the throne, and they tell me it is the song of the redeemed working people. And the angels cry out, "Who are these so near the throne?" and the answer came back: "These are they which came out of great tribulation and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb."

TO COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

"The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings."—NAHUM ii. 4.

IT has been found out that many of the arts and discoveries which we supposed were peculiar to our own age, are merely the restoration of the arts and discoveries of thousands of years ago. I suppose that the past centuries have forgotten more than the present century knows,

It seems to me that they must have known thousands of years ago, in the days of Nineveh, of the uses of steam and its application to swift travel. In my text I hear the rush of the rail-train, the clang of the wheels, and the jamming of the car couplings. "The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings."

Have you ever taken your position in the night, far away from a depot, along the track, waiting to see the rail-train come at full speed? At first you heard in the distance a rumbling like the coming of a storm; then you saw the flash of the head-light of the locomotive as it turned the curve; then you saw the wilder glare of the fiery eye of the train as it came plunging toward you; then you heard the shriek of the whistle that frenzied all the echoes; then you saw the hurricane dash of cinders; then you felt the jar of the passing earthquake, and you saw the shot thunderbolt of the express train. Well, it seems that we can hear the passing of a midnight express train in my text: "Their chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings." I halt the train long enough to get on board, and I go through the cars and I find that three-fourths of the passengers are commercial travellers. They are a folk peculiar to themselves, easily designated, at home on all the trains, not startled by the sudden dropping of the brakes, familiar with all the railroad signals, can tell you what is the next station, how long the train will stop, what place the passengers take luncheon at, can give you information on almost any subject, are cosmopolitan, at home everywhere, from Bangor to Cincinnati. They are on the eight o'clock morning train, on the noon train, on the midnight train. You take a berth in a sleeping car, and either above you or beneath you is one of these gentlemen. They are the best patronizers of the hotels. Without them three-fourths of the hotels in the land would go into bankruptcy. There

are thirty thousand professed commercial travellers in New York City; one hundred thousand professed commercial travellers in the United States; but five hundred thousand would not include all those who are sometimes engaged in this service. They spend millions of dollars every day in the hotels and in the rail-trains. They have their official newspaper organ. They have their mutual benefit association, two thousand names on the rolls, and have already distributed more than sixty-eight thousand dollars among the families of deceased members. They are ubiquitous, unique, and tremendous for good or evil. All the tendencies of merchandise are toward their multiplication. The house that stands back on its dignity and waits for customers to come, instead of going to seek bargain-makers, will have more and more unsaleable goods on the shelf, and will gradually lose its control of the money markets; while the great, enterprising, and successful houses will have their agents on all the trains; and "their chariots will rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings."

I think commercial travellers can stand a sermon of warm-hearted sympathy. If you have any words of good cheer for them, you had better utter them. If you have any good honest prayers in their behalf they will be greatly obliged to you. I never knew a man yet that did not like to be prayed for, I never knew a man yet that did not like to be helped. It seems to me that the sermon I preach this morning is timely. At this season of the year, there are tens of thousands of men going out to gather the Spring trade. The Month of march, in all our commercial establishments, is a very busy month. In a few days our national perplexities will all be settled, and then look out for the brightest ten years of national prosperity which this country has ever witnessed. All our astute commercial men feel that we are standing at the opening gate of wonderful prosperity. Let the manufacturers put the bands on all their wheels, and the merchants open a new set of account books

in the place of those filled with long columns of bad debts. Let us start on a new commercial campaign. Let us drop the old tune of "Naomi," and take up "Ariel" or "Antioch." "Oh," you say, "it is impossible that this land after so much depression should be revived." Why, in 1857 there were failures to the amount of \$291,000,000; we got over that: we will get over this. God hath not dealt so with any nation; as for his judgments we have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.

Now you, the commercial traveller, have received orders from the head men of the firm that you are to start on a long excursion. You have your patterns all assorted and prepared. You have them put up in bundles or cases, and marked. You have full instructions as to prices. You know on what prices you are to stand firm, and from prices you may retreat somewhat. You have your valise or trunk, or both, packed. If I were a stranger I would have no right to look into that valise, but as I am your brother I will take the liberty. I look into the valise and I congratulate you on all these comfortable articles of apparel. The seasons are so changeable you have not taken a single precaution too many. Some night you will get out in the snowbank and have to walk three or four miles until you get to the railroad station, and you will want all these comforts and conveniences. But will you excuse me if I make two or three suggestions about this valise? You say, "Certainly, as we are having a plain, frank talk this morning, I will not be offended at any honourable suggestion." What is this little package in the valise? "Oh," you say, "that is a game of cards." Well, my brother, you do not want to be lumbered with unnecessary baggage, and if you want to play cards, you will find persons equipped with them on all the rail trains and at all the depots; besides that, there are Christian people, weak-headed if you will, but still Christian people, who do not like cards, and who do not like to trade with people who play cards. "But," you say, "there is certainly no harm in a pack of cards, is there?" Instead of directly answering your question, I

will give you as my opinion that there are thousands of men with as strong a brain as you have who have gone, through card playing, into games of chance, and have dropped down into the gambler's life and into the gambler's hell. A Christian gentleman came from England to this country. He brought with him \$70,000 in money. He proposed to invest the money. Part of it was his own; part of it was his mother's. He went into a Christian church; was coldly received, and said to himself, "Well, if that is the kind of Christian people they have in America, I don't want to associate with them much." So he joined a card playing party. He went with them from time to time. He went a little further on, and after a while he was in games of chance, and lost all of the \$70,000. Worse than that, he lost all his good morals—and on the night that he blew his brains out, he wrote to the lady to whom he was affianced an apology for the crime he was about to commit, and saying in so many words, "My first step to ruin was the joining of that card party."

Well, I don't want to be too inquisitive—but what is this other little bundle in the valise? "Oh," you say, "that is a brandy flask." Well, now, my brother, just empty the contents, and fill it with cholera mixture. It is very important when you are absent from home and on the train that you have medicines which you can take in case of sudden sickness. Then, if on a long route, your friends expect you to take them to the end of the train, and pour out some disinfectant into the begrimed glass at the water tank, while they are standing around, smacking their lips, waiting for a drink, pour out some of this cholera mixture. Now, you have taken my advice about two things. I have only one more counsel to give you, and then I will bother you no more with your baggage. Make an addition of some good wholesome reading. Let it be in history, or a poem, or a book of pure fiction, or some volume that will give you information in regard to your line of business. Then add to that a Bible in round, beautiful type—small type is bad for

the eyes anywhere, but peculiarly killing in the jolt of a rail train. Put your railway guide and your Bible side by side, the one to show you the route through this world, and the other to show you the route to the next world. "Oh," you say, "that is superfluous, for now, in all the hotels, in the parlour, you will find a Bible, and in nearly all the rooms of the guests you will find one." But, my brother, that is not your Bible. You want your own hat, your own coat, your own blanket, your own Bible. "But," you say, "I am not a Christian, and you ought not to expect me to carry a Bible." My brother, a great many people are not Christians who carry a Bible. Beside that, before you get home, you might become a Christian, and you would feel awkward without a copy. Beside that, you might get bad news from home. I see you with trembling hand opening the telegram, saying, "George is dying," or "Fanny is dead—come home!" Oh, as you sit in the train, stunned with the calamity, going home, you will have no taste for the newspapers, or for fine scenery, or for conversation, and yet you must keep your thoughts employed, or you will go stark mad. Then you will want a Bible, whether you need it or not. It will be a comfort to have it near you—that book full of promises which have comforted other people in like calamity. Whether you study the promises or not, you will want that book near you. Am I not wise and Christian this morning when I say throw out the cards and put in the Bible?

Now, you are all ready to start. You have your valise in the right hand, and you have your blanket and shawl-strap in the left hand. Good-bye! May you have a prosperous journey; large sales—great per centages. Oh, there is one thing I forgot to ask you about! What train are you going to take? "Well," you say, "I will take the five o'clock Sunday afternoon train." Why? "Oh," you say, "I shall save a day by that, and on Monday morning I will be in the distant city, in the commercial establishment by the time the merchants come down." My brother, you are starting wrong. If you clip off something from the

Lord's Day the Lord will clip off something from your life time successes. Sabbath-breaking pays no better for this world than it pays for the next. There was a large establishment in New York, that said to a young man, "We want you to start to-morrow afternoon, Sunday afternoon, at five o'clock, for Pittsburg." "Oh," replied the young man, "I never travel on a Sunday." "Well," said the head man of the firm, "you must go; we have got to make time, and you must go to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock." The young man said, "I can't go, it is against my conscience; I can't go." "Well," said the head man of the firm, "then you will have to lose your situation; there are plenty of men who would like to go." The temptation was too great for the young man, and he succumbed to it. He obeyed orders. He left on the five o'clock train Sunday afternoon, for Pittsburg. Do you want the sequel in very short metre? That young man has gone down into a life of dissipation. What has become of the business firm? Bankrupt—one of the firm a confirmed gambler. Out of every week, get twenty-four hours for yourself. Your employer, young man, has no right to swindle you out of that rest. The bitter curse of Almighty God will rest upon that commercial establishment which expects its employes to break the Sabbath. What right has a Christian merchant to sit down in church on the Sabbath when his clerks are travelling abroad through the land on that day? Get up, professed Christian merchant, so acting. You have no business here. Go out and call that boy back. There was a merchant in 1837, who wrote: "I should have been a dead man had it not been for the Sabbath. Obligated to work from morning until night through the whole week, I felt on Saturday, especially on Saturday afternoon, that I must have rest. It was like going into a dense fog. Everything looked dark and gloomy, as if nothing could be saved. I dismissed all, and kept the Sabbath in the old way. On Monday, it was all sunshine, but had it not been for the Sabbath, I have no doubt I should have been in my grave."

Now, I say if the Sabbath is good for the employer, it is good for the employe. Young man, the dollar that you earn on the Sabbath is a red hot dollar, and if you put it into a bag with five thousand honest dollars, that red hot dollar will burn a hole through the bottom of the bag, and let out all the five thousand honest dollars with it.

But I see you change your mind, and you are going on Monday morning, and I see you take the train—the Hudson River, or the Erie, or the Pennsylvania, or the Harlem, or the New Haven train. For a few weeks now you will pass half of your time in the rail-train. How are you going to occupy the time? Open the valise and take out a book and begin to read. Magnificent opportunities have our commercial travellers for gaining information above all other clerks or merchants. The best place in the world to study is in a rail-train. I know it by experience. Do not do as some commercial travellers do—as many of them do; as most of them do—sit reading the same newspaper over and over again, and all the advertisements through and through; then sit for two or three hours calculating the profits they expect to make; then spending two or three hours looking listlessly out of the window; then spending three to four hours in the smoking car, the nastiest place in Christendom, talking with men who do not know as much as you do. Instead of that, call William Shakespeare, the dramatist, and John Ruskin, the essayist, and Tennyson the poet, and Bancroft and Macaulay, the historians, and Ezekiel and Paul, the inspired men of God, and ask them to sit with you, and talk with you, as they will if you ask them. I hear you say: “I do wish I could get out of this business of commercial travelling; I don’t like it.” My brother, why don’t you read yourself out? Give me a young man of ordinary intellect and good eyesight, and let him devote to valuable reading the time not actually occupied in commercial errand, and in six years he will be qualified for any position for which he is ambitious. “Oh,” you say, “I have no taste for reading.” Now, that

is the trouble, but it is no excuse. There was a time, my brother, when you had no taste for cigars, they made you very sick, but you persevered until they became to you a luxury. Now, if you can afford to struggle on to get a bad habit, is it not worth while to struggle on to get a good habit like that of reading? I am amazed to find how many merchants and commercial travellers preserve their ignorance from year to year, notwithstanding all their opportunities. It was well illustrated by one who had been largely successful, and who wanted the show of a library at home, and he wrote to a book merchant in London, saying: "Send me six feet of theology, and about as much metaphysics, and near a yard of civil law in old folio!" There is no excuse for a man lacking information if he have the rare opportunities of a commercial traveller. Improve your mind. Remember the "Learned Blacksmith," who while blowing the bellows, set his book up against the brick work, and became acquainted with fifty languages. Remember the scholarly Gifford, who, while an apprentice, wrought out the arithmetical problems with his awl on a piece of leather. Remember Abercrombie, who snatched here and there a fragmentary five minutes from an exhausting profession, and wrote immortal treatises on ethics. Be ashamed to sell foreign fabrics or fruits unless you know something about the looms that wove them, or the vineyards that grew them. Understand all about the laws that control commercial life; about banking; about tariffs; about markets: about navigation; about foreign people—their characteristics and their political revolutions as they affect ours; about the harvests of Russia, the vineyards of Italy, the tea-fields of China. Learn about the great commercial centres of Carthage and Assyria and Phœnicia. Read all about the Medici of Florence, mighty in trade, mighty in philanthropies. You belong to the royal family of merchants—be worthy of that royal family. Oh! take my advice this morning, and turn the years of weariness into years of luxury. Take those hours you spend at the depot, waiting for the delayed train, and make them Pisgah

heights from which you can view the promised land. When you are waiting for the train, hour after hour in the depot, do not spend your time reading the sewing machine advertisements, and looking up the time-tables of routes you will never take, going the twentieth time to the door to see whether the train is coming, bothering the ticket agent and telegraph operator with questions which you ask merely because you want to pass away the time. But rather summon up the great essayists, and philosophers, and story-tellers and thinkers of the ages, and have them entertain you.

But you have come now near the end of your railroad travel. I can tell by the motion of the car that they are pulling the patent brakes down. The engineer rings the bell at the crossing. The train stops. "All out!" cries the conductor. You dismount from the train. You reach the hotel. The landlord is glad to see you—very glad! He stretches out his hand across the registry book with all the disinterested warmth of a brother! You are assigned an apartment. In that uninviting apartment you stay only long enough to make yourself presentable. You descend then into the reading room, and there you find the commercial travellers seated around a long table, with a great elevation in the centre covered with advertisements; while there are inkstands sunken in the bed of the table, and scattered all around are rusty steel pens and patches of blotting paper. Of course, you will not stay there. You saunter out among the merchants. You present your letters of introduction and authority. You begin business. Now, let me say there are two or three things you ought to remember. First, that all the trade you get by the practice of "treating" will not stick. If you cannot get custom except by tipping a wine-glass with somebody, you certainly had better not get his custom. An old commercial traveller gives as his own experience that trade gotten by "treating" always damages the house that gets it, in one way or the other. Besides that, you cannot afford to injure yourself for the purpose of benefitting your employers. Your

common sense tells you that you cannot get into the habit of taking strong drink to please others without getting that habit fastened on you. I do not know whether to tell it or not. I think I will. A close carriage came to the Tabernacle door one night, at the close of a religious service. Some one said: "A gentleman in that carriage wants to see you." I looked into the carriage and there sat as fine a salesman and as elegant a gentleman as New York ever saw; but that night he was intoxicated. He said he wanted to put himself under my care. He said he had left home, and he never meant to go back again. I got into the carriage with him. I rode with him until after midnight, trying to persuade him to go home. I have been scores of times to Greenwood, following the dead; but that was the most doleful ride I ever took. After midnight I persuaded him to go home. We alighted at his door. We walked through his beautiful hall, his wife and daughter standing back affrighted at his appearance. I took him to his room. I undressed him. I put him to bed. Where is that home now? All broken up. Where are the wife and the daughter? Gone into the desolations of widowhood and orphanage. Where is the man himself? Dead, by the violence of his own hand. When I heard it, I said: "Cursed be rum! cursed be rum!" Oh, commercial traveller, though your firm may give you the largest salary of any man in your line, though they might give you ten per cent. of all you sell, or twenty per cent., or fifty per cent., or ninety per cent., they cannot pay you enough to make it worth your while to ruin your soul. Beside that, a commercial house never compensates a man who has been morally ruined in their employ.

Again. I charge you, tell the whole truth about anything you sell. Lying commercial travellers will precede you. Lying commercial travellers will come right after you into the same store. Do not let their unfair competition tempt you from the straight line. It is an awful bargain that a man makes when he sells his goods and his soul at the same time. A young man in one of the stores in New York

was selling some silks. He was binding them up when he said to the lady customer, "It is my duty to show you that there is a fracture in that silk." She looked at it, and rejected the goods. The head man of the firm hearing of it, wrote to the father of the young man in the country, saying, "Come and take your son away, he will never make a merchant." The father came in agitation, wondering what his boy had been doing, and the head man of the firm said, "Why your son stood here at this counter and pointed out a fracture in the silk, and of course the lady wouldn't take it. We are not responsible for the ignorance of customers; customers must look out for themselves, and we look out for ourselves. Your son will never make a merchant." "Is that all," said the father. "Ah, I am prouder of my boy than I ever was. John, get your hat and come home."

But it is almost night and you go back to the hotel. Now comes the mighty tug for the commercial traveller. Tell me where he spends his evenings, and I will tell you where he will spend eternity; and I will tell you what will be his worldly prospects. There is an abundance of choice. There is your room with your books. There are the Young Men's Christian Association rooms. There are the week-night services in the Christian churches. There is the gambling saloon. There is the theatre. There is the house of infamy. Plenty of places to go to. But which? Oh, immortal man, which? Oh, God, which? "Well," you say, "I guess I will—I guess I will go to the theatre." Do you think the tarrying in that place until eleven o'clock at night will improve your bodily health, or your financial prospects, or your eternal fortune? No man ever found the path to usefulness, or honour, or happiness, or commercial success, or Heaven, through the American theatre.

But now the question is still open: Where will you spend your evening? Oh, commercial travellers, how much will you give me to put you on the right track? Without charging you a farthing, I will prescribe for you a plan

which will save you for this world and the next, if you will take it. Go, before you leave home, to the Young Men's Christian Association of the city where you live. Get from them letters of introduction. Carry them out to the towns and cities where you go. If there be no such association in the place you visit then present them at the door of Christian churches, and hand them over to the pastors. Be not slow to rise in the devotional meeting and say: "I am a commercial traveller; I am far away from home and I come here to-night to seek Christian society." The best houses and the highest style of amusement will open before you, and instead of you being dependent upon the leprous crew who hang around the hotels wanting to show you all the slums of the city on the one condition that you will pay their expenses, you will get the benediction of God in every town you visit. Remember this: That whatever place you visit bad influences will seek you out; good influences you must seek out. While I stand here I bethink myself of a commercial traveller who was a member of my church in Philadelphia. He was a splendid young man, the pride of his widowed mother and of his sisters. It was his joy to support them, and for that purpose postponed his own marriage day. He thrived in business, and after a while set up his own household. Coming to Brooklyn, I had no opportunity for three or four years of making inquiry in regard to him. When I made such inquiry I was told that he was dead. The story was, he was largely generous, and kind-hearted, and genial, and social, and he got into the habit of "treating" customers, and of showing them all the sights of the town, and he began rapidly to go down, and he lost his position in the church of which he was a member, and he lost his position in the commercial house of which he was the best agent; and his beautiful young wife, and his sick, old mother, and his sisters, went into destitution, and he, as a result of his dissipation, died in Kirkbride Insane Asylum.

Oh! commercial travellers, I pray for you to-day, the all-sustaining grace of God. There are two kinds of days

when you are especially in need of Divine Grace. The one, the day when you have no success, when you fail to make a sale, and you are very much disappointed, and you go back to your hotel discomfited. That night you will be tempted to go to strong drink and rush into bad dissipations. The other day when you will especially need Divine grace will be when you have had a day of great success, and the devil tells you you must go and celebrate that success. Then you will want the grace of God to restrain you from rollicking indulgences. Yes, there will be a third day when you will need to be Christians, and that will be the last day of your life. I do not know where you will spend it. Perhaps in your house, more probably in a rail-car, or the steamer, or the strange hotel. I see you on your last commercial errand. You have bidden good-bye to the family at home for the last time. The train of your earthly existence is nearing the depot of the grave. The brakes are falling. The bells ring at the terminus. The train stops. All out for eternity! Show your ticket now for getting into the gate of the shining city—the red ticket washed in the blood of the Lamb.

GREAT TALENTS AND SMALL. .

"For the kingdom of Heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods.

"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability."—ST. MATTHEW, xxv. 14, 15.

MANY of the parables of Jesus Christ were more graphic in the times in which He lived than they are now, because circumstances have so much changed. In olden times, when a man wanted to wreak a grudge upon his neighbour, after the farmer had scattered the seed wheat

over the field and was expecting the harvest, his avenger would go across the same field with a sack full of the seed of dandel grass, scattering that seed all over the field, and of course it would sprout up and spoil the whole crop; and it was to that Christ referred in the parable when he spoke of the tares being sown among the wheat. In this land our farms are fenced off, and the wolves have been driven to the mountains, and we cannot fully understand the meaning of the parable in regard to the shepherd and the lost sheep. But the parable from which I speak to-night is founded on something we all understand. It is built on money, and that means the same in Jerusalem as in New York. It means the same to the serf as to the czar, and to the Chinese coolie as to the emperor. Whether it is made out of bone or brass, or iron or copper, or gold or silver, it speaks all languages without a stammer. The parable of the text runs in this wise: The owner of a large estate was about to leave home, and he had some money that he wished properly invested, and so he called together his servants, and said: "I am going away now, and I wish you would take this money and put it to the very best possible use, and when I come back, return to me the interest." To one man he gave 7,525 dollars, to others he gave lesser sums of money, to the least he gave 1,505 dollars. He left home, and was gone for years, and then returned. On his arrival he was anxious to know about his worldly affairs, and he called his servants together to report to him. "Let me know," said he, "what you have been doing with my property since I have been gone?" The man who had received about 7,000 dollars came up and said: "I invested that money. I got good interest for it. I have in other ways rightly employed it; and here are 14,000 dollars. You see I have doubled what you gave me." "That's very good," said the owner of the estate; "that's grandly done. I admire your faithfulness and industry. I shall reward you. Well done—well done." Other servants came up with smaller accumulations. After a while, I see a man

dragging himself along, with his head hanging. I know from the way he comes in that he is a lazy fellow. He comes up to the owner of the estate and says: "Here are those 1,505 dollars." "What!" says the owner of the property, "haven't you made it accumulate anything?" "Nothing, nothing." "Why, what have you been about all these years?" "Oh, I was afraid that if I invested it, I might somehow lose it. There are your 1,505 dollars." Many a young man started out with only a dollar in his pocket, and achieved a fortune; but this fellow of my text, with 1,505 dollars, has gained not one farthing. Instead of confessing his indolence, he goes to work to berate his master, for indolence is almost always impudent and impertinent. Of course he loses his place and is discharged from the service. The owner who went out into a far country is Jesus Christ going from earth to Heaven. The servants spoken of in the text are members of the Church. The talents are our different qualifications of usefulness given in different proportions to different people. The coming back of the owner is the Lord Jesus returning at the Judgment to make final settlement. The raising of some of these men to be rulers over five or two cities is the exaltation by the righteous at the last day, while the casting out of the idler is the expulsion of all those who have misimproved their privileges.

Learn first from this subject, that becoming a Christian is merely going out to service. If you have any romantic idea about becoming a Christian, I want this night to scatter the romance. If you enter into the kingdom of God, it will be going into plain, practical, honest, continuous, persistent Christian work. I know there are a great many people who have fantastic and romantic notions about this Christian life, but he who serves God with all the energies of body, mind, and soul, is a worthy servant, and he who does not is an unworthy servant. When the war trumpet sounds, all the Lord's soldiers must march, however deep the snow may be, or however fearful the odds against them. Under our government, we may have

colonels and captains and generals in time of peace, but in the Church of God there is no peace until the last great victory shall have been achieved. But I have to tell you it is a voluntary service. People are not brought into it as slaves are dragged from Africa. A young man goes to an artisan, and says: "Sir, I want to learn your trade. I, by this indenture, yield myself to your care and service for the next four, or five, or seven years. I want you to be my master, and I want to be your servant." Just so, if we come into the kingdom of God at all, we must come, saying to Christ: "Be Thou my Master. I take Thy service for time and for eternity. I choose it." It is a voluntary service. There is no drudgery in it. In our worldly callings sometimes our nerves get worn out, and our head aches, and our physical faculties break down; but in this service of the Lord Jesus, the harder a man works the better he likes it, and a man in this audience who has been for forty years serving God, enjoys the employment better than when he first entered it. The grandest honour that can ever be bestowed upon you, is to have Christ say to you on the last day: "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Again. I learn from this parable that different qualifications are given to different people. The teacher lifts a blackboard, and he draws a diagram, in order that by that diagram he may impress the mind of the pupil with the truth that he has been uttering. And all the truths of this Bible are drawn out in the natural world as in a great diagram. Here is an acre of ground that has ten talents. Under a little culture, it yields twenty bushels of wheat to the acre. Here is another piece of ground that has only one talent. You may plough it and harrow it and culture it, year after year, but it yields a mere pittance. So here is a man with ten talents in the way of getting good and doing good. He soon, under Christian culture, yields great harvests of faith and good work. Here is another man who seems to have only one talent, and you may put upon him the greatest spiritual culture,

but he yields but little of the fruits of righteousness. You are to understand that there are different qualifications for different individuals. There is a great deal of ruinous comparison when a man says ; "Oh, if I only had that man's faith, or that man's money, or that man's eloquence, how I would serve God !" Better take the faculty that God has given you, and employ it in the right way. The rabbis used to say, that before the stone and timber were brought to Jerusalem for the Temple every stone and piece of timber was marked ; so that before they started for Jerusalem, the architects knew in what place that particular piece of timber or stone should fit. And so I have to tell you we are all marked for some one place in the Great Temple of the Lord and do not let us complain, saying : "I would like to be the foundation stone, or the cap stone." Let us go into the very place where God intends us to be, and be satisfied with the position. Your talent may be in personal appearance ; your talent may be in large worldly estate ; your talent may be in high social position ; your talent may be in a swift pen or eloquent tongue : but whatever be the talent, it has been given only for one purpose—practical use. You sometimes find a man in the community to whom you say, "He has no talent at all ;" and yet that man may have a hundred talents. His one hundred talents may be shown in the item of endurance. Poverty comes, and he endures it ; persecution comes, and he endures it ; sickness comes, and he endures it. Before men and angels he is a specimen of Christian patience, and he is really illustrating the power of Christ's Gospel, and is doing as much for the Church, and more for the Church, than many more positively active. If you have one talent, use that ; if you have ten talents, use them, satisfied with the fact that we all have different qualifications, and that the Lord decides whether we shall have one or whether we shall have ten.

I learn also from this parable that the grace of God was intended to be accumulative. When God plants an acorn, He means an oak, and when He plants a small

amount of grace in the heart, He intends it to be growthful and enlarge until it overshadows the whole nature. There are parents, who, at the birth of each child, lay aside a certain amount of money, investing it, expecting by accumulation and by compound interest, that by the time the child shall come to mid-life, this small amount of money will be a fortune, showing how a small amount of money will roll up into a vast accumulation. Well, God sets aside a certain amount of grace for each one of His spiritual children at his birth, and it is to go on, and by compound interest, accumulate until it shall become an eternal fortune. Can it be possible that you have been acquainted with the Lord Jesus for ten, twenty, thirty years, and that you do not love Him more to-night than you ever did before? Can it be that you have been cultured in the Lord's vineyard, and that Christ finds on you to-night nothing but sour grapes? You may depend upon it if you do not use the talent that God gave you, it will dwindle. The rill that breaks from the hillside will either widen out into a river or dry up. The brightest day started in the dim twilight. The strongest Christian man was once a weak Christian. Take the one talent, and make it two; take five, and make them ten; take ten, and make them twenty. The grace of God was intended to be very accumulative.

Again. I learn from the text that inferiority of gifts is no excuse for indolence. This man, with the smallest amount of money, came growling into the presence of the owner of the estate, as much as to say, "If you had given me seven thousand dollars I would have brought fourteen thousand dollars as well as this other man. You gave me only fifteen hundred dollars, and I hardly thought it was worth while to use it at all. So I hid it in a napkin, and it produced no result. It's because you didn't give me enough." But inferiority of faculties is no excuse for indolence. Let me say to the man who has the least qualifications, by the grace of God he may be made almost omnipotent. The merchant, whose cargoes come out from

every island of the sea, and who, by one stroke of the pen can change the whole face of American commerce, has not so much power as you may have before God, in earnest, faithful, and continuous prayer. You say you have no faculty. Do you not understand that you might this afternoon have gone into your closet of prayer, and knelt before God, and brought down upon your soul, and the souls of others, a blessing so vast that it would take eternal ages to compute it? "Oh," you say, "I haven't fleetness of speech. I can't talk well. I can't utter what I want to say." My brother, can you not quote one passage of Scripture? Then take that one passage of Scripture; carry it with you everywhere; quote it under all proper circumstances. With that one passage of Scripture, you may harvest a thousand souls for God. I am glad that the chief work of the Church in this day is being done by the men of one talent. Once in a while, when a great fortress is to be taken, God will bring out a great field-piece, and rake all with the fiery hail of destruction. But common muskets do most of the hard fighting. It only took one Joshua, and the thousands of common troops under him, to drive down the walls of cities, and under wrathful strokes to make nations fly like sparks from the anvil. It only took one Luther for Germany, one Zwinglius for Switzerland, one John Knox for Scotland, one Calvin for France, and one John Wesley for England. Dorcas as certainly has a mission to serve as Paul has a mission to preach. The two mites dropped by the widow into the poor-box will be as much applauded as the endowment of a college which gets a man's name into the newspapers. The man who kindled the fire under the burnt offering, in the ancient temple, had a duty as imperative as that of the high priest in magnificent robes, walking into the Holy of Holies under the cloud of Jehovah's presence. Yes, the men with one talent are to save the world, or it will never be saved at all. The men with five or ten talents are tempted to toil chiefly for themselves, to build up their own great name, and work for their own aggrandize-

ment, and do nothing for the alleviation of the world's woes. The cedar of Lebanon, standing on the mountain, seems to hand down the storms out of the heavens to the earth, but it bears no fruit; while some dwarf pear tree has more fruit on its branches than it can carry. Better to have one talent and put it to full use, than five hundred wickedly neglected.

Again. My subject teaches me that there is going to come a day of solemn settlement. When the old farmer of the text got home, he immediately called all the servants about him, and said, "Here is the little account I have been keeping. I want to see your account, and we will first compare them; and I'll pay you what I owe you, and you'll pay me what you owe me. Let us have a settlement." The day will come when the Lord Jesus Christ will appear, and will say to you, "What have you been doing with My property? What have you been doing with My faculties? What have you been doing with what I gave you for accumulative purposes?" There will be no escape from that settlement. Sometimes you cannot get a settlement with a man, especially if he owes you. He postpones and procrastinates, and says, "I'll see you next week," or "I'll see you next month." The fact is, he does not want to settle. But when the great day comes of which I am speaking, there will be no escape. We will have to face all the bills. I have sometimes been amazed to see how an accountant will run up or down a long line of figures. If I see ten or fifteen figures in a line and I attempt to add them up, and I add them two or three times, I make them different each time. But I have admired the way an accountant will take a long line of figures, and without a single mistake, and with great celerity, announce the aggregate. Now, in the last great settlement, there will be a correct account presented. God has kept a long line of sins, a long line of broken Sabbaths, a long line of profane words, a long line of discarded sacraments, a long line of misimproved privileges. They will all be added up, and before angels, and devils, and men, the aggregate will be an-

nounced. Oh, that will be the great day of settlement. I have to ask the question, "Am I ready for it?" It is of more importance to me to answer that question in regard to myself than in regard to you; and it is of more importance for you to answer it in regard to yourself than in regard to me. Every man for himself in that day. Every woman for herself in that day. "If thou be wise thou shalt be wise for thyself; if thou scornest thou alone shalt bear it." We are apt to speak of the last day as an occasion of vociferation—a great demonstration of power and pomp; but there will be on that day, I think, a few moments of entire silence. I think a tremendous, an overwhelming silence. I think it will be such a silence as the earth never heard. It will be at the moment when all nations are listening for their doom. "Come ye blessed!" It shall thrill with new joy through the ranks of the saved. "Depart ye cursed!" It will throw additional darkness into the abandonment of the lost.

Lastly. I learn from this parable of the text, that our degrees of happiness in heaven will be graduated according to our degrees of usefulness on earth. Several of the commentators agree in making this parable the same as the one in Luke, where no man was made ruler over five cities, and another made ruler over two cities. Would it be fair and right that the professed Christian man who has lived very near the line between the world and the Church—the man who has often compromised his Christian character—the man who has never spoken out for God—the man who has never been known as a Christian only on communion days—the man whose great struggle has been to see how much of the world he could get and yet win heaven—is it right to suppose that that man will have as grand and glorious a seat in heaven as the man who gave all his energies of body, mind, and soul to the service of God? The dying thief entered heaven; but not with the same startling acclaim as that which greeted Paul, who had gone under scorchings and across dungeons and through maltreatments into the kingdom of glory. One star differs

from another star in glory, and they who toil mightily for Christ on earth shall have a far greater reward than those who have rendered only half a service.

Some of you are hastening on toward the rewards of the righteous. I want to cheer you up to-night at the thought that there will be some kind of a reward waiting for you. There are Christian people in this house to-night who are very near Heaven. This week some of you may pass out into the light of the unsetting sun. I saw a blind man going along the road with his staff, and he kept pounding the earth, and then stamping with his foot. I said to him, "What do you do that for?" "Oh," he said, "I can tell by the sound of the ground when I am near a dwelling." And some of you can tell by the sound of your earthly pathway that you are coming near to your father's house. I congratulate you. Oh, weather-beaten voyagers, the storms are driving you into the harbour. Just as when you were looking for a friend, you came up to the gate of his house, and you were talking with the servant when your friend hoisted the window and shouted, "Come in! come in!" Just so, when you come to the gate of the future world, and you are talking with Death, the black porter at the gate, methinks Christ will hoist the window and say, "Come in! come in! I will make thee ruler over ten cities." In anticipation of that land, I do not wonder that Augustus Toplady, the author of "Rock of Ages," declared in his last moment, "I have nothing more to pray for; God has given me everything. Surely no man can live on earth after the glories I have witnessed." Oh, my brothers and sisters, how sweet it will be, after the long wilderness march, to get home. That was a bright moment for the tired dove in the time of the Deluge, when it found its way safely into the window of the ark.



IS THERE A HELL?*Thus saith the Lord*—EXODUS iv. 22.*Thus saith the Lord*—EXODUS ix. 13.*Thus saith the Lord*—I SAMUEL ii. 27.*Thus saith the Lord*—JOSHUA vii. 13.*Thus saith the Lord*—JOSHUA xxiv. 2.*Thus saith the Lord*—JUDGES vi. 8*Thus saith the Lord*—I CHRONICLES xvii. 7,*Thus saith the Lord*—JEREMIAH vi. 9.

EIGHT texts, and all of them the same. The strangest thing in the history of American and European journalism is that during the past few months it has been discussing the question of eternal punishment. The question of Turko-Russian contest, the question of silver currency, the question as to President Hayes's policy with the South—all submerged into the question, "Is there a hell?" It makes but very little difference what De Witt Talmage says about this, for it is only a little while ago he began to breathe, and in a little while he will stop breathing. It makes but little difference what Dean Stanley, or Canon Farrar, or Mr. Frothingham think about this, for they have never been into the eternal world, and can give no personal experience. The Roman Catholic Church in all its Diets and through all its bishoprics has declared its belief in a place of future retribution, but that does not settle it for me. The Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian churches have adapted this theory in their creeds, but that does not settle it for me. This morning I cast aside all human authority and all human opinion. There is only one Being who can tell me now whether there is a hell. That Being is God. I reject every opinion except that on which is written, "Thus saith the Lord." I put one "Thus saith the Lord" against all the sermons, all the disquisitions, all the books of all the ages. "Thus saith the Lord." You see, my friends, I start in the assumption that the Bible is true. If you deny

it is true, some other Sabbath I will argue that matter. As common-sense men you know that in making any argument on any secular or religious subject, there must be some common data, some common ground, where we shall start together. It would be as silly for me to try to prove to you, who reject the truth of the Bible, that there is a place of future retribution, as it would be for me to discuss fraud and crime and their penalties with a man who denies Blackstone and the statutes of the State of New York. Our common sense tells us that there must be some common ground where we can start. Now, in passing, I have to ask you who reject the Bible the questions, "Is there a God?" "Yes," you say, "Is He good?" "Yes," you say. Now, I ask you, is it not reasonable that a good God should give us a revelation of some kind? Is it not reasonable to suppose that such a Being, starting our race in this world, would give them some guide, some directory, some written help? "Of course," you say, "that's so." Now, which is it? If you will show me a book which seems to be a more reasonable and a better revelation from God than the Bible, I am willing to accept it. I like anything new and unique. By the constitution of my nature I prefer the new to the old. If you can hand me up a book this morning that seems to be a better revelation from God than the Bible, I will take it and I will preach from it. Is there a man in this house who denies what the Bible affirms? It is easy thus to deny. You tell me that the Turko-Russian war is nearly over. I deny there has ever been such a war. Moreover, I deny, for the sake of argument, that there ever have been any such places as Russia and Turkey. "But," you say, "you will admit that there are such places as Moscow and Constantinople?" No, I never saw them. "But," you say, "you must have seen the submarine telegrams in all the newspapers, coming from the seat of war?" Yes, but those telegrams were not sworn to, and I do not know but that all those newspapers and all those telegraphers may have made a conspiracy to deceive. In other words, I deny everything.

"Well," you say, "that is foolish." I admit it, but you are doing in regard to the Bible just what I am now doing in regard to geography.

You deny the geography of the eternal world, and I for the minute deny the geography of Europe. Good-bye, my brother. I have no time this morning to talk to you who reject the Bible. Some other Sabbath I will see you. I must turn now to those who believe the Bible to be true. Eternal Spirit of Almighty God, fall upon us now, while with fingers of dust we turn the sacred leaves, and with lips of ashes, we recite the most stupendous truths that ever shook the human soul. If we are honest men we will come to this subject as we would in the midst of a great freshet if we, at midnight, were on the Erie express train, and said to the conductor, "Conductor, do you think any of the bridges are down to-night?" with something of the feeling I had when our last lifeboat had been crushed to pieces in the midst of the ocean cyclone, and I said to the officer, "Officer, do you think we will ever get to New York?" I have no sympathy with the flippant discussion of this truth, nor with the manner on the part of a preacher which seems to say—"You impenitent people will be lost, and serve you right!" I feel that I am a sinner, and because of the million transgressions of my heart and life I must perish unless some one can show me a way out from under the condemnation. The platform on which I stand may be two or three feet higher than the pew in which you sit; but I realise that I am not raised the thousandth part of an inch above the level on which we must stand in judgment before God. I do not know how people can jest about this subject, and yet it is the subject of more puns, more caricatures, more jokes in the offices and shops than any other subject. Why do they not joke about the broken bridge at Ashtabula? or the *Atlantic* steamer going down off Mars Head with five hundred passengers? or the earthquake that crushed Lisbon? or the London plague? There is more reason for jest in all those subjects than in this. Let us come to this subject not as critics, not as

cavillers, not in a polemic spirit. Let us come to it as a question of personal safety. Let us empty ourselves of all previous impressions, and without any disposition to twist things, or explain them away, find out what is the announcement of the only authority on this subject that is worth so much as a pin.

In the first place, I group together all those passages which represent the suffering of the lost by fire. In Matthew it is said, "At the end of the world the angels shall come forth and separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." Can you not explain it away? Oh! yes. I could make these angels fairies; I could represent this fire as only something looking like fire; I could represent this furnace as a casket with a crimson lining; but what is the use of explaining away a furnace of fire when God says there is one? What is the use of a criminal trying to explain away the existence of the place of punishment? But you say, "Isn't there some mistake about it?" If there is, then the Lord Christ made the mistake, for the passage I quoted is part of *His* sermon. I appeal to Paul on this subject. He was no coward. Instead of his trembling before governors, governors trembled before him. A small invalid, but the most magnificent man of the ages. What does he say? He says to the Thessalonians: "The Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God." I appeal to St. John, the inspired. In one place he says of the lost: "They shall be tormented with fire and brimstone." In another place he says: "The adulterers, the sorcerers, and all liars shall have their place in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." And in another place he says: "They shall both be cast alive into the lake of fire." The last book of the Bible closes with a dark scroll on the sky.

What is it? Smoke. Where there is no fire there is no smoke. "The smoke of their torment ascended for ever and ever," "But," you say, "were not these men who

wrote this?" Yes, but they were inspired men. If you do not want to take even inspired men, then I go back to Christ again, and as my first quotation on this subject was from Christ, so my last quotation under this head shall be from Christ, as He says: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." "But," you say, "isn't this figurative?" I am not opposed to saying it may be figurative, but I know very well that if it is not fire, it is something as severe as fire. Christ and His Apostles were not lacking illustrative power, and when they say a thing is morning, I know it is as bright as it can be, and when they say anything is a prison I know it is a galling thralldom, and when they say anything is fire, I know it is a torment unmitigated. I often hear people explain these fiery representations of scripture as metaphor, and as soon as they make metaphor out of them, they seem to think they have soothed the whole subject. No; if there be a mental state as sharp and severe as fire, it might as well be fire. Christ and His Apostles use the figure of fire, and I know that there is nothing more painful or more agonising. But if you want some other figure, take it. Say it is a penitentiary, iron-bolted, iron-barred, iron-locked, the door opening in and not out. I will not dispute with you. If you will, say it is a maelstrom which dashes and breaks to pieces and swallows down all those that come within the sweep of its foaming circles. I will not dispute you.

If you prefer those human similes, take them. I prefer God's comparison, because I know God is right, and human comparisons may be wrong. God says it is fire, and a furnace of fire. Besides that, my brother, I do not know that it is figurative. It may be literal. The Bible sixteen times says it is fire. The whole race is sinful and rebellious, and underneath that race there is a furnace glowing, cracking, roaring, raving, and we shall all be plunged in it unless we escape on one condition, which I shall mention at a later point in my sermon. You say "I don't believe it, and I won't believe it." Then be consistent and pitch your Bible into the stove, or throw it into

the river. Thomas Paine was consistent in denying the doctrine of eternal punishment, for he rejected the whole Bible, although in his last moments he howled with so much terror that his nurse fled from the room. He was consistent nevertheless. Voltaire was consistent in rejecting the doctrines of future punishment, because he rejected the whole Bible, although he did not seem to be so very well persuaded of the non-existence of perdition, for when his friend wrote to him, "I have found out for sure that there is no hell," Voltaire replied, "I congratulate you; I am not so fortunate as you are." But still he was tolerably consistent, for as well as he might he rejected the whole Bible. But, my brother, you have a Bible in your hand, you have a Bible in your bedroom, you have a Bible in your nursery, you have a Bible in your parlour. Your children have Bibles, and all these Bibles say that there is a world of fire for those who do not escape on a certain condition which I shall in a few moments mention. Now, overboard with your Bible, or overboard with your unbelief. Keeping both your Bible and your unbelief you stultify yourself beyond all other possibility of stultification.

The next thing I have to do is group all those passages which show the indignation of God against sin and the sinner, and, hence, the possibility of such a place as I have spoken of. Out of a hundred sermons ninety-eight of them are on the love of God, the mercy of God, the kindness of God, and if we preach two sermons out of the one hundred in regard to the indignation of God we are styled "sulphuric." Our American preaching needs to be reconstructed on this doctrine of God's indignation. So recreant are we, the American clergy, on this subject that the vast majority of you people here to-day do not know the Bible more frequently speaks of the wrath of God than it does of the love of God. Not because God has more wrath than mercy, but because he knew the world would be slow to believe it. We have not enough backbone of moral courage to preach the whole Bible. So we go preaching a one-sided God, with a character which we

would despise in ourselves!. Do you ever get angry? Suppose a ruffian should knock your little girl into the gutter,—would you smile about it? Would you reward him for it? Suppose, passing down the street, you saw three or four men, with hods of brick on their shoulders, going up a long ladder, and some one should come to the foot of the ladder and hurl it away, and the three or four men should dash down and lose their lives—would you smile about it? Would you reward him for it? No. There are a hundred things in your life that excite your indignation, and if you are never aroused in that way it is because you are imbecile. Yet, what do they say of God? Why, the whole race can go on defying Him, breaking His law, murdering His only-begotten Son, striking in the face the Lord Almighty, and He will smile on them through all eternity. Bible-holders, I want you to recognize the fact that God in the Bible more often speaks of His indignation than He does of His mercy. Twenty-eight times does the Bible speak of the love of God. Sixty-one times does it speak of His wrath and His indignation. Here is Cruden's "Concordance." I brought it along with the passages all collated. I will lay it at the foot of the pulpit. It is quite an expensive book, and some of you may not have it or be able to get it. I lay it at the foot of the pulpit, and you can count the passages for yourself at the close of the service. Oh! can we preach the Bible without preaching the indignation of God, as well as the love of God? I will recite to you some of the passages which show the Lord's indignation, and hence the possibility of such a place as I am thinking of. In Thessalonians: "Taking vengeance on them that know not God." In Revelation: "They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Almighty God, poured without mixture into the cup of His indignation." The figure, you see, is a pitcher and a bowl. Into the pitcher are compressed the clusters that have grown under the hot sun of indignation; and then the wine, seething, bubbling, is poured out from the pitcher into the bowl, and the lost soul, compelled to put trembling hands to that

bowl, presses it to the lips and drinks the draught until all the contents are drained. You do not like the figure? It is not wine. "Thus saith the Lord. They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Almighty God, poured without mixture into the cup of His indignation." In another place the Bible says, "The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness," and over that abyss we are all suspended, unless we escape on one condition to be mentioned at a later point. It is too early to mention it. What does a man want to know of a life raft when he is sure of no shipwreck? Not persuaded yet? Revelation; "The wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Not yet persuaded that there is a wrath side as well as a love side to the Almighty? Isaiah 33—and this passage perhaps you have never heard quoted: "And the people shall be as burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burned up in the fire. Hear, ye that are afar off, what I have done, and ye that are near acknowledge my might."

Not yet persuaded? I quote once more Isaiah: "I will tread them in my wrath and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Does that quotation irritate you with me? I did not say it. "Thus saith the Lord." Not persuaded with what Samuel says, and Micah says, and Daniel says, and Jeremiah says, and Ezekiel says, and Paul says, and Christ says, and Jehovah says? Not persuaded? Then I shall have to leave you to be persuaded by your own experience, when the truths of God's burnished throne shall flame on you. The fact is that all the Bible-holders in this audience by this time, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, are persuaded that there is a hell. How long shall it last? I will answer that question to-morrow night. How do you accord this with the love and mercy of God? I will answer that question to-morrow night. What do you think of the theories of Canon Farrar, and Dean Stanley, and Mr. Frothingham? I will answer that question to-morrow night. This morning I have noth-

ing to do with objections. I will simply state to you that God fifty-six times, in the plainest, most unmistakable, stupendous, and overwhelming way, declares that there is a hell. It is burning now. It has been burning a long while. It is becoming fiercer by the victims that are ever being dropped into it. Yea, I will go further, and say there is a possibility, aye, there is a probability that there are some in this house to-day who will spend eternity in the lost world. Nothing but the hand of an outraged, defied, insulted, long-suffering, indignant, omnipotent God keeps this whole audience this moment from sliding like one avalanche into it. Oh! God, what a crisis! Has not the time come for me to tell this people that there is no need that any of them go there? I am going to announce to you that five or ten may escape—yea, a hundred—yea, a thousand—yea, all. You say: "Tell me just now." Oh! I do not want to break on you the glad tidings too suddenly. I want to tell you that there is no more need that you go to that world than that you should leap into the Geysers of California, or the crater of Cotopaxi. Tell the people, gentlemen of the press, tell them that I said there was no reason that anybody should go there; that if anybody goes there he is a suicide of his immortal soul. I turn to the same old book and I find out that the Son of Mary, who was the Son of God, the darling of heaven, the champion of the ages, by some called Lord, by some called Jesus, by others called Christ, but this morning by us called by the three blessed titles, Lord Jesus Christ, by one magnificent stroke made it possible for us all to be saved. He not only told us that there was a hell, but He went into it. He walked down the fiery steep. He stepped off the bottom rung of the long ladder of despair. He descended into hell. He put His bare foot on the hottest coal of the fiercest furnace. He explored the darkest den of eternal midnight, and then He came forth lacerated and bleeding, and mauled by the hands of infernal excruciation, to cry out to all the ages: "I have paid the price for all those who would make Me their substitute. By My groans, by

My agony, I demand the rescue of all those who will give up sin and trust in Me." Mercy! mercy! mercy! But how am I to get it? Cheap. It will not cost you as much as a loaf of bread. Only a penny? No, no! Escape from hell, and all the harps and mansions and thrones and sunlit fields of heaven besides in the bargain, "without money and without price." Now, I ask you as common-sense men and women, if one has a choice between heaven and hell, and he may escape from one and he may win the other, and he refuses to do so—I ask you, as men and women of common sense, if he does not deserve to be lost. He does. You know he does. Oh! by the free salvation of Christ, by the voice of the eternal groan which we have heard this morning, I beg all this audience to flee from the wrath to come. Do not, my friend, make it a controversy between you and me; it is a controversy between you and God. Do not go away talking of what I said; go away talking of what God said. My dear brother, my dear sister, you may shuffle this whole subject off your attention, but that does not change the fact. Your impenitent course is certainly leading you to that lost world. You are on the road to hell! Turn around! and start on the road to Heaven. Oh! it seems as if my pulses never beat so swiftly as they do this minute, and it is in emotion lest some of you be lost. My heart, it seems as if it would break. God knows that I have never prayed over any sermon as I have prayed over this, and yet how powerless I am to make you see things as you will see them on your dying bed; as you will see them when the front gate of eternity swings open upon your amazed spirit. With one more quotation I will leave this whole subject between you and God's arousing, convicting, converting Spirit. Isaiah xxxiii. 14: "Who of us can dwell with devouring fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burnings?" Who? Who?

[Between five and six thousand people were present during the delivery of this discourse, and thousands could not get inside the tabernacle. The services opened with that well known hymn of Wesley's, "A charge to keep I have."]

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